



**HARRISONBURG  
DOWNTOWN  
STREETSCAPE PLAN**

**FEBRUARY 2005**

**FRAZIER ASSOCIATES**



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We wish to express our appreciation to the members of the City of Harrisonburg Downtown Revitalization and Streetscape Committee, who have willingly and generously given of their time and talents to review the study progress and results as the Streetscape Plan has evolved.

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## INTRODUCTION



*Looking north on Main Street in the 1920's.*

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century photographs of Harrisonburg reveal a bustling downtown, beckoning shop fronts, brick paved sidewalks, a brick paved Court Square, stone curbs, stone crosswalks, decorative wrought iron street lights, and mature street trees. Today's downtown streetscape pales by comparison; the obvious result of post-war social and economic trends favoring suburbanization.

Recent initiatives aimed at reversing the decline of Harrisonburg's city center have focused on financial and real estate incentives and public events programming. The present study highlights the physical streetscape.

Streetscape may have lagged behind other revitalization efforts due to the mixed success of a mid-seventies street enhancement project. A worthy streetscape attends first to human safety. It provides safe walking surfaces, night-time illumination, and effective traffic control. A praiseworthy streetscape must also be sustainable in terms of maintenance and fully functional serving everyday needs such as wayfinding, public seating, noise abatement, parking, and trash collection. Finally it must be aesthetically pleasing, offering both contact with nature and a sense of civility and place while harmonizing well with downtown building styles.

The current effort to develop a coordinated streetscape plan began with a general survey and analysis of the entire downtown planning area, an approximately twenty block sector comprising approximately one hundred and six acres. The district is generally bounded to the east by Federal and Mason Streets, to the west by the Chesapeake Western Railroad Line, and to the north and south by the split of Route 11 to one-way Main and Liberty Streets.

Frazier Associates recorded and mapped a variety of conditions within this district including building use, building height, pedestrian and vehicular circulation and parking patterns, both historic and contemporary building density, and environmental and open space patterns and elements. The design team then identified and mapped four downtown sub-districts. The team met once with the public and several times with the Downtown Revitalization and Streetscape Advisory Committee to gather opinion and review preliminary findings. Notes culled from the public meetings are included within the appendix of this report.

Whether by deliberate policy or natural inclination, urban environments typically sort over time into strikingly uniform, identifiable districts. Such

districts typically yield their evolving cities a high degree of both practical organization and interest and excitement. Harrisonburg is no exception. The study delineates four downtown districts as follows: Downtown Core, Garden, Rail/Industrial, and Post Urban Renewal (see Districts Plan, page 5). The central Downtown Core, anchored by Court Square, is both clearly complemented and bolstered by its interaction with the Garden and Rail/Industrial Districts. Its relation with the Post Urban Renewal District is by contrast problematic. An outline of the various districts and more detailed discussion of their interaction follows.

A central premise of the present study is that the emergence of downtown districts is a positive dynamic to be encouraged and exploited. Rather than develop a unified, city-wide streetscape plan, recommended improvements are tailored to each of the four individual sub-districts.

A second premise of this study is that the City of Harrisonburg should recognize and celebrate its long and distinguished civic, cultural, and economic history. Harrisonburg was recognized as the seat of Rockingham County as early as 1780. Always a center for education, Harrisonburg's first school was established by the Methodists in 1794. Newspapers



*Former grocery store at corner of North Main and East Wolfe Streets. Note the elaborate sidewalk display and leafy street trees.*



*The same view today!*



*Court Square in 1942. Note brick streets, stone curb, and ornamental street light.*



*View from top of Bank of America Building looking north on Main Street over corner of Court Square. Note crosswalk.*

advertise as many as ten schools by the 1870s. Since the 1920s, Harrisonburg has led the state in poultry production. Downtown retains many of Harrisonburg's most significant historic buildings including the home of its founder, Thomas Harrison, and the home of its first mayor, Isaac Hardesty.

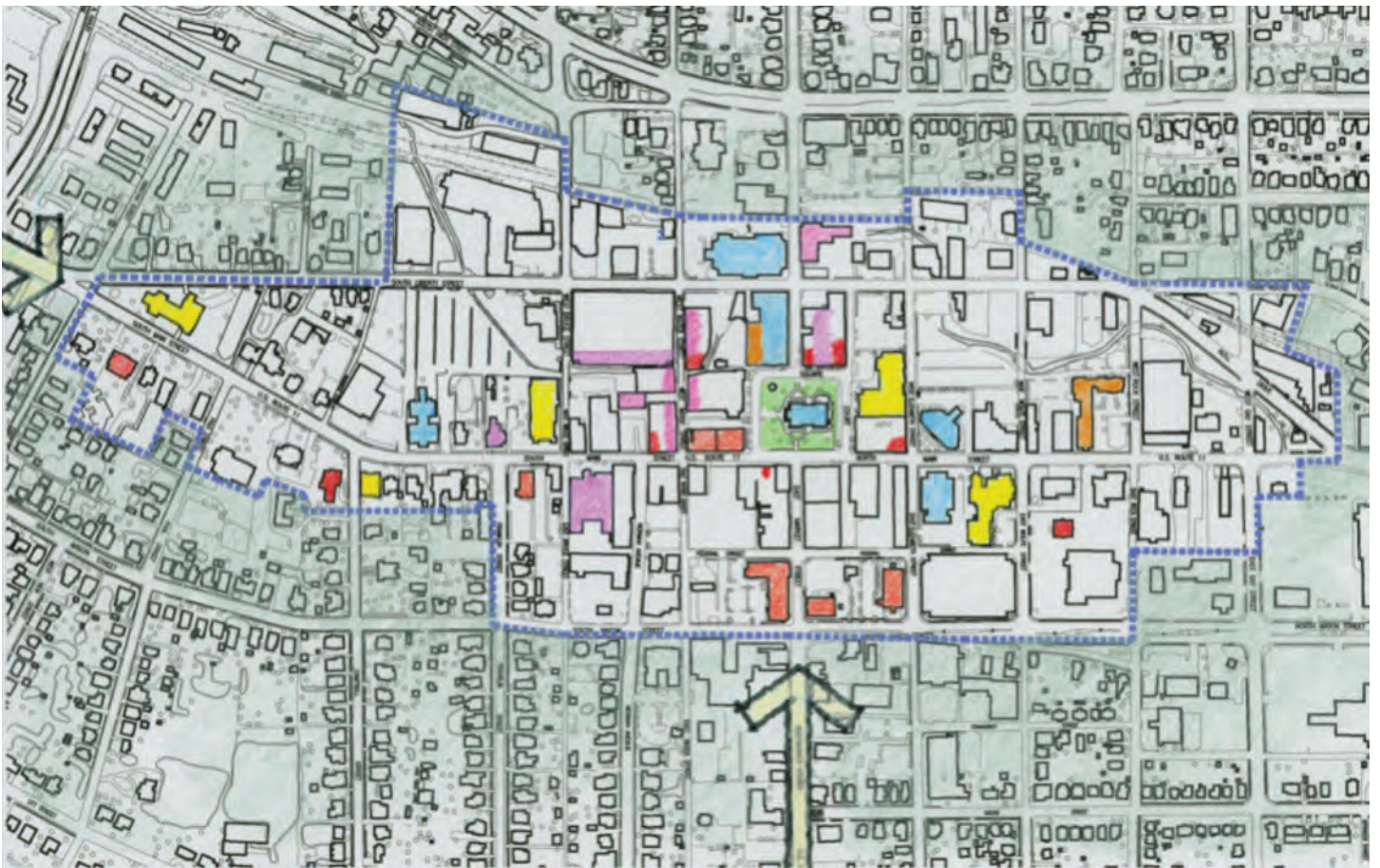
This report considers first and in greatest detail the Downtown Core District of the identified central planning zone as a matter of priority. The district retains its traditional, symbolic role as the community's primary business, cultural, and civic center. Second, the central district survives to this day as the most physically intact precinct of the historic downtown, so will be most likely to receive essential historic tax credits. Third, the area includes a relatively high proportion of prime developable but empty or underutilized building sites, making it ideally suited for future significant mixed use infill development.

The map on page 4 graphically summarizes response received at a recent public workshop to the

question: "Why go downtown?" The map suggests that the Court Square, Main Street, and West Water Street areas of the Core Downtown district and the South Main Street Corridor of the Garden District are today's most viable neighborhoods. The arrows indicate the primary visitor approaches to downtown suggesting that these corridor approaches and gateways are additionally crucial to the present streetscape plan. Discussion of gateways follows that of the four districts.

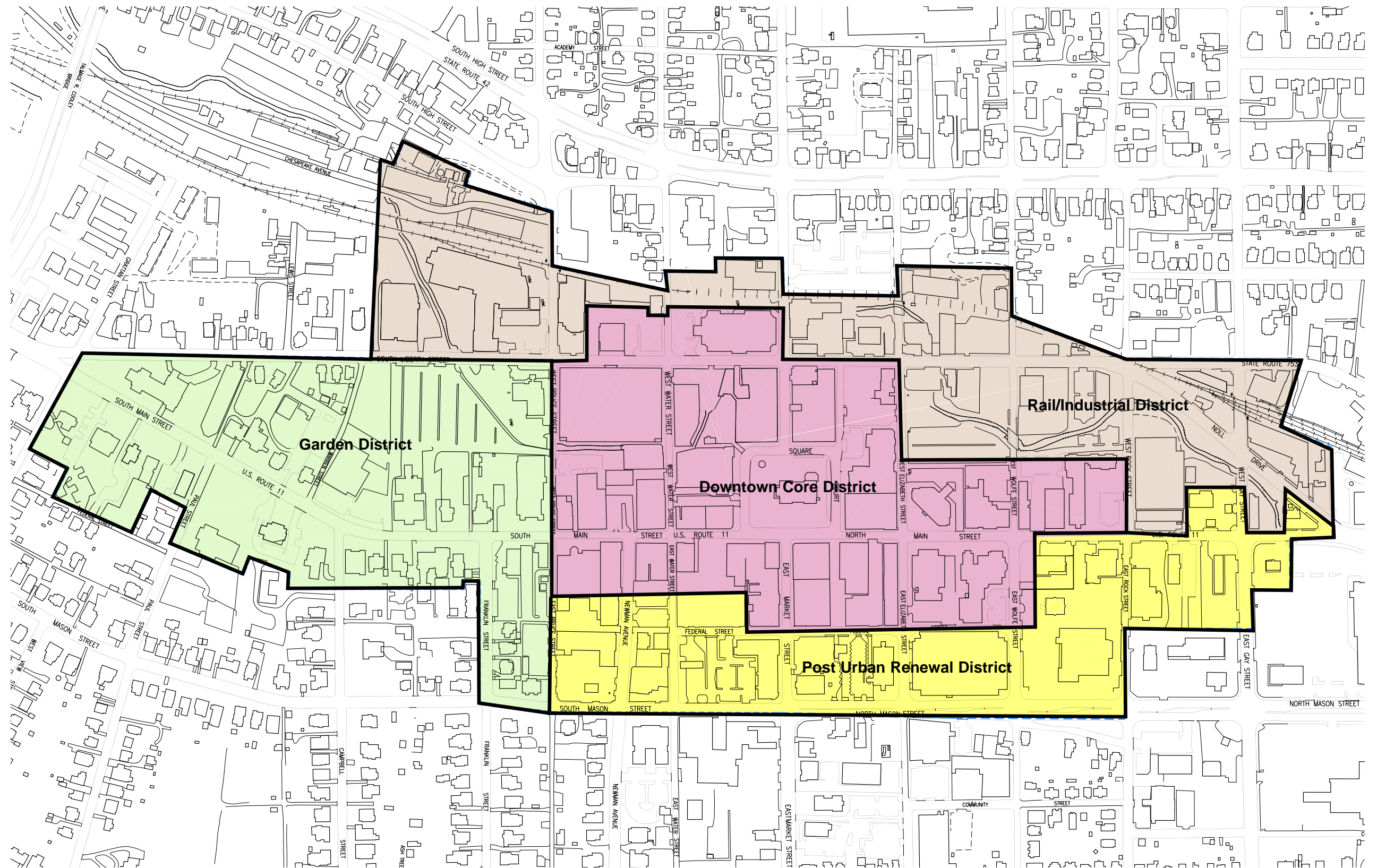
Implementation of the Harrisonburg downtown streetscape plan will undoubtedly cause a degree of inconvenience to downtown residents, the business community, and visiting public. Recommended coping strategies proven to work in other communities include effective construction phasing, a clever public relations campaign, and token incentives such as temporarily waived parking fees at municipal parking decks. Harrisonburg old-timers report that inconvenience associated with the seventies era streetscape renovation was, in hindsight, short-term and bearable.





