



**MAKE**

*e v e r y*

**NIGHT**

*Saturday Night in Macon*



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I N T R O D U C T I O N

## YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY MACON



Not so long ago, downtown Macon was in a state of significant disrepair. A large number of buildings were vacant and the streets were desolate. Like many other cities lured by the misguided planning theories of the time, Macon pursued downtown beautification and renewal schemes such as buildings with aluminum slipcovers and railroad timbers as street landscape solutions. However, Macon has rebounded and moved past many of these earlier mistakes. Downtown Macon is energized and ready for additional revitalization steps.

During the weekend January 27 – 29, 2006, University of Georgia students and faculty witnessed a vibrancy and life in downtown which had been missing for decades. Downtown Macon was ALIVE on Saturday night! Children walked along the sidewalks, families were dining in new downtown restaurants, and a successful art opening was taking place across the street from the New Town Macon office. These activities made downtown look – for just a minute – like Greenwich Village. This is a far cry from the days of rolling up the sidewalks at 7 pm and being afraid to go downtown.

## PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

There are impressive projects and initiatives in the works that are worth mentioning. They provide a back drop for our work at this charrette: *the City Plaza, the proposed Museum Campus, the Bealls Hill initiative, and a new streetscape designed by prominent Landscape Architect, Walter Hood.*

The *Bealls Hill project* is an excellent example of how an institution and city can partner and redevelop a place that many had given up on. Now, in its 5<sup>th</sup> year of conception, the *Bealls Hill project* is a nationally recognized success: it was recently awarded a prestigious award for excellence in planning from the Congress for the New Urbanism. This project is exactly the kind of institutional partnership to replicate and nurture.

The *Poplar Street Yard streetscape design by Walter Hood* elicits diverse opinions, but the innovative designer's project is a pearl for Macon. Hood designs award winning landscapes worldwide. This project is significant and will continue to gain significance because it was created by a famous landscape architect. This fact, in and of itself, elevates the status of the streetscape project and amplifies its level of importance...just as a painting which only some view as beautiful becomes significant and famous when the artist gains acclaim. The Walter Hood streetscape project is this kind of project. It says something positive and creative about Macon. The fact that it resulted from a national competition and a rigorous selection process is important to Macon. Be proud of this innovative and contemporary urban solution.



Oglethorpe Rendering  
Source: <http://www.beallshill.net/>



View from Oglethorpe looking north to  
hilltop belvedere.  
Source: <http://www.beallshill.net/>



Poplar Street, Macon, Georgia.  
Hood Design.  
Rendering: Hood Design



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O V E R V I E W

## OVERVIEW

Macon's rich and deep ties to music make the streets sing and buildings resonate with the history of this community. The Convention and Visitor Bureau's new slogan "The Song and Soul of the South" truly captures the spirit of Macon.



[www.maconga.org](http://www.maconga.org)



### MUSIC EDUCATION SIGNAGE

*Design idea to follow Macon's already strong theme: music*

## MACON, GEORGIA

# *Song & Soul of the South*

The Charrette Team was inspired by Macon's music.

The recommendations that follow fall into three broad themes:

## PARTNERSHIPS, MANAGEMENT, AND POLICY/ENFORCEMENT.

At the end of a discussion of the three themes, a series of design solutions follow, addressing site specific issues and problems.

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PARTNERSHIPS

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Holding open meetings and creating avenues for dialog will remove suspicion and increase the lines of communication.
- Health care professionals, especially mental health care professionals, can be a strong component of solving some of the problems facing downtown. An annual colloquium for all appointed boards will continue the precedent of strong partnerships and will enhance further efforts. This colloquium should be a forum for all of the elected boards and decision makers. An impartial representative from outside of the community should facilitate this process. The meeting can serve as a venue where community decision makers can all be in the same room at the same time talking about joint missions, unified promotion, and shared outcomes. Avoid the pitfall of duplicated services or duplicated missions. It is such a waste of talent and time. All activities benefit from coordination and communication.

