

# SANDERSVILLE

design charrette

# REPORT

Produced by:

University of Georgia | College of Environment & Design | Center for Community Design & Preservation  
Georgia Department of Community Affairs | Main Street Program and Georgia Trust  
April 30, May 1st and May 2nd, 2004



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Office of Downtown Development

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# What is a Charrette?

**Charrette** is a French word that translates as “little cart.” At the leading architecture school of the 19th century, the Ecole des Beaux- Arts in Paris, students would be assigned a tough design problem to work out under pressure of time.



A charrette is an intensive, multi-disciplinary planning process. It is designed to facilitate an open discussion between all of the stakeholders of a given development project, including architects, community groups, developers and neighbors. A charrette is usually a short process, from 3 days to 2 weeks long, resulting in a clear, detailed, realistic vision for development.



## There are 3 main parts to a charrette:

- **Exploration and issue Identification:** Stakeholders and design professionals meet to explore the area (e.g. building, site, neighborhood) and discuss issues important to the development.
- **Design:** Design professionals create schematic images to represent numerous design solutions for the problems at hand. Issues discussed in the first step are taken into consideration: building typology, design elements, green spaces, landscaping, parking, recreation, traffic, safety, sustainable development, water management, to name a few.
- **Implementation Plan:** A document summarizes the vision and is adopted by stakeholders as a guide for present and future developments.





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## Overview

### Overview: Goals

The objectives of this design charrette are to improve the secondary ring of parking lots and alleys around the downtown core, design a downtown park around Lang's Pond, and to compile a list of observations and suggestions for further improvements to the downtown and the connecting corridors. The area behind the blocks fronting the main square have the potential to improve circulation and contribute to downtown economic and social successes. The two areas behind the buildings fronting Haynes Street on the square (around Carriage House Antiques) and along Jernigan Street should be transformed into viable public spaces connected to the courthouse square. The goal is to reduce eyesores, improve connections between the parking and the courthouse square, and create inviting and useful public spaces.



*These would have been beautiful street trees had they not been repeatedly cut away from the power lines. They will not live long in this condition.*

### Urban Design Issues

Several issues that contribute to the overall aesthetics of downtown should be addressed to enhance urban quality. Sandersville has a sign ordinance, but it primarily addresses public safety and nuisance issues. A separate sign ordinance, adopted for the downtown core, will ensure that larger signs scaled for highways do not find their way into downtown Sandersville. Utility lines should be buried underground whenever possible. This has already been done to the courthouse square and has created a dramatic improvement. The power lines on the downtown streets of the main square and those on the roads into downtown should also be buried. On Highway 15 specifically, this would eliminate the practice of insensitively pruning trees. These trees should create a canopy that encloses the space and provides shade in summer. With any new plantings downtown, native, drought-tolerant, and hardy plants and trees should be used.



*Local farmers sell home grown produce at the farmer's market held in downtown Sandersville on Saturday mornings.*



*Future development should not include large bill-board style signs.*



*Historic advertisements like this one add to the character of Sandersville.*

## issues?

- Jernigan Street
- The Pond
- The Courtyard
- Historic Preservation Issues
- Trees
- Signs
- Connectivity

## eyesores?

- walk-in freezers
- dumpsters
- grease traps
- cluttered lots
- HVAC systems
- overhead power lines
- mutilated trees
- "Everything" bldg, Butler bldg, NAPA, conv.store
- Waffle House sign

## move or remove?

- A. Smith building beside theatre
- Fire Station
- Concrete block addition to Wilson's furniture
- Canopy beside police alley
- Gutter plants

