

OREGON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION'S

Resource Team Report
for
Sweet Home, Oregon



March 18-20, 2003

The Sweet Home Resource Team Report

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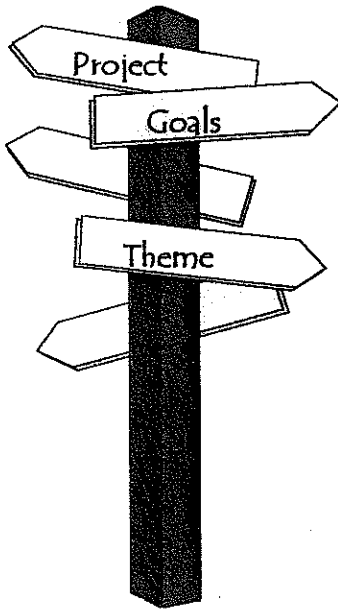
Project Introduction

Discussions for downtown revitalization assistance for Sweet Home began after the Oregon Downtown Development Association (ODDA) attended a 'one-stop' meeting in the community that consisted of local stakeholders and service providers. Representatives from the Oregon Economic & Community Development Department, the Sweet Home Economic Development Group (SHEDG) and ODDA concluded that a Resource Team approach would offer the community a good framework from which to launch and implement downtown revitalization projects. ODDA worked with SHEDG to develop a scope of work and the Resource Team was scheduled for on-site assistance March 18-20, 2003.

The on-site Resource Team for Sweet Home consisted of downtown specialists in the areas of public space and circulation design, parking analysis, architectural design, commercial energy efficiency and business mix analysis. A staff member from ODDA served as the Team's coordinator. The Resource Team convened in Sweet Home on March 18, 2003. While on-site, the downtown planning process included a 'kick-off' meeting; walking and driving tours; interviews with local stakeholders; a thorough examination of issues affecting the downtown district through collected information; analysis of issues that needed to be addressed; and recommendations relating to those issues. A presentation on the Team's findings and recommendations completed the on-site portion of the work. This report serves as follow-up to the final presentation.

The recommendations contained in this report are broad brush and conceptual in nature. The aim of this project is to bring the community together to discuss a shared vision of downtown's future, then articulate those ideas into conceptual drawings and supporting text. The ideas contained in this report are not written in stone; they should be used as a springboard for further discussion as to which projects should be implemented and to assist in project prioritization and phasing.

This report is a summary of information collected and synthesized by the ODDA Resource Team while working in Sweet Home March 18-20, 2003. It is based on the information presented at the final presentation. The recommendations in this report are broken into sections based on the team members' specialties: Public Space Design; Parking; Rehab and Redevelopment; Commercial Energy Efficiency; Downtown Business Mix and Clustering; and Next Steps.



Project Goals & Overarching Theme

The six primary goals of the Sweet Home Resource Team included:

1. Create a mixed-use downtown district that offers a great experience for residents and tourists alike.
2. Rehab downtown buildings to make them more attractive and enticing to shoppers.
3. Create an inviting pedestrian atmosphere that encourages browsing and provides good linkages.
4. Strengthen existing businesses and recruit complementary businesses.
5. Provide enough easy to find parking to meet downtown's needs.
6. Encourage energy efficiency measures to help businesses' bottom line and overall performance.

The overarching theme for the Sweet Home Resource Team project was to build off the community's assets and recent successes.

Each member of the Resource Team undertook their tasks with these goals and theme in mind. The differing disciplines that each Team member brought to Sweet Home allowed them to address these goals in their own tailored way. Team recommendations and strategies are discussed in the sections that follow.



The Sweet Home Resource Team's Findings & Recommendations

General Recommendations for Moving Downtown Revitalization Efforts Forward

- The City, Sweet Home Economic Development Group, the Chamber and other appropriate groups should partner on both short and long-term revitalization projects, concentrating efforts on Sweet Home's traditional downtown core. Commercial sprawling development that rambles from downtown toward the lake continues to drain life from downtown. It will take strong community/ political will, and focused efforts, to 'bring downtown back.' Recent community successes, such as the new multi-purpose community center, police station, high school and Class A office space (at the west end of town) support the notion that Sweet Home can successfully undertake complex projects. Downtown revitalization is a long-term, incremental process and it will take collaboration, 'laser-beam' focus and clearly defined roles to succeed. Factors that weigh heavily in the success of downtown redevelopment include leadership, shared vision, a well thought-out and implementable plan, calculated risk-taking and perseverance. A strong sense of community, ownership and empowerment in Sweet Home are extremely valuable assets that can't be underestimated.
- It will be important for the community to remember that the proposed resort development will not be a cure-all for the community. Efforts should be concentrated on improving the downtown so that tourists and residents who are currently driving *through* downtown Sweet Home will want to stop and spend time (and money).

Design Recommendations: Public Space & Circulation

Topics covered in this section include:

Introduction

Opportunities Plan

Gateway Development

Ames Creek

Circulation & Linkages

Streetscape Improvements

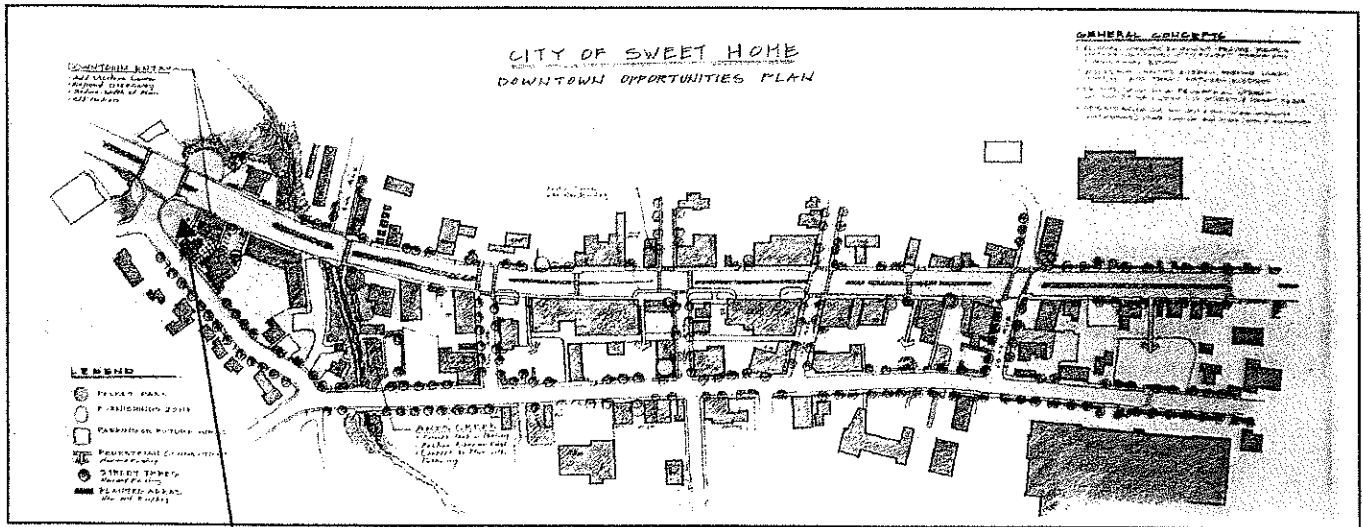
Creating People Places

INTRODUCTION

This section of Sweet Home's Downtown Conceptual Plan addresses the physical and aesthetic design of downtown's public spaces. The enhancements discussed in this section are designed to seamlessly integrate with each other to make the whole downtown district look and function better. The character and aesthetics of the public spaces in the central business district will help set the theme of, and tone for, Sweet Home.

One goal of the public space design portion of this project is to help create a stronger downtown commercial district for Sweet Home through the enhancement of open and public spaces. These spaces serve as conduits for pedestrian circulation; provide a more cohesive and inviting whole, and create a pleasant and safe environment. Another goal is to improve pedestrian circulation patterns as they are a critically important, functional element in a successful downtown environment

Two goals emerged from the public space design component of the Resource Team project: 1) the creation of flexible gathering spaces that are multi-purpose, with uses that promote 'people-activity;' and 2) the creation of public spaces that are attractive, special and loved by the community. (These will be attractive to visitors as well.)

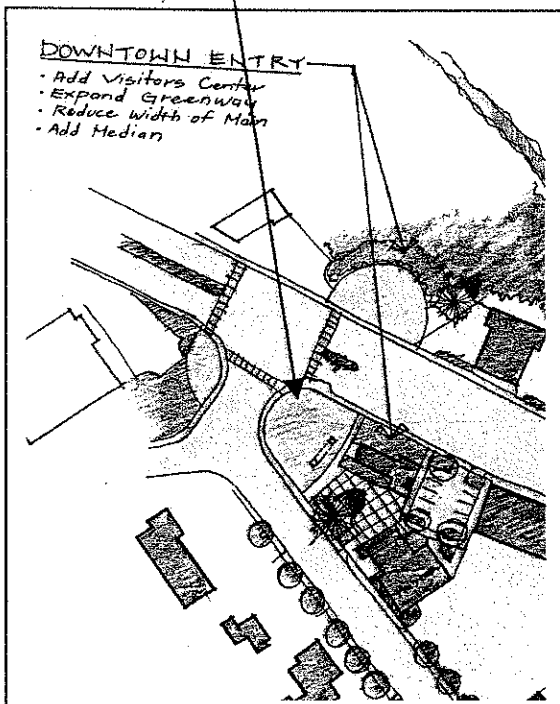


DOWNTOWN OPPORTUNITIES PLAN

The color version of the above graphic is located in the Appendix.

The Resource Team took a broad, 'big picture' look at downtown Sweet Home in terms of pedestrian nodes (or attractors), and the types of public space enhancements that are needed to help make the community more cohesive and pedestrian friendly.

GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT

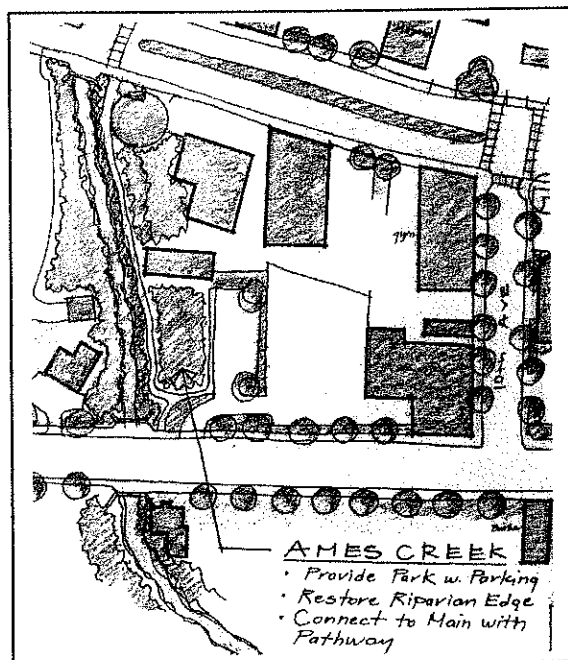


The Downtown Opportunities Plan outlined in a broad conceptual form, several recommended public space improvements for Sweet Home's business district. One of the recommendations provides a solution for making a stronger entry, or gateway, statement on Highway 228 (from the west). The Team recommends reconfiguring the site where the local Museum is located to include a Visitors' Center, attractive public plaza, expanded green space and parking. The Team recommends the old Depot, located behind McDonald's, be moved and rehabbed into a Visitors' Center/Chamber. The current location of the Chamber (in the center of town) is inaccessible from the east. Locating the Visitors' Center at the Museum would help create a strong gateway into the

community and provide a 'one-stop' for visitors to get information on local offerings and tour the Museum. A paved plaza between the Visitors' Center and Museum would feature outdoor exhibits. Maintaining the lawn at the 'point' of the property would create a green setting for the Visitors' Center and a front yard for the community, appropriate to the name *Sweet Home*. To help make this area more attractive and inviting, the Team recommends 'greening up' the corners directly to the west and south of the Museum property. The conceptual plan for this area shows the location of the depot/Visitors' Center and adjacent parking. For this configuration to occur, the shed that houses the historical farm equipment would need to be relocated.

Another recommendation that would help make this area more pedestrian friendly would be to incorporate a crosswalk at the intersection, from the Museum across Main, and narrowing of the crossing distance of Main Street with curb extensions. (These improvements will need to be implemented with ODOT's approval.)

AMES CREEK



Sweet Home is fortunate to have a natural amenity like Ames Creek running through the western edge of downtown. Restoration of the riparian edge of the creek into a more natural area will make it even more of an outstanding feature. The inclusion of a trail along the creek, linking Main and Long Streets, coupled with a better defined park, and the addition of a parking lot, would turn this 'diamond in the rough' into an outstanding natural feature in downtown.

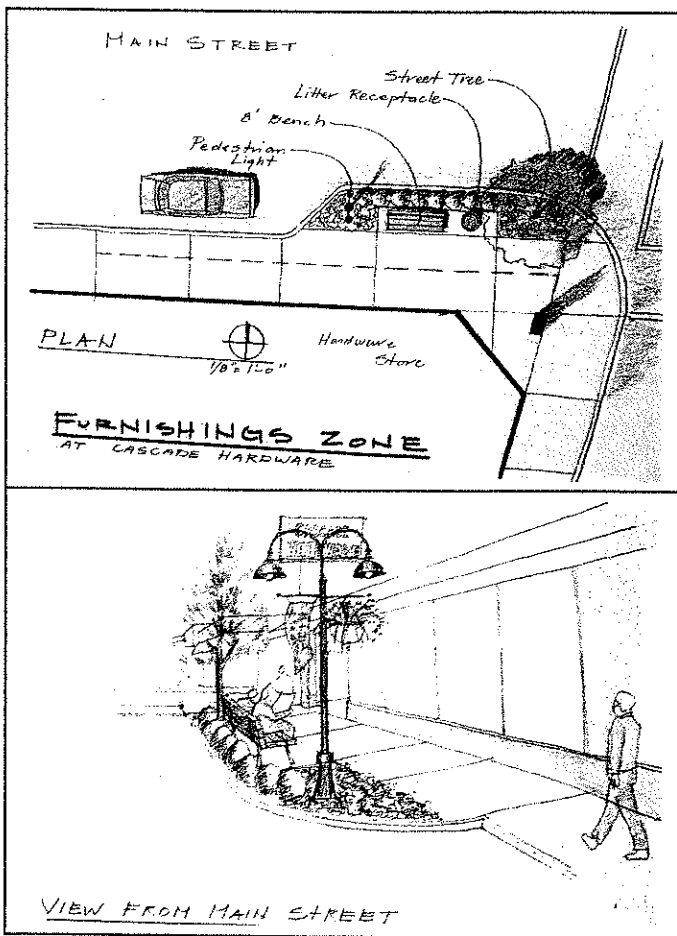
STREET TREES

Members of the Resource Team recommend the continuation of the street tree planting program along Long Street, the streets that connect Long and Main (10th, 12th, 13th, & 15th), and in selected areas along Main Street (the recommendations for Main Street will be covered in a section that follows). In downtowns, trees can create a special ambiance and frame great views. When planted along wide streets, trees can help calm traffic, offer shade and add vertical texture to otherwise bleak urban areas. They also add color,

texture and softness to an otherwise 'hard' streetscape. In particular, widening the sidewalks and adding trees along the streets that connect Main and Long will help turn these areas into inviting gateways, helping entice visitors to explore Sweet Home's commercial offerings along Long Street.

The Resource Team also recommends the continued 'plant out' of the center median strip from near the museum, to 18th Avenue. Due to the narrowness of the median, planting street trees *in* the median is not recommended as their height and bulk would visually divide Main Street and create the probability of damage to the tree limbs from passing trucks.

FURNISHING ZONES



Color versions of these graphics are included in the Appendix.

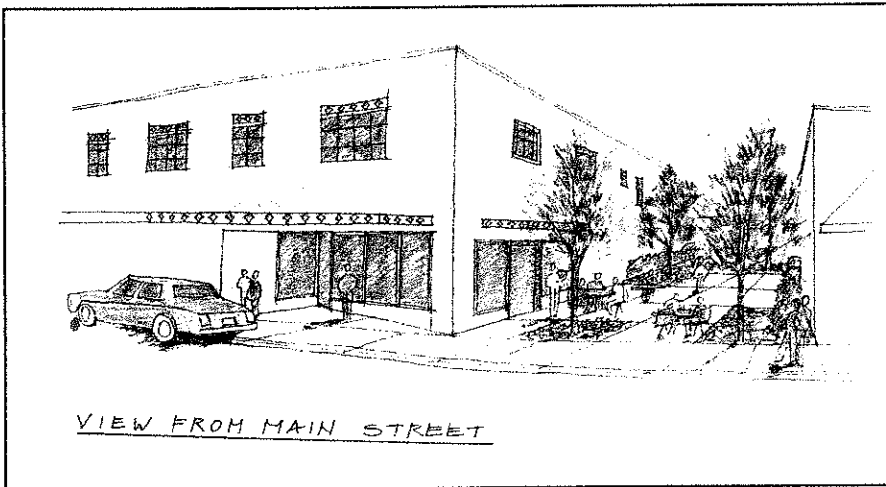
In addition to locating street trees in specific downtown locations, other pedestrian amenities should be implemented in the core area as part of an overall plan for downtown public space. However, the narrow width of the sidewalks along Main Street offers little room for amenities such as pedestrian

scaled lighting, benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, etc. In response to this issue, the Resource Team recommends working with ODOT to develop 'furnishing zones' in specific areas along Main Street. Conceptually, these zones could be implemented along the south side of Main where there are curb extensions (at 12th and 13th Avenues), and in front of Key Bank. They could include lighting, benches, low plantings, trash

receptacles, etc. Making these 'opportunity areas' into more people-friendly places will create a Main Street's public space that is more inviting, attractive and *active*!

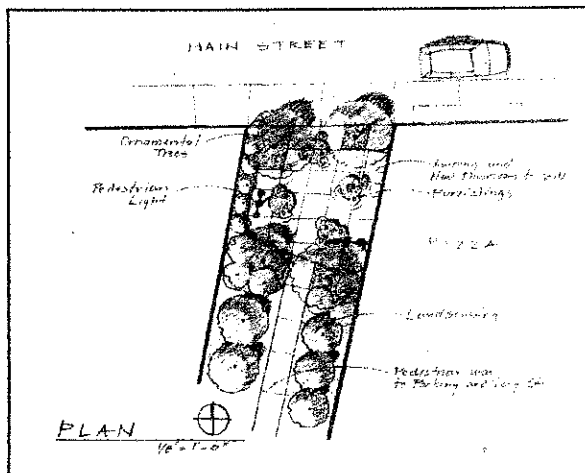
POCKET PARKS AND CONNECTIONS

Since the sidewalk width on Main Street is narrow and there are limited public places for people to gather and interact, the Resource Team recommends developing pocket parks in several locations to solve this problem. An active Main Street include public 'people spaces' that encourage activity through their design and location. The opportunities to develop pocket parks along the south side Main Street exist at the following locations: at Ames Creek; the corner of the Solar Way building at 12th; between the newspaper office and the pizza parlor; next to Mollie's Bakery; and on the east side of the Rio.



Opportunities to create pocket parks on the north side of Main Street exist at the following locations: just east of A&W; next to the Frontier Restaurant; next to the Dairy Queen and between the video

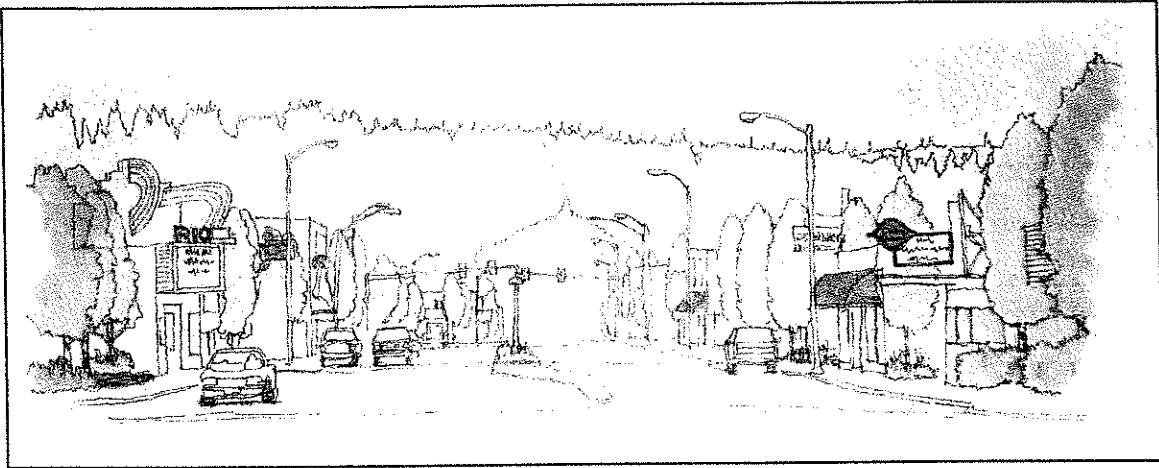
store and Main Street, at the 15th Avenue intersection. On Long Street, there is an opportunity to develop a pocket park at the 12th Avenue intersection, behind the tavern.



Since all of these proposed pocket park locations are different in size and orientation, each will need to be designed individually. However, certain design elements (ie. lighting, benches, trash receptacles, etc) will need to be consistent in design for an integrated and cohesive look. Each space should contain the elements that support activity, including good pedestrian-scaled lighting for safety and to alleviate vandalism. Several of the pocket park locations along Main Street could also provide good pedestrian linkages to Long Street- -giving visitors

and residents attractive options and opportunities to 'park once and walk often,' rather than vice versa. In addition to the pocket parks, there are several other locations along

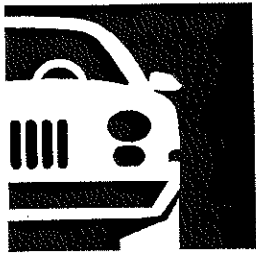
Main Street that could support more formalized pedestrian connections to better access parking.



Several of the pocket park locations could be enhanced by opening up the retail or restaurant spaces onto the park with windows and doors, and in some instances, outdoor dining could easily ‘spill’ out into the pocket park, encouraging even more activity.

Along Main Street, the pocket parks should include trees to help soften the street edge and add green to this urban environment. By carefully locating street trees in these spaces, and clustering plantings at other strategic locations, downtown can have the appearance of regularly planted street trees *without* compromising the narrow sidewalk space need for pedestrian circulation.

The development of downtown pocket parks as attractive, unique places will help make downtown a more inviting place for pedestrians. Sweet Home has a good opportunity to add and reshape downtown green space through pocket park development.



Downtown Parking

INTRODUCTION

The study area for this project is Downtown Sweet Home, defined as including the area bordered by 10th Avenue to the west, Long Street to the south, 15th Avenue along the eastern boundary and Main Street to the north. The inventory included on-street evaluation of capacity.

The land uses within the study area include a mix of retail, commercial, civic, public and recreational activities, as well as historic features that are appropriate for an emerging and vital downtown core area.

The Resource Team conducted a parking inventory and selected parking utilization review of public parking assets within the study area. Elements of the parking study included:

- Inventory parking in the downtown.
- Evaluation of “typical day” parking use to determine peak hour utilization in a smaller area identified as the “core area” of downtown, identified by local business owners as the area of highest use. The core area includes the area bordered by 13th Avenue to the east, 10th Avenue to the west, Main Street to the north and Long Street on the south.
- Identification of parking surpluses and constraints in the parking supply in the downtown.

The purpose of the parking study was to produce a “snapshot” analysis of existing parking dynamics in downtown Sweet Home that could be employed to develop strategies for managing the downtown parking supply as Sweet Home grows.