*Graphic summary of public workshop input. Shaded areas reflect public workshop responses to the query: “why go downtown?” Arrows represent the most heavily trafficked approaches to downtown.*

GOVERNMENT	
CIVIC/INSTITUTIONAL	
RESTAURANT	
RETAIL COMMERCIAL	
BANKS	
RESIDENTIAL	
CHURCHES	



OVERALL DISTRICTS PLAN





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## DOWNTOWN CORE



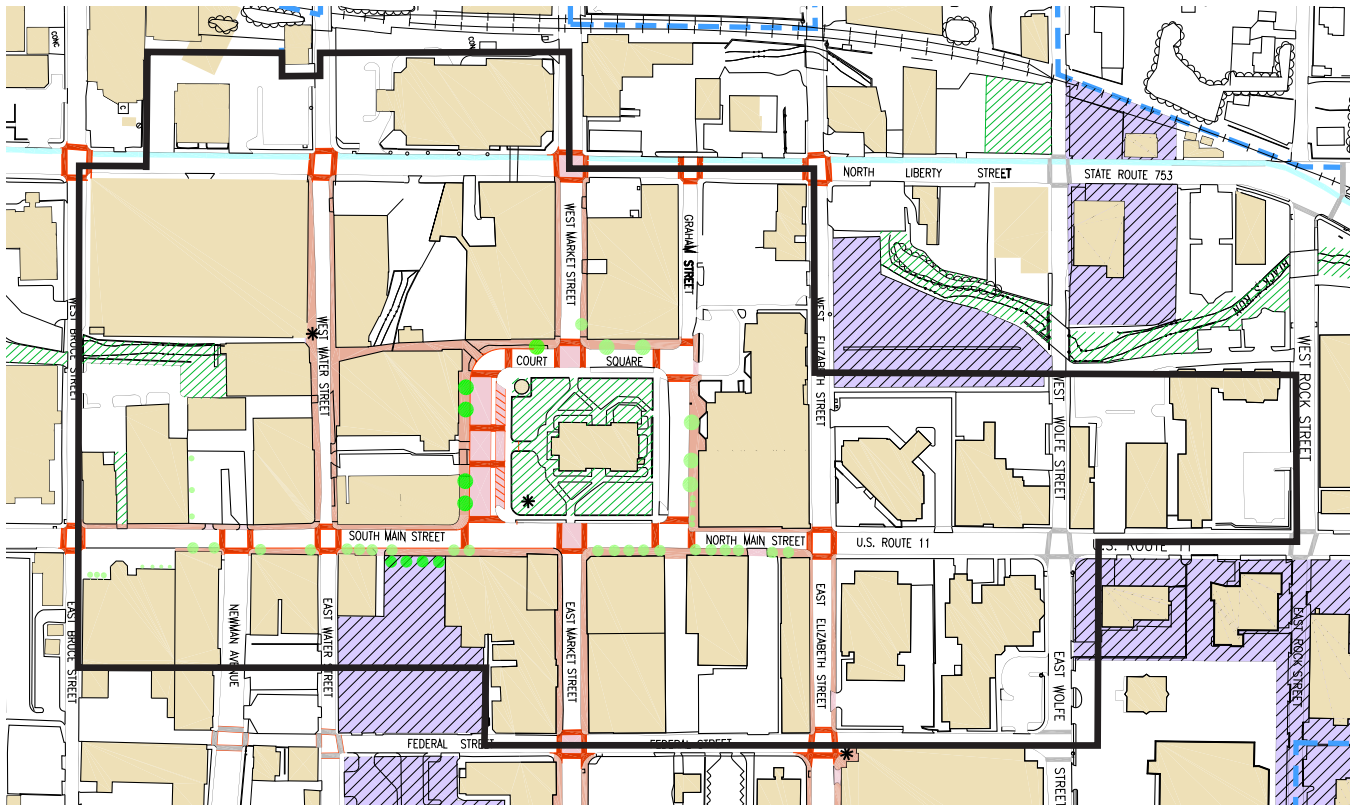
The Downtown Core is Harrisonburg’s center in both literal and figurative senses. The district itself centers on a marvelous gem of 19th century civic architecture, the County Courthouse. Constructed in 1896, the Richardsonian Romanesque and Renaissance Revival style building designed by prominent Valley architect T. J. Collins stands at the heart of a traditional park square in the very heart of town. Approaching from several directions, views of this building give the impression of entering a charming old European city center. While many Virginia cities may boast of handsome, historic courthouses, few are as blessed with as magnificent an architectural masterpiece as this.

In contrast to the other districts, the Downtown Core is urban in character. Land uses are highly concentrated and diverse. In addition to the

historic courthouse, this district consists of a modern county courthouse annex complex, police headquarters, retail shops, cafes and restaurants, arts venues, residential apartments, churches, professional offices, museums, and both public and private landscaped parks. This diversity of urban activity is reflected in a rich diversity of architectural styles.

At the corner of West Market is a beat-generation style, open air café. Bracketing the northeast corner is the Victorian gothic style Harrisonburg Presbyterian Church. At the corner of South Main Street is the impressive Bank of America Building, an early, mixed-use skyscraper closely reflecting the architectural style of the Rockingham County Courthouse Building. The diversity of architectural styles gives the central square a sense of historic evolution and progress.

DOWNTOWN CORE



*Downtown Core District Plan*

LEGEND

- STUDY BOUNDARY
- SIDEWALK
- CROSS WALK - UNIT PAVES
- CROSS WALK - PAINTED
- STREET PAVING
- BIKE LANE
- REDEVELOPMENT AREA
- BUILDING
- PUBLIC SPACES
- EXISTING TREE
- PROPOSED TREE
- \* KIOSK

Harrisonburg's Main Street resembles the traditional American main street. A variety of retail merchants, banks, coffee shops, and restaurants line Main from Elizabeth Street to Bruce Street. In recent years, empty storefronts have been occupied by institutional uses including a children's museum, community mediation center, and dance studio. Notwithstanding Main Street persists as both retail center and popular venue for downtown parades and street festivals.

An effort was made to unify and invigorate the downtown streetscape with concrete unit paved sidewalks, street trees, period light fixtures, and street furniture in the mid-1970s. Thirty years is a normal life expectancy for any urban streetscape. Criticism of the city's downtown appearance at the Fall, 2004 Revitalization and Streetscape Workshop was largely focused on the 70s era improvements. Differential settling of the concrete unit and poured concrete paving has resulted in hazardous walking conditions. There was general sentiment that the zig-zag unit paver style and checkerboard pattern are inharmonious with the downtown's prevailing historic character.



Downtown parking was also discussed at the Fall community meeting. In conjunction with the 70's streetscape improvement, two full block, two-level municipal parking decks were constructed at northeast and southwest diagonal corners of the core downtown. Either because of security concerns, poor wayfinding signage, the inconvenience to retail shoppers of a several block walk, or a combination of the above, the two garages are frequently underused. On-street downtown parking is often both difficult to find and an annoyance due to parking meters and/or unclear regulations.

Widespread support of the Black's Run Greenway program, a proposed stream restoration corridor and park recreation trail, was voiced at the public forum. Black's Run Greenway is proposed to extend from Harrisonburg High School at the southwest of the project area to the corner of Noll Drive and North Main Street at the northernmost point of the project area. This important initiative should not only improve the environmental health of the stream, it will also provide an attractive recreational amenity directly benefiting several downtown neighborhoods including the downtown core.



*View of East Market west toward picturesque Rockingham County Courthouse (left); view past County Courthouse park setting on right to Bank of America building, a perfect complement to the Courthouse (right). The Downtown Core district encircles the splendid 1896 Romanesque and Renaissance Revival style Rockingham County Courthouse Building. The core features a variety of architectural styles, distinctly urban flavor, and sense of rich, layered history. Note in both images the disparity of light fixtures, lack of pedestrian crosswalks, and insufficiency of wayfinding signage. Note in the left image the lack of screening of parking at the right edge of the photo. The proposed streetscape plan addresses the above deficiencies by calling for a unified family of light fixtures, painted or unit paved crosswalks, buffered parking, and a coordinated public information and wayfinding system.*



**DOWNTOWN CORE RECOMMENDATIONS**

**STREETSCAPE IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES:** Those streets comprising Court Square and the Downtown Core portion of Main and Market Streets are assigned top priority for streetscape enhancement. These streets are highly visible and receive the greatest volumes of vehicular traffic. Both retain viable retail and/or service sector business. Both play a strategic if largely symbolic role as the city’s primary government and retail center.

West Bruce, West Water and East Elizabeth Streets fall next in priority both because of their enduring retail character and pedestrian scale. They also serve a vital role by connecting the two municipal public parking garages to the central Main Street/Court Square area. Moreover West Bruce and West Water Streets are due for overhead utility line burial which promises to greatly enhance their appearance. Remaining streets should be upgraded in the order with which they either rebound of their own accord or become targeted for commercial reinvestment and renewal.

**COURT SQUARE, MAIN STREET, AND MARKET STREET SIDEWALK AND STREET PAVING:** Pave the Court Square and Downtown Main and Market

Street sidewalks with red brick laid in a perpendicular, running bond pattern reminiscent of the City’s former brick sidewalks. Pave crosswalks with pre-cast concrete pavers laid in a herringbone pattern, better tolerant of wear from vehicular turning movements. The herringbone pattern should be edged with a concrete paver of contrasting color laid as a stacked bond border. Provide a rigid, concrete sub-slab base to all proposed street and sidewalk unit paving to prevent uneven settling. Unit pavers are preferable to asphalt Street Print which generally holds up under busy street conditions for no more than a couple of years. Should either brick or concrete unit paving prove too expensive, consider re-paving sidewalks with well-crafted and proportioned poured concrete. Replace existing concrete curbing with cut limestone curbing should it be locally available; if not, consider granite.

Pave the level street area fronting the County Courthouse to the south with a brick-sized unit concrete paver laid in a herringbone pattern. Remove the raised concrete planters that presently edge and confine both sides of this street, replacing the trees with judiciously spaced and planted flush to grade street trees.



*The present, 1970’s era streetscape checkerboard paving pattern is hazardous due to differential settling and stylistically inappropriate for the historic downtown center.*



*The streetscape plan replaces the checkerboard concrete pattern with a uniform running bond brick pattern replicating Harrisonburg’s 19th and early 20th century sidewalks, as shown in this image.*

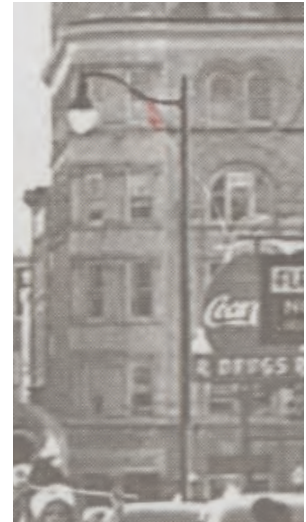
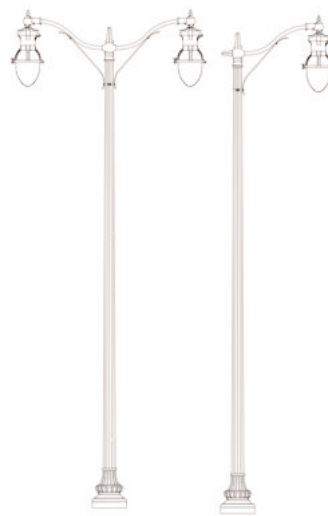
The resulting plaza will both serve to magnify the County Courthouse Building and provide a fitting setting for street festivals and civic ceremonies as permitted by temporary street closure. During occasions for which streets must be closed, the public should be informed both in advance and in a manner that is positive and courteous. The message affixed to a temporary closure barricade might read: “The City of Harrisonburg apologizes for the inconvenience—Independence Day Parade in Progress.”

It is recommended that the two east/west intersections of Main and Market and Court Square and Market Street be similarly paved in a matching herringbone pattern framed by crosswalks. The east/west paved intersections will announce arrival to Court Square, alert traffic to mid-block crosswalks, and in composition with the aforementioned south plaza establish an appropriate hierarchy of Courthouse building approaches. Future paving in brick of the entire Court Square street area was not ruled out by the advisory committee. Evolving use patterns by pedestrians of the Court Square area may be closely watched to determine future streetscape priorities. (See Downtown Core Schematic Streetscape Plan, page 19.)

Sidewalks of West Market and East Market blocks approaching the heart of Court Square should also be paved in running bond brick to both accentuate the arrival to Court Square and to celebrate Court Square’s both actual and symbolic role as Harrisonburg’s central crossroads.

#### **MAIN STREET AND COURT SQUARE LIGHTING:**

Replace the contemporary utilitarian style, 28’ tall shoe box light fixtures up and down Main Street and surrounding Court Square with a traditional tear drop style street light fixture reminiscent of an earlier, Harrisonburg light standard visible in old pictures. There may be an opportunity to re-use the existing shoe-box fixtures elsewhere in town. The



*Recommended Main Street and Court Square lighting, reminiscent of the historic downtown lighting.*



*View north on Main Street. Existing street trees to be properly limbed up and thinned by a skilled, certified arborist.*

proposed, traditional tear drop fixture is distinctive, complements Harrisonburg’s historic architecture well, and offers the opportunity for further adornment with colorful banners or hanging flower baskets. Holophane manufactures a period acorn fixture identical to Harrisonburg’s early lights. See Streetscape Standards, page 57, for specifications on light fixtures and banner brackets, and page 53 for a depiction of the banners.



**MAIN STREET AND COURT SQUARE STREET TREES:** Trees currently lining Main Street and Court Square should be judiciously pruned and in rare cases selectively removed to achieve a greater sense of spaciousness, better penetration of light to both buildings and sidewalk, and visibility of retail and professional storefronts. Cutting trees is inadvisable from a political standpoint, as the public would miss the trees and their shade, but selected trees may be removed where overly crowded.