## THEME I: PARTNERSHIPS

In the life of any community, creative partnerships are one of the most meaningful ingredients for success. Partnerships take the form of collaborative relationships between government, corporations, private institutions, and citizens. Macon is no stranger to strong partnerships.

However, keeping these partnerships alive and the lines of communication open can be difficult. Macon's downtown partnerships and faithful local institutions contribute significantly to this community. There are exemplary corporate partners, indicating that the business community sees value in downtown. Local political leadership fluctuates throughout the life of a community and demands constant tending. Macon must nourish its existing partnerships. Political forces, elected officials and community leaders must keep the lines of communication open. Downtown partners must continue to see their role as important contributors to community health. Partners must also see the value of exploring new partnerships and discovering new ways to work together. Things cannot be done as they have always been done.

*Dynamic projects require dynamic managers.*

*Examples of Macon's Successful Partnerships (not inclusive):*

- Urban Development Authority
- New Town
- Local Media
- Neighborhood associations
- Downtown business bureau
- Chamber of Commerce
- Health Care Community

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PARTNERSHIPS



*Street scene, Macon, Ga. 1936 July.  
Lange, Dorothea, photographer.*



*Street scene, Macon, Ga. 1936 July.  
Lange, Dorothea, photographer.*

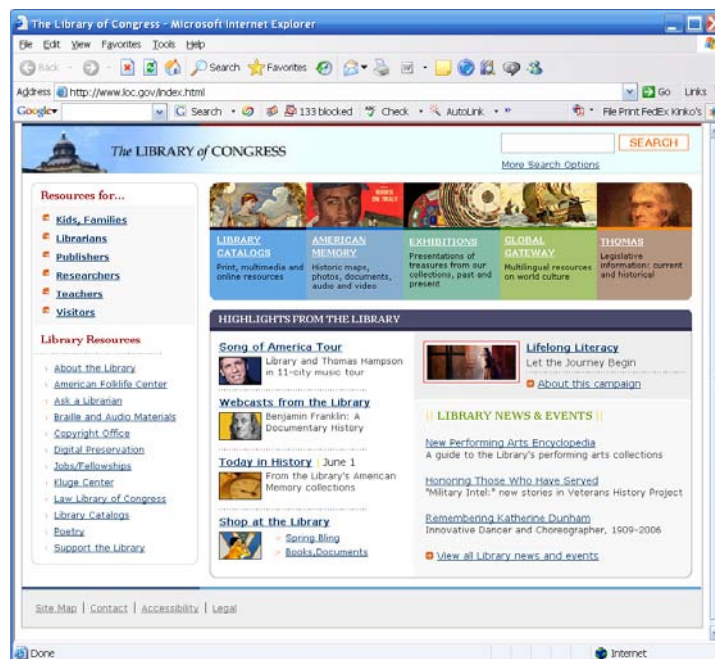


*Main street, Macon, Ga. 1936 Mar.  
Evans, Walker, 1903-1975, photographer.*

## MACON'S HISTORY

In researching Macon's history we looked to the American Memory Collection of Photographs from the Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/>



This collection includes photographic essays on life in downtown Macon. The images reveal that even during a very depressed time in U.S. history, Macon had vibrancy and life in its downtown. There were people who were suffering immensely, yet there was hope in the faces of Maconites. There was a managed system that helped to facilitate economic relief. Management provided economic relief and opportunities for many of the disenfranchised.



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HERE ARE SOME OF  
THE ANECDOTAL  
COMMENTS WE  
HEARD DURING THE  
CHARRETTE:

“Macon has the worst parking problems in the state.”

“Macon has never had problems with parking.”

“Macon needs a parking deck.”

“We’ve got three decks that are not being used—decks that managers won’t allow people to park in.”

“Empty parking decks and ugly surface parking lots are useless. You cannot waste downtown space on surface lots. The time has come to change this approach with better management.”

“Downtown is your front yard!”

“Cracked asphalt and weeds growing in fenced-off parking lots should be a thing of the past. Macon is better than that!”

M A N A G E M E N T

## THEME II: MANAGEMENT

Parking problems downtown can be solved by a well-developed management system. The problems associated with homelessness can begin to be solved through effective management.

