

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Opportunity to Develop and Own Mixed-Use Office/Commercial Building
Oxford, Georgia
May 2, 2023

Introduction:

The City of Oxford Downtown Development Authority (the "DDA") invites proposals from qualified developers/owners (the "Owner") for the development and ownership of a 10,000 to 12,000 square feet mixed-use office/commercial building in Oxford, Georgia (the "Whatcoat Street Building").

Property:

The DDA is soliciting proposals for the acquisition and development of a prime real estate parcel (a depiction of such parcel is attached hereto at Attachment A) located adjacent to Emory Street and Whatcoat Street in the heart of historic Oxford (the "Property"). The final boundaries of the Property will be established in connection with the relocation of Whatcoat Street as shown on Attachment B hereto.

Project Requirements:

- City of Oxford is relocating the eastern end of Whatcoat Street as shown on Attachment B.
- DDA to ground lease the Property with existing improvements to Owner for a term of 50-99 years with the amount of ground rent to be negotiated between DDA and Owner.
- The Property has an existing building on the site that will need to be demolished in connection with the development of the Whatcoat Street Building.
- Owner would own, construct, finance and operate the proposed Whatcoat Street Building.
- Owner is responsible for all site and vertical development costs associated with the Whatcoat Street Building.
- DDA expects Owner to cause construction of a Whatcoat Street Building that is substantially similar to concept plans provided by DDA (a copy of which are attached hereto as Attachment C) or as otherwise approved by DDA.
- The Ground Lease would include the following: typical maintenance and repair standards for the building, use restrictions to be negotiated, a right of first offer to purchase the Whatcoat Street Building in favor of DDA, and other customary provisions.
- The Whatcoat Street Building project has an identified anchor tenant with strong credit.

Submittal Requirements and Proposal Package: Developer/Owner to Provide:

- Project narrative discussing all significant aspects of the development process.
- Proposed preliminary conceptual design of Whatcoat Street Building; submittals are encouraged to adhere to the concept plans in Attachment C to the extent possible and provide reasons for substantial variations.
- Proposed development schedule.
- Expected construction cost of Whatcoat Street Building.
- Projected tenant rents per square foot for Whatcoat Street Building.
- Portion of building expected to be leased to anchor tenant.
- Proposed ground lease term for the Property.

- Proposed ground rent payment upon execution of ground lease.
- Proposed ground rent as percentage of net cash flow.
- Description of experience and capabilities, including:
 - experience with similar projects (narrative and pictures encouraged)
 - financial ability to perform (financial statements or financing plan)
 - credentials of key team members (including principals and project managers)

DDA Review:

Proposals will be reviewed in terms of:

- Completeness of submittal
- Quality and appropriateness of the building design and site improvements
- Proposed ground lease terms
- Feasibility of the project
- Developer's expertise (including track record of successful similar projects)
- Consistency and compatibility to DDA's Oxford Town Center Vision (attached hereto as Attachment D)
- References

DDA will review all proposals based on the criteria above. DDA reserves the right to consider any other criteria or factors that it deems appropriate. Further, DDA may reject or accept any proposal for any reason in its sole discretion.

Attachments:

Attachment A – depiction of Property site

Attachment B – depiction of relocation of Whatcoat Street

Attachment C – concept plans for Whatcoat Street Building

Attachment D – Oxford Town Center Vision

Questions:

The DDA assumes that questions and requests for further information and clarifications might be needed. All questions should be directed to Bill Andrew (DDA Secretary/Treasurer) at bandrew@oxfordgeorgia.org or (770) 786-7004.

Submission of Proposals:

All proposals should be submitted within 45 days from the date of this RFP, or June 16, 2023 at 3:00 PM. Proposals should be addressed and delivered, or dropped off, to Bill Andrew at 110 West Clark Street, Oxford GA 30054. Please deliver two hard copy originals and a digital form of the submittal.

EXISTING CONDITION

INTRODUCTION

The Oxford DDA engaged Historical Concepts to provide schematic plans for potential development of the city property located at the intersection of West George St. and Whatcoat St. (site of the existing “Whatcoat Building”). It was requested that the schemes include:

- 12,000 sf of leasable square footage.
- An anchor building on the south end of a future commercial stretch of Emory street.
- Illustration to future developers of the character of building aesthetic and scale appropriate for Oxford.

Through a series of meetings with the DDA, Historical Concepts developed numerous schemes looking at form, scale, open space, parking, and vehicular and pedestrian movements. The two concepts in this package are versions of a theme:

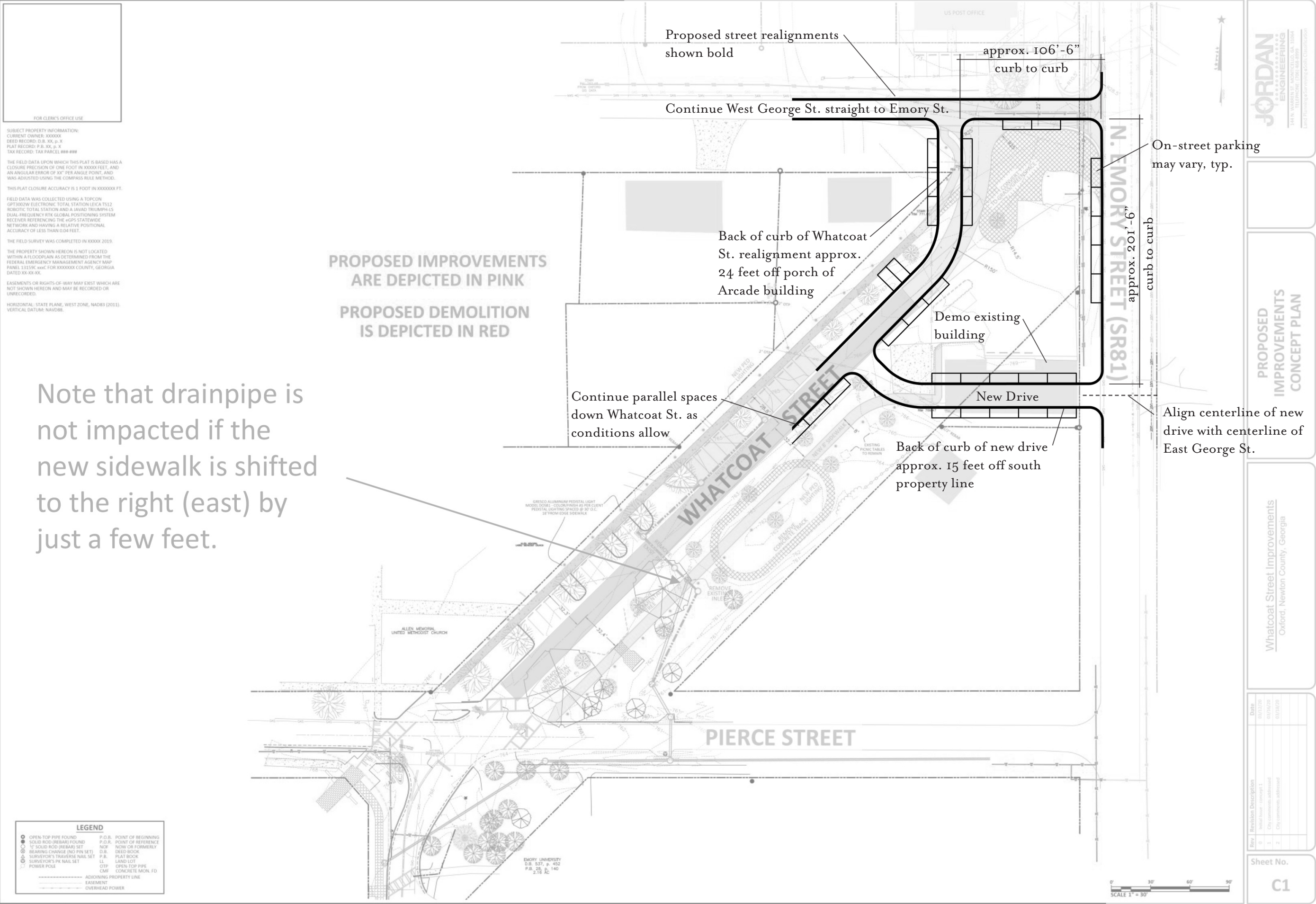
- The first concept is functionally a single building but with the appearance of two buildings, being broken down in massing and setbacks, as if added to over time.
- The second concept includes two separate structures that provide outdoor space, possible phasing, and flexibility.

Both schemes are conceptual in nature and would need additional input, design, and study before being built.

EXISTING USE

Building:	4,700 sf.
Parking:	20 spaces
Asphalt	12
Adjacent to Arcade	8





CONCEPT 1

DESCRIPTION

Whatcoat St. is reconfigured to meet West George St. with a “T” intersection. This allows for more efficient vehicular and pedestrian flow and also provides a much more functional “block” for new development along Emory St.

