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South Valdosta Highway – it is clear that businesses have new parking incentives to put in businesses in that location because there is room for parking

Contemporary businesses, which are successful, have to be geared to cater to customers, who prefer to park close to the store or business they intend to enter.

Parking in Downtown Lakeland is dominated by minimal parking choices. Limited parking has been the norm, because downtown improvements did not include the creation of increased parking. Beautification projects decreased parking. Instead of addressing the problem city-wide, the choice to let F & M Bank and other property owners buy up and dominate the ownership and use of downtown parking on Main Street, on South Valdosta Road, and on Murrell Street has been standard operation for a long time. When listening to discussions about downtown revitalization, parking is the main expressed concern!

A lot of people would like a business to be established in the old Ganas Hardware Store building. It's desirable, in part, because of the back/south parking lot and south door entrance into the building. This writer hates to admit it, but I was "citified" enough to fail learning about the south/behind-the-building parking for some businesses for a couple of years after moving here.

Instead of the City of Lakeland, the Lakeland-Lanier Chamber of Commerce, the Lakeland Downtown Development Authority or other entities exercising overall planning taking the parking problems into consideration, they have allowed the city, various projects and businesses to limit parking. The current response is to look to the Downtown Development Authority to solve the parking problem, or the City of Lakeland (as different from building owners). Instead, we have the general public attending Lakeland City Council meeting to address the problem, and the placement of an F &

M Bank Employee involved with the Development Authority and Lakeland-Lanier Chamber of Commerce to 'deal' with the problem.

Downtown city planners, please plan for parking instead of leaving people to cross the two busiest streets in Lakeland at their own risk! The Lanier County News encourages ALL citizens to respect parking laws and 'do the right thing'! It's everyone's responsibility to follow law!

NOTE: It is the opinion of this writer that "the powers that be" consider abandoning the current Lanier County Courthouse and move the courthouse operations to the old LCS Primary School where there is plenty of space for its operations AND PLENTY OF SPACE FOR PARKING! A traffic circle replacement of the current courthouse would make a safer intersection and connection for the multiple highways and state roads which intersect at Main Street and South Valdosta Road.

Is a public official working for the citizens when...?

- official doesn't update government's website and keep current
- official commonly uses derogatory 'pet' names for anyone who does not hold identical views or anyone perceived as questioning or challenging
- official limits information available on a government's website
- official offers solution which isn't a full solution, just to appear 'helpful'
- official tells staff to ignore Open Records requests instead of responding to them, hoping that the person will not pursue the request
- official doesn't look for ways to be transparent, particularly with online information, limiting citizens right to know
- official calls citizen by name and labels a liar during public meeting?
- official tells citizens to take care of matters themselves, instead of enforcing ordinances?
- official creates community budget and minimizes board/council or citizens their right to know in advance and give input?
- official changes meetings to accommodate employee creating attendance problems for board/council and citizens.
- official constructs narrative for citizen by saying official held public meetings about which board/council never were informed.
- official pits people against each other to make one feel right and the other one wrong.
- official controls all the decision-making about everything including the responsibilities of a board/council.
- official claims truth is what's being said at the moment, instead of information in accordance with fact or reality
- official tells citizens to follow the law, but privately doesn't do it him/herself.