

early steps

Given that the master plan projects and work program discussed on the previous pages is fairly complex in organization and scheduling, the Planning Team developed the following list of “early steps” toward implementation that the City and DDA can undertake with a minimum of cost and mobilization. Fulfillment of the following ten items will not guarantee plan implementation, but will focus the City’s short-term efforts in the right direction. The **Top Ten Early Steps** are in addition to projects and programs already underway, and are:

- 1.** *Conduct a space needs programming study for City Hall and finalize the development budget and schedule*
- 2.** *Designate representatives to participate in the NGCSU campus plan process to cover downtown master plan issues and recommendations*
- 3.** *Begin conversations with Lumpkin County on relocating the planned new library to the East Main site*
- 4.** *Assemble a task force or team to study the feasibility and physical criteria of a new conference center, and market the idea with the development community to gauge interest*
- 5.** *Undertake preliminary design work on the East Main / West Main / South Chestatee streetscapes*
- 6.** *Begin drafting the new Park Street Historic District designation, and update the Downtown Historic District with newly-eligible resources*
- 7.** *Empower the Arts Council to create a long-term plan for the expansion of the Cannery, with a short-term expansion into the Old Jail*
- 8.** *Begin conversations with key property owners on the ultimate development or redevelopment of strategic sites like Greenbriar Plaza or the vacant land in University Heights*
- 9.** *Brief GDOT on the master plan recommendations and engage them on potential improvements to Morrison Moore Parkway*
- 10.** *Begin a master plan outreach / education effort to raise community awareness, possibly in conjunction with a longer term marketing / branding campaign*

Figure 4.4: Surface Parking using Cellular Grassed Paving



The next twenty years will be crucial in testing Dahlonega's ability to grow without sacrificing the qualities which have made it popular as a destination and desirable as a home. Lumpkin County will also face the same challenge of accommodating new development without destroying the landscape which defines it. As Atlanta continues to expand, these fragile environments to the north will face increasing pressure to change unless focused and aggressive action is taken to manage the city's form in the future.

This Downtown Master Plan and the accompanying appendix is one step in that direction. It has attempted to show where and how the city can expand and still be the small town that everyone knows and loves. While not exhaustive – essential steps like a comprehensive transportation study are assumed but not discussed – the plan nevertheless lays out a vision and a framework for progress to 2030. It will be up to the citizens and their elected leadership to chart a course over rough terrain using the plan as a guide, and be flexible enough to modify the course if the weather darkens and the winds change.

Figure 4.5: Dedication Plaque on Springer Mountain