A new drive connecting Whatcoat St. and Emory St. is proposed to the south of the study area (requiring the existing Whatcoat Building to be demolished). This drive provides vehicular and pedestrian access, parking, and service access.

The proposed building is designed to appear as two separate structures while functionally operating as a single building with a shared elevator and stair and a conditioned connector.

The southern portion of the building, oriented to the new drive, handles service and deliveries.

PHASE 1

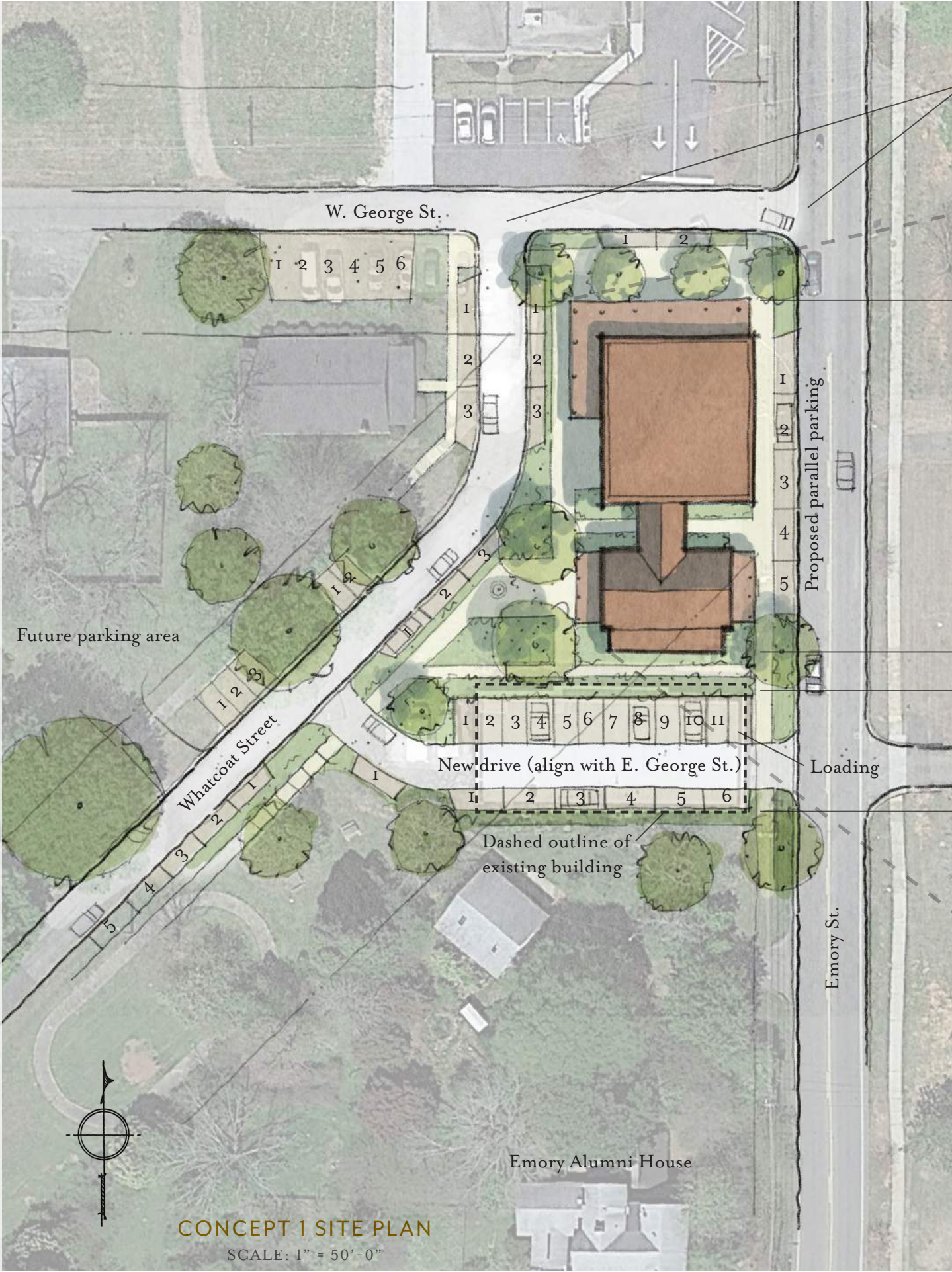
New Building:	12,700 sf.
North Wing:	7,200 sf.
-Over two floors	
Connector:	800 sf.
-Over two floors	
South Wing:	4,700 sf.
-Over two floors	

PHASE 2

Existing Building:	Demo
New Drive:	-

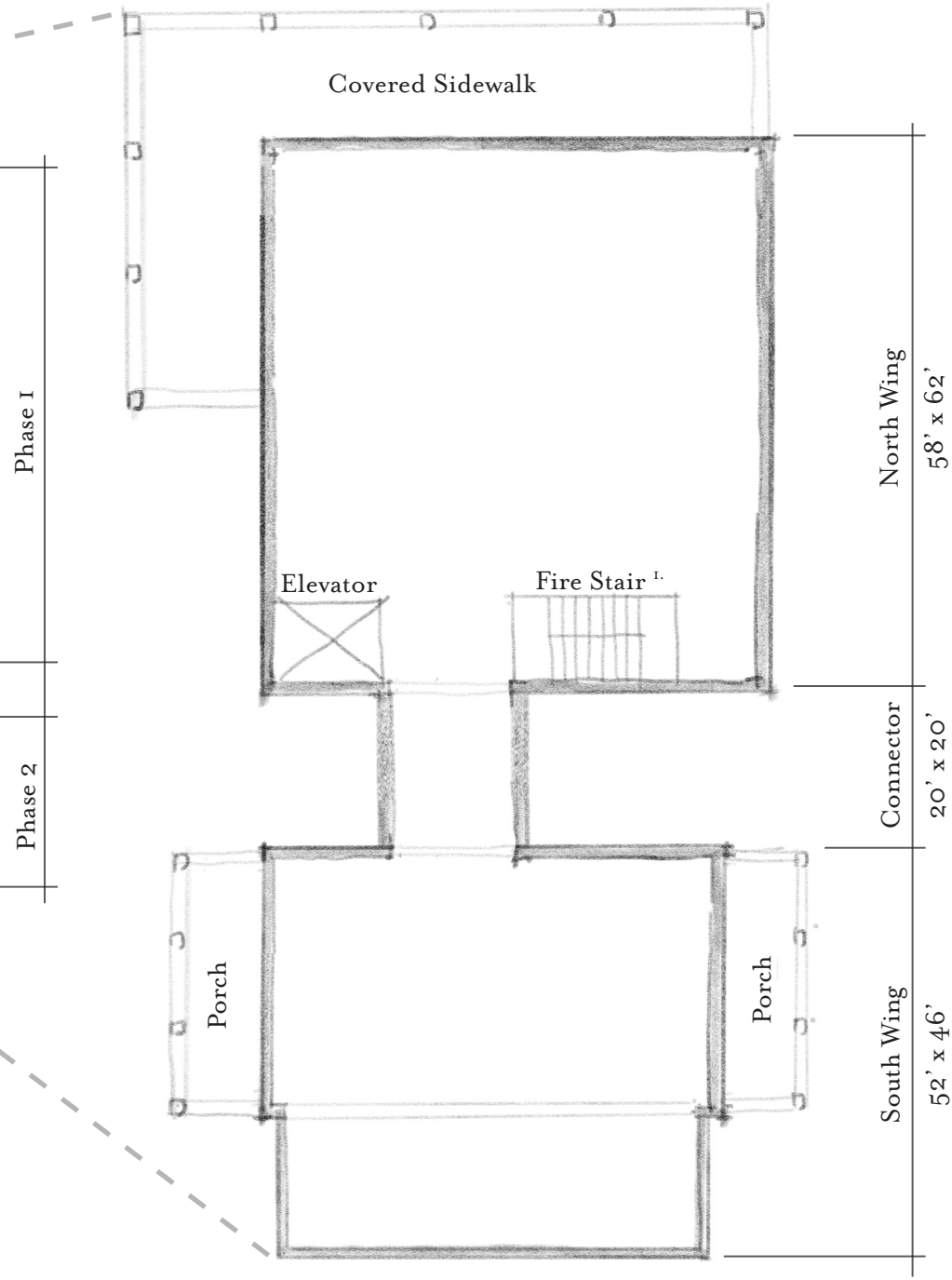
TOTALS

Buildings:	12,700 sf.
Parking:	50 spaces shown
Equivalent to 3.9 spaces per 1,000 sf of net square footage (80% of gross).	



CONCEPT 1 SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 50'-0"

New alignment of Whatcoat St.,
W. Georgia St., and Emory St.