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION ISSUES

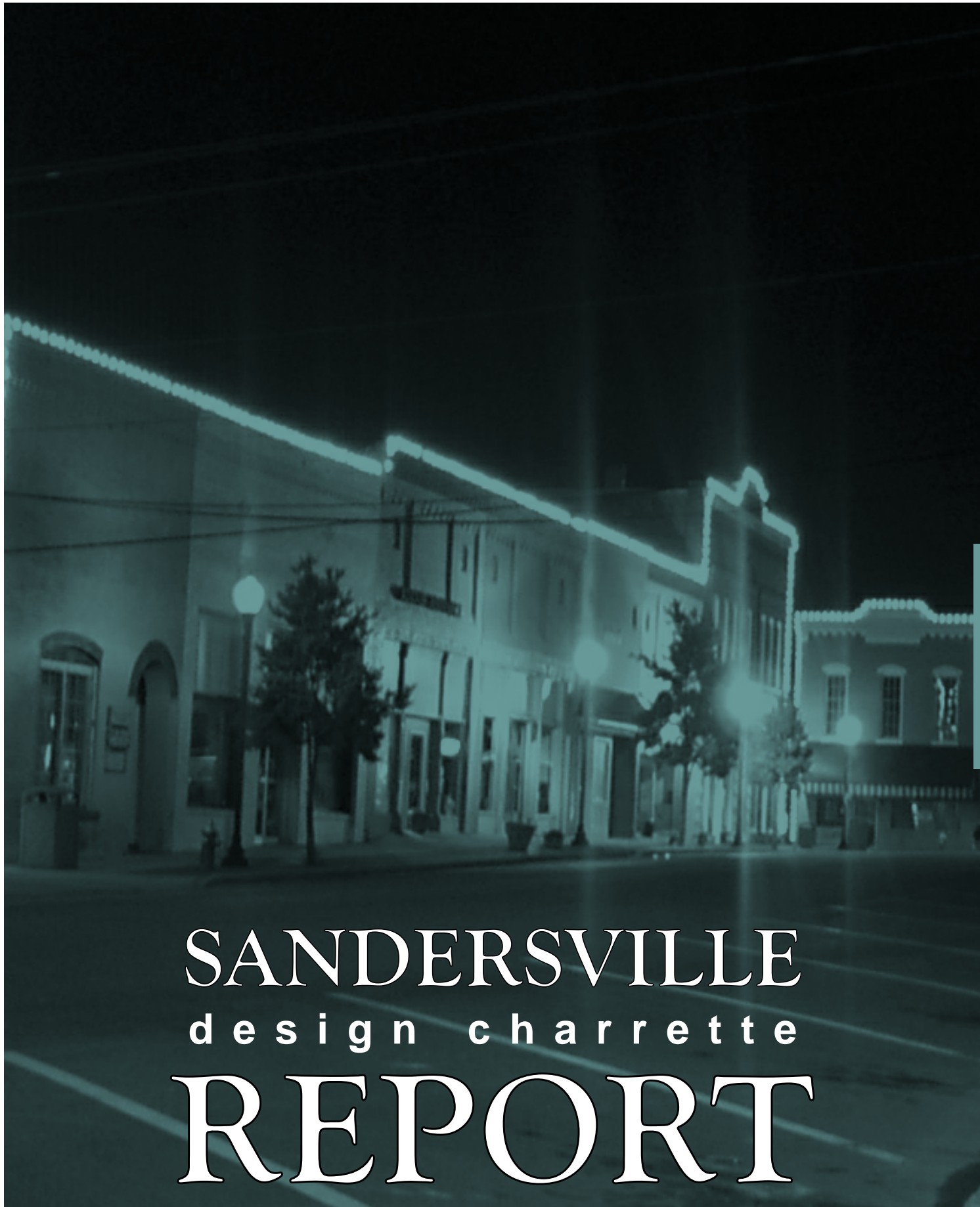
- Consider removing stucco from historic brick buildings.
- Replace out-of-scale or inappropriate signage.
- Uncover boarded windows and transoms. Consider utilizing shutters.
- Remove mansard and hip roof entry overhangs that disrupt historic brick cornices, i.e. Shop Rite Drugstore, Vogue Men's Store on East side of square.
- Research historic photos for possible appropriate canopies.
- Educate property owners about Federal Tax Credits for future rehabilitation projects. All of downtown square is within National Register district.
- Look into potential for local preservation ordinances and Certified Local Government. Potential funding.
- Courthouse and Holt Building are individually listed on the National Register. Look into plaques for each to raise awareness about National Register and create civic pride.
- "Progressive Trend/School of Cosmetology/Liz N' Kids Beauty Salon" at 210-220 W. Haynes St. is a unique building in a prominent location. Needs stabilization to prevent further deterioration. Part of visual corridor from square to cemetery.
- "Washington Apartments" at corner of Brookins St. and W. Haynes St. has excellent potential for mixed use. Building is in good condition and is currently used for commercial use only.
- Retain all historic painted signage, i.e. Coca-Cola signage on Holt Building and Dr. Pepper signage on Country buffet.