PARKING INVENTORY

An approximate total of 612 on- and off-street parking stalls were identified within the study area. Of these, approximately 219 were on-street and approximately 393 were off-street stalls. On-street parking is fairly evenly distributed throughout the study area. A number of small off-street lots are located throughout downtown, with the largest publicly available (although privately owned) lot located off of Long Street between 10th and 12th Avenues.

W&H Pacific, Inc. conducted a previous downtown parking analysis in 1998. However, that study included a larger area than this project, and did not conduct any utilization rate analysis, so a direct comparison of this study's results with the previous study is not possible.

CAPACITY ANALYSIS

The capacity inventory was conducted on Tuesday, March 18, 2003 for the study area. The utilization inventory was conducted over a six-hour period (10:00 AM to 4:00 PM) on Wednesday, March 19, 2003 for the core area of highest demand. This time period was selected to include the period identified as "peak" by local business owners. The day was mild (low 60 degrees) and rainy, with average activity in downtown. It should be noted that March would be considered an off-peak visitor month, with no recreational activities, or special events.

The capacity analysis began with a compilation of public parking spaces (on and off-street) within the study area. Parking was documented by location and type and was used to create a data template necessary to conduct the utilization assessment for the core area. Of the approximately 612 total parking spaces in the study area, approximately 145 are located in the core area, including 47 on-street and 98 off-street.

The utilization study involved an hourly accounting of each occupied on-street and off-street parking space in the Core Area. Table 1 shows the results of this study.

TABLE 1: UTILIZATION RATES: CORE AREA

TIME	ONSTREET		OFF-STREET	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
10:00 AM	14	30%	33	25%
11:00 AM	20	43%	41	31%
12:00	16	34%	45	34%
1:00 PM	17	36%	33	25%
2:00 PM	14	30%	37	28%
3:00 PM	10	21%	27	20%
4:00 PM	25	53%	30	23%
<i>Average Utilization</i>		35%	26%	

“Peak hour occupancy” for a downtown is the period during the business day where there is the highest utilization of parking spaces. The peak hour for the core area for this utilization study was not distinct, with slightly more spaces used at 11 AM and 4 PM.

The overall occupancy for the core area was around 30%. At 11:00 AM and 4:00 PM, the percentage of occupancy rose to about 37%.

The generally accepted industry standard for optimum parking utilization is 80-90%. When parking utilization approaches this level, certain steps are triggered, as described below. Using 85% occupancy ‘rule,’ the completed survey demonstrates that there is an existing surplus of parking in the downtown.

It is recommended that the utilization rate survey be conducted again during a peak period to determine how parking usage differs at other times of the year. The following steps should be used to re-conduct the utilization study:

1. Determine the times and days to check parking useage. If weekday parking is identified as the problem, the study should be done on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. Do not perform the study the week of spring break or during any other unusual event.

The typical inventory period for an hourly parking count is the period between 11AM and 4PM. This period can be adjusted if observations indicate that a shorter or longer period would be more appropriate.

If the whole study area cannot be done in one day, count separate sections on different days. For example, if one area can be completed in a single day, do that on a Tuesday at all the appointed hours, then complete the remainder of the area on another day.

2. Count the occupied parking spaces. This can occur on a map or by using the inventory sheets. If the inventory sheets are used, data will be transferred to the map. The circuit should be counted hourly, and the same counting pattern should be repeated each time as this improves accuracy.
3. Calculate parking occupancy by block. First, add up the available spaces and all the occupied spaces for each time period. Divide the number of occupied spaces by the number of available spaces to calculate the average occupancy rate. The results will show your overall parking utilization rate for the downtown area. The goal is a rate of less than 85%.
4. For any of the blocks that are at or near capacity (over 75%), it is also useful to break the utilization rate down by block, or block face, and hour. This will allow patterns to be revealed of where and when there are any problems. At this point, it is possible to determine if a turnover study is needed.

TURN-OVER ANALYSIS

No turn-over analysis was performed for this project. If the utilization rate study performed during the peak period demonstrates that any portion of the core area is approaching 85%, then it is recommended that a turn-over analysis be conducted to determine if 2-hour spaces are being occupied for significantly longer than two hours. A turn-over analysis is conducted by recording three digits of a parked car's license plate on an hourly basis, then analyzing the results. This reveals whether users are parking for the posted length of time. For maximum efficiency and economic benefit, the on-street spots should not be utilized for long-term parking. A result that shows misuse of parking spaces could lead to a discussion about the need for increased enforcement.

PARKING POLICY GUIDELINES

The guidelines for parking in downtown Sweet Home are based on the desire to create a system of parking access that supports, facilitates and contributes to a healthy downtown. The guidelines serve as a framework for near- and long-term decision-making and implementation of parking decisions and management in downtown.

These guidelines are based on the premise that long-term development of the downtown will require an integrated and comprehensive package of strategies to stimulate economic development and redevelopment. The parking component of that overall plan is one element of a larger approach to downtown improvements.

- **Make the downtown accessible to all users.** Access should be provided to all users of the downtown, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and delivery vehicles. The City should strive to create and implement as many access options as possible.
- **Make the downtown parking convenient for Customers and Visitors.** The core area of downtown should provide parking that supports its role as the central point from which the priority users, customers and visitors, are connected to shops, businesses, and visitor facilities. The most convenient parking spaces should be reserved to support customer and visitor access to downtown.
- **Provide sufficient parking.** Enough parking should be provided to support desired and priority economic activities.
- **Provide adequate employee parking.** Adequate parking with reasonable access should be provided to meet employee needs, in conjunction with a transportation system that provides balanced travel mode options.
- **Preserve and expand on-street parking wherever possible.** On-street parking should be preserved along strategic corridors to improve customer/visitor accessibility and to facilitate revitalization of street level

activities. On-street access should, in some cases, take priority over street capacity and vehicle speeds.

- **Improve access linkages between other parts of the city and the downtown core.** Access linkages within the core and other parts of the city should be clearly identified through signage, way-finding measures and other communication strategies to increase customer understanding of the downtown parking system.
- **Implement education and communication programs to improve downtown parking.** Efforts should be made to educate employees, customers and other users of the downtown of the general purpose and intent for parking and access in the downtown.

PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

This section presents the recommended parking management plan for downtown Sweet Home. This plan establishes consistency with the Parking Policies and gives direction to future decision-making. The Management Plan provides a flexible system of parking management that is triggered by demand.

The purpose of the parking management plan is to:

- Clearly define the intended use and purpose of the parking system,
- Manage the supply and enforce the parking policies,
- Monitor use and respond to changes in demand, and
- Maintain the intended function of the overall system.

The Rule of 85%

The Rule of 85% is a measure of parking utilization that acts as a benchmark against which parking management decisions are based. Within the parking industry, it is assumed that when an inventory of parking exceeds 85% occupancy in the peak hour the supply becomes constrained, and may not provide full and convenient access to its intended user. Once a supply of parking routinely exceeds 85% occupancy in the peak hour, the Rule of 85% would require that parking management strategies be implemented to bring peak hour occupancies to a level below 85% to assure that intended uses are conveniently accommodated.

The recently completed parking inventory for Sweet Home revealed that existing peak hour occupancies are significantly less than 85%. Having the Rule of 85% in effect will

assure that a process for evaluating and responding to future parking activity in the downtown is in place.

Downtown Parking

The purpose of parking in downtown is to support and enhance the vitality of the downtown core. In the downtown core, the following management rules should apply:

- All on-street parking will be 2-hour parking based on the principle that:
 - The 2-hour time stay allows adequate customer, visitor and client access to the retail core; and
 - Uniform time stays foster a parking environment that is easy for the customer, visitor and client to understand.
- The priority for **on-street parking** in the downtown will be 2-hour parking. As strategies within this plan are implemented, any on-street spaces of longer duration will be transitioned to off-street locations within the Core Zone and immediately adjacent to it.
- The priority for **off-street parking** in the downtown will be stays of less than 4 hours to accommodate customers, visitors and clients. These facilities are intended to provide for a moderately longer time stay than allowed on street.
- The City will conduct regular utilization and turn-over studies to ascertain the actual peak hour utilization and average turnover of parking resources in the downtown area. If utilization of on- and off-street parking exceeds 85% and turnover meets desired rates, the City will evaluate and implement one, or a combination of, the following implementation steps triggered by the 85% Rule:
 - Increase level of enforcement to assure desired rate of turnover and minimize abuse (i.e., exceeding time stay, employees moving to evade a parking ticket).
 - Transition overall mix of short-term or 15-minute stalls to 2 hour stalls.
 - Reduce on-street time stays to increase turnover (e.g., 2-hours to 90 minutes)
 - Transition employee parking in the core into less centrally located parking.

- Pursue shared-use agreements with private lots to provide for additional parking capacity in downtown.
- Create new public supply of parking in downtown.
- The City will establish policy guidelines for exceptions to the short-term parking requirements in the downtown.
 - Handicapped/disabled access
 - 15 minute zones
 - Specific criteria for approval (i.e., by specific business type)
 - Specific locations (i.e., end of block vs. mid block)
 - Number per geographic area
 - Loading zones
 - Maximum number per block face(s)
 - Limitation on number per geographic area (e.g., no more than two for every three continuous block faces)

Signing and Striping

The City should consider directional signage on the roadways that directs customers to specific facilities. This will be of greatest importance at primary portals into downtown, at major traffic intersections within downtown, and at primary points of ingress at specific facilities.

The City should create a uniform sign system for off-street facilities owned or operated by the City of Sweet Home.

- The City should establish a consistent sign package that incorporates a uniform design, logo, and color package into all information signage related to parking.
- Each off-street public facility should be named by its location (e.g., Front at 10th).
- City signs at off-street facilities should direct customers to the nearest available visitor lot (e.g., “Employee Parking Only, Visitor Parking at Front & 10th).
- The City should work with ODOT to mark individual parking spaces along Main Street to increase efficiency.

Marketing and Communications

The City of Sweet Home should develop a marketing and communication system for downtown parking. This can consist of the following items.

- Develop maps that visually display the parking areas and lots and identify the location of visitor versus employee facilities.
- Validation program. Evaluate the feasibility of retail and theater validation systems if the City moves to enforcement and ticketing.
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) alternatives. Incorporate alternative mode options (i.e., shuttles, transit, and bicycle) into parking materials.

Pricing

Given the size of Sweet Home and its current and anticipated growth, it is not suggested that the City implement parking pricing at the present time. However, as the 85% Rule is triggered, additional and more aggressive management of the supply is needed. Sweet Home may at some future point consider pricing parking. At that point, pricing would be intended to (a) facilitate more efficient turnover, (b) encourage use of specific facilities in specific management zones (i.e., short-term vs. employee parking), (c) encourage use of alternative modes, and (d) provide a funding source for new supply and alternative mode options. The following options may be considered:

- Meter on-street parking to increase efficiency and capacity.
- Charge for parking in publicly owned off-street facilities.
- Establish a "Downtown Parking Fund" from revenues derived from downtown public parking.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARKING IMPROVEMENTS

Near-Term Implementation

- Mark on-street parking spaces to increase efficiency
- Create an agreement with property owners for public use of:
 - Lot on Long St. west of pizza business
 - Lot on Long St. between drugstore and laundromat
 - Credit property owners (“public parking provided by...”)
- Mark spaces as “reserved for” specific uses
- Stripe and sign several pull-through RV spaces in public lot (dual use)
- Create a clear parking signage program
 - Develop a logo/identity for off street public parking lots.
 - Upgrade on-street directional signage to incorporate logo/identity
 - Install uniform signage at all public off street parking facilities

Additional Study

- Re-do utilization study during “peak season” – after boating season begins
- Perform a turnover study (measures how long parking spaces are being used)

Longer-Term

- Continue to repeat utilization studies – implement 85% Rule
- Create additional RV spaces in the downtown area
- Improve pedestrian access between Long St. parking lot and Main St.
- Consolidate or remove driveway cuts on Main St. and Long St. to increase on-street parking

- Discuss clear zone length with ODOT and reduce if feasible
- Implement a parking management program:
 - Enforce 2-hr parking on-street,
 - Mark off-street parking for 4-hr or “all-day”
 - Evaluate and reduce 15-minute stalls if they are underutilized

Façade Design Recommendations:

Topics covered in this section include:

Sweet Home's Commercial Architecture Style

Traditional Downtown Storefront Features

Façade Rehab Recommendations

Hardware Store Rehab

Main Street Blockface Rehab

Solar Way Update

Sweet Home's Commercial Architecture Style

Sweet Home's downtown commercial district is primarily comprised of small-scaled buildings that are two stories, or less, in height. Many of the storefronts are built out of concrete block - - which means that for the most part, they are very 'flat' and plain in appearance. That said, Sweet Home is fortunate to have some nice, traditional architectural landmarks in downtown, including the Rio Theater and Molly's Bakery building on Main, and the Feed Store on Long. Downtown also has some unique local architectural landmarks on Main Street that include the A&W and walk-up Dairy Queen - - helping to give this largely non-descript commercial district a 'fifties' look and feel. While on-site, the Resource Team considered ways to play on the 50's kitsch, without going overboard. The recommendations that follow show a good variety of building rehab ideas that respect and support elements of good downtown design, while offering some innovative façade rehab ideas.

Before specific façade rehab recommendations are discussed, it is important to understand the features of traditional downtown storefronts and why they are critical to pedestrian movement (and a vital downtown district).

Traditional Downtown Storefront Features

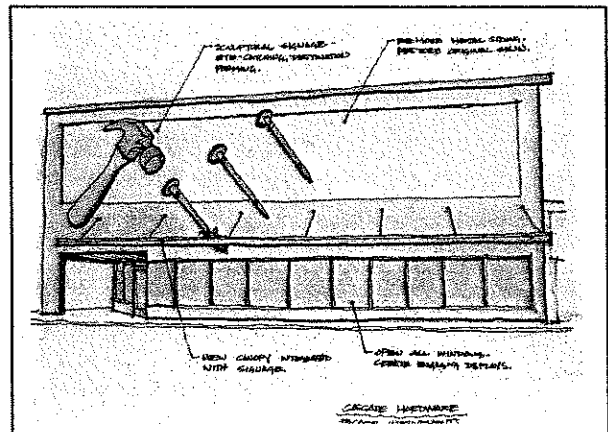
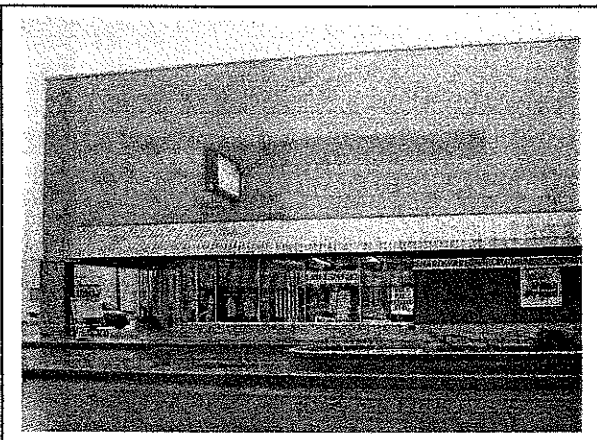
One of the goals of downtown revitalization is to have a continuous line of storefronts that encourage browsing through the design of the buildings, coupled with interesting and appealing shop windows.

The following is a list of building features that help contribute to walkable, pedestrian friendly downtowns.

Building features that contribute to inviting downtowns include:

- Respect for history: rehabilitating existing historic buildings by keeping true to their original character; and by *referencing* Sweet Home's commercial style in new infill development (but not exactly replicating it).
- Buildings that directly address the sidewalk, rather than set back behind parking.
- Buildings that offer sidewalk protection for pedestrians, i.e. canopies or awnings.
- Transparent storefronts at the street level, i.e. large clean, appealing windows.
- Bulkheads below the storefront windows (visually "anchoring" the building to the site).
- Recessed storefront entries.
- Breakup of the horizontal building lines with vertical structural elements.
- Upper levels of buildings punctuated with rhythmic use of vertically proportioned windows.
- Articulated parapets that vary in height and character from building to building.
- Absence of blank walls or empty lots. Studies show that pedestrians will not walk along long empty lots or blank walls in a downtown setting, they will cross the street or turn around to avoid these areas. For maximum *browsibility*, a downtown needs a consistent, continuous line of storefronts that is not broken up by vacant lots, blank walls, parking lots and drive-thrus.

Hardware Store Rehab

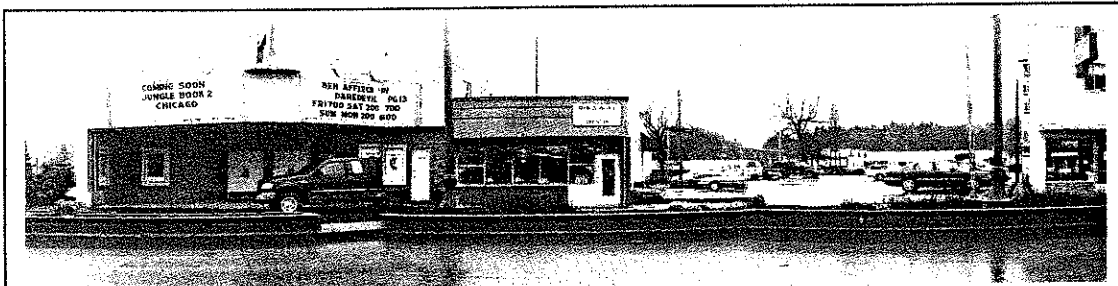
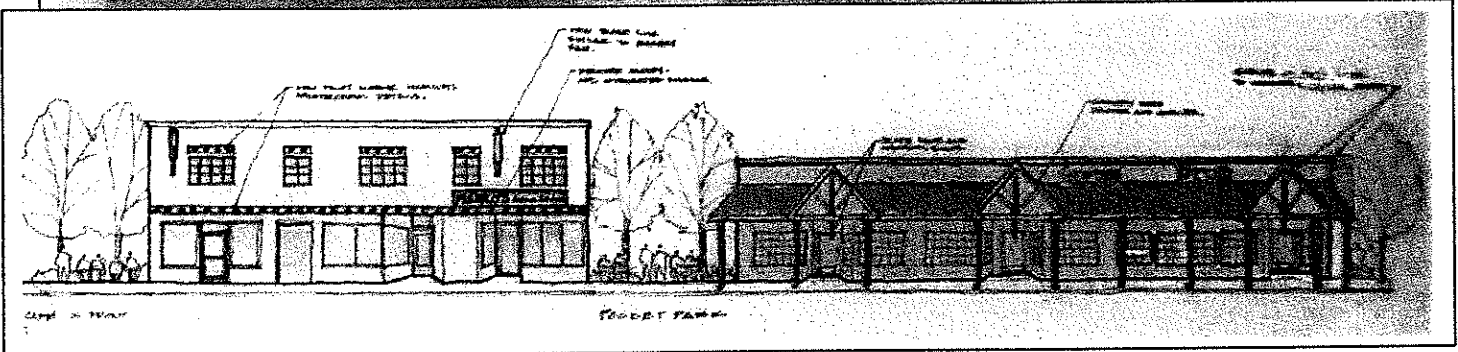
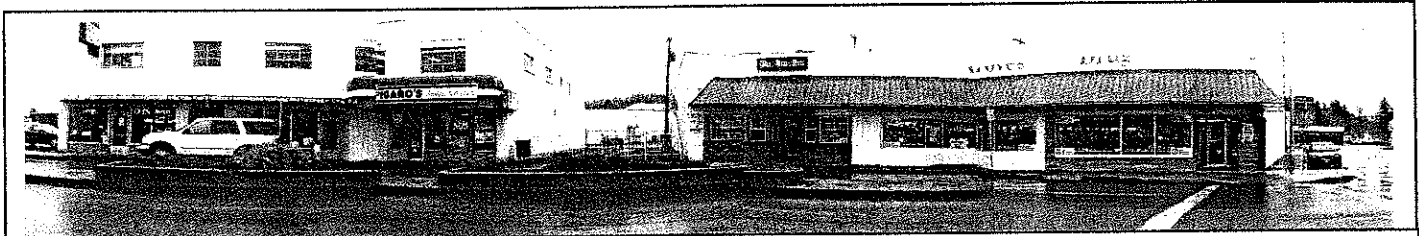


A color version of the 'after' graphic is included in the Appendix.

The Resource Team thought this downtown storefront was the perfect candidate for a façade rehab that was interesting and *fun!* As it exists, there is little visual interest to captivate the passerby. The following are recommendations to give this tired-looking façade a new lease on life!

- Remove the metal sheathing covering the top half of the building; restore the original storefront.
- Install three-dimensional sculptural storefront signage that is eye-catching, unique and helps create a new, fun look for downtown.
- Install a new canopy that integrates with new signage.
- Uncover all the ground floor display windows and fill them with engaging store displays.

Main Street Blockface Rehab (Color versions of the 'afters' are in the Appendix.)

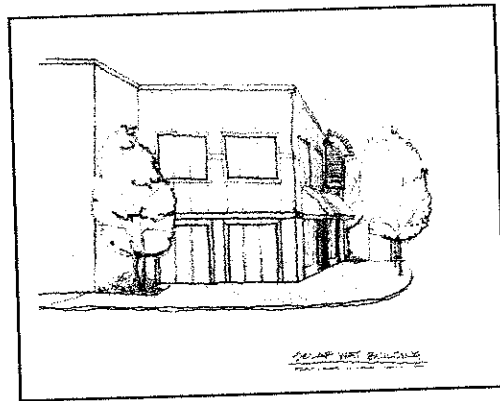
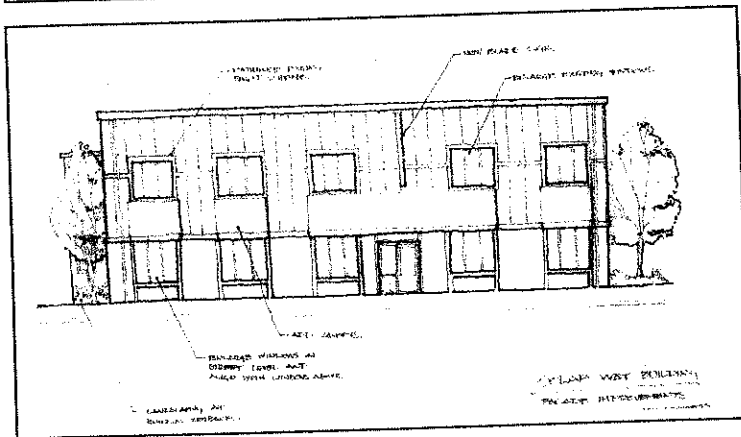
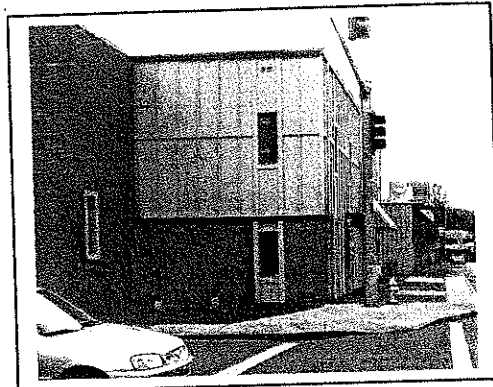
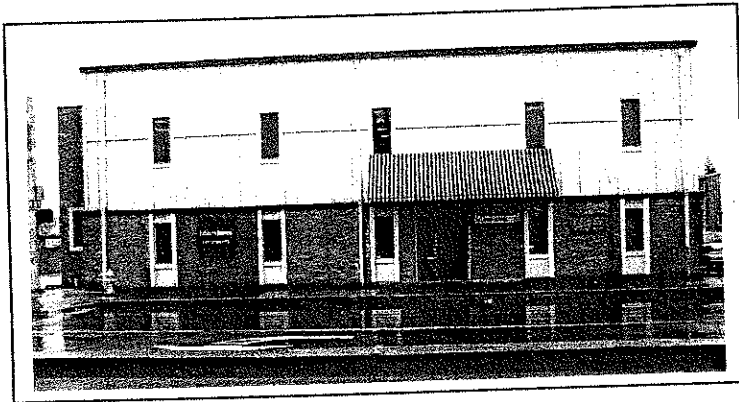


The Resource Team explored façade solutions for a blockface along Main Street, from the Rio Theater to Grove's Pharmacy. The recommended updates for the buildings complement each other. Open spaces between the buildings are addressed by 'greening them up' and making them more people friendly and the street, as a whole, more cohesive.

