SENOIA, GA
Jianing Tao
JIANING TAO
LAND 4900
Senior Capstone Project
Professor Spooner
College of Environment and Design
The University of Georgia

JIANING TAO
LAND 4900
Senior Capstone Project
Professor Spooner
College of Environment and Design
The University of Georgia
“Senoia is known worldwide for its well-deserved television and cinematic successes; having more than two dozen television shows and movies to its credit. Senoia is so much more! The people who call it home are truly what make Senoia so special. Our community spirit and involvement is a very special thing. That proud spirit sets us apart.”

In the welcome message, Senoia mayor, Larry Owens expresses the city’s mission and vision. Senoia is a special place. It is characterized by its historic charm, its movie business, and its special community. They are equally important and indispensable to let the city survive, thrive, and stand out.

Here comes the problem: How to acquire uniqueness that attracts business and investment; How to gain and utilize the cinematic fame for development; and most importantly, How to maintain as a quaint and quiet town in face of Hollywood intrusion and urban encroachment?
I. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Established in 1826, Senoia, Georgia is located about one hour south of Atlanta. With a historic main street and quiet neighborhoods showcasing examples of classic southern architecture, Senoia has maintained a charming, small town atmosphere. The city’s proximity to Atlanta, however, along with an abundance of undeveloped land, puts it directly in the path of encroaching development.

Proposal:

- **Historic district** of downtown Senoia, the approximately 13-acre blocks (colored in brown), is the major focus. New construction and renovations in the district will stick to the *Historic District Design Guidelines*. Infill development will start from south end of Main Street and extend to the north, or expand widthwise and develop Barnes Street and Baggarly Way into secondary corridors.

- **Historic landmark** will be defined and preserved. For example, the water tower, with proper repair and renovation, could serve as historic icon and tourism attraction. Historic Development Ventures, the company who owns the 100-foot tank on a half-acre parcel of land is responsible to negotiate with city planners for further development.

- **Major traffic** will detour around the historic Main Street. The Barnes Street could take over as primary road, allowing smoother flow at the railroad section. As stores increase and tourism boosts, the Main Street could finally transfer to pedestrian street with an iconic threshold at each end.
II. HOLLYWOOD & TOURISM

Unlike so many recession-weary towns, Senoia has a bustling Main Street. Filmmaking has brought a thriving tourism trade in Senoia, where officials say the number of storefronts has grown from six (in 2008) to 49 since the zombies arrived. The new businesses include a Woodbury Shoppe that sells "Walking Dead" souvenirs.

So far in 2014, “Walking Dead” bus and walking tours in Senoia have been directly responsible for $100,000 in revenue in Senoia, Mayor Larry Owens said. Movies put Senoia on the map, but The Walking Dead made the town come alive.

Proposal:

- Filmmaking brings about popularity, which raises the value of properties and acts as a catalyst for future investment and economic development. Hollywood infrastructure is already in town: Raleigh Studios Atlanta (shown below) with everything necessary for TV and film production is less than a mile from downtown Senoia. Therefore, on-site facility may not be necessary. But historic renovations are in plan.

- Lee Thomas, the deputy commissioner in charge of the film division of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, said a boost in tourism is one of the greatest economic bonuses the state gets from providing scenery and backdrops.
Foreseeing the growing demand, tourism infrastructure is proposed to bring people in. It includes a hotel, local restaurants and retail stores in downtown area; inns, eating places, and entertainment facilities in surrounding community; and shopping center or mall in proximity to the town.

- Identifying attractions and operating tours are good ways to attract tourists. Thresholds at each end of Main Street will be specially designed. Open spaces will be left for special events, such as parade and firework. Landmark structures will be identified as attractions.

As for tour, The Atlanta Movie Tours Company is operating two zombie tours called “Big Zombie” and recently welcomed guest No. 10,000. Tour and guide is attractive and profitable, which means Senoia could operate its own tour in and around the city in the future.

### III. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A quaint little town incorporated in 1860, Senoia is grand in its simplicity, a destination for those who seek to decompress from a modern, fast paced lifestyle. Besides the historic and cinematic elements, the small town atmosphere is what makes the place special and charming. At here, we are invited to a passage back to simpler times, where neighbors are friends, shopkeepers believe in service, and family values are important to everyone.