Take aggressive action against property owners who blatantly disregard Macon’s efforts to have a downtown that is attractive and functions well. This action should come from the political leadership. Political leadership must take a tough stance on the unsightly problems in downtown Macon. That kind of behavior and practices should no longer occur in downtown Macon. Macon is too important.



*Some other anecdotal comments: Conflict, problem or misperception, can be solved with a new, clarified parking management plan. Do not perpetuate problems related to parking.*

*The lack of maintenance of surface parking lots should be considered just as egregious by the political leadership as letting rotting garbage pile up outside of a historic landmark on College Avenue.*

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## EASEMENTS & DEED RESTRICTIONS/ COVENANTS OUTLINE

- Identify what interests are recorded for downtown properties.
- Assignable façade easements held by the City as a result of the Façade Rehabilitation Program in the late 70's.
- Other easements, covenants, and restrictions held by the City, Macon Heritage Foundation, or other public or private entities.
- Identify the scope of the rights afforded by easements and their enforceability.
- Consolidate/Coordinate.

*continues on page 9*

P O L I C Y   E N F O R C E M E N T

## THEME III: POLICY ENFORCEMENT



The Charrette legal team uncovered a lot of “toothless ordinances” and codes that affect downtown Macon.

Macon must strengthen and enforce minimum maintenance codes and demolition-by-neglect ordinances downtown. The ability to enforce minimum codes, demolition-by-neglect, and other codes should be a high priority for downtown. Codes currently sit on the books without sustained enforcement tactics applied to persistent violators.

The look of the downtown is what attracts people to move to Macon, and it is what attracts youth to return after college. To a certain extent, 20 and 30-somethings have already begun to return to Macon. Many have demonstrated interest in improving the appearance of downtown. This age group will become one of the

most important forces in downtown, filling the lofts, eating in the restaurants, and making downtown a lively place.

Many may not realize this, but Macon has a history of leadership in the state. In the late 70's and early 80's when no other city in the state or the southeast was doing it, Macon instituted an architectural review board and created a review process that was ahead of its time. The review board and review process demonstrated aggressiveness. That same aggressiveness must return in a new minimum maintenance and demolition-by-neglect program.



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*continues from page 8*

- Façade easements are assignable and if the City lacks resources to enforce them. They may be assigned to other qualified organizations, potentially New Town or the Urban Development Authority.
- Consolidate/Coordinate to increase the ease of monitoring and enforcement.
- Reinstitute the Façade Rehabilitation Program.
- Create improvements on the public face of downtown combined with lasting mechanisms to try and maintain those improvements.
- May be possible to fund the program with non-profit dollars if the City is unwilling or unable to provide matching funds.

P O L I C Y   E N F O R C E M E N T

## FACADE EASEMENT AND OTHER DEED RESTRICTIONS AND COVENANTS

A façade easement is a type of conservation easement, which is regulated by OCGA 44-10-1, et seq. Easements have been acquired since the late 1970's by Macon's efforts with the "The Façade/Rehabilitation Grants Program," which was a dollar matching program whereby the city provides matching funds for façade improvement to property owners who in return provide easements to the city. Approximately 60 properties appear to have façade easements as a result of this program. Other restrictions exist in the form of additional easements, deed restrictions and covenants resulting from the efforts of other organizations such as Macon Heritage Foundation.

Enforcement of the terms of the façade easement may be problematic. Information needs to be collected and responsibilities for enforcement need to be coordinated. The City or another party needs to confirm that all these easements were recorded with the title office. At the same time, the City needs to establish who owns the interests in the different easements, and classify them by the rights they establish. The existing easements in downtown Macon protect significantly different rights, and it needs to be clarified exactly which properties are in compliance with the terms of the easements. Action should be taken to bring the others into compliance.






Façade easements may be held by a number of different parties. To enforce the terms of the facade easement, a party must have a specific interest in the enforcement action. Easements may be transferred to the Urban Development Authority, other public entity, or qualified private non-profit. This would help avoid some of the political considerations that sometimes obstruct enforcement. Placing all of these interests in one entity charged with monitoring their enforcement could raise the level of vigilance and monitoring.

