

SUMMER 2015

# Chamblee

GEORGIA



GEORGIA DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE PARTNERSHIP



# Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partners and Special Acknowledgements



## Georgia Municipal Association

**Chris Higdon**, Community Development Manager

Created in 1933, GMA is a voluntary, non-profit organization that provides leadership, tools, and services to assist local governments in becoming more innovative, effective, and responsive.



## Georgia Cities Foundation

**Perry Hiott**, Director of Community Development

Established in 1999, GCF is a non-profit organization that assists cities in their efforts to revitalize and enhance downtown areas by serving as a partner and facilitator in funding capital projects through a revolving loan fund.



## Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia

**Danny Bivins**, Public Service Associate

**Kaitlin McShea**, Senior Designer

The Institute of Government works with public officials throughout Georgia and around the world to improve governance and people's lives. The Institute has helped government leaders navigate change and forge strong directions for a better Georgia.



## College of Environment and Design, University of Georgia

**Juan Da Silva**, Renaissance Fellow

The UGA College of Environment and Design hosts various degree programs, including landscape architecture, historic preservation, and environmental planning and design as well as offering a specialized certificate program in environmental ethics.

## Special Thanks



## City of Chamblee, Georgia

**Adam Causey**, Economic Development Manager

**Marc Johnson**, City Manager

**Eric Clarkson**, Mayor



## Chamblee Downtown Development Authority

**David Carter**, Chairperson

**Van Pappas**, Vice Chairperson

**Ronni French**, Secretary

**Paige Perkins**, Treasurer

**Leslie Robson**

**Brian Ray**

**John W. Boggs, Jr.**



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# Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership

Working with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government and the Georgia Cities Foundation, the Georgia Municipal Association identified and selected member cities with specific downtown or town center needs. The City of Chamblee was chosen as one of three communities to take part in the Downtown Renaissance Fellows Program this summer.

Juan Da Silva, an undergraduate landscape architecture student from the University of Georgia's College of Environment and Design, spent his summer working directly with Adam Causey, Chamblee's economic development manager. He provided visions, design solutions, and other technical services to enhance the sense of community in Chamblee's central business district.

During the 12-week fellowship, Da Silva and two other Renaissance Fellows, Megan Hull and Tianyi Jiang, worked full time at the Institute of Government's Spectrum Studio under the supervision of Danny Bivins and Kaitlin McShea.



# GATEWAY

mural concept



Signage is essential to the revitalization of a downtown. It allows visitors and even locals to move efficiently through cities. Gateway signage creates a visitor's first impression of a city. It is what announces the presence of and entrance into a city.

Currently, Chamblee's signage is appropriate and fits the city's historically industrial nature. The signs have an industrial look that resembles the rails of the railroad. Some signs serve as gateways, while others are used for wayfinding. However, there are opportunities for additional gateway signage.



Adding bold signage to Peachtree Boulevard would enhance the look and feel of this high-traffic road, especially on both the north and south intersections with Peachtree Road. This signage could tie into the murals that are located within the city under the overpasses of the railroad and Peachtree Road.

Chamblee has an impressive mural painting on the walls of an underpass. It mural invites visitors and residents into the city. This mural concept could be extended to create even more of a sense of place.



### *Mural Gateway*

**Before**

There is a retaining wall at the southern intersection of Peachtree Boulevard and Peachtree Road that is becoming dirty and overgrown. Currently, a street sign serves as a gateway welcoming cars into historic downtown Chamblee, but it is becoming overgrown.

**After**

Although the ownership is unknown, this retaining wall could be a city asset, providing gateway signage to the downtown. In this rendering, the wall has been pressure-washed and a mural painting welcomes visitors to downtown Chamblee.