**Proposal:**

- To be a friendlier town, the first target for Senoia is walkability. Walkable community contains housing, work places, shops, entertainment, schools, parks, and civic facilities essential to the daily lives of the residents, all within easy
walking distance (within a 10-minute walk of home and work) of each other. The town will be divided into several communities and neighborhoods each with a public space in the center. Road system will be planned in grid by hierarchy to allow quick access. And it requires pedestrian friendly street design.

- **Mixed-use** is another way to create meaningful relationships and friendly neighborhoods. It contains mixed-use in different hierarchy: within neighborhoods, within blocks, and within buildings. A mix of shops, offices, apartments, and single-family lots on site cut expenses, save energy, and improve life quality.

- At least 40% of the town will be left for green space system. Greenway corridors will go along the abandoned railroad in central Senoia. Small patches of green space in neighborhood will be linked up into an interconnected system.

The abandoned patch (colored in green) next to downtown offers an 800-square-feet linear space potential for park and recreation area. Not only providing amazing natural backdrop for downtown, the proposed public park will also be the recreational and social center of future Senoia.
Senoia is a special place. It is characterized by its historic charm, its movie and tourism business, and its friendly community. The quaint city located about one hour south of Atlanta. To maintain the historic small town atmosphere, historic preservation is the first issue to fight against encroaching urban development. Meanwhile, development is significant for Senoia. Downtown revitalization and tourism promotion will raise the land value and its interest to entrepreneurs and developers.
In close proximity to Atlanta with a large population of 447,841 and Peachtree City of 34,893, Senoia remains relatively untouched by developers and still retains the charm of a quaint small town. At the 2013 U.S. census, there were 3,751 people and 1,330 households residing in Senoia. Grand in its simplicity, the city has been a destination for those who seek to decompress from a modern, fast-paced lifestyle. However, Senoia is forecasted to triple in population over the next 20 years. This level of growth presents both challenges and opportunities for all aspects of the community.
As part of the Atlanta metropolitan area, a place that is only an hour away from central Atlanta, Senoia is a prospering city with plenty of opportunities and possibilities for developing. A chain of cities, including Peachtree City, Tyrone, Fairburn, and Union City, connects Senoia with the busy city of Atlanta. The city corridor brings not only business, income, job, but also people – tourists and residents. However, like many small towns, Senoia's charm and character could easily be lost to changes brought about by development. The proximity to Atlanta, along with an abundance of undeveloped land represents a new era of growth for the City, which could be a major challenge.
SITE ANALYSIS: Transportation and Circulation

The map shows the classification of roads, the condition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the routes of existing railroads within a half-mile radius of centric Senoia.
**Historic Downtown**

- Twist along main street causes inconvenience and danger
- Increased traffic flow in downtown area results in congestion
- Existing grid system offers possibility for walkable community
- Fragmented sidewalk and bike facility

- Develop additional main roads to disperse traffic flow
- Detour major traffic around historic downtown area
- Take advantage of the grid system to improve street connectivity within and between developments
- Improve existing sidewalk and create a pedestrian system
- Preserve bicycle safety to become a major destination for bicycling

**Highway Commercial**

- Highway brings in people and economic opportunities
- The highway entrance is a promising spot for new commercial development

- Create a centralized commercial district rather than a scattered linear area
- Connect the new commercial areas to historic downtown
- Connect commercial areas to nearby residential areas.

**Greenway**

- Abandoned railroads provide opportunity for green trails
- Redesign railroad into a central city park to improve natural environment and social interaction
- Create green corridor and trails between Senoia and Griffin
- Preserve open space around the community and expand park space
- Connect open spaces into an interconnected green system to improve life quality
SENOIA, GA – INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Jianing Tao

SITE ANALYSIS: Historic District and Land Use

SITE ANALYSIS: Historic District and Land Use

The map shows the extent of historic district, the location of historic sites, and the land use types of each parcel within a half-mile radius of centric Senoia.
**Historic Downtown**

- Located within national register historic district
- A historic hotel added to National Register of Historic Places
- Bustling main street with 49 storefronts
- Available open spaces