[www.wje.com/facadeordinance/table2.html](http://www.wje.com/facadeordinance/table2.html)

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## Summary of Various Facade Ordinances

P O L I C Y   E N F O R C E M E N T

	# of Buildings Affected	Frequency and Due Date of Reports	Which Buildings are Subject to Compliance	Acceptable Inspectors	Exterior Walls Subject to Inspection	Method of Inspection	Fines for Non-compliance
CHICAGO	 2,500	Critical exam required every 4, 8 or 12 years and on-going inspection every 2 years in the interim between critical examinations	All buildings at or greater than 80 feet in height	Architects and structural engineers or personnel under their direct supervision	50% of area on all facades required for critical exam, plus 100% of areas adjacent to building corners, and 100% of terra cotta facade elements	Annual reports are based on visual surveys at a minimum; 4, 8 or 12-year critical exam reports require close-up inspection	Minimum \$500/day Maximum \$1,000/day
NEW YORK	 10,000	5 year; 5th cycle reports due between Feb. 2000 and Feb. 2002	All buildings at or greater than 6-stories with a basement in height	Architects and structural engineers or personnel under their direct supervision	All walls except those within 12-inches of adjacent walls	Visual survey plus one sample representative scaffold drop for hands-on inspection	\$1,000 and/or imprisonment not exceeding six months plus \$250/month for non-compliance
BOSTON	 600	5 years, every year for unoccupied structures	All buildings at or greater than 70-feet in height or classified as a high rise	Architects and structural engineers or personnel under their direct supervision	All walls	Visual surveys for walls less than 125-feet in height and 1 hands-on scaffold inspection per facade for buildings greater than 125-feet in height	\$100/day
DETROIT	 400	5 years	All buildings 5-stories or greater in height	Competent workmen with 3 years of related documented experience or an established inspection service	Cornices and other projections	Visual survey and a swing stage (alternative inspection methods to be approved by building official)	Up to \$500 plus 90 days in jail
COLUMBUS, OH	 480	5 years, staggered per 20th year of age for each building	All buildings 20 or more years in age and located within 10-feet of a public right of way or open pedestrian walkway	Architects and structural engineers or personnel under their direct supervision specializing in facade inspections	All walls	As defined by architect or engineer performing the inspection	Court summons

[www.facadeordinance.com](http://www.facadeordinance.com)

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The problem of parking is not something that a one-time study can solve. Cities must constantly revise parking management schemes, count the empty spaces, figure out why decks are closed, and figure out why deck owners lock cars in or out. *There is a reason for that.* You cannot say, “that’s just the way they are” and leave it at that. Communicate with owners, figure out what motivates them, and work to get them to reevaluate their practices.

This is not a problem that you have to solve alone. Luckily, people have solved it in other places. Borrow those ideas!

One good place to start is with adequate SIGNAGE. Visitors to Macon comment that they are not able to find signs directing them to most of the parking lots. Ask yourselves, “In other cities that you visit, what do you look for when you get there?”

The big blue P.

That kind of expected directional sign does not have enough of a presence in Macon.

*If visitors can't find the lots, then businesses won't have return customers.*

## P O L I C Y   E N F O R C E M E N T

### POLICY ENFORCEMENT EXTENDS TO PARKING

Looking at historic photographs of downtown Macon, the predominant image is one of people driving around looking for parking spaces. That problem is not going away. It is a sign of life and vitality in the downtown. It is difficult to find parking in any great city in the world. It is the downtowns without parking problems which are in trouble. Parking problems demonstrate that people are downtown, and additional people WANT to be downtown.

If people are unable to park directly in front of Luigi’s Bistro for dinner—bravo! That means that the food is good. It means people are going to the theater and it means that people have to plan their evenings. An entertainment district works that way, and downtown Macon needs to work that way.



There is an aggressiveness we found in some of your surface parking lot management.

While often humorous, that aggressiveness transfers directly to the visitors. If someone says: *“If you don’t pay me, I’m going to smash your car up,”* then that negative attitude is transferred to the visitor.

