

A Wayfinding System Sign Audit

Prepared by the



McCOMM GROUP

A CREATIVE COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY

McCommGroup.com

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version 2



THE CITY OF
TROY



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City of Troy, Alabama - Wayfinding System Sign Audit

Introduction & Overview

Introduction

This report outlines the history, purpose, goals, process and suggested locations for a wayfinding signage program for the City of Troy. The intent of this document is to provide overview detailed enough to be used for the design and subsequent estimating of wayfinding signs throughout the city.

The Report Includes:

- History & Purpose
- Questions and Answers from initial meeting
- Goals & Recommended Direction
- Sign Type Information
- Similar City Example Designs & Photos
- Recommended Installation Locations
- Recommended Sign Point-of-Interest and Landmark Content

The History & Purpose

In July of 2015, the Troy Planning Department contacted the McComm Group to discuss the process of developing a wayfinding sign system for the Troy community. From that discussion, a meeting was scheduled for October 2015 to present the McComm Group's services concerning wayfinding systems to the city planning director, Melissa Sanders. Many topics were explored including the current wayfinders that the city is using, the relationship the city has with the University of Troy, current tourism draws, Troy's general traffic flow and the long-range plan for future growth. After that meeting the McComm Group's team toured the Troy area to assess and to determine wayfinding signage needs.

The Questions and Topics Explored

1. What do the citizens and residents think of Troy?
2. What do visitors think of Troy?
4. What is the plan for Troy's next 5 years?
5. Are there negatives you feel impact a visitor's experience?
6. Describe the relationship between the University and the city.
7. What are the top attractions, points of interest, or sporting venues?

8. Does the city have walking and biking trails?
9. Do you want to drive traffic to your historic district?
10. Where do you think visitors should enter and exit?

The Answers Gleaned

The information gathered provided valuable input which will result in a final design package that has wide-ranging community support.

It was noted that many travelers are bypassing Troy's city center by using Hwy. 231 while en route to and from the gulf coast. In addition, visitors who attend sports events and who visit the Troy University stay on the fringe and may not venture further into the city's historic downtown area.

Besides the lack of a branded and easy-to-follow wayfinding system, it was noted that there was a misconception that the downtown area had too few areas for parking.


Other Opportunities for Improvement Include:

- Hwy. 231 needs better gateway signage for visitors to find downtown
- Troy's major Hwy. 231 intersections could be improved with the addition of semi-gloss black painted steel support poles and mast arms to hold traffic signals and LED backlit street signs
- University events draw tourists that could be directed to experience Troy's historic downtown area
- Government buildings downtown cause confusion about which building houses which departments
- Welcome information on pedestrian map kiosks around the downtown Square would encourage foot traffic to the areas beyond the inner Square
- Well-designed, large brightly colored banners downtown could direct visitors to the outer Square's shopping areas
- Many hand-cut lettered traffic signs should be replaced with standard Department of Transportation approved signs.
- Concentrate revitalization efforts along the downtown gateway route, Montgomery St. Unkept private properties will give the wrong first impression of what visitors should expect to experience around the Square



Combination Area Identifier & Wayfinder Sign • Decatur, AL 
Example Photo - McComm Group*



Small Area Identifier Sign
Decatur, AL
Example Photo -
McComm Group* 



Proximity Sign
Rock Hill, SC
Example Photo -
Corbin Design* 

* NOTE: Photos shown are for discussion and illustration of sign types only. Icons underneath the photos are for cross-referencing to the attached maps. Unless otherwise noted in the caption, they are not intended to be represented as designs by or photographs taken by the McComm Group.

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Questions & Answers

In the meeting it was agreed that a well-designed and maintained holistic wayfinding system could solve all or most of the issues discussed. A well-designed flexible signage system would entice many of the tourists to make side trips from the Hwy. 231 area to Troy's downtown, surrounding parks, and areas to shop and dine.