- Require preservation and renovation to add historic character
- Revitalize and infill downtown to bring new commercial and office
- Develop downtown gateway as an identification
- Promote historic-based tourism to become an attractive tourist destination
- Promote downtown with festivals and events to raise the profile of the community and its interest to entrepreneurs and developers
- Expand tourist infrastructure including hotels, local restaurants, retail stores, and entertainment facilities
- Utilize open blocks in downtown area for green space and outdoor entertainment

**Neighborhood Development**

- The City has more than tripled in size and population since 1990
- Over the next 20 years, population is forecasted to triple

- Require new neighborhood development
- Create neighborhood mixed-use new town to increase walkability throughout the city
- Incorporate traditional neighborhood developments in the undeveloped areas surrounding historic district
SITE ANALYSIS: Landform, Hydrology and Soil

The map provides topographic information within a half-mile radius of centric Senoia, including contour lines, high point, waterbody distributions, drainage directions, and suitability of soil for agriculture.
Historic Downtown

- The north end of historic main street is located on the high point
- Take advantage of the high-lying position for landmark identification
- Utilize the perspective provided by topographic relief for downtown gateway design

Rural and Open Land

- High-lying position of downtown creates storm water issues in surrounding area
- Major land along city center is Prime Agricultural Land which has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for agricultural productivity
- The vast majority of land in Senoia is Farmland of Statewide Importance with soils that are nearly Prime Farmland
- Protect the water quality and improve storm water management system
- Preserve prime agricultural land and existing open space
- Preserve greenspace within new neighborhood development
- Protect natural areas and views of surrounding rural area
- Create an interconnected green system
SUMMARY

Primary goal of the city planning is to maintain a small town atmosphere and to create a strong sense of community.

The historic charm of downtown should be kept by renovation program and infill development that fits in the historic environment. Downtown will include a relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services, and employment to serve the residents of Senoia, but also strive to become a statewide historic tourist attraction.

For new development, the major plan is to create attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly community villages. New neighborhoods will embrace the traditional forms that match the downtown pattern, street networks based on the city grid system, and the peaceful atmosphere of a vibrant but yet uncrowded town.

Open spaces and green spaces will be preserved and linked up into an interconnected green system. Expansion of green trails, public parks, and recreational spaces along inactive railroad will be the focus of the green system development.
According to the inventory and analysis, Senoia will raise the land value and its interest to investors and developers by maintaining a small town atmosphere and by creating a strong sense of community. In this way, the primary goal of the city planning is to create attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly communities and to develop interconnected green space system. To achieve these goals, connection should be the primary consideration for city planning and community design, which will also be the focal point in the conceptual design.
CONCEPT I: Double Network

In a grid system, focal points are even distributed and directly connected. The strong connection created by a network allows minimal travel time. A double network realizes fusion of two different systems and ensures function and efficiency. Commercial area and green space are both necessary elements for a desirable neighborhood. This concept suggests a perfect solution to reconcile these two. Street corner serves as focus for retail and public facility, while green space located in block center.
CONCEPT II: Hierarchical Cluster

Cluster is all about grouping and gathering. Rather than scattering around, cluster development saves cost, increases efficiency, and reserves open land. To connect clusters, hierarchical system is an ideal way which controls size and function of each group. Based on the concept, commercial hub is defined as the major focus with residential communities clustering around. In this way, large area of open space is reserved. It not only increases walkability and promotes mixed-use, but also preserves natural features and creates more green space for social interaction.
SENOIA, GA – CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

Jianing Tao

Bubble Diagram

Concept I: Double Network

- Community scale
- Fit well with the historic district which is basically shaped on a grid system
- Create livable community
- Enhance walkability by mixed use design
- Increase business and employment opportunity
- Provide green space for recreation and social activity

Concept II: Hierarchical Cluster

- City scale
- Guide the new development along highway
- Create a sense of community
- Increase recreational and social interaction
- Protect environmental sustainability
- Preserve agriculture land and open space
- Reduce storm water runoff and increase water quality
Schematic Design

- Commercial
- Multi-Family
- Single Family
- Green Space
SUMMARY

Connection is the primary consideration in the conceptual design process. Connection is what groups land lots into communities, and is what bonds different communities into cities and towns. It is important to connect things up in order to create a friendly and livable neighborhood.

