



# Reimagining Troy, Alabama

A DesignPlace Report

# Just a Word...

The ideas represented in the following report are those of a design team brought together to work for three days in a charrette process for the City of Troy. The ideas found in this report are based on observations of the community, the significant public participation and insights the community shared with the team about Troy and your aspirations for it. The process has informed our thoughts about Troy and the Historic Academy Street School site, and this report represents our best professional recommendations in how to create and enhance spaces throughout the community. We look forward to seeing all the exciting things that come from our time in Troy.



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# Introduction



In 2016 DesignAlabama decided to create a program that would allow communities represented at the DesignAlabama Mayors Design Summit with a “next step.” The idea was that mayors who had gained so much knowledge about planning and design during their time at the Summit needed a chance to share that knowledge with their community. The idea of the program is not to create a new place, but to enhance a community based on the assets of their community. Community assets include the built environment, the natural environment and most importantly, a community’s people.

Through a three-day charrette process, DesignAlabama brings in a team of design experts with experience in architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, graphic design, interior design and planning, showing the underlying success of community development when design arts are used.

Perhaps the greatest benefit is the stimulation and mobilization of the public. Citizen participation is absolutely critical to the success of DesignPlace or any local design and planning initiative. A DesignPlace visit is not an end; rather, a new beginning. A second and equally important benefit is the objective which a team of “outsiders” brings to a community. Professional consultants are free to carefully examine strengths and weaknesses with “fresh eyes” untainted by political ambition or economic self-interest. Further, for both design and non-design professionals on the team, professional skills are sharpened. And for all participants, appreciation is deepened through citizen participation in the design and planning process. Finally, DesignPlace is invaluable for illustrating the value of community design and planning in Alabama. It stimulates awareness of design issues and dramatizes the impact design can have upon a community’s vitality and the quality of life within its boundaries.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed, citizens can change the world”

- Margaret Mead

# The Team



**Brandon Bias**

(Facilitator)

Brandon serves as a certified Community and Regional Planner in the Mobile office for Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood. His background includes a wide range

of experience in both planning and design with proven expertise in master planning emphasizing community design, ecological processes, regional dynamics and smart growth principles. Prior to joining the firm, he served as the Planner in the Special Projects Division of the Community Development Department for the City of Birmingham, Alabama. In this role, he was responsible for management of the City's CDBG and CDBR-DR funds and coordination with neighborhood stabilization initiatives. Brandon is actively involved with several statewide initiatives as a board member of DesignAlabama and Your Town Alabama, as well as serving as the president of the Alabama Communities of Excellence Board. He also currently serves on the executive committee for the Alabama Chapter of the American Planning Association.



**Mary Shell**

Mary Mason Shell has been a preservation planner with the Alabama Historical Commission since 1991. She assists communities with utilizing historic preservation

programs to identify and protect historic buildings and districts. As manager of the Certified Local Government program, Shell assists towns with establishing local historic preservation commissions and identifying and designating local historic districts and landmarks for regulation and protection. A member of the State Scenic Byways Council, Alabama Communities of Excellence Board and Your Town Alabama Board, she provides historic preservation expertise to these community development programs. After receiving her bachelor's degree in history from Auburn University in 1986, Shell attended the master's program in historic preservation at Middle Tennessee State University. In 1988, she was hired to work with the National Register of Historic Places program at the Alabama Historical Commission. In 1989, she relocated to Salem, Oregon, to work with the state historic preservation agency until moving back to Alabama in 1991.



Lea Ann Macknally

Lea Ann Macknally is a Landscape Architect and President of Macknally Land Design. Upon graduating from Mississippi State University in 2000, Lea Ann put down roots

in Birmingham, Alabama. Her professional experience has allowed her to foster a passion for the design of public spaces and sustainable landscapes through projects such as Benjamin Russell Hospital for Children and Railroad Park. This passion has led to opportunities in promoting native landscape design and restoration, integrated stormwater management, and the importance of civic spaces. She leads the firm's focus in the philosophy of creating innovative and collaborative design concepts with a strong practical foundation. Her understanding and ability to balance the desires and needs of the client and characteristics of the site is clear in the firm's strong portfolio of long-term clients and successful projects. In addition, Lea Ann's belief in education and conservation is evident in her work with ACE Mentor of Alabama, Your Town Alabama and Cahaba River Society.



Angela Stiff

Angela Stiff is the Managing Partner and Creative Director of Copperwing Design, located in Montgomery, Alabama. Angela succeeded in growing Copperwing into one of

Alabama's leading communications firms during the first decade of the company's existence. She founded the firm with brand management as its cornerstone, recognizing its critical role in creating breakthrough communications with long-term relevance. She continues to lead with the same out-front thinking as she sets the vision for the firm. She has successfully led branding initiatives for clients with regional and national reach. Her creative work has been recognized with numerous industry awards. Angela is a proud graduate of Auburn University, where she earned a BFA in visual communications.

Angela is a member of the Auburn University College of Architecture, Design and Construction Executive Board. She serves as member and Communications Co-chair to the DesignAlabama Board of Directors. She has served as past member of the Troy University College of Communication and Fine Arts Advisory Council. She has also served as past board member to AGAPE for Children, for whom she still advocates.





### Jeremy Cutts

Jeremy Cutts is an Associate with Williams Blackstock Architects in Birmingham, Alabama. There he lends his thoughtful design approach to a variety of project types, with special

interest in affordable housing and community-based design. He manages projects with a goal to design impactful spaces and provide design solutions that are successful for the entire project team and that benefit the broader community.

Jeremy graduated from Auburn University in 2010 with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. As a student, he served as Vice President of the Auburn chapter of the American Institute of Architecture Students and served as a mentor in the Summer Enrichment Experience program of the College of Architecture, Design, and Construction. As a professional, he has continued to mentor through the ACE Mentor of Alabama, which grants local high school students exposure to the possible careers in the design and construction industry.

It is Jeremy's belief that through greater awareness, community engagement and collaboration, quality design can extend its impact to those who have routinely been underserved.



### Nolanda Hatcher

Nolanda Hatcher is a native of Birmingham, Alabama. She attended the Birmingham and Fairfield Public Schools. After graduating from Fairfield High School, she received her Bachelor

of Architecture degree from the University of Notre Dame. She would go on to receive her Juris Doctor degree from Cumberland School of Law Samford University. After completing law school and returning to practice architecture in 1997, Nolanda established NHB Group, LLC, a full service design firm, in 2002. In 2015, NHB Group, LLC merged with Hoskins Architecture to create the Studio 2H Design, LLC with the vision to "provide the client and community with design excellence beyond expectation. S2HD's office is located in the historic 4th Avenue District downtown Birmingham, Alabama.

Nolanda's most proud accomplishment is her role as mother to daughter Jamese Bearden (26) and son Nickolas Bearden (12). She enjoys golfing, biking, traveling, good food and outings with friends and family.



### Collier Neeley

Collier Neeley has been the National Register Coordinator at the Alabama Historical Commission since 2016. He has a bachelor's in history from the University of Mississippi and a master's in

Historic Preservation from Georgia State University. He has spent time working at Historic Oakland Cemetery in Atlanta and taken part in numerous architectural surveys in Georgia and Alabama. Collier is a native Alabamian, born in raised in Montgomery. He specializes in 19th century vernacular architecture, 20th century commercial architecture, and midcentury modern architecture, as well as promoting thoughtful design and Historic Preservation in small communities across the state.



# Who is Troy?

Located just south of Montgomery and just north of Dothan, the city of Troy was once part of Creek Indian territory. First settled in the early 1830s and known as Deer Stand Hill, it was later called Zebulon and Centreville.

The small town was named Troy in 1843, the same year it was officially incorporated. In 1842 Troy was established as a Federal Post Office with at least two post roads serving it. Troy's greatest growth took place in the 1870s when its first mayor paid the Mobile and Girard Railway to extend its railroad from Columbus, Georgia, to Troy, making the city the center of trade for several counties.

