



The musing of a prodigal Son of a steelworker, lent head, fastball pitching, Jesus loving, history buff from Alabama City Ralph H. Dyer Sr.-my Daddy my Hero! This is too Long so...read if you want, as much as you want, food for thought about what Gadsden, Alabama could do to become a destination not just a stop on a map.

Over River Gondola /Chair lift, Water Taxi system, Hotel Conference Center, Large Green Space with Professional Stage, Bass Pro Shop, Suspended Walking Bridge under Memorial Bridge, River District on both sides of river, Aquatic Center, White water park, Amusement Park with permanent Rides, Water Park, New Bridge over River for 411 to 759, New City Hall, tie in Downtown Gadsden with River Front(s) east and west with "pedestrian bridge, river taxi, chair lift", RGBW Led Lights for Memorial Bridge, Internet High Resolution I.P. Cameras at Falls, Down Town, along River front, and other locations, for visitors to get a look at what's happening in Gadsden, Just to Get Started, At the falls a shopping village, artist, and small vendor, a village along the road where the souvenir, shop is and going back towards golf and fields, like "<https://thevillageshops.com/>" in Gatlinburg, maybe different fronts with porches, but same base build to make construction easier and consistent, rent out the spaces, for smaller vendors, and build to suite for long term for more permanent, businesses.

My Wish List for the City of Gadsden Alabama for the Riverfront and beyond: if money, land availability, time and outside investment was not an issue. This is not done to offend anyone, or suggest moving or replace a business, or to replace the fact that we also need to attract manufacturing jobs, professional jobs, trade craft jobs, medical facilities, and educational as well as sporting facilities and events. It's just the musing of someone who was born here I am the prodigal son of a steel worker, who moved away to pursue my education at Auburn University and vocational calling. At the age 17 while a member of Mayor Steve Means teen Council, and a lifeguard in the city pool system, I was ask by the Mayor, what does Gadsden need to do to get our youth to stay or move back to Gadsden after high school and college? Mayor Means and myself looked out his city hall window while I described a Hotel Conference Center and Boat docks on the east side of our Riverfront beside the existing lake that would be an improvement, and jobs that are higher tech and professional. While away studying and working I was fortunate to Live in three different cities 2 of which was looking at growth stifled by lack of vision like Gadsden, Auburn, where I got my degree and Panama City Beach where I worked in tourism, the other was Atlanta where I was part of the dynamic growth. In Atlanta I worked for Coca-Cola USA in their Creative Services division on National advertising campaigns and brand identity, so I know a thing or two. Over the years Auburn found a way to Grow, when they voted out their old politicians and elected my friend Bill Ham Mayor and got a new city council willing to except outside investment growth and change that embraced the student body faculty and staff. Have you been to Auburn see their growth latly? The same folks helping Gadsden Goodwyn Mills Cawood <https://www.gmcnetwork.com/> " also, had a hand in and around helping Auburn in their growth. In Panama City Beach where I worked while attending college before getting my degree, they needed to compete in a higher end market. So, they and the St. Joe Company developed their area around the city pier "Pire Park similar to our undeveloped riverfront,

when I arrived in PCB the city peir it was just a place to fish and maybe surf, with some showers on the other side of the road to wash the sand off, and shopping plaza. I also got involved with the tourism board there in PCB and saw firsthand the struggle to change. When I moved back to Gadsden 26 years ago, I immediately got involved, at first helping with Graphics for the River Fest, where I designed several shirts and made some web pages for the event. Also, over the years, I helped out at the center for cultural arts with Bobby Welch, helping out with the imagination place. Around that same time, I got into Gadsden Tourism, helping Lloyd Wagnon promote the World's longest Yard Sale, also developing World Longest Yard Sale shirt for the event. I also designed logo and coat of arms for Lloyd. At the time I met with Mike McCain and offered my services in his quest to build our industrial base here and in our surrounding area, what a great person and friend he was. Also, after moving back, I found out that we had lost population and over the years industry and jobs, that was 26 years ago, now we have the unique opportunity to reimagine and reinvent or comprehensive city plan, but we need to start with our wildest thoughts, with no limits or boundaries, then find out how what we can do and what is just a pipe dreams. I hope you will comment, expand, and tear apart this post to find something that we could use and build on.

1. An Anchor Resort Hotel for Our Riverfront – Marriott – Sheraton – Hilton- Holiday Resort-even a *Great Wolf Lodge* "water park included."
2. Develop a River District on both sides of the Coosa River
3. Move and Rebuild City Hall in a classic architecture style with form and function that will stand the test of time.
4. Shut down Albert Rains Blvd. and reroute 411 for the development of westside riverfront district.
5. Relocate the Ford Dealership to a better location in order to develop eastside Riverfront district "if we can move a highway" and city hall, maybe help find a better location a help build a better facility for the ford dealership. Win Win
6. A Conference center and / or green space with a professional stage and public restrooms to handle a large crowd on our eastside(?) my favorite, where the dealership is today or west side, if the eastside space was not available.
7. Develop the eastside using all properties from the Ronnie Watkins to Lowes, re-work to face River, relocate businesses, apartments, in order to take full advantage of river front. Also going north from the Boat docks, that may be the easier property to obtain, private local and outside investment encouraged to make all this happen.
8. Make Lake Gadsden behind the Gadsden mall water taxi accessible and self-propelled personal watercraft, without disturbing its beauty or nature. And on the other side of 759 make that body of water of Lake Gadsden accessible for water sports and water sporting events.
9. Water Taxi Service
10. An amusement park with a few permanent rids along our waterfront somewhere, year-round and /or a water park with extra's for fall and winter traffic.
11. Attract a Cabela's Bass Pro Shop to cater to all the competitive fishermen that come here on 759 close to the River, or located off of 59 next to Big Wills Creek, or 59 the Etowah fairgrounds.
12. An Aquatic Center for our citizens, folding it in with our parks and recreation.
13. White Water Rafting / Kayak Park along our riverfront or on Big Wheels creek, there are plans for big wheels.
14. Some sort of pedestrian bridge across the river maybe under Broad Street Bridge, Auburn Architecture and Engineering could make a Graduate project out of this one. And would be a one of a kind an attraction to the area itself. Connecting Downtown and the west side of the river to the east side river front and boat docks.
15. A sky tram or chairlift / Gondolas that traverses the Coosa River and provides a view of our Classic Historic Bridge.
16. Light up the Broad Steet Bridge with addressable color controlled RGBW lighting using a professional Lighting effects group that specialize in lighting of Architecture.
17. Consider a State-of-the-art Medical District and facilities away from the westside Riverfront District, because the activities on our River, might disturb the hospital or interfere with quick access during an emergency.
18. Put high end color night vision ip cameras downtown, on our bridge, at Noccalula falls Park, Amphitheater, ect points of interest that can be accessed by all from the internet, a way to promote our area, and worth every