Macon needs to welcome people to parking spaces and make sure that parking managers also welcome visitors through appropriate signage, lighting and a positive attitude.



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P A R K I N G   S O L U T I O N S



*Appropriate signage can easily reveal the parking deck entrance, not the sense of voided, dark spaces.*

## PARKING SOLUTIONS ALREADY BEING UTILIZED:

*Macon solved a parking and streetscape issue*



The city has a new deck that looks like it could be a building. We encourage future development to include street level retail with parking decks. As a pedestrian walking down the sidewalk next to one of these buildings, one has the feeling of being next to any other city building, not a deck.

The mental image of walking next to a parking deck is one of fear, darkness, noise, and echoes associated with hollow space. But, if street level retail is located on exterior walls of parking decks, pedestrians can be fooled into thinking the city blocks are sewn together in a cohesiveness, which is one of Macon's greatest strengths. Make this type of deck the rule rather than the exception.



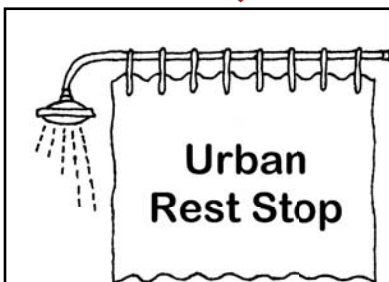
We explored ideas of how to enhance existing parking decks. If parking decks can not look like buildings, make them look like parks. Maybe it is an exterior grid frame with vines growing on it. This idea is taking root in some of the world's most polluted cities, such as Bangkok, Mexico City and Buenos Aires.

see pages 21-23 for more parking deck solutions

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DESIGN IDEAS

## Seattle Rest Stop



### SERVICES:

#### Access to toilets - All welcome!

Access to showers & laundry  
- Homeless and low-income individuals and families  
Personal hygiene supplies available to patrons (Toothbrushes, toothpaste, razors, shaving gel, combs, deodorant, skin lotion, feminine hygiene supplies, diapers, athletes' foot powder and socks)

All patrons are provided with body/hair soap, towels and laundry soap. If an individual does not have a change of clothes to wear while doing laundry, he/she may borrow a pair of coveralls.

**ALL SERVICES FREE OF CHARGE!**

More info: [www.lihi.org/pages/RestStop.htm](http://www.lihi.org/pages/RestStop.htm)



## DESIGN IDEAS FOR SPECIFIC PROBLEMS: PUBLIC TOILETS

Provide places for people to use the bathroom. Downtown Macon is being used as a toilet. This does not make the visitor want to come back. There are options, but you've got to make the effort. Historically, Macon accommodated this problem with under the sidewalk toilets. This may not be the appropriate solution for today, but it is a fascinating solution. Everyone who has traveled abroad



knows that other countries accommodate people who must relieve themselves. *Perhaps the most novel of these are the famous pissoirs of Paris and Amsterdam.* Downtown Macon has to accommo-

date basic human needs and this is one of them.

## San Francisco Automatic Public Toilet Program



The Automatic Public Toilet Program was developed because of a growing civic concern about the lack of sufficient public toilet facilities in the City. The toilets cost a quarter to operate, are designed to automatically clean themselves after each use, and are fully accessible to people with disabilities. Free tokens distributed by various non-profit organizations are given to those that cannot afford the 25 cents entry fee. This program is operated at no cost to the City. In exchange for the toilets, the City allows the contractor to install public service/advertising kiosks on City sidewalks. Advertising revenue generated by the kiosks pays for the installation and maintenance of the toilets.

Excerpt and images from [http://www.sfgov.org/site/sfdpw\\_page.asp?id=32752](http://www.sfgov.org/site/sfdpw_page.asp?id=32752)



## DESIGN IDEAS FOR SPECIFIC PROBLEMS: ALLEYS

Alley examples:



Valdosta, GA



*Macon is fortunate to have a strong and vibrant alley system.*

Historically, these alleys provided a commercial function for deliveries at the rear. Now that business use has changed, alleys have become a different resource. Big blocks and wide streets create a demand for cut-throughs. The alleys bring an ease of getting from one part of the city to another.