The city's flagship educational institution, Troy University was established in 1887 as the State Normal School for teachers. Today it is the third largest university campus in the state and has branches in 16 states and 11 countries.

Troy is a vibrant city offering world-class amenities while preserving its important ties to the past. The city's downtown square is filled with restaurants, an antique shop and a local museum. As the county seat of Pike County, Troy offers residents and visitors beautiful parks, quaint streets, Victorian homes and historic sites. Area shopping and progressive businesses are found here as well. Selected as the 2010 Corporate Investment and Community Impact Award winner by Trade and Industry Development magazine, Troy is on the cutting edge of economic development. From the Johnson Center for the Arts, to TroyFest, to the Dixie Boys World Series, Troy has many exciting things to do. In addition to NCAA sporting events, Troy University also is home to the Claudia Crosby Community Theater and the Alabama Bandmaster's Hall of Fame.

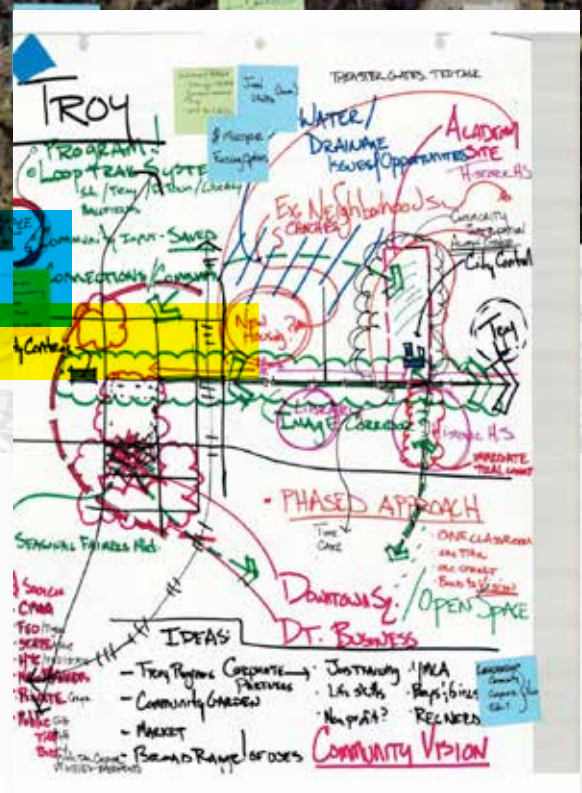
City-funded amenities include the city's nationally recognized Parks and Recreation programs and facilities, the innovative and creative Colley Senior Complex, and the outstanding Troy Public Library.



# How did we get here?

In 2017 Mayor Jason Reeves participated in the 11th Annual Philip A. Morris Mayors Design Summit. Mayor Reeves brought to the summit, a desire for ideas to promote an adaptive reuse of the historic Academy Street School, which would then become the main focus of the Troy DesignPlace. Though the Academy Street School was the starting point for the summit discussions, the conversation grew to broader ideas and design. Following are some of the ideas produced during the 2017 Summit:

- > Look at sidewalks, street crossings and bump-outs
- > Building placement on streets is vital
- > Create pockets of parking in the alley for potential shoppers, but most importantly for owners/workers – think downtown Homewood
- > Examine how property is changing hands along 231
- > Take advantage of your creeks
- > There are things that entice as far as you can see
- > Do not synchronize the lights along 231
- > Remember the Farmers Idea from Mississippi

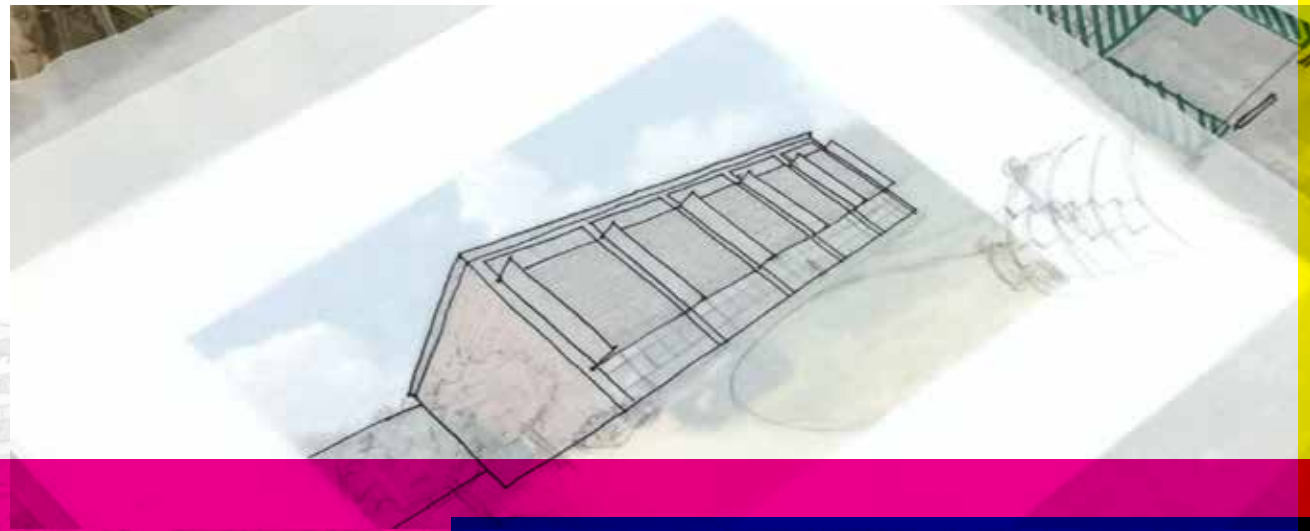


Work from Mayors' Summit 2017



- > You get what you design for; do you want people or parking?
- > Look at connecting to the historically white school parcel as well
- > Large loop of the pedestrian system starting from the school that loops around through the neighborhood
- > What does the African-American Community want
- > Adaptive Reuse
- > If you utilize this building, beyond it, what would people be walking to here- Powers of 10 Concept
- > Business Incubator, vocational training venue (where are your employers getting their employees), Look at HIM Ministry Model in Montgomery
- > Look at Opelika-Jeter/Carver neighborhood design issues-similar parallels in trying to maintain identity for a historically African American Community
- > Use the creek as a walking path from neighborhoods to the academy site
- > Partner with Johnson Center for the Arts to help activate the area for both day and night
- > Water conservation grants
- > Permanent farmers market here with a culinary school, community garden and green house
- > Explore your rail line-Alabama Trails Commission
- > Funding opportunities for trails: money for erosion control, water conservation grants, historic tax option for building, CMAC transportation funding, CDBG, Alabama State Council on the Arts- Cultural Facilities and Planning Grants, identify 2-3 developers that can help you land bank, New Market Tax Credits, façade grants for other building owners in the area
- > What are the corridors that get us into this location?
- > Fail early, fall often and learn fast
- > Phases: Step 1- Create a small loop to library and revitalize one small classroom, Step 2- create a loop to the neighborhood and Step 3- create a city-wide loop
- > Create a small museum in front of the building that gives a nod to the history of the building and helps the community you are serving retain the identity of this building, while changing it for the future
- > Have your first community/grant planning meeting at the school
- > Creating a board of directors for the development of the school and surrounding areas may help provide buy in for the community
- > Look at corporate partners Troy University and others

***Many of these same recommendations have been revisited and will be highlighted throughout this report.***



# Concept Plans

The team, working through all they had observed, felt lead to discuss the current and future states of five distinct areas of focus in this report. Those five areas include: The Academy Street School Site (both the building and the surrounding property) connections branding, gateways and future city growth.