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# Jernigan Street



*Boarded windows send a negative message to the visitor.*



*This illustration depicts how the appearance of this building is improved by replacing the windows and removing the HVAC unit.*

## Jernigan Street

### Issues:

- (A) Jernigan Street is currently used as a through street from Warthen Street to Harris Street; however, the parking lot is underutilized due to a lack of signs, no sidewalks, and no clear access to the courthouse square.
- (B) The backsides of the buildings look uninviting for residents and/or tourists.
- (C) Power lines and HVAC units clutter up this street.

### Solutions:

- (A) Adding a sidewalk on the north side and revitalizing the alley beside the police station would improve the situation.
- (B) Clean up area and repaint if needed, replace damaged windows and doors, and add signs and other amenities like potted plants and awnings to liven up the backsides of these buildings.
- (C) Burying the power lines underground and moving the HVAC units to the roofs if possible will reduce the visual clutter. If the units can not be moved to the roofs, painting them dark green or black will help disguise them.

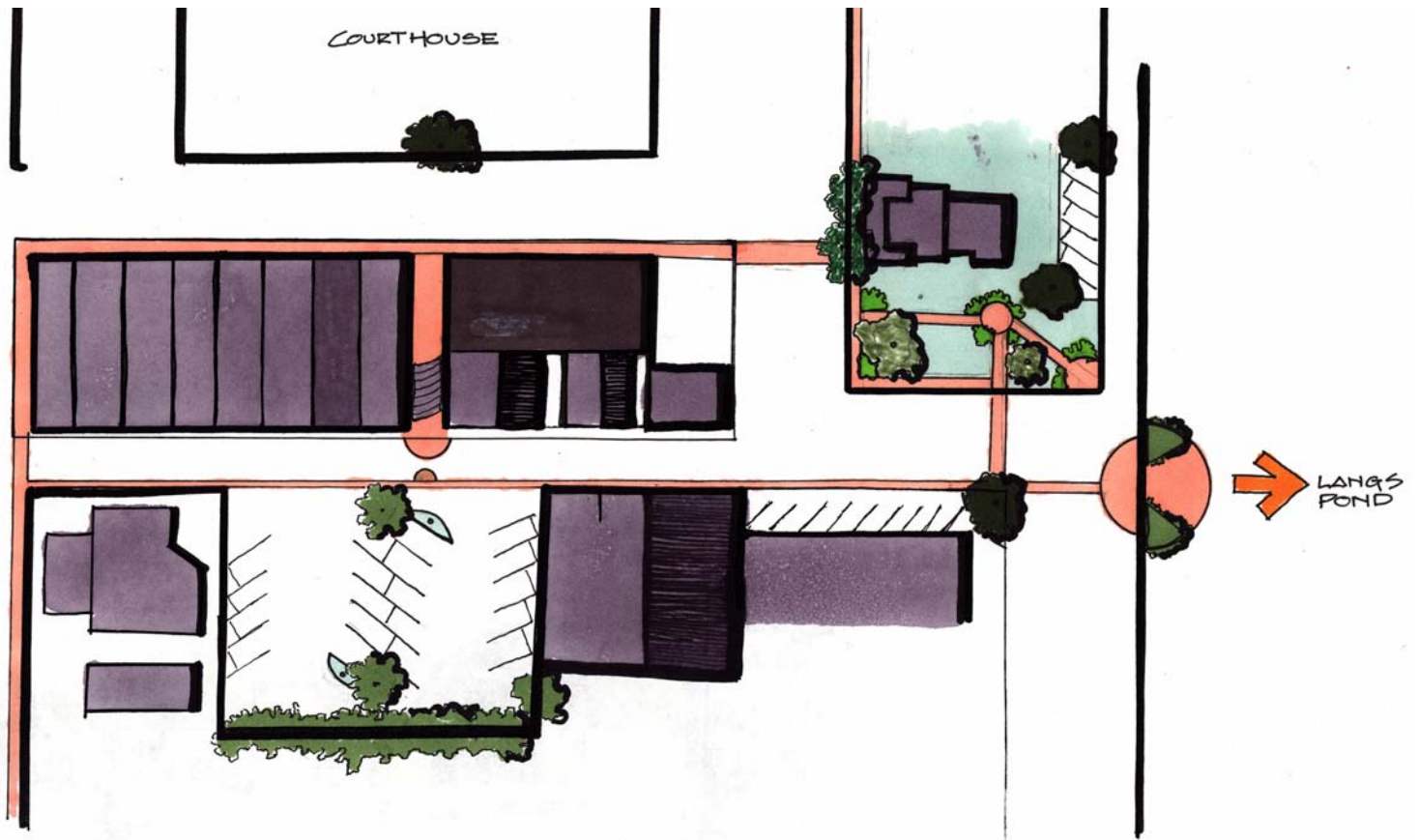


*Jernigan Street has no sidewalk and is visually cluttered by power lines.*



*View down Jernigan Street -- Existing conditions*





*Jernigan Street can be improved and provide access to the new "Lang's Pond Park." Streetscape improvements can create a place where people drive through and, most importantly, feel safer when walking (the drawing above is not to scale).*



*View down Jernigan Street after improvements. Improved rear entrances, parking lot, and gas station are depicted.*



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# Jernigan Street



*The HVAC systems create clutter. By cleaning up the backside of the buildings, Sandersville's downtown will expand by at least a block. Visitors and residents will be able to use the parking lot and feel safer as they walk through Jernigan St.*



*A visitor to Sandersville is given no clue as to what type of business is in this building (if any) due to the boarded windows and lack of signs.*