Note:
1. Only one fire stair may be needed, but further study is required depending on interior layout and use.
2. First and second floor footprints are similar.
3. Floors may be subdivided into multiple tenants as needed.

CONCEPT 1 FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 20'-0"





Downtown Development Authority

TOWN CENTER VISION

Building Place from Heritage

October 10, 2019



HISTORICAL CONCEPTS
ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

This document was prepared by Historical Concepts for the Oxford Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and delivered on October 10, 2019. It is a planning tool to guide future economic development efforts for the town of Oxford. The DDA was established in 2017 with the following mandate:

OXFORD DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MISSION

Encourage the development and use of the Oxford “Town Center” in a manner that maximizes the long term benefit to the Oxford community.

- Make Oxford more desirable for current and future residents
- Increase economic viability of Oxford

STRATEGY

Develop attractive and desirable for-sale housing in the Town Center area while preserving green space and encouraging community scale commercial uses where appropriate and viable.

- Create a greater sense of place; a destination atmosphere
- Improve variety of quality housing options
- Retain/enhance walkable inviting neighborhoods
- More connectivity to College and cultural history

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Introduction

Oxford was founded in 1839 by the Methodist Church as the birthplace of Oxford College. It was intended as a self-sustaining agricultural community of higher learning. The original plan was laid out in support of this ideal. Over time, the lifestyle and economy changed and commercial businesses such as grocery and hardware stores popped up along Emory Street. A City Hall and Post Office also occupied parcels along Emory Street. While each of these functions may have served in some fashion as a gathering point, there was never intentionality in creating a civic or commercial center (in contrast to the university center) for the City of Oxford.

The **2018 Oxford Strategic Investment Plan** presented the concept of creating an intentional town center along Emory Street between Clark and George Streets. This proposal was made in the context of several initiatives aimed at strengthening Oxford's identity and economic sustainability.

This **Town Center Vision** advances the 2018 town center concept with a more thorough design and a conception of a realistic development plan with actionable goals.

Goals

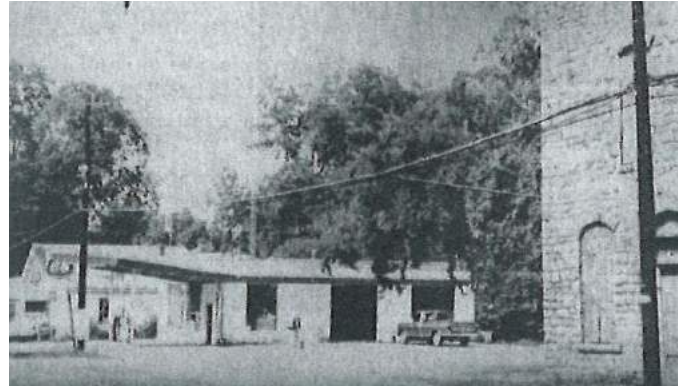
In September, 2019, Historical Concepts met with the members of the Oxford DDA to discuss their visions for the town center. The following are the **key stated goals**:

1. Create a sense of place.
2. Preserve character of Oxford.
3. Give people a reason to stay a while in Oxford.
4. Foster community gathering.
5. Avoid potential decline of "relevance."

It was also expressed that the resulting vision can have actionable steps that include near term and affordable tasks and projects in addition to long-range efforts.



View of Oxford College



Gas station, now demolished, at Emory/Clark Streets.



The Old Branham Store

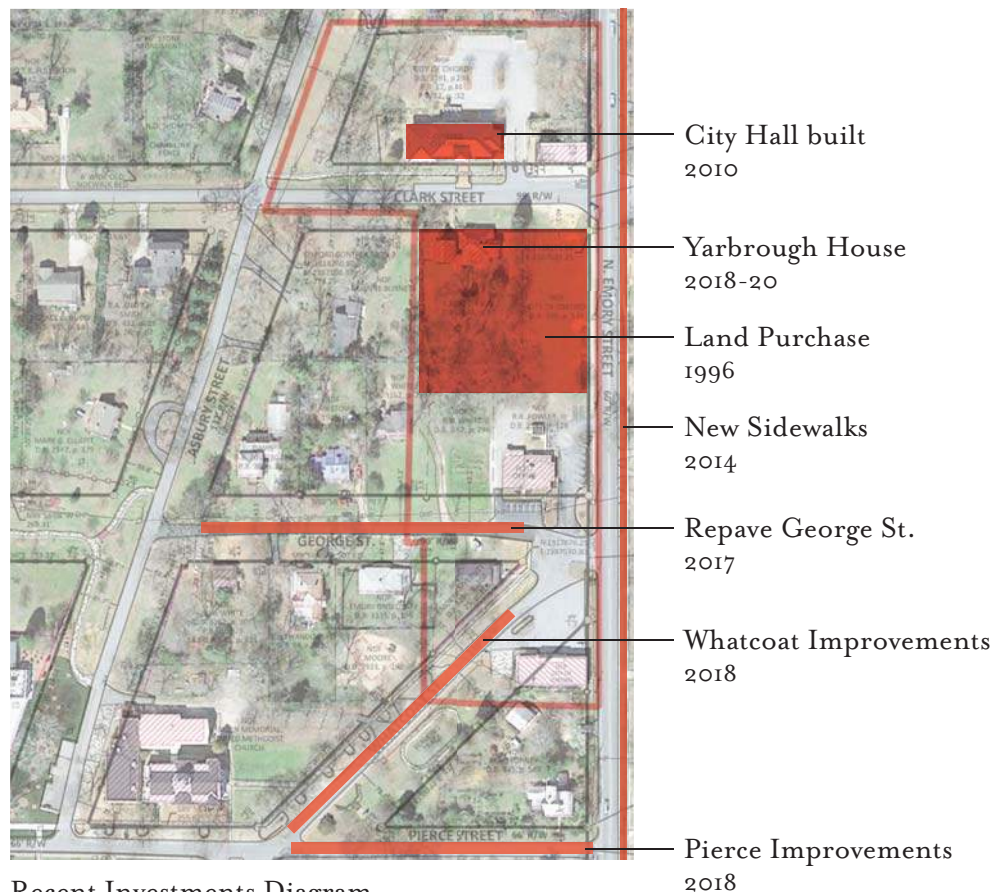


Allgood Grocery Store, 1950s

Existing Conditions and Observations

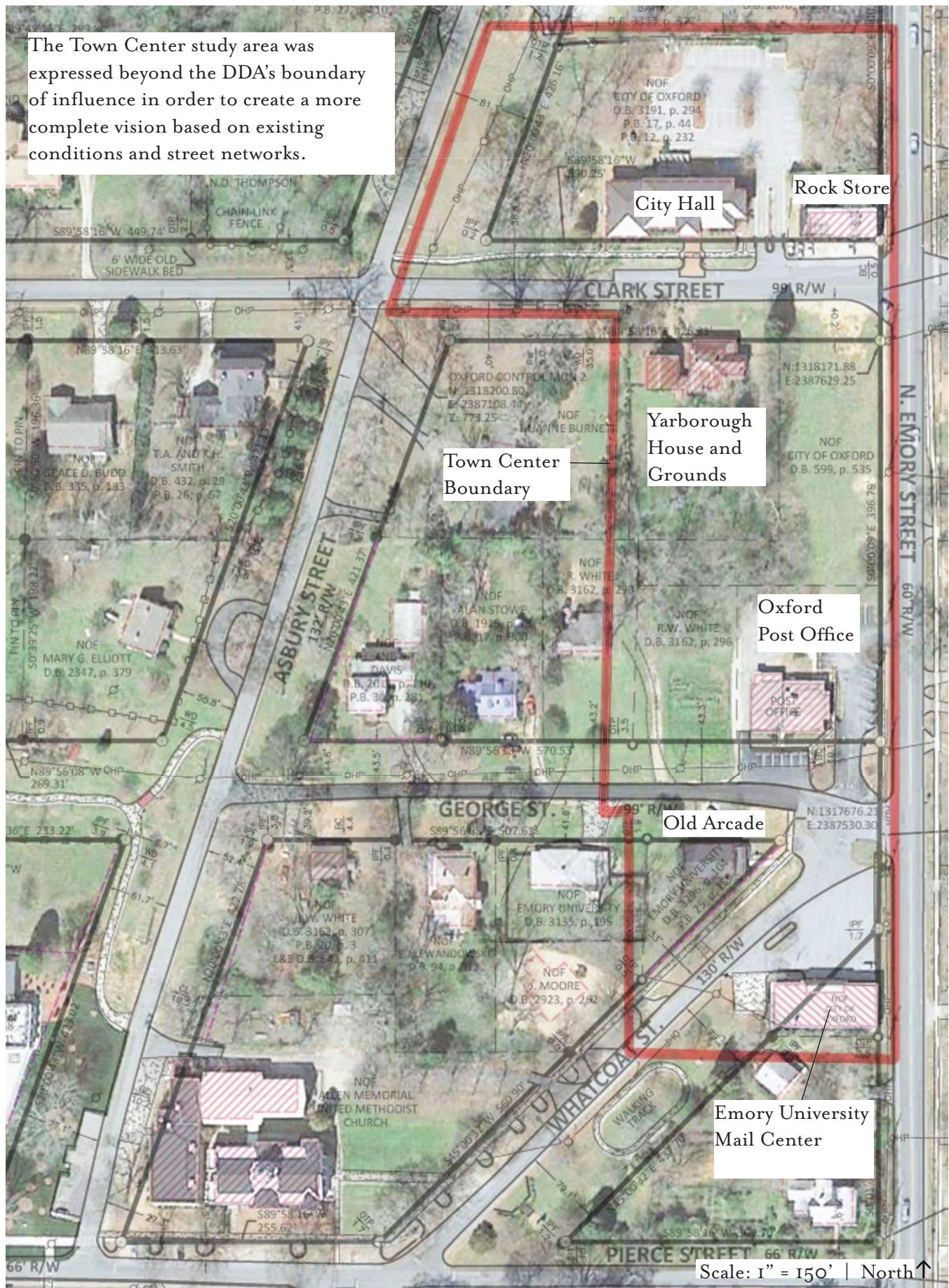
Historical Concepts makes the following observations of the existing conditions:

- Oxford's building distribution can be described as loose and not inter-related. While this can and should remain the condition for its historic residential areas, this is not the arrangement that successfully achieves the DDA's stated goals of the town center.
- The Post Office and weekly farmers' market serve as settings for frequent social interactions, however there is a decided lack of inviting, comfortable, and safe public space in the area now defined as town center.
- The Oxford Post Office, Emory University Mail Center, and Emory University offices at the Old Arcade already are acting as an "incubator" for town center uses. When retail and other services are mixed in, there will be a gravitational pull for town residents and students alike.
- Oxford and Emory University have made significant improvements and investments to this area in recent years. The diagram below depicts this. For these reasons, along with other, this location within Oxford is perfectly suited for a town center, and timing seems undeniably right.



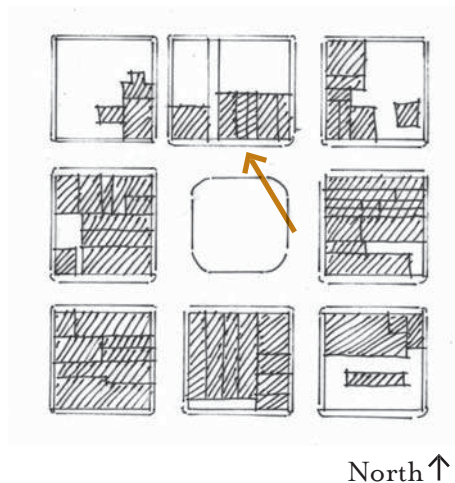
Recent Investments Diagram

The Town Center study area was expressed beyond the DDA's boundary of influence in order to create a more complete vision based on existing conditions and street networks.



Context and Comparison

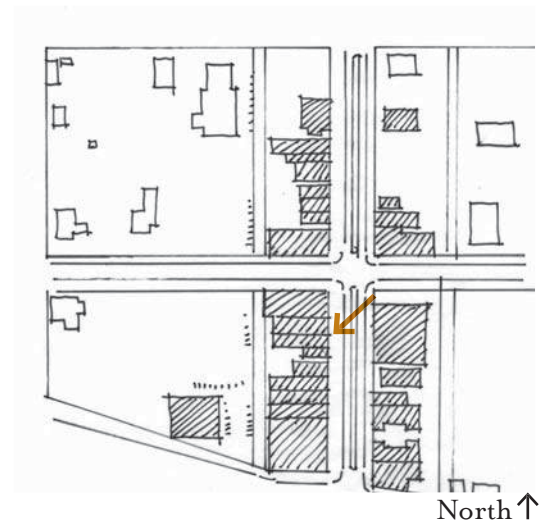
Many small towns of Georgia can be studied for lessons applicable to the creation of a town center for Oxford. The following comparisons show regional examples of town centers in varying forms: square, main street, main street and square. These forms require a tight congregation of buildings (building density) to frame the public space and (as depicted in the photos) provide a variety of uses close to one another. Building density is important to achieving vibrant, safe, pleasurable, active, and walkable streetscapes. In comparing these plans, notice the relative lack of building density found in Oxford and therefore lack of sense of place. **In order to give Oxford's Town Center a thriving sense of place (a gravitational pull), there has to be the right combination and density of uses, buildings, and people.** As Conyers, Senoia, and Old Town show, a tight building fabric is the essential backdrop within which to make this happen. **Oxford should focus any future development into its Town Center.** This can occur slowly but must take on the proper building density that matches other successful town centers.



Conyers, Georgia
Town Square
Scale: 1" = 400'



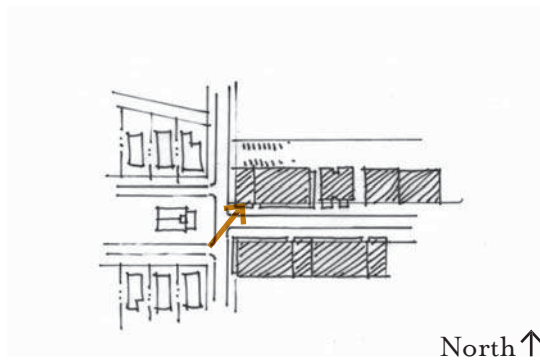
View looking down Floyd St. towards City Hall.



Senoia, Georgia
Intersection of Main and Travis Streets.
Scale: 1" = 400'



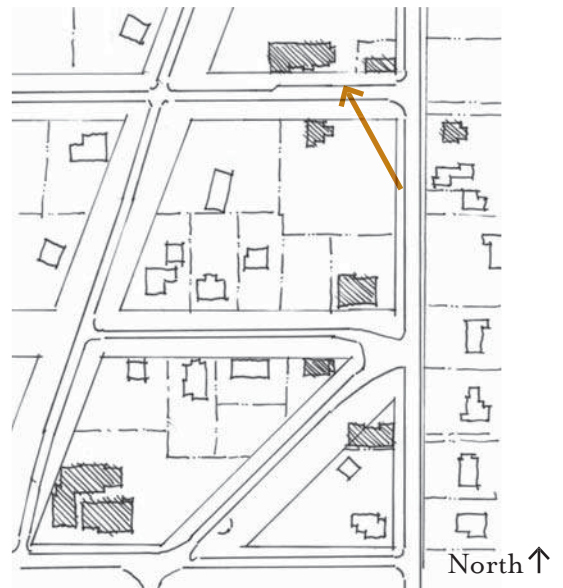
View looking at North West corner of Main and Seavy St.



Old Town, Columbus, Georgia
 Intersection of Dream Boat Drive and Massee Lane.
 Scale: 1" = 400'



View looking at North East at the corner of Dream Boat Dr. and Massee Ln.