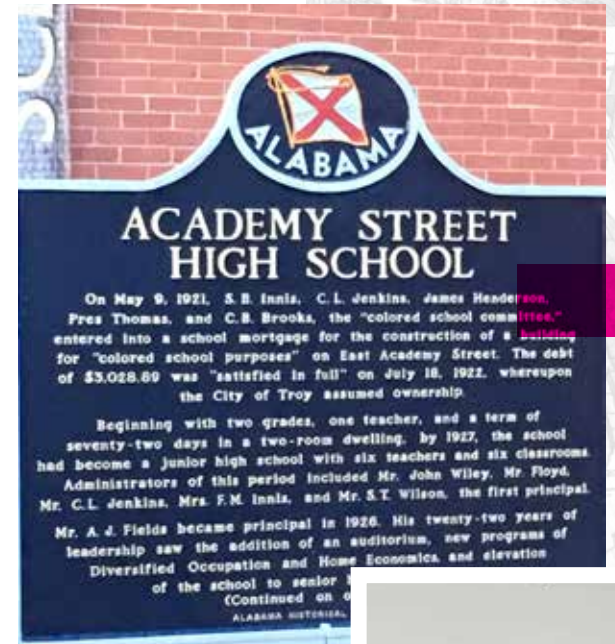


# A Academy Street

The Academy Street High School was crucial in the educational development among the African-American community in Troy, Alabama. The present-day building was built in 1946 after fire destroyed a previous building. The brick building is a product of hard work and dedication of those who were involved with the school. Through the years, the Academy Street High School evolved from a two room, two-grade institute to a senior high school including grades 7 through 12. The campus also features an agriculture building and a gymnasium. The school was closed in 1970 when the Troy City School system integrated. Today, the City of Troy maintains Academy Street High School.

This site is a remembrance of the hard work and perseverance of those who were involved in the school and was crucial in the educational development among the African-American community in Troy. This site through capital enhancements can be more than a monument to the community. It can be put into use for community meetings, programs, and events and also be used as a catalyst to more improvements in the area. Academy Street

High School was listed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage on March 29, 2012. To show the support for this site, on July 5th dozens of people gathered for the Academy Street High School reunion where a special dedication was held to post the Alabama Register Historical marker outside of the school. Many residents feel that this is a special location and needs to be put more into use.



Following the community meeting on the first evening of the charrette, a number of potential programming options for the building seemed to excite the community and designs for the site developed from these programming options.

## Academy St. School Programming

### Industrial Arts

Provide a space for individual use + class space  
Work with Contractors to provide intro level classes for technical skills

- Wood Shop
- metal working, welding, machining
- Ceramics, Pottery
- kiln
- glass blowing

Computer space for basic and technical skills development

- 3D printer

### Visual Arts

Studio space and develop partnership with Johnson Center for the Arts

### Performance Arts

- Music classes
  - Community Band and Theatre
  - Recording Studio
- Use the studio to provide opportunities to learn about music production  
Auditorium + Amphitheatre

### Physical Arts

Maintain Community Recreational Space

- gym
- Build Adventure Playground
- slides + playsets
  - walking trails

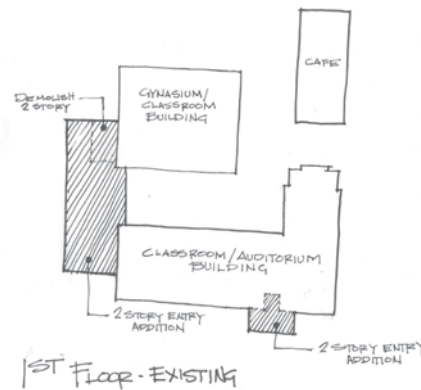
### CULINARY ARTS

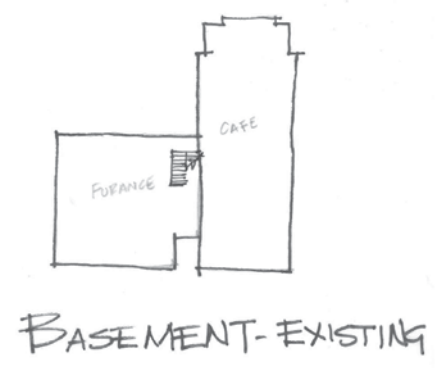
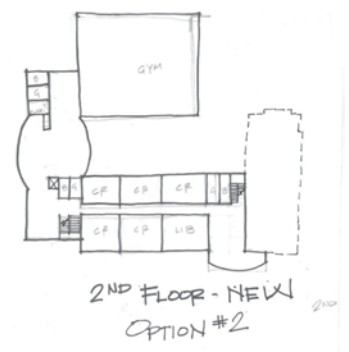
- COOKING CLASSES FOR ALL
- RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT

## A1. The Interior/Exterior of Building

The existing academic building is naturally suited to fulfill the desire expressed by Troy residents for technical and vocational training spaces. Two levels of existing classroom space can accommodate a wide range of uses: from computer labs and meeting spaces, to a welding shop and pottery studio. Academy Street High School can serve as a regional hub for vocational training, as well as training in the industrial arts.

Included in the academic building is an existing auditorium and existing cafeteria, which can each be reimagined as multipurpose spaces for large gatherings such as reunions, banquets, and receptions. Featuring a very high ceiling and tall windows that provide an abundance of natural light, the auditorium can hold events, day or night, for over 250 occupants. The existing cafeteria – which once served meals for multiple schools in the area, each day – could easily serve the event space above, but can also be used as a catering kitchen for other local events.





The existing gymnasium building, which has a basketball court on the upper floor and classroom spaces on the lower floor, would optimally serve as a recreational facility for the community. The basketball court gives children a place to play, sheltered from inclement weather. The spaces on the lower floor could host game rooms, small screening rooms to hold movie nights, exercise space, a dance studio, and a number of similar functions. Those lower floor spaces on the north side of the building flow right out toward the proposed amphitheater.

A new two-story, glass entry space will connect the existing gymnasium and existing academic buildings to facilitate accessibility (entry options 4,5, and 6 can be seen below as examples), simplify movement between buildings, and provide a fresh image to the campus.

All visitors to this space will be greeted by a history wall, documenting the legacy of Academy Street High School and its place in the community. This wall could include space for future recognition. New stairs, elevator, and restrooms will improve usability of the campus by a wider range of visitors, and the extended canopy element will act as a gateway to the proposed amphitheater beyond.