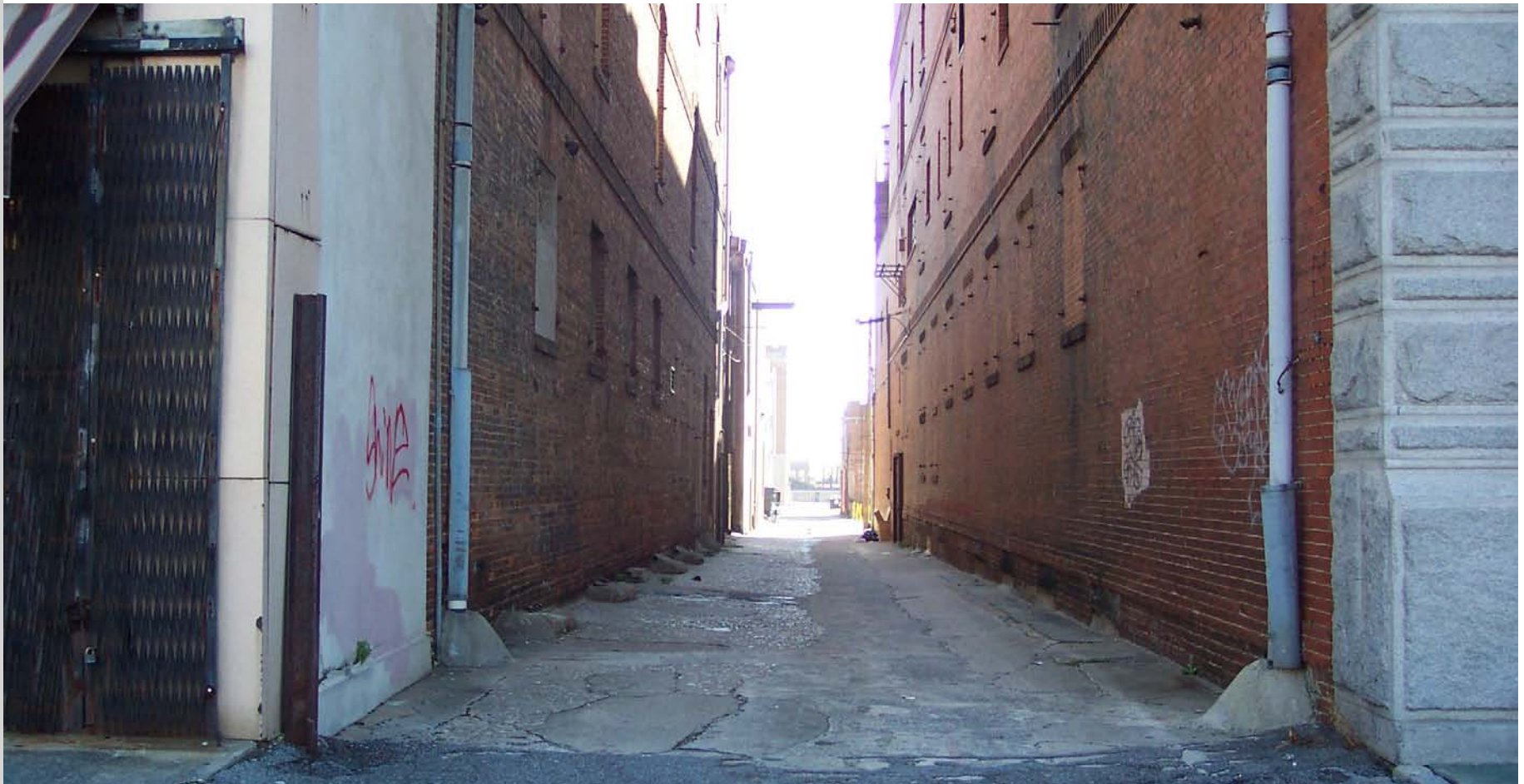
Many of the problems seen downtown are results of those alleys. The problems of vagrants, homeless people, vermin, lack of security, and public urination, all contribute to people not feeling comfortable walking two blocks to their destination rather than one block. The crime statistics may not sufficiently validate these fears, but that doesn't matter. If people THINK that they are not secure, that is enough to keep them away from downtown.