# STREETSCAPE

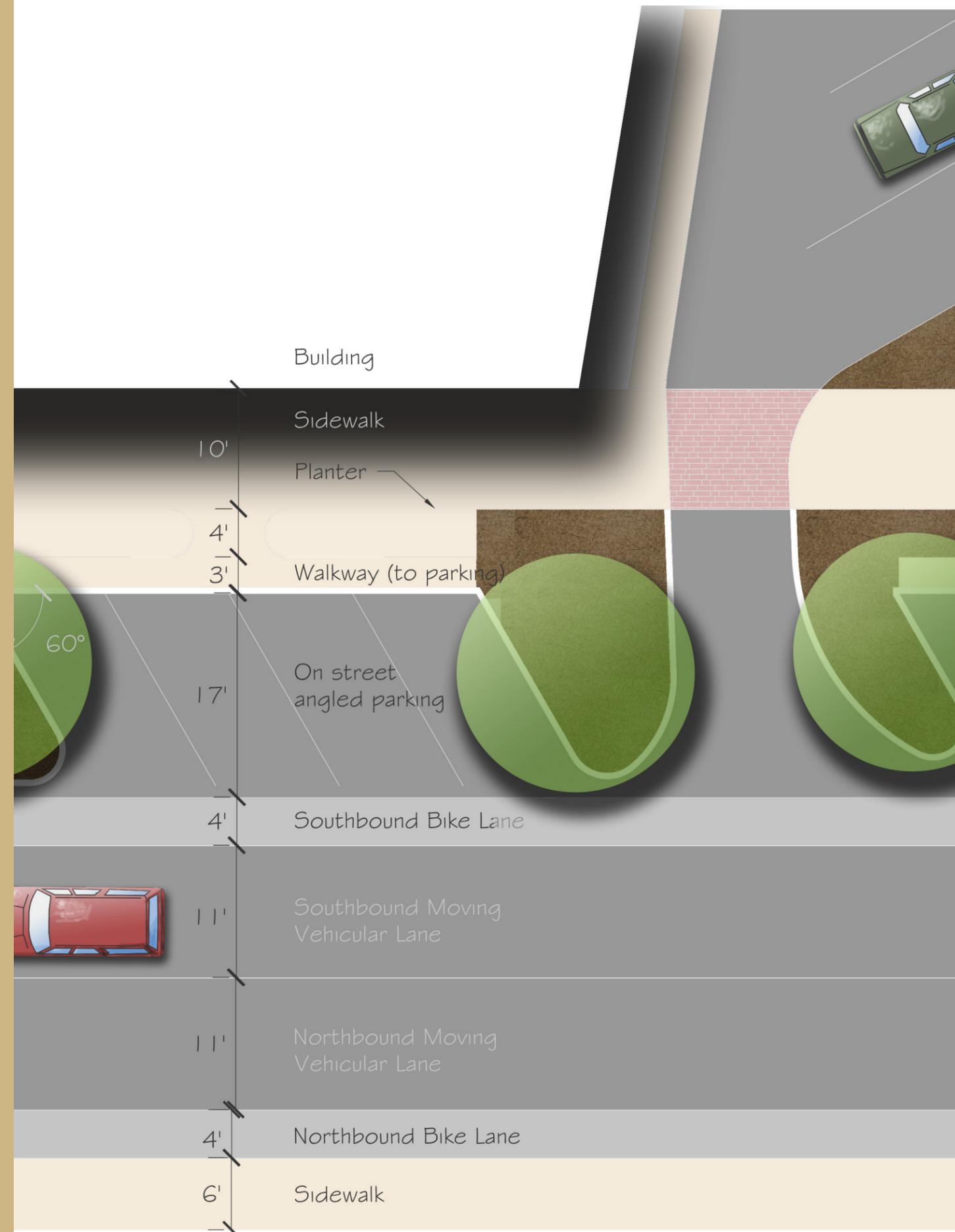
## peachtree road

Peachtree Road serves as Chamblee's main street. Due to wide moving lanes and lack of proper sidewalks and crosswalks, Peachtree Road is geared more toward vehicles. To create a successful main street, Chamblee needs to focus on becoming pedestrian-friendly.

Vegetation is a vital component in the health and progression of a city. It helps with traffic, aesthetics, human health, shade (which leads to community engagement), and even economic development.

Large walkable sidewalks allow pedestrians to travel freely through the city. Sidewalks promote activity within a city, which, in turn, fosters more activity. Sidewalks are the key to a pedestrian-focused downtown – you need people and human activity to have a pedestrian-focused downtown, and vice versa.

Traffic calming is an important element in a pedestrian-safe city. In Chamblee, measures are needed to slow down traffic. Doing so not only makes it safer for pedestrians, but it also gives drivers the opportunity to truly see the city (this is where façade redesign comes in). Some examples of traffic calming include crosswalks, trees, medians, narrower lanes, and winding roads. By implementing some of these solutions, Chamblee can truly create a pedestrian-driven downtown.



*Pierce Block*  
angled parking

The first option for Peachtree Road's design goes one step further than the current streetscape. This option allows the continuation of 60-degree angled parking. Brick crosswalks are added where pedestrians cross driveways and alleyways. The awning has been removed, and the sidewalk currently under the awning has been extended to a width varying from 10' to 17'. Vegetation has been added to provide shade for pedestrians. Four-foot bike lanes are added in each direction. Vehicular lanes are reduced from approximately 15' to 11' as a traffic calming tactic. Finally, the sidewalk on the railroad side of Peachtree Road is extended and enhanced to increase pedestrian connectivity on both sides of Peachtree Road.

## *Pierce Block* angled parking

### *Before*

This photo shows the current buildings on the Pierce block. A uniform awning extends across all of the storefronts. The asphalt street is approximately 50 feet wide, taking into account the parking.