Discovering Useful Wayfinding Sign Content

It was agreed that Troy is a great place to raise a family with cost-effective, affordable homes and Southern charm. It is friendly, clean, and diversified with easy access to the Troy University. It is also a short drive to popular beaches. Troy is a progressive city with terrific sports facilities, recreational opportunities and unique restaurants. The citizens and leaders promote ideas and ventures for a better quality of life and support many sports and entertainment projects.

When asked what Troy is best known for the responses included:

- The home of Troy University
- A destination for sports recreation at both regional and national levels
- A desirable area friendly to families and people of all ages to settle because of the natural beauty and moderate seasonal climates, a robust and an affordable economy, top-quality education facilities, well-maintained parks and recreation facilities, a new public library and the J.O. Colley Senior Complex, an extensive agricultural network, and several good quality health care facilities

Top Things to do included:

- The Johnson Center for the Arts, Museum and Cultural Center
- The Pioneer Museum of Alabama
- The Troy Sportsplex
- The Troy Parks and Recreation Fitness Center
- The Heart of Dixie Trail Ride
- Butter and Egg Adventures

Noteworthy Festivals Included:

- Pike Piddlers Storytelling Festival
- Spring Reunion and Irish Parade
- TroyFest Arts and Crafts Festival

- Alabama International Film Festival
- Memorial Day Program at Bicentennial Park
- J.O. Colley Senior Complex Annual Mardi Gras Gala Ball

Events that draw tourists Included:

- Troy University Home Games and Homecoming
- American Cancer Society "Relay For Life"
- July 4 Fireworks, Troy University Veteran's-Memorial Stadium
- Farm City Week
- Various Sport Tournaments

Major Draws to Downtown Dothan Included:

- Milky Moo's Homemade Ice Cream
- Sips on the Square Wine Bar and Pizza
- Dolce Pastry Shop
- Momma Goldberg's Deli
- Utility and Government Buildings
- J.O. Colley Senior Complex
- Johnson Center for the Arts, Museum and Cultural Center
- The Troy Public Library
- TroyFest Arts and Crafts Festival
- Work
- Unique Shopping Boutiques
- Pike County Chamber of Commerce
- Church

Answers to the question "What do you want for Troy?" Included:

- For Troy to be a destination and not just a quick stop
- A system of signage for directing parking in downtown
- City-wide wayfinding which shows continuity and unity

When questioned about the possibility of the historic districts being a tourist draw the consensus was:

- Do send tourists to Troy's historic downtown
- Traffic does not need to be directed into the residential historic district, but may be routed along the northern edge via Murphree St.



Pedestrian Kiosk Sign • Decatur, AL ●●
Example Photo - McComm Group*



Pedestrian Kiosk Sign • Georgetown, SC ●●
Example Photo - Corbin Design*

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Sign Audit Intent & Recommendations

Wayfinding & the Sign Audit Intent

Wayfinding is a navigational system that conveys directions to travelers by use of graphics, signs, maps and other means. Once the needs and destinations were defined, Troy's wayfinding program began to take shape. This Troy Wayfinding System Sign Audit intends to:

- Define corridors and gateways that visitors should use
- Suggest a preliminary hierarchy of information by defining destinations
- Direct drivers to areas first, then to destinations within each area
- Increase pedestrian traffic by suggesting locations for informative interpretive kiosks for pedestrians and cyclists

Study Recommendations

Often mini-sign systems are needed to "nest" within the overarching plan to help travelers reach their destinations. Examples of this include walking trails, bike trails, mural trails, and parking systems. These systems often continue to reflect the design elements of the main wayfinding plan for continuity and branding. Troy could benefit from a downtown parking plan to help drivers identify public parking areas.

Troy planners should consider exploring refreshing the major gateway signs to reflect colors and/or elements of the soon-to-be-designed wayfinding system to help establish a visual cue for travelers seeking welcome information and wayfinding directional signs.

Troy should consider a permanent pavilion in or near downtown for a Farmer's Market. Preferably, the market should have easy access, ample parking and be within walking distance of the historic downtown.