Beginning with Grove's Pharmacy, the recommended blockface improvements include:

- Add attractive entrance-defining gables (with columns) at each store entrance, including wrapping the gable treatment around the corner of the pharmacy to better address and announce its corner entrance. Articulating the façade with this type of treatment will give it more visual interest and breakup its long, linear look through the use of vertical elements.
- A unified color palette on this building will make it appear more cohesive.
- Larger, storefront windows that are filled with great displays (displays that match from one storefront to the next) will also make this group more cohesive in appearance and 'browser friendly.'
- Attractive blade signs are needed to better announce each business, especially for pedestrians.
- Between the newspaper office and Figaro's is a great opportunity to create a downtown pocket park that includes trees, lighting, a plaza and outdoor seating/dining options. This space could also provide a connection to Long Street, as well as serve as a wonderful open space amenity.
- For the building that houses Figaro's and Mollie's Bakery, the Team recommends punching out an opening on the side of Figaro's facing the pocket park to encourage activity and park use. This will also keep more eyes on this space that has suffered from vandalism in the past.. There is also an opportunity to create an inviting outdoor café/seating area adjacent to the bakery (in front of the parking lot). The addition of street trees and landscaping on both sides of the driveway would help create visual rhythm and continuity and 'green' without sacrificing any of the sidewalk.
- The Team recommends that the original canopy of the entire building be restored. This includes the removal of the plastic, bubble awning at Figaro's.
- A new paint scheme would also improve the looks of this building - - one that better highlights the interesting 'diamond' architectural details through the use of complementary colors that tie into the art deco look of this building. Because of the building's scale and location, it has the potential to be a nice 'bookend' to the Rio Theater -- any rehab of the façade should reflect that opportunity. (The Rio Theater is an excellent example of restored, thematic architecture.)
- New blade signage, similar to Mollie's Bakery, would be a nice addition for Figaro's, along with flat signage over the canopy.
- The recommendation for the storefront adjacent to the Rio, includes the use of larger flat signage that would help announce this great little space, and the addition of perpendicular blade signage.

Solar Way Updates



Downtown Sweet Home has an interesting example of cutting edge solar technology of its time. The Solar Way building was developed in the late seventies. It is very unusual to find these types of energy-smart buildings in small towns, so the discovery of this building during the Resource Team's visit was fun. The development of this building also points to the fact that this community is not afraid of new ideas, or more complex solutions. The Solar Way building offers a good perspective on the history of solar buildings. Its current street front façade is based on 'knowledge of the time,' with small windows on the north side of the street (Main Street). Since that building was developed, there have been advancements in windows and glazing. New and large, inviting storefront windows on this type of building will not lead to heat loss.

Recommended updates to the Solar Way building include:

- Replace existing street front windows with larger, more appropriate sized windows for a downtown district. Tripling the size of the windows, while keeping the original window proportions on both levels, will help make this building more attractive. The existing windows look out of scale and do not promote downtown 'browsability.' When enlarged, the windows on both levels should be aligned.
- Additional canvas awnings over the ground floor windows would also soften the building's appearance and create a more unified street façade.

- The building's appearance would also benefit from enhancing the existing paint scheme.
- A new, interesting blade sign on the building would also better identify it.
- The building could also benefit from landscape plantings at either end, with the potential to create a small pocket green space at the corner where the building steps back. (This area is also designated as a streetscape furnishings zone on the overall downtown plan.)



Energy Related Findings & Recommendations

It is important to address energy issues facing building owners and tenants because energy costs are a significant portion of operating costs for most retail, running \$1.50 to \$2.50 per square foot for basic systems in typical stores. The larger this reoccurring cost, the less competitive and sustainable businesses are, particularly in times of economic downturn. Energy savings, on the other hand, go right to the bottom line, increasing business profitability. Sweet Home has the opportunity to upgrade and refine its energy use to its advantage during the process of downtown redevelopment.

ENERGY FINDINGS

- Many buildings in the downtown core, while structurally sound, have lighting heating and cooling systems that are inadequate and inefficient due to their age.
- Many buildings have building shells that are leaky and difficult to weatherize and were not designed for more efficient central systems, further complicating the situation for building owners.
- Outmoded fixtures, lack of circuits and limited power panels in the buildings hamper retail lighting.
- The availability of piped natural gas means that gas heat is the typical heating solution. However, many commercial buildings are using electricity for space and water heating, rather than the less expensive gas.
- Sweet Home's maritime climate means that heating and cooling requirements are lower than average, but harder to manage due to the need to frequently shift between heating and cooling.
- The modest annual percentage of sunshine means that daylighting can be a real advantage. Lighting control and design, therefore, are important for both retail and housing. Skylights, lightshelf canopies and transoms are valuable and more effective if used properly.

ENERGY RECOMMENDATIONS

Topics covered in this section include:

Achieving Energy Sustainability

Reducing Energy Waste

Smart Design

Best Technologies

Matching End-Use to Energy Source

Space Heat

Space Cooling

Water Heating

Developing New Local Sources

Summary

Available Resources

Information

Design Assistance

Financial Incentives

ACHIEVING ENERGY SUSTAINABILITY

Energy sustainability can have many meanings. In this context it means the energy used produces a net benefit and is not wasted.

The net impact of this approach is to reduce the energy cost drain on the community while building additional support structures within the community. In addition, energy efficiency provides numerous direct benefits, such as:

- Lower operating costs – reduced overhead means a stronger business
- Better performance – energy efficient equipment is typically higher quality
- Reliability – very low failure rates
- Productivity – increased comfort, healthiness
- Accountability – excellent real time operating data

Achieving energy sustainability is a two step process:

- 1) Reduce waste as much as practical.
- 2) Identify the best energy *source* to match with the energy *use*.

An attainable goal is:

Existing and planned downtown buildings will use 30% less energy than conventional buildings.

Existing downtown buildings can meet this goal because, while they are generally structurally sound, their energy systems are old enough to justify complete replacement during remodeling. New buildings can meet this goal by being designed to higher

efficiency standards. Local merchants can be encouraged to expand their inventory of energy efficient products into a developing market, expanding the local retail base.

REDUCING ENERGY WASTE

The first step is to reduce energy waste through smart design and use of 'the best' proven technology. A unit of energy saved is a unit that doesn't have to be generated or paid for.

Smart Design – For both new construction and remodels, the following energy design elements should be incorporated to the maximum degree economically feasible.

- Daylighting – Use skylights, transoms and windows to provide natural lighting to the greatest extent it is economically feasible. While it is important these elements be carefully designed to avoid overheating and glare, studies show that areas that are day-lit produce up to 40% more sales than artificially lit areas.
- Natural cooling – Use outside air as much as practical to provide cooling. With Sweet Home's maritime climate, this usually means no mechanical cooling is required most days of the year.
- Vegetation screens – Use plants for screening against wind chill and over-heating from the sun. Plants also provide softening and attractiveness to the building site.
- Energy efficient and durable building shell materials – Avoid materials with poor insulating qualities or high maintenance finishes.
- Recycled and recyclable materials – These materials reduce the energy content of the construction, making the remodel a lower environmental impact project.

Best Technologies – The following proven, commercially available technologies should be incorporated into any remodels or new construction to the maximum level feasible.

- High efficiency lights – High efficiency lights provide more illumination for the same amount of energy - - providing a typically higher quality of light as well. With Pacific Power/ Energy Trust of Oregon programs, they cost less, too, through incentive and rebate programs.
- Non-mechanical cooling – As mentioned above, making sure that heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment use outside air as much as possible, can save tremendous amounts of energy and money. This is commonly referred to as the "economizer cycle" by heating and cooling specialists.
- Tight, insulating building shells, doors and windows – Tight, energy efficient buildings use substantially less energy and are much more comfortable. No drafts - - meaning no cold or hot spots.
- Selective glass to control sunlight – Window glass can be treated with coatings that effect what kind of light is allowed through. For example, they can keep direct sunlight out to prevent overheating, as well as keep heat in during winter months. The coatings are customized to specific needs.
- Extensive energy control & monitoring – Nothing saves energy as quickly as something that is turned off when not needed. Good equipment controls that

assure it is off when not in use, or goes to a "sleep" mode, pay back very quickly. For larger building systems, computerized controls (referred to as Direct Digital Control, or DDC) typically pay for themselves within a matter of months.

MATCHING END-USE TO ENERGY SOURCE

To get the highest energy efficiency at the lowest cost, the job (lighting, heating, motors, etc.) needs to be matched with the best energy source for that use. For example:

Space Heat – A first step is to insulate and install double glass windows, since the cheapest unit of energy is one that doesn't have to be purchased. Next, try to capture heat from the sun through the use of properly oriented windows and skylights, since this fuel is free. Finally, use gas or electric heat pumps, with gas backup, to supply the extra energy needed. Electric resistance heat (wall heaters and/or baseboards) should be used as a last resort since it is about double the cost to operate of gas equipment or a heat pump.

Space Cooling – In addition to natural cooling discussed above, and as with space heating, installing insulation and insulated windows should be a first step. Shading of windows and skylights is a next step. If mechanical cooling is needed, a heat pump can provide efficient cooling as well as heating (as it's reversible). A standard air conditioner is simply an expensive, non-reversible heat pump and would be the last choice as it is the most expensive to operate.

Water Heating – As with space heating and cooling, the cheapest unit of energy is one that doesn't have to be purchased. Within that framework, a first step should be to install low-flow fixtures for hot water. Using solar to heat water has the lowest cost over the long term. In Sweet Home, sunlight should be able to provide ½ of hot water (primarily from Spring to Fall). The next best source is heat recovered from commercial cooking or processing, which has a typical 2 to 3-year payback. Gas is the third best source to use for water heating - - with electric water heating a distant fourth at twice the cost.

DEVELOPING NEW LOCAL SOURCES

To maximize the number of energy dollars that stay in the community, Sweet Home needs to expand its offering of energy efficiency products. At present, few of the local retailers or wholesalers stock energy efficient equipment other than compact fluorescent bulbs. This is especially true for general lighting products and appliances, where the local offerings are almost exclusively the lowest cost, and therefore lowest efficiency items (even though they may cost much more to operate). The most likely reason is that the suppliers of building and electrical materials do not yet see a large enough market demand for energy efficient items. Downtown leaders can act as a catalyst to alert local retailers to this opportunity for an expanded product line and if they are unresponsive, support the development of new business that will offer these products.

SUMMARY

There is an immediate, and financially sound, opportunity to make the downtown redevelopment of Sweet Home a sustainable energy success story that will help strengthen the economy, deliver more comfortable, productive and long-lived buildings, insulate businesses against economic swings, keep resources within the community, and solve long standing environmental issues. The community needs to include commercial energy efficiency into the overall downtown redevelopment process in parallel with the rest of the plan. There are a number of resources available to help this occur. They are described in the next section.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

There are three types of commercial energy conservation/efficiency assistance available: information, design assistance and financial incentives.

INFORMATION

Three excellent sources of general energy information include:

- Pacific Power– Your electric utility has many of the answers you need, and, more importantly, knows you and the community. They can also provide design assistance and steer you to incentives to help make your project work (see below). Contact them at 1-800- 222-4335. For details on their programs, log on to www.pacificpower.net.
- Energy Ideas Clearinghouse* - The Energy Ideas Clearinghouse is a service that provides quick answers, customized research, and/or technical assistance on almost any question related to building design or energy use. Contact the Clearinghouse at www.energyideas.org, or call 1-800-872-3568.
- The Oregon Office of Energy – The Oregon Office of Energy website, www.energy.state.or.us , provides abundant information on energy issues and programs of importance to Oregonians.

DESIGN ASSISTANCE

Design assistance, pertaining to increased energy efficiency, is available from a variety of sources. They include:

- BetterBricks* – BetterBricks provides building owners, architects and other business professionals with information and design assistance for the important link between energy efficiency and improved productivity. When organizations invest in a great facility, they are not just investing in the space; they are investing in an even more valuable resource – the people who will work, learn or shop there. For more information, visit the BetterBricks website at www.betterbricks.com, or call 1-888-216-5357.
- Lighting Design Lab* - The Seattle-based Lighting Design Lab promotes energy-efficient lighting in the Pacific Northwest. The Lab provides training and support for lighting designers and specifiers through use of its facilities and outreach

programs (<http://www.northwestlighting.com>). If the community is interested, a Retail Lighting Workshop open to commercial business and property owners, could be brought to Sweet Home at no charge. Contact the Oregon Downtown Development Association for more info.

- Pacific Power – Pacific Power will provide design assistance on specific equipment that is included in their programs. For details contact them at 1-800-222-4335. For details on their programs, log on to www.pacificpower.net.

Not so accessible, but worth the time if you are in Seattle (or a good excuse to go there!) is:

- Future @ Work* - Future @ Work is a 3000 square-foot exhibit located in downtown Seattle. The space is a showcase for workplace design solutions that demonstrate the bottom-line benefits of energy efficient, sustainable buildings and practices. For more information, visit www.future-at-work.com, or to schedule a tour, call Amy Cortese at 1-800-411-0834 X 278.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Financial incentives from the State and local electric utilities make energy efficient equipment much more competitive to purchase and much cheaper to operate in the long-run.

- The State of Oregon has two energy programs for commercial buildings, the Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC) program and an Energy Loan Program.
 - The Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC) program offers a tax credit of 35% of the incremental cost of equipment that is more efficient than code requirements or uses a renewable fuel.
 - The Energy Loan Program offers low interest loans to help pay for energy efficient and renewable energy equipment.

For details on these and other Office of Energy programs, check the Oregon Office of Energy website at www.energy.state.or.us.

- Pacific Power offers financial incentives for retrofit of energy efficient equipment that meet their program criteria through the Energy Trust of Oregon. For details contact 1-800-222-4335. For details on their program requirements, log on to www.pacificpower.net or www.energytrust.org .

*These programs are sponsored by the Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, a non-profit partnership of electric utilities, state governments, public interest groups and industry representatives from Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. The Alliance works to provide affordable, energy efficient products to the businesses and residents of the Northwest.



Market Dynamics, Business Mix and Clustering

I. INTRODUCTION

This section of the Sweet Home Resource Team report focuses on market factors and business mix. It is intended to provide the Sweet Home Economic Development Group (SHEDG), the Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce and City staff with direction and guidance as they seek to achieve the goal of creating a more economically vibrant downtown area.

Among the key questions to address in creating a strong business district are:

- Who are downtown's customers?
- What are their shopping needs and interests?
- What shopping is available to them? What is the current 'supply' of retail/services?
- What are the market voids or niches that downtown can fill?
- How can downtown compete for the shopping dollars available in the trade area?
- What are the most profitable locations for businesses?
- How can this information be 'packaged' to strengthen existing businesses and to recruit new businesses?

The findings and conclusions of the market assessment and business analysis are based upon the following: community input during the Oregon Downtown Development Association's Resource Team visit from March 18 - 20, 2003; definition of downtown's trade area; analysis of demographic data; small group meetings during the Team visit; and over a dozen in-store interviews with selected business owners. The findings are divided into the following sections:

Section II: Current Business Profile

Section III: Trade Area and Market Segments

Section IV: Competitive Advantages, Disadvantages, Challenges and Opportunities

Section V: Business Mix

Section VI: Next Steps for Downtown Sweet Home

II. CURRENT BUSINESS PROFILE

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

A successful business mix in virtually any size downtown will have a balance and mix of uses that includes housing, professional and government services, entertainment and retail shopping. With the exception of the retail sector, the Sweet Home area is well represented with a diverse business base in each of the following categories. The commercial district as a whole is anchored on each end by the two largest grocery stores, Safeway and Thriftway. The core pedestrian-oriented shopping district focused on by the Resource Team, deal with the blocks between 10th and 15th Streets, including Long and Main Streets. Below is a summary of the types of firms engaged in business within this area.

Professional and Financial Services

This category includes banks, savings & loans, physicians, insurance agencies, financial advisors, attorneys, certified public accountants, home designers, and any other office situation that provides professional services. The function of this category is to provide downtown with employees that will use, and are able to pay for, other available services. This category tends to pay higher rents and have fewer turnovers than the retail and entertainment categories.

Among the prominent professional and financial service industries represented within downtown Sweet Home are: real estate, banks and credit unions, insurance, bookkeeping, funeral service, attorneys, CPAs, travel, veterinary services, chiropractors, photography, financial services, utilities and related activities.

Retail

The retail category includes grocery, pharmaceuticals, apparel, dry goods, hardware, cards and gifts, home furnishings, and any other category that provides goods with or without services. Successful small downtowns offer a mix of largely convenience and specialty goods. In many instances, the best-suited retailer for the downtown core will be a home-owned, sole proprietorship or small, local corporation. National corporate chains prefer mall locations.

Currently, the core downtown Sweet Home district has more than a dozen retail operations including: pharmacies, gifts, hardware, furniture, used bookstore, florists, health food, appliance, liquor store, convenience grocery, auto supply, feed and seed, nursery and pet supply, electronics and jewelry.

Entertainment/Restaurants

This category is closely related to retail except that businesses function as *attractors* for customers seeking entertainment venues. Entertainment establishments include restaurants, video stores, theatres, bars and taverns, coffee shops and any other business that attracts customers for social or entertainment purposes. This category supports the

retail services category by offering the downtown customer an opportunity for entertainment and refreshment. It also helps retain employees in the central core area.

Downtown Sweet Home is fortunate to have a movie theatre and several restaurants as entertainment anchors. In addition, the East Linn County Historic Museum is in the commercial district, an important cultural anchor for downtown Sweet Home. At least three bars/clubs exist as well as six eating establishments of various kinds.

Convenience Services

Downtown Sweet Home is fortunate to have a number of small businesses in the core business district that meet some of the basic needs of visitors and local residents alike. These include: gasoline, drugstores, bakery, convenience grocery, liquor, espresso, hair salons/barbers and other businesses.

Government/Educational Services

Downtown has been the traditional location for government offices and services such as the post office and library. Downtown Sweet Home is home to City Hall, the post office, the library, the high school and Linn Benton Community College. Together, these anchors attract hundreds of people to town each week.

ANCHOR VS. ATTRACTOR BUSINESSES

An important function of an *anchor* business is to serve as a catalyst to establish a complementary cluster of retail businesses around its perimeter. Anchor businesses are found in malls and are used to attract smaller business operations, which depend on customer traffic created by the anchor business. Small downtowns often have an anchor as a customer draw. Downtown Sweet Home has few, if any, large retail anchors. However, one business in downtown Sweet Home that is locally famous is the A & W Drive-in Restaurant. The pharmacies were also noted by many residents as anchor businesses generating a lot of customer traffic.

Small downtowns primarily depend on *attractor* businesses for customer traffic. Attractors are businesses or services that steadily serve the local community. It is important to recognize what type of customer business categories attract, and then leverage that information in recruiting new businesses into downtown.

The primary attractors represent the reasons that local shoppers are currently using the downtown Sweet Home district.

Primary Attractors to Downtown Sweet Home (examples)

Professional and other Services:

- Banks
- Insurance

Retail / Services

- Restaurants
- Hardware
- Gifts
- Florist

Dining/Entertainment/Arts

- Restaurants
- Movie Theatre

Government Services

- City Hall
- Library
- Post Office
- Linn-Benton Community College

III. TRADE AREA AND MARKET SEGMENTS

TRADE AREA DEFINITION

The trade area is the geographic area from which the great majority of regular customers originate. The market area was identified based on interviews with Sweet Home business owners, drive time estimates and the location of existing competitive shopping centers. The trade area drawn for this analysis focuses on a five-mile radius.

TARGET MARKETS

Market segments represent the consumers who currently or potentially shop in your downtown. Understanding who these consumers are, and knowing each segment's shopping habits and needs can help drive promotional campaigns, business recruitment and retention policies and business mix.

Sweet Home's *primary* customers are year-round trade area residents that shop there because of its convenience, location, and selection. Below are current demographics for the Sweet Home trade area market.

Exhibit 1: Trade Area Demographics, 2001

	Sweet Home 5-mile radius	State Of Oregon
Population	12,173	3.5 million
Average Annual Projected Growth Rate (2001-2006)	0.63%	1.3%
Households	4,630	1.3 million
Median Age	39.2	36.6
Percentage Age 19 or younger	28.7%	24.7%
Percentage Age 65 or over	17%	13%

Source: ESRI, Business Information Services

Most significant among the variables noted above is the fact that Sweet Home has a higher proportion of seniors, age 65 and older, and youth, age 19 and under, compared to the state as a whole. The large senior population is also reflected in the median age of Sweet Home trade area residents, 39.2, compared with 36.6 years for all Oregonians. The Sweet Home area is expected to grow at half the rate of the state on an average annual basis during the years (2001-2006).

Median household income in the Sweet Home trade area was estimated to be significantly lower than the state as a whole, \$29,493 in 2001 compared to \$39,178 for Oregon. Another indicator of economic vibrancy is the local unemployment rate.

Unemployment in Linn County has been and remains higher than the state average in recent times. Linn County's unemployment is at 8.7% compared to 6.8%.

OTHER TARGET MARKETS

Other potential markets for downtown Sweet Home are highway travelers, tourists and downtown/area workers. Below are data that illustrate the size of some of these market segments.

- Traffic volumes are very high on Highway 20. The most recent counts in Sweet Home on Highway 20 range from 5,000 to 6,000 Average Daily Traffic (ADT). All highway traffic provides the chance to lure customers to downtown businesses.
- Visitors spend over \$87 million annually in Linn County. The Sweet Home Jamboree makes a major contribution to this figure with over 9,000 visitors coming to town for this 3 day annual event. The Chamber of Commerce also takes note of visitors to their office and in July 2002, received 400 calls and 170 walk-in visitors.
- Recreation tourism attracts significant numbers of visitors annually.
 - Sunnyside Campground hosted 47,975 campers in 2002 (Source: Linn County Parks Department)
 - 2002 visits @ Foster Lake = 495,689 in 2002 (Source: US Army Corp of Engineers)
- The number of employees in Sweet Home's commercial district is estimated to be over 650 persons. Major industrial employers continue to exist in the Sweet Home area as well with Weyerhaeuser employing 250 and Foster Mill, 150.

Local residents, employees and area visitors offer significant untapped market potential for downtown Sweet Home businesses. More information on customer behavior is provided in Appendix A, "Buyers vs. Browsers."

IV. DOWNTOWN SWEET HOME'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Market Assessment asks: *How is Sweet Home doing compared to other comparably sized communities working to strengthen their downtown business district?* The response is organized into: Competitive Advantages, Competitive Disadvantages and Opportunities for future development.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Sweet Home has an extensive list of advantageous factors or attributes to build upon in its efforts to strengthen the business district.