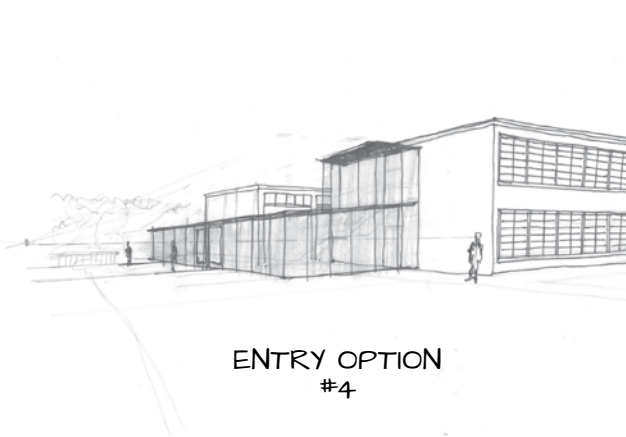
ENTRY OPTION  
#1



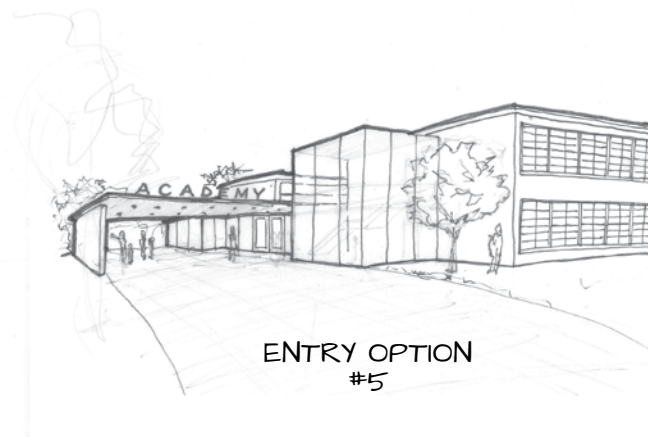
ENTRY OPTION  
#2



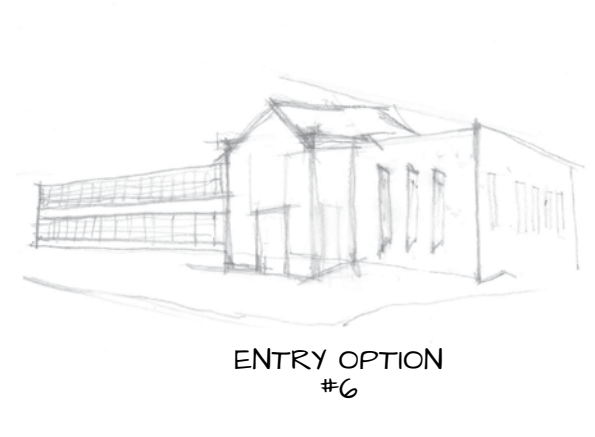
ENTRY OPTION  
#3



ENTRY OPTION  
#4



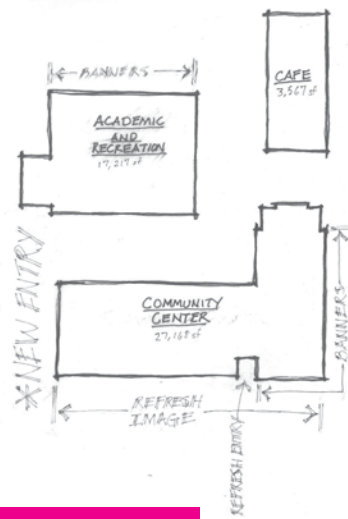
ENTRY OPTION  
#5



ENTRY OPTION  
#6



The existing agricultural building is a one-story masonry building with a pitched roof, nestled between the other buildings and the proposed amphitheater. Its size and location make it ideal for a new restaurant/café – complete with outdoor dining that looks out onto the amphitheater – allowing visitors to enjoy a meal and a show. This café would bring different user groups to the campus, exposing a broader audience to the new life of Academy Street High School, and further fostering Troy’s strive toward diversity and inclusiveness.







*“City leaders and staff should consider making improvements in phases to show community charrette participates their implementation strategy. City leadership’s investment to make Academy Street High School a state of the art community/cultural center would help to repair old wounds left from the abrupt closing of the high school in the late 1960’s.”*

With new windows and fresh landscaping, the Academy Street High School campus will once again present itself with pride as a jewel of the City of Troy. Additional character and branding can be provided using a series of banners to highlight the various programs and functions housed within this new community center. The banners would be changeable, to adapt with curriculum or time of year. Banners are a quick and less expensive way to provide a new identity and to inform others of the changes to come.

The next steps necessary to begin making these ideas become reality are to commission:

- > Topographic site survey documenting property boundaries, all building and site improvements, and all site utilities;
- > Hazardous materials survey of the existing buildings on site to determine the necessary abatement requires;
- > Documentation of the existing building conditions in CAD format to use as base line for future design.



EXTERIOR STAIR  
OPTION #1



EXTERIOR STAIRS  
OPTION #2



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## HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES

### **\*\*Who Should Read This\*\***

Historic Building Owners, Architects, Developers, Realtors, Accountants, Preservationists

#### **Alabama Property Tax Reduction**

- The Wallace Property Relief Constitutional Amendment ("Lid Bill") Code of Alabama 40-8-1 Section 2. allows all historic property, regardless of use, to be assessed at 10% of the assessed value for ad valorem tax purposes.
- This allows the properties that are either determined by the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) as eligible for listing in the National Register; individually listed in the National Register; or listed as contributing to a National Register historic district to receive the lowest assessment rate.
- To determine if a property is eligible for this benefit, submit an Ad Valorem Assessment Application, complete with a map and photos, to the AHC. Upon receipt of a complete application, AHC staff review documentation and process the application within 30 calendar days.
- Owners receive an AHC letter confirming a property's status in the National Register or determining eligibility for listing and for the ad valorem reduction. This letter may be presented to the county tax assessor for reassessment of the property.

#### **Alabama Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit**

- The Alabama Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit is a 25% refundable tax credit available for private homeowners and owners of commercial properties who substantially rehabilitate historic properties that are listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and are 60 years old or older.
- Taxpayers filing a State of Alabama income tax return or entities exempt from federal income taxation who own title to a building or own a leasehold interest in a building for a term of 39 years or more may apply.
- Tax credits are capped at \$5 million for commercial properties and \$50,000 for residential homes. \$20 million in tax credits are available each tax year from 2018 to 2022. Excess tax credits will be carried forward each year. \$8 million of each year's allocation will be set aside for rural communities for the first six months of the year.
- Eligible costs must exceed 50 percent of the owner's original purchase price or \$25,000, whichever is greater.
- Work must follow the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*, which guarantee improvements will maintain a building's historic character and integrity.  
<http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm>
- The state tax credit application is a three-step process. The AHC provides technical assistance on application procedures, appropriate rehabilitation work, and will visit properties as needed. The AHC will recommend qualifying projects to the Historic Tax Credit Evaluating Committee who will rank projects in the order they are to receive tax credit reservations.
- Applicants must report progress of the project at 18 months and 36 months of receiving the reservation, and the project must be complete within 60 months. At the end of a project, owners submit a final application providing information on the completed project. If work complies with the *Standards* and all other requirements are met, the AHC issues a Tax Credit Certificate. Owners claim the tax credit in the tax year in which the building is placed in service. The credit is transferable only one time. Any unused portion of the tax credit is refundable.

#### **Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit**

- The Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit is a 20% credit available for Certified Rehabilitations of income-producing historic buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Amounts to 20% of the total eligible rehabilitation expenditures and can be applied to federal income tax owed by the property owner.
- Certified Rehabilitations meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation* and are approved by the National Park Service (NPS) as being consistent with the historic character of the property.
- Rehabilitation expenditures must exceed the greater of \$5,000 or adjusted basis of the building. The adjusted basis is the purchase price of the building, minus the value of the land, plus improvements, minus depreciation.
- The three-part application process must be initiated before the rehabilitation project begins. Contact the Alabama Historical Commission for guidance with the application and rehabilitation process. The National Park Service reviews applications and issues official Certification decisions.
- The tax credit earned is taken ratably over a five-year period beginning in the year the rehabilitated building is placed in service or when the building has been substantially rehabilitated (unless transition rules under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 apply for certain projects).
- The owner must own the building for five years after completing the rehabilitation, and any work on the building within five years must be approved by the NPS beforehand, or the credits can be recaptured.

#### **Information and Applications available online**

<https://ahc.alabama.gov/federaltaxcredits.aspx>  
<https://ahc.alabama.gov/alabamarehabtaxcredits.aspx>  
[www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm)  
[www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm)

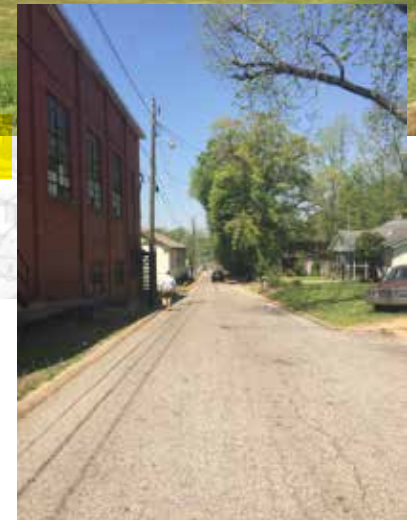
#### **Contact the AHC for more information**

Ad Valorem Reduction and Federal Tax Credit: Chloe Mercer, 334.230.2669 / [Chloe.Mercer@ahc.alabama.gov](mailto:Chloe.Mercer@ahc.alabama.gov)  
Alabama Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program: Taylor Stewart, 334.230.2643 or [Taylor.Stewart@ahc.alabama.gov](mailto:Taylor.Stewart@ahc.alabama.gov)

## A2. Academy Street Outside

The Academy Street campus has the opportunity to expand and enhance the new building program by offering multiple spaces for outdoor classrooms, gathering areas, recreation and relaxation. A new entry walk from Academy Street will welcome visitors to the campus and lead them by a history wall that tells the story of the impact of Academy Street school and its past students. Through this gateway and the perimeter walkways, the community has access to a large civic green and hillside amphitheater. Extending from the building are community and teaching gardens, outdoor café' seating and walkways that connect to the buildings central courtyard.