Sign Types Recommended in this Audit

Note that Phase II of the design process may very well expand this list as necessary to fluidly connect visitors to their destinations.

Primary & Secondary Gateway Sign - **G**

Gateway signs introduce visitors to the area and provide the "sense of arrival." Troy has two major gateways with a third potential. In addition to these, this report recommends adding three additional Secondary Gateway signs. They could be located on the main corridors leading to the downtown (See "Troy Gateways & Major Intersections" Map).

Downtown Gateway Sign - **DG**

Downtown Gateway signs announce to visitors they have arrived to the city's heart. Like the Primary Gateway signs, these will project a "sense of arrival." Troy has three major gateways to the downtown Square. (See "Troy Downtown Detail" Map).



Kiosk • San Juan Capistrano, CA
Example Photos - Hunt Design*



Parking Sign • San Juan Capistrano, CA
Example Photos - Hunt Design*



Parking Sign • Georgetown, SC
Example Photos - Corbin Design*



Parking Signs • Tulsa, OK
Example Photos - Corbin Design*



Parking Sign • Decatur, AL
Example Photos - McComm Group*



Downtown Parking Map • Decatur, AL
Example Photos - McComm Group*

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Sign Types & Their Functions

Directional Vehicle Decorative Trailblazer Signs - **DVDT**

This sign type is used in situations where some distance must be traveled between decision-making points. The specific type of trailblazer is determined by the speed at which the motorist is traveling. Trailblazers assure drivers they are still moving in the right direction. Typically, the decorative trailblazers are designed and used in downtown areas. (See the “Troy Downtown Detail” Map)

Directional Vehicle Trailblazer Signs for Fast Traffic - **DV-F**

Similar in function to the standard Trailblazer signs mentioned above, but used on major roads with speed limits greater than 40 mph such as on Hwy. 231. Their size and letter height would be scaled to meet the needs of fast-moving traffic and wider roads. (See the “Major Intersections, Schools, University, and Sports Complex View” Map for reference)



Monument Style Gateway Sign • Decatur, AL
Example Photo - McComm Group*



Ornamental Iron Style Gateway Sign • Charleston, SC
Example Photo - McComm Group*



Monument Style Gateway Sign • Kingsport, TN
Example Photo - Corbin Design*



Building Identity Sign • Decatur, AL
Example Photos - McComm Group*



Civic Club Gateway Sign • Decatur, AL
Example Photos - McComm Group*



Flag Mount BladeStyle Gateway Signs • Raleigh, NC
Example Photos - Corbin Design*



Monument Style Gateway Sign • Charleston, SC
Example Photo - McComm Group*



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Sign Types & Their Functions (Continued)

ID & Directional Vehicle Proximity Signs - **DVP**

Proximity signs may be small, single-item signs used to point vehicular traffic to a single destination by type of venue (i.e. Troy City Hall) and to let the driver know they are still headed in the right direction. ID signs are used to identify the venue by name and to announce to the traveler they have arrived at the intended destination. (See the “Troy Downtown Detail” Map for reference)

Pedestrian Map Kiosk and Guide Information - **K**

This informational sign typically consists of a map and area information. Destinations are labeled on the map and will be listed with an alphanumeric code so they can be located on the map grid. Pedestrian maps are more effective orientation devices for walkers than guide signs. They can show all destinations in a given area and allow visitors to choose a route that takes them past destinations that interest them most. Unlike vehicles, which are confined to the street grid, pedestrians don’t always walk in a straight line. (See the “Troy Downtown Detail” Map)



Directional Vehicle Trailblazer Sign • Claremont Village, CA
Example Photo - Hunt Design*



Directional Vehicle Trailblazer Decorative Sign • Frisco, TX
Example Photo - Corbin Design*