1. Strong visitor and local resident markets. Sweet Home is conveniently located 45 minutes from Eugene, and less from Corvallis, offering easy access to water and mountain recreation for visitors. In addition, the town's close proximity to I-5 and jobs in metro areas or the interstate corridor has meant that Sweet Home has not suffered population loss as have other former mill communities. The five-mile local trade area is relatively large, with over 12,000 residents, allowing the Sweet Home business community the advantage of a potentially large customer market.
2. Well organized efforts for economic growth. Sweet Home, through the efforts of SHEDG, the City and other local groups, is much better focused and organized than most rural communities to capture commercial and industrial development. These organizations and others continue to work hard to diversify Sweet Home's economic base, including active efforts to serve the visitor industry among other activities. One relative newcomer noted, "Sweet Home is a progressive small town," referring to its strong planning and organizational efforts
3. At least 20 annual Sweet Home community and visitor events are a strong indicator of the community's ability to organize, to initiate change, to work to generate pride and to have fun! While only a handful of these events are viewed as ones geared toward visitors, many more offer the chance to attract individuals from well beyond the Sweet Home area.
4. Community pride and caring people. A year 2000 community survey indicated that among the top values of area residents are pride in their community and friendly, caring people. "This is a town that watches out for the kids, in particular," one parent noted during the resource team visit. These attributes can and should be incorporated into Sweet Home's community and economic marketing efforts.
5. New investment is occurring! Big and small investments are underway throughout Sweet Home, ranging from the resort development and an apartment building

on Main Street, to several new businesses opening in the last two years and some plans for expansion. Some of these projects will be critical influences on the future development of downtown. Further, they send a strong positive message to the outside world about confidence in the future of Sweet Home.

6. Good selection of convenience goods. It is important that Sweet Home as a whole, continues to offer businesses, employees and local residents a variety of convenience goods and services that bring them to town on a daily basis. These businesses are vitally important to getting visitors to stop as well. A sample of Sweet Home's convenience businesses are: groceries (7+), gas, pharmacies (3), banks (3), auto, hardware (3), liquor, sporting goods and of course, restaurants.

7. Many creative, hard working downtown business owners. As one business owner commented, "*Our retail base has had to adapt to Wal-Mart and other changes in the retail base.*" Downtown Sweet Home has several exemplary businesses where the merchants are working hard to offer excellent service and variety at a fair price and just as important, are staying in touch with the needs of their market place.

8. Although viewed by some as a double edged sword because of the truck traffic and noise, Highway 20 exposure is generally understood to be a plus for the downtown Sweet Home business district, providing outstanding visibility and exposure.

COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGES

1. Lack of cohesiveness. Empty lots, vacant buildings, 'loner' destination businesses and stand along businesses all challenge downtown Sweet Home, giving it a sense of disjointedness. Creating a unified pedestrian-friendly district demands uninterrupted storefronts and active retail or entertainment businesses with strong *street appeal*. This allows the district to develop a critical mass of businesses and serve as a destination for a large number of shoppers looking for a unique and broad selection of merchandise in an attractive and inviting atmosphere.

2. Lack of 'unified practices.' Downtown Sweet Home businesses are still learning about the importance of working in a unified manner on ways to attract and keep customers in town. Store hours and open days vary widely from one business to the next, making it difficult to promote downtown Sweet Home as a unified shopping district. These issues are particularly key to gaining a larger share of the visitor market. The desire for longer business hours was identified as a prime issue in the 2000 community survey.

3. Downtown vacancies are a concern as are several idle properties. They signal vulnerability and economic decline, and potentially affect the success of established businesses in the district.

which hopefully may spur additional marketing. At present, there are no organized business promotions, no rack cards or brochures marketing Sweet Home businesses to either visitors or local shoppers.

CHALLENGES

1. Living up to the promise of the name 'Sweet Home' is an ongoing challenge. A community's physical image tells a story, sends a message and is directly connected to Sweet Home's potential for economic expansion. As a whole, the 'downtrodden' appearance of downtown Sweet Home is not a selling point. As one local business owner commented, *"It looks like we don't care. It's going to take a different approach!"* Another said, *"It's got to start with each of us personally taking responsibility."*
2. A very large, long, spread out commercial district that increases the difficulty of creating a 'critical mass' of retail. In numbers, most businesses in Sweet Home are located outside of downtown and are free standing, auto-dependent establishments. Active recruitment of businesses to downtown properties and limitations on highway commercial may alter this development pattern over the long term. In the year 2000 community survey, the majority of residents (47%) concurred that the *'Best development plan' (for strengthening the commercial base) is to fill in the gaps along Main Street.*
3. Underutilized spaces in the retail core. Several prime retail spots in downtown are occupied by service or institutional uses, parking lots or part-time business occupants.
4. Coping with change is an ongoing challenge for Sweet Home and many small towns. Sweet Home has successfully dealt with many chapters or eras in its lifetime including:
 - ◆ Native American Period (Kalapooians)
 - ◆ Early Pioneering – farming
 - ◆ Big Timber Era
 - ◆ Post Timber Transition Period—Diversification: Recreation, Bedroom Community
 - ◆ Future: Continued diversification...movement toward higher economic plateau

OPPORTUNITIES

Downtown Sweet Home has multiple opportunities for redevelopment and for the capture of shopper dollars. These will be touched upon below. More will be said about ways to capitalize on opportunities in the section on Next Steps. Business opportunities are addressed in the Business Mix section of the report.

1. Increased visitor growth and visitor spending should result from several current opportunities. The new marina being constructed at Foster Lake, the Resort @ Salmon

Run and the Highway 228 Scenic Byway designation will all generate increased visitor traffic, jobs/payroll and the potential for additional spending. Scenic byways across the country have tracked the economic benefits as increased business, tax revenue and jobs from tourist spending. The planned 728-acre, \$200 million resort development anticipates creating 350 local jobs in the long run. Encouraging spending by the targeted high end resort visitors and dwellers will take considerable work on the part of local Sweet Home businesses and the community as a whole. A separate ODDA-sponsored workshop on this topic will occur in the spring 2003.

2. Tapping local retail spending. Potential retail spending based solely on Sweet Home's 5-mile trade area resident population and household incomes totals \$94.5 million annually in 2001 (source: US Census and ESRI Business Information Services). No doubt, a significant portion of that spending is occurring outside of Sweet Home. In some categories, such as apparel, virtually all of the spending is happening elsewhere as there are no retailers in this category. Retail spending is distributed as follows:

- Leisure & Entertainment, \$8.5 million
- Health, \$4.7 million
- Transportation, \$35.7 million
- Home Furnishings, \$13.6 million
- Food, \$22.5 million
- Apparel, \$7.7million
- Misc Retail, \$1.7 million

3. Gift stores/cluster. If downtown Sweet Home has a single niche or business cluster to promote it is gifts and specialty merchandise. A couple of businesses, such as 'A Country Welcome' and 'Our Heart's Desire' are almost exclusively gifts. In addition to these quality businesses, the drugstore, florists, fabric shop, jeweler and other stores have a selection of gift items. A rack card could be created to promote this niche to locals and out of towners alike.

4. Property development. Downtown Sweet Home has vacant lots, underutilized and partly filled buildings, vacant upper stories and completely vacant buildings that are all important opportunities to shape the character and future economic activity downtown. Mixed use development should be encouraged at every step, allowing retail on the ground floor to generate street traffic and spending and encouraging office and residential upstairs. Two specific opportunities include the former gas station/auto repair shop site (13th & Main Streets), the vacant property at 9th & Main (owned by White's Electronics).

V. BUSINESS MIX

This is What Visitors Want

- Unique, one of a kind goods such as arts, crafts, gifts, galleries
- Antiques/reproductions/gifts
- Convenience goods—gas, grocery, etc
- Recreational/sporting goods and services
- Apparel & accessories – unique
- Restaurants and unique eating places
- *Variety* of cuisine and prices

Quality

Back to the Future!

- ◆ Enormous potential
- ◆ NO magic bullet
- ◆ Think BIG. Be BOLD.

Downtown Sweet Home will never be able to compete with large malls and strip centers in providing a large variety of retail goods, long and predictable shopping hours, and the image of low-cost retail items. However, the downtown customer will respond favorably when he or she feels that they are receiving good value for money spent, have a convenient and safe place to spend time, and consider the downtown area an interesting and attractive place to be.

To achieve the vision of downtown as a place serving multiple needs and markets, consideration should be given to the customer that is using the downtown as a destination to acquire needed items and services, or to spend time socializing and relaxing.

Downtown Sweet Home has the capability to serve local full-time residents, area workers and visitors with a wide range of goods and services. The keys will be:

- Providing excellent service
- Offering unique, quality merchandise
- Targeting high dollar volumes per square foot for a business to succeed. In other words, smaller spaces with in-depth, high turnover inventory.
- Working with downtown Sweet Home's existing business community to provide complementary product lines.

RETAIL CLUSTERS

One way to look at the downtown business mix is to examine the existing retail clusters. As noted, downtown has a variety of business clusters in different stages of development. When there is a healthy retail cluster in place, it encourages shopping activity. Common features of successful retail clusters include maintaining visual appeal with interesting window displays and street beautification and a contiguous storefront line.

A successful cluster must also be large enough and have several categories in order to maintain the interest of the browsing customer. The competitive business cluster is a grouping of similar businesses that serves the customer of the primary market by offering more choices, like a food court at a shopping mall. With several antique shops in close proximity, Sweet Home has the basis for an antique business cluster. The complementary business cluster contains businesses offering different products or services but appealing to the same customer profile.

The appropriate business mix for downtown Sweet Home depends on the following factors:

- Market potential—the target markets and the amount of money they have to spend.
- Existing business base—the current assets of downtown
- Business location to make it easy for customers
- Continuous marketing
- Retail trends

Downtown Sweet Home has current retail trends working in its favor. A recent Urban Land Institute retail development forum noted that:

“The most promising retail sectors are mixed-use town centers, community/neighborhood shopping centers and urban entertainment centers.”

“Traditional malls have morphed into dinosaurs in over saturated markets. Main Street retail and urban mixed-use centers offer the best opportunities now.”

RECOMMENDED BUSINESS MIX

The two primary goals of downtown Sweet Home related to business development should be to:

- 1) Retain, strengthen and expand the business base in downtown Sweet Home.
- 2) Recruit businesses that will complement and improve the existing downtown commercial mix and will enhance downtown's attractiveness to its target markets.

The year 2000 Community Survey summarized the retail/service interests and desires of nearly 1,000 participating Sweet Home residents:

- Greater selection, 66%
- Competitive prices, 51%
- Better quality, 33%
- Longer business hours, 29%
- Make businesses look better, 29%

Below are listed the merchandise and business types with the greatest chance for success that also build upon existing business anchors and respond to the needs identified by local residents and businesses during the site visit, as well as the 2000 Community Survey. In many instances, a separate business may not be able to be supported, but rather, merchandise lines can be added to complement the offerings of existing businesses. Several businesses in town already model this concept: Seamingly Creative and Roger's Floral Shop both have a very good mix of complementary goods and services, for example: flowers, gifts & formal wear; fabric, quilting supplies, sewing services, hand made apparel & gifts.

- ◆ Restaurants offering more variety—deli/bagel shop, Italian, Thai
- ◆ Brew pub with live music
- ◆ Home accessories: framing, art, antiques/reproduction, lamps, rugs, etc
- ◆ Healthy restaurant food/grocery
- ◆ Children/Baby Clothes—new & used
- ◆ Specialty Toy/Game Shop: new & used CDs, computer games, etc.
- ◆ Youth oriented merchandise/activities—bike & board shop
- ◆ Unique specialty apparel
- ◆ Bath & body supplies
- ◆ Antiques and collectibles
- ◆ Craft store
- ◆ Party store
- ◆ Office supply/copy center
- ◆ Internet café (computer access and coffee)

Success will be achieved with stores that:

- Serve both visitors and area residents
- Aggressively market to these target customer groups
- Offer multiple, complementary product lines of good quality
- Start small and grow to fill niches
- Have focus, imagination and strive to meet the needs of the customer

FEATURES OF SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN BUSINESS

Retail and business standards are just as important as the types of businesses attracted to downtown Sweet Home. The focus should be on superior retail standards when qualifying and recruiting a prospective downtown business. They include:

Strong Business Values

- *Planning*
- *Commitment*
- *Passion*
- *Tenacity*
- *Understanding*

Strong Merchandising Elements

- *Up to date point-of-sale practices*
- *Appropriate turnover of goods*
- *Interesting visual displays*
- *Emphasis on value over price*

Superior Customer Service

- *Developing human relationships*
- *Determining customer needs*
- *Servicing customer needs*
- *After-sale contact*

Appendix B includes a more detailed summary of considerations for qualifying a prospective business for downtown Sweet Home.

VI. NEXT STEPS

Business/market development and expansion opportunities in downtown Sweet Home are strong. Building on the momentum of the resource team and the market assessment, the following recommendations are provided as *next steps* for action. They are organized as a 3-Point Program focused on:

1. Marketing
2. Business Development
3. Property Development

1. Marketing

Goal: Capture local and visitor shopper dollars—off season and through active promotion campaigns/activities

TO DO:

- A. For Sweet Home, marketing must begin with steps toward improving its physical image.
 - Follow through on this goal and action steps that currently exist in your strategic plan.
 - In addition, provide Visual Merchandising technical assistance to downtown and other businesses, (to include window displays, lighting, entry way ideas, store displays, etc) There may be students at one of the local universities who would be able to take this on through a class or special project.
 - Never lose sight of the critical objective--*Make it irresistible for visitors to stop!*
- B. Develop a Downtown Promotion Calendar and other activities to get more business from the market than is already coming to Sweet Home! For example, get the 9,000 Jamboree visitors into the stores!! Develop a coupon book or a 'country and western' trivia game, bingo, or some other activity to get visitors into the stores.

In addition, consider the following retail promotions:

- Frequent shopper campaigns
 - Senior citizen days
 - Downtown Worker Club
 - High school student discounts
 - Retail promotions tied with your other events
 - Holiday promotions
- C. Promote what you do have!
 - Develop a simple business directory
 - Develop a series of rack cards focused on: restaurants, gifts, and specialty. As noted, there are at several gift shops in downtown.

- *Keep it simple.* Visitors won't take the time to read elaborate write-ups.
- D. Business owners need to challenge themselves to know and respond to their customers inside and out! Guidelines include:
- Customer service is the #1, #2 and #3 most important issue
 - *Constantly*, offer something new and fresh
 - Adapt to the season! Longer hours in summer season would be very beneficial.
 - Focus on your Destination Product(s)
 - Create impulse-oriented displays
- E. Recognize & reward business owners going 'above & beyond,' with monthly awards for Best Window Display, Best Service Program, Best Remodel or whatever categories fit.

2. Business Development

Goal: Strengthen existing businesses and attract new ones.

TO DO:

- A. Create a critical mass of retail by clustering businesses to allow downtown Sweet Home to play to shopper's impulses. Start with the core blocks between 10th & 14th Streets. The guidelines are:
- Connect Complementary Products
 - Think Synergies: 1+1 = 3!
 - Group Businesses Serving the Same Customer Base (For example, Long Street has businesses offering pet supplies & vet services. Wouldn't it be great if a groomer were on this street too?)
 - Scatter Restaurants/Food

Clustering goals are:

- Encourage pedestrian/shopper movement!
- Avoid creating a downtown of 'destination businesses'
- Strive to create a full-service downtown district

How this happens is:

- Sell and promote the economic and market vision for downtown
- Get close to property owners & realtors
- Form a BEAT block system where individuals/volunteers are trained and assigned to stay in regular touch with business and property owners in each block.
- Target key properties
- Purchase and redevelop properties! (Congrats, you're doing this already!)

- B. Get *everyone* involved on the Downtown Sweet Home Sales Team.
 - Be clear on what ‘products’ and opportunities you are selling.
 - Develop hard facts to document those opportunities—a preliminary recruitment packet
 - Prepare a game plan to target niche businesses.
 - Determine what message you are conveying. Make it a positive one.

- C. Retain/diversify/expand existing businesses.
 - Target new businesses/merchandise to fill niche opportunities.
 - Target free standing ‘loner’ businesses to bring (back) downtown!
 - Sponsor educational sessions on Strategies for Success during a Down Economy; Diversifying your Merchandise; etc.

3. Property Development

Goal: Redevelop key vacant properties; provide infill development opportunities

One thing is clear in Sweet Home: market intervention is needed! Properties will continue (as they have for years) to sit in disrepair without aggressive intervention.

One Sweet Home business owner summed up the situation as:

- ◆ *“The old guys who own these buildings and are retiring on the rent need to let us (the next generation) take them over. We want to keep moving forward, grow and GET OUT OF THE PAST”*

TO DO:

- A. Form a Property Development Committee to Target Key Properties (focus on your strongest blocks in core downtown area). Some actions include:
 - ◆ Sell and promote the economic and market vision for downtown
 - ◆ Get to know the interests of all property owners & realtor
 - ◆ Develop Property Info Sheets (Who owns? For sale? Lease? Cost?)
 - ◆ Target Businesses to Key Properties (using clustering guidelines)
 - ◆ Package Incentives: Façade Improvement Program, Loan Funds, SBDC Technical Assistance
 - ◆ Form a Land Trust, a CDC, Urban Renewal District or other entity to purchase and redevelop property

- B. Consider creative options for temporary leases of properties and enticing ways to attract interest in downtown properties. Here are some ideas that other towns have successfully implemented:
 - ◆ Retail incubators
 - ◆ Youth business incubator (one is soon to open in Coquille)
 - ◆ Youth Dance Club (Fridays)
 - ◆ Holiday Bazaar / Harvest Festival (3 week lease, brings thousands of shoppers to town)

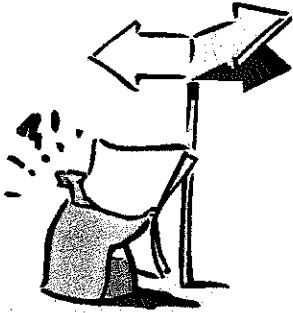
- ◆ Multiple home-based businesses rent space at the Holidays
 - ◆ “Your Business Here” displays and sets
- C. Make vacant downtown storefronts ‘come alive’ with rotating exhibits. Here are some ideas:

- ◆ Wash the windows!
- ◆ Art displays by local school kids
- ◆ Nonprofit organization displays
- ◆ Holiday decoration contests
- ◆ Adopt a Window – school room displays
- ◆ 12 Days of Christmas
- ◆ Hollywood Manikin/Movie Set Displays
- ◆ Homecoming Exhibits—tributes to graduates or current students
- ◆ Historical displays & photographs

With 180 graduating high school seniors who all need community service hours to graduate, get the kids involved in Sweet Home’s downtown. Give them a role, a stake—maybe they’ll work harder to keep it clean for everyone.

Remember, a key to economic revitalization is that:

“To get where you want to go, you have to leave where you are.”

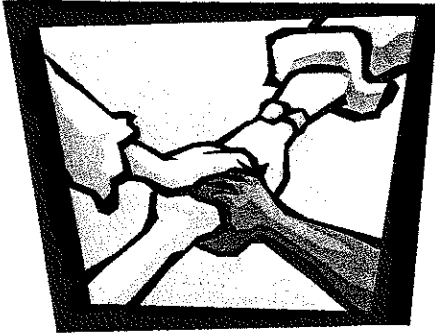


We've Got the Plan, Now What?

Creating the downtown conceptual plan is the easy part! Now is the time for residents and other appropriate stakeholders to begin partnering on its implementation. Following are steps to help move the process forward.

- *Schedule a community-wide meeting to discuss the plan, recommendations and next steps.*
- *At this meeting closely examine the local capacity that's needed to carry out the various pieces of the plan. Is there energy, commitment and capacity to move forward successfully? How can capacity be increased and volunteer burnout avoided? Discussing these issues and finding solutions is a key ingredient to successful implementation of the plan. It is also critical to define the various roles & responsibilities associated with the plan's implementation...who will take responsibility for implementing different pieces of the plan? It is critical to coordinate, collaborate and cooperate in putting together the framework for implementation. Create a collaboration matrix that details who's doing what, and when.*
- *Create short-term and long-range categories for implementation. Decide which projects have the highest level of community support, the best chance of success and are the highest priorities. Then create the short-term (1 year) workplans and long-range plans (2+ years) based on what can realistically be accomplished.*
- *One year workplans should be action-oriented and implementation based with specific timelines, names of persons responsible, budgets, and a check-off when the project is completed. It is important to do fewer projects very well, than too many projects haphazardly! Keep this in mind when creating the workplan. More projects can be added to the workplan as others are crossed off when completed.*
- *Bring all the groups working on revitalization projects together on a regular basis to report on implementation progress. Keep these meetings focused on the workplan and its implementation.*
- *Evaluate your progress and make adjustments as needed! No plan or workplan is static; it should be adjusted to address issues and opportunities that arise.*
- *CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESSES! Keep the community informed on the plan and its implementation!*

KEEP MOVING FORWARD!



Partnering for Success

In order for community revitalization to be truly successful in Sweet Home, it is critical that partnerships and collaborations are the vehicles used to move the community's vision for downtown forward. Downtown revitalization should be a community-wide effort. The more groups and people involved in the process, the more pride and ownership will be evident in the results.

The work of the ODDA Resource Team serves as a springboard for community discussion as to the future of downtown and how revitalization efforts should move forward. Sweet Home is full of opportunities to create a more attractive and livable community that serves as a gathering place, commercial center, hometown and visitor destination. Success can only come about by building consensus, becoming champions for the community's vision of downtown, then moving forward with implementation in an organized and cohesive way.

"To bring an idea to life, the community must get behind it."



APPENDIX



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Appendix A

Buyers vs. Browsers

Customers in each market segment act in one of two ways: buyers and browsers.

Buyers are those who are prepared to make a purchase and are looking for the right item to buy.

Browsers are those who may buy only if they find the item that fits their needs.

To support buyers, a commercial district needs ample and convenient parking; a large selection of merchandise; and service that supports buyer needs. To support browsers, a downtown commercial district needs available long-term public parking; well-designed merchandise displays; and service that is oriented to the comfort of the customer.

Businesses that serve **browsers** should be encouraged to cluster together.

A successful **browser retail** cluster will have:

- No interruption in the visual building line of the street;
- Storefront design features that are at a human rather than automobile scale;
- Merchandise that is oriented towards value rather than price.

A successful **buyer oriented** cluster will have:

- Low building density vs. the land area (strip malls, for example);
- Design features that maximize automobile usage;
- Stores that compete through niche specialty, price and selection.

Comparing Needs of Browsers and Buyers

Browsers prefer:

long-term public parking
interesting streetscape
high value
time to browse
buying for entertainment
attractive store design
fun displays
unique selection
comfortable environment

Buyers prefer:

short term, convenient parking
easy access
low price
immediate service
buying to fulfill a need
functional store design
clear displays
large selection
clearly defined sections

Appendix B

Asking the Right Questions of Start-up and Expanding Businesses

The Tillamook Downtown Association can assist downtown businesses by providing information specific to downtown, such as demographics and visitor counts. This is different from a Business Assistance Team (BAT) or the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in that it provides general information about the business environment downtown rather than specific business advice. The Small Business Development Center is an excellent resource for businesses needing specific technical or other assistance.

The following questions should serve as a checklist of details that every businessperson should consider as they embark on a new downtown business venture.

What are the **industry categories** of the business?

(Refer to *Downtown Market Analysis & Business Recruitment Made Easy* handbook.)

What **trade organizations** will support the business?

(Trade shows, product reps, training programs, published material)

What are the anticipated **gross sales** of the business?

(Annual gross sales divided by days open, sq ft, employees)

What are the anticipated annual **sales per square foot**?

(Refer to *Downtown Market Analysis & Business Recruitment Made Easy* handbook.)

What is the anticipated merchandise **turnover**?

