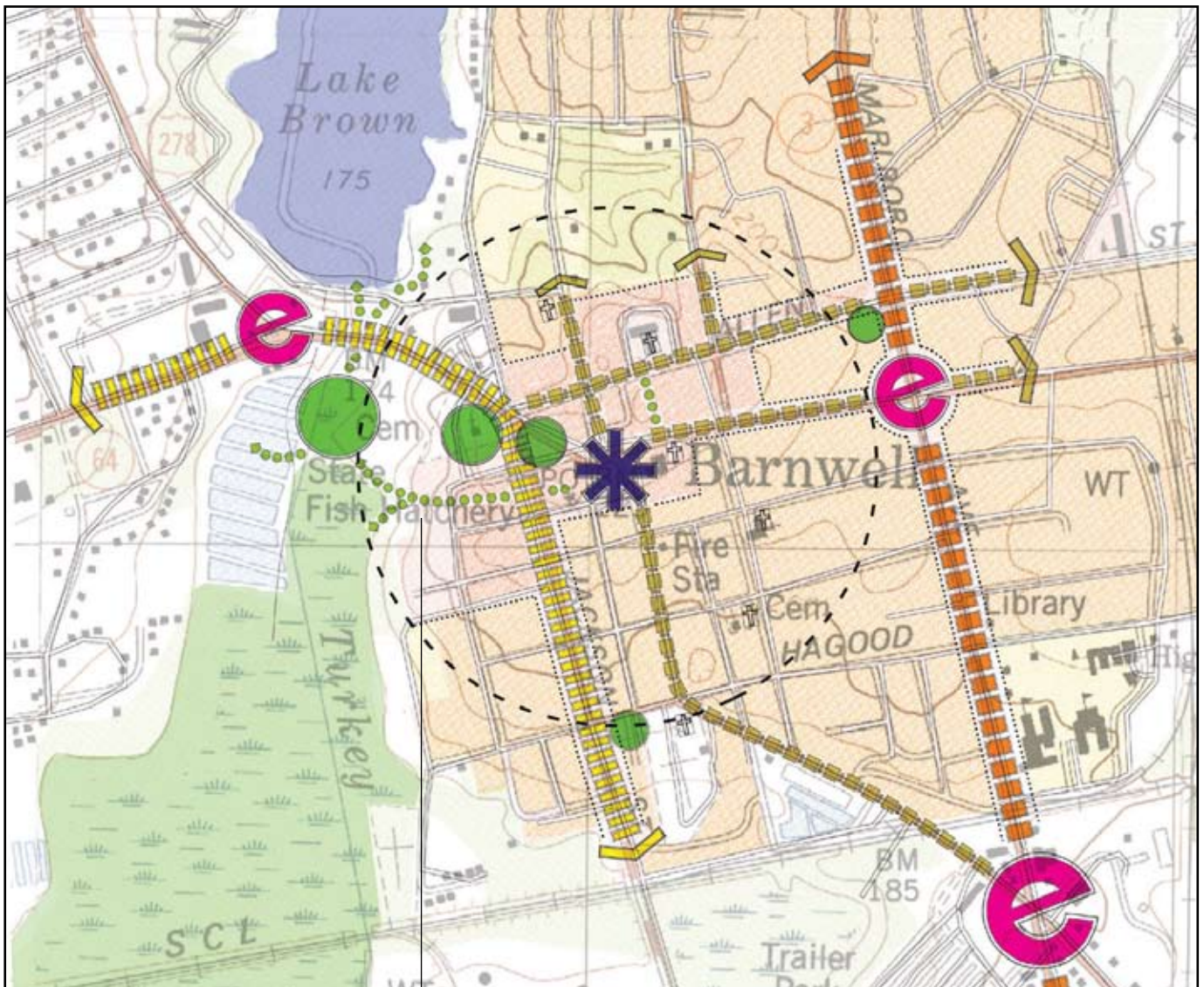


2.4 Strategy #4

Barnwell at Play: The Recreation, Parks and Events Plan



Existing Conditions Analysis Map

2.4.1 Existing Conditions

An existing conditions map (see previous page) was prepared to use as a reference in the physical design and planning stages of this process. Main corridors, potential arrival points, green space, and physical icons (the circle) were identified in order that the physical design would be influenced by what already exists.

Barnwell, because of its location in the state, is not a junction for any major thoroughfares. Simply put, there are no major roads that intersect the city. Hwy 278 is a North to South corridor through town. The other main entry point for the city is on Hwy 70 coming from the east. Hwy 64 enters from the west and is a direct connection to the Savannah River site. There is no bypass which enables use for potential capture of visitors directly downtown. Although there are no major thoroughfares, Allen Street handles a large amount of traffic to and from the Savannah River Site. Barnwell is also on the beach traffic back roads, for areas like Augusta, GA and Aiken SC.

2.4.2 Entry/Gateways

Barnwell currently has several gateways marked with signage announcing arrival and setting a visual boundary for the town limits. There are three key gateway opportunities in Barnwell that will increase the sense of arrival.

The most important area of focus is at the intersection of Hwy 278 (Jackson Street) and Hwy 3 (Marlboro Avenue). Traffic on 278 has the option of branching onto Hwy 3 and bypassing town. This is a key gateway opportunity for not only directing traffic toward the town center, but also announcing the beginning of a potential arrival sequence.

The second key area of focus is on Hwy 70 (Main Street) at the intersection of Hwy 3 (Marlboro Avenue). Hwy 70 is an important entrance for the town. Currently the only existing signage on Hwy 70 is located several miles from the downtown center. While this signage identifies a visual limit to the town, it does not announce arrival. A lack of an arrival statement placed at this key intersection reduces downtown traffic and provides no sense of arrival.