### *After*

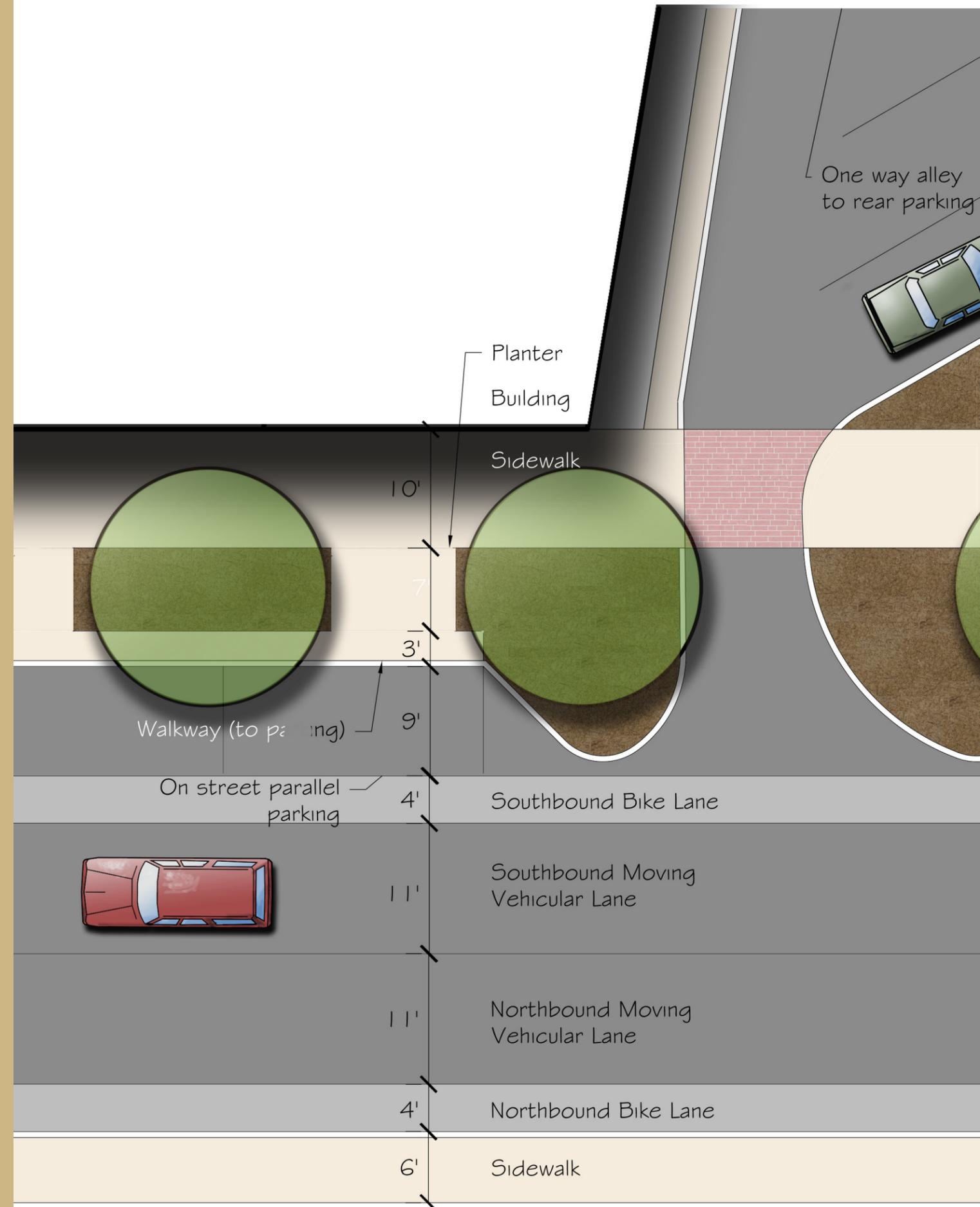
This rendering depicts the Pierce block with the addition of plenty of angled parking and some street trees to provide shade. It shows what the bike lane would look like in relation to the moving lanes and parking spots. The awning across the storefronts has been removed, creating a more inviting look.



Before



After



*Pierce Block*  
parallel parking

The second design option for Peachtree Road's streetscape converts the current 60-degree angle parking to parallel parking. Brick crosswalks are added where pedestrians cross driveways and alleyways. The awning has been removed, and the sidewalk currently under the awning has been extended to a width varying from 10' to 20'. Vegetation has been added to provide shade for pedestrians. Four-foot bike lanes are added in each direction. Vehicular lanes are reduced from approximately 15' to 11' as a traffic calming tactic. Finally, the sidewalk on the railroad side of Peachtree Road is extended and enhanced to increase pedestrian connectivity on both sides of Peachtree Road. This proposal requires the smallest right-of-way width (about 65').

*Pierce Block*  
parallel parking

*Before*  
This photo shows the current buildings on the Pierce block. A uniform awning extends across all of the storefronts. The asphalt street is approximately 50 feet wide, taking into account the parking.

*After*  
This rendering depicts the Pierce block with parallel parking and a continuous line of street trees along the large sidewalk.



Before



After



After



Before

### *Art Block*

#### *Before*

At present, the buildings in this block look almost abandoned.

#### *After*

This rendering shows what this block could look like with some façade and streetscape improvements. Street trees provide shade and implied space between the vehicular and pedestrian zones. A mural on the face of one of the buildings is a way to support the local artist community.

*The Hole*  
Intersection and Infill

*Before*

This photo shows that the intersection of American Industrial Way and Peachtree Road is wide and dangerous. There is no crosswalk. This also shows part of the lot nicknamed *the hole*. Walking this way is the only route for pedestrians to reach Peachtree Road from the east side of the railroad tracks.

