

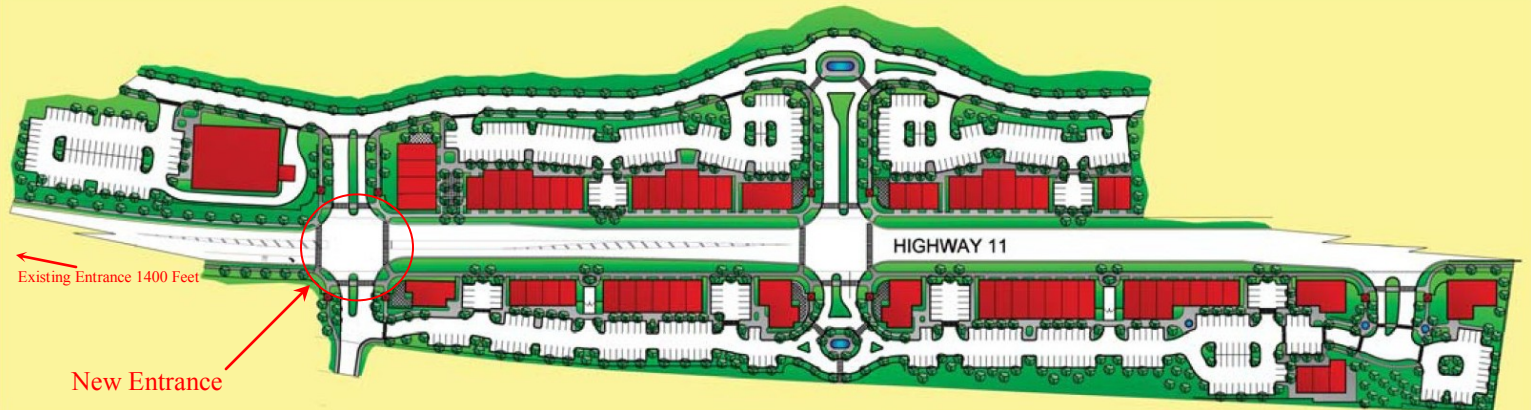
THE RIVERWALK TIMES

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MAIN STREET DISTRICT



The rendering above depicts the Main Street District of Trussville Springs, a half-mile stretch along both the north and the south sides of Highway 11, zoned for commercial use. Since the permanent entrance (marked with a red circle on the rendering above) involves major changes to Highway 11, it is important that we complete the infrastructure of the Main Street District at the same time the highway work is done. Attached is the flyer we are using in connection with the development of the commercial district. We are soliciting interest, of which we are pleased to say we have received much, in purchasing a building pad in the District or renting in buildings to be built by us. The exact layout of the buildings and the parking areas will be determined, in large part, by the kinds of retail or office operations that choose to locate in the Main Street District. The goal of the

development is twofold: First, we want to be sure that we attract and include in the District the right mix of retail and office tenants. Second, we want to be sure that the architecture and landscaping are totally in keeping with the standards and themes of Trussville Springs.

The location of our commercial strip just to the east of City Hall and far above the flood plain means that the Main Street District is destined to be the new town center of Trussville. The inexorability of this outcome stems not just from location but from preconception: The planning for the Main Street District means that it will be functionally and aesthetically coherent in both layout and style. The old part of Trussville along Highway 11 has developed randomly over a period of many decades and, therefore, lacks thematic and aesthetic harmony, a situation that

will likely persist until the merchants west of Trussville Springs form a coherent action group that moves decisively to make improvements. Trussville city officials are cooperating and encouraging the Old Town area but there are limits to what government can accomplish; thus, ultimately, the rebirth of the old part of the Highway 11 strip will depend on the unified action of the folks whose businesses line the road. Trussville Springs joins the city and the Old Town merchants in urging renovations and beautification projects because we all need for people who visit Trussville to ride along Main Street and say, "Wow!" With a modest amount of cooperation from the powers that be (local, state and federal) and the blessings of God, the people of Trussville have the wherewithal, the foresight and the expertise to do it!