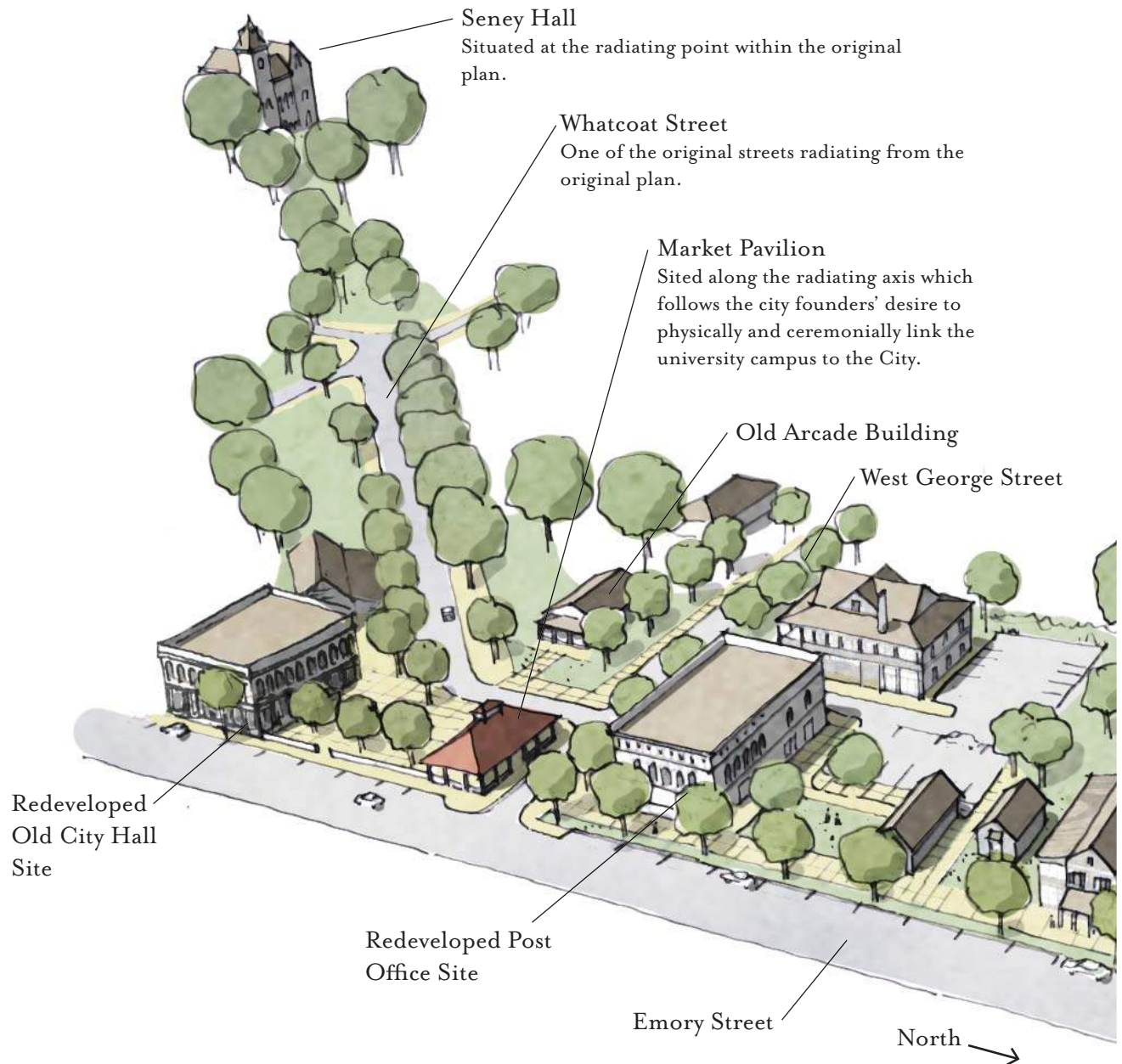


Oxford, Georgia
 Town Center Area
 Scale: 1" = 400'



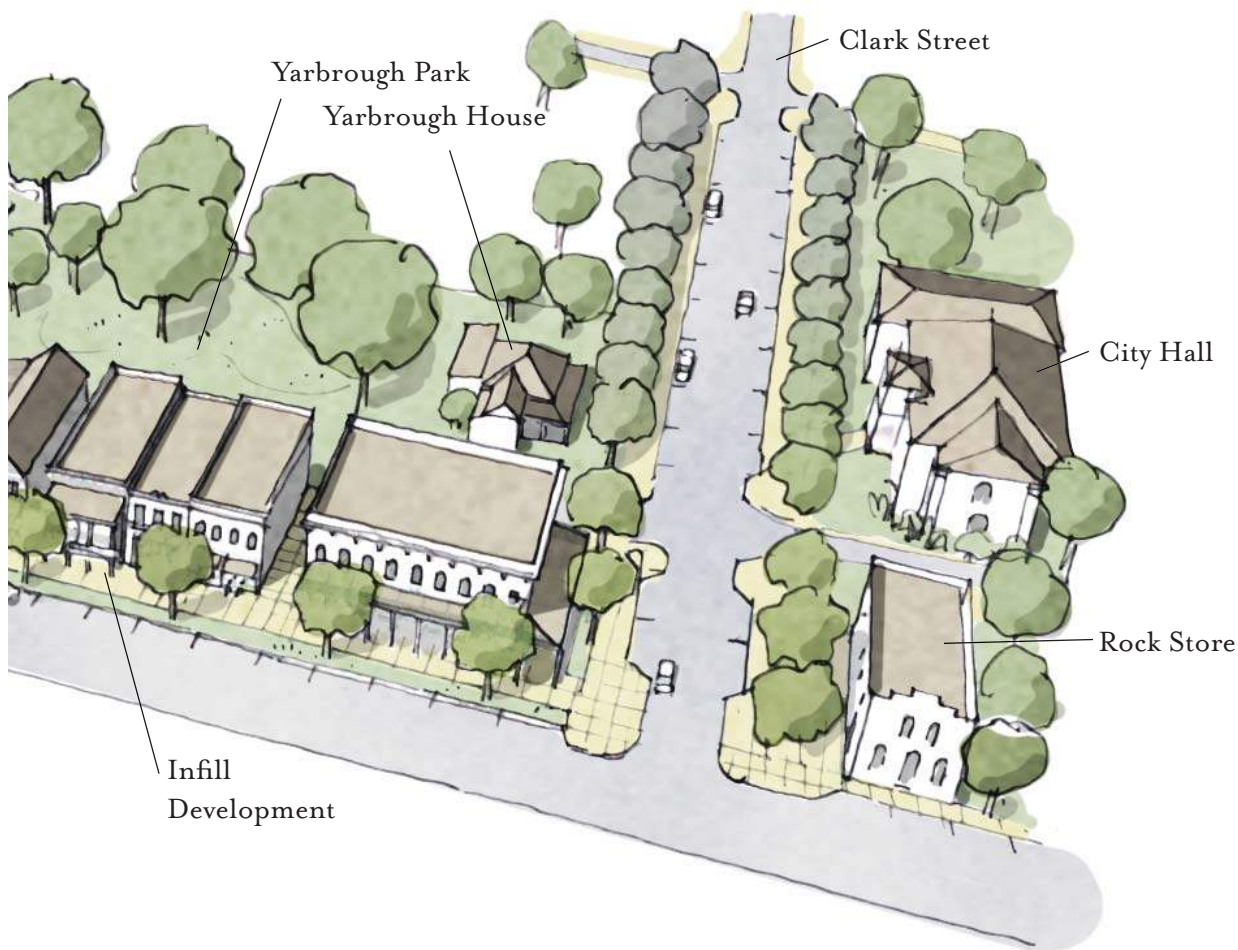
View looking North West towards City Hall and the Rock Store.

Town Center Vision



Aerial perspective drawing envisioning Oxford Town Center in 20 years.

The vision for Oxford's Town Center is of a place that compliments and preserves the existing town fabric while establishing new places (indoors and outdoors) for the community to gather, engage, and benefit. Such a vision is critical to further the identity of Oxford by creating a center that is unique in comparison to neighboring towns and authentic as it builds from the rich heritage of the city. This vision expands on recent and current investments of the city on one end (City Hall and Yarbrough House) and Emory University on the other (Pierce and Whatcoat street improvements and continual improvement in campus offerings). The original plan is redeemed with a new public space anchoring Whatcoat Street. Existing street infrastructure is enhanced and capitalized on (with parallel parking) rather than compromised (by investments in off-street facilities). Lastly, the vision has been conceived so that it can occur incrementally by different parties.



Development Phases

The following pages detail a design direction for the City of Oxford. These designs are organized into three phases (small images below) with estimated timeframes of development.

Phase 1 (less than 3 years)- Following the completion of the Yarbrough House, Phase 1 presents a major but achievable first move. By focusing on partnerships with Emory University and developers, Oxford can create a significant new public amenity and identity at the intersection of Whatcoat, George, and Emory streets in the form of a plaza framed by new buildings.

Phase 2 (3-10 years)- Anchors the intersections of Clark and George Streets with new buildings and create a block (with different parking), laying the foundation for future development in Phase 3.

Phase 3 (10-20 years)- Depicts the goal of completing the block between Clark and George Streets, as well as other redevelopment opportunities and infill within the town center study area.

Phase 1



Phase 2



Phase 3



Character Images

The following images depict the future, general character for Oxford's Town Center. Note the building heights are between 1-2 stories, fronts are close to the street, building density is greater than what currently exists in Oxford today, and the architecture is traditional in character.



Covington, GA



Livingston, MS



Jasper, GA



Roswell, GA



East Hampton, NY



Senoia, GA

Phase 1: Streetscape Improvements & Market Pavilion

1. Add street trees along West Clark Street.
2. Add street trees along the western side of Emory Street.
3. Reconfigure the intersection of Whatcoat Street and West George Street.
4. Add street trees and on-street parallel parking along the southern portion of West George Street.
5. Add additional perpendicular parking spaces and intermittent landscape strips along the western side of Whatcoat Street and parallel parking spaces along the eastern side of the street. Add street trees along the length of the street.
6. Eliminate the oversized and under utilized parking lot north of the Emory University Mail Center and create an open air plaza for markets and festivals.
7. Activate the local community by repurposing the reconfigured right of way into an open air market pavilion. This building could be utilized regularly by the local Emory University agricultural student body while also providing a space to sell local produce to the surrounding community. This shell space can also be utilized for community gatherings and rented out by local businesses and residents for private use. (See the following page for more details).
8. Complete the Yarbrough House renovation and consider reprogramming the building to a more appropriate adaptive reuse such as accomodating a non-profit historic commission, community center, or meeting place for local organizations. Any work or improvement of the backyard should be kept to a minimum so that trees can remain protected and those funds can be allocated elsewhere for a bigger impact.
9. Assign a more active use to the Old Arcade building to help activate the new plaza.
10. Tear down the Old City Hall and build a new, two-story structure to better frame the new plaza and provide more uses to help activate the new plaza. (The new building is shown north of the current Old City Hall footprint.)