## Jernigan Street

Jernigan Street is currently used as a cut-through from Warthen Street to Harris Street. The parking lot is underutilized due to a lack of signs and sidewalks, and no clear pedestrian access to the courthouse square.

Adding a sidewalk on the north side and revitalizing the alley beside the police station would improve this area. Street trees, benches, and other streetscape amenities will help create a pedestrian friendly environment.

These street trees (below) in the courthouse square are in excellent condition thanks to the absence of power lines overhead. They help to shade market vendors and visitors. By burying the lines on Jernigan street, having large shade trees on the street will be possible.



*Existing leaning pole and power lines on Jernigan Street.*



*Visual clutter is minimized by burying the lines underground*





*This alley appears run down due to the dumpster, boarded windows, cracked pavement, and looming power lines.*



*This alley becomes a welcoming path to the courthouse square by relocating the dumpster, burying the power lines, and repairing the windows in the buildings. Benches, an interesting shade structure and creative paving materials add visual appeal to this space.*





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## Antique Alley

### The Courtyard



View of Antique Alley -- Existing conditions

The parking lot in the center of the block bound by Church, Harris, Warthen, and Haynes Streets offers an opportunity to create a new public space in the midst of the most popular downtown commercial block. The south edge of the block already contains lots used for parking. Pedestrians use the space as a walkway to the courthouse square. Improvements would serve to tie the antique mall to the row of shops on Haynes Street.

should have a smaller rear sign, so the different businesses on the street can be identified.

By restricting automobile traffic in the center of the courtyard and moving the parking to the west side of the lot, a pedestrian link and gathering place will be created between the antique mall and Puebla's restaurant. This would make an ideal location for outdoor dining/festivals.



Boarded up windows and hap-hazard parking

Simple improvements, such as moving the service components (dumpsters, HVAC, etc.) to the periphery and enhancing the rear facades of the buildings will create a pedestrian-friendly space. Each business owner