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**ALLEYS**

DESIGN IDEAS



**PUBLIC ART—BRINGS IN LIFE, LIGHT, SOMETHING TO SEE.**





## LIGHTING THE ALLEYS OF MACON



Florescent security lighting is NOT inviting.

Other examples of well executed lighting in alleys:

- Extending Macon's existing streetlamps into wider alleys.
- Lighting attached to sides of buildings, allowing trucks to still pass through.
- Uncover those bricked over windows leading into the alleyway. It will make alleys feel more secure, and increase the sense that there is something going on in town.

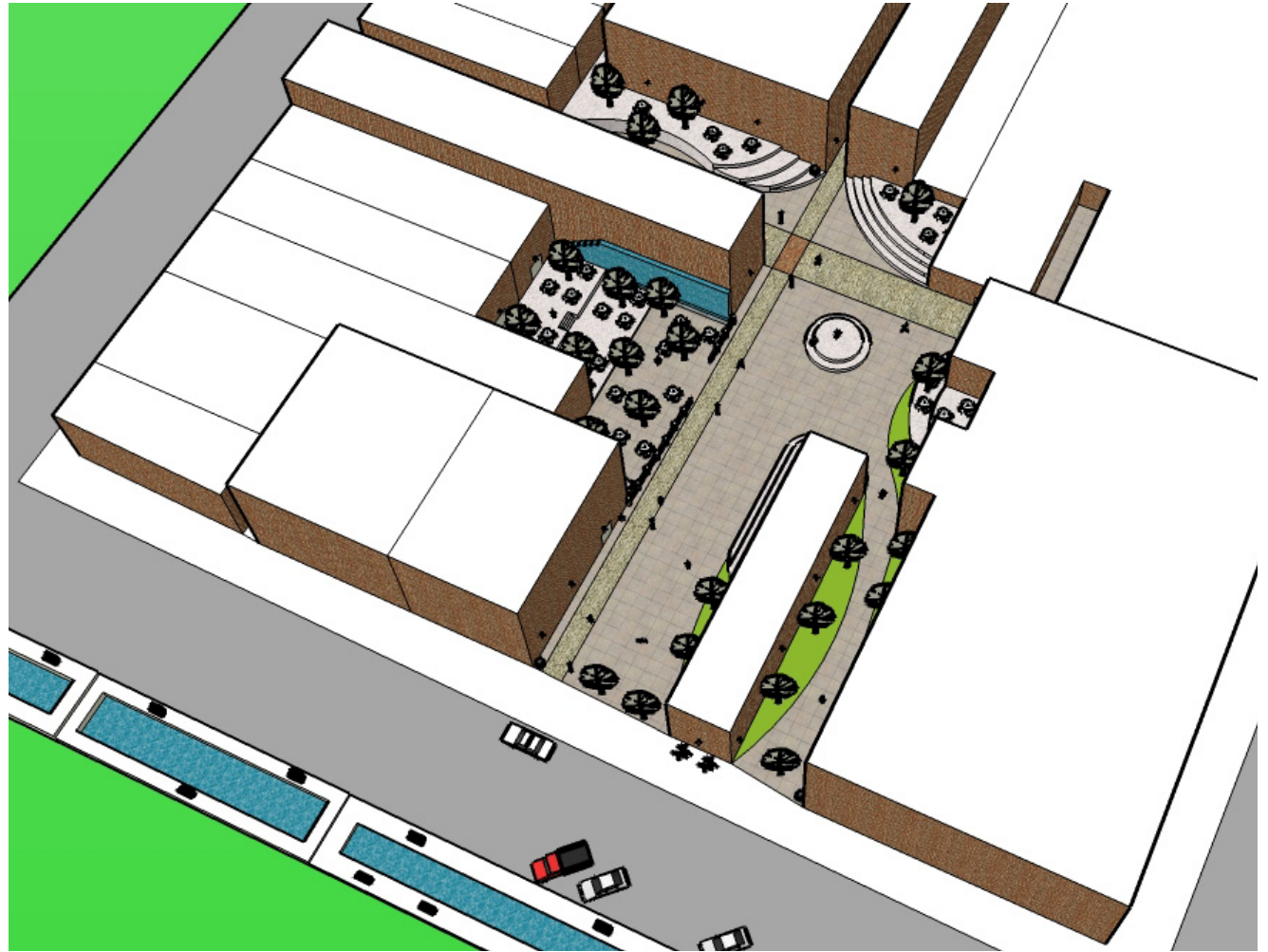




# MAKE every NIGHT *Saturday Night in Macon*

# ALLEYS

DESIGN IDEAS



A GOOD SURPRISE DOWN THE ALLEY.



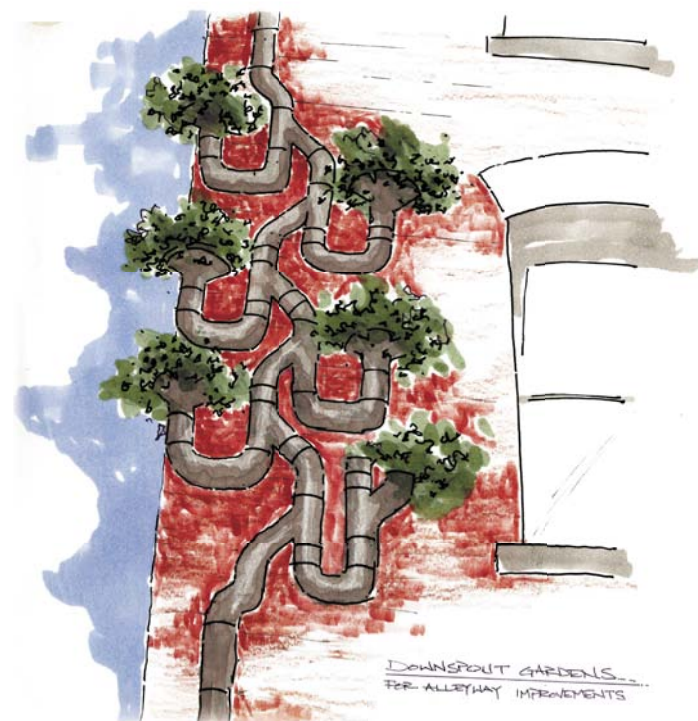


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## ALLEYS

DESIGN IDEAS

BANNERS ADD LIGHT, AMUSEMENT AND COLOR, AS DO DECORATIVE  
DOWNSPOUTS, PLANTINGS IN THE ALLEYS AND HANGING BASKETS.





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## FAÇADE

REHABILITATION



Continue  
Macon's strong  
tradition of building  
rehabilitation.



This concept illustrates the restoration of larger display windows with smaller transom windows located above. This provides increased visibility into the storefront for pedestrians passing by.



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## FAÇADE

REHABILITATION



Encourage walkability by providing increased visibility into and out of the store.



Restoration of the historic building façade includes replacement of broken windows and an adaptive reuse of the ground floor space. Ground floor retail and large display windows provide increased visibility into and out of the store, encourage walkability and create traffic to support nearby businesses.

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## PARKING

DECKS



Create a more  
inviting pedestrian  
environment.



Encourage vines to  
grow on the exterior of  
existing parking garages  
in downtown, creating  
a greener, more inviting  
pedestrian environment.



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## PARKING

DECKS



**Enhance walkability of downtown, safety and viability of neighboring businesses!**



Require new parking garages to be wrapped with ground floor retail. This technique provides the pedestrian with the feeling of walking next to a building rather than a vast parking garage. This building form in the before picture is a step in the right direction. Carry this further with ground floor retail to enhance walkability of downtown, safety and viability of neighboring businesses.



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## PARKING

D E C K S



Address parking,  
signage and  
visitors.

Help visitors find parking  
by directing to one of  
Macon's parking garages.



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## The University of Georgia

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This report was produced by the  
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