**MAIN STREET AND COURT SQUARE PLANTING BEDS:** Many existing Main Street and Court Square planting beds are due for overhaul and refurbishment. If allowed to grow freely, mature shrubs would crowd sidewalks, block pedestrian and traffic sight lines, and present an unkempt appearance. Consequently they are over-pruned to eventually appear leggy, stunted and unnatural. All such bedding material should be replaced with controllable, urban-tolerant ground cover material such as liriope, dwarf nandina, or English ivy.

**MAIN STREET, MARKET STREET, AND COURT SQUARE PLANTER BOXES:** Main Street and Court Square planter boxes should be specifically chosen to complement both the scale and character of their respective settings. A “one style fits all” approach rarely works in an urban environment as complex, idiosyncratic, and with as varied scale, architectural styles, and color palette as Harrisonburg’s downtown. In some cases planters are best aligned, in a row-like fashion, against a building elevation. In some cases they are best spaced rhythmically against



*Raised concrete planter walls isolate shop fronts from street and Court Square context. The streetscape plan calls for replacement of the raised planters with flush street trees and integration of the sidewalk with a grand Courthouse Square urban plaza.*



*Colorful splash of annuals on South Main Street at the terminus of Newman Drive.*



*Planter boxes fronting townhouse row on East Market one block down from Court Square. Massed plantings of colorful annuals typically relate better in scale to surrounding broad streets and tall buildings of the urban environment than small scale, individual planter boxes depicted here.*

a building front or street edge. In yet other cases planters are best located individually on a cheek wall or at a building entrance as an accent.

Planter selections that match the historic character of Downtown Harrisonburg include the Dresden style planter manufactured by Dura ArtStone and the So Ho Planter available from Smith & Hawken. The Dresden style planter is available in a broad range of shapes, sizes, and colors. The Smith and Hawken So Ho Planter only offers two sizes and one color choice - black.

**WATER AND ELIZABETH STREETS:** It is proposed that Water Street sidewalks also be paved with running bond brick due to the street's proximity to Court Square, intimate scale, overlap with Black's Run Greenway, linkage with the Water Street Municipal Parking Garage, demonstrated present-day retail business vitality, and promised, near term utility line burial. Because Water Street is less formal than Court Square and Main Street, concrete curbs are preferred.

Water Street's present shoe box street light fix-

tures and wood utility pole mounted light fixtures should both be replaced by a new light standard; a contemporary version of the period tear-drop light recommended for Court Square and Main Street. The proposed fixture, manufactured by Architectural Area Lighting, features a luminaire consistent with the period Main Street tear-drop fixtures, but also provides a dark sky compliant shade. Both Cooper Lighting's Epic Collection and Architectural Area Lighting's Universe Collection offer this style light of fixture. The shaded luminaries should be mounted to 16' tall poles consistent with the Water Street's pedestrian-oriented street scale. Additional specifications for this pendant style fixture are provided on page 57.

Because the block of East Elizabeth Street from Main Street to the municipal parking deck effectively links the downtown core with public parking, it is recommended that this portion of East Elizabeth Street also be upgraded in the same manner as Water Street with brick sidewalks, concrete curbs, and medium height, pendant light standards.



*With overhead electric lines buried, brick paved sidewalks, and appropriately sized period ornamental light standards, intimately scaled Water Street, which links the parking deck and downtown center, will acquire unprecedented new charm.*



*Proposed Water Street light fixtures.*

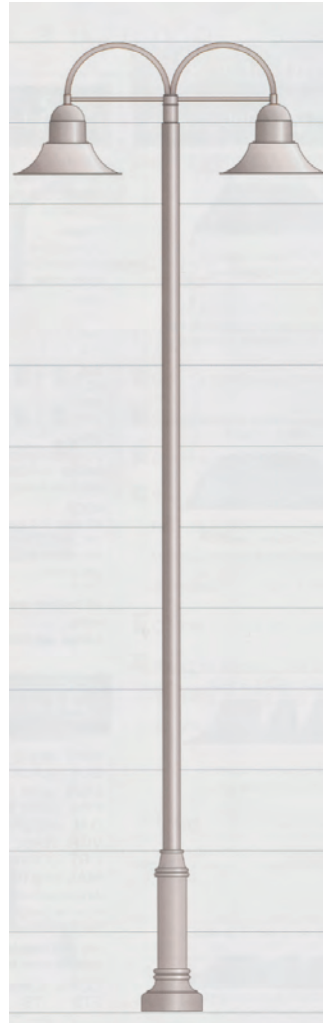


**PEDESTRIAN ALLEY LINKING COURT SQUARE AND WATER STREETS:** The alley linking Court Square and Market Streets is both a handy pedestrian shortcut and surprising, Venetian-like respite from the car. Once Court Square and Water Street sidewalks are bricked, once Black’s Run Greenway improvements have beautified the stream environment, and once shops and restaurants discover and open up to the special ambience of this unique passageway, it will be natural to also brick and add street furniture here. As with Water Street, the cobra head, utility pole light fixtures should be replaced with the contemporary shaded style fixtures and the overhead electric cables should be buried.

**LIBERTY STREET PAVING AND LIGHT FIXTURES:** Liberty Street, a one way south arterial, breezes through downtown Harrisonburg just one block west of Court Square with little acknowledgement of the Downtown Core. Drivers easily zip south today unaware of downtown’s very existence. The present Streetscape Plan makes a number of coordinated recommendations to address this problem.

First, it recommends installation of concrete unit paver crosswalks from West Elizabeth to Bruce Streets. At Liberty Street’s intersection with West Market Street, the same framed, herringbone crosswalk paving recommended for Court Square and the four City Gateways (to be discussed) is recommended. The resulting sequenced interruptions of typical asphalt street paving will alert automobile traffic to the surrounding presence of downtown.

Secondly, the Streetscape Plan recommends installation of contemporary, shaded style light standards, similar to those recommended for Water Street but appropriately sized and scaled for Liberty Street. Instead of 14’ poles, 20’ poles are recommended. Instead of single globes, paired double globes are prescribed. The double pendant fixtures should be installed on the east side of the street only in order to avoid conflicts with the existing overhead utility cables lining the west side of the



*Example of proposed light fixtures for Liberty Street (left), and typical concrete unit paver, herringbone pattern crosswalk (right).*

street. Equipped with banner brackets, the proposed Liberty Street light standards will effectively offer an additional means of announcing and celebrating downtown. For light selection locations, see Summary Lighting Diagram on page 23.

**GRAHAM STREET:** Graham is presently a little used side street joining the northwest corner of Court Square with North Liberty Street. Closing Graham Street to vehicular traffic would offer possibilities for an outdoor café component to Calhoun’s Restaurant, enhanced Black’s Run Greenway link to

Court Square, and better screening of a large, surface parking area. Should the street need to be occasionally accessed for maintenance, service, and/or emergency vehicles, it is recommended that removable bollards be installed. Should the street be converted to pedestrian use, it is recommended that a unit paver consistent with proposed Court Square paving themes be employed.

Prior to detailed planning and design of Graham Street, existing rights of way, easements, and adjacent private property holdings must of course be defined. The existing, municipally owned, pigeon-inhabited stair tower mid-way down Graham Street is little used and has become a special problem for maintenance. Until a clear, future use and location for this structure is established, it is recommended that it be disassembled and stored.

**PAVING OF ALL OTHER CORE DOWNTOWN STREET SIDEWALKS:** It is recommended that paving of all other downtown street sidewalks be concrete with concrete curbs so as not to compete with Main Street, Court Square, Water Street and Elizabeth Street's unique sense of place. Concrete is also typically more affordable, being a third or quarter of the cost of unit paving. If thoughtfully proportioned and skillfully installed, concrete may also be highly attractive.

It is still recommended that all street crosswalks within the central downtown core be paved



with concrete unit pavers. Doing so better defines and sets the character of the overall Downtown Core area while also offering an important safety advantage for pedestrians.

**OTHER CORE DOWNTOWN LIGHTING:** All other Downtown Core street lights, most of which are cobra head style fixtures mounted to electric utility poles, should be gradually replaced with the contemporary shaded pendant style fixtures, appropriately scaled to each respective street. Color finish should be dark bronze. See Streetscape Standards, page 57, for specifications on proposed light fixtures.

**TRAFFIC LIGHTS:** Many of the traffic lights within the core downtown area were converted to a clean contemporary design with an attractive dark bronze finish. Not all poles, however, were outfitted with matching traffic signal lantern fixtures. Many signal lanterns are bright yellow and as such are highly incompatible with the surrounding historic architecture and cityscape. It is recommended that the correct dark bronze fixtures be substituted.

**PLANT MATERIAL FOR ALL OTHER DOWNTOWN STREETS:** Plant Material in an urban setting offers numerous practical and aesthetic benefits but must be used with discretion. Planting is only suggested where adequate growth conditions and maintenance is assured. No plant material at all is better than sickly, abused, or malformed plant material resulting from poor or inadequate design, installation, and/or upkeep.

Downtown planting must also take into account scale. If small trees are all that may be acceptable below an overhead utility line, then the trees should be planted serially in uniform rows to be effective; even noticed. Plant material should be selected and sited to moderate weather such as provide shade or buffer winter winds. It should at times soften rigid architectural lines, at other times complement the vertical lines of architecture with a strong, horizontal ground plane pattern.

Recommended street trees for Core Downtown locations include Ginkgo (males only) (*Ginkgo biloba*), Thornless Honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis* cvs.), Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*), and Lacebark Elm (*Ulmus parviflora*). All the above trees are both highly tolerant of urban conditions and share a level of grace and refinement consistent with the core downtown streetscape.

**BIKE PATH:** A bike path in a University town makes a great deal of sense, as students are likely to use a bike lane. It adds a unique feature to the downtown scene. Selection of the bike lane route must depend on both favorable street dimensions and regional routing considerations outside the scope of this study.

**BENCHES:** Benches should be sited on level ground and in protected locations, preferably with enticing views. Landscape Forms’ Scarborough bench with back and horizontal strap seat with Stormcloud powdercoat finish is recommended for the Downtown Core District. See manufacturer’s recommendations for surface mounting.



**TRASH RECEPTACLES:** Landscape Forms’ Scarborough side opening litter receptacle will match well with the Scarborough benches. The same Stormcloud Powdercoat finish is recommended. See manufacturer’s recommendations for surface mounting.

**PARKING STRATEGY:** Harrisonburg’s current downtown parking is typically regulated by meters. Recent public opinion surveys performed in Harrisonburg suggest that paid parking is a deterrent to shopping downtown vs. shopping at the mall or a commercial strip where parking is typically both convenient and free. It is therefore recommended that the downtown metered system be converted to a well conceived, well-enforced sign system governing parking duration. The downtown core should be assigned a reasonable mix of convenient (10-15 minute) and short term (2 hour limit) parking. Removal of the Main Street, landscaped bump outs in order to reestablish parallel parking was ruled out in design meetings with the Downtown Renaissance Design Committee; however clearly signing the existing spaces as public short term parking was recommended. The current duck-in parking spots have proven to be popular in providing customers a convenient way to run quick errands. Long term (4 hour to all day) parking should be assigned to the downtown’s immediate periphery.

Harrisonburg is uniquely configured to provide off street parking in relatively hidden, rear building lots. Remote parking has been proven to work if it is both easy to find and linked within a three block range to all presumed destinations by a safe and attractive pedestrian route. As the downtown build’s up, serious consideration should also be given to additional structured parking solutions.

A parking analysis and revised plan for Downtown Harrisonburg providing detailed answers to questions such as on which streets to assign defined time rates, when and where to assign parking attendants, and when it becomes cost effective to invest in new parking decks falls beyond the scope of this study. The next step must be for the City to procure a traffic engineer and parking specialist to more thoroughly diagnose and prescribe solutions. (See page 25 for Existing Circulation and Parking Diagram).



**STREET IDENTIFICATION SIGNS:** At one time Harrisonburg's standard, white on green downtown street signs were white with a blue backdrop. This distinctive color scheme, rarely seen anymore on America's streets, should be reinstated. Doing so would enhance recognition of the downtown core. Blue is also proposed as a color theme for Harrisonburg's downtown street banners, illustrated on page 53.



**INFORMATION KIOSKS:** Information kiosks animate the streetscape, assist with wayfinding, and provide effective billboard advertising opportunities for both civic programs and local businesses. Many Virginia cities including Roanoke, Staunton, and Charlottesville have found information kiosks an attractive and worthwhile investment. A metal furniture fabricator by the name of Twists & Turns based in Roanoke, Virginia manufactures a handsome kiosk that may be customized to individual cities and towns. Its prototype kiosk for Roanoke, Virginia is illustrated below.



*Twists & Turns kiosk.*

The Downtown Core Schematic Streetscape Plan proposes three initial kiosk locations; one at each of the two existing municipal parking deck pedestrian exits and a third at the southeast corner of court square. The garage pedestrian exit locations are proposed so that visitors arriving to Harrisonburg will discover the helpful kiosks upon depositing their cars. The southeast Court Square location is chosen both because of its physical centrality and high visibility to traffic entering the core from both Market and South Main Streets.

**SIDEWALK CAFÉS:** Outdoor dining adds a level of sophistication and romance to downtown, very much in keeping with Harrisonburg's European fashioned courthouse and surrounding Courthouse Square. Cafés offer both flexible and inexpensive expansion opportunities for existing restaurants. They generally also play an important marketing role by attracting passersby.