JUNGLE TIPS

A perception has crystallized in the Jungle Man's brain: The equinoxes, vernal and autumnal, are the most pleasant times of the year! The nights are cool and the days mild at and around the equinoxes. You're neither sweating to dehydration nor freezing to numbness, as commonly happens at the solstices. Granted, the swimming pools have been closed and the ski slopes have not yet opened, but aren't the days glorious this time of year? Of course, the Jungle Man works primarily outdoors so the weather prejudice has a practical underpinning: It's a great time to do landscaping work and the nature of the work becomes more pleasant. The summer grasses are becoming dormant and the winter grasses aren't a chore yet. The weeds also become dormant and the insects

are beginning to recede.

As nature slows down, the transition presents a few landscaping opportunities. You can boost your lawn for the next growing season by fertilizing with a low nitrogen mixture. Although bugs in general are beginning to disappear, you need to watch out for fall army worms in your turf. If you see any signs of them, you need to apply an appropriate insecticide. Since your turf will need less water in the dormant stage just arriving, you need to adjust your irrigation system to match what's actually happening in precipitation. Your lawn will need some water but, in the absence of draught, the natural rainfall this time of year is usually sufficient except, of course, for any new plantings.

With regard to pruning, a couple of things should be kept in mind. First, the buds have already set for the current bloom cycle on your azaleas and camellias, so don't prune them at all this time of year! As soon as your Knockout roses lose their blooms for the season, prune them back to make them "bush" out in the spring; if you don't cut them back, they will become "leggy" and sprawling in the warmer months. For evergreen shrubs in general, it's a great time to prune to be sure the energy of the plants is headed in the direction you want them to grow. Just be careful not to prune them back so much that they have trouble recovering by the first freeze of winter.

Happy gardening!

THE OFFSPRING ARRIVE

In the April issue of the Times, we reported on the Great Blue Herons that have found the headwaters of the Cahaba River to be bountiful sources of fine dining. We observed at the time that mating season was just beginning and projected that in the fall the fledglings would seek out streams and lakes with clear water and accessible aquatic life. The photograph on the right, taken by Trussville Springs photographer John Shadrick, shows that the reproduction cycle has been completed: A fledgling Great Blue trolls the river near the American Water Willows (*Justicia Americana*) that provide protective cover for all kinds of aquatic morsels. At the time of the original story on the herons in our waters, we wondered whether the parents would allow the young ones to fish their waters. Herons tend to be territorial and protective of the shoals where they feed. Of course, Trussville Springs has a mile of the river and a host of fish, frogs and crawfish, but the question still lingered. It was at least noteworthy that no fledglings have been photographed in prior years. The question seems now to have been answered in the affirmative: As long as food is plentiful, the young herons will probably be permitted to fish the parental waters. It is our guess that the fledgling will exit in a hurry if an adult heron, parent or not, makes a sudden appearance.



If you're wondering why aquatic birds like our section of the river, see the photograph below (also taken by John Shadrik) of a school of largescale stonerollers (*campostoma oligolepis*). Stonerollers resemble small fresh-water mullet in both appearance and eating habits. The stoneroller, which feeds on algae that it scrapes off the boulders and bedrock of clear running streams, is entirely herbivorous. Thus it tends to be prey for game fish

and, of course, for aquatic birds and fish-eating mammals like the raccoon. To make matters worse for itself, the stoneroller all but holds up a sign that says, "Look at this mouth-watering morsel": it is brightly colored with white or light yellow scales along the venter and, to draw maximum attention to itself, it leaps into the air and splashes the surface of the water. The full-grown stoneroller is

about eight and a half inches long, about the size of many of those in the photograph below left, which shows a large school of stonerollers in their favored habitat: shallow, sparkling water riffling over bedrock in a small river. It is a tribute to the vitality of the headwaters of the Cahaba that the fledgling Great Blue above appears to be well fed despite a limited amount of experience as a fisherman.