A well-designed plaza can host many activities.



Open-air pavilion as a gathering spot.

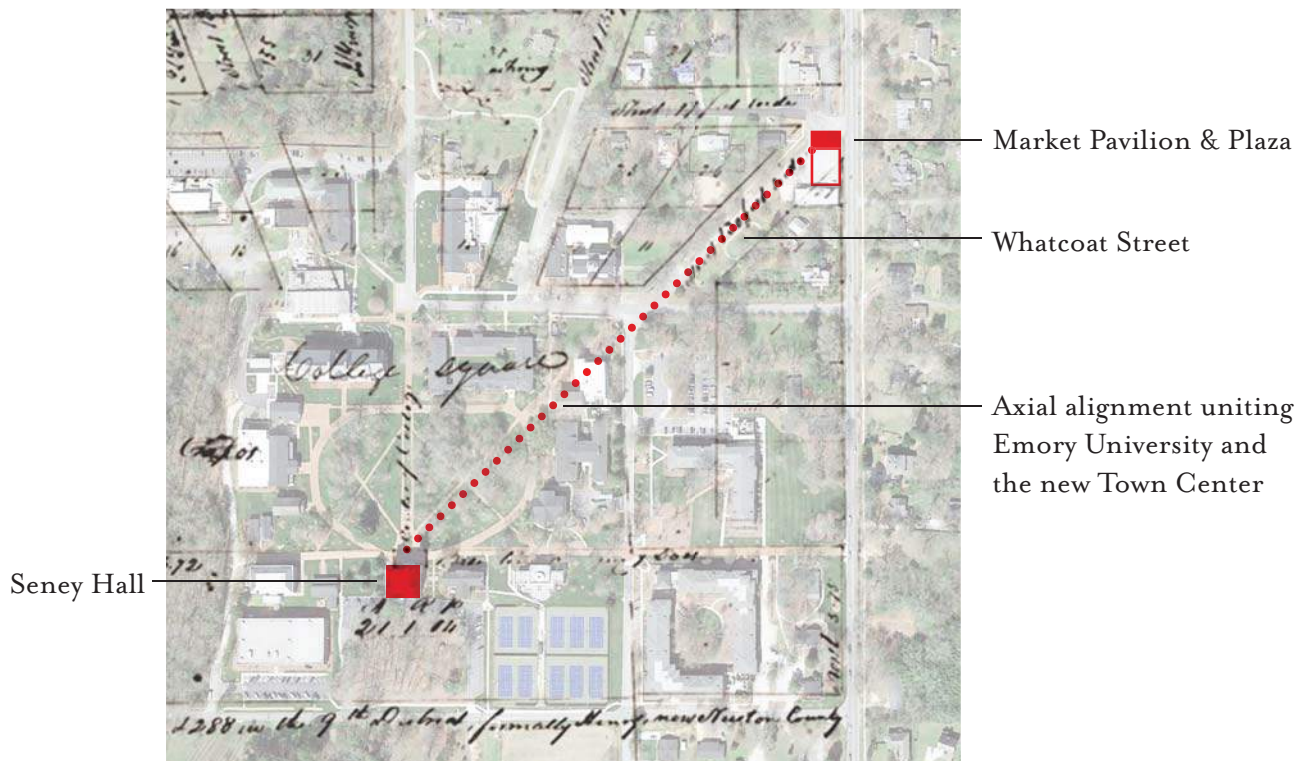


Phase 1: Market Pavilion

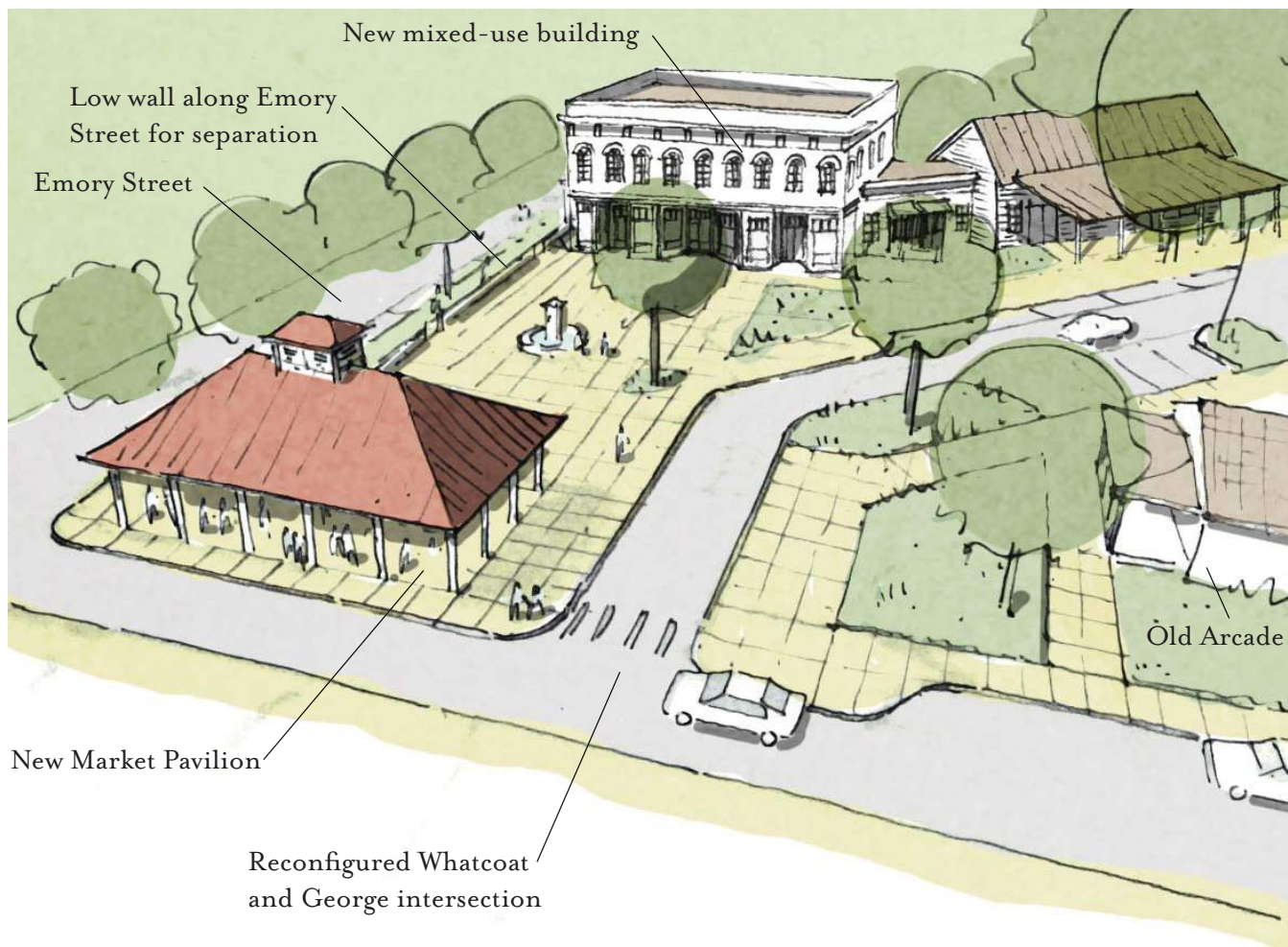
Oxford's uniquely large rights-of-way provide many physical opportunities for community infrastructure. The perspective drawing to the right shows a vision for a reconfigured intersection at the streets of Whatcoat, George, and Emory. The intersection is improved and made more efficient by slightly rerouting Whatcoat into George with a "T" intersection. The residual space left between Whatcoat Street and Emory Street is almost 70 feet which is room enough for an appropriately scaled open-air market pavilion and new hardscaped plaza.

The Market Pavilion can be constructed with low-cost materials and details and can be a simple open-air structure. It acts as a termination point for the original plan (see diagram below) ceremonially linking it to Emory University's Seney Hall. The Plaza can serve as overflow space during market day, as a starting point for the annual July 4 parade, and as a space for daily meetings or interactions.

The existing Emory University Mail Center should be replaced with a new, two-story structure that better frames the new plaza and provides more uses to help activate the new public space. A wing addition can angle off from the main building along Whatcoat Street, helping to frame that street and provide additional square footage as needed.



Original 1837 town plan overlaid onto aerial photograph.



Open air Farmers Market pavilion as a hub for activity.



Plaza space successfully framed by buildings and activated by different uses.