*After*

This street view of American Industrial way shows how infill development in *the hole* could bring this street to life. The street is lined with trees, and the intersection now comes to more of a right angle, requiring vehicles to stop before turning.



*The Hole*  
Crosswalk and Infill

*Before*

The intersection is currently dangerous. It is wide and allows for high speeds when turning onto or off of Peachtree Road. There is no crosswalk. The combination of no crosswalk and a very wide road makes for a difficult crossing. This intersection is adjacent to *the hole*.

*After*

The proposed design narrows the streets and brings the intersection to more of a 90-degree angle. This makes it more difficult for vehicles to take the turn at high speeds, requiring them to slow down. The addition of a proper crosswalk gives pedestrians priority, and is essential in transforming this space into a safe area for pedestrians. Mixed-use infill replaces *the hole*. A planted median and new street trees make the space friendlier and provide shade for walking pedestrians.



*Before*



*After*

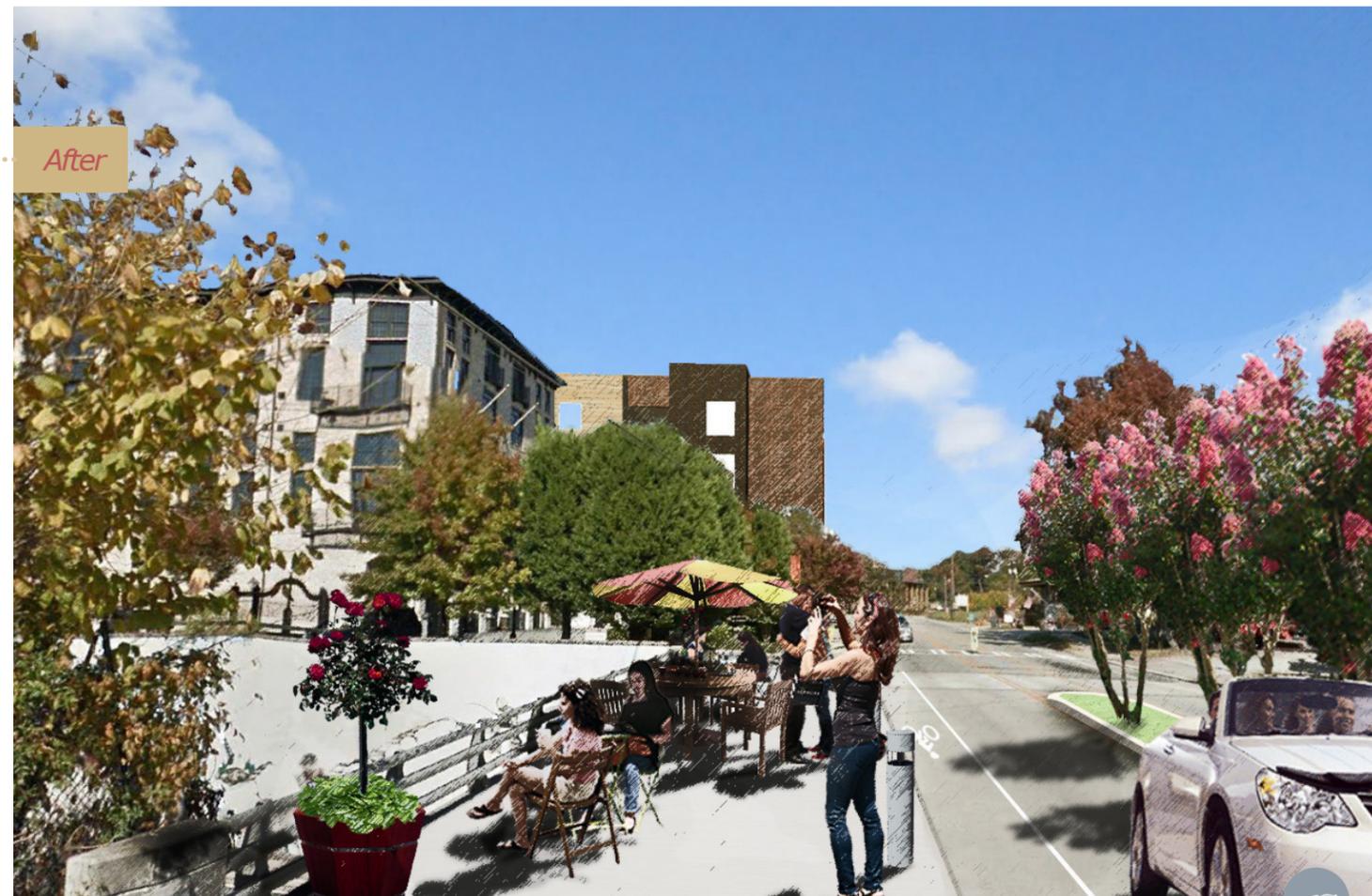
## *Peachtree Bridge* Patio and Overlook

### *Before*

This photo shows the current bridge with a non-structured median, or what some cars assume is a turn lane.