penny. One way to Pay for them is by allowing local businesses advertise on the web site, and even sponsor cameras, or provide their own.

19. At the falls a shopping, artist, and small vendor, village along the road where the souvenir, shop is and going back towards golf and fields, possibly like "<https://thevillageshops.com/>" in Gatlinburg, maybe different architecture fronts with porches, but the same core buildings to make construction easier and consistent and less costly to build. Then rent out the spaces, for smaller vendors, for longer term for more permanent businesses, then could build to suit.
 20. Market our City as a destination for Tourists, investors, "philanthropist" manufacturing, retail, restaurants, professionals, and trades, as a place to visit, a place to play, a place to work, and a place to live. We can do this by linking our attractions, businesses, places to stay, places to eat, to shop, and places to visit using the internet websites that link and have a common cohesive theme and a professional designed pamphlet with map, and event calendar, a QR code for website, and revised, quarterly, available when we have events here in Gadsden from a booth, like at fishing tournaments, concerts, softball, Soccer, baseball tournaments, running, biking events, and ect, and mailed with tickets or city information request, and at all our places of interest, at Noccalula Falls Park, Boat Docks, Sports Parks, Downtown Gadsden, Center for Cultural Arts, Museum, ect..
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1. Move Albert Rains Boulevard highway us411 away from its current location above or at Twin Bridges Golf Course in North Gadsden and have it rejoin below or at the Gadsden Mall. The perfect solution would be a bridge over the Coosa River that would bring it between the old Goodyear Building and the shopping plaza that has Hobby Lobby, dropping off traffic to 431 then curve back following the natural water way culvert bending back to 759. I am almost suer at on time this would have been the preferred path. Joining 759 then dropping over the 759 bridge onto Rainbow Drive to its original path. The easiest way is to bring 411 back up Third Street which I think was the original route, it still does the deed, with less cost.
 2. Move City Hall, maybe back towards town and south, the YMCA Property, or the chamber block, or even the next block, build a classic building that will stand the test of time, and be a show place for our civil servants and elected officials.
 3. Reclaim our riverfront on the city side and set up a river district with green space and an area that does not impede the access and view of the river. Bild an an infrastructure to accommodate pedestrians, bikes, boats from the river, water sports, picnicking, and businesses that would cater to the leisure visitors, an access road back off of the river some parallel or perpendicular, places to park cars, without causing congestion or impeding activities in the areas. Encourage this district to grow down the Coosa all the way to 759, everybody would profit from this, in the long run, making our River a destination, just as our Falls is and our Downtown is becoming.
 4. We should attract a Large Hotel who has experience with Tourism and have a say on the Architecture and style, "Not an 8 day inns, or a sleep cheap" with Cheesy Architecture, or color, or poor access and most definitely have a parking deck, as part the structure that complements, and hides the fact of its function to our River Front. I know that some have suggested where the Hotel should be built, where City Hall is, or even occupy and renovate the existing building, but I have always said way before Ronnie Watkins had a dealership there, and a lake was still there the Eastside would be the perfect Location, which could enable our boat dock visitors, and competitive fishermen a place to stay, also this could be an anchor for a convention center, and or a large green space to hold events. We would need Parking maybe on the other side of Wallace Drive with Causeways and crosswalks across to the Eastside Riverfront District.
 5. A walkway bridge under our historic Broad Street Bridge but up and suspended and in a way as not to detract from the looks of or the architecture and form of the bridge, I feel this is possible, or I think so, but do not know for sure. If it were possible what a wonderful unique way to connect Downtown Gadsden with the east side of our riverfront it would also be a tourist draw.
 6. As far as the Eastside banks of our Coosa River, stating from the Broad Street bridge down to where Lowes is we need to reimagine it as it sits nothing faces the river. First draw up an east side River district plan that again gives access to our river, with no businesses, blocking the view and not having non-restrictive space between them

and the river, unless a water Taxi Business, they too should not impede foot or bike traffic or the overall aesthetics. To achieve this development and district, we would need find property for all the businesses and even the apartments that now exist. Looking at the old Goodyear Property, and other parcels in and across our city with easy access to highway traffic, which could be a better location, and even promote other businesses, to the new business districts. Some could find new locations in the newly developed district. Gander Mountain could become the new Academy. Lowes will do good almost anywhere. The Apartments well we could find them an acceptable alternative location. If I'm not mistaken, they are not high-end rentals in the first place.

7. Attract Cabela's Bass Pro Shop to cater to all the competitive fishermen that come here on 759 close to the River, or off of 59 next to Big Wills Creek, or 59 the Etowah fairgrounds.
8. Still working on other ideas.....