The most popular outdoor cafés are typically those with great atmosphere whether a result of being situated in a cramped yet picturesque alleyway, corner of a popular park, or bordering a busy shopping street. Cafés take many sizes, shapes, and forms. Their design is typically the handiwork of a creative restaurateur requiring only encouragement from city leaders. A first step should be adoption of a City ordinance permitting public outdoor dining.



*Street activity and beckoning restaurant or storefront displays are encouraged. This highly creative and inspired present day Court Square coffeehouse represents a fine example to be emulated.*



**PUBLIC ART:** Public art in an urban environment offers multiple benefits. It may anchor or activate an otherwise lackluster site. It may establish a familiar landmark or offer a place of congregation and activity. It may bolster careers of participating artists and inspire works of future artists.

Public art in the urban environment may also take diverse forms. Works may be either permanent such as the sculpture gracing the World War I Veterans Memorial on South Main Street or temporary such as the monumental recycled paper sculpture currently visible on the JMU campus. The World War I memorial is a traditional, figurative sculpture. The JMU sculpture is a contemporary abstract work.

Preliminary planning and organization to establish a public art program is critical. An art advisory panel must be established to design, promote, seek funding for, and administer the enterprise. The panel must establish a process and criteria for both the commissioning and siting of works. It must manage the maintenance and conservation of completed works.

Because much public art by its very nature is controversial, the panel's work will inevitably embrace public relations. It may be advantageous to begin with a temporary public art program. Because temporary art is understood to be of limited duration, community acceptance is generally freer and more immediate.



*Examples of public art.*

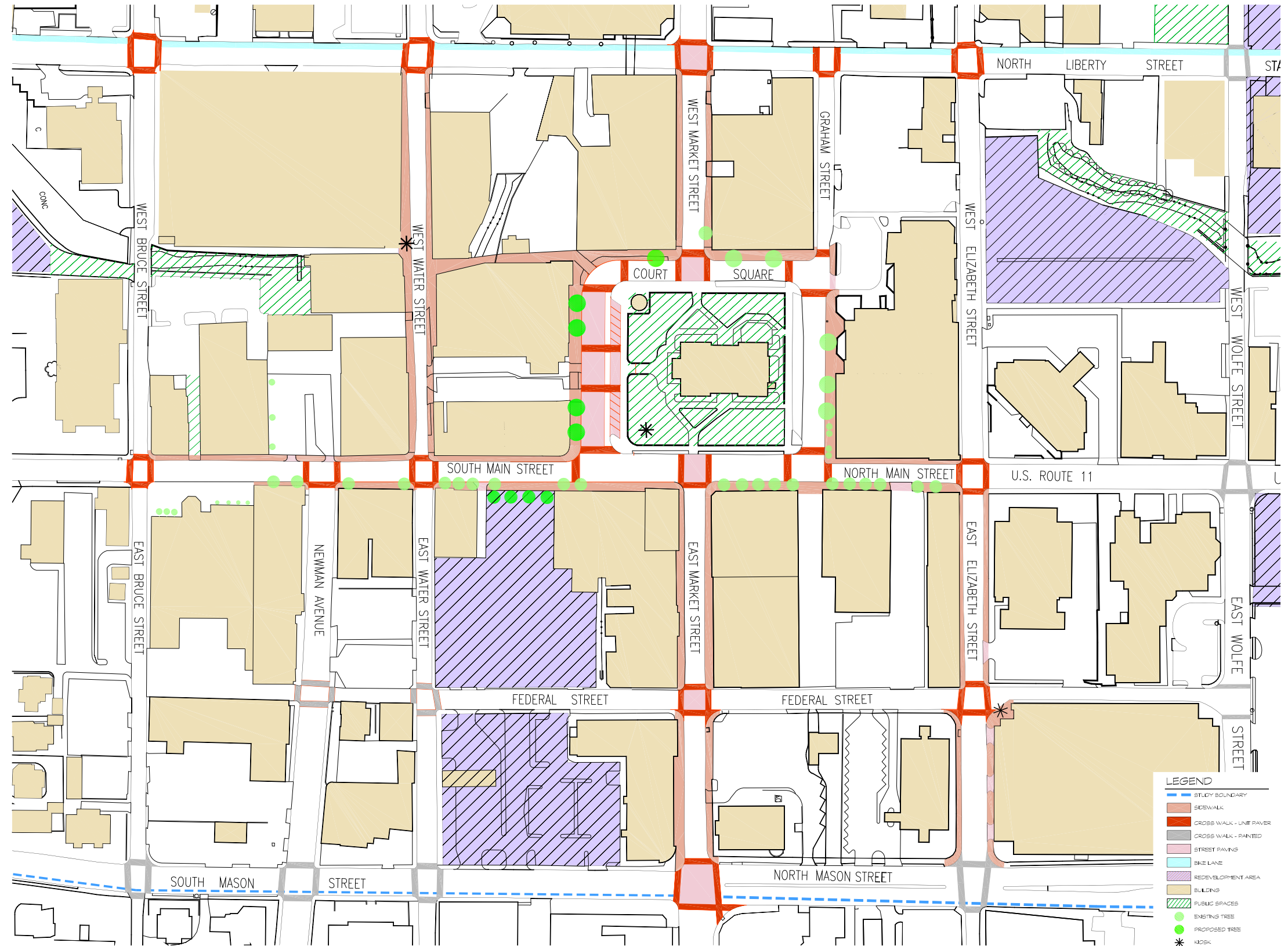
## DOWNTOWN CORE REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Presently an open parking lot, the land parcel fronting on South Main, occupying the corner of East Water and Federal Streets, and reaching one block further east to South Mason Street overlapping with the Post Urban Renewal District, offers the most significant current, core area redevelopment opportunity. The property is strategically situated less than one-half block from Court Square and less than two blocks from the Massanutten Regional Library. (See map on page 8.)

The quiet mid-block location with access to Main Street appears ideal for a mixed use office/commercial center. The parcel is currently bordered to the west and north by a concentration of retail and financial service businesses. It is bordered to the south and east by professional offices. Because the parcel sits directly opposite Harrisonburg's tallest building, the historic Bank of America skyscraper, its height might comfortably step down from approximately five stories on Main Street to two to three stories on Federal and North Mason Streets.

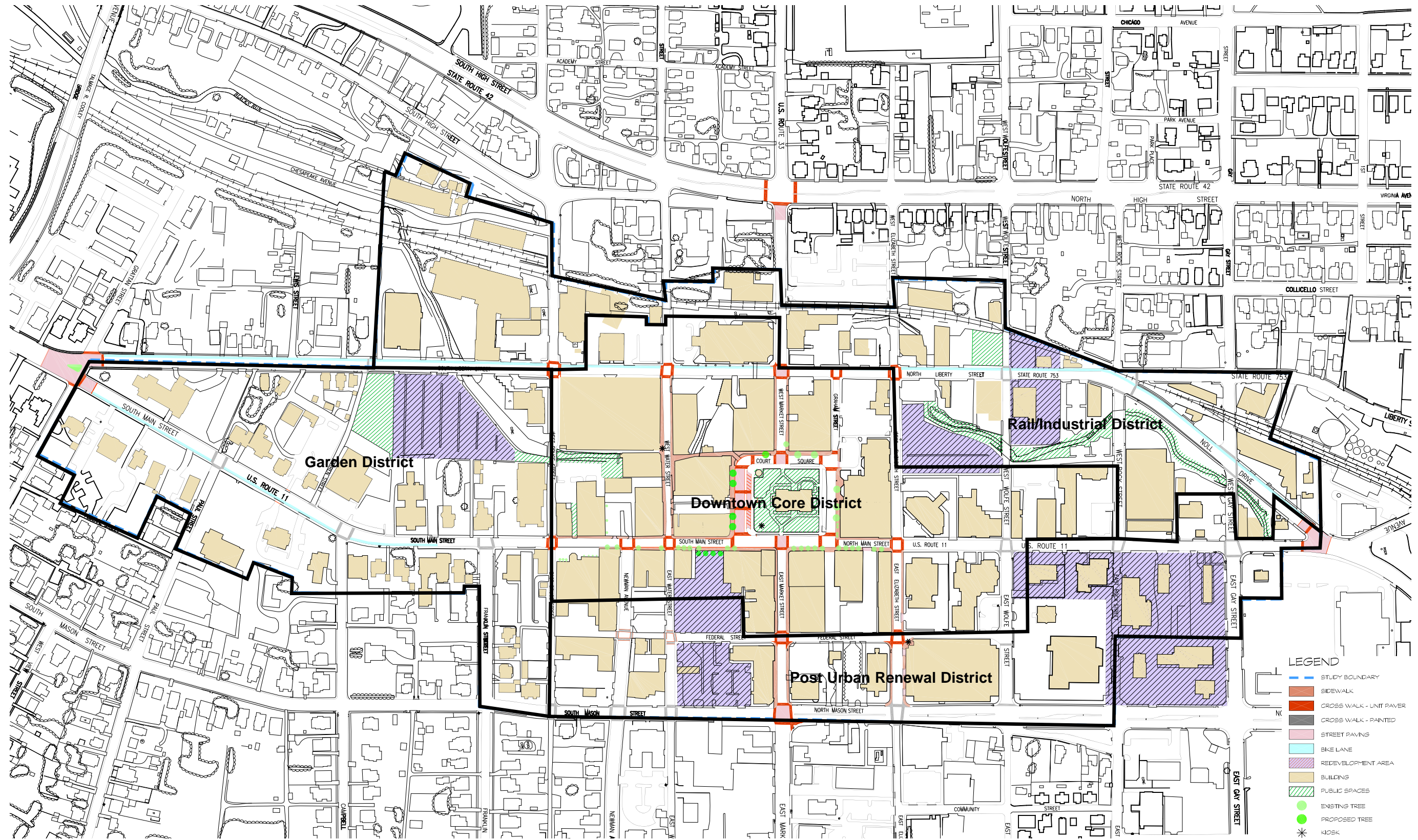
Future development of this parcel should include a reasonable number of structured parking spaces to compensate for displaced current surface parking. Because the block falls to the east of Main Street in the direction of the Route 81 corridor, traffic impact on westward, downtown neighborhoods resulting from development should be minimal.

A well conceived and imaginative redevelopment of this substantial parcel provides exciting opportunities for renewed architectural definition of South Main Street's important first block, contrast of old and new architecture, not to mention a likely boost to neighboring commercial business.