### *After*

In this rendering, the sidewalk has been extended, creating more of a patio where customers of Vintage Pizzeria or the Frosty Caboose can enjoy their meal or frosty treats as they overlook the mural tunnel. All that is needed is some potted plants and seats. In addition, the "turn lane" has been transformed into a planted median.



## *Voyle's Lot* Infill

### *Before*

At present, the Voyles' lot between Chamblee City Hall and the Heritage Lofts building mainly contains a parking lot. The old police department building is also located here.

### *After*

This rendering depicts possible infill based on the concept plan for Chamblee's proposed Town Center. The infill has a retail first floor to support local business and residential or office space on the higher floors. Street trees create a buffer between the sidewalk and the street, while calming traffic and creating a shaded walk. A sidewalk is added on the opposite side of the street.



# PARKING

rear parking lot



As Chamblee continues to grow, the demand for downtown parking will increase. One parking lot just north of Pierce Drive can be improved. This lot is in a promising location, with easy accessibility and proximity to Peachtree Road. Creating a destination for vehicles is practical and can encourage activity along Peachtree Road.





## Rear Parking Lot

Proposed Design Options 1 & 2

### Before

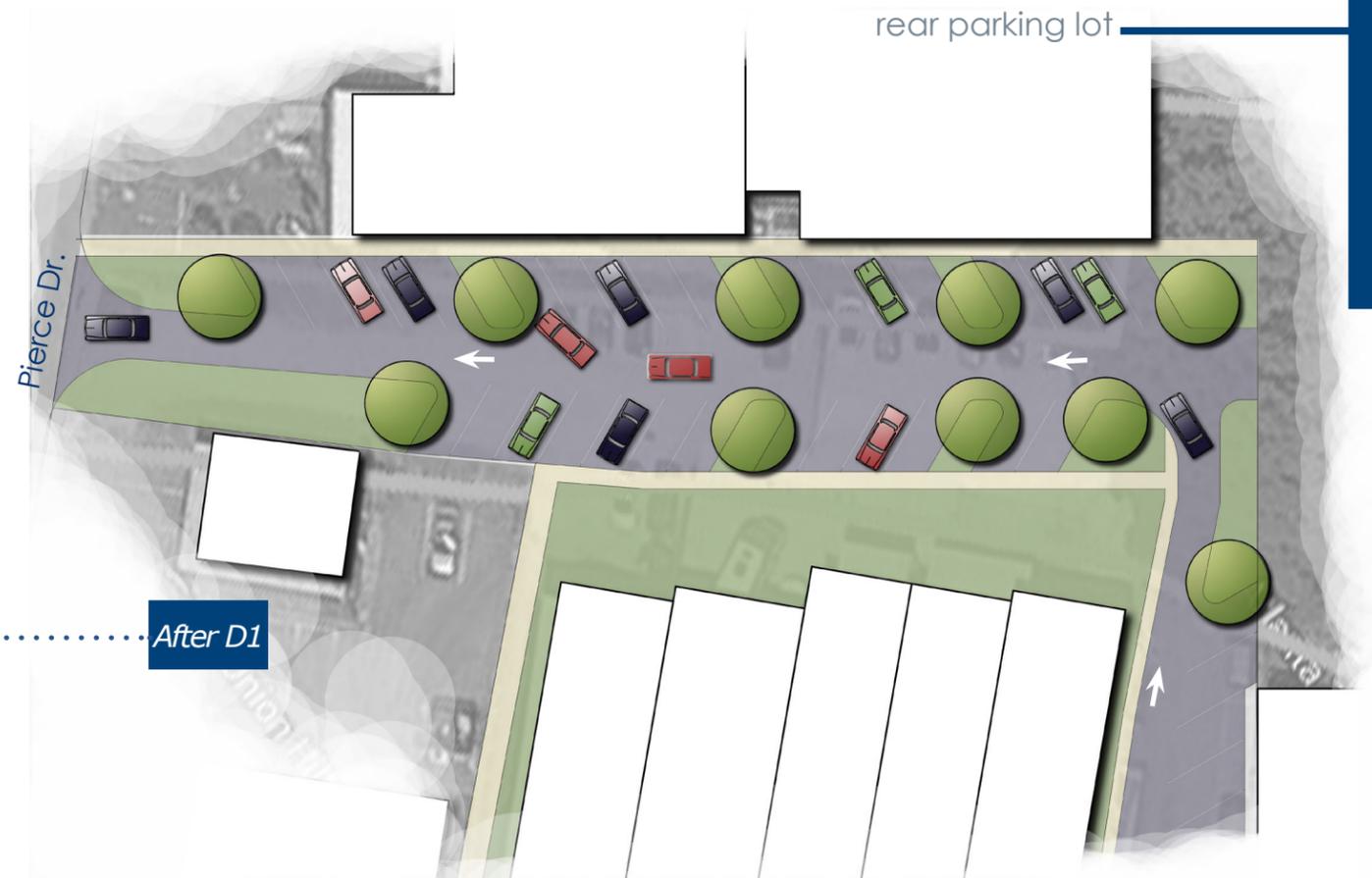
Currently, the rear parking lot is made up of a combination of unpaved gravel and concrete. At present, 17 parking spots are marked; however, there is room for approximately 30 parking spots that are being used whether they are marked or not. The parking lot connects to Pierce Drive with a curb-cut driveway. It also connects through two alleyways to Peachtree Road. The parking lot is not inviting, with no lights or trees. A sign on one of the buildings reads, "Smile, you are on camera."