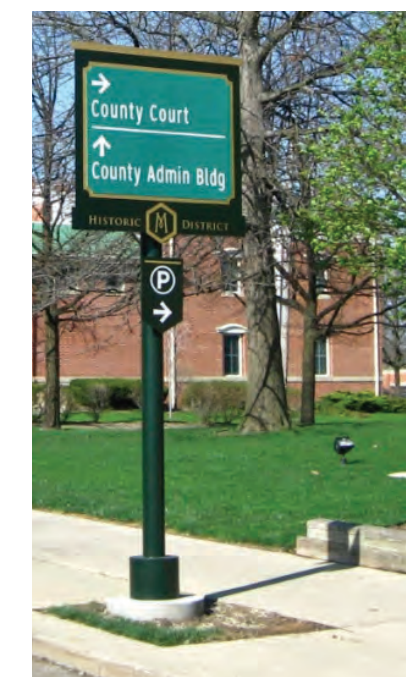
Directional Vehicle Trailblazer Decorative Sign
Bloomington, IN
Example Photo - Corbin Design*



Directional Vehicle Trailblazer Decorative Sign • Decatur, AL
Example Photo - McComm Group*



Directional Vehicle Trailblazer Decorative Sign
Rock Hill, SC
Example Photo - Corbin Design*



Directional Vehicle Trailblazer Decorative Sign
Medina, OH
Example Photo - Corbin Design*



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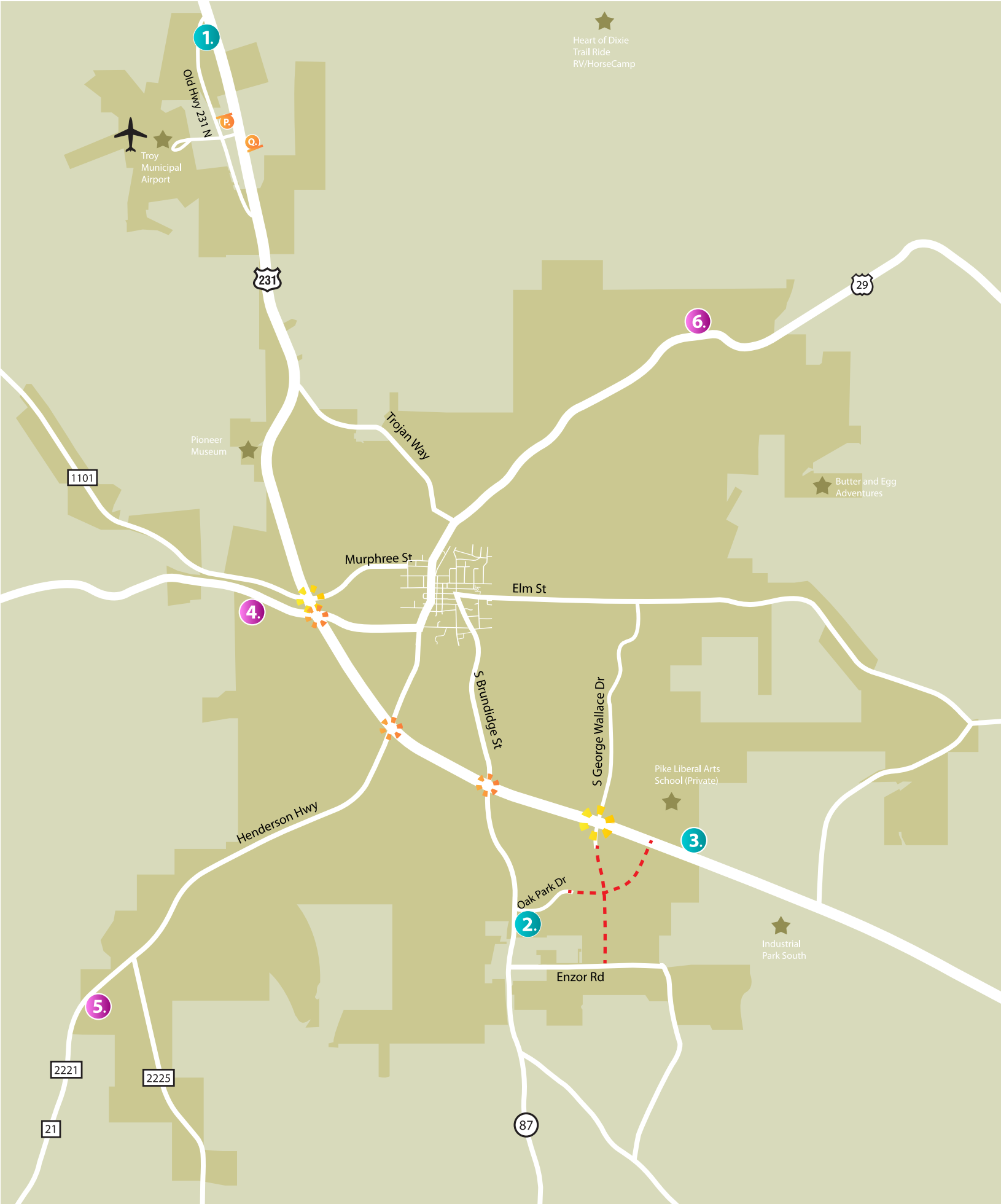
Contact: Melissa Sanders
Client: City of Troy, Alabama
Description: Wayfinding Sign Audit
Wide View Map
Date: 12/17/2015