DOWNTOWN CORE SCHEMATIC STREETScape PLAN





SUMMARY STREETScape DEVELOPMENT PLAN





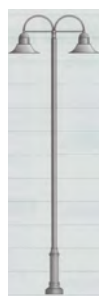
PERIOD TEAR DROP:  
MAIN STREET, COURT  
SQUARE, AND MARKET  
STREET



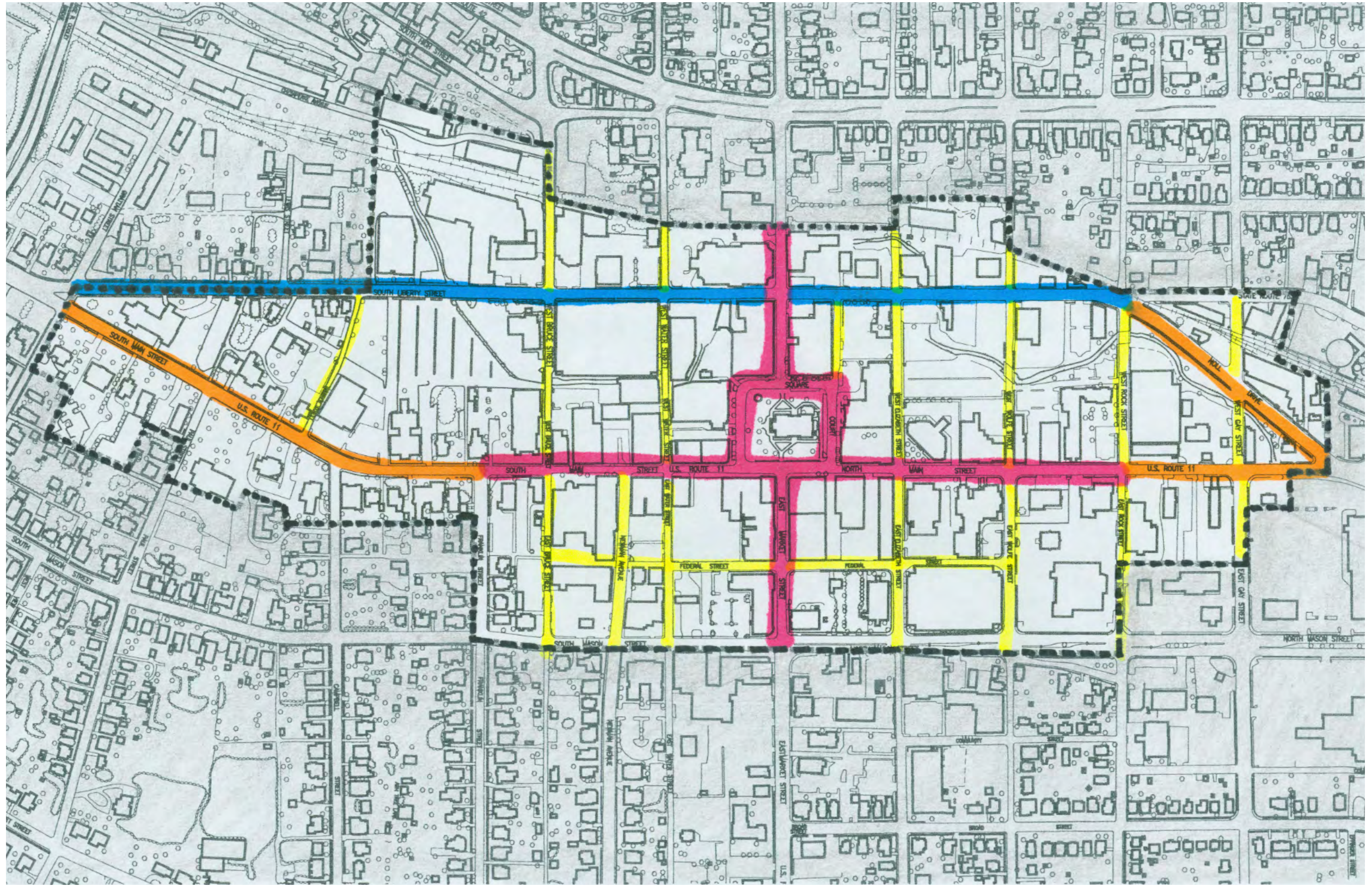
ADAPTED COBRA HEAD:  
SOUTH MAIN STREET,  
NORTH MAIN STREET,  
AND NOLL STREET



TALL PENDANT:  
LIBERTY STREET

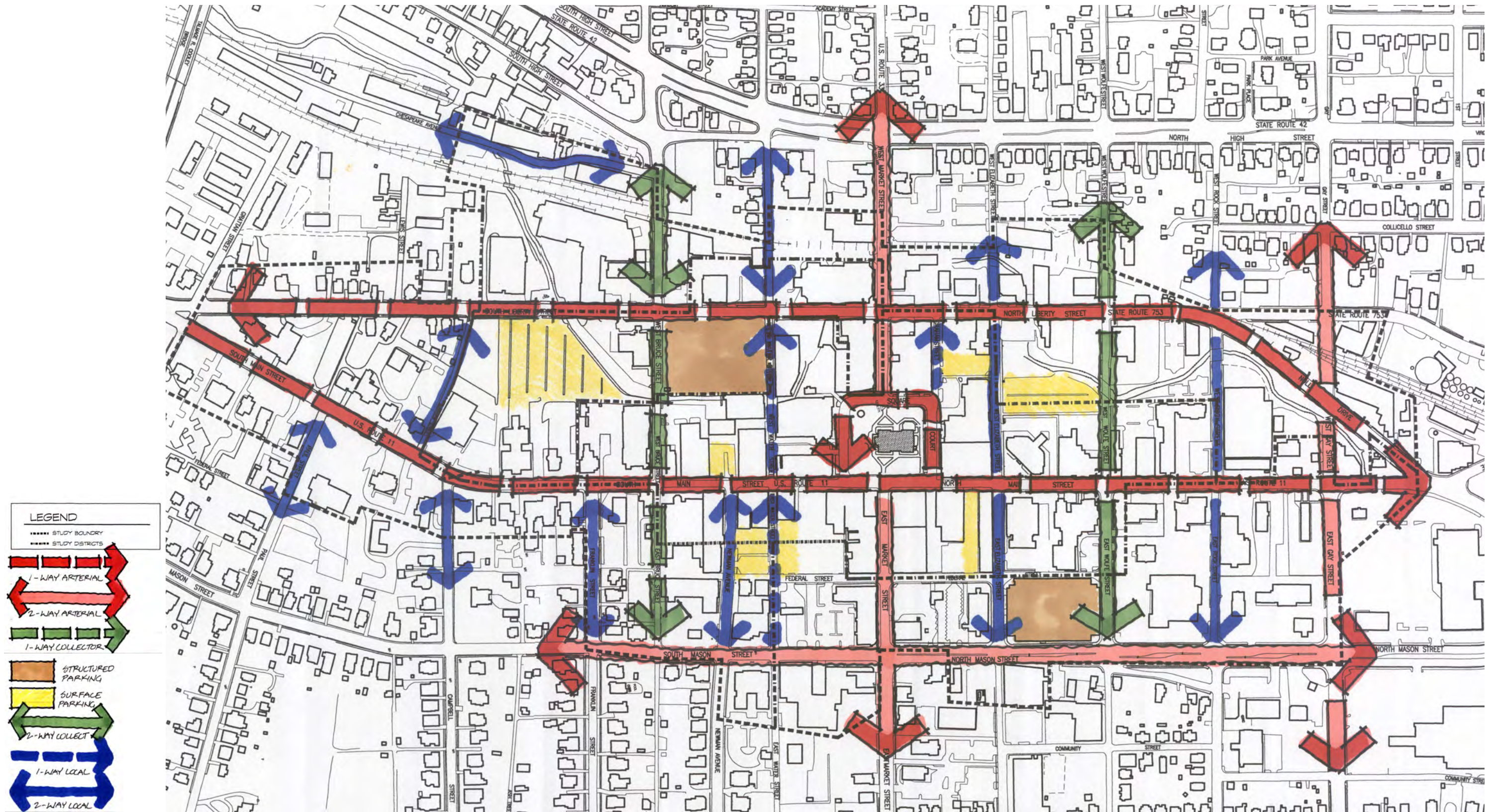


MEDIUM PENDANT:  
REMAINING DOWNTOWN  
STREETS



SUMMARY LIGHTING DIAGRAM





EXISTING CIRCULATION AND PARKING DIAGRAM





## GARDEN DISTRICT



The Garden District forms the southern border and entrance to downtown. It is characterized by large, shady lawns and handsome, historic homes, many of which have been converted to professional or institutional office buildings. If not for their telltale identifying street signage, many such fine old homes might still be mistaken as such.

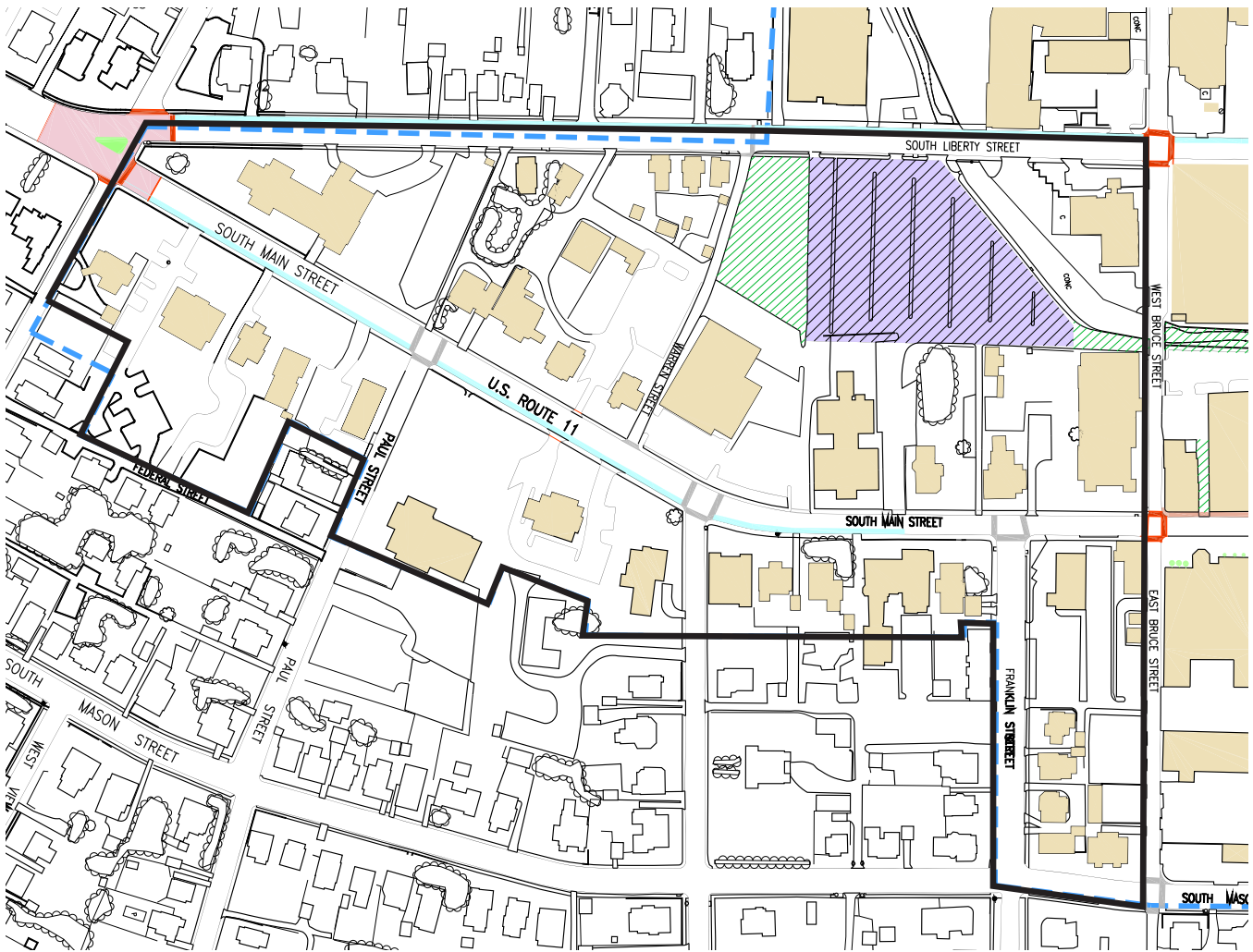
Within the larger urban context, the garden district serves a valuable role by linking downtown with Harrisonburg's substantial James Madison University and Rockingham Memorial Hospital districts and by very clearly defining the southern border of the urbanized, downtown center.

The primary, organizing element or backbone of the district is the northbound Route 11/South Main Street and southbound Route 11/South Liberty Street pair. These are both very broad, 40 foot wide, one-way two lane arterial streets with parking to either side. The travel speed of each is 25 miles per hour. The district begins to the south where these two streets split apart and ends to the

north where spacious lawns transition to the urban city center. To the east and west the district is bordered by residential neighborhoods.

Occupying a large parcel at the southern tip of the district where the two streets split apart is the commanding Harrisonburg Baptist Church. The stately, brick church both anchors and sets the tone of the district with its large and well-maintained lawn, mature trees, and towering steeple. The church provides a fitting backdrop to the historic World War I Veterans memorial facing south on Route 11 at the point that South Main and Liberty Streets split apart. The memorial represents the southern gateway to the historic downtown.

Whereas South Main has the makings of a grand avenue with stately street trees, ornamental light fixtures, buried overhead lines, and well set back estate homes, South Liberty frequently overpowers more modestly scaled homes and front lawns with its equal width, tall utility poles, and cobra head highway lights.



Garden District Plan

LEGEND

- STUDY BOUNDARY
- SIDEWALK
- CROSS WALK - UNIT PAVEMENT
- CROSS WALK - PAINTED
- STREET PAVING
- BIKE LANE
- REDEVELOPMENT AREA
- BUILDING
- PUBLIC SPACES

## GARDEN DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

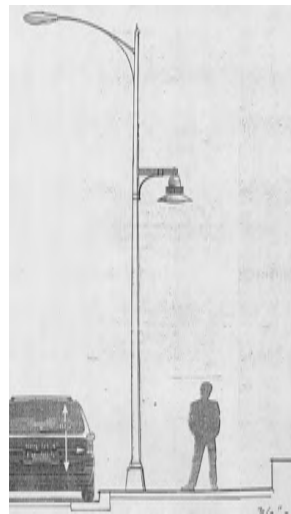
**STREETScape IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES:** The Garden District could consider the adoption of a landscape ordinance. Enhancement of the bicycle and pedestrian links between James Madison University and the Downtown Core is also top priority given the importance of the campus community to Harrisonburg's retail economy.

**SIDEWALK AND CROSSWALK PAVING:** Because this district links the downtown with hospital and JMU areas, it is important to further encourage both walking and biking. Paving and curbs shall be uniform concrete. Painted crosswalks shall be provided at all intersections. Curb cuts should be minimized both in number and breadth, especially on primary walking routes to and from downtown including Main and Liberty Streets.

**STREET LIGHTING:** The present cobra head street lights found on South Main Street should be retrofitted with pedestrian level luminaires and banner brackets. Emergency call boxes as currently found on the James Madison University Campus regularly spaced between the campus and downtown are also recommended to encourage pedestrian nighttime use.

The same pendant style fixture suggested for the Core Downtown Area is recommended for the retrofitted, Garden District cobra heads with one minor variation. Instead of a gooseneck arm it is recommended that the supporting bracket be a rounded lower bar as illustrated below to better complement the cobra fixture's arm and bracket.

Just as in the Downtown Core District, all existing side street wood pole mounted cobra head fixtures are to be replaced with the medium height, shaded pendant style fixture with the goose neck arm.



*Retrofitted existing light.*



*New Liberty Street lighting.*



*Retrofit fixture for cobra light.*



*Retrofitted lighting along South Main Street.*





*Garden District professional office suites as viewed from South Main Street. Streetscape recommendations include removal of parking meters, addition of bike lanes on South Main and Liberty Streets spaced between parking and travel lanes, benches at bus stops, and retrofitting of cobra head lights with pedestrian level luminaries complimentary in style to proposed downtown ornamental light standards.*



*Strive to bring Liberty Street, depicted in both images above, up to par with South Main Street by installing shaded pendant light standards with banner brackets, providing a bike lane, and by requiring that all future projects include street trees, screening of parking, and reduction of curb cuts in both number and length.*

The street lighting work should begin with the scheduled under-grounding of utility lines on West Bruce Street and proceed as all utility burials are extended. The 20' tall double pendant street lights should be continued on Liberty Street (west side only) from the Downtown Core.