(Annual turnover as an industry standard)

What are the anticipated **sales per employee**?

(Percentage of employee cost to gross sales)

What is the **cost of sales**?

(Defined as activities that create sales)

What is the anticipated **overhead cost**?

(Defined as all costs not related to sales)

Rate each of these business values:

Commitment: _ high _ med _ low How serious is the owner?

Passion: _ high _ med _ low Does the owner truly like the business?

Tenacity:	_ high	_ med	_ low	Are they committed for the long haul?
Understanding:	_ high	_ med	_ low	What he does vs. the industry?
Planning:	_ high	_ med	_ low	Is there a written, flexible business plan with long & short term goals?

How is the business **organized**?
(As sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, LLC?)

To what extent is the business **customer driven**?
(vs. management driven)

To what extent does the business cater to **browsers**? To **buyers**?
(Does management know the difference?)

What is the **market area** for the business?
(Geographic market, tourist trade?)

What **demographic segment** is most likely to support the business?
(What is the life-style and age of customer? What percentage of the population?)

How will the business **position** itself in the market?
(What is the identity of the business to the customer?)

How will the business **market** itself?

- Image (How it presents itself)
- Advertising (Direct mail, print, radio, TV)
- Public Relations (This ranks higher than advertising)

What will be the strategy for **merchandising**?
(Value vs. price)

What is the **exit plan** for the business?
(Sell or close?)

Expanding Businesses should consider these questions:

What **training program** is in place for employees?
(Part of the cost of expansion)

What aspect of your business will be **replaced** in expansion?
(Will customers see the change as a negative?)

How will your **position** in the market change with the expansion?
(Will it feel like the business has closed and reopened?)

How will you **promote** the changes in your business?

What are the **positive elements** of the change?

Sample Survey

Your Opinion Counts! The City of Cornelius and the Chamber of Commerce are working to improve shopping in the Cornelius. Please take a minute to complete this survey and return it to City Hall, the Library, Hank's Thriftway, OR mail it to _____

SURVEY OF CORNELIUS RESIDENTS

1. Where do you do most of your non-grocery shopping (i.e., apparel, home furnishings, sporting goods, etc)?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cornelius | <input type="checkbox"/> Hillsboro | <input type="checkbox"/> Mail Order |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Grove | <input type="checkbox"/> Portland | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please name) _____ |

2. What is the primary reason you shop where you do?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selection | <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty | <input type="checkbox"/> Service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Convenience | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify reason) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Price | <input type="checkbox"/> Familiarity | _____ |

3. What types of merchandise do you think are needed and would be supported in Cornelius if they existed? (check all that apply)

Specialty/Merchandise Stores

- Arts & Crafts Supplies
- Beauty Supplies
- Books
- Cameras & Supplies
- Computers & Access.
- Glasses & Sunglasses
- Auto Supplies
- Gifts & Cards
- Luggage
- Pet Supplies
- Sporting Goods

- Electronics
- Music & CD's
- Consignment Shop
- Toys & Hobbies

Household Furnishings

- Antiques
- Furniture
- Appliances
- Linens & Towels
- Garden Supplies
- Hardware

Apparel

- Women's Casual
- Women's Business
- Women's Specialty
- Men's Casual
- Men's Business
- Men's Specialty
- Shoes
- Children & Infants
- Jewelry

Convenience Merchandise

- Bakery
- Groceries
- Pharmacy

Other

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

4. What services do you think are needed and would be supported in Cornelius if they existed?(check all that apply)

Leisure/Entertainment

- Restaurants
- Exercise Studio/Gym
- Nightclub/Bar
- Bowling
- Movie Theater
- Live Theater
- Swimming Pool
- Concerts/Live Music

General Services

- Appliance Repair
- Car Wash/Detailing
- Computer Repair
- Computer Training
- Day Care
- Gasoline/Auto Repair
- Video Rental

Personal Services

- Dry Cleaner/Laundry
- Hair/Beauty
- Tailoring/Alterations

Business Prof. Services

- Bank/Financial Advice
- Insurance

Other

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- Outdoor Recreation: Ex: _____ Copy Center _____
- Indoor Recreation: Ex: _____ Pack & Mail _____
- Indoor Recreation: _____ Legal/Accounting _____

5. In your opinion, what types of restaurants and eating places are needed in Cornelius and would be supported if they existed? (check all that apply)

- Bakery Chinese Family Pizza/Italian Other Ethnic _____
 - Bar/Grille Coffee House Fast Food Seafood Other _____
 - Brew Pub Deli Mexican Steakhouse Other _____
 - Cafeteria Dinner Fine Dining Tea Room Other _____
- Theater

6. Currently, what are the major advantages of shopping or doing personal business (e.g. banking) in Cornelius?

- Convenient location Fair prices Know the store employees
- Friendly service Easy to find parking Other _____
- Support local businesses Less traffic & crowds Other _____
- Within walking distance Selection of goods/services Other _____

7. Currently, what are the major disadvantages of shopping or doing personal business (e.g. banking) in Cornelius?

- Poor appearance Inconvenient location Other _____
- Poor selection of goods/services High prices Other _____
- Lack of parking Limited hours Other _____
- Traffic Unfriendly/poor service Other _____

8. What can local merchants do to improve their stores?

- Improve appearance Promotions/advertise Improve safe access
- Lower prices/sales Expand store hours Other _____
- Improve selection Be friendlier Other _____

9. Indicate, by checking the appropriate number, how important each of the following is to you in making purchases.

	(1-not very important) _____ →					7-very important)	
Convenience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Safety/Security	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Low Price	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Speed of Delivery	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Product Selection/Variety	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Customer Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. As Cornelius continues to grow and change, if you could keep one thing the same about the community, what would it be? _____

11. If you could change one thing about the community, what would it be? _____

12. What identity or image would you like to see Cornelius develop for itself as a unique community? _____

13. Please check your age: 14-18 19-24 25-44 45-64 65 or over

14. Please share any other comments below or attach a separate page.



Funding Sources & Programs for Downtown Revitalization Activities

Downtown revitalization programs and activities are typically funded by a multitude of sources. This report provides a synopsis of popular public and private funding sources that can be tapped for various aspects of downtown/community/economic revitalization initiatives. They are listed below together with websites that provide detailed program descriptions and contact information.

●Note: this list is current at the time this report was published (2/27/02); sources and guidelines may change.



Private/Nonprofit Funding Sources

Often, in order to access funding from foundations, the organization requesting funding must have 501c3 tax exempt status, or be a city. Check each source for their specific requirements and programs.

- The Ford Family Foundation & The Ford Institute for Community Development
<http://www.tfff.org/>
- Meyer Memorial Trust
<http://www.mmt.org/>
- Northwest Grantmakers
<http://www.lib.washington.edu/gfis/resources/pnw-links.html>
- Oregon Community Foundation
<http://www.ocfl.org/Default.htm>
- Philanthropy Northwest
<http://www.pngf.org/grantseeker.htm>

For a full listing and description of Oregon Foundations, see the Oregon Foundation Data Book, www.FoundationDataBook.com.

- Cascadia Revolving Fund is a non-profit financial institution that provides loans and technical assistance to entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations unable to access traditional financing and support. Cascadia lends to businesses owned by low-income people, women or minorities; and to childcare businesses, businesses that restore or improve the environment or have strong potential to create family wage jobs. Cascadia provides intensive, one-on-one business counseling to borrowers at no additional cost. Contact Cascadia Oregon office at (503) 235-9635 or visit www.cascadiafund.org.
- The Oregon Microenterprise Network (OMEN) is a statewide association of microenterprise development programs and their supporters. These programs provide training, lending and other enterprise opportunities to entrepreneurs with limited access to economic resources. They offer an excellent free publication called *The Microenterprise Development Resource Guide*.
<http://www.oregon-microbiz.org/>
- Rural Community Assistance Corporation, RCAC, is a major resource for the rural west. Core services include technical assistance and financing for affordable housing, environmental infrastructure and community facilities. In 1996 the U.S. Treasury certified RCAC as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). RCAC believes rural citizens can better control their own future by creating healthy and sustainable communities. Oregon office: 503.228-159 or <http://www.rcac.org>.
- SOLV, provides materials, planning assistance and small grants to communities/organizations who want to organize a restoration, enhancement, cleanup or beautification project.
<http://www.solv.org>



Public Funding Sources

The State Community Solutions Team (CST) is made up of the directors of five state agencies serving as a cabinet-level advisory board on community development. The CST directors meet regularly to coordinate policies, programs, and investments for the following state agencies:

- Economic & Community Development
- Environmental Quality
- Housing & Community Services
- Land Conservation & Development
- Transportation

Many of the relevant funding resources are listed in this section. Visit the CST website for a complete listing of funding sources associated with these departments:
www.communitysolutions.state.or.us/funding

Oregon Arts Commission has several small grant programs which are summarized below.
<http://art.econ.state.or.us/programs.htm>
800.233.3306 (in Oregon) oregon.artscomm@state.or.us

Arts Build Communities grants are part of an initiative designed to recognize and support the arts in building and strengthening Oregon communities. The program acknowledges the Commission's belief that the arts are integral to community development in Oregon and the expanding role arts organizations are taking in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of those communities. The program provides \$3,000 - \$7,000 grants for arts and community development projects in rural and under-served urban communities.

Arts Industry Development Grants. Postmark deadline for applications: April 1 annually. The Commission provides funding for the operations of approximately 100 non-profit arts organizations offering programs, presentations and services to the public through its Arts Industry Development Grant program. Grants are a small percentage of an organization's overall budget; state funds should be matched many times over with earned and contributed dollars.

Arts Reaching Youth Initiative Grants. The purpose of Arts Reaching Youth grants is to demonstrate the range of ways in which experiences in the arts can help at-risk youth. The program provides funds to support several substantive projects across the state that serve high-risk youth and their families, in both community-based and institutionally-based settings.

Business Financial Services division of OECDD has a number of funding programs. Though most are not geared toward small commercial business, a few are worth exploring. <http://www.econ.state.or.us/businessfinance/index.htm>

Community Development Block Grants are federal funds used to provide grants to cities and counties for projects that principally benefit low and moderate income people. The State of Oregon receives about \$15 million annually, largely for rural parts of state. Year round application process for public infrastructure, community facilities, and downtown revitalization projects. <http://www.econ.state.or.us/cdbg.htm>

The Oregon Entrepreneurial Development Loan Fund has made more than 140 loans to help companies get started in Oregon. The fund, administered by the OECDD, offers initial direct loans up to \$25,000 and additional follow-up loans up to \$15,000 to qualified applicants. Contact: Mike.D.Foresee@state.or.us.

State Historic Preservation Office Programs, in the form of grants and/or Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits are available for improvements to historic property and other activities related to local preservation efforts. The Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program provides a 20% income tax credit for qualified rehabilitation of depreciable, income-producing, certified historic properties.

<http://www.shpo.state.or.us/services.php>

Grants Program: kimberly.dunn@state.or.us

Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program: david.skilton@state.or.us

Housing Grant & Tax Credit Programs are often used to bring housing into downtown settings, either through the redevelopment of existing property or new development. For more information on what these programs are, how they work and their timelines:

http://www.hcs.state.or.us/housing/grants_taxcredits.html

Community Incentive Funds are part of the Oregon Livability Initiative. This \$20 million state resource is designed to help local communities meet four main goals:

- Create more jobs in distressed communities that want economic growth;
- Increase the supply of affordable housing near jobs and transportation;
- Reduce sprawling development patterns;
- Revitalize urban centers, downtowns, and main streets

This fund is located in the Oregon Department of Housing and Community Services. For more information and timelines:

<http://www.hcs.state.or.us/communityincentivefund.html>

Old Growth Diversification Funds. Discretionary grants to assist rural, timber-dependent and resource dependent communities with projects that could aid in averting decline of the community and stabilize and diversify their economies. U.S. Forest Service (via Economic & Community Development Dept. OECDD)

State Pedestrian & Bicycle Grants are for pedestrian or bicycle improvements on state highways or local streets. Grant amounts up to \$200,000, local match encouraged. Projects must be situated in road, street or highway right-of-way. Project types include sidewalk infill, ADA upgrades, street crossings, intersection improvements, minor widening for bike lanes. Oregon Dept. of Transportation (ODOT)

<http://www.odot.state.or.us/techserv/bikewalk/funding.htm>

The State receives about \$550,000 per year. Grants are normally small--\$30,000 or less. Grant awards are rarely used for construction projects. However, communities have established façade improvement programs with these funds. A number of federal regulations apply to the funds. Toll-free In State/TDD (800) 233-3306.

The Rural Investment Fund is distributed to regional investment boards to help develop their rural economies; provides a flexible source of funds needed to fill gaps in funding not available from other locally determined funding sources. Boards prepare a Rural Action Plan to guide the use of the funds. Project decision-making and processes are decentralized to Regional Investment Boards.
<http://www.econ.state.or.us/RIPlist.htm>

TEA-21 (Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century) is a federal grant program administered through state Departments of Transportation. For more information on this program contact Pat Rogers Fisher at the Oregon Department of Transportation:
patricia.r.fisher@odot.state.or.us

The Oregon Tourism Commission (OTC) Matching Grant Program was created to help strengthen Oregon's tourism infrastructure by providing seed money to municipalities, non-profits, tribes, and ports for tourism-related projects for tourism marketing and development projects. The program is managed by the Commission's Tourism Development Manager, who is assisted by a Project Review Committee that screens and scores applications.

In the 2000/01 biennium, \$50,000 in Commission funds was made available, augmented by \$50,000 from USDA Forest Service Rural Community Assistance Program to total \$100,000 in awards. The maximum award amount is currently set at \$10,000. The 2000-2001 Matching Grants Program Award Recipients will be listed on this website on or before March 1, 2002. Contact: info.oregontourism@state.or.us

The Transportation Growth Management (TGM) Program is a joint effort between the Department of Transportation and Department of Land Conservation & Development. TGM mission is to: "To enhance Oregon's livability, foster integrated land use and transportation planning and encourage development that results in compact, pedestrian-, bicycle-, and transit-friendly communities." The TGM program has several tools to fulfill this mission. The program offers planning Grants to local governments. Grants help local communities plan for streets and land use in a way that creates livable, transportation-efficient communities and makes the best use of state highway infrastructure.

TGM consultants provide transportation efficient design alternatives to development proposals. On request, a team helps a community or developer meet Smart Development design objectives. Code Assistance is provided to local governments to prepare or amend development codes for transportation systems and land use plans, and apply urban growth management tools. The TGM Outreach program is aimed at increasing the understanding and acceptance of smart development principles through workshops, a partnership program and technical assistance for practitioners.
<http://www.lcd.state.or.us/tgm>

Vertical Housing Development Zones are a brand new tax abatement tool to help promote redevelopment within core urban and rural community centers and transit oriented areas. The goal of this program is to provide increased residential density in concert with commercial development in targeted areas. The percentage of tax abatement is determined by the number of residential floors above the groundfloor commercial space. This program is implemented through the Oregon Economic and Community Development Department. For more info contact: Bill.Campbell@state.or.us



Federal Programs

Small Business Administration, or SBA, is "Americas small business resource." SBA's Office of Business and Community Initiatives administers programs and activities designed to provide information, education, and training to prospective and existing small business owners. The Office engages in co-sponsorships with private sector partners which are designed to provide small business owners with information, education and training that is cost-effective, of high quality and reflective of trends in small business development. As a result of these co-sponsorships, small businesses receive a broad variety of education and training opportunities, written materials, and other forms of assistance that are provided free of charge or at extremely low cost. Oregon office contact: marlin.mowery@sba.gov; helpful SBA websites include: <http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/indexprofile.html> or <http://www.sba.gov/l/programs.html>.

USDA - Rural Development is another excellent resource for economic revitalization activities. USDA Rural Development Intermediary Relending Loan Program provides financing for "the establishment of new business, the expansion of existing businesses, creation of employment opportunities, saving of existing jobs, or community development projects."

Though specific grant programs are not published, USDA, Rural Development has been an active partner throughout the state in business improvement programs. Contacts: Pendleton Office, Donald C. Hollis, (541) 278-8049, Ext. 129, don.hollis@or.usda.gov

Redmond Office, Robert K. Haase, Cooperative Development Specialist
(541)923-4358, Ext. 124 bob.haase@or.usda.gov



Public/Private Sources

Creation of a sustainable funding district to support downtown economic revitalization activities is becoming increasingly popular in Oregon communities. Listed below is a synopsis of these special assessment districts.

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)/ Business License Fees – implemented by city and paid by business owners for revitalization programs and projects. Fee can vary widely. Usually renewed every 5 years.

Economic Improvement Districts (EIDs) – implemented by city an assessment on property and used for revitalization programs/projects. Fees can be based on a variety of criteria. Up to 5 year duration, with option to renew.

Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) – implemented by city, paid for by property owners and focused on capital improvements. One time payment or payment over time.

Urban Renewal Districts – implemented by city, uses tax increment financing for capital improvement projects. Duration: 20-30 years.



Technical Assistance Organizations

The Association of Community Development Corporations, AOCDO, is a statewide non-profit organization supporting community development corporations, and nonprofits developers of affordable housing around Oregon committed to improving the quality of life and living conditions of poor families around the state. <http://www.aocdo.org>

The Oregon Downtown Development Association, ODDA, is a statewide non-profit that provides downtown revitalization assistance to communities through “Tools, Training and Technical Assistance.” ODDA’s *Tools* are a wide variety of user-friendly handbooks on a wide range of downtown redevelopment topics. ODDA’s *Training* consists of highly successful quarterly workshops and an annual statewide conference. *Technical Assistance* is provided through on and off site work with communities; tailored to their specific needs. For more info: <http://www.odda.org>

Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, or OAME, is a non-profit organization formed to promote and develop entrepreneurship and economic development for ethnic minorities in Oregon. OAME provides training, technical assistance, access to credit, access to markets and asset development. <http://www.oame.org>

A Native American Business Network (ONABEN) provides business training, one-on-one business counseling, access to markets and access to credit through their programs <http://www.onaben.org>

The Neighborhood Partnership Fund, NPF, is a n Oregon non-profit that provides ideas, resource and training to community development organizations and partners to create economic opportunities and affordable housing for low-income people. <http://www.tnpf.org>

Rural Development Initiatives, RDI, is a non-profit organization that assists rural community leaders, the organizations they create, and those that support them. RDI's services include: leadership development, action training, strategic planning and special projects. <http://rdiinc.org>

The State Network Office of Small Business Development Centers can guide you to the nearest Small Business Development Center for personal hands-on help for small businesses and potential businesses. Experienced advisors and instructors address all aspects of business ownership to help create prosperous businesses. The centers are hosted by community colleges and universities throughout Oregon. <http://www.bizcenter.org>

Technical Assistance for Community Services, better known as TACS, provides assistance to nonprofit organizations to help them develop the people and skills they need to achieve their missions. TACS has provided training and/or consultation for over 3,000 non-profits throughout Oregon and Washington. TACS provides workshops, networks, and consultations on financial management, board development, strategic planning, building diversity, organizational development and leadership issues. <http://www.tacs.ogec>

The Elements of Downtown Design

The downtown's physical quality plays an important role in consumers' decisions about where to shop. In the last several decades Americans have become accustomed to shopping malls and centers — artificial environments where design elements are closely controlled, from parking lots to window displays to shopping bags. Mall designers are keenly aware of the aspects of human behavior that influence shopping habits: interior fountains are installed to mask background noises; artificial lighting gives the impression that time is passing slowly; flags and banners draw the eye through the mall, and into store windows; decorated infill panels disguise vacancies.

While shopping malls may be visually stimulating, there are no distinct qualities that differentiate one from another. A community's unique design characteristics — the elements that reflect its past and explain the ways in which it developed — are found downtown, not at the mall. City squares, parks, public buildings, monuments, alleys and traditional commercial buildings are the elements that physically define the town. Each downtown is a one-of-a-kind expression of its community's heritage, unlike any other. It cannot be duplicated. Once gone, it can never be replaced.

There is no formula for good downtown design, just an appreciation of Main Street's unique assets and an eye for improvements that are compatible with the existing environment. Years of deferred maintenance and insensitive alterations often obscure the richness and beauty of traditional commercial buildings. Heavy-handed approaches to managing parking and traffic have upset the delicate balance that exists between infrastructure and architecture. Fortunately, insensitive design treatments can usually be reversed. In many cases, it may be as simple as removing aluminum covering to reveal an original facade, or making a park more accessible. Occasionally, a building or other design element may require more extensive repair or restoration. As long as the modifications reinforce the downtown's design assets and represent good design, they almost always lead to an improved environment — one that reflects the present as well as the past.

Elements of Downtown Design

Downtown design affects a number of elements besides the buildings, such as public infrastructure, marketing materials and parking areas. All components that communicate a visual message to consumers about the downtown should be addressed by the program's design improvement efforts, including:

- *Buildings.* Buildings of all ages and architectural styles contribute to the downtown's distinctive personality. Similarities in storefront placement, building height, road setback and proportion of door and window openings give a strong sense of rhythm and continuity along the street, visually tying buildings together and creating a cohesive streetscape.
- *Public improvements.* Public improvements include sidewalks, streets, lights, fountains, benches, plantings, utility lines and poles and other elements that support downtown pedestrian and vehicular activity.
- *Signs.* Public information and private business signs have a significant impact on the downtown's visual image. Like all other design elements, signs should reinforce the district's style in terms of size, scale, color, materials and placement.
- *Parking.* Downtown parking areas include on-street spaces, public and private lots and parking garages. Certainly one of the most misunderstood of the downtown's design elements, parking is often blamed for many economic problems — when, in reality, it serves a secondary function.
- *Graphics.* Logos, posters, advertisements and other broadcast or printed marketing materials that convey a visual message about the downtown are also important design components. These graphics should be of high quality, reflecting the downtown's unique characteristics.

Downtown Design Principles

There are six basic principles for implementing successful downtown design improvements:

- *Appreciate what already exists.* Establishing a design improvement program first involves calling attention to Main Street's unique design characteristics and fostering appreciation for the downtown's

importance to the community's personality and quality of life. Once the design characteristics are identified, there are countless ways of promoting their variety and distinctiveness, from guidebooks to walking tours to investors' workshops.

- *Design with compatibility in mind.* A successful downtown design improvement program should manage visual change constructively, building on existing physical assets and encouraging innovation that supports them. Downtown design does not mean that new construction should imitate historic styles or themes,- instead, it involves making changes that are compatible with the commercial area's established characteristics, especially building height, setback from the road, use of materials and the rhythm of window and door openings.
- *Avoid formulas that work at the mall.* The design qualities that entice costumers to the shopping mall rarely work when applied to the downtown. Because malls are designed and built as single units where temperature, light and pedestrian activity can be controlled, certain design elements — such as unified facades and broadcasted music — are possible. In the downtown, though, many of these elements appear unnatural and gimmicky, detracting from the district's own special design qualities.
- *Recognize the limitations of design improvement projects.* Design improvements enhance the appearance of the downtown and make it a more appealing place for consumers. But design improvements alone will not reverse economic decline,- they must be complemented by business development activities, aggressive marketing and the structure provided by a strong organization capable of coordinating the many steps involved in the downtown revitalization process.
- *Establish unified goals for the physical and visual improvement of buildings, public improvements, parking areas and marketing materials.* All design improvements on Main Street should be unified, with improvements in one area reinforcing and coordinated with improvements in others.
- *Always stress quality.* Every visual element associated with the downtown should reflect quality and pride — characteristics that make it unique in the marketplace.