Troy, AL

Gateways & Major Intersections

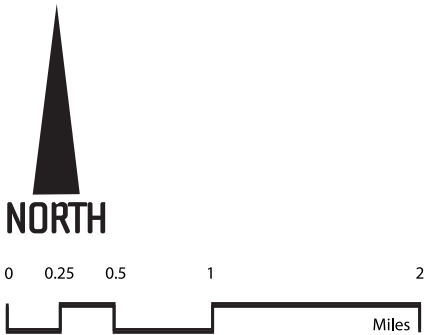
Wayfinding Sign Plan Recommendations

- Notes:
- These are preliminary recommendations only and are subject to change pending right-of-way approvals.
 - The wayfinding icons are numbered and/or lettered to help facilitate sign design and cross-referencing of to-be-proposed sign content in Phase II.



Legend

-  Primary City Gateway Sign
-  Secondary Gateway Sign
-  Primary Gateway Intersection
-  Secondary Gateway Intersection
-  Proposed Road
-  Proximity Sign
-  Point of Interest



Contact: Melissa Sanders
Client: City of Troy, Alabama
Description: Wayfinding Sign Audit
Medium View Map Detail
Date: 12/17/2015

Troy, AL







Major Intersections, Schools, University, and Sports Complex View

Wayfinding Sign Plan Recommended Placement

Notes:

- These are preliminary recommendations only and are subject to change pending right-of-way approvals.
- The wayfinding icons are numbered and/or lettered to help facilitate sign design and cross-referencing of to-be-proposed sign content in Phase II.