A series of meandering pathways connect visitors to the lower play area with expansive, unique play areas for all ages, pavilions for community parties and/or pop-up shops serving sno-cones on those summer days. The paths also connect visitors to the lower creek area that can be used for environmental education classes or just a place to sit and enjoy the shade. The site and its outdoor 'rooms' can be enhanced by native landscape to embrace the campus and provide habitat for birds. By providing something for every age group and multi-use spaces, the Academy Street Campus can provide a place for community education, engagement and celebration.







## ***Maintaining a Sense of Neighborhood***

The housing around Academy Street school makes up one of the traditional African-American neighborhoods in Troy. The houses range from well-kept to very poor condition. The Downtown Troy Plan and Comprehensive Community Master Plan both support residential use in the area and support rehabilitation and infill development. The neighborhood could provide a mix of affordable and market rate housing to serve different income levels and promote diversity. The city and alumni can recruit local developers to consider ways to redevelop the area while maintaining the historic development pattern of housing and rehabilitating buildings still in good condition. The city can seek CDBG funds to assist with housing rehabilitation for elderly and disabled. A locally funded program with assistance from churches and other community groups can also be effective to improve existing housing.



## B Connections

One of the most important pieces to the redevelopment of the Academy Street School site and the surrounding area is connections. These connections can be managed through a program that embraces the concept of “complete streets.” According to America Bikes, the program that originally coined the term, “A complete streets policy ensures that the entire right of way is routinely designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street.” These concepts provide multiple benefits including increasing safety for both pedestrians and drivers and increased health and recreation opportunities and outcomes. These policies also provide access for populations such as children, older adults and people with disabilities that may not have access to automobiles.

These policies align with other initiatives and requirements such as the American with Disabilities Act and those from the Federal Highway Administration and Alabama Department of Transportation. A program that implements these policies and ideals can often qualify for funding from public or private grants like the ALDOT’s Transportation Alternative Plan (TAP) or Highway Safety funding. Additionally, if plans are in place, these improvements can often be required as part of the approval of adjoining developments. There is no one set of rules for creating complete streets.



### *Four Key Lessons Towns Should Consider When Creating a Bike Friendly Community*

- > Look to see where people are currently locking up their bikes. If you’re seeing bikes chained to parking meters, benches, and trees, that’s a good indication that a bike rack would be valuable in those locations.
- > Ask local bike riders and advocates where racks are most needed. Simple and straightforward: Just ask people where they’d appreciate bike racks. This doesn’t have to be a formal survey; follow league by polling the local bike Facebook group or just inquiring with neighbors who bike.
- > Choose central locations. You’re probably not going to start out by installing 50 bike racks all over town at once. Instead, start by putting in a few racks in busy areas where they can be used by patrons of multiples businesses and get the maximum bang for your buck.
- > Install functional racks. This part is crucial; don’t install a rack that can’t be easily and safely used. That means thinking about the design of the rack and its location (i.e. don’t put in a rack up against a wall or a fence that will render it unusable).

Often the type of pedestrian or bicycle accommodation is based on existing traffic patterns, available space and location of buildings or utilities.

Complete streets policies, sidewalks and general pedestrian connectivity should be prioritized in the following areas:

- > Along major commercial corridors
- > Near civic uses such as parks and schools
- > Connecting existing residential areas with sidewalks
- > New development

**Following are some examples of utilizing principles of Complete Streets on existing Troy streets.**



Academy Street



Current



Proposed

Elm Street



Current



Proposed

Park Street



Current

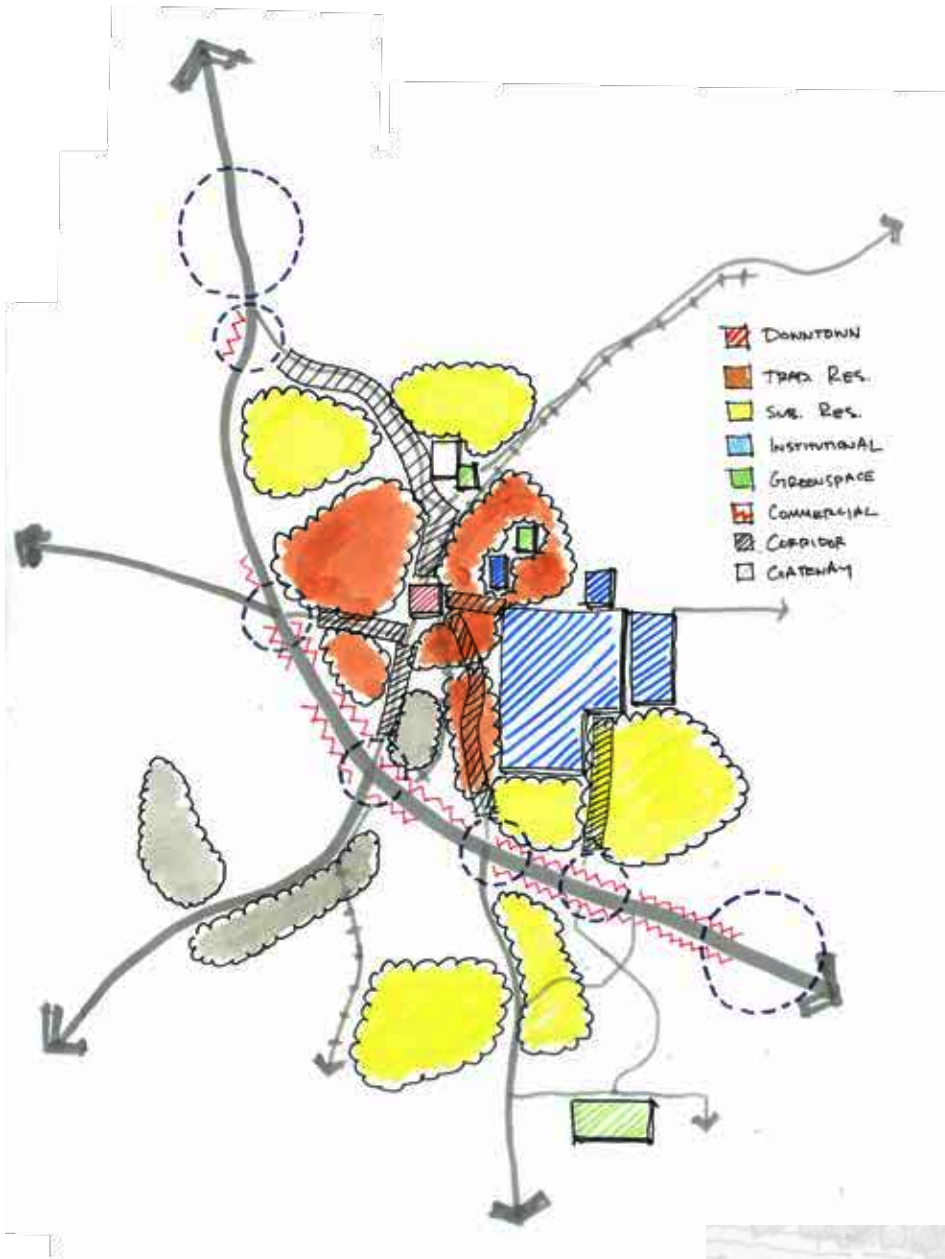


Proposed



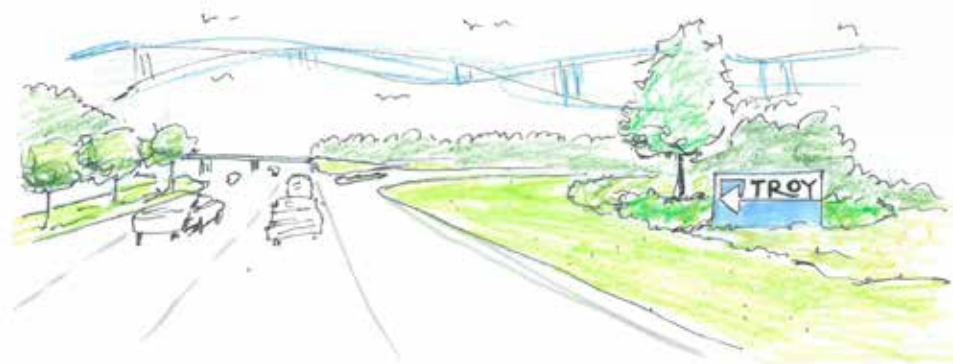
Below: Image highlights assets and important connections of those assets around Academy Street School and the community.