### After D1

This option contains 60-degree angled parking, for a total of 36 spots. A one-way moving lane flows from the entrance to the alleyway south of Zentea to the exit through the driveway on Pierce Drive. The secondary, narrower alley north of Union Hill Kitchen has been permanently closed off to vehicles and redeveloped as primarily a pedestrian connection. The trees in the parking lot provide shade to parked cars during the hot summer. Proper sidewalks leading to the Peachtree Road streetscape provide for easy foot access to and from the parking area.

### After D2

This option contains 60-degree angled parking, for a total of 32 spots. A one-way moving lane flows from the entrance to the alleyway south of Zentea to the exit through the driveway on Pierce Drive. The secondary, narrower alley north of Union Hill Kitchen should remain as is, with some beautification. This alley is closed off at night to create Railway Mini Plaza. The trees provide shade to parked cars during the hot summer. Proper sidewalks leading to the Peachtree Road streetscape provide easy foot access to and from the parking area.





### Rear Parking Lot

Proposed Design Option 3

#### After D3

This option contains a combination of 90-degree-angle parking and 60-degree angle parking. The design is a proposal to connect two parking lots through the backyard of Zentea. The parking lot contains a total of 89 parking spaces - not including the spaces adjacent to Zentea. Two proposed infill buildings have been placed (marked in yellow). The trees provide shade to parked cars during the hot summer. There are two main access points: one on Chamblee Dunwoody way, and another on Pierce Drive. There are two secondary access points: both on Peachtree Road, one adjacent to Zentea, should be used as entrance only, and one adjacent to Union Hill Kitchen, should be used as an exit only.

## *Parking Lot Exit*

Rain Garden and Mural

### *Before*

This photo shows the current exit from the rear of the parking lot onto Pierce Drive. The storage building for Union Hill Kitchen is empty, and cars park on the grass.

### *After*

This photo shows the current exit from the rear of the parking lot onto Pierce Drive. The storage building for Union Hill Kitchen is empty, and cars park on the grass.





## *Railway Mini Plaza*

Secondary Alley during day and night

### **Before**

This secondary alley measures approximately 13' 9" between the buildings. The chain-link fence creates a barrier between Union Hill Kitchen and the alley.

### **After: Day**

In this rendering, the chain-link fence is dressed up with climbing, flowering vines. In addition, flowering perennial plants along the foot of the chain link fence enhance the look and feel of the alleyway.

### **After: Night**

This rendering depicts how the alley might be used by pedestrians. The addition of art along the fence and buildings gives the alley a sense of place. The string lights hung from buildings and the lamps attached to the building are essential for visibility and safety. The area near the restaurant could be used as a patio space, if desired.



MARTA and Norfolk Southern Railroad have lines that go through Chamblee, running almost parallel to Peachtree Road. The only connection between the two sides of town is through the streets that run under the railroad tracks on Chamblee Dunwoody Road and Chamblee-Tucker Road. One of the underpasses has murals, creating a sense of identity for the city. However, the walk from Chamblee Dunwoody Road to Peachtree is long and difficult—pedestrians must go under the tunnel then up to the light and around everything to get to downtown.

# BRIDGE

## tunnel corridor

From a pedestrian perspective, the railroad tracks create a divide between the downtown district and the eastern side of Chamblee. The walk from under the bridge and around the hole is not easy. The pages that follow provide an exploration of ways to connect the area east of the railroad to Peachtree Road.





Before



After

*Bridge over-look*  
Street Improvements

**Before**

This photo illustrates the narrow sidewalks on either side of the street and shows where the street is significantly wider than the lane width.

**After**

The street lanes have been narrowed to 11 feet, and one lane has been eliminated. The sidewalks are wider, and a new street tree buffer creates a physical barrier between vehicles and pedestrians. The tree buffer shades the sidewalk and acts as a traffic-calming mechanism.

## *Bridge from East*

Street Improvements and Mural Gateways

### *Before*

The east side of the bridge serves as a secondary gateway into downtown Chamblee. The sign welcoming people to Chamblee is not in an optimal location. Currently, the welcome sign competes with the retaining wall behind it, making it difficult to read.

### *After*

In this rendering, a mural-style sign is installed on the supports and walls of the bridge. This sign clearly welcomes people into downtown Chamblee, while incorporating some local art.



Before



After



Before

### *Chamblee Tucker Bridge* Street Improvements and Gateways

**Before**

The east side of Chamblee Tucker Road's tunnel is an advantageous location for beautification and gateway signs. This tunnel is very heavily travelled, and is directly adjacent to Chamblee's MARTA Station.