The Role of Historic Preservation in Downtown Design

One of the most critical issues in downtown revitalization is finding ways to make traditional commercial buildings economically viable once again. In the past few decades, many communities have attempted to give downtown buildings new life by altering their appearance in some way — for instance, by covering them with aluminum slipcovers, adopting false historic themes or concealing them with oversized signs. But approaches that alter the architectural features of these buildings have rarely been successful in improving their economic value.

Historic preservation, however, uses a building's distinctive architectural characteristics for economic benefit. People enjoy shopping in unique environments that offer value, quality and a high level of personal service and involvement — assets almost all downtowns have. The traditional buildings in a downtown make it absolutely unique. The degree of craft inherent in downtown buildings represents a level of quality often unmatched elsewhere in the community. And, because commercial buildings reflect a community's history, the traditional downtown environment makes shoppers feel at home. By taking advantage of these characteristics, a revitalization program can position the downtown as a unique shopping environment that offers qualities and services no shopping center or mall can provide.

Historic preservation means managing change in the built environment. Because communities constantly evolve, their building stocks evolve, too. New buildings reflect the times in which they are constructed — the community's current goals, aspirations and values. When well-designed, new buildings blend with Main Street's existing architecture, creating a rich pattern of visual clues that reflect its social and cultural values throughout time.

Preservation is not anti-change; it does not advocate restricting design improvements, reconstructing demolished historic buildings, applying historic themes to new buildings or saving all old buildings just for the sake of it. Instead, historic preservation recognizes good design from the past, maintains the built environment's unique characteristics and encourages good new design — whether in the construction of new buildings or in the modification of existing ones — that is compatible with the old.

Storefront Design

Many factors contribute to the success of a downtown commercial district. Merchandising skills, accurate marketing and availability of merchandise, for instance, are all crucial to a healthy, economically viable downtown. But improvements in storefront design—new paint, moderate renovation or full-scale rehabilitation — are often the first visible signs that something positive is happening, signaling to the community that exciting changes are taking place downtown.

Storefront buildings — traditional buildings with large display windows on the ground floor and one or more stories above—are the basic units of downtown commercial areas. Storefront buildings were, and still are, designed to facilitate retail activity. Large expanses of glass in the ground-floor facade allow pedestrians to look into shops and see displayed merchandise. Recessed entryways blur the distinction between the sidewalk, which is public space, and the private space of the store, giving shoppers the feeling that the store is a semipublic space and, therefore, inviting them to come in and browse around. The long, narrow shapes of storefront buildings make it possible to group a large number of shops on one block. In turn, these stores can display a wide variety of goods and services to shoppers as they walk down the street. Storage spaces in the rear of the buildings facilitate delivery of goods from alleys and secondary roads.

After World War One, when downtown commercial districts started experiencing competition from shopping centers and other outlying areas, downtown businesses began losing customers and sales revenues, and many buildings fell into disrepair. Maintenance was deferred indefinitely. Many downtown business owners tried to compete with shopping malls by covering building facades with aluminum in an attempt to create a unified image. Some towns even adopted phony historic themes.

Imitating the physical design of shopping malls, however, did not make downtowns more competitive. Shoppers went to malls for many reasons other than their physical appearance/ reasons like the unified hours mall businesses offered, the way businesses were clustered to group together similar goods and services and the variety of activities malls provided for members of the entire family.

Ironically, it is the unique design characteristics of traditional downtown commercial buildings that, at least in a design sense, give them a marketing advantage over shopping malls. Traditional buildings reflect the community's history and give the downtown a unique visual identity, unlike any other in the world—something shopping malls cannot offer. Concealing or

neglecting architectural details that help tell the story of the community's development deprives the downtown of one of its best marketing tools: its unique image.

Good downtown design starts with a solid understanding of the ways the buildings work, the reasons they were designed the way they were and the different elements that make up the downtown's physical environment

Storefront Evolution and the Elements of Storefront Design

Regardless of their age, almost all downtown commercial buildings are composed of three basic elements: the storefront, upper facade and cornice.

- ❑ *The storefront* The storefront is the ground-floor section of the front facade. It typically contains large glass display windows with bulkheads, or kick plates, below that provide protection from breakage and elevate merchandise to eye level for pedestrians looking inside. Many storefronts have transom above the display windows. Transom windows filter light into the ground-floor space. A structural beam spans the storefront opening, supporting the weight of the upper facade. Sometimes, the structural beam is exposed on the outside of the building and might be decorated or used as a background for sign lettering. In other instances, the structural beam might be concealed by a decorative cornice running the width of the storefront opening.
- ❑ *The upper facade.* The area above the ground-floor storefront opening — the upper facade — contains both wall material (typically brick, wood or stucco) and windows. Upper facade windows are usually arranged in even horizontal rows, sometimes accentuated by horizontal bands of a contrasting building material.
- ❑ *The cornice.* The entire facade — storefront and upper facade together — is capped by a decorative cornice. The cornice might be made of elaborate wood moldings (common during the federal and Victorian periods), pressed metal, terra-cotta, brick or other materials. In addition to giving the buildings a visual termination, the cornice sometimes conceal gutters and facilitate roof drainage as well.

These three elements can be found in downtown

commercial buildings from any period of American history. Although earlier buildings were generally not as tall as later ones and tended to have smaller storefront display windows, they nonetheless had the same basic elements.

Most changes in the design of downtown commercial buildings have taken place because of improvements in the way glass was manufactured. In the 18th century, glass was expensive and could be manufactured for practical purposes only in small panes. For these reasons, storefront display windows were small, with perhaps as many as 16 or 20 panes of glass in one window. As it became less expensive to manufacture glass in larger sections, storefront windows gradually became larger. In the mid-19th century, storefront windows typically measured five to six feet in height, with as few as four panes of glass in each window. By the late 19th century, glass could be manufactured in single sheets that filled the entire storefront window opening and, during the next several decades, storefront window openings continued to increase in size.

Other technological innovations have also modified the appearance of downtown commercial buildings. The introduction of cast iron and steel in the 19th century enabled builders to span greater distances without intermediate supports, making it possible for storefront window openings to be larger and commercial buildings wider. In the first half of the 20th century, the use of aluminum and structural pigmented glass led to the design of some very innovative Art Deco and Art Moderne commercial storefronts.

In spite of the technological advances that slightly modified the appearance of traditional commercial architecture, the commercial building's three basic design elements remained the same. These elements — storefront, upper facade and cornice — give storefront buildings visual cohesiveness. Each element is closely related to the others and, together, create a balanced architectural composition.

The Importance of Building Design to the Entire Streetscape

The significance of these elements, however, goes beyond their importance to the composition of individual buildings. Regardless of its age, a downtown building's components help make it compatible with surrounding buildings and the entire block. The way the patterns of storefronts, upper facades and cornices repeat from one building to the next along a street gives the whole Streetscape visual cohesiveness and creates

a physical rhythm that provides orientation to pedestrians and motorists. Through this repeated pattern, the Streetscape itself takes on design characteristics as distinctive as those of individual buildings:

- *Height and width.* The proportions of the height and width of most buildings are relatively constant within a commercial district. Wide buildings are usually divided into separate bays, reinforcing the overall proportions of the Streetscape.
- *Setback.* Almost all downtown buildings abut the sidewalk, instead of being set back from it.
- *Color.* While color choices in downtown buildings differ considerably, depending on the materials used and the climate in which the structures are built, the use of color throughout the commercial area should be harmonious. For instance, if the colors of downtown buildings are primarily muted earth tones, a bright red or purple building would not be sympathetic - a better choice might be a soft brown or rust.
- *Proportions of door and window openings.* The proportions of door and window openings throughout the downtown area, and especially in adjacent buildings, are relatively constant. The height of upper-floor window placement is also somewhat constant, reinforcing a strong horizontal relationship between upper-story windows along the block.
- *Roof shape or profile.* Roof profiles are usually consistent throughout downtown commercial areas. Whether most buildings have flat roofs, hip roofs or another shape, consistent profiles help create a strong rhythm of design elements along the street.

Building improvements that take place downtown should be compatible with the design characteristics of the Streetscape as well as with those of the building. A building that is incongruous with its neighbors in height, color, roof profile, proportion or setback can have a significant negative impact on the overall appearance of the entire block.

Common Design Problems

During the past several decades, many downtown buildings have suffered from deferred maintenance or attempts to disguise or alter their original architectural

characteristics. Fortunately, many of these changes can easily be reversed. The first step in correcting insensitive alterations is to identify the changes and analyze their impact on the building's and streetscape's basic design elements. The most common architectural design problems found downtown include:

False Historical Themes

The difference between a good reconstruction of an original storefront and an unsuccessful one lies in its degree of authenticity. In recent years, many downtown buildings have been remodeled using false historical details, trims and moldings. The easy availability of such elements as pseudocolonial doorways and plastic snap-in window muntins has, unfortunately, led to many fine late 19th- or early 20th-century buildings being "earliered up." Fake colonial themes are not the only ones that frequently occur: mansard roofs, plastic, Spanish-like pan tiles, artificial "Swiss chalet" half-timbers; and wild West, rough-sawn, cedar saloon fronts all appear from time to time.

The problem of false historical themes downtown is a continuing one. Community members frequently confuse historic preservation, the management of existing historic resources, with the *creation* of historical images. Inevitably, it will be necessary to explain to an eager building owner, who is proud of his or her decision to "go historic," why lumberyard colonial windows, cross-buck vinyl storm doors and similar elements are not the best expressions of the past. Often, it is most effective to simply make a case for the long-term, lower cost, accurate rehabilitation; authenticity is more likely to survive than the passing fads of the lumberyard or phony themes.

Slipcovers

In an effort to compete with shopping malls in the 1960s and 1970s, many downtown groups encouraged property owners to cover their buildings with metal slipcovers, hoping that, by making a whole downtown block appear to be one single, massive building, the downtown itself would look like a shopping mall. While these programs had the best of intentions, Main Street organizations have since discovered, again and again, that making the downtown look like a shopping mall will not bring back business.

Fortunately, the aluminum or light-gauge steel panels used to slipcover downtown facades were usually installed quickly and inexpensively. Framing or brackets that attached the metal panels to the facade were often anchored in only a few places, making removal relatively easy. In many instances, all the building's

original architectural features are still in place beneath the metal cover, although, the anchoring devices may have damaged masonry, woodwork or other building fabric. In some cases, window frames or even entire cornices were removed to make the metal panels fit flush against the facade. In all instances, examine how the anchors are installed before beginning to remove them. Extra care should be taken to prevent further damage.

Separating the Ground Floor from the Upper Facade

Another prevalent type of building alteration grew out of the popularity of shopping malls and strip commercial areas: treating the ground floor and upper facade as unrelated elements. Brightly lit, oversized signs were plastered across the fronts of downtown buildings in the 1950s and 1960s. Large, plastic projecting signs also appeared, often bolted right through the wall surface. The signs were intended to attract the attention of passing motorists and, because most commercial signs were being manufactured for the shopping strip, the ones that worked best on the highway were also installed downtown.

Downtowns, however, are scaled for pedestrians and slow-moving vehicles. In most instances, applying flashy, oversized signs to traditional commercial buildings destroyed the balanced relationship between the storefront and the upper facade, in effect, separating the ground floor from the rest of the building. Downtown building facades with this type of sign no longer worked as integrated design units, individually or as part of the streetscape.

Like slipcovers, though, large signs are fairly easy to remove. Before developing plans to remove a sign, thoroughly examine the anchoring system to minimize any damage that may occur. Also, try to determine whether any architectural details were altered or removed when the sign was installed, and plan ways to repair, replace or compensate missing features in the final design.

Filling in Display Windows, Transom Windows and Doors

The loss of balance between the storefront and upper-facade spaces through the use of slipcovers and oversized signs led to other building modifications. The balance between display window, transom and upper-floor windows also disappeared; and, as a result, these spaces were often boarded up or filled in. Sometimes, transom windows were covered over when suspended acoustical tile ceilings were installed. Or, if upper

floors were no longer used, windows were often sealed. Occasionally, two storefront spaces were combined when a business expanded, with one storefront opening — windows and door together — filled in completely. Filling in display, transom and upper-floor windows upsets the relationship of facade elements to one another and disrupts the rhythm of repeating patterns along the streetscape.

Using Color Inappropriately

Color was originally used on downtown commercial architecture for a variety of reasons. In hot climates, buildings were often painted pastel or pale earth tones to reflect heat. Commercial buildings from the Victorian period tended to use paint playfully to highlight elaborate moldings and other architectural details. Buildings made of soft brick were usually painted to help protect the masonry from moisture, wind and sun damage. But buildings made of more durable masonry were not typically painted.

A common problem with downtown buildings is the inappropriate use of color. In some instances, one paint color might be used not only for the building facade but also for its architectural trim, making it difficult to see the detail around windows and doors and on the cornice. In other cases, colors that clash with surrounding buildings are used, making the building stand out too boldly, thereby disrupting the streetscape.

Using Inappropriate Materials

Like unsuitable colors, the use of inappropriate materials to construct or alter downtown commercial buildings frequently severs them from their surroundings. While new materials need not replicate old ones, they should be compatible in texture, scale and color with those already found in the downtown area. Materials like cedar shakes, molded stone, rough-cut logs and stained wood rarely have precedents in the traditional downtown environment and usually should not be used.

Design Improvements and Building Rehabilitation

Once a building's design problems have been identified and an assessment has been made to determine which parts of the building are affected (and to what extent), a design improvement plan must be developed. The plan should meet several objectives:

- *It should capitalize on the building's assets.* A good

design improvement plan will take advantage of a building's original architectural materials, its unique details and other existing features.

- *It should respect the relationship of storefront, upper facade and cornice.* In cases where this relationship has been upset by the use of inappropriate materials, colors, slipcovers, signs or other alterations, the incompatible elements should be removed. Any new modifications should reestablish this design relationship.
- *When appropriate, it should preserve as much of the original building fabric and significant modifications as possible.* Once gone, a building's original fabric can never be replaced. New design work should preserve as much of the original material as possible. Building modifications that have taken place in the past might be significant, as well. For instance, some storefronts built in the late 19th century were altered in the 1920s and 1930s when new materials, such as aluminum and structural pigmented glass, became available. Many of these modifications represent good examples of Art Deco design and may, therefore, be worthy of preservation. In cases like this, analyze the modification carefully. If it respects the relationship of kick plate, display window, transom, upper facade and cornice, is compatible with other buildings in the district and represents good design work of the period in which it was created, it might be best to preserve the alteration.

There are three possible courses of action to pursue in rehabilitating traditional commercial buildings. In some instances, any of the three alternatives may be possible. In other cases, only one may be. The best course of action will depend on the building's condition, its historic and architectural characteristics and the nature of the surrounding streetscape.

Restoration

Restoration involves reproducing the appearance of a building exactly as it looked at some time in the past. For commercial buildings, restoration in the strictest sense might mean removing every element that was not part of the original structure (signs, store windows, canopies, doors, air conditioners), then duplicating original parts that are now missing. Restoration can be expensive because it requires a degree of artisanship that is not common today. It also requires extensive, accurate research and a good understanding of historic construction techniques.

Sometimes, restoration is the best alternative. For instance, national landmarks, extraordinary examples of a particular style of architecture or buildings that are excellent examples of a famous architect's work may warrant the extra care and expense required for restoration. This kind of monument can — and should — be considered the exception, rather than the rule.

There is a second, and more likely, instance in which restoration might be the most appropriate design treatment. Many downtowns have buildings that have never been altered, not even on the ground floor. These buildings are often in bad repair and, at first glance, are eyesores. A more careful examination, however, will reveal their true architectural qualities. In these situations, a new coat of paint and simple maintenance can return a building to its original appearance; thus, the building is restored.

The major difference between these two types of restoration is the cost. With the unaltered building, restoration may be the least expensive and most logical option. The results of a restoration project can be astonishing. A restored building is an authentic part of the community's history and serves as a dramatic demonstration of how architectural deterioration of the downtown can be reversed.

Major Rehabilitation

When commercial buildings have been drastically altered — for instance, by the removal of substantial building elements or a replacement of the storefront — major rehabilitation is required to return the building to a form consistent with the rest of the downtown. Although many kinds of construction and materials may be used, most fall into one of two categories:

- *Reconstruction of a period storefront* When accurate restoration is truly appropriate and desirable (as in the instance of a landmark building), reconstruction of a storefront — from the period in which the building was built or in which it attained its historic significance — may be appropriate. Remember, though, that adopting a historical theme as a basis for widespread building alterations downtown is not appropriate. Historical themes cause problems by confusing people about the age of the buildings and their authenticity and by overlooking each structure's individual, intrinsic design characteristics.
- *Construction of a new, compatible storefront* In some cases, using newer materials for storefront renovation offers advantages that make this treatment more appropriate than restoration or

reconstruction. Visually, the subtle contrast of new, compatible materials and old, original building fabric can create a handsome blend of the past and present. And, because new materials are usually stock items carried as regular inventory in lumber yards, they are available almost everywhere.

Generally, if the new materials are as simple in line and form as possible, they will blend into the building better than more elaborate treatments. But, be sure to use new materials in shapes, forms, sizes and colors that are similar to, and supportive of, original building characteristics. This will help establish a functional and aesthetic consistency with the past. Storefront features like the short panels below the display windows and the transom windows above are common in many traditional commercial buildings but can be expressed in new materials. It is quite possible to create attractive, compatible new features using materials that were not available when the buildings were originally constructed.

New materials can have significant advantages over traditional ones. For instance, some new building materials require less maintenance than the originals. There can be energy conservation benefits in using new materials, too. Many have high "R-values" than old ones, meaning that they do not conduct heat and cold as quickly, making them more energy efficient.

Conservative Rehabilitation

Conservative rehabilitation is the design treatment most often used in downtown building improvement projects. Conservative rehabilitation involves simply improving the storefront's appearance by minimizing its less attractive features and using simple, inexpensive techniques to emphasize its positive ones.

The Incremental Nature of Design Improvements

Downtown design improvements will not be completed in one year or even two. In fact, they probably will never be finished, because the downtown will continue to grow and evolve as time passes, as new architectural styles and new building materials emerge and as better preservation techniques develop.

Initially, building owners might be willing to invest in moderate improvements, but not ready to conduct major rehabilitation projects. Remember that design improvements happen incrementally — if moderate improvements make his or her business stronger, the building owner will probably want to continue the

rehabilitation process later on. Also, initial design improvements in a downtown commercial area will call attention to the positive changes taking place. A dozen small building improvement projects can have more impact than one major one.

Implementing Common Storefront Design Improvements

Frequently, a building's appearance can be significantly improved simply by cleaning it and taking care of neglected maintenance problems or by removing inappropriate alterations and repairing architectural features. Common storefront design improvement projects include:

Cleaning Traditional Commercial Buildings

A variety of cleaning techniques are available; but choose carefully as some can be damaging.

□ *Abrasive cleaning.* Abrasive cleaning techniques like sandblasting should *never* be used on traditional commercial buildings. Such harsh cleaning actually cuts into the building material, causing irreversible damage. Brick, for instance, has a hard, baked exterior surface. Inside the brick, though, the masonry is much softer. When sandblasted, the hard outer surface disappears, exposing the much softer masonry inside to moisture and wind damage. Abrasive cleaning has similar effects on wood and stone.

If a masonry building has already been sandblasted but is not yet too severely deteriorated, painting the building might slow down the deterioration process. Avoid varnishes, enamels, polyurethane sealants and other products impervious to moisture penetration—they will lock moisture *inside* the masonry and prevent it from evaporating, ultimately causing severe moisture damage.

□ *Water wash.* Most often, a gentle water wash is the most appropriate, least damaging way to clean a traditional commercial building. Water pressure should be low — not more than 200 pounds of pressure per square inch (psi). Use a soft, natural bristle brush (not metal) to gently scrub details. If necessary, use a mild detergent, then thoroughly wash to remove any residue.

□ *Chemical cleaners.* In some instances, a chemical cleaner might be needed to remove paint or heavy grime. The masonry should be moistened first to

soften dirt. Then, a chemical paint remover is applied and allowed to remain on the building surface for a period of time before it is rinsed off with water and, sometimes, a neutralizer. The process may be repeated several times to remove built-up paint or dirt.

Finding the right chemical cleaner for the building material is crucial. Chemical cleaners can be either alkaline or acidic; one is appropriate for some materials, one for others. Using the wrong chemical can damage the building material.

When using chemical cleaners, be sure the area surrounding the building is well protected and that adequate drainage is available. Also, thoroughly cover any architectural features that will not be treated with the chemical. Metal cornices, for instance, can be eroded by some types of chemicals that cause an electrolytic reaction.

Chemical cleaning should always be done by experienced professionals. Many communities do not have professional building cleaning companies, but firms in most larger cities are willing to travel long distances. It might be possible to reduce the firm's transportation costs by having more than one building owner agree to use their services at the same time.

Regardless of whether a water wash, steam or a chemical cleaner will be used, it is always wise to clean a test patch first. Pick a section of the building that is not too visible — a side or rear wall, for instance — and treat a section about three or four square feet in area. Allow the test patch to dry thoroughly, then examine it closely for any signs of damage. Look for possible damage to the mortar joints and for any residue left on the wall surface by the cleaning process. Examine bricks closely to see if the edges are rounder than they were or if the surface feels flaky. Some masonry surfaces may be too soft to be cleaned.

Removing Inappropriate Alterations

When inappropriate alterations like oversized signs, window coverings or metal slipcovers are being removed, follow these steps in planning the work:

□ *Identify elements.* From a full-facade photograph or an accurate facade drawing, note all the elements that should be removed.

□ *Determine how the inappropriate elements are attached.* Examine each element that will be removed to see how it was attached to the building and to determine the condition of the building around

the anchor area. Make careful notes about each element and key them to numbers or letters on the facade photo or drawing; this will make it easier for the contractor to plan the removal of each piece.

It is often possible to see how metal slipcovers were attached by looking outside through upper-floor windows. If there is a big enough gap between the original facade and the metal slipcover, use a flashlight to look between them for anchoring devices. It is usually a good idea to remove a small section of the slipcover before planning the whole job. Metal panels were often screwed to metal or wood frames or bolted to metal flanges attached directly to the facade. In either case, a screwdriver and a small crowbar may be all that are needed to remove a section of paneling.

- *Repair original material that was damaged when alterations were made.* The most common types of damage caused by alterations include drilled holes, lost or pared decorative elements, accumulated dirt and rust stains.
- There are several ways to treat holes drilled into the facade. If the hole was drilled into a mortar joint, it can be replaced or patched. Be sure the new mortar closely matches the original in composition and color. If the hole was drilled into brick or other masonry, a patch can be made by grinding up similar masonry, mixing it with an epoxy and filling the hole. Or, the hole can be filled with epoxy and closed with a solid plug cut from matching masonry. If the hole was drilled into wood, it can be filled with putty, sanded and painted along with the rest of the facade.
- If a decorative element, such as a cornice or trim around a window, was removed or pared to help the slipcover fit flat against the facade, it can be replicated by a skilled artisan or replaced with a simpler element. The alternative chosen will depend largely on the extent of the damage, the owner's preference and his or her budget for the project. If the exact appearance of the original element is not known, it is usually best to substitute a more simple designed replacement part than try to invent a period design.
- Rust stains might be present if, as in most cases, metal anchors were used to attach the slipcover to the facade. Stains can often be removed by applying a poultice mixed with an appropriate chemical to the stained area, letting the poultice dry,

brushing it off and cleaning the area. Poultices usually have to be applied several times to remove all the stain. The poultice should be prepared by an experienced professional building cleaner who knows which chemicals to use for different types of stains on different materials.

In almost all instances, cleaning the facade once the slipcover has been removed will probably be necessary to clear away dirt and debris that has accumulated.