Right: Image shows how creating a downtown square that allows for walkability and community activity helps in creating complete streets.



## C Gateways

Gateways are the recognizable entries into a city, a neighborhood, center or district. They help to establish strong edges to those places and foster a sense of pride in place as well as sense of arrival. Gateways can be defined and created with appropriate signs and landmarks, plantings, burying of utility lines, protecting important views, and using distinctive pavement and architectural elements at intersection. Each gateway to the City or its neighborhoods should reflect the particular characteristics of its setting and provide a welcoming transition from one area to another.



Gateway - Direction  
Hwy. 231 South

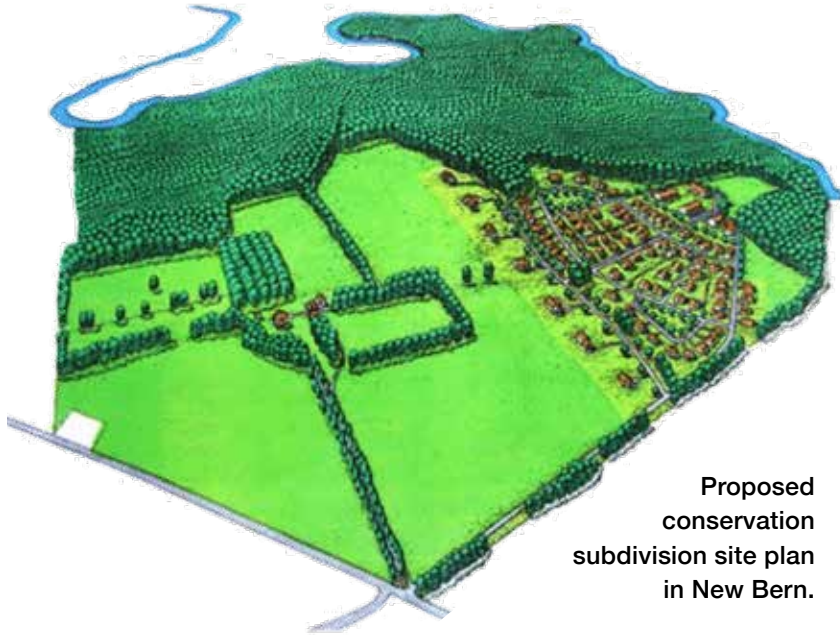


## D Ideas to Consider for Development and Growth in New Troy

Recently, new streets have been constructed in the southeastern segment of Troy. While, these new streets are an asset to dramatically improve the physical connections between existing neighborhoods, retail centers, and community amenities, they also can pose a threat on future development patterns. The rural character of this segment of Troy is important to the identity of the community, and when lost it cannot be restored.

### Conservation Subdivisions

Development under the current regulations will provide nice subdivisions, but this pattern will consume large tracts of land. One method that may help create both strong development while preserving green space is to allow for conservation subdivisions. These subdivisions provide an alternative that sets aside historic sites, farm land or other protected areas and then allows increased density on the remainder. More information on these types of developments can be found in the book *Conservation Design for Subdivisions* by Randall Arendt.

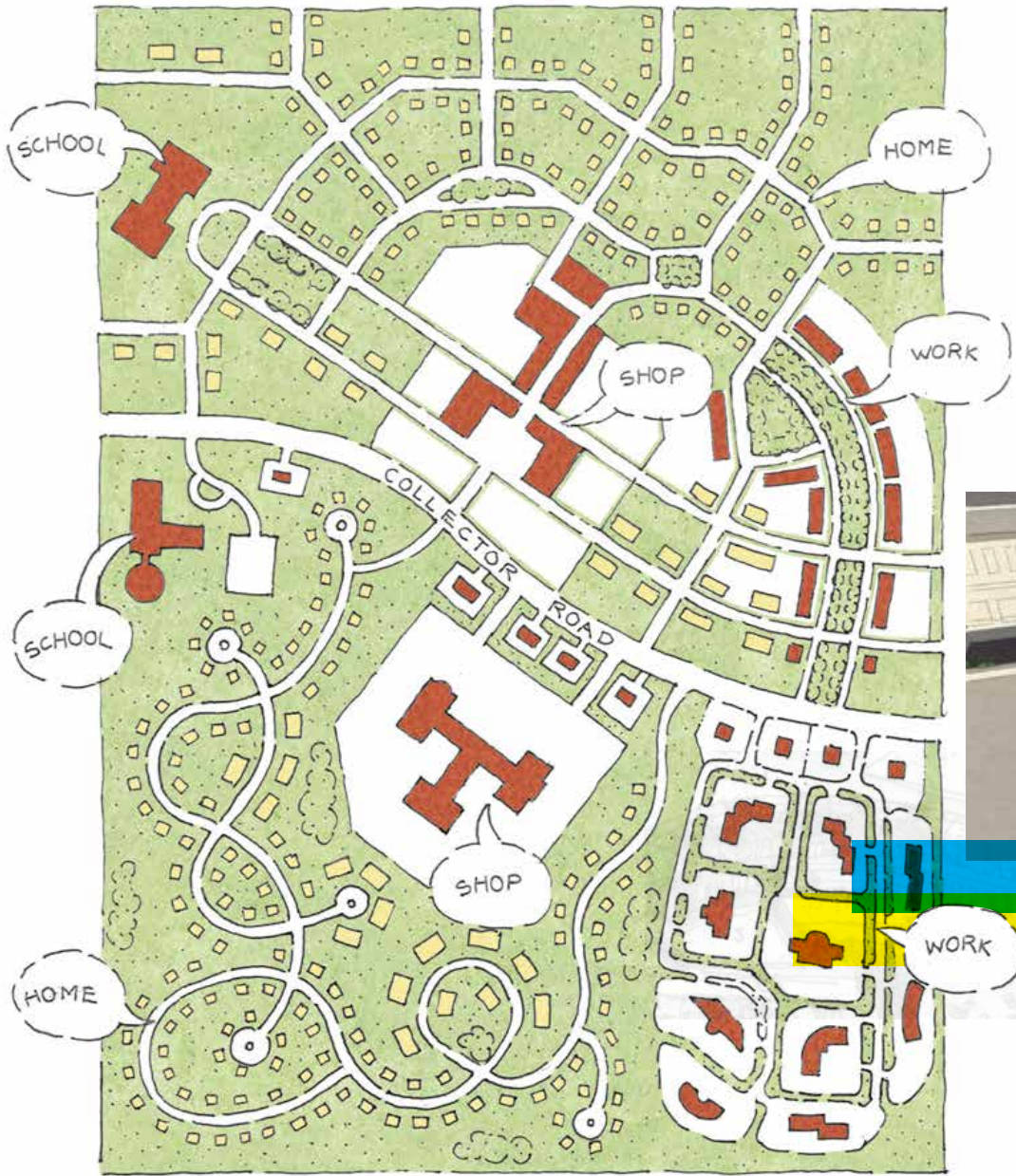


Proposed conservation subdivision site plan in New Bern.