**After**

In this rendering, a banner sign has been placed as a gateway into Chamblee. The street was shifted to the left, the left sidewalk was taken out, and the space was used to enlarge the sidewalk on the right side of the street. The extra room could create enough for a tree buffer and a bike lane.



After

## Bridge Crosswalk

Signage and Infill

### Before

This crosswalk can be improved. The width of the road means pedestrians have a long walk to cross the street. There are four lanes of traffic and a very easy turn for cars.

### After

The cross walk is improved by altering the street itself. The lanes are narrowed and three lanes, rather than four, are more fitting for this space. Also, moving the crosswalk farther down Chamblee Dunwoody Road allows for a narrower crossing. A train is stenciled into the paint, giving this crosswalk a sense of place.





Before



Day

### *Chamblee Light Bridge*

Tunnel corridor during day and night

#### **Before**

The walls under the bridge are visibly worn, and the steel supports for the bridge are painted green.

#### **After: Day**

The steel supports are repainted black. The sidewalks are enlarged and a large buffer from the road has been added. The mural has been extended, making the area more appealing.

#### **After: Night**

This space can be turned into an attraction at night with lights that change color. These will keep the space well lit and allow people to further enjoy the Chamblee night scene.



Night



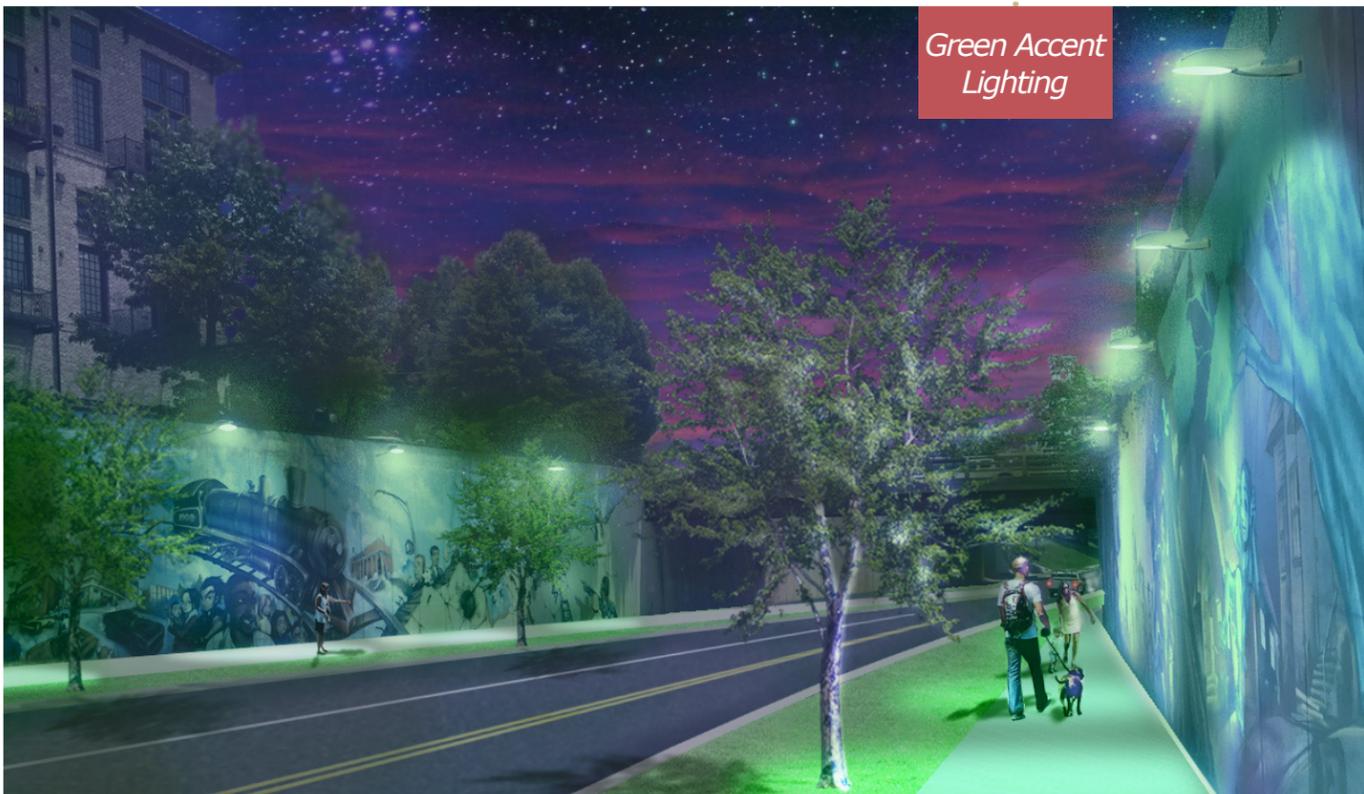
Blue Accent Lighting