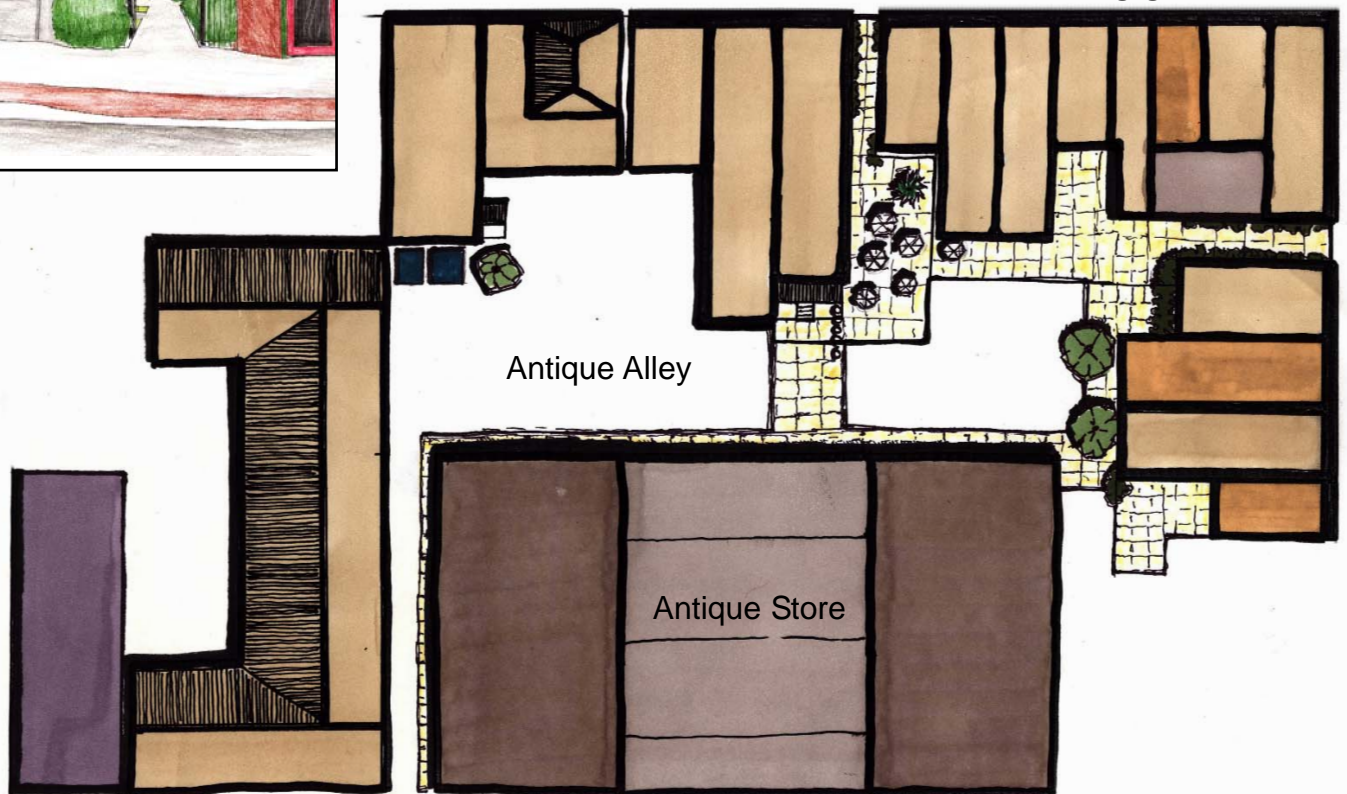
This small building can be removed to create pedestrian access to Antique Alley as depicted in the illustration at right.







W. HAYNES ST.



*Since the city has already hosted successful events here, why not make Antique Alley a cleaner, more comfortable and exciting place to be? Shade trees, outdoor eating and seating areas, improved pedestrian connections, and enhanced rear entrances will all help make this happen.*



# Antique Alley

## Eyesores

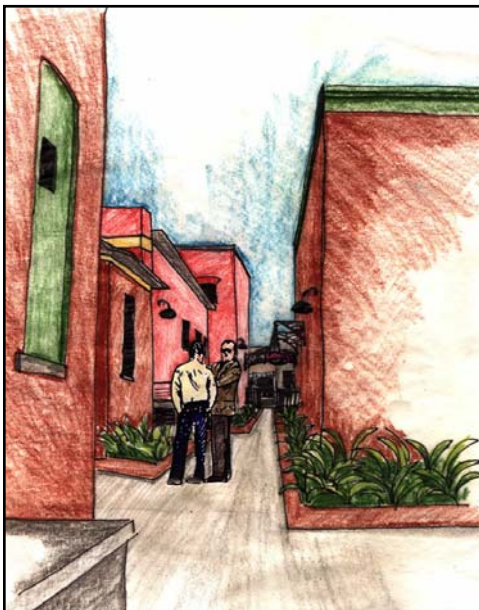


View of alley -- existing conditions

The strictly utilitarian attitude of the rear entrances of these buildings needs to be expanded to include rear customer access and outdoor seating. The present attitude creates an atmosphere where HVAC systems, garbage dumpsters, grease dumpsters, and walk-in freezers are placed behind the buildings without considering the visual, olfactory, and economic impacts. By moving these items, hiding them behind screens, or applying appropriate finishes, they may still perform their functions without hindering the pedestrian experience.