Phase 2: Anchor Buildings and Foundation for Future Growth

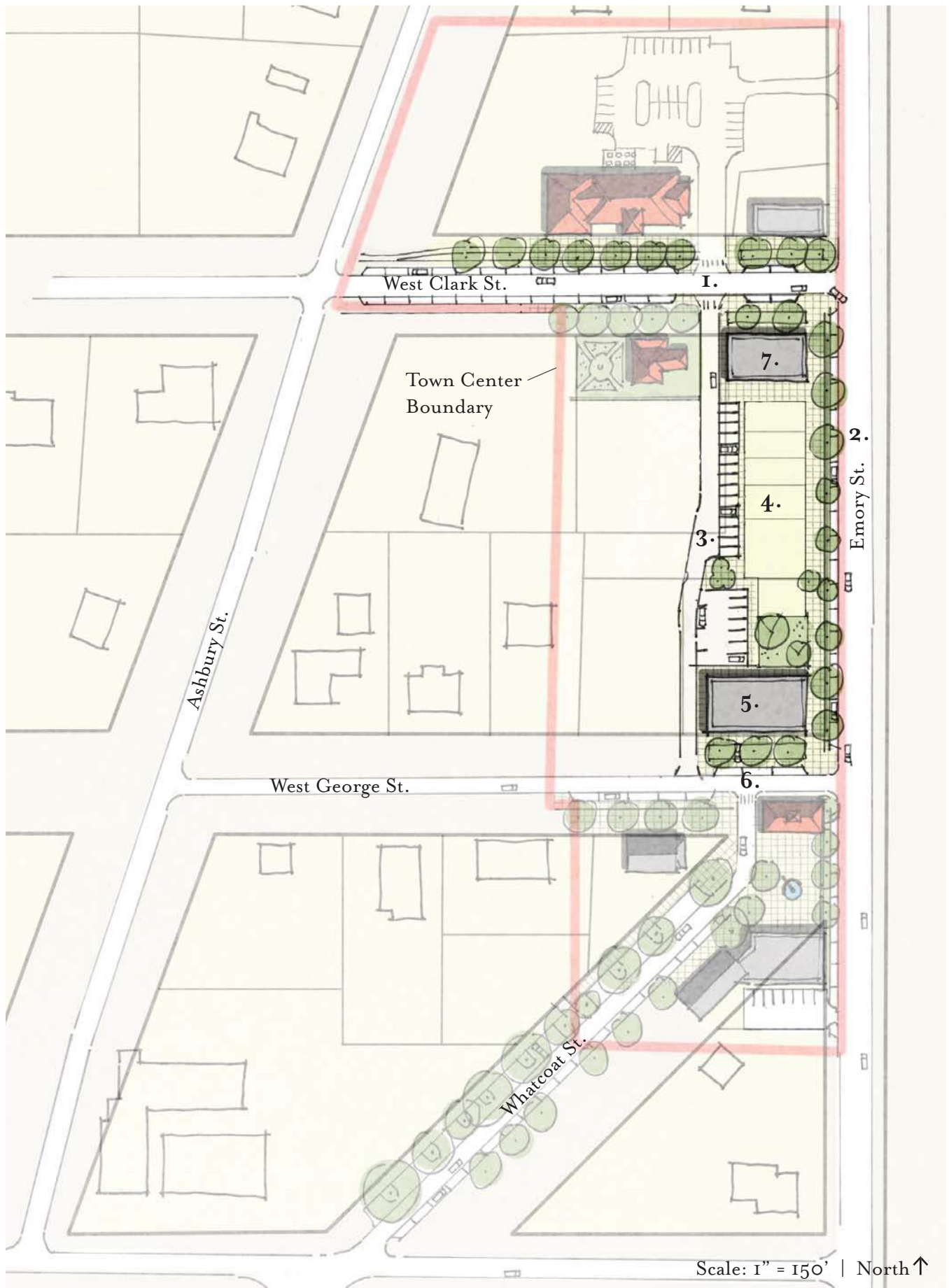
1. Add on-street parallel parking along the length of West Clark Street. (See Appendix B for a parking study.)
2. Add on-street parallel parking along the west side of Emory Street.
3. Create an alley between West Clark St. and West George St. to consolidate access to new development and provide additional off-street parking for existing and future development.
4. Create a commercial main street frontage along Emory Street with the addition of sidewalks and developable commercial lots for future infill.
5. Working with the property owner and USPS, demolish the existing post office building and its parking lots and replace with a two-story building to better anchor the corner with the Market Pavilion. It should house a mix of uses that include a post office.
6. Add street trees and on-street parallel parking to north side of West George Street.
7. New two-story building to anchor the corner of West Clark Street and Emory Street. This building could contain a coffee shop on the ground floor and other uses above.



New streetscape along Emory Street Should anticipate future development.



Establishing a deeper sidewalk on Emory Street provides an opportunity to create spaces in front of the buildings.



Phase 3: Intentional Infill and Partnerships

1. Encourage infill development of lots defined in Phase 2.
2. Encourage infill development on adjacent, underutilized lots.
3. Redevelop the Old Arcade site to a more appropriate civic or commercial use.
4. Continue infill development by utilizing available lots as needed along Emory Street.
5. Bring additional commercial or civic use to the Ashbury Street side of the block.
6. Relocate the Old Arcade building and repurpose with a new commercial or civic use.
7. Expand the parking lot behind City Hall as needed.
8. Option to create a low-impact, permeable overflow parking as needed on the Yarborough House lot.

In addition to the above and previous phases, consider the following opportunities (and refer to the *Strategic Investment Plan* dated June 13, 2018):

- East Clark Property.
- Development east of Emory Street.
- Fletcher Street (see Appendix C).
- Underutilized parcels adjacent to the Town Center.

Total Parking and Square Footage Count Shown within the Town Center Boundary

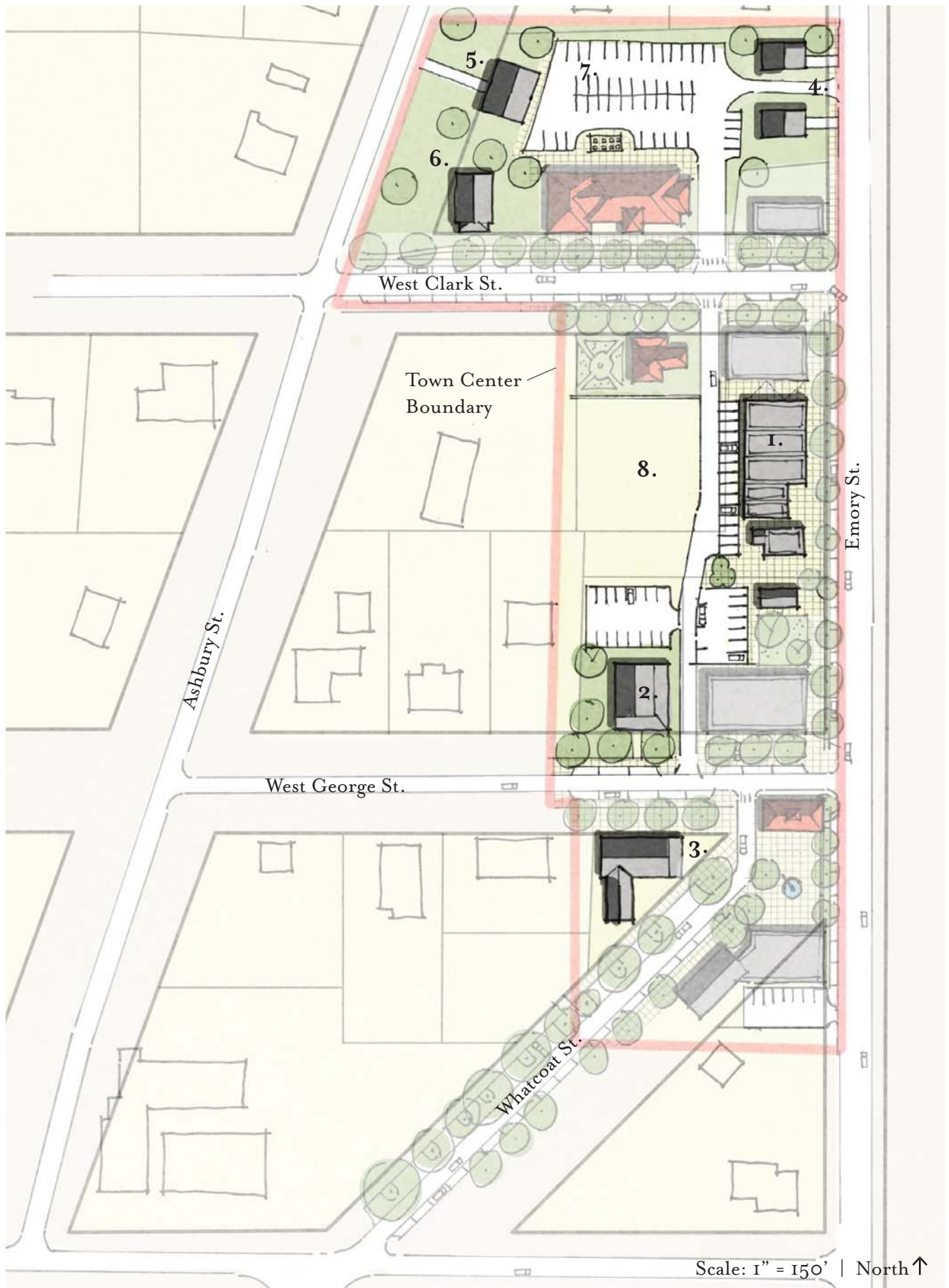
Parking Count	On Street Parking Spaces	116
	Off-Street Parking Spaces	98
	Total Parking Spaces	214
Commercial Square Footage	Ground Level Square Footage	82,000
	Upper Level Square Footage	53,000
	Total Square Footage	135,000



Low-impact permeable parking lot makes for a more inviting experience.