### *Chamblee Light Bridge*

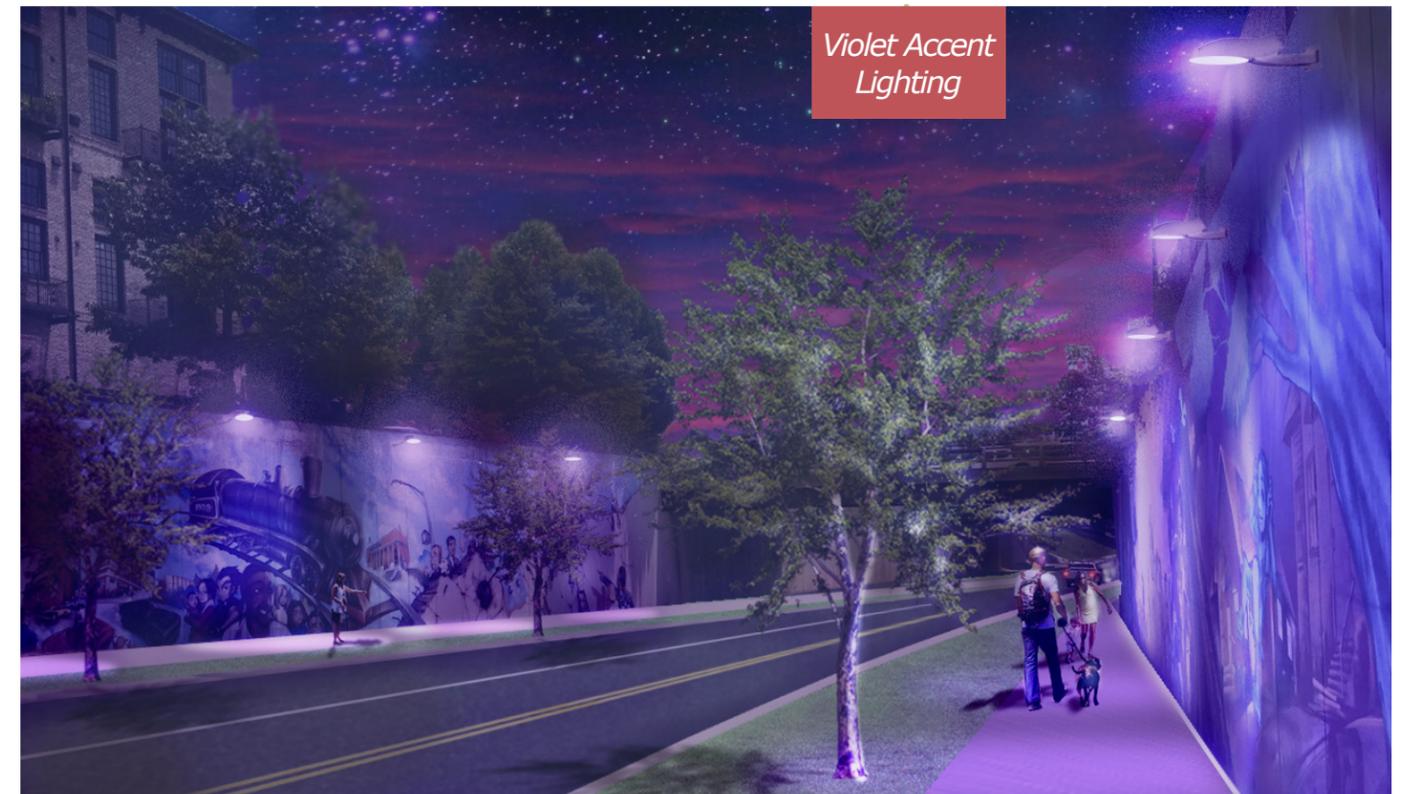
Tunnel Corridor at night with color lights

#### *Color Lights*

These renderings show the tunnel corridor with different color lights. Color lights can transform the tunnel to become an attraction.



Green Accent Lighting



Violet Accent Lighting

# PLANTS



*Magnolia virginiana*  
Sweetbay Magnolia

Nice fragrance when leaves are broken. Good for streets or parking lots.



*Cedrus deodara*  
Deodar Cedar

Large evergreen tree. Should be used as a focal point.



*Lagerstroemia spp.*  
Crape Myrtle

Good street tree. Nice flowers and



*Amelanchier spp.*  
Serviceberry

Good small, street tree. Nice fall color.



*Abelia grandiflora*  
Glossy Abelia

Good for sidewalks and other pedestrian zones.



*Raphiolepis Umbellata*  
Indian Hawthorn

Good for sidewalks and other pedestrian zones. Buy white flowering variety, not pink.



*Ulmus parvifolia*  
Chinese Elm

Good tree for streets and parking lots.



*Quercus phellos*  
Willow Oak

Large, formal tree. Expresses exceptional might. Good for large streets.



*Osmanthus fragrans*  
Fragrant Tea Olive

Good as a screen or hedge, nice fragrance, good in parks or other pedestrian zones.



*Camellia sasanqua*  
Sassanqua Camellia

Strong plant, evergreen, good as a screen or hedge.



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Completed for the city of Chamblee, Georgia by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government in partnership with Georgia Municipal Association and Georgia Cities Foundation.