The practice of burying power lines underground should be extended to the secondary blocks around the courthouse square and the corridors into downtown (Hwy 15, specifically). The removal of power lines reduces streetscape clutter and allows aesthetically pleasing elements, such as trees and buildings, to frame the street rather than power lines. Another additional benefit of power line removal on the corridors leading to downtown is the proper maintenance of the shade trees alongside the road. These shade trees never recover from severe pruning by utility companies. A gradual program of removal and replacement should begin immediately after a plan has been developed.

## Grease Management



This rendering depicts the same alley with garbage removed with added hardscape, plantings and lighting.

The restaurants fronting Haynes Street need to reexamine their spent grease management. Currently each restaurant uses its own grease dumpster that does not seal. A better solution would be the installation of a single shared dumpster recessed below ground which can be sealed to prevent unpleasant odors and vermin. There are also ecological and sanitation considerations as spills eventually run off into storm drains. Many options are available and these businesses could check with their current service provider to discuss options or investigate other service providers. The Georgia Pollution Prevention Assistance Division ([www.p2ad.org](http://www.p2ad.org)) could offer grease management advice and consultation.

### Dispose of Grease Renderings Responsibly

Dispose of grease renderings collected from fryers and other cookware in a designated outdoor container. Waste haulers or grease disposal companies will often provide a waste container for this purpose. Safeguard your rendering container from the possibility of leaks or spills. These containers should be located away from storm drain catch basins and covered to prevent contact with nearby storm waters during a rain event or spill. Immediately clean up any grease spills or leaks to prevent discharge into the storm drain and minimize the presence of vermin.

(from Greensboro, NC government website)





*This bleak area of Antique Alley (right) becomes a vibrant and interesting place for pedestrians when signs, awnings, and plantings are added.*



*Currently (left), the only clues that this is the back of a restaurant are the smell and sight of the dumpster and grease trap. The illustration above shows how a few improvements can transform this space into a pleasant outdoor eating area.*



A grayscale photograph of a street scene at night, featuring a building with a prominent neon light fixture. The text is overlaid on the image.

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# Lang's Pond Park

## Lang's Pond: A New Park



The pond itself is quite beautiful with native grasses and shrubs like Woolly Broomsedge, Myrica and Scirpus spp. already thriving in and around it.



The existing tree line forms a large outdoor room on corner lot #55. The rendering below depicts this "room" as a beautiful and usable space.



Above is the entrance to Lang's Pond Park. A rustic open air pavilion with a large stone fireplace provides a gathering space for public or private events. Native plantings are clustered around the main sign in the foreground, while an informational sign (with map) marks the beginning of the trail.

According to the January 2004 DNR Grant Proposal, Lang's Pond will be developed into an 8.5 acre park providing many benefits for Downtown Sandersville. A green space for Downtown with a walking trail for recreation, a pedestrian connector of Downtown and Historic Old City Cemetery, and a venue for outdoor events are all mentioned as desired components of this park. It is currently an illegal dumping ground for garbage, fill dirt, and rubble.