Adding New Materials

When missing or damaged architectural features are replaced, the new building fabric should duplicate the old or match it as closely as possible. Replacement parts should blend in with existing ones, they should not call attention to themselves. These parts should not be antiqued, however, or made to look old and worn.

One of the most common storefront elements to be replaced is the upper-floor window. Over the past several decades, an enormous amount of damage has been done to storefront buildings by insensitive window replacement. Often, aluminum storm windows have been installed outside upper-floor windows, concealing their original decorative trim and detracting from their appearance. Ironically, the cost of replacing the windows usually far exceeds any energy savings that may result from replacement. Even minor changes in form, details and materials used in new windows can significantly affect the facade's overall appearance. In many cases, windows can easily be repaired, making replacement unnecessary. When replacement is truly justified, be careful to match the building's original window treatment as closely as possible.

When a larger architectural element needs to be replaced (such as the storefront opening itself), developing an appropriate design becomes more complex. In these instances, several approaches are possible.

- The new work might involve an accurate reconstruction of all the parts that have been severely damaged or removed, restoring the building to its appearance at some previous point in time.
- The new work might follow the general form and scale of that which previously existed but differ in design characteristics
- The new work might involve a distinctly different design that complements the older building elements but has its own qualities of expression.

The approach chosen depends on the project budget and the purposes the rehabilitated building is to serve. But, before deciding on an approach, consider two additional factors:

- *The building's historic or architectural significance.* If the building is a major architectural landmark in the community or if it has historic significance, restoration is the most desirable approach. Regardless of whether literal restoration takes place, new materials should not be disguised to look old. This way, future generations will be able to tell which parts of the building are original and which are not. If the building in question is less significant as an individual architectural work, restoration still remains an option, but more latitude exists for creating a new design. In such instances, a new design is usually preferable because it enables the downtown to grow and change as architectural styles evolve. Except in the very rare cases where the downtown's appearance has remained virtually intact, design changes should reflect good design from all periods of time, including the present. The most important design considerations to keep in mind are the relationship of the three basic elements of storefront design — storefront, upper facade and cornice—and the compatibility of new design with old in terms of scale, proportion, setback, color, materials and roof profile.
- *The building's physical relationship to the rest of the downtown.* In some communities, downtown buildings are homogeneous in appearance, most having been built during the same time period with similar characteristics of form, style, shape and materials. In these instances, new building sections should visually relate to the physical environment of the entire streetscape as much as possible. A new design that contrasts sharply will call attention to itself at the expense of the downtown's overall appearance. In most downtowns, though, buildings vary considerably in size, scale, style and materials. These buildings may span a lengthy period of time and include a variety of good alterations. Under these circumstances, there can be greater flexibility when designing new work.

Stimulating Interest in Building Improvements

Initially, many business and property owners are reluctant to invest in building improvements. They have good reason to be cautious: without any guarantee that the money they invest will generate new revenues, undertaking building improvement projects can appear risky. Once the downtown revitalization program is well underway and demonstrates that positive changes are taking place, owners will be more willing to make improvements.

Ironically, one of the best ways to demonstrate positive change early in the downtown revitalization program is through building improvement projects. Seeing physical improvements take place convinces citizens that something exciting is happening downtown and helps reverse any negative perceptions they may have. Therefore, stimulating interest in building improvement activity helps generate immediate projects and creates momentum for future projects. Listed below are common ways Main Street programs have stimulated interest in building improvements:

- *Offering free design assistance.* Helping owners develop improvement plans — at no cost to them — is a tremendous incentive. Often, the assistance may be minor: help in selecting paint colors, for example, or estimating the cost to remove a metal slipcover. Some state Main Street programs offer free design assistance to downtown property owners in designated Main Street communities. In other towns, the revitalization programs purchase blocks of consulting time from local design professionals and, in turn, offer the time, free of charge, to downtown property owners. The Main Street program manager or downtown coordinator can usually help property owners by providing basic guidance and sharing technical information and publications with them.
- *Creating financial incentive programs.* Financial incentive programs help stimulate building improvements by reducing the financial risk to the property owner. Incentive programs that offer low-interest loans, incentive grants and interest buy-downs typically provide only a small percentage of the funds needed for an improvement project, but they might be the only incentive necessary to get an owner to go ahead with improvement plans. Here are some guidelines to follow when creating financial incentive programs.

- Make the first program small. If the program offers more money than is likely to be used within six months or a year, property owners will not feel they need to move quickly to take advantage of it. Incentive programs that offer large amounts of money to downtown property owners are less likely to be used than those offering small amounts.
 - Assign a definite time line to the program — and stick to it. Create the illusion of a shortage and urgency by making the program available for a limited period of time. Property owners will be more likely to act quickly if the funds are offered for a short time. If funds are not used during the designated time period, use the funds for a different type of incentive program.
 - Target the program for specific types of improvements. Initially, the incentive program might be made available for facade improvements. Later in the revitalization process, there might be a greater need to stimulate interest in upper-floor development or building code compliance. Incentive programs will be most effective if they are intended for specific, clearly defined types of building improvements.
 - Aggressively market the incentive program. No incentive program — no matter how wonderful the incentive — will be successful unless it is marketed vigorously. Be sure that *all* downtown property owners, including absentee owners, are informed before the program begins. Then, make sure they each receive copies of promotional literature and, if appropriate, application forms when the program is launched. Finally, promote completed improvement projects that received assistance from the incentive program in local papers, the revitalization program's newsletter and special one-page profiles of each project.
 - Remember that the incentive is intended to stimulate, not sustain, building improvement activity. Sometimes, when incentive programs are offered for extended periods of time, property owners begin to *expect* an incentive and resist carrying out building improvement projects without financial assistance. To avoid this situation, keep incentive programs small, offer them for limited periods of time and stipulate that the incentives can only be used for specific types of projects.
- *Conducting building surveys and maintaining information files on each downtown building.* Assembling information packets on downtown buildings will help property owners move quickly when they are ready to plan building improvement projects. For instance, a photograph that shows how a building looked when it was constructed can help in the planning of projects that involve reconstruction of missing elements. Some of the information that should be gathered includes:
 - historic photographs
 - records of past tenants and owners
 - date of construction
 - identification and description of architectural style
 - references to city and county planning maps
 - fire insurance maps showing the building's shape, materials and other characteristics at different times in the past
 - descriptions and, if possible, photos or drawings of any alterations that have taken place
 - *Working to improve building code regulations and enforcement policies for traditional commercial buildings.* Building codes used throughout American communities today were written primarily to regulate new construction. Often, building codes have sections that simply cannot be applied to traditional commercial buildings or that do not take into account some of their characteristics. For example, some codes require that storefront display windows in new commercial buildings be located no less than two feet from the ground. In some communities, building code officials have applied this regulation to traditional commercial buildings, significantly altering the appearance of kick plates shorter than two feet when making window repairs.

Working closely with local building code officials can help downtown property owners make improvements that support their buildings' original design characteristics. Let code officials know the goals of the downtown revitalization program and how traditional commercial buildings differ from new ones. Also, point out to them that most current major codes, including the BOCA Code, Universal Building Code and Southern (or Standard) Building Code, now contain provisions that give local officials considerable discretion when applying code requirements to historic buildings.

Public Improvements

Public improvements — the trees, streetlights, benches, fountains, plazas and public art that make Main Street an inviting place for pedestrians — are probably the least understood design elements. Downtown public improvements have always been essential for providing functional support to pedestrian and vehicular traffic and helping buildings function efficiently. Unfortunately, in the last few decades, public improvements have become predominant design elements in the downtown, often overshadowing the architecture that surrounds them.

Things were not always this way. Traditionally, downtown architecture was the dominant design element, with public improvements supporting building design and usage patterns and delivery of services to and from shops, offices, residential areas, industries, public buildings and parks. Public improvements were also meant to support the overall design of the surrounding urban environment. A successful public improvements system today should build upon this historic precedent by supporting, visually and functionally, the downtown's buildings and their uses.

Why have so many revitalization programs adopted heavy-handed public improvements? When shopping malls began to compete with downtowns for customers, many commercial districts responded by trying to apply some of the mall's design characteristics to the downtown environment, hoping to entice as many customers as the mall. Unfortunately, most elements of shopping mall design cannot be translated to the downtown. In particular, three factors that give mall interiors their appeal simply do not apply to the downtown at all.

□ *Clearly defined entrances, exits and boundaries.*

Shopping malls have definite boundaries; they are self-contained and are usually built in areas that do not have any strong design characteristics. The downtown's boundaries are not as well defined. Commercial buildings usually extend several blocks beyond the core business district; and the downtown is surrounded by buffer zones of offices, public buildings, churches and recreational areas that help create a gradual transition from a commercial to a residential environment.

It is appropriate for a shopping mall's public improvement elements to be contained within its walls. But in the downtown, public improvements look unnatural when applied to an artificially imposed set of boundaries. Because the commercial character of the downtown extends beyond the central business district, the boundaries for public improvements are difficult to establish.

□ *The ability to coordinate storefront design.* Shopping malls are built as single buildings, with all individual storefronts constructed together. For this reason, coordinating public improvements with storefront design inside a shopping mall is easy. In most downtowns, however, buildings were constructed over a long period of time. They vary in size and style — characteristics that make the downtown unique and give it a distinct marketing identity. Thus, public improvements for a downtown commercial environment must support a wide variety of individual storefronts, and coordinating them with existing buildings is a complicated process. Placing elements at regular intervals along the street, as might be done inside a shopping mall, is not effective downtown.

□ *A climate-controlled environment* Because shopping malls have controlled climates, their promotional directors can schedule a wide variety of indoor activities throughout the year. Many downtowns have emulated mall furnishings, installing benches, tables with inlaid game boards, planters and other fixtures that work well in a climate-controlled environment, but can be used for only few months of the year when placed on a downtown sidewalk or pedestrian mall.

The Functions of Downtown Public Improvements

In general, the downtown's public improvements should satisfy five goals.

□ *Public improvements should encourage pedestrian movement through the downtown and into shops and businesses.* The quality of the physical link between public and private spaces is crucial to the proper functioning of the downtown—and its businesses. Public improvements should help create an inviting environment for shoppers, with clearly marked streets, convenient stopping places, well-lit sidewalks and good pathways between parking areas and stores. Improvements should be designed to create an overall rhythm, establishing a consistent, comprehensible system of movement throughout the downtown. Crosswalks, sidewalks and the paths between parking areas and shops should be safe, convenient and attractive, emphasizing pedestrian scale. Pedestrian areas should be well lit and, when appropriate, served by amenities like water

fountains, benches, trees and public telephones.

Traditionally, streets, sidewalks and commercial buildings were designed and oriented to create a comfortable environment for people strolling through the downtown and browsing in shops. Today, public improvements should continue to channel pedestrian traffic into retail shops, offices and public buildings.

- Public improvements should support storefront merchandising by blurring sidewalk's public space with the recessed, semiprivate space of a store's entryway and display window.
 - When possible, plantings should serve practical as well as aesthetic purposes by providing shade and shelter and acting as a buffer between the sidewalk and street. Plantings can enhance commercial buildings by drawing attention to entrances or away from unattractive areas.
 - Entryways to the downtown should be marked along major access routes. Directional and informational signs should be clear, attractive and sized for the relatively slow pace of downtown traffic. Pedestrian access routes from parking areas and surrounding neighborhoods to businesses should be well designed and pleasant. A shopper who has to walk past untended public areas will form a negative impression of the downtown.
 - Public buildings (city halls, libraries, etc.) are often separated from the street by plazas or open spaces. Public improvements should reinforce the special functions of public buildings by creating an appropriate physical environment for them.
- ❑ *Public improvements should support, not overshadow, downtown functions.* Public improvements should provide basic utilities, like water, sewage and energy. They should make it easy for pedestrians and vehicles to travel throughout the downtown and should accommodate all aspects of transportation such as parking, bus service and connections to other major roads. And, they should provide these services in a manner that is visually compatible with the nature of the functions they support. For example, the design of sidewalks, streetlights and signs should reinforce patterns of pedestrian movement along streets and into shops.
 - ❑ *Public improvements should help create a pleasant environment.* A clean, attractive downtown is an

asset to the entire community. Businesses and industries look at all sections of a community when deciding whether to locate there. A downtown represents substantial public and private investment — in commercial and residential buildings, in utilities, in business ventures. It also generates considerable municipal revenues through property and business taxes, business licenses and the re-circulation of money throughout the community. Thus, the physical appearance of the downtown indicates how well the town is protecting its investments and how residents feel about their community.

Proper maintenance of public improvements is an important factor in projecting a positive image of the downtown. Maintenance costs and responsibilities for upkeep should be included in plans for public improvements.

- ❑ *Public improvements should provide direction within the downtown.* Signs must be well designed and properly located to direct people to, and through, the commercial district. Entrances to the downtown should be clearly defined and inviting; passage through the district should be convenient; and exits from the downtown should provide direction to other parts of town. If one or more roads in the downtown are state highways or other major routes, they should facilitate traffic through the district and provide easy transfer to secondary roads. The location of parking areas and transit stops should be distinctly marked, and locational maps within the downtown should be considered. Directional signs should be compatible with the area's existing design characteristics.
- ❑ *Public improvements should be integrated with other physical improvements.* Public improvements and private projects such as facade rehabilitations should be planned as parts of the same program; neither group alone can carry the full weight of the downtown's physical revitalization. Public improvements should be planned incrementally, with implementation of the program timed to fit the downtown's overall schedule of activity.

Planning Public Improvements

A comprehensive public improvements program should be an integral part of the revitalization process. It should be tailored to the specific needs of the downtown while reinforcing private projects. Planning for public improvements usually involves four steps.

- Conduct an inventory of existing downtown public improvements.
- Analyze each element's effectiveness and examine the possibilities for modification.
- Establish goals and priorities.
- Develop an incremental, realistic implementation plan.

Conducting the Inventory

To begin the inventory, start with a base map of the downtown area. It should show streets, sidewalks and the outlines of all buildings, and should be large enough to accommodate drawn symbols and detailed notes. Most city planning offices have this type of map.

With map in hand, walk around the downtown and note the locations of all public improvement elements. Develop a set of symbols for common elements to save space on the map. Try to be as accurate as possible in locating elements on the map; use buildings as guides for proper placement. Some of the things to look for and note on the map include:

- Directional and informational signs
- Pedestrian spaces (e.g., parks, malls, plazas)
- Plantings
- Street furniture
- Drinking fountains
- Public restrooms
- Phone booths
- Transportation stops (e.g., bus stops, cab stands)
- Loading zones
- Lighting (Note whether street lighting is designed to provide primary illumination to the street, sidewalk or both. Also, note the type of light used: mercury vapor, halogen, etc.)
- Parking spaces and parking lots (Note any time limits on parking spaces, whether they are metered, whether they are reserved for handicapped drivers and whether they are for public or private use.)
- Telephone and utility poles
- Fire hydrants
- Mail boxes
- Traffic equipment (e.g., switching boxes)

As you mark each element on the map, give it an identifying number. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, note the following characteristics for each element:

- Condition.* Is the element in good repair? Is it being properly maintained?
- Installation.* Has the element been properly installed?

If replacement is necessary, are there any factors unique to the element or its location that might affect installation? Does it have special energy or security requirements that are not being met?

- Placement* Is the element placed where it will be most effective? How is it integrated into its surroundings? How does it affect pedestrian or vehicular traffic?

- Seasonal change.* How might the element be used differently or have a different impact on its environment throughout the year? For example, does a fountain that functions well during warm months become a maintenance problem or a safety hazard during winter months? How can it be secured during cold weather so that it is safe and does not become an eyesore?

Finally, be sure to write the date, the time of day and a brief description of the weather on both the map and the inventory sheet.

The inventory should be conducted several times a year to determine how different spaces are used at different times of the day, week and year. For instance, the inventory should note whether delivery trucks cause traffic congestion by double parking at certain times of day or whether bus stops impede the flow of pedestrians along the sidewalk. To supplement the inventory, collect any existing studies on present or forecasted patterns of use in the downtown, such as pedestrian counts, traffic counts, parking usage or plans to upgrade public infrastructure.

The Analysis

The inventory and data collected should be reviewed and analyzed by the Main Street Design Committee (or a subcommittee or task force it establishes). Begin with general considerations and gradually move to specifics. In this way, the analysis focuses first on the entire downtown and general patterns so that an overall picture of circulation, high traffic areas, underused spots and so on emerges.

Next, sort and analyze the collected information *according to specific function*. For example, all elements that affect parking should be examined together, as should all elements that affect vehicular traffic or pedestrian movement. Elements will often overlap. For instance, a crosswalk affects both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. A row of trees that screens a parking lot might also provide a pleasant, shaded pathway for

pedestrians. The analysis should identify all areas where elements overlap by function so that it will be easier to determine which areas and functions might be affected by modification of any element.

Conclude the analysis by summarizing the major findings. The summary statements should note where public improvements are functioning properly as well as pinpointing areas that need improvement. Statements should be brief but explanatory, for example:

- "The crosswalk at the corner of Main and Fourth is not clearly marked, and pedestrians are cautious about crossing there."
- "Security lights at the Sycamore Street parking lot aren't working."
- "Traffic backs up along Second Street around noon on Monday, Wednesday and Friday because the grocery store's delivery truck has to double-park in the street."
- "Use of the public parking lot behind City Hall has increased about 30 percent since plantings were installed in the alley connecting it to Main Street."

Establishing Goals and Priorities

Consider the summary statements carefully. Where do they indicate that immediate action is needed? What improvements would make the area look better, but do not necessarily affect downtown safety or circulation? Which are likely to be most expensive?

The statements should then be prioritized. Issues related to safety should always come first to ensure that the downtown is safe for pedestrians and motorists. Prioritize the remaining concerns according to the goals for downtown design improvement developed by the Main Street Design Committee. Goals differ considerably from town to town, but might include such basic considerations as:

- Promoting downtown economic revitalization
- Enhancing the downtown's overall appearance
- Encouraging building rehabilitations
- Improving the functional characteristics of public spaces
- Making parking seem more convenient

Finally, group areas of concern according to each goal, and in order of priority.

Developing an Implementation Plan

The final step is to develop an implementation plan. Remember that public improvements need not be implemented all at once. A public improvements plan should be implemented gradually, as funds and energy permit, and in accordance with the pace of building improvements. Implementation of each improvement involves five distinct steps.

- *Choose an approach.* Does the improvement involve repairing, replacing or modifying an existing element or adding a new one? In choosing an approach, keep the following guidelines in mind:
 - Less is better than more.
 - It is best to correct problems with existing infrastructure before adding new public improvement elements to the downtown.
 - Try to find management solutions to problems before considering design solutions.
 - Major improvements should be planned and executed so as to cause the least disruption.
 - New elements should be visually compatible with existing elements and buildings.
 - Any strategy for upgrading public improvements should include maintenance considerations for both new and existing elements.
- *Select appropriate elements.* Is the design or repair of the element visually and functionally compatible with existing elements downtown? Does the element conform with established design guidelines? Some factors to consider when selecting elements include:
 - *Impact.* What impact will this change have on the downtown and its functions? How will the downtown be affected during construction or installation of the improvement?
 - *Cost.* What will this improvement cost? Is the benefit worth the price? How will it be funded? What are the maintenance costs? Would its removal, modification or replacement cause maintenance costs in other areas of the downtown?
 - *Responsibility.* Who will be responsible for designing, installing, maintaining and managing this improvement?
 - *Compatibility.* Is the element visually compatible with the downtown environment? Does it reinforce the design of downtown buildings?
 - *Security.* Does the element have special security requirements? If so, what are they?

- *Energy.* Does the element have any energy costs associated with it? If so, what are they, and who will be responsible for them?
 - *Circulation.* How will this element affect pedestrian and vehicular circulation? Can its design facilitate movement into shops and businesses? Does it provide direction to other parts of the downtown and the rest of the community?
 - *Initial cost versus long-term cost.* Will the community be saving money up front by purchasing an inexpensive item that will need to be replaced within a few years? Will it be less expensive in the long run to buy an element that will last longer or that does not require as much upkeep?
- ❑ *Plan appropriate locations.* Where will the element be located? If it is an existing element that is being repaired, would it be advantageous to relocate it? If it is a new element, where will it best be located to serve its function and support others?
 - ❑ *Organize the work.* When will work begin and how long will it last? Is the work schedule timed to create as little disruption as possible for businesses and traffic? Who will be responsible for each phase of the work plan?
 - ❑ *Plan follow-up activities.* After the element has been repaired, installed or modified, determine how

well it is functioning. Is there an adequate maintenance plan in place? Who is responsible for maintenance? Has the change had the desired effect?

Because implementation of the public improvements program is incremental, funding will be incremental as well. Funding for various segments of the program may come from different sources. The downtown should consider traditional funding sources such as capital improvements programs, and less traditional sources such as public improvements gift catalogues, foundations and other private-sector sources, special taxing districts and tax-increment financing.

The Importance of a Public-Private Partnership

Both the public and the private sectors are responsible for design improvements downtown. A public improvements program by itself cannot leverage private investments. On the other hand, a program carried out in conjunction with private building improvements and within the broader framework of the Main Street approach will significantly contribute to the downtown revitalization effort and provide a more attractive environment for businesses, investors and consumers.

Design Glossary

A

Abrasive cleaning. A process for cleaning building materials. The building surface is usually blasted under pressure with sand, glass pellets or water. Unfortunately, abrasive cleaning cuts away the protective outer coating of most building materials and causes irreversible damage. Consequently, abrasive cleaning is almost never appropriate for traditional commercial buildings.

Awning. A sloping, roof-like structure that projects from a building (generally above the storefront) and covers the sidewalk. Awnings can be retractable or fixed. Although usually made of fabric stretched across a metal frame, awnings can also be made of wood or metal.

B

Bearing wall. A building wall that carries a structural load. Most traditional commercial buildings are deep and narrow; the long walls in these buildings bear loads transferred from joists and beams in the flooring and roof systems.

C

Canopy. Like awnings, canopies are roof-like structures that project from a building (usually above the storefront] and cover the sidewalk. While awnings are sloped, however, canopies are flat and are not retractable. Canopies can be made of wood, metal, glass, concrete or fabric.

Carrara glass. See Structural pigmented glass.

Certified local government (CLG). A local government certified by the state historic preservation office (SHPO) to undertake local historic preservation activities. To be certified, a community must establish a historic preservation commission and design a program that meets federal and state standards. Certified local governments are eligible to apply for earmarked grants distributed through the SHPO from the National Historic Preservation Fund. CLGs also receive technical assistance from the SHPO and assist in nominating local properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

Compatibility. The congruity of design characteristics. Design features of traditional commercial buildings should be compatible with the streetscape's overall design characteristics in terms of size, color,

materials, proportion of window and door openings, setback from the street and roof shape.

Comprehensive plan. A plan prepared—usually by the local government — to direct community growth and delivery of services. Most communities prepare or update comprehensive plans at least once every 10 years. Comprehensive plans usually address housing needs, commercial activity, transportation, education, recreation, medical and social services and infrastructure. Many cities include sections on the needs of the downtown commercial area.

Cornice. The decorative band at the top of a building. The cornices of traditional commercial buildings can be made of wood, pressed metal, brick, decorative tile or other materials.

D

Design guidelines. Written guidelines that help designers and property owners decide how to rehabilitate a building. Often accompanied by illustrations, design guidelines should be tailored to the needs and unique design characteristics of the district in which they are to be used. They are usually provided by the local government, a private historic preservation organization or the downtown revitalization project. Programs that offer facade rehabilitation loans or other financial incentives for building improvements often require recipients to follow the design guidelines. Occasionally, a local government will adopt design guidelines as part of the design review process for a local historic district, with issuance of building permits tied to compliance with the guidelines. (See Design review.)

Design review. The process of reviewing proposed building modifications to ensure compatibility with established design guidelines. Design review can be a voluntary or mandatory process. Some communities approve ordinances requiring design review for designated areas in order to ensure design compatibility. In many instances, design review is part of voluntary financial incentive programs that offer grants, loans or other assistance to individuals or businesses who comply with the guidelines.

E

Efflorescence. A type of masonry deterioration in which moisture inside the wall evaporates and leaves a residue of soluble salts on the building's surface. If detected early, the salts can be safely removed. The source of

moisture infiltration must be identified, however, and the infiltration halted.

F

Fenestration. The arrangement of windows in a wall—usually in the upper facade of downtown commercial buildings.

H

Historic district. A delineated area containing historic buildings that are related to one another by style, historic significance, theme, cultural or other design traits. Historic districts can be designated by the city, state or federal government and are usually established to protect the architectural, historic or cultural characteristics of an area.

I

Infrastructure. The term applied collectively to water mains, sewers, underground utilities, sidewalks, streetlights and other elements that support basic activity in public areas.

K

Kickplate. The bulkhead below a storefront display window. The kickplate protects the storefront window from breakage by elevating it several feet above the sidewalk.

M

Marquee. A permanent canopy over an entrance. Usually found on hotels or theaters, marquees are generally made of metal and glass and are often brightly lit.

Masonry. Stonework or brickwork.

Mortar. A moldable material used to bond masonry (bricks, stone, etc.). Mortar consists of three elements: cement, water and an aggregate (sand is almost always used; sometimes, coarser aggregates are used as well).

Muntins. Strips that separate glass panes in a window.

N

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. An act of Congress establishing a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify,

evaluate and protect historic and archeological resources. The National Historic Preservation Act created the National Register of Historic Places, established a national Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, set up guidelines for state historic preservation offices, authorized funding through the National Preservation Fund and created other mechanisms for preserving the nation's cultural resources.

National Register of Historic Places. The official list of the nation's cultural resources, authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act and maintained by the National Park Service under the Secretary of the Interior. Listing in the National Register recognizes a building's significance to the county, state or community in which it is located. A property listed in the National Register is eligible for federal tax benefits, receives special consideration in the planning of federally assisted projects and, when available, qualifies for federal funds earmarked for historic preservation. The following types of properties are eligible for the National Register, properties associated with significant events or individuals; properties that embody unique architectural or structural characteristics, and properties that have archeological significance. National Register listing does not restrict the owner's freedom to use or modify the property.

O

Oriel. A large bay window projecting from the upper facade.

P

Parapet. A low wall at the edge of a roof. Most traditional commercial buildings have flat roofs, with parapets along the front. The roof usually slopes away from the parapet at a slight angle, helping provide drainage for rainwater.

Pediment. The triangular space that forms a gable at the top of a classical building with a pitched roof.

Pigment. A powdered substance, which is added to paint to give it color.

R

Rehabilitation. Physically improving a building's function and/or appearance in a manner that *does* preserve and utilize the building's historic features and characteristics. Substantial rehabilitation may involve some

degree of restoration. Most rehabilitation projects, though, are relatively simple, involving minimizing a building's less attractive features and using simple, inexpensive techniques to emphasize its positive ones.

Rehabilitation tax credits. The federal government provides an income tax credit for the *certified* rehabilitation of buildings listed in (or eligible for) the National Register of Historic Places. The tax credit is equal to 20 percent of the cost of the rehabilitation; expenses must equal the adjusted basis of the building or \$5,000, whichever is greater, in order for the credit to be used. Also, the rehabilitation must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The rehabilitation tax credit provides a valuable incentive for reinvestment in traditional commercial buildings. A 10 percent credit is available for non-historic buildings constructed at least 50 years ago.

Reinforced concrete. Concrete reinforced with metal bars or mesh. The metal reinforcement gives concrete — especially concrete used in columns and slabs — greater tensile strength and durability. Sidewalks are usually made of reinforced concrete, as are all structural elements in buildings.

Renovation. Physically improving a building's function and appearance in a manner that may or may not preserve and utilize the building's historic features and characteristics.

Repainting. The repair and replacement of mortar between masonry units (bricks, stone, etc.). In traditional commercial buildings, repointing should always be done by professionals skilled in historic preservation techniques to ensure that masonry is not damaged and that the new mortar matches the original as closely as possible in composition and application. Modern mortar — which has a higher concentration of Portland cement than mortar made more than 50 years ago — can sometimes cause damage because it is usually harder than the masonry, which then becomes susceptible to deterioration.

Restoration. Restoring a building's *original* features. This option is usually most appropriate for museum-like buildings-national landmarks, for instance, or extraordinary examples of a particular style of architecture.

S

Sandblasting. See Abrasive cleaning.

Sash. The metal or wood framework that surrounds panes of glass in a window or door.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Guidelines developed by the Secretary of the Interior for historic preservation activities. The Standards describe recommended — and *not* recommended — treatments for restoration, rehabilitation and renovation projects. Property owners who wish to qualify for the federal rehabilitation tax credit must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Spalling. A form of deterioration in which the surface of a masonry unit—usually brick—chips or flakes off. Spalling is generally caused by the freeze-thaw action of moisture trapped inside the masonry; when the ice particles melt, they expand, causing the masonry to flake apart. If moisture problems are detected early enough, spalling can be prevented.

Specifications. The list and description of specific materials used in construction. Specifications often call for brand names of prefabricated building elements. They also usually describe the types of building materials that the designer intends the builder to use. Locating a traditional commercial building's original set of specifications can help during rehabilitation by providing detailed information about mortar composition, roofing materials, architectural details and other building features.

State historic preservation office (SHPO). The public-sector office that monitors historic preservation within the state and assists communities with preservation projects. Each state has a SHPO, which is responsible for reviewing nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, overseeing historic site surveys, regulating certified local governments, reviewing projects that use public funds to ensure compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and monitoring other related activities. SHPOs typically receive some operating funds from the federal government - most also receive funding from the state government as well as private sources.

Storefront The ground-floor, front facade of a traditional commercial building. The storefront consists of a kickplate, display windows and transom windows. It is usually spanned by a structural beam carrying the weight of the upper facade. The structural beam is sometimes trimmed with a decorative cornice. The storefront entrance is often slightly recessed. The storefront space is designed to for merchandise and helping blend the sidewalk and the store interior.

Streetscape. The sequence of buildings along the street. In downtown commercial areas, the design characteristics of the streetscape are as significant as those of individual buildings in creating a visually cohesive district.

Structural pigmented glass. A type of decorative glass (not structural, despite its name) used to cover a building facade. Structural pigmented glass — known primarily by the brand names Carrara and Vitrolite— was developed in the 1920s and used widely in Art Deco and Art Moderne architecture and in buildings remodeled from the 1920s to 1950s. Structural pigmented glass is no longer manufactured in the range of colors once available.

T

Terra-cotta. A glazed or unglazed tile used architecturally. The facades of some traditional downtown commercial buildings are clad with terra-cotta panels, often wood or metal joist or beam inside the building. Tie rods are frequently capped on the outside of the building with small metal plates created especially for a particular building. The terra-cotta panels are usually attached to the facade with metal anchors.

Tie rod. A rod (usually steel or iron) used as a structural brace. Tie rods often help secure a building's facade to its structural framework by connecting the facade to a

shaped like stars or florets.

Transom. The window area directly above storefront display windows. Transom windows filter light back into narrow traditional commercial buildings, illuminating the interior.

U

Upper facade. The area of the facade above the storefront and below the cornice. The upper facades of traditional commercial buildings consist of an infill material (such as brick or wood) and fenestration.

Z

Zoning. The process of designating different sections of a town or city for specific types of activities, such as residential, commercial or industrial.

CITY OF SWEET HOME DOWNTOWN OPPORTUNITIES PLAN

GENERAL CONCEPTS

1. PROMOTE VITALITY ON MAIN ST. PROVIDE PEOPLE GATHERING SPACES WITH POCKET PARKS AND FURNISHINGS ZONES
2. ADD PLANTINGS TO SCREEN PARKING WHERE POSSIBLE. ADD TREES BETWEEN BUILDINGS.
3. PROMOTE LONG AS A PEDESTRIAN STREET. CONNECT TO MAIN USING SIDE STREETS & POCKET PARKS.
4. PEDESTRIANIZE 10th, 12th, 13th & 15th. Widen sidewalks (Narrow streets) Where possible. Add trees, lights & furnishings.

DOWNTOWN ENTRY
 • Add Visitors Center
 • Expand Greenway
 • Reduce Width of Main
 • Add Median

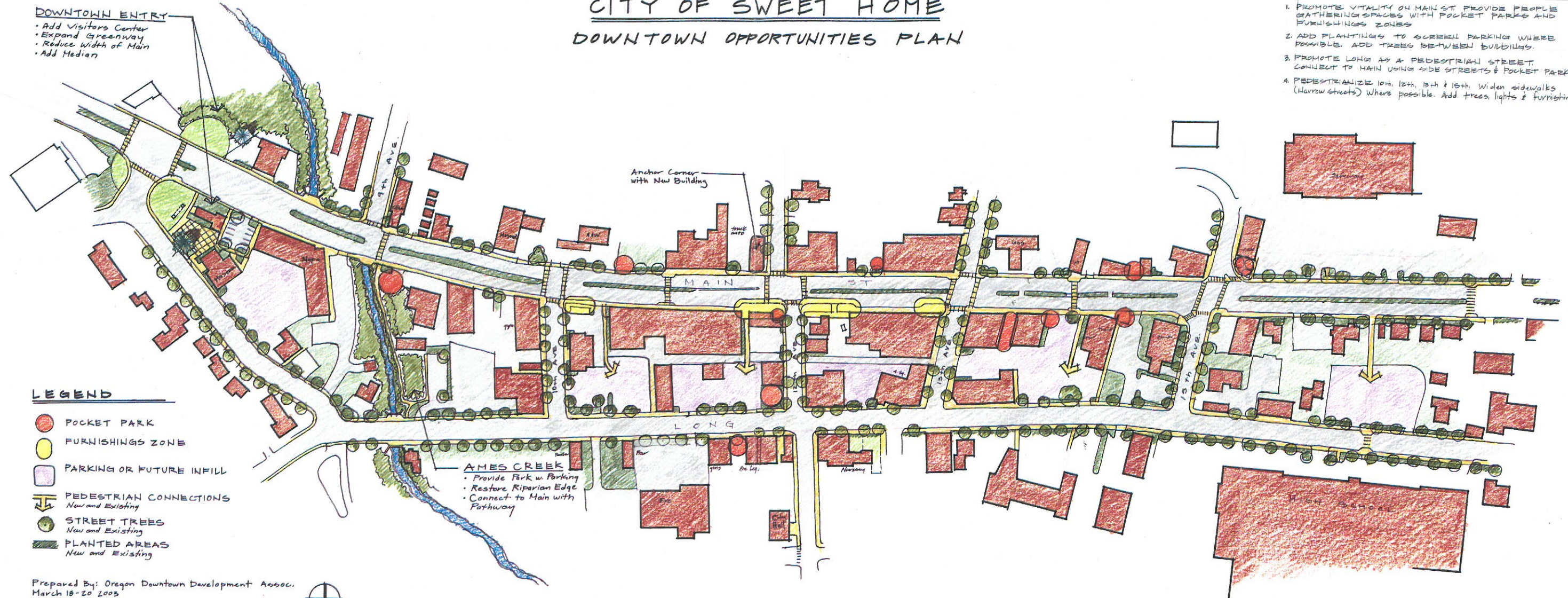
Anchor Corner
with New Building

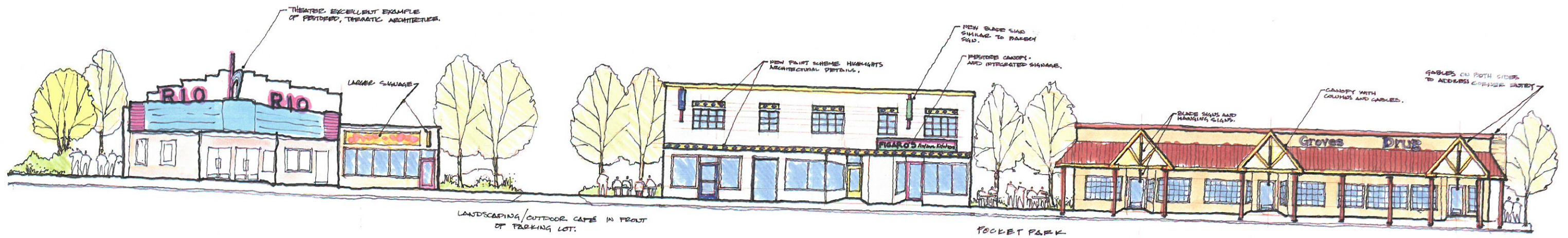
AMES CREEK
 • Provide Park w/ Parking
 • Restore Riparian Edge
 • Connect to Main with Pathway

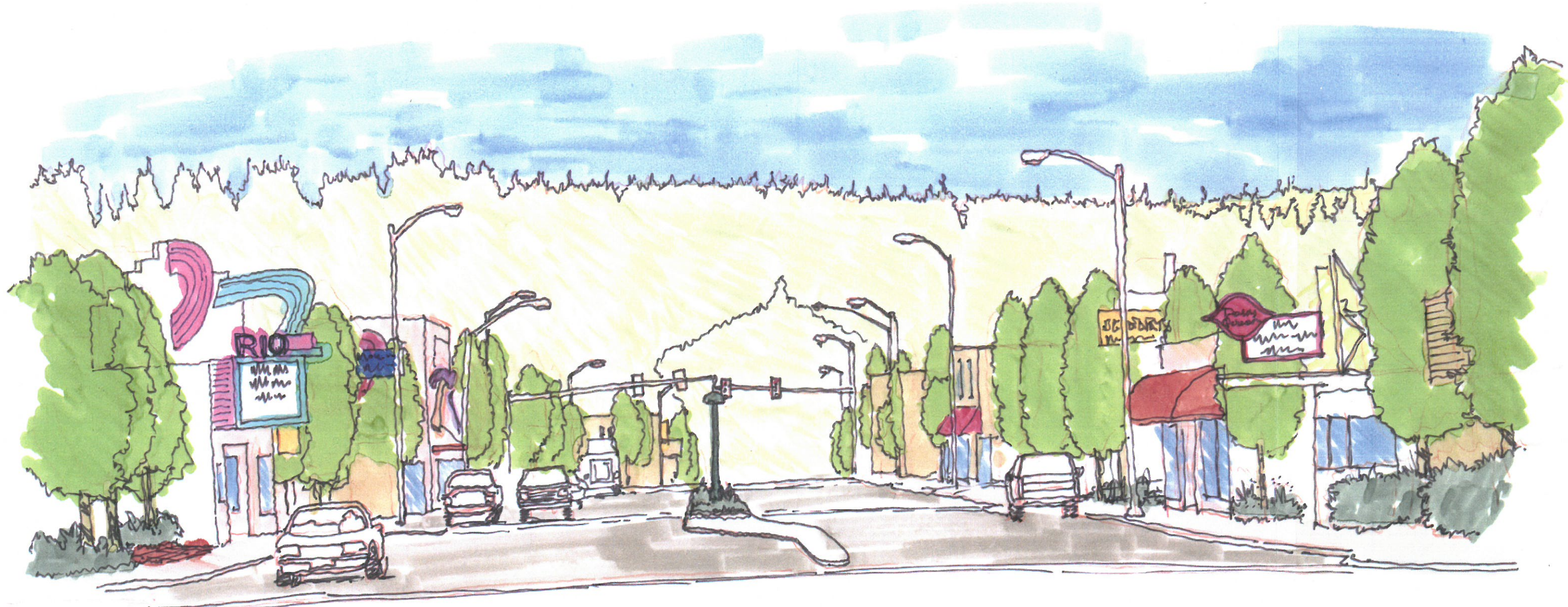
LEGEND

- POCKET PARK
- FURNISHINGS ZONE
- PARKING OR FUTURE INFILL
- ↕ PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
New and Existing
- STREET TREES
New and Existing
- PLANTED AREAS
New and Existing

Prepared By: Oregon Downtown Development Assoc.
 March 18-20 2003
 David Dougherty, Landscape Architect
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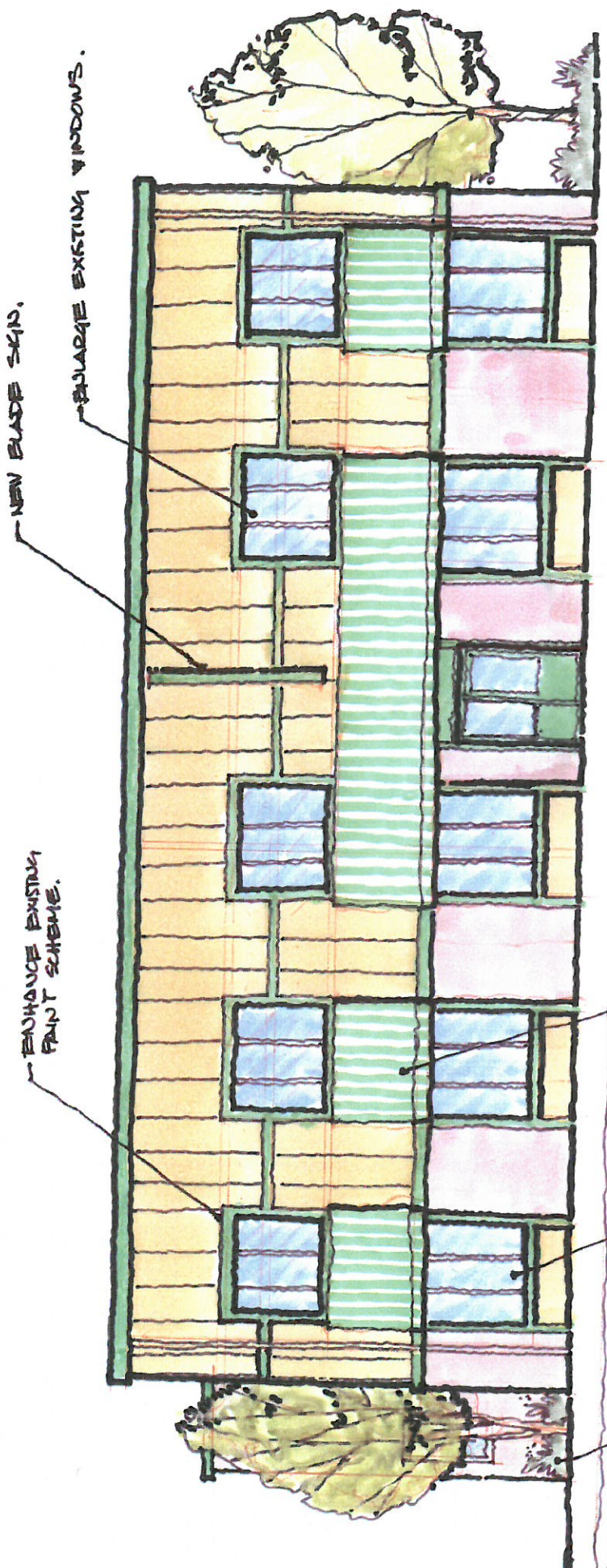




MAIN STREET LOOKING WEST

03.20.03

SERA ARCHITECTS, INC.



NEW BLADE SKIN.

ENLARGE EXISTING WINDOWS.

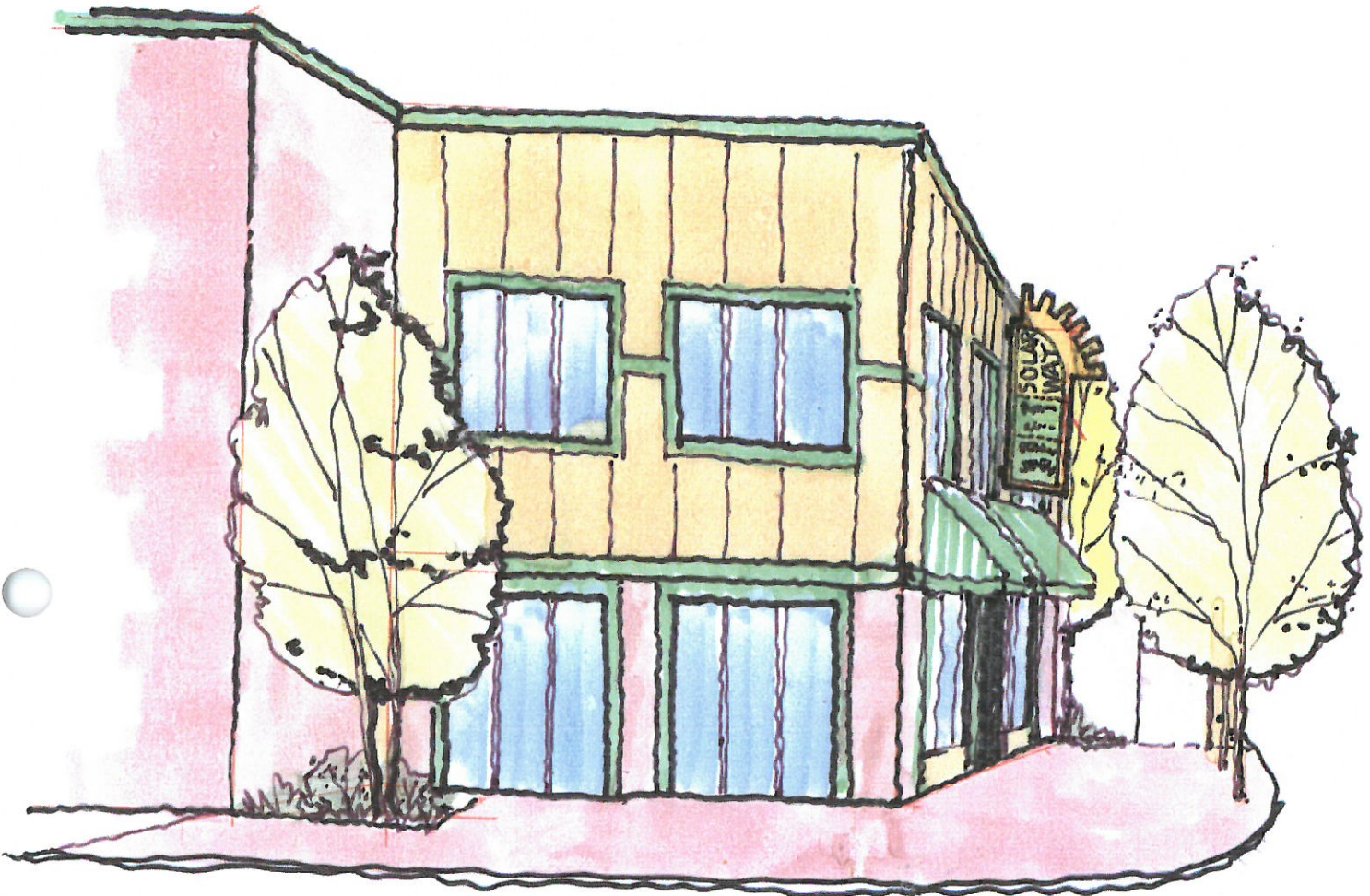
ENHANCE EXISTING PAINT SCHEME.

ADD CANOPIES.

ENLARGE WINDOWS AT STREET LEVEL AND ALIGN WITH WINDOWS ABOVE.

LANDSCAPING AT BUILDING SETBACKS.

SOLAR WEST BUILDING
FACADE IMPROVEMENTS
03.20.03
SERA ARCHITECTS



SOLAR WAY BUILDING
FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

03.20.03

SERA ARCHITECTS