A proposed conventional site plan for the same area. Images Courtesy of Randall Arendt

## TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD



Another method that could create a strong development is similar to the Oak Park neighborhood which is connected to Oak Park Drive. This neighborhood is built with traditional neighborhood development (TND) attributes such as reduced setbacks, front porches, alleyways, sidewalks and street trees. These neighborhoods, sometimes referred to as new urbanist developments, or TNDs, would recreate walkable neighborhoods such as the historic areas near downtown Troy. More information on these types of developments can be found in the book *The Smart Growth Manual* by Andres Duany.



## SUBURBAN SPRAWL

## E Branding

The City of Troy's brand story should be treated as a living document that is updated and added to on an ongoing basis by local brand stewards. As the brand evolves, so must the story to stay relevant and accurate. We offer the version here as a starting point. Messaging and brand language for future communications should always branch from the core story. When Troy shares its story with consistency it will help to resonate with others and be more memorable.

The major themes that arose from our brainstorming session with community stakeholders were:

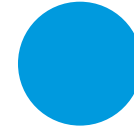
- > progressive thinking and ideas
- > inclusive engagement among residents
- > appreciation for art and culture
- > innovation for future economic development
- > deep respect for history of place

This led to "Art of Community – Spirit of Progress" as a proposed positioning statement for the City of Troy.





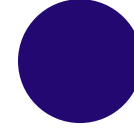
PMS 7426



PMS 2925



PMS 4545



PMS 2745



OAKLAND  
**TROY**



EAST ACADEMY  
**TROY**



DOWNTOWN  
**TROY**

## Troy Brand Story

The City of Troy is place where you can feel the vibrancy and energy in the air. It is one of Alabama's biggest small towns. Troy welcomes people from more than 75 countries who come to live, learn, shop, play and work. This rich tapestry of cultures makes way for a city diverse in ideas, art and tradition.

The community spirit of a small town thrives in Troy, while offering the amenities of a city much larger. A charming downtown square draws you in to take a stroll through locally owned shops and enjoy a quick bite or stay awhile longer for leisurely dining. Troy's natural beauty comes from the rolling hills of the surrounding watershed, walking trails and parks as well as its historic architecture.

Troy residents are very engaged in and connected to each other and their community overall.

This provides a safe and stable environment to growing families. It also means opportunity for business and industry. Troy welcomes new business and invests in providing the innovation and technology services needed to drive success.

This is a place you have to see and experience to know that Troy has made the idea of community a true art.

Experience the art of community and the spirit of progress.  
Experience Troy.

## A New City Seal

We are proposing the adoption of a new city seal. The seal incorporates the new positioning statement. The symbolism of an architectural "T" represents the city's history rising from the rolling hills of Troy's watershed. The "T" column is flanked by two laurel branches, which represent the city's spirit of achievement in all endeavors whether in academics, inclusiveness or innovation.

The suggested color palette features a burgundy red to link with the University of Troy and the brand awareness it enjoys well beyond the city of Troy. The seal works equally well in solid black or white for applications with such limitations.

## Sub Branding

The center of the new seal can be extracted and used as a unifying mark among area neighborhoods, initiatives or events. This version of the mark can also be used on wayfinding signage to make the city more walkable. Consider color-coding areas of interests such as shopping, restaurants, parking, etc.





**Tourism Branding**

Troy's active town square is a central place for people to gather and feel connected to the community. With the city's passion arts and culture, we suggest a square "canvas" that can be creatively filled with the many attributes and benefits of visiting, working in and making a home in Troy. This could become a fun, memorable series that keeps the ways to experience Troy ever changing.





# ACADEMY

Lift Ever Onward



## ACADEMY

Reimagining the Academy Street School as a continued learning facility and community event space calls for a new identity to honor the school's history. We suggest the name use the abbreviated and familiar "ACADEMY". Four symbolic colors layer together to shape the typography. Gold and burgundy are used to continue the legacy of the school colors. Bright pink signals the passion former students hold for their alma mater. Lastly, a bright blue was added to the

palette and was inspired by a line in the school's anthem "...towering toward the blue." A line from the chorus of the anthem gives us our aspirational ACADEMY slogan, "Lift Ever Onward."

Bright banners designed for the front-facing wall of the building also incorporate the Troy tourism logo illustrating various types of skills and arts shared at Academy.

# Brand Communications

Making your brand visual is an immediate way to share attributes of your brand's offering. Then there are brand communications including what is said, the mode of communication, with whom you communicate and how often. As part of our brand-storming exercise, we began to look at how communications could be outlined and maximized. In the lists at right, we identified communities of people with likely similar interests. Then we re-sorted the list by those interests, consolidating similar topics such as "engagement" and "relationships". From there you can see that Troy is a community that begs to be connected, with "Networking/engagement" and "Activities" the two categories garnering the most interest. These are followed closely by "Housing" and "Healthcare" needs. We recommend cross-referencing the list with population data, as "young families" will represent a much larger portion of the population than "Civic

Clubs". Regardless, you can see the possibilities for planning events based on these groupings and on marketing opportunities to network and participate in community activities.

In addition, the benefits list shows amenities to focus on when promoting Troy to these groups. The attributes list was used to craft the brand story — language that should help share consistent information about Troy. Lastly, we listed challenges so that topics requiring improvement or perception management remain top of mind.

## Troy Communities

### Networking/Engagement

- Civic Clubs
- Faith-based Groups
- Senior BM/WM Coffee Clubs
- University Faculty and Staff
- Young Professionals
- College Students
- International Students
- Business Prospects
- Newcomers
- Healthcare

### Activities

- Retirees
- University Faculty and Staff
- Young Families
- Young Professionals
- College Students
- International Students
- Established Families
- Low Income Families

### Housing

- Large Businesses
- University Faculty and Staff
- Young Families
- Young Professionals
- College Students
- Newcomers
- Established Families

### Healthcare

- Large Businesses
- Retirees
- University Faculty and Staff
- Young Families
- Newcomers
- Established Families
- Low Income Families

### Easy access to retail

- Retirees
- University Faculty and Staff
- Young Families
- Young Professionals
- College Students
- International Students
- Newcomers

### Be Heard/Valued

- Downtown Businesses
- Faith-based Groups
- Senior BM/WM Coffee Clubs
- Newcomers
- Established Families
- Low Income Families
- Being informed
- Downtown Businesses
- Civic Clubs
- Senior BM/WM Coffee Clubs
- Business Prospects

### Infrastructure

- Large Businesses
- Business Prospects
- Investment Groups
- Healthcare Industry

### Race relations

- Large Businesses

### Airport/Transportation

- Large Businesses

### Affordability

- Large Businesses
- Retirees

### Ease of doing business

- Large Businesses

### Skilled workforce

- Large Businesses

## Schools

Large Businesses  
University Faculty and Staff  
Young Families  
Newcomers

## Low cost of utilities

Large Businesses

## Foot traffic

Downtown Businesses

## Parking

Downtown Businesses

## Marketing and promotion

Downtown Businesses

## Shop Local

Small Businesses

## Visibility

Small Businesses  
Downtown Businesses  
Business Prospects  
Faith-based Groups

## Support

Civic Clubs  
Faith-based Groups  
Healthcare

## A base for events

Civic Clubs

## Convenience

Civic Clubs

## Catering

Civic Clubs

## Partnerships/Collaboration

Faith-based Groups

## Quiet/Charming

Retirees  
Newcomers

## Continued Education classes

Retirees

## Resources, knowledge base, skills

Retirees  
Senior BM/WM Coffee Clubs  
Low Income Families

## Job/Career

University Faculty and Staff  
Young Professionals  
College Students  
Established Families