The most unique of the three key gateway opportunities is located on Hwy 278/64 (Dunbarton Blvd.) There is a significant amount of grade change as one draws closer to the center of town. Entering town from Hwy 278/64 gives the feeling that the downtown core is on the top of a hill. There is a strong opportunity to incorporate gateway signage into the grade in the form of a retaining wall or other vertical element. This area also encompasses the Brown Lake and a crossing of Turkey Creek.



Existing and proposed conditions photo-rendering of gateway treatment at Hwy 278 / 64



Existing and proposed conditions photo-rendering of a typical entrance gateway



2.4.3 Green/Park Space

The potential for future recreation park development is excellent. Current plans call for the development of a recreation park on the outskirts of town. The existing DNR fish hatchery facility as well as the adjacent land provides more than enough space for a baseball and recreation complex. This green space is within a five minute walk of downtown and would be a tremendous asset for the community to be more involved in the vitality of downtown through recreational gathering. This green space would create a direct pedestrian connection with shops and other downtown facilities. It would also link to trails connecting to Lake Brown. The existing topography lends itself to the potential for a 250 to 300 person amphitheater as well as signage opportunities.



Existing and proposed conditions photo-rendering of Fuller Park

Lake Edgar Brown is another tremendous existing asset to the vitality of downtown. A trail system is already in place along the span of the lake. However, a connection still needs to be made with the downtown via streetscape and green space enhancements along Dunbarton Blvd. Turkey Creek, which feeds into Lake Edgar Brown, continues under Dunbarton Blvd and into the existing DNR (proposed park) site. The enhancement of the creek bed as well as enhancements to the bridge over Turkey Creek will provide an excellent physical as well as visual connection between Lake Edgar Brown, the park site, and downtown.

2.4.4 Pedestrian/Safety Enhancements

2.4.4.1 Streetscapes

Allen Street, Jackson Street and Dunbarton Street are all very wide for their uses (and proximity to downtown) and should be enhanced by lane narrowing, parking and landscaped medians. These reductions and medians will provide a more pedestrian scale to the streetscape. Ornamental lighting and site furniture should be placed along all the major corridors and should be consistent throughout the downtown to help solidify the branding and marketing theme. Street tree plantings will also help encourage a theme through the downtown area. Trees should be placed approx. 50' on center where room is available. These trees should vary in species to address the street they are placed on. Median plantings should be planted with columnar canopy trees and understory flowering trees. Shrubs and ground covers should be placed at the ends of the medians for most visual effect and to reduce blocking of vehicular visibility triangles.

2.4.4.2 Courthouse Parking and Traffic Flow

The parking and traffic pattern surrounding the courthouse was one of the biggest complaints that we heard from our public input sessions. There are key problems that need to be addressed to alleviate the current traffic problems. The current traffic pattern around the court house is counterclockwise and in two directions. We can alleviate this by the making the following changes.

1st: Redirect traffic on Wall Street to one way towards Main Street. The existing street can be changed by merely re-striping the existing street. The existing corner lot at Wall Street and Allen should be converted to a one story parking structure. The existing grade change lends itself perfectly for this change. County and courthouse parking could use the main level and public parking could use the top floor since it would be level with Main Street.

2nd: Changing Dunbarton Street between Main and Allen to one way north bound and parking on both sides. The existing street width would allow for the existing curbs to remain and parking be added to the closed south bound lane. This change along with Wall Street would create a clockwise traffic pattern circling the courthouse, so persons looking for a parking space could continue around until they found a space. These changes would also alleviate the five point intersection by reducing the number of streets at the intersection.

3rd: Realignment of Main Street to Jackson Street and signaling the Jackson and Main Street Intersection. Main Street would be re-aligned to make the though traffic head towards Jackson Street. Incoming traffic from Hwy 278/64 would turn right onto Jackson Street and then turn Left onto Main Street this flow would remove the current conflict of the courthouse traffic. Signalization of the Jackson and Main Street intersection will also help promote the pedestrian connection from downtown to the new park site. Angular parking and a landscaped median on Jackson Street will help give visitors a sense of arrival to the downtown and Main Street.



2.4.4.3 The “Circle”

Perhaps the most prominent feature of Barnwell is the unique circle formation in the core of downtown. With shops and public sector buildings defining the area, it is perhaps the greatest asset to the town. Several improvements need to be made to this historical icon in terms of making the space more pedestrian friendly. Currently the roads are too wide allowing traffic to speed around the circle making pedestrians uncomfortable. The current parking configuration makes the roadway feel even larger. We would recommend the following changes to make a safer downtown circle.

1st: Leave the existing Circle location as it is and narrow the travel lanes creating larger sidewalks in front of the existing buildings. This will allow street trees and site furniture be placed along the building side of the circle.

2nd: Add pedestrian safe havens at the corners of the circle. The existing painted medians should be planted and new barrier curbs installed to help reduce speeding through the circle. Landscape and sidewalk islands at each corner of the circle will also help reduce the traffic speeds and shorten the length the pedestrians have to cross getting to and from the circle. Landscaping of the circle to create a more shady location will help with the getting people to use the space.

3rd: The current fountain in the center of the circle does not promote the uniqueness of the circle. We propose that a zero pool children's fountain with sprays jets be incorporated so as to promote active use of the space, as well as enhance visual and pedestrian appeal. This fountain could be set to music or made to be interactive. The level pool area could be used at Christmas time for placement of the town Christmas tree.



Proposed enhancements to the Circle