**BIKE LANES:** There is only sufficient width on South Main Street to provide a bike lane to City Hall. Past City Hall, the street narrows by ten feet. Past the Hardesty Higgins House, the street further narrows by seven feet. Termination of the bike lane at City Hall may be quite acceptable given that most bikers slow down and disperse once in downtown. Evaluation of optimal bike routes requires a more regional view than the present, downtown-focused study permits.

**LANDSCAPE:** The City should consider adoption of a city-wide landscape ordinance with stricter requirements for the Garden District including installation of street trees, screening of off street parking, tree planted parking islands, screening of utility and trash



*Section of South Main Street sidewalk converted in 70's to checkerboard unit paver/poured concrete pattern. Proposed Garden District sidewalks to be simplified to an all poured concrete standard.*

collection areas, and limitations on size and materials of signage. Many Virginia communities including Charlottesville, Lexington, Norfolk, and Fairfax have successfully adopted landscape ordinances to protect their neighborhood landscape character.

Because of its generous, landscaped lawns, the Garden District offers opportunities to plant trees unsuitable for other downtown districts due to higher susceptibility to urban impacts such as road salt or highly compacted soils. Examples include the Maples, Katsura Tree (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*), both deciduous and evergreen Magnolias, Crape Myrtle if planted in a protected location (*Lagerstroemia indica*), and Flowering Cherrys and Dogwoods.

**BENCHES:** Site benches on level ground and in protected locations, preferably with enticing views. On South Main Street they should be located at bus stops. A solid, vandal resistant metal bench akin to the Scarborough bench manufactured by Landscape Forms is suggested. DuMor's Bench 160 with DuMor's Green, Powdercoat color finish is recommended. The same bench is also available with tough, ipe wood slats if preferred. The bench should be surface mounted.



**TRASH RECEPTACLES:** DuMor's metal grid Trash Receptacle 48 with Green Powdercoat finish is recommended for the Garden District. This trash receptacle is simpler and a bit more airy and playful than the Scarborough Waste Receptacle recommended for the Core Downtown District. The embedded mounting option is recommended.



## GARDEN DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The principal redevelopment parcel available within the Garden District borders the proposed Black’s Run linear park to the east, South Liberty Street to the West, Harrisonburg Electric Company’s Headquarters and the Water Street Parking Deck to the north and a proposed, City owned public park to the South. Directly opposite Black’s Run from the

tract are City Hall and Harrisonburg’s Quilt Museum. Opposite Liberty Street to the west are the Harrisonburg Daily News Record offices and a commercial ice plant. (See map on page 28.)

Bridging a gap between the Garden District and the Core Downtown, this spacious parcel seems ideally suited for a multi-family residential development with convenience store retail opportunities. The Garden District is generally quiet, well heeled, and attractive. The location is convenient to both the James Madison University and Rockingham Memorial Hospital campuses. The development might also benefit from its proximity to the existing parking deck to the north and public open space presently used for summer concerts to the south. (See map on page 28.)



*View of Harrisonburg City Hall from Main Street. Perspective sketch shows addition of shade trees and hedge to screen parking. Landscape buffering of parking should be a required standard for all proposed downtown parking.*



## POST URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT

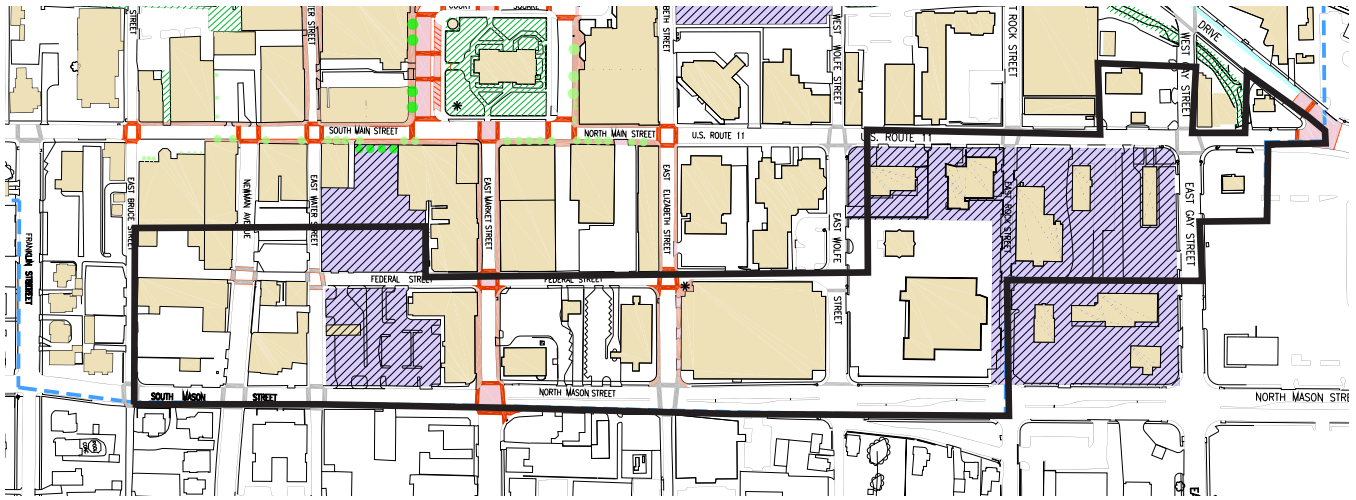


The Post Urban Renewal District occupies the northeastern corner of downtown Harrisonburg. Established in the early 1960s, the renewal district displaced lower income, predominately black neighborhoods.

The Renewal District is bounded to the east by North Mason Street, a four-lane north-south arterial skirting downtown, and to the west by northbound Route 11. Bordering and anchoring the district to the north is the recently completed Rockingham County Administration Center. Based in a renovated, former Safeway Supermarket Shopping Center, the County Administration Center is fronted by an ample but generously landscaped parking lot. The renewal district butts up to the south against the downtown core and garden districts. Primarily occupied by auto shops, convenience restaurants, and government services buildings such as a post office and ABC liquor store, the area includes a disproportio-

tionate number of vacancies and underdeveloped lots.

The Renewal District is presently characterized by nondescript commercial buildings unrelated to surrounding streets and engulfed by parking lots. Landscape amenities are minimal at best. Street lights are uniformly cobra head fixtures mounted to wooden utility poles, curb cuts are frequently oversized, parking lots reach to sidewalks or curbs unbuffered by landscape, utility lines run overhead, many commercial signs are scaled to be read at highway scale, and street furniture amenities such as benches or waste receptacles are nowhere in evidence. Though relatively modern, the district projects a general atmosphere of incoherence and under-use. Oriented primarily to the automobile and a highway scale, this district represents the greatest challenge to a revitalized downtown streetscape.



*Post Urban Renewal District Plan*

**LEGEND**

- STUDY BOUNDARY
- SIDEWALK
- CROSS WALK - UNIT PAVEMENT
- CROSS WALK - PAINTED
- STREET PAVING
- BIKE LANE
- REDEVELOPMENT AREA
- BUILDING
- PUBLIC SPACES



**POST URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**STREETScape IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES:** This district offers tremendous potential for large scale mixed-use commercial/residential redevelopment. Redevelopment should follow a traditional downtown street urban design pattern, not a contemporary suburban highway strip pattern, in order to better relate to, and, in effect, “grow” the downtown.

Should full scale redevelopment of this area be far in the future, rudimentary site improvements are in order. Sidewalk repairs, screening of parking and utility areas, planting of street trees, and prohibition of billboard signs is recommended.



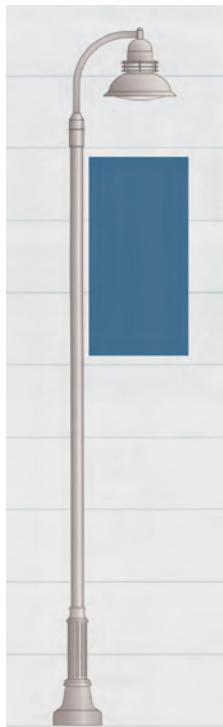
*View east toward East Rock Street.*



*View of County Courthouse and Bank of America Building from Federal Street. The Post Urban Renewal and Downtown Core Districts offer tremendous potential for large scale mixed-use development.*

**SIDEWALK PAVING AND STREET CROSSWALKS:** Main Street sidewalks and crosswalks should be paved just like the Core Downtown area if redevelopment projects serve to extend the traditional character of Main Street north. The sidewalks should be paved in running bond brick and the crosswalks in herring-bone concrete unit pavers. The curbs should be limestone or granite. Should redevelopment additionally yield any side streets with the retail liveliness and intimate scale of the Core Downtown’s Water Street, the crosswalks and sidewalks of such streets should be paved with concrete unit and brick pavers as well. Side street curbs may all be concrete. All other Post Urban Renewal street sidewalks should be paved in concrete with concrete curbs. All other street crosswalks should be painted.

**STREET LIGHTING:** Street light fixtures for the third and final north block of Main Street and on Noll Drive within the Post Urban Renewal District are the same metal pole, cobra head fixtures as are found within the Garden District lining South Main Street. They should be retrofitted with the lower, pedestrian level shaded pendant fixture and banner bracket just as is recommended for the South Main Street fixtures. The first and second Main Street blocks north of the Downtown Core should receive the same, medium height tear drop period fixture with banner brackets as recommended for the Downtown Core Area. All other Post Urban Renewal District street lights should be the same pole mounted, shaded pendant fixture as recommended elsewhere. Finish colors for all light fixtures should be dark bronze. (For lighting locations, see Summary Lighting Plan, page 23.)



**LANDSCAPE:** A hallmark of all future redevelopment of the Post Urban Renewal District should be well integrated landscape. Street trees should be given adequate pervious growing surface, proper irrigation and drainage, and properly amended planting soils. All large-scale redevelopment projects should be accompanied by burial of overhead utility cables to allow both full and uniform maturation of street trees. All surface parking lots should be configured to allow perimeter screening and both internal and perimeter shade tree plantings. Paved areas should be minimized to reduce urban storm runoff. Storm runoff should be filtered wherever possible through landscaped areas before discharge into either the stream channel or storm sewage system.

Final selection of plant material for urban redevelopment projects must of course await further design resolution of each prospective project. Should redevelopment be far in the future, the following trees may be expected to both tolerate present urban conditions and grow relatively quickly for short term impact: Japanese Zelkova (*Zelkova serrata*), Bloodgood London Plane Tree (*Platanus x acerifolia* ‘Bloodgood’), Marshall’s Seedless Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica* ‘Marshall’s Seedless’), and Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*).

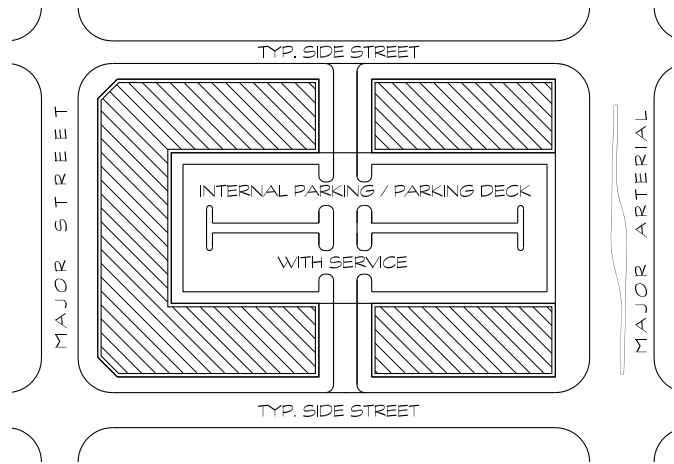
**BENCHES:** DuMor’s Bench 160 with DuMor’s Green, Powdercoat color finish is recommended. The same bench is also available with tough, ipe wood slats if preferred. The bench should be surface mounted.

**TRASH RECEPTACLES:** DuMor’s metal grid Trash Receptacle 48 with Green Powdercoat finish is recommended for the Post Urban Renewal District. The embedded mounting option is recommended.

**PARKING STRATEGY:** The Elizabeth Street Municipal Parking Garage primarily serving the Downtown Core area requires both a facelift and improved lighting. Its present condition discourages patrons both directly by being unattractive and indirectly by

appearing to attract vandalism and petty crime. Wall mounted, vine lattices as manufactured by Green Screen or Jacob have proven effective for softening or screening urban parking garages. A prerequisite to their success of course is provision of adequate planting conditions. A professionally painted mural may also be an effective solution.

New parking areas should be accommodated mid-block, screened from view by buildings and landscaping, allowing the development of traditional street-front buildings at the sidewalk. (See diagram at right). As mentioned previously, a detailed parking study by qualified traffic and parking consultants is required to fully resolve all parking questions.