## Safety

University Faculty and Staff  
Young Families  
Newcomers

## Center/space to perform

Artists and Art Patrons

## Access to talent

Artists and Art Patrons

## High School Programs

Artists and Art Patrons

## Workshops for High School Teachers

Artists and Art Patrons

## Be the center of arts in Alabama

Artists and Art Patrons

## Hunting & Fishing

Outdoors Enthusiasts

## Land Ownership

Outdoors Enthusiasts  
Business Prospects

## Biking and Walking Trails

Outdoors Enthusiasts

## Restaurants

College Students

## Cultural Amenities

International Students

## Opportunity/Revenue

Downtown Businesses  
Business Prospects  
Investment Groups

## Labor Force

Business Prospects

## Tax Incentives

Business Prospects  
Investment Groups

## New Business

Investment Groups

## More Students

Investment Groups

## Grants Longevity

Investment Groups

## Costs

Investment Groups

## Building permits and codes

Investment Groups

## History of Success

Investment Groups

## Proof of Demand and Support

Investment Groups

## Funding

Investment Groups

## Reassurance of stability

Established Families

## Choices

Low Income Families

## Mentorship

Low Income Families

## Trust

Low Income Families

## Capital to grow and improve

Healthcare Industry

## Public Relations

Healthcare

## Benefits

Relationships  
City services and opportunities  
Small town atmosphere with Big city amenities  
Downtown growth  
University  
Recreational Center  
Hospitality  
Affordable  
Community  
Healthcare/hospital  
Networking  
Job opportunities  
Job diversity  
Activities  
Infrastructure  
Airport  
Arts and culture

## Attributes

Engaging people  
Historical  
Progressive  
Welcoming  
Beautiful  
Family  
Charismatic  
Home  
Friendly  
Diverse  
Heart  
Quiet  
Charming  
Growing  
Connects with people

## Challenges

Lack of Retail  
Art programs for kids who cannot afford  
Schools and their perception  
Communicating to public  
Hospital perception  
Amenities  
Financial Restraints  
Lack of Civic Center for meetings and events  
Old mindset

# Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper

The quality of a public space has always been best defined by the people who use it. The growing success of “Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper” (LQC) projects all over the world is proof that expensive and labor-intensive initiatives are not the only, or even the most effective, ways to bring energy and life into a community’s public space. United under the core principles of community vision, cost-effectiveness, collaboration, and citizen-led change, this exciting movement goes by many names—action planning, guerilla urbanism, pop-up projects, city repair, D.I.Y. Urbanism, and Tactical Urbanism. We see each of these efforts as important tools and catalysts for larger community-based Placemaking processes.

“Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper” is a phrase borrowed from Eric Reynolds to describe the simple, short-term, and low-cost solutions that are having remarkable impacts on the shaping of neighborhoods and cities.



## Why Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper?

One of the greatest advantages of LQC is the ability to create and test a project immediately and with direct community involvement. Initial LQC projects are often temporary—relatively inexpensive alterations to a public space that take place while more long-range projects grind through the lengthy development pipeline. Bringing multiple and wide-ranging benefits to communities, the early implementation of LQC projects can help:

- > Bring life and amenities to previously lifeless public spaces
- > Break down resistance to change, while empowering vulnerable or overlooked communities who may have lost faith even in the possibility of change
- > Generate the interest of potential investors, both public and private
- > Establish (or re-establish) a neighborhood or region's sense of community
- > Inform best practices for later planning efforts
- > Bring together diverse stakeholders in generating solutions and a collective vision

- > Encourage community buy-in (by demonstrating, for example, how a new street design would impact traffic flows not only for cars, but also for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit)
- > Foster a community's sense of pride in, and ownership of, their public spaces Although a Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper approach is not for every situation (it may not be the right solution, for example, for large infrastructural projects like building a bridge—though that would surely be interesting!), it can be a creative, locally-powered alternative to the kind of capital-heavy and top-down planning processes that so often yield end results that are completely detached from the needs and desires of the communities they are meant to serve.





# Next Steps

## The Who-What-Where-Why-When-How of Getting Plans Implemented

As seen throughout this plan, the community provided their insight on the future of Troy and the Academy Street school site with the intention of this vision to be implemented. For this to be effective, an on-going collaborative effort must be instilled between the public and private sectors along with non-profit organizations. The following recommendations and tools are meant to provide the structure by which the community can move forward.

### Critical Steps in Implementation

The implementation of DesignPlace Troy requires three critical steps. Each step builds upon the previous to provide need, credibility and commitment.

- > A commitment to improving the community. By committing to improvement, there is a recognition of needs or desiring from the community that things can be done better.
- > Official recognition of DesignPlace, Troy by the Planning Commission and City Council. The adoption or endorsement of the plan demonstrates to the community the commitment the City has made toward implementing the vision.

- > The formation of a public-private implementation team to implement the DesignPlace, Troy vision. By bringing together the public and private sectors within the community, the team can assemble resources and champion implementation.

### Implementation Tools

Implementation of the DesignPlace: Troy could benefit from the following economic tools and incentives:

- > **Urban Redevelopment Authority and District** – Troy could create a redevelopment authority with broad authority to acquire property, sell, etc. This authority could be considered for issuing tax exemptions, bond financing, land acquisitions and re-selling to developers, etc.
- > **Business Improvement District (BID)** – The City and property owners can adopt a self-improvement Business Improvement District. A BID can create a special tax for specific improvements or services agreed to by a consensus of property owners.

- > **Tax Increment Financing District (TIF)** – Troy can consider a Tax Increment Financing district. This district can be used to finance improvements through a delay in the incremental increase in property tax.
- > **Cooperative Improvement District** – This type of district allows the City to invest in public/private projects through tax repayments to the city from return on private development.
- > **Historic Tax Credits** – Historic properties can be improved using a 20% federal tax credit. Properties can also take advantage of the Wallace-Cater Act to reduce state tax that allows historic property owners to be eligible for an additional 20% State of Alabama Property Tax Reduction on top of the Federal income tax credit.
- > **Brownfield/Department of Revenue Programs** – Certain properties may be eligible for Brownfield tax credits and/or grants for assessments of properties that have environmental questions. These programs are administered through the Alabama Department of Revenue, ADEM and EPA.

- > **Façade Rehabilitation Grant or Loan** – A Façade Rehabilitation Program can be used to provide funds for renovations to facades. These funds can also be used to remove signs, abandoned parts of buildings, etc. The fund must be established using federal or private funding and used as a grant or part of a revolving loan.
- > **State Land Banking Programs** – The state land bank can be used to acquire property and hold it for re-sell to a private developer who will improve the property. The cost of the land can be negotiated to “make” the deal feasible.
- > **Transportation Alternative Program Grants** – These funds can be used for streetscape improvements, as well as sidewalks, bicycle facilities, etc.

### Defining Priorities and Timelines

There are many specific projects and recommendations included as part of DesignPlace: Troy and for successful implementation of the vision, these must be organized by priority and given a timeline. The first charge of the implementation team should be to define priorities by short-term, mid-term and long-term. These designations consider the importance of a project or recommendation as well as a sense of time sensitivity or urgency. By creating these priorities, the implementation team can demonstrate to the community the level of commitment and needed resources to move forward.

### Financing and Funding

DesignPlace Troy cannot be funded by city resources alone. Many of the project and recommendations will be implemented by multiple organizations or entities, and the goal should leverage and support multiple resources to accomplish the desired results. Plan implementation should also be seen as an investment strategy and not just the spending of public funds. Cooperation with other agencies, organizations, non-profit and philanthropic groups is critical to plan implementation.

Financing and funding of city initiatives for public improvements and property acquisition should include the use of city funds, bond issues, grants, loans and special funding generated through related development authorities such as the Redevelopment Authority, Industrial Development Board, or other specialized mechanism at the City. These funding sources provide the initial spark of investment with the goal of leveraging other support.

### Regulatory Tools

Certain regulatory tools are important to the implementation of DesignPlace Troy, including enforcing the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, property maintenance ordinances and others. A mechanism for design review through the Planning Commission or other entity should be considered for downtown, especially relative to some form of façade rehab program.

A critical step to undertake upon the completion of any plan is a thorough review and update of the City's major regulatory tools, including, but not limited to, the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, property maintenance codes, design guidelines, etc.