In the project, two concepts suggest different solutions in regards to connection issue. The double network is based on a connected grid system where similar elements are evenly distributed and connected. The hierarchical cluster provides a radiant pattern where smaller elements are clustering around a larger central focal area.

The two concepts fit well with each other. On the city planning scale, the second concept serves as guidance for new development. By increasing block density, not only walkability is enhanced within communities, but important natural features, prime agricultural land, and open space are also preserved permanently. However, the first concept can be taken into consideration during community design. It offers a formula for designing mixed use neighborhood. Commercial and public facilities are located in street corner while block center is left for green space. The highly walkable community promotes a green lifestyle for people in town.
SENOIA: MASTER PLAN

- Post office (Existing)
- Historic Downtown
- Church (Existing)
- City Entrance
- Gas Station (Existing)
- Parking Lot
- Track to Trail
- Historic Hotel (Existing)
- Hotel
- Townhouse
- Single-Family Lot

Legend:
- Commercial
- Public Facility
- Neighborhood Mixed-use
- Green Network
- Greenway
- Pedestrian and vehicular circulation separation
SENOIA, GA – MASTER PLAN
Jianing Tao

Ground Figure Diagram
SITE PLAN
Site Plan: Downtown Redesign

1. sculptural seat
2. wooden bench / fence
3. wooden deck
4. rain garden
5. outdoor seats / awning
6. ramp / temporary parking / dumpster
7. hotel front plaza
8. hotel entrance / one-way driveway
9. parking lot
Bird's Eye View (Looking East)

1. sculptural seat
2. wooden bench / fence
3. wooden deck
4. rain garden
5. hotel front plaza
6. hotel entrance / one-way driveway
7. parking lot
Public Space & Rain Garden

1. bench against fences
2. sculptural seating
3. wooden deck
4. open concrete platform
5. ornamental grasses
6. rain garden
7. curbless sidewalk
8. retail stores
Hotel & Front Driveway

1. hotel front door
2. one-way driveway
3. pedestrian pathway
4. front lawn
5. angled parking
6. retail store
7. sidewalk
Café & Out-door Dining

1. downtown entrance
2. themed café
3. outdoor dining area
4. planters
5. street strip planting
6. sidewalk
7. park & green trail
CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS
## Planting List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMBOL</th>
<th>BOTANICAL NAME</th>
<th>COMMON NAME</th>
<th>QTY.</th>
<th>SIZE &amp; CONDITION</th>
<th>SPACING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ulmus parvifolia</em></td>
<td>Chinese Elm</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3” Cal. B&amp;B</td>
<td>20’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td><em>Liriodendron tulipifera</em></td>
<td>Tulip Poplar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3” Cal. B&amp;B</td>
<td>40’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td><em>Cornus florida</em></td>
<td>Flowering Dogwood</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3” Cal. B&amp;B</td>
<td>25’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ilex opaca</em></td>
<td>American Holly</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3” Cal. B&amp;B</td>
<td>10’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Tree-DECIDUOUS*
# Planting List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMBOL</th>
<th>BOTANICAL NAME</th>
<th>COMMON NAME</th>
<th>QTY.</th>
<th>SIZE &amp; CONDITION</th>
<th>SPACING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perennial</td>
<td><strong>Phlox douglasii</strong></td>
<td>Tufted Phlox</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>1 gal. cont.</td>
<td>1.5'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Symphyotrichum ericoides</strong></td>
<td>White Aster</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1 gal. cont.</td>
<td>2.5'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Achillea millefolium</strong></td>
<td>Common Yarrow</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1 gal. cont.</td>
<td>3'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Muhlenbergia capillaris</strong></td>
<td>Muhly Grass</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3 gal. cont.</td>
<td>6'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Panicum virgatum</strong></td>
<td>Switchgrass</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3 gal. cont.</td>
<td>3'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Cynodon dactylon</strong></td>
<td>Bermuda Grass</td>
<td>12400 sf.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Turf Grass**
## Seasonal Color

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Elm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulip Poplar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flowering Dogwood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Holly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tufted Phlox</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Aster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Yarrow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhly Grass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switchgrass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SENOIA, GA – CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

Jianing Tao

Themed Cafe & Outdoor Dining Area
Green Space & Rain Garden
Public Space & Seating Area