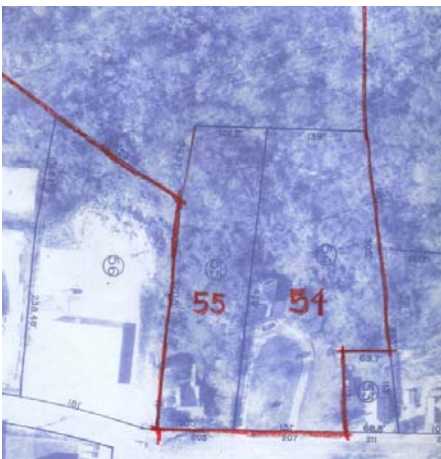
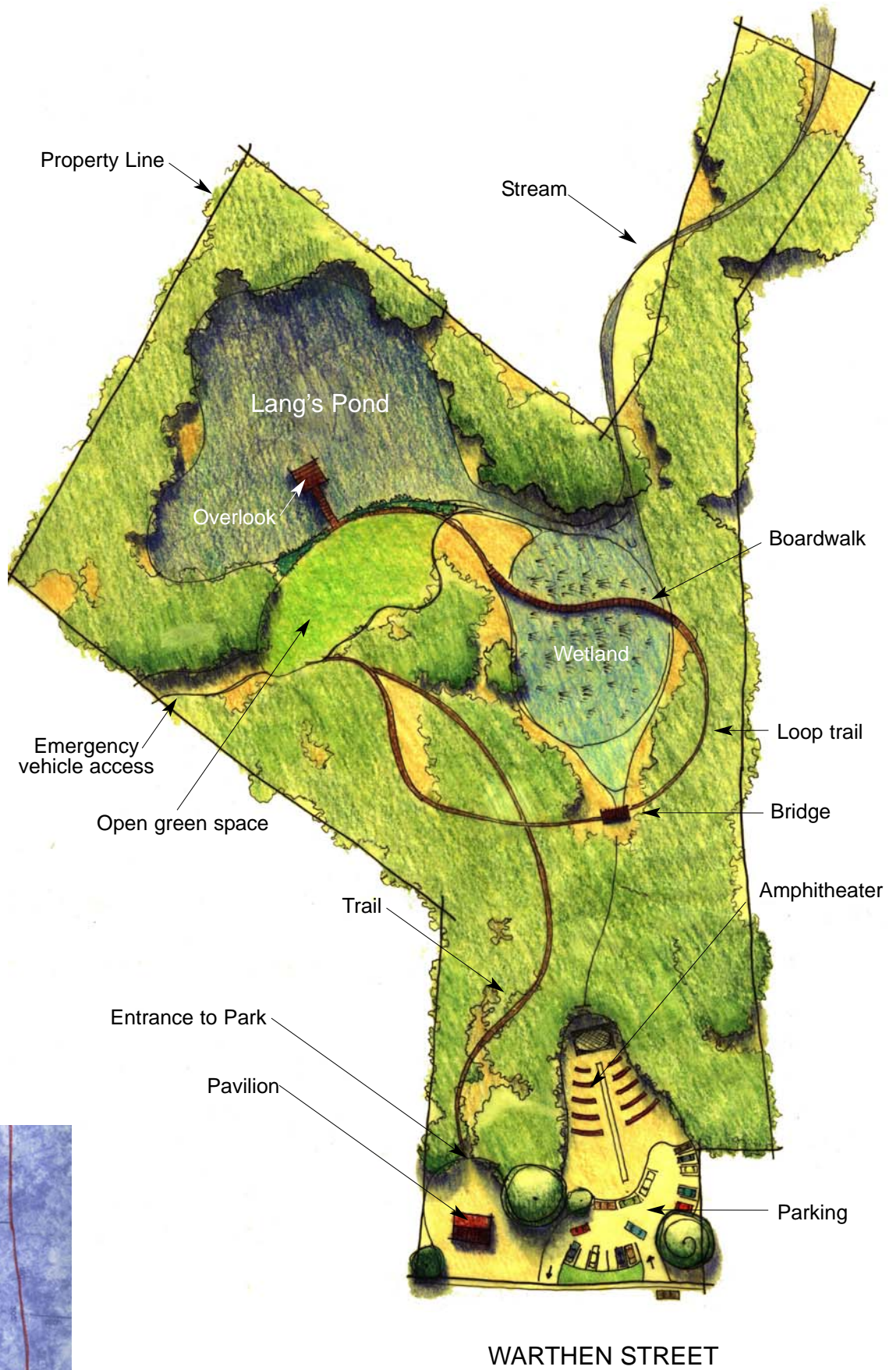
Once the site is cleaned up and the pond and surrounding grading is improved, a loop trail may be constructed as shown on this plan. Large deciduous native trees form a dense woodland that is a shady oasis during

Sandersville's hot summer months. Compromising the ecological integrity and visual character of these woods should be avoided. Invasive exotic plants including Privet and Japanese Honeysuckle make up most of existing shrub and ground layer and should be cleared without disturbing the trees (see attached invasive exotic removal information). Once this vegetation is removed, a loop trail may be constructed of porous materials and a boardwalk through marshy areas. Also shown is an overlook that will bring people "into" the pond. By protecting the existing vegetative buffer and building this type of trail as opposed to a paved asphalt path, water filtration and drainage to the pond will improve.



An open-sided covered structure may be built on lot # 55, with parking and an amphitheater on lot #54. The stage, seating, and pavilion (per the DNR proposal) should be made of materials that visually blend in with the surroundings such as rustic wood and metal. The amphitheater stage and seating are to be built in accordance with the existing topography to avoid any unnecessary grading or tree clearing. Gravel or grass parking is kept near the road and tucked into the woodland edge with no curbs.

Contact an ecologist for advice regarding clean up, grading, construction, and management of this park.