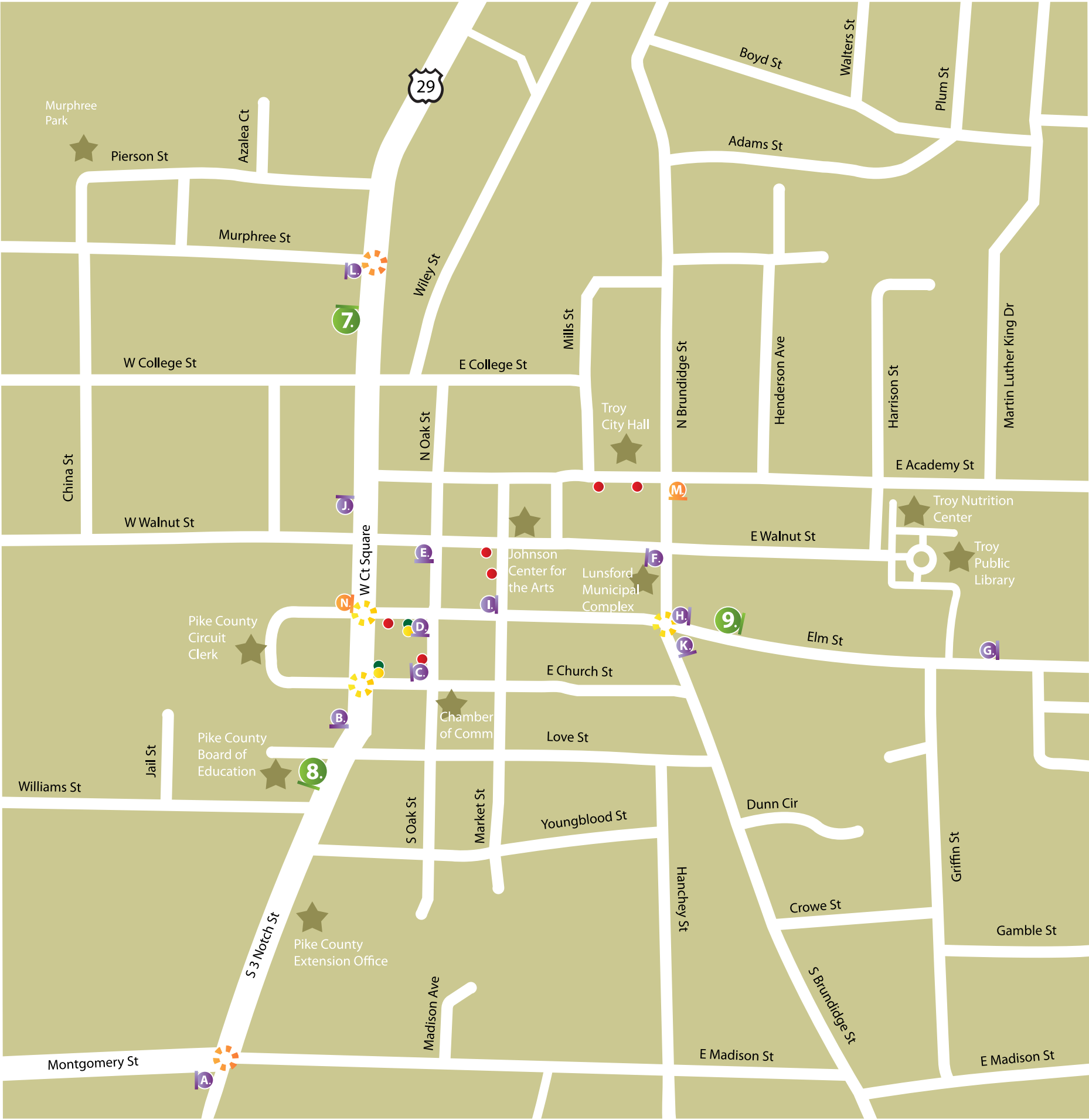
- Legend**
-  Vehicle Trailblazer Sign
 -  Proximity Sign
 -  Points of Interest
 -  Primary Gateway Intersection
 -  Secondary Gateway Intersection
 -  Proposed Road

Contact: Melissa Sanders
Client: City of Troy, Alabama
Description: Wayfinding Sign Audit
Downtown Map Detail
Date: 12/17/2015

Troy, AL Downtown Detail

Wayfinding Sign Plan Recommended Placement

- Notes:
- Where necessary and possible, the Decorative Vehicle Trailblazer Signs will feature a public parking icon with arrow mounted to the pole below the sign face.
 - These are preliminary recommendations only and are subject to change pending right-of-way approvals.
 - The wayfinding icons are numbered and/or lettered to help facilitate sign design and cross-referencing of to-be-proposed sign content in Phase II.



- Legend
-  Historic Downtown Gateway Sign
 -  Decorative Vehicle Trailblazer Sign
 -  Proximity Sign
 -  Public Parking Sign
 -  Area Identifier Sign
 -  Pedestrian Kiosk
 -  Points of Interest
 -  Primary Gateway Intersection
 -  Secondary Gateway Intersection