Community greenspace camouflages the entry to an alleyway and off-street parking.



Work Program

Phase	Entity	Task
Phase 1 0-3 yr.	Oxford DDA	1. Coordinate with adjacent Property Owners regarding selling property or redeveloping according to the vision.
		2. Work with City on the design of Whatcoat Street , the new Plaza, Market Pavilion, and new Whatcoat building.
		3. Promote the idea of new commercial development to town residents by hosting pop-up shops, festivals, etc. in the area (the success of this will better attract developers).
	City of Oxford	1. Complete Yarborough house renovation and reprogramming.
		2. Design and build Whatcoat Street improvements, new Plaza, Market Pavilion, and new Whatcoat building.
	Emory University	1. Strategize what university functions could work in the town center context.
		2. Partner with the City to redevelop the Whatcoat buiding.
		3. Assign a more active function to the Old Arcade building.
	Other	1. Historic Commission or other to keep Yarborough house active through programming and active uses.
		2. Civic or Special Interest Groups to explore programs and events opportunities with Emory University to begin to build ties between the university/students and residents.
		3. Private developers to be engaged to build new buildings within the town center area.

Note: **Bold tasks** indicate a new tasks for a phase.

Phase	Entity	Task
Phase 2 3-10 yr.	Oxford DDA	3. Promote the idea of new commercial development to town residents by hosting pop-up shops, festivals, etc. in the area (the success of this will better attract developers).
		4. Work to find development partners to build buildings at the corners of Clark and George Streets.
		5. Work to find development partners to build buildings at the center of the town center block.
	City of Oxford	3. Prepare the town center frontage: bury the power lines from Clark to Pierce Street; install parallel parking on west side of Emory Street; plant street trees.
		4. Prepare the town center block rear access: build new north/south alley with parking
		5. Plant street trees along W. Clark Street in the area of City Hall and Yarborough House.
	Emory University	6. West Clark Street improvements with the addition of parallel parking between Emory and Asbury Streets.
		4. Explore Programs and event opportunities with the Civic or Special Interest Groups to begin to build ties between the university/students and residents.
	Other	1. Historic Commission or other to keep Yarborough house active through programming and active uses.
		2. Civic or Special Interest Groups to explore programs and events opportunities with Emory University to begin to build ties between the university/students and residents.
		3. Private developers to be engaged to build new buildings within the town center area.
Phase 3 10-20 yr.	Oxford DDA	5. Work to find development partners to build buildings at the center of the town center block.
		6. Explore opportunities to occupy the remainder of the City Hall block with additional buildings and uses.
	Emory University	5. Relocate university functions to new buildings, with goal of creating synergies.
		6. Relocate the Old Arcade building. Redevelop site to a more appropriate commercial building.
	Other	1. Historic Commission or other to keep Yarborough house active through programming and active uses.
		2. Civic or Special Interest Groups to explore programs and events opportunities with Emory University to begin to build ties between the university/students and residents.
		3. Private developers to be engaged to build new buildings within the town center area.

Parking

On-Street vs. Off-Street

As the town strategizes ways for possible public-private partnerships in developing the town center, one category for creative problem solving and reduced cost is parking. If the city strives for a goal of building on-street parking versus off-street lots there can be much to gain.

On-street parallel parking has the following benefits over off-street parking lots:

- 1. It is more efficient and requires less asphalt. Only eight additional feet of width is needed along a street; in Oxford’s case, this is readily accommodated within the large rights-of-way.
- 2. Creates a safety barrier between pedestrians and moving vehicles.
- 3. Can provide spaces closer to destination.
- 4. All on-street parking spaces are accessed by the existing street. All off-street parking lots have to have their own “streets”, which increases redundancy, paved area, and costs.
- 5. On-street parking can be more aesthetically pleasing than off-street parking.

The diagram on the adjacent page compares the city hall parking lot to Clark Street if parallel spaces were installed. Just by adding parallel parking on one block of Clark Street, all spaces in the city hall parking lot could be replaced. The table below details the differences. **Parallel parking spaces would be 68% more efficient and less costly than those in the city hall parking lot.**

	Number of Parking Spaces	Asphalt Area	Cost of Asphalt (at \$5/sf)	Area per Parking Space	Cost per Parking Space
City Hall Lot	33	18,100 sf	\$90,500	548 sf	\$2,740
Clark Street Parallel	34	5,980 sf	\$29,900	176 sf	\$880

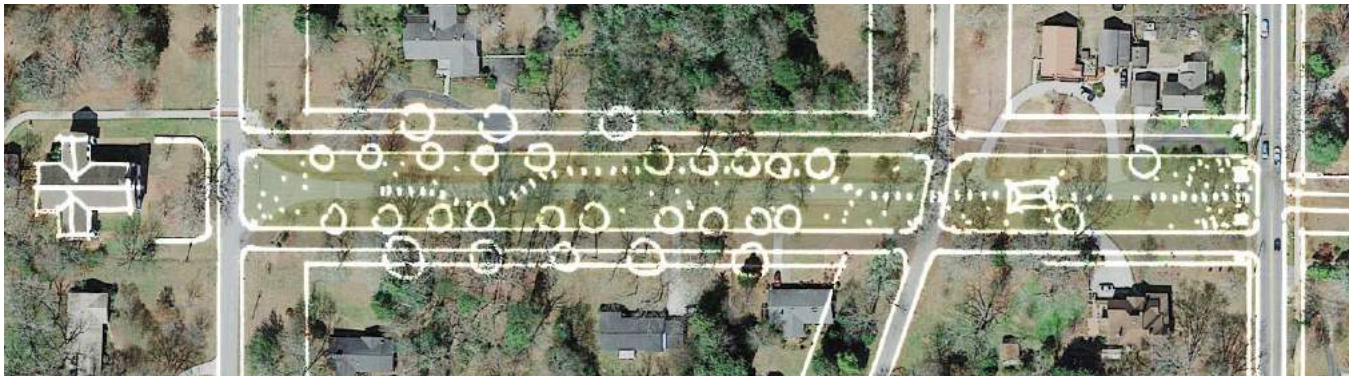


Aerial view of West Clark St. comparing existing off-street parking lot spaces at City Hall to the number of parallel parking spaces that could be accommodated on street.

Fletcher Street

The following notes on Fletcher Street were included in the Strategic Investment Plan dated June 13, 2018. It is being duplicated here because of Fletcher's proximity to the DDA Town Center boundary and its potential applicability to the goals expressed in this document regarding the revitalization of the town center. It also marks a third (and fourth) gateway connecting the town center and completing the series of gateways outlines in the strategic investment plan.

Oxford's ROWs are wide and mostly under utilized. While these are a vestige of the original plan, several have been taken over by development or dedicated as green space. Therefore, a level of erosion has already occurred which begs the question of their value as merely corridors for travel as most are today. Can these ROW's, some as wide as 165', be better utilized and can they possibly even generate revenue? The conceptual plan at right presents an idea for reconceiving **Fletcher Street as a two-acre linear park flanked by one-way streets**. The driving force for this idea is that it could spawn opportunities to subdivide existing residential lots on either side for infill development. The example at right shows ten new residential lots. One-way streets run the edges of the ROW and a linear park fills the center. This space becomes the **welcome mat to Old Church** and can play a major role in the annual 4th of July parade and other future events that could be anchored by Old Church. This potential isn't confined to Fletcher Street alone: it could be replicated on other streets as well (Wesley Street, in particular).



Aerial photograph of Fletcher Street with proposed park sketch overlay.



Concept plan showing a linear park and potential infill lots along Fletcher Street.



Fletcher Street looking toward Old Church. Dashed lines indicate proposed width of new linear park.

Drawings contained herein
are conceptual in nature
and are not released for
construction.

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