*Proposed design requires acquisition of Lot 54.*



# Lang's Pond Park

## Lang's Pond: Invasive Exotics vs. Natives



The slopes around Lang's Pond are currently covered with dumped garbage, Kudzu, Japanese Honeysuckle, and Privet.



Chinese privet, *Ligustrum sinense*



*Pueraria montana*, Kudzu (above left)  
*Lonicera japonica*, Japanese Honeysuckle

This large site is shaded by a rather mature canopy of native trees. However, the understory is made up of invasive exotic species including Chinese Privet, Japanese Honeysuckle, and Kudzu (three of the top ten worst plant pests in GA). Unfortunately this is the case for most wooded areas in the Southeast. A major problem associated with this dilemma is the resulting lack of biodiversity. Numerous species of beautiful native plants are robbed of food, water, and soil and are quickly replaced by only a few species of aggressive invasive plants. The result is a biologically and visually boring landscape that often appears weedy and overgrown.

By removing these invasive exotic plants and encouraging native species to thrive, a more diverse landscape can once again exist. This will provide a more exciting and pleasant experience for visitors to this new park. Once the Privet and Honeysuckle are removed (the most predominant species here) a trail can more easily be constructed from the entrance to the pond without disturbing the mature trees. The "cut-stump" method of removal is recommended in which the plant is cut at the base and the stump is immediately painted with a glyphosate herbicide. This method reduces the risk of herbicide drift and minimizes soil disturbance.

### Top Ten Exotic Pest Plants in Georgia

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Scientific Name</u>
Kudzu	<i>Pueraria montana</i>
Chinese privet	<i>Ligustrum sinense</i>
Japanese honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera japonica</i>
Hydrilla	<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>
Chinese tallow tree	<i>Sapium sebiferum</i>
Nepalese browntop	<i>Microstegium vimineum</i>
Bamboo	<i>Phyllostachys aurea</i>
Autumn olive (silverberry)	<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>
Chinese wisteria	<i>Wisteria sinensis</i>
Mimosa	<i>Albizia julibrissin</i>

The plant list above was found on the GA-EPPC website. For information regarding identification, removal and control of exotic plant species, please visit this site and the links it provides.

## GEORGIA EXOTIC PEST PLANT COUNCIL



Tim R. Murphy  
Crop and Soil Sciences Department  
The University of Georgia





## Suggested Native Plant List



*Lobelia cardinalis*  
Cardinal Flower



*Cephalanthus occidentalis*  
Buttonbush



*Osmunda cinnamomea*  
Cinnamon Fern



*Asclepias incarnata*  
Swamp Milkweed

### Trees

Acer rubrum	Red Maple
Betula nigra	River Birch
Carpinus caroliniana	Musclewood
Carya ovata	Shagbark Hickory
Celtis laevigata	Hackberry
Liriodendron tulipifera	Tulip Poplar
Nyssa Sylvatica	Blackgum
Platanus occidentalis	Sycamore
Quercus phellos	Water Oak
Salix nigra	Black Willow

### Shrubs

Cephalanthus occidentalis	Buttonbush
Cornus amomum	Silky Dogwood
Ilex verticillata	Winterberry
Itea virginica	Virginia Sweetpire
Lindera benzoin	Spicebush
Sambucus canadensis	Elderberry

### Grasses, Ferns, and Herbaceous Plants

Andropogon glomeratus	Wooly Broomsedge
Asclepias incarnata	Swamp Milkweed
Carex spp.	Sedge
Chasmanthium latifolium	River Oats
Eupatorium fistulosum	Joe Pye Weed
Impatiens capensis	Touch-me-nots, Jewel Weed
Lobelia cardinalis	Cardinal Flower
Onoclea sensibilis	Sensitive Fern
Osmunda cinnamomea	Cinnamon Fern
Sagittaria spp.	Arrowhead
Saururus cernuus	Lizard's Tail

Above is a suggested list for plants associated with ponds and wetlands. For more information on wetland and upland plants native to Georgia, please visit [www.gwf.org](http://www.gwf.org) GA Wildlife Federation, [www.gnps.org](http://www.gnps.org) GA Native Plant Society and the numerous links and book lists they provide.



A grayscale photograph of a street at night, featuring a prominent neon light fixture that runs along the top of a building. The street is dimly lit, and the overall atmosphere is urban and modern.

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