*Typical block development diagram.*



*East Bruce Street.*



*The municipal parking garage on East Wolfe and Elizabeth Streets requires better lighting and a facelift.*



*Failing wholesale redevelopment in the near term, sidewalk repairs are required, parking areas should be set back and screened, and street trees should be planted.*



*The northeast corner of East Rock and North Main Streets, where the urban character of the Downtown Core district falls apart. Future redevelopment should rectify this with traditional street front architecture.*



**POST URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT  
REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The largest and least constrained redevelopment opportunity downtown-wide falls within the Post Urban Renewal District. Spanning two half-blocks plus additional land outside the immediate study area, the parcel is bordered by East Wolfe, East Gay, and North Main Streets. The parcel represents approximately one sixth of Main Street’s total downtown commercial street frontage. The property also represents an important link between the new County Administrative Offices and the Downtown Core Area. (See map on page 34.)

A second substantial redevelopment parcel found within the Post Urban Renewal Zone is bordered by East Water and South Main streets. Because a significant portion of this parcel reaches into the Downtown Core District, the area is addressed in its entirety in the Chapter on Downtown Core Redevelopment Opportunities.

All redevelopment within the Post Urban Renewal District should follow a traditional downtown street urban design model vs. the current, suburban highway strip pattern in order to better relate to and, in effect, “grow” the downtown. Redevelopment should respect the historic architectural character of the Downtown as manifest in a traditional urban relationship to the street and comfortable, human scale creating a viable and engaging pedestrian environment.

Development should accommodate both short-term on-street and long-term mid-block parking options. All signage and landscaping should be well conceived, attractive, and contributory to the ambience and character of the district. Below is a catalogue of pictures of analogous redevelopment projects representing the above described urban design principles.





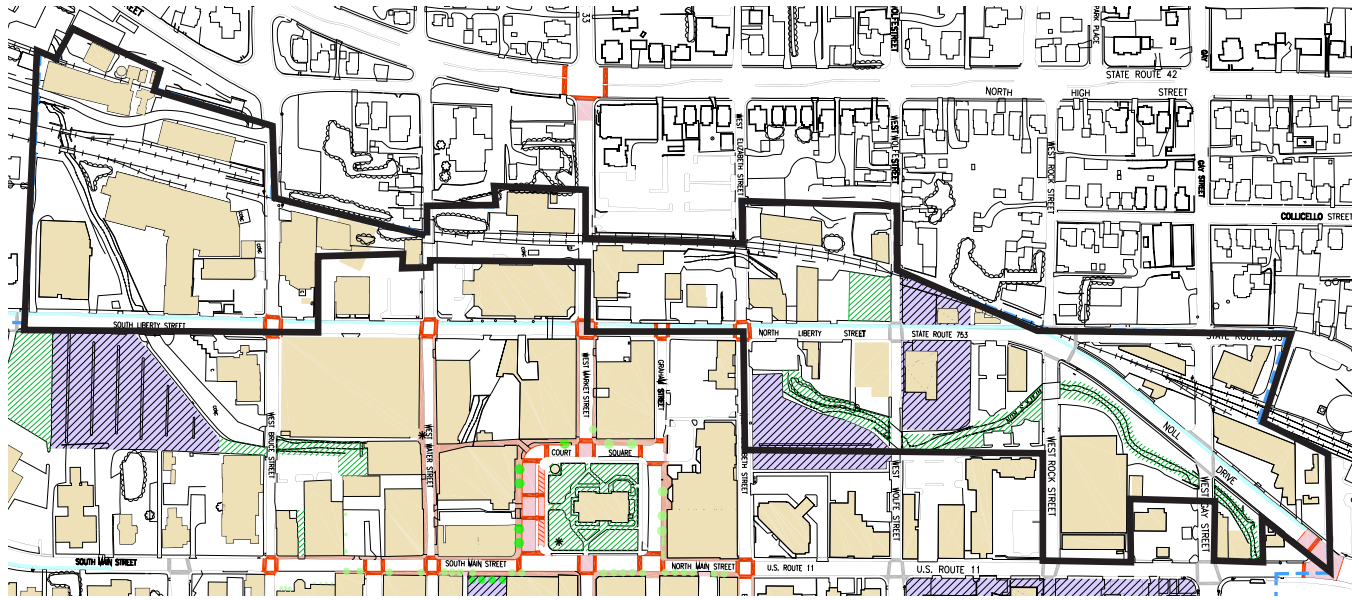
## RAIL/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT



The Rail/Industrial District forms the western edge of the downtown planning area. It zig-zags saw-tooth fashion to adjoining districts, likely due to the slow attrition of rail transportation age buildings. Still standing rail age buildings are uniformly of strong character but in varying degrees of repair and use. For example, the handsome Wetsel Seed, Inc. building, converted to use by high-tech, software firm Fairfield Language Technologies is a brilliant demonstration of the adaptive re-use of an industrial age structure. The remarkable former Chesapeake Western Railway Administration and railway freight buildings on Chesapeake Avenue, by contrast, are presently boarded up. The adjoining Rockingham Mill buildings are in desperate need of repair although still in active use for storage.

The physically fragmented Rail/Industrial district easily divides into several sub-areas, each with

an individual character. For example, the West Gay and Noll Street precinct is sliced diagonally not only by southbound Route 11 and the rail line but also by Blacks Run. So bold are its resulting, non-orthogonal buildings, the area projects a non-conventional spirit. The Chesapeake Avenue sub-district is separated from downtown to the east by the railway line. It is separated from the predominately residential west side of Harrisonburg by a steep bank. Relative isolation lends the precinct a sense of small neighborhood scale and individuality on the one hand, and a perceived sense of danger during business off-hours on the other. The Wetsel Seed complex bracketing Market Street is most closely linked to the downtown core and as mentioned is distinguished for its progressive adaptive re-use of very beautiful historic warehouse buildings.



*Rail/Industrial District Plan*

**LEGEND**

- STUDY BOUNDARY
- SIDEWALK
- CROSS WALK - UNIT PAVEN
- CROSS WALK - PAINTED
- STREET PAVING
- BIKE LANE
- REDEVELOPMENT AREA
- BUILDING
- PUBLIC SPACES



The streets serving the Rail/Industrial District are in a similar poor condition as many of the district's buildings. Chesapeake Avenue is totally lacking in sidewalks and street lighting. The street itself is ill-defined. Except at West Bruce Street, all track crossings are at grade. Slow-moving trains frequently hold up traffic for periods of more than a half hour. Many side street sidewalks are discontinuous and/or

in deteriorated condition. Street lights are typically cobra heads mounted to shared, creosoted wood utility poles.

Also dissecting the district diagonally is Black's Run Creek. The largely channeled creek bed adds a level of interest to the orthogonal block pattern of the neighborhood.



*Development of Black's Run Greenway promises to greatly enhance the Rail/Industrial District.*



*View north on Liberty Street. Rudimentary streetscape improvements are required district wide.*

## RAIL/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

**STREETSCAPE IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES:** This district offers excellent opportunities for creative adaptive reuse projects. Advantage should be taken of incentive programs such as historic tax credits.

As is the case with the Post Urban Renewal District, rudimentary streetscape improvements including screening of parking, repair of sidewalks, and restriction of curb-cuts in number and length should be mandated for all future development or re-development.

It is recommended that all streetscape selections for the Rail/Industrial District be solid and bold in scale and simple and/or traditional in style to be complimentary of the district's predominately industrial, rail age surroundings. Basic materials are preferred to faux materials such as bomanite pavings or plastic fencing. Used materials such as salvaged street cobbles may be completely appropriate. Outdoor exhibition of large-scale, industrial age artifacts such as a restored, antique steam locomotive or an early cement mixer is highly encouraged. Interpretive signage such as an informative panel on the vanished Houck's Steam Tannery or Whitmore's



*Many vestige Rail/Industrial buildings have indisputable architectural character and charm. With redevelopment billboards may be expected to come down.*

Percheron Breed Livery Stable would likewise embellish the district. Sturdy, low-maintenance plant materials with high tolerance for urban conditions are preferable to delicate, ornamental materials.

An important objective of the streetscape plan is to effectively link this district with the downtown core. HEC is scheduled to underground the electric lines on a portion of Bruce Street which should greatly enhance this street providing access to both the noteworthy Chesapeake Avenue Rail/Industrial neighborhood and the municipal parking garage.

The area will greatly benefit from the Black's Run Greenway Project, which promises to both beautify and provide an alternative pedestrian route linking the district's disconnected sub-areas. Wayfinding must be emphasized throughout the district given its fragmented nature and potential for tourist discovery.

### **SIDEWALK PAVING AND STREET CROSSWALKS:**

Sidewalks and curbs for the Rail/Industrial District should be at minimum concrete with all crosswalks painted. A unit brick or concrete paver may also be suitable if an integral part of a paving theme related to large scale redevelopment.



*An example of a paving theme that complements the historic character of the district.*



**LIGHTING:** Rail/Industrial District street lights, most of which are cobra head style fixtures mounted to electric utility poles, should be steadily replaced with the shaded pendant style fixtures, appropriately scaled to each respective street. Color finish should be Dark Bronze.

**STREET TREES:** Street trees appropriate for the visual character and urban physical conditions of the Rail/Industrial District include Bloodgood London Plane Tree (*Platanus x acerifolia* 'Bloodgood'), Southern Catalpa (*Catalpa bignonioides*), Eastern Redbud (*Cercis Canadensis*), Fruitless Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Rotundiloba'), Japanese Black Pine (*Pinus thunbergiana*), and Shumard Oaks

(*Quercus shumardii*). (Also see remarks on well-integrated landscape for the Post Urban Renewal District, page 36.)

**BENCHES:** DuMor's Bench 160 with DuMor's Bronze Powdercoat color finish is recommended. The same bench is also available with tough, ipe wood slats if preferred. The bench should be surface mounted.

**TRASH RECEPTACLES:** DuMor's metal grid Trash Receptacle 48 with Bronze Powdercoat finish is recommended for the Rail/Industrial District. The embedded mounting option is recommended.



*Revitalization of Bruce Street should be made top priority in light of its strategic role in linking Chesapeake Avenue with downtown.*

**RAIL/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT  
REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The principal Rail Industrial District redevelopment sites lie to the northeast of the downtown core. The largest parcel borders on a meandering segment of Blacks Run Creek with primary frontage on West Elizabeth Street. To the east this parcel borders the rear of the Public Safety Building and a three story walk-up apartment building. Given that the property neither faces a principle commercial street nor lies adjacent to any retail district it appears best suited for either a housing development or additional downtown parking deck.

A second smaller lot facing Liberty Street sits directly across West Elizabeth Street from a neighborhood pocket park presently under construction. The parcel also borders Black’s Run Greenway to the east. This parcel is ideal for a first floor commercial space with residential apartments above. Opposite this parcel on Liberty Street, backing up to the rail line is a third, street corner parcel well suited for a small business with minimal parking demand. (See map on page 40 or on page 21.)



*West Elizabeth Street facing east towards the Downtown Core District.*





## DOWNTOWN GATEWAYS



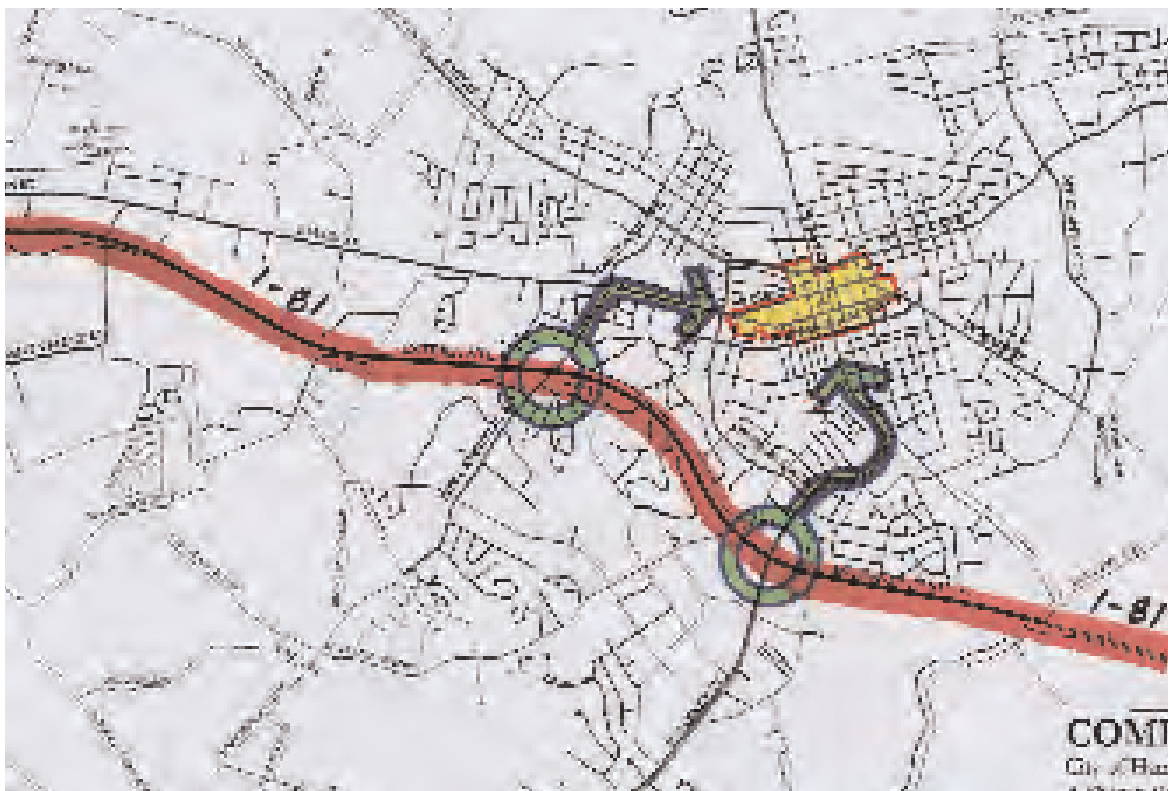
Proposed improvements for the four Gateways into downtown consist of unit paved street intersections and crosswalks, the start of period street lighting and decorative banners, and general consolidation of signage. Hardscape materials selected for Court Square and each of the proposed gateways should match. Commercial properties bordering the four gateway intersections should be encouraged to restrict signage to a minimum to not compete with

or overpower the gateway. Building mounted signage is typically preferable to monument or pole mounted signage.

