

BUSINESS DISTRICT DESIGN PLAN

CITY OF COLVILLE

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INTRODUCTION

Why Have a Design Plan?

The Colville Revitalization Project began early in 1993 guided by the Revitalization Advisory Committee, a group of downtown merchants and property owners. The mission of the Committee is:

To enhance the value of our community through a unified effort in revitalizing the business district and restoring original historic beauty thereby establishing a viable, vibrant atmosphere in which to live, work and play.

To achieve this mission, the Committee adopted an action plan that included the development of a Business District Design Plan. The purpose of this plan is:

to provide a guide for beautification and design projects over the next five years and serve as a resource for the City, business and property owners, and community organizations interested in physical revitalization activities.

The following design plan and its suggestions provide a guidebook for making decisions about the improvement of the business district.

Process

Initial contact with the consultant identified four specific areas of concern:

1. How could the entire business district from Southtown to the northern exit to the city be unified?
2. What guidelines would effectively define design standards for improving older buildings and inserting new buildings into the district while not demanding that there be an specific theme for the area?
3. What improvements could be made to the streetscape to help unify the district and provide amenities for those using the business district?
4. Could the plan be used as an educational tool for assisting people to see what could be done to revitalize the downtown?

Among other activities, the Revitalization Advisory Committee conducted several design studies to assist the consultant in the development of the design plan. The Committee toured the business district looking for design assets and liabilities. Assets were defined as aesthetic

features which enhanced the visual and ambient character of the downtown. Liabilities were features which detracted from this visual and ambient quality. Committee members took pictures of these assets and liabilities to be used in a subsequent design workshop.

The Committee was divided into subcommittees to investigate three specific design elements: streets and sidewalks, buildings, and signs. The streets and sidewalks group also examined the general character of the landscaping in downtown Colville. Each group focused on possible assets and liabilities in each of respective design elements taking pictures of examples of each.

At the design workshop all of the groups reported on what they had discovered. These assets and liabilities assisted in the development of design objectives and guidelines for the downtown and a list of actions to be taken to enhance community assets and mitigate liabilities. This following design plan evolved from these suggested objectives and actions.

Organization of the Plan

The plan contains four sections following this introduction. The first describes the findings of the research conducted by the Revitalization Advisory Committee. The second section defines the basic design guidelines based upon the three specific areas of investigation. The final portion describes techniques for implementing these guidelines covering suggestions for both public and private actions. An appendix to the plan contains citations of several references that can also be helpful in executing the plan.

FINDINGS

Three Distinct Areas

Traveling along Main Street from the south city limits to 5th Avenue where U. S. 395 turns northwest out of town, Main Street contains three visually and functionally different areas. From the south city limits past Southtown shopping center to Birch Avenue, Main Street is primarily an automobile oriented strip commercial development. The area from Birch Avenue to 3rd Avenue is dominated by older historical buildings and is pedestrian oriented. The topographical change from the southern end of town into this older historic district emphasizes the differences between these two spaces. The final two blocks at the north end are transitional containing a mixture of pedestrian and automobile activities as the highway passes out of town. The distinction between this area and the previous is not as dramatic as the former transition between the southern and historic areas. Each area contains its own distinct characteristics with little or no continuity between each.

Liabilities

General Cleanliness

The Committee noted that generally the business district is in need of clean-up and fix-up to improve the overall character of the spaces within the downtown. Weeds and litter fill vacant lots. Some buildings need repair and maintenance. Others would benefit from painting. They also expressed concern over poor drainage on Main and Oak Streets and the need to keep the sidewalks shoveled during winter weather.

As a separate task during their revitalization effort, the Committee completed a thorough block by block investigation of the conditions of buildings and streets throughout the study area . The findings of this survey reinforce comments made during their design analysis.

Streets, Sidewalks, and Landscaping

The width of Main and Oak Streets emphasize the automobile rather than the pedestrian making the pedestrian areas of downtown uncomfortable and, at times, dangerous to negotiate. Placing greater emphasis on the automobile, especially in the older historic area of downtown, increases the conflict between cars and the pedestrian in a space that is primarily pedestrian. This is exacerbated by poorly defined crosswalks. The width of the street and its relationship to the height of buildings heightens this discomfort making the walls of the streetscape feel further apart than they actually are. Perceptually, people experience comfortable closure in a space when the ratio of the height of a space to its width does not exceed 1: 2. With few exceptions, this ratio is or exceeds 1:3 along both of these streets .

There is ample parking throughout the downtown. However, some parking lots are poorly marked. The combination of the width of the street and parking lots adjacent to the street in

the southern area of town creates a sea of asphalt and cars presenting a poor visual entrance to Colville. In the historical core of downtown, parking cars in the center as well as at the sides of the streets intersecting Main Street add to the vision that the car is more important than the pedestrian in a space that should be pedestrian friendly.

The lack of continuity in sidewalks as you move from one end of Main Street to another reinforces the functional and visual distinctions between the three areas along Main Street. In many areas, the sidewalks are poorly maintained. In some cases, they are partially obstructed by objects such as sandwich board signs.

Landscaping is also discontinuous throughout the study area. While some proprietors have taken significant steps to improve parking lot and general landscaping, others have not. This is particularly true in the southern area where the landscaping around the federal building and Southtown is attractive, but in most other areas it is barren or minimal. The trees along Main Street in the historic core are beneficial but seem rather small and spotty compared to the width of the street and the height of the buildings.

Buildings

Although most attention was given to the buildings in the historic core, much needs to be done to improve the quality and character of those structures located along the Southtown automobile corridor. These buildings stand back from the street with little or no landscaping in the parking lots adjacent to the street. Most lack any individual design character.

In the historic core, false facades have been added to the handsome original buildings. The materials used in these false fronts (e.g. rock, metal, and plastic) create a collage that is out of harmony with the original materials. These fronts often ignore the structural pattern of the building reducing the integrity of its design.

The upper stories of some of the taller structures are not being used. This allows materials to appear in the windows creating clutter and adding to the general impression of dilapidation.

Insensitive awnings have been added to many buildings. These awnings are often brightly colored and span the width of the building fracturing the visual integrity of the facade of the building through their dominant colors and by lapping over the structural elements of the building. Some awnings are completely out of scale with the building.

The relights, the windows just above the main windows of a storefront, often contain white paper or boards to reduce the sunlight entering these windows. While serving a useful purpose, these boards and papers create visual clutter and subtract from the integrity of the design of these buildings. Some store windows contain a visual riot of signs and displays adding to the visual clutter.

Several buildings that have been added to this historic core have been insensitive to the design characteristics of the original buildings. They are built of incompatible materials and

the rhythm and pattern of the structure, windows, and other architectural elements do not reflect the harmony associated with the older buildings.

Signs

Visually there are too many signs all competing for customer attention. Outdated signs that represent demised business add to this clutter. This competition for visual attention is counterproductive making it difficult to see important informational signs that mark businesses and public facilities.

In the Southtown area, most signs are larger than necessary and stand substantially taller than the buildings they mark reducing the dominance of these buildings. Some of these signs are poorly located. Some identify products or places remote from the location of the sign. This is particularly true of billboards which dominate the skyline and obscure views.

In the historic core, many signs ignore the character of the building and dominate the structure by crossing over structural elements and interrupting the rhythm and pattern of windows and other design elements. The signs and the lettering on the signs do not reflect the character of the buildings.

Both entrances to Colville lack significant entry signs. The signs that do announce entry into Colville are small and insignificant with the exception of the rodeo sign at the city's south entrance.

Assets

Even though the Committee found numerous liabilities within the business district, they were also impressed with the large number of assets. In many cases, some structures or spaces contained both assets and liabilities. For example, the House of Music has handsome architectural features but suffers from lack of visible use above the first floor. In general, the Committee saw much to capitalize on. These assets became a foundation for subsequent suggestions for improvements.

Streets, Sidewalks, and Landscaping

Although the traffic on the streets can be annoying to the pedestrian, there is sufficient space within these traffic corridors to handle these flows. The flower boxes at the center of Main Street at Astor are a resource that not only adds to the quality of the visual experience of driving or walking through downtown, but it also helps to divide the width of the street into two comfortable zones.

The sidewalks at the historic core of the downtown are in good condition and provide the nucleus for a more extensive and well kept sidewalk system extending from one end of the district to another. This would help encourage more pedestrian activity.

There is sufficient parking at all times of the day. In some instances, people may not be aware of all of the places to park, but these places are convenient and provide easy pedestrian access to most of downtown.

Particular locations, such as the federal building and the civic center, provide excellent examples of the use of vegetation to soften and enhance spaces making them attractive and pleasant to be in. The completion of Heritage Court will add to the landscaped spaces within the district. The trees along Main Street, while spotty and small, provide at least one unifying element along this portion of the corridor.

Buildings

The largest set of assets in the business district is the collection of older buildings contained in the historic downtown core. These buildings represent various periods of small town architecture. Some might qualify for historic designation. All contain architectural features that make this portion of downtown attractive and pleasant.

Nearly all of the buildings are constructed of brick masonry. Some of the brick detailing is elaborate and represents fine craftsmanship such as the small office building to the south of the newspaper. The use of brick creates visual continuity connecting new and old construction by the scale of the brick and the harmonious red and brown earth tones.

Most of the buildings are one-story. Those that rise above this height maintain the emphasis on the first story through various facade elements such as courses of bricks and placement of windows and doors. The rhythm and pattern of these windows and courses of bricks along with roof lines and other architectural elements are consistent throughout the district adding to the district's harmony.

Even buildings not constructed of brick and built in a different era and style maintain the same sense of scale and humanness. An excellent example of this are the Alpine Theater and its relatives to the north. All are Art Deco, a style much different than most of the buildings in the district, but they contain detailing that reflect patterns seen in other buildings nearby. They also are painted with colors that do not clash with the common colors within the district.

There are a considerable number of buildings that could be celebrated by historic designation. The post office building on the southwest corner of Oak and Astor has already been included in a thematic nomination. Others present additional opportunities for designation.

Signs

Although there is significant concern over the number, size, and placement of signs within the business district, the Committee did discover some signs that they felt were assets to the community. Throughout the business district there are older signs that provide remnants of

the history of Colville. In particular, the Committee noted the signs painted on the north and south sides of the Barman building. The Committee also enjoyed the neon Fonk's sign.

Generally, signs that provided useful information and were visible (e.g. direction signs to various public facilities) were seen as assets. Likewise, signs that conformed to the facades and structural characteristics of the buildings to which they were attached were also perceived as assets.

Views

Colville's wide streets provide spectacular views to the surrounding countryside. Some of these views also contain or are ended by important structures, e.g. the old elevators looking west from Main Street and Astor Elementary School perched at the east end of Astor Avenue. These views are a major asset to the business district.

Actions

After reviewing these assessments of the aesthetic quality of the business district, the Revitalization Steering Committee developed a set of action statements that serve as the foundation for the design guidelines that follow. The action statements were combined into groups of actions. These groups of actions were displayed along with the pictures of assets and liabilities in the Key Bank during the evening of the workshop and the following morning. Members of the Committee explained the purpose of the work, their information gathering, and the list of actions to people entering the bank. Visitors were asked to place three dots on the groups of actions they thought were most important. The number of dots beside each set of activities provided a means for setting priorities for these actions. The list below begins with the most popular group of actions and continues through respectively to the least popular. All sets received a vote. None were disqualified.

Buildings

- refurbish old buildings
- encourage people to occupy all floors of old buildings
- remove outdated awnings
- fix awnings
- create backdoor entrances
- encourage harmonious new construction

Clean-Up/Fix-up

- clean-up weeds, litter, and alleys
- remove overhead wires
- paint
- maintain and repair buildings
- maintain vacant lots

- shovel sidewalks in the winter
- fix drainage on Main Street

Sidewalk and Parking Plan

- paint and mark parking spaces
- landscape sidewalks and parking lots
- make downtown pedestrian friendly
- create parking lot signs

Signs

- remove old and unnecessary signs
- build entrance signs for the city
- create parking lot signs

Traffic Plan

- create a traffic circulation plan the integrates automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic

Inform People of the Plan

- develop and implement a public information program

Maintain Views

- maintain views of the surrounding countryside

DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section of the report builds upon the findings of the investigations discussed above. Although general clean-up and fix-up can improve the overall aesthetic quality of the community, these guidelines focus on other actions to improve the quality of the physical environment of Colville's business district. These guidelines are divided into sections associated with the original three areas of investigation. Many are interrelated; however, this interrelatedness should not preclude taking individual actions in specific areas. Any activity taken independently would improve the quality of the district.

Streets, Sidewalks, and Landscaping

Entrances to Colville

Significant signs and landscaping around these signs should announce the entrances to Colville. These improvements should happen close to the city limits in locations that perceptually identify the city and separate it from the surrounding countryside. At the south entry to town this would occur at or near the location of the present rodeo sign, and near the turn to the lumber company on the north side. Similar locations should be identified at the eastern and western entrances to town.

The signs should be of significant size to catch the traveler's eye but should not dominate the landscape. They should be surrounded by indigenous plants that enhance the sign but not detract from its message. The lettering on the sign should be simple and readable from a car traveling at highway speeds and simply state that the traveler is arriving in Colville.

Turning Three Areas into Two

The southern area of the business district should be recognized as being different from the older historic core. However, the northern edge of the business district should be joined with the center of town creating two related but distinctive areas.

The southern area of the business district contains auto-oriented businesses with buildings facing onto parking lots that are adjacent to the street. It would be difficult to rearrange this order of spaces, but they do not need to be as obtrusive as they currently appear. Landscaping would do much to soften and unify this area. To reduce the view of a sea of cars and asphalt from the street, small earth berms planted with vegetation can be created between the sidewalks and the parking lots (see Figure 1).