The eastern and southern approaches to downtown Harrisonburg are considerably more heavily trafficked than their northern and western counterparts due to the configuration of the City's Route 81 interchanges. Implementation of the South and East Gateway Plans should therefore receive priority.



*Proposed North, South, East and West Downtown Gateway locations.*



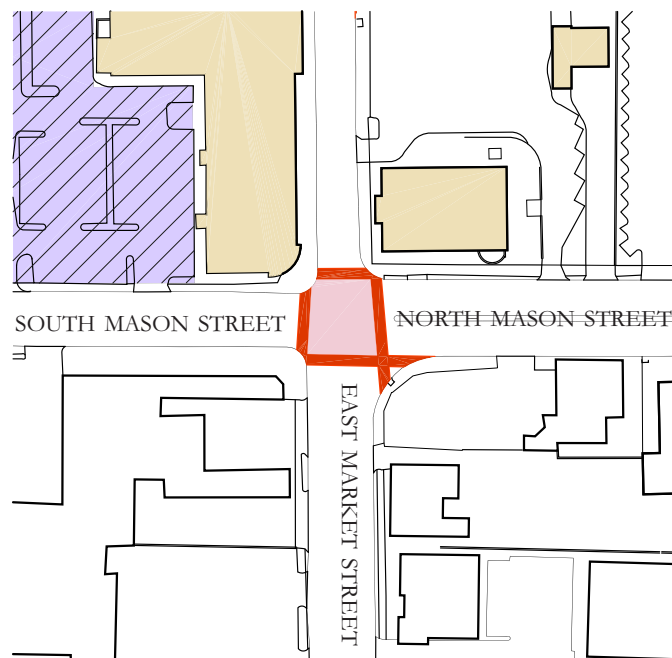
*Interstate 81 interchanges as they relate to and influence the eastern and southern Downtown Gateways.*



## EAST GATEWAY

The East Gateway falls at the border of the current downtown district at the intersection of East Market Street and Mason Street. The boundary of town and cityscape at this intersection is presently quite distinct. The proposed Gateway is visible for a considerable distance as one descends East Market Street,

and provides an ideal, picture postcard, framed view of Court Square. The two commercial banks bracketing this street corner should be encouraged to replace free standing monument signs with well integrated building mounted signs.



*Approach from the East to East Market and Mason Streets intersection.*



*Existing view of East Gateway intersection.*



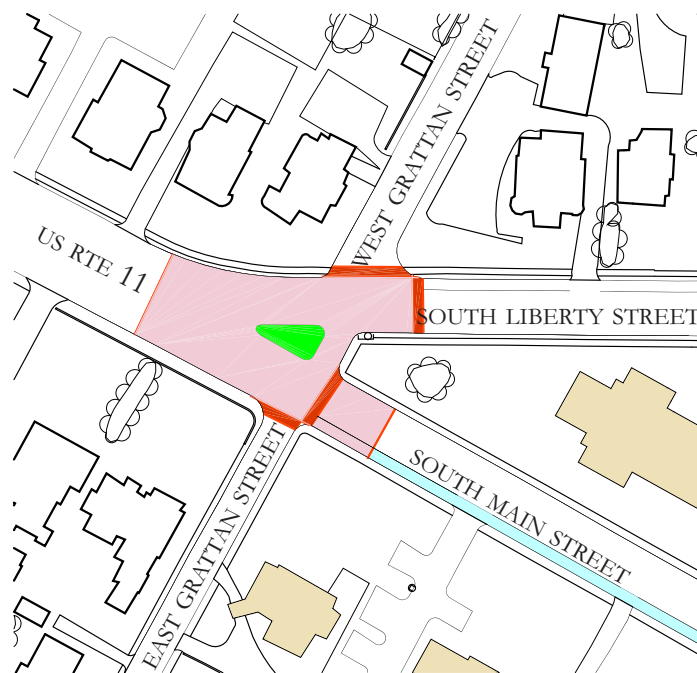
*Proposed view of East Gateway intersection, illustrating crosswalks, street paving and banners.*



**SOUTH GATEWAY**

The proposed southern gateway coincides with the division of business Route 11 into north and south one-way streets. The site is currently occupied by a handsome World War I Memorial consisting of a flagpole and a traditional bronze sculpture of a seated woman raised above the street on a planted, concrete podium. The quality of this landscape bed is

not on a par with the annual and perennial planting beds gracing Courthouse Square and the East Market Street entrance to downtown and merits improvement. The memorial is also seriously marred by a prominent “Do Not Enter” traffic sign. An alternative location should be considered with VDOT for this sign.



*Approach to South Gateway.*

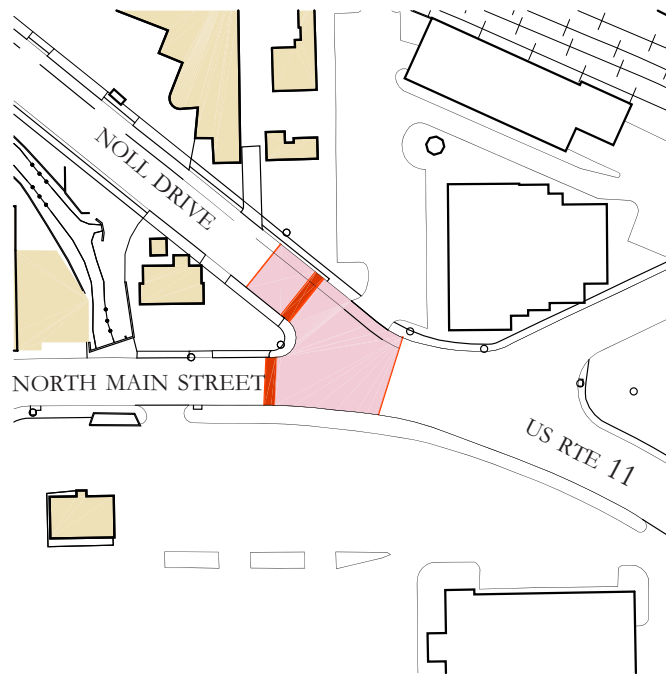


*Investigate relocation of “Do Not Enter” sign to north corner of monument or via street markings.*

**NORTH GATEWAY**

The northern Urban Renewal District is presently introduced by towering grain silos, a pizza shop, and the northern terminus of the proposed Black’s Run Greenway. Calculated introduction of plant material at this location would achieve a better parity

between this downtown entrance and the well landscaped southern, World War I Memorial gateway. It would also better signal the Black’s Run Greenway’s northern trailhead.



*Approaching Gateway from North.*



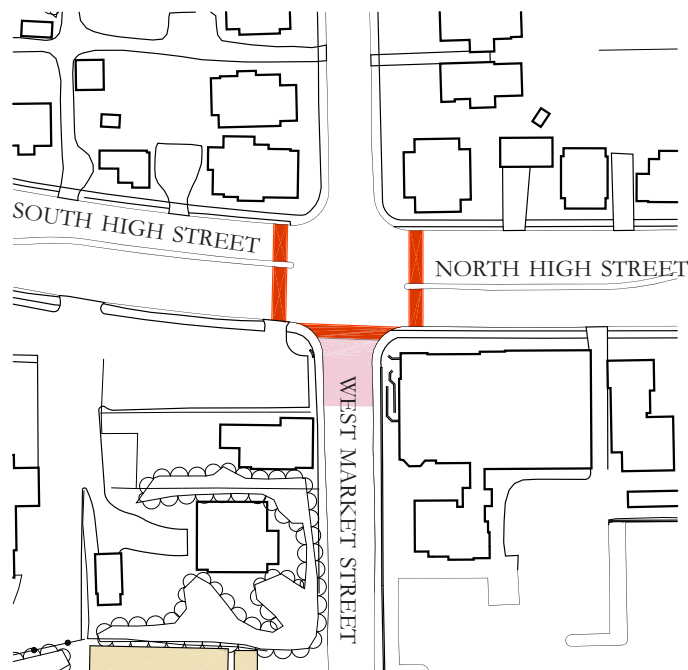
*Northern terminus of proposed Black’s Run Greenway visible directly behind Pizza Shop.*



## WEST GATEWAY

The West Gateway is proposed at the crest of West Market Street at its intersection with High Street, where the demarcation between town and cityscape is most pronounced and a stunning view of the Rockingham County Courthouse building is bracketed between picturesque Otterbein United Methodist

Church and a very beautiful stand of large trees. In this case it is not recommended that the entire sprawling four-lane intersection be converted to unit pavers. Crosswalks and unit paving where West Market constricts to three lanes will suffice.



*Approach to West Gateway intersection. The Rockingham County Courthouse building appropriately terminates view.*



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## DOWNTOWN BANNER DESIGNS

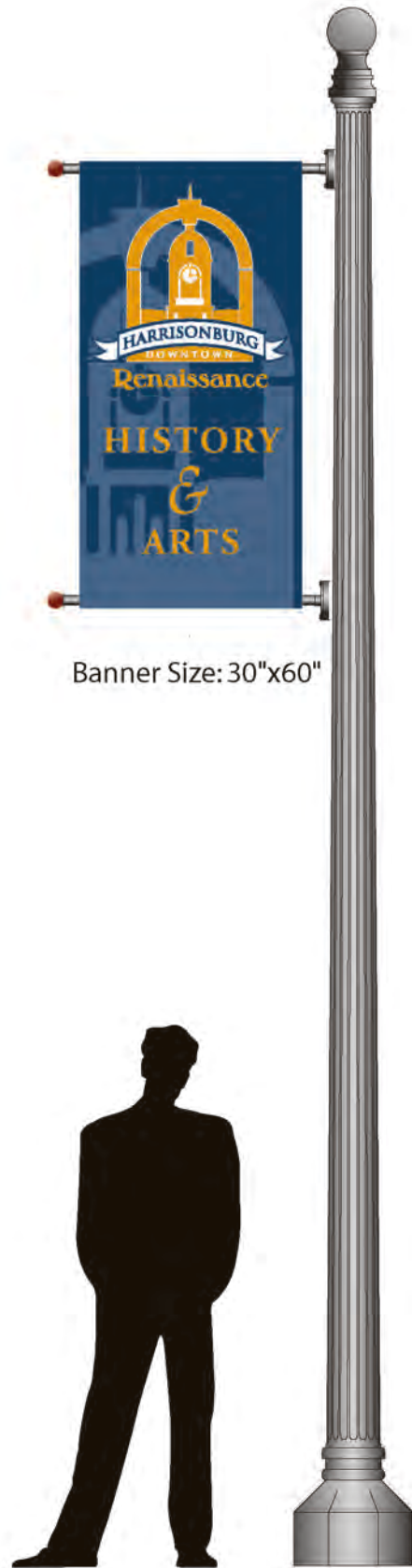




Banner Size: 30"x60"



Banner Size: 30"x 84"



Banner Size: 30"x60"



Banner Size: 30"x 84"



Banner Size: 30"x 84"

Harrisonburg Downtown Schematic Sign Design

Harrisonburg, Virginia



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## STREETSCAPE STANDARDS



## Harrisonburg Downtown Study - Streetscape Standards

### 1. Downtown Core

	pavings and curbs	
	sidewalks	<i>red brick, running bond perpendicular to curb, bituminous setting bed over reinf concrete slab, sand joints</i>
	crosswalks	<i>concrete unit paver, herringbone pattern, bituminous setting bed over reinf concrete slab, sand joints</i>
	street paving - special	<i>concrete unit paver, herringbone pattern, bituminous setting bed over reinf concrete slab, sand joints</i>
	street paving - basic	<i>asphalt, use brown stone aggregate</i>
	curbs	<i>granite</i>
	street furnishings	
	period tear drop, 22' ht.	<i>replace shoe box fixture with Holophane Memphis Luminaire, Columbia 24" base Pole, and Boston Harbor crossarm, with banner bracket</i>
	tall pendant, 20' ht.	<i>AAL-UCL-SR-ANG H3-FLD/400 MH-DBZ on a DB10-5R20-DBZ pole w/ SLA 18-2-DBZ arm, provide 4" tenon</i>
	medium pendant, 16' ht.	<i>AAL-UCM-SR-STR-H2-FTG/175 MH - DBZ on a DB6-4R16-DBZ pole w/ SLA 24-DBZ arm</i>
	traffic signal lights	<i>continue with enhanced bronze poles, replace yellow light boxes with matching bronze fixtures</i>
	trash receptacles	<i>Landscape Forms Scarborough with liner, 25" dia. X 40"h, side opening, Stormcloud Powdercoat Finish</i>
	benches	<i>Landscape Forms Scarborough, backed, 72" length, horizontal strap