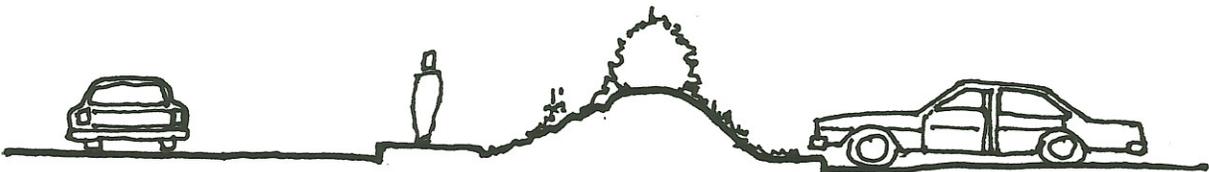


FIGURE 1
Landscaped earth berms screen parked cars.

Encourage adjacent owners to combine parking lots. Combining lots into one area creates opportunities for landscaping plans that unify spaces. Fewer curb cuts reduce the pedestrian-automobile conflicts and interruption of traffic on the highway.

The northern edge of the business district can be tied to the center by continuing the tree planting program north to 5th Avenue. Any infill construction should place the building next to the sidewalk with parking in the rear continuing the spatial relationship of buildings to street found in the rest of the historic core.

Unification

Although each area of the business district should be recognized for its differences, efforts should be made to create elements that would visually unify these areas into a perceptual whole. A landscaping program that builds upon the flower boxes at the corner of Main and Astor would integrate the pieces of the district. Figure 2 and Figures A and C on the following pages illustrate this idea. Using portions of the left-turn lane, trees and other vegetation would be planted in this median from the southern edge of the business district to the corner of 5th and Main. Additional trees planted along the west side of Main and at strategic locations on the east side in the southern portion of the district would reflect the tree planting program begun in the central historic core. These are shown in Figure B with no medial strip planting and curbside planting on the east side of Main. This alternative is less effective than the previous.

Banners attached to the lighting fixtures along Main Street would announce one's arrival to the business district. These banners should be of sufficient size to be readily visible but not large enough to reduce views of the adjacent businesses.

At the center of the business district from Birch to 5th more elaborate landscaping could occur to accent the pedestrian qualities of this space. In addition to adding trees and ground cover to the median, a landscaped pedestrian bulge could extend into the street from Heritage Court and different paving materials could be used to emphasize the pedestrian crosswalks (see Figure D). Pedestrian bulges could occur at the corner of other intersections. To tie the side streets to Main, some medial parking could be removed and replaced by similar landscaping (see Figure 3).

The trees planted along Main Street should be taller and additional trees should be added between existing trees. Taller trees provide a protective space between buildings and streets while permitting travelers to see the storefronts. The curbside and median trees would improve the sense of closure and improve the perception of space through this portion of the downtown (see Figure 4).

Additional pedestrian amenities could be added to the historic core. Merchants might place benches outside of their businesses for patrons who may be waiting on friends or relatives. Benches could also be provided in other more public locations throughout the core. Lighting

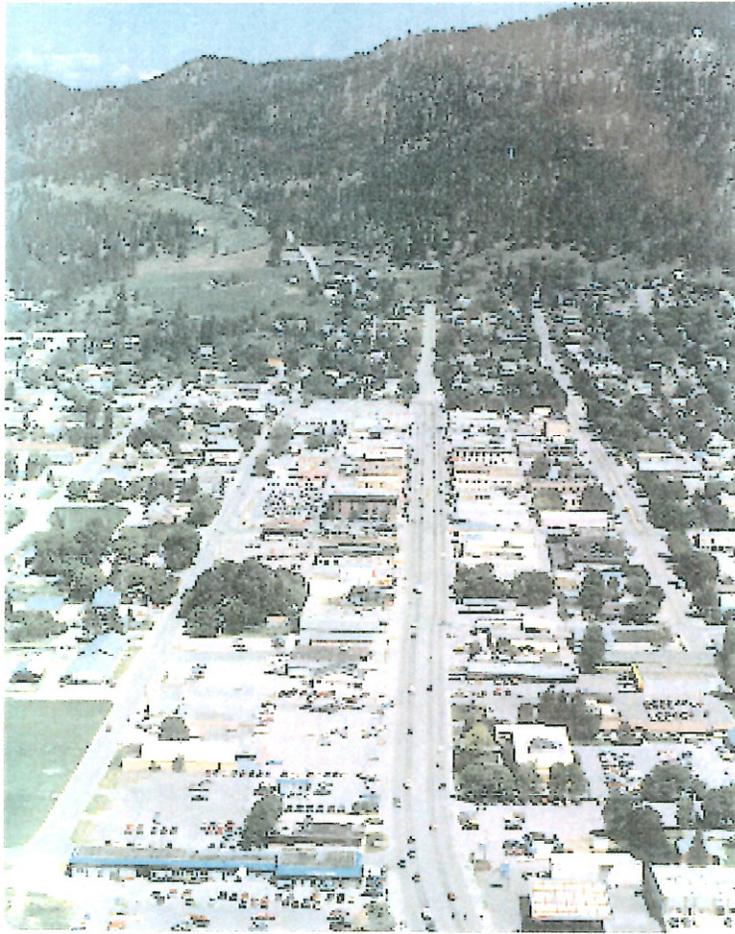


Figure A: Aerial view of downtown Colville (above)
Aerial view of downtown Colville illustrating center median strip of planting with left turn lanes (below)

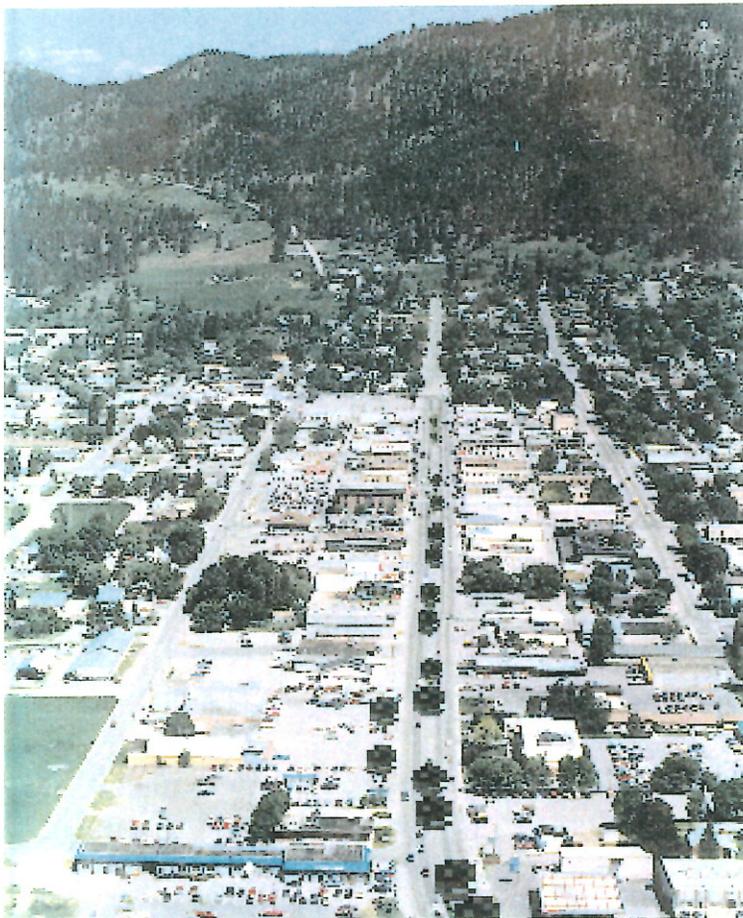




Figure B: View of Southtown (above)

View of Southtown showing sidewalk planting and the effect of limiting size of signs



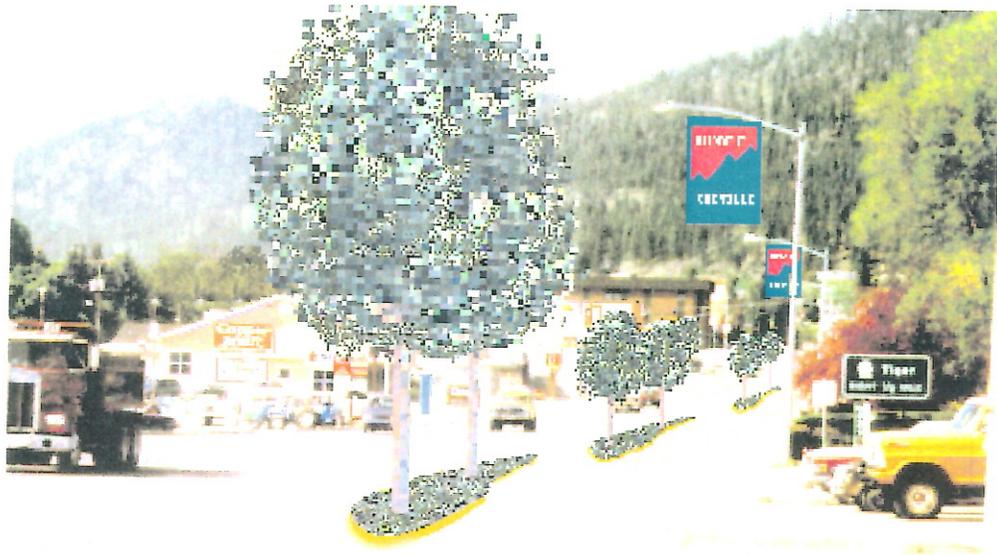


Figure C: View of Southtown with landscaped median and sign size limitations

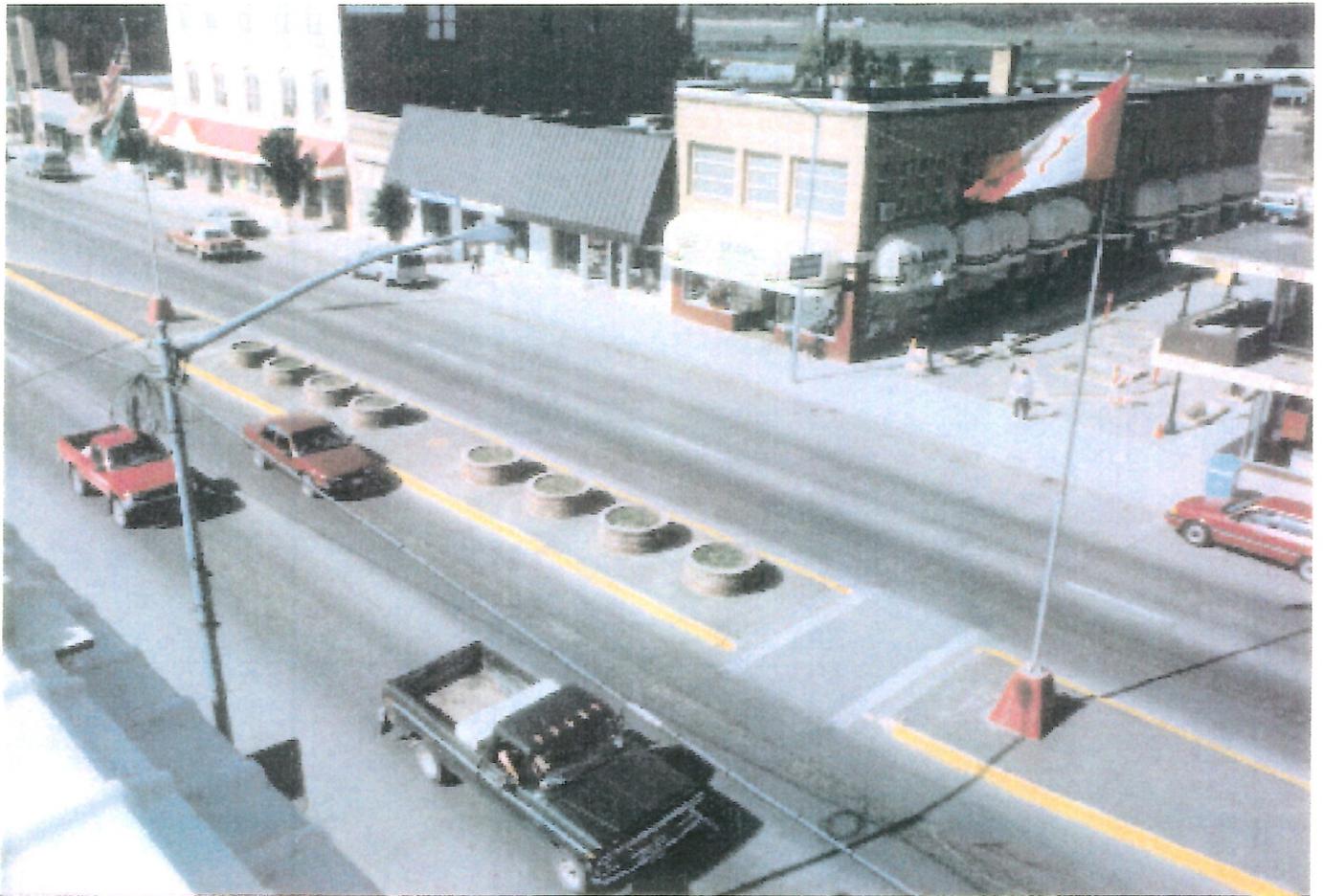


Figure D: Center of Existing Historic Downtown (Above)
Proposed Modifications to Center of Historic Downtown (Below)



standards similar to those proposed for Heritage Court could be extended throughout this area. These amenities would help identify this as a pedestrian zone.

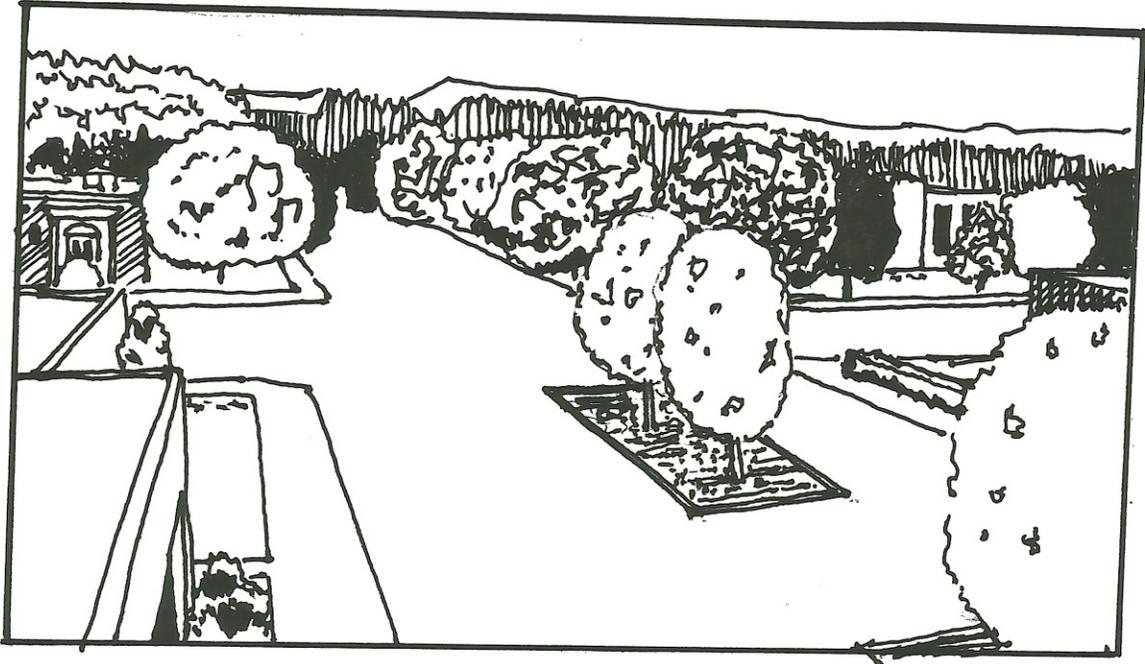


FIGURE 3

View looking east on Astor from Main showing landscaping in the median.

Buildings

Renovation

Renovation of buildings throughout the business district would improve the aesthetic quality of the spaces within the district. This is particularly true in the historic core of the business district. In some cases, buildings could be restored to their original historic appearance. This is not recommended for all buildings; however, any renovation should be sensitive to the original character of the building and to its neighboring buildings.

Removal of all artificial facia material such as wood and metal siding from older buildings should be encouraged. These materials often cover original masonry materials that, if recovered, would make these structures compatible with the context and character of the other buildings in the central core. They also span across the face of the building covering original windows, doors, and other openings and architectural elements.

Awnings can also produce the same effect by spanning across the building, dominating it, and detracting from the original architectural elements. The awning on the Mandarin Garden in Figure E extends from one end of the building to the other ignoring the structural pilasters at either end. Awnings should be sensitive to these types of elements by spanning between them in segments. There are many back lighted awnings throughout the historic core. Although these are informative and represent private impetus to fix-up and clean-up, they also tend to dominate the building making them more visible than the original character of the structure. Over time, it would be beneficial to replace these with more subtle awnings such as the one used on the Penney's building.

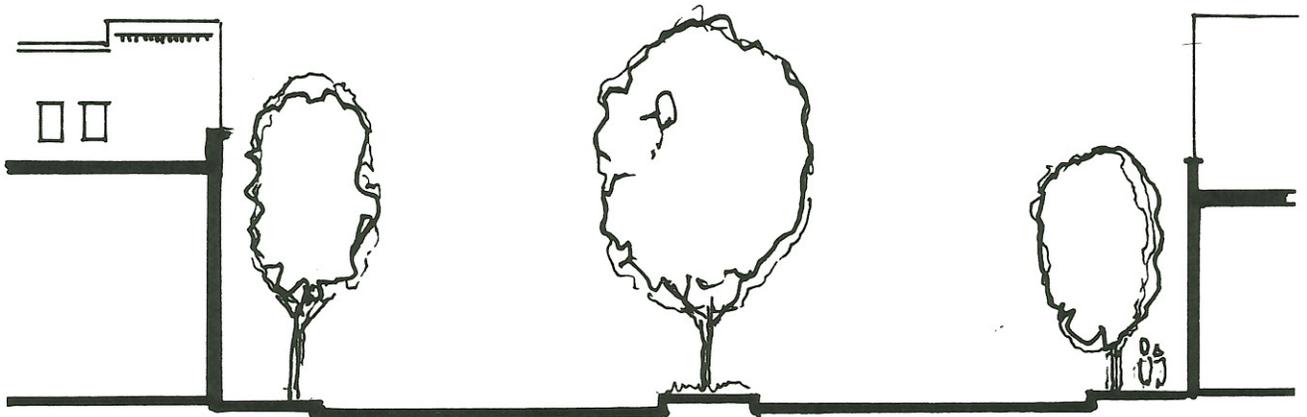


FIGURE 4

Cross section of Main showing enclosure created by trees in the median.

If paint is removed from brick masonry buildings, it should not be removed by sandblasting or using any corrosive materials. This will destroy the fired surface of the brick and make it vulnerable to moisture and rapid deterioration. Using water and soap is sufficient to clean brick surfaces.

The relights, the windows above canopies and storefronts, should be opened to the light. If this creates heating problems on the interior, the inside surfaces of these windows can be coated with light reducing materials which reduce the sunlight but make these attractive unlike the white paper and cardboard that is now being used. The suggested renovation of Fonk's contained in Figure E demonstrates this change and the removal of the paint from the upper stories.

Renovation should emphasize the architectural elements of the building. For example, Figure F illustrates two Art Deco buildings adjacent to the Alpine theater. In the renovation new paint has been applied to these buildings. Additional paint has been added as lines to highlight the character of the deco elements.

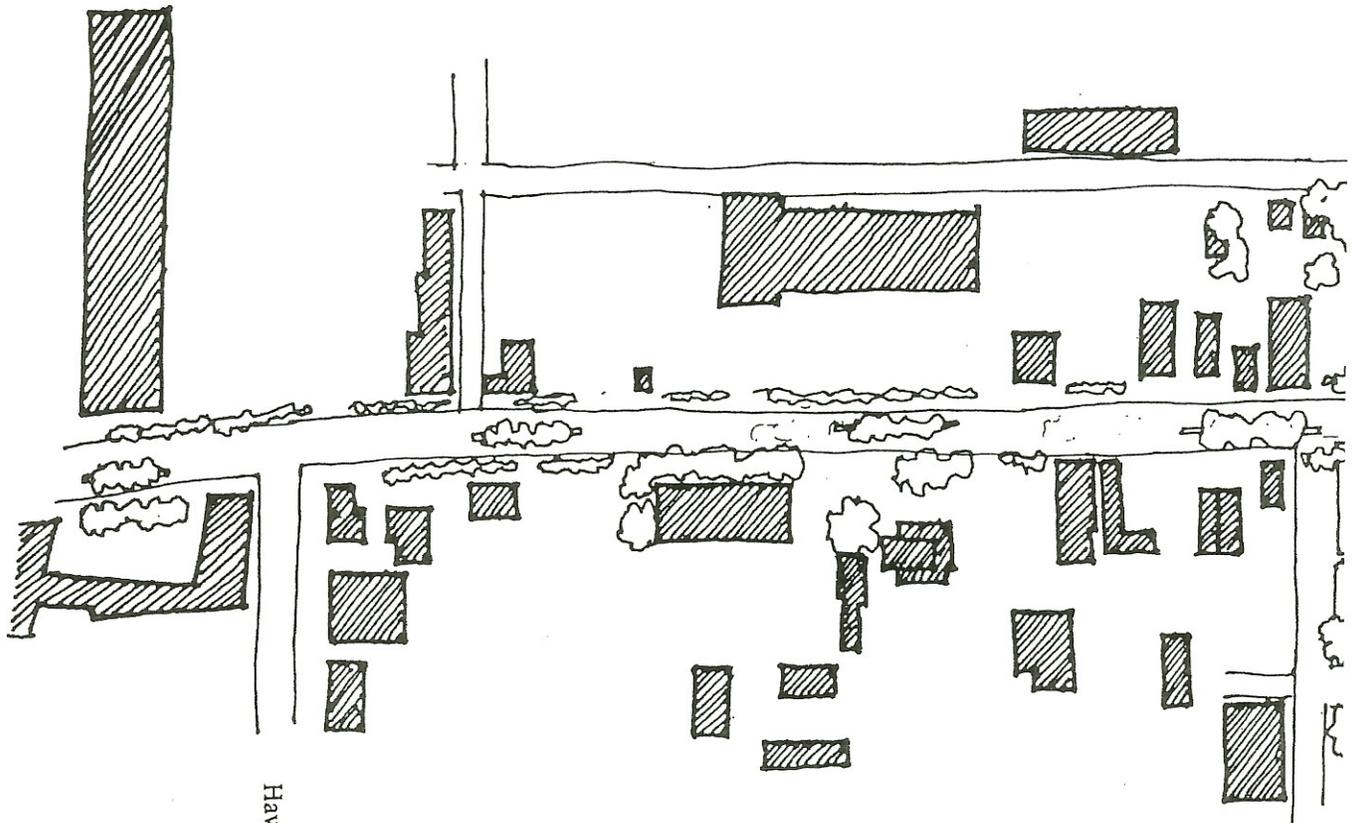
Selection of paint colors can be critical. The masonry materials offer the beginnings of a palette of muted brown, yellow, and red colors. These colors are not intense; therefore, any addition of intense, primary colors must be carefully applied. If these colors are too intense and encompass a large portion of a building, the architectural element painted with these colors will dominate the building. The awning on the Mandarin Garden demonstrates this phenomenon. Although it is still red, the smaller stripped awning similar to the one on the Penney's building is less obtrusive than the original (see Figure E). It is best to select dark and light tones of muted pastel and earth colors to retain the harmonious character of the historic core.

New Construction

All new construction should be compatible with its surroundings. This is as true with the southern area of the district as it is with the historic core even though it is more critical in this latter area. Vertical structures much higher than two stories near Southtown would dominate the streetscape, less so in the historic district. Placing buildings next to the street would not help to create enclosure in this area and be out of character with the neighboring structures.

Compatibility of new construction is very important in the historic core. All new construction within this district should be masonry or stucco with articulated surfaces reminiscent of the existing buildings continuing the current scale and color.

All new construction should continue the pattern of the rhythm of windows, structural elements, and other architectural features found on the buildings in the district. For example, second and third story windows on several buildings come in pairs. Nearly all of these upper story windows are the same height and width. The same scale window treatment on a new building would repeat this signature. Structural bays are emphasized by columns and pilasters. Although it is possible to span larger distances with modern construction techniques, architectural elements in new structures such as breaks in storefront windows could be used to repeat the pattern found on the older buildings.

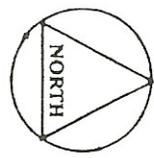


Hawthorne Avenue

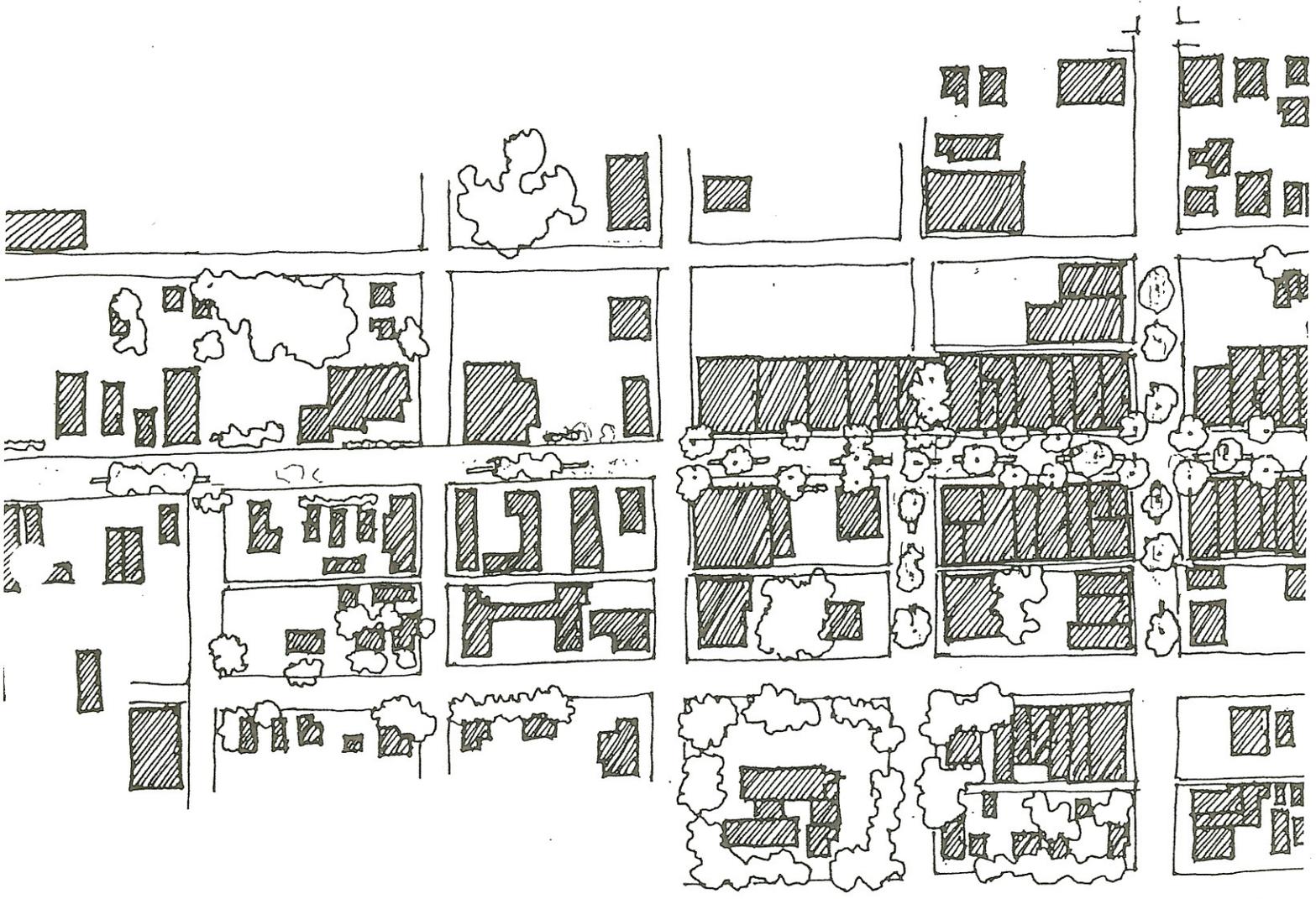
Dominion Avenue

FIGURE 2

Schematic plan showing Main Street landscaping from Southtown to 5th Avenue and side streets in historic core.



NO SCALE



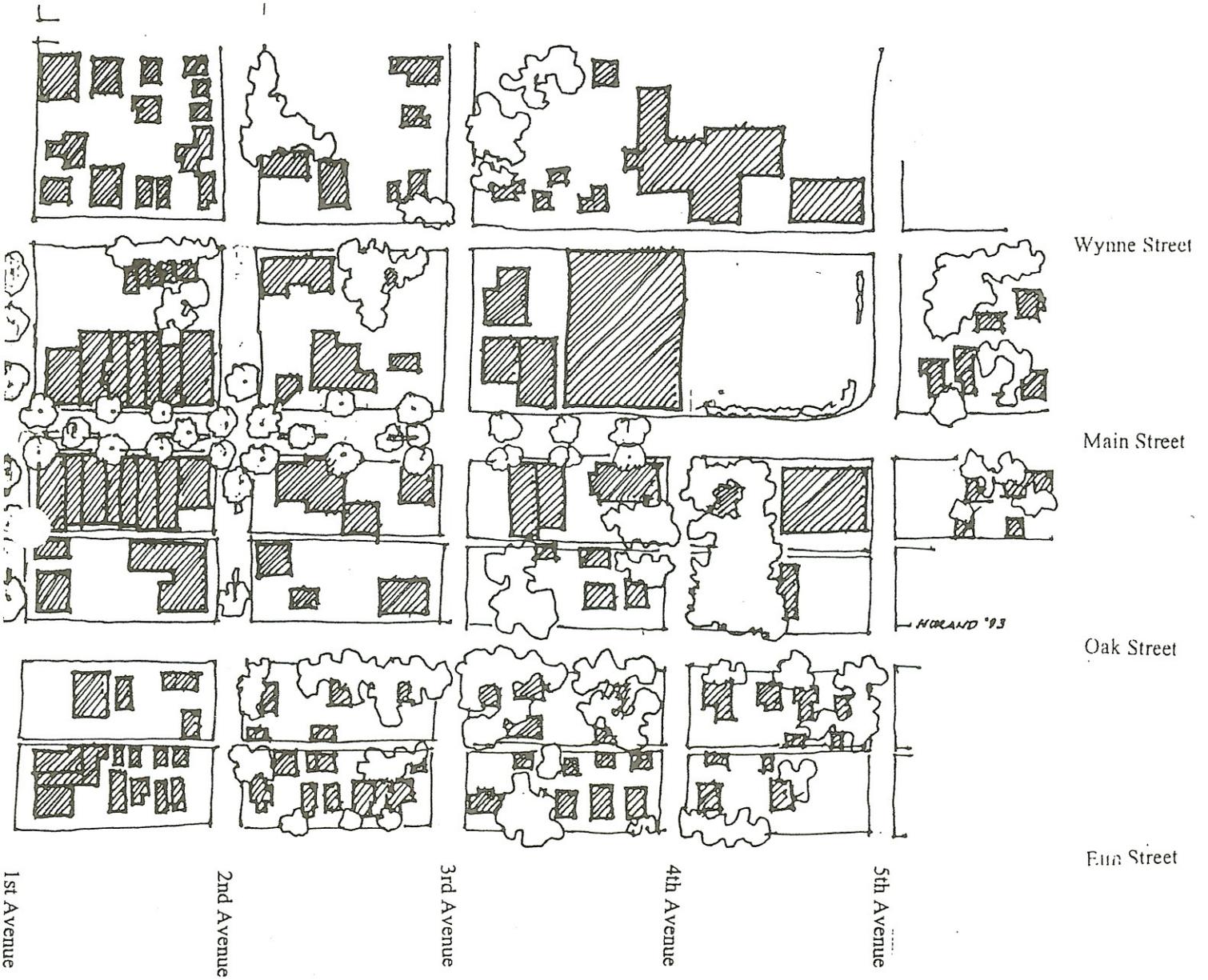
Dominion Avenue

Columbia Avenue

Birch Avenue

Astor Avenue

1st Avenue



Wynne Street

Main Street

Oak Street

Elm Street

1st Avenue

2nd Avenue

3rd Avenue

4th Avenue

5th Avenue

HOLAND '93



Figure E: Existing Historic Buildings (1890's- 1920's) (Above)
Recommended Rehabilitation (Below)





Figure F: Existing Art Deco Buildings From the 1930's Era (Above)
Proposed Rehabilitation for Art Deco Buildings (Below)



All of the buildings have flat parapet roofs. The parapet wall at the top of most buildings contain dentils or other architectural details that visually create an end to the top of the structure. New construction should continue this practice. No roofs should extend beyond the face of the building and some architectural detailing should occur at the top of the building.

The alleys behind buildings, especially those that front on Main Street, present an opportunity to gain access to stores. Efforts should be made to at least clean-up these spaces and offer the pedestrian another entrance to those stores that can take advantage of these alley entrances. This would make the parking that lies behind these buildings closer to the stores within the buildings. Long-range plans could include the utilization of these alleys as additional pedestrian corridors by enhancing the entrances to business, consolidating trash receptacles, and repaving these spaces.

Signs

Reduction of Number, Height and Size of Signs

There are too many signs in the business district, all competing for attention. This detracts from the inherent beauty in the buildings and views within the business district while keeping people from seeing important informational signs. The community should decide on the appropriate number of signs that a business can display and require compliance by all local businesses. This number should be related to the view from the street. For example, in the southern portion of the district, businesses located in a strip commercial center should consolidate their signs at the edge of the street into one sign and then be permitted to have an additional sign on the face of their building. Since the buildings in the historic core front on the street, only one sign announcing the business may be needed. Regardless, the appropriate number should be decided through community discussion. This discussion should lead to an overall reduction in the number of signs while being attentive to the needs of local businesses.

Sign clutter can also occur when the windows of businesses begin to gather advertising signs. Businesses should take note of the accumulation of signs in their windows and note how this increases visual pollution and reduces the overall attractiveness of the district. In Figure E, the signs in Fonk's windows have been removed to reduce visual clutter. Other businesses might benefit from this inexpensive method of improving the aesthetic quality of the district.

In many cases, the size of signs should also be reduced. The size of signs should relate to the speed of the passing observer. This criteria would allow signs in the southern portion of the district to be larger than those in the historic center, the pedestrian core of the district. In either location, the size of the sign should not dominate the structure on which it is located. The rehabilitation recommended in Figure E shows a reduction in the size of the Kelly's sign to make it more compatible with the structure.

Height of a sign can also produce similar effects as size and number. In the Southtown area many of the signs extend above the roof lines of the buildings making the signs the dominant visual feature rather than the proprietor's store. In Figures B and C, along with the landscaping, the height of many of the signs have been lowered reducing their impact on the streetscape.

Fit Between Buildings and Signs

Signs that dominate a structure are often insensitive to the character of the building just as the awnings noted above. Signs should be designed to fit within the architectural character of the building. Figures E and F indicate suggested changes to make several signs fit within the character of the building. The edge of the awning becomes a sign announcing the Mandarin Garden in Figure E. In a similar fashion, the edge of the canopy replaces several signs on the front of the building on the right in Figure F.

Billboards

Off-premise billboards tend to dominate the streetscape adding to its visual cacophony. Several large billboards on the west side of Main Street block the view of the rise in elevation between the Southtown area and the historic core. Removal of these billboards would enhance this view and allow the traveler to read the change in elevation, an important indicator of the differences between the two distinct areas of the business district. Other billboards might also be removed to enhance the character of the business district.

Celebrating Historic Period Signs

Several buildings in the historic core of the business district contain signs that represent another era of sign-making. The neon sign on Fonk's not only represents an era of sign-making but also is reminiscent of the five and dime store. A similar case exists with the old fading signs on the sides of the Barman building. These and other historic signs should be identified and restored.

Important Informational Signs

If the clutter and size of commercial signs is reduced, informational signs will have a chance to compete in the visual field. Informational signs announcing or directing people towards important public buildings or spaces should be of a size sufficient to compete with other signs in the visual field. However, they should also not dominate the streetscape. These signs should be of a consistent color indicating that they refer to sites and buildings different from the commercial signs. They should also be placed in a timely location to allow the traveler to make turns when necessary.

IMPLEMENTATION

The success of any plan is based upon a community's commitment to implement it. Below are some suggestions for implementing the design recommendations contained in the previous section. Some of these suggestions can be instituted immediately. Others will take considerable time, effort, and financing. In considering phasing of activities, the Revitalization Steering Committee should move quickly to coordinate the simple events, e. g. clean-up/fix-up days, while developing strategies for longer range and more difficult activities like developing the financing for the boulevard plan for Main Street.

The mechanisms suggested below will require a concerted public-private partnership to execute. This partnership should include all of the businesses and public services within the designated business district.

Private Initiatives

The Committee should encourage local business and fraternal groups to arrange clean-up days and campaigns. This would include cleaning streets, yards, sidewalks, and vacant lots to improve the overall appearance of the business district. Extended campaigns can focus on maintenance and repair. Awards could be given to those businesses that achieve excellence in building maintenance and renovation.

The landscape improvements suggested by this plan are extensive. Some require public improvements, others require concerted effort by private business. Detailed plans should be developed not only for the boulevard concepts but also for suggested improvements to private properties. Local landscapers should be contacted to recommend indigenous plants that achieve the goals outlined in the above design recommendations. Once these plans are finalized, general landscaping should begin in earnest.

Private businesses should be encouraged to begin their own landscaping improvements including improvements to parking lots. By collaborating, large purchases of materials might save expenses and would insure that plant materials are similar throughout the business district. Local business and fraternal organizations could donate materials or labor to encourage improvements.

A detailed condition analysis should be conducted to identify those buildings which are beyond repair and those worthy of renovation. A rehabilitation schedule should be developed from this analysis. Individual property owners should then be encouraged to improve their buildings beginning with general painting and cleaning and extending to more elaborate restoration. The latter will require considerable financing.

Local banks and entrepreneurs should be encouraged to develop a revolving loan fund at reasonable or below market interest rates to help individual property owners finance improvements to their properties. Businesses might search for possible grants to create a pool of money to underwrite the loan fund.

Local business and economic development groups should also be searching for tenants for downtown buildings. The more businesses located in these structures the greater the financial feasibility of rehabilitation efforts.

Owners of historic properties should be encouraged to have their buildings placed on a local, state, or national register. This will allow them to take advantage of certain tax incentives that can reduce the cost of improvements. Donation of a facade to a public entity can also give the owner a one-time tax deduction and reduce the value of the property by the estimated value of the facade thereby reducing the property taxes.

Local business groups should develop programs for rewarding owners for creating compatible development and renovations and for creating pleasant signage and window displays. These awards can range from simple certificates and plaques to monetary rewards.

Most effective rehabilitation and revitalization plans depend upon concerted private action. The tools available to public entities are limited and often not nearly as effective as private action. The majority of any business district is owned and operated by private business. Revitalization should be their responsibility, and they should take pride in the outcomes of their efforts.

Public Actions

The design plan should be adopted as part of the comprehensive plan for the City of Colville. This would make the plan public policy giving the City Council and the city's staff a legitimate source for public decision-making. Elements of the plan could then be included in the City's capital improvements program. This would set a schedule for creating many of the public improvements suggested by the plan.

The boulevard landscaping program will require approval from the Washington State Department of Transportation and will need substantial funding. The City might explore using funds from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Act to create these improvements. This could be coupled with the creation of a local or business improvement district to assess businesses in the district for some of the costs of landscaping and streetscape elements.

The City might also investigate along with businesses in the district various tax incentive programs to encourage revitalization. Historic buildings can receive special treatment from the tax assessor. If tax increment financing becomes available in the state, the city can use this mechanism for paying for improvements.

Some improvements might simply be scheduled as routine maintenance or capital improvements as part of the city's capital improvements program. Repairs to curbs, gutters, and sidewalks and resolving street drainage problems are examples.

Ordinances can be used to create compliance with certain elements of the plan. The zoning ordinance can be modified to include restrictions on building heights and require appropriate

landscaping. The zoning ordinance can also be used to regulate the size, number, and height of signs.

Design review can be accomplished through a variety of mechanisms. A formal design review committee can be established and given the responsibility for reviewing renovation and new construction plans to ensure that they meet the guidelines for the business district. However, it is suggested that this type of formal review be limited to the historic core of city where the structures present specific aesthetic information for comparison. The committee should include various design and planning professions and local business representatives. To insure consistent review, it may be necessary to elaborate on and formalize the guidelines presented here. The City's staff could perform similar review replacing the committee. This is particularly true of such items as zoning adherence and landscaping requirements but can also apply to other design standards.

Instituting formalized and official design review can be a contentious process. The Revitalization Steering Committee should also consider informal review by a committee of local business people. Rather than requiring that plans be submitted for review by the City, the Committee can seek out those property owners willing to submit plans for review, conduct an informal review of these plans using the broad guidelines suggested in this plan, and then use a successful reviews and outcomes to encourage others to have their plans reviewed.

Regardless of the process, guidelines are simply guidelines. Each decision about a renovation or new construction is unique. Sensitivity to the spaces and buildings surrounding and near a project is critical. Replicating or slavishly adhering to a specific solution can lead to monotony. The existing buildings, while appearing uniform, are in fact quite different. Seeing the differences is as important as seeing the similarities.

Any actions taken by the City should be discussed and coordinated with and approved by the business community. Separate action can lead to divisiveness. Completion of this plan requires cooperation not conflict.

CONCLUSION

This design plan is the result of the efforts of the Revitalization Steering Committee. They provided insights into their community and suggested possibilities. The consultant team embellished these suggestions and provided examples of improvements. As noted above, a plan is only as good as the will to execute it. The Committee must remain energized, but they must also serve as the nucleus for generating broader interest in the implementation of the plan. A concerted public information program that involves the general public as well as the business community can assist in increasing interest, and interest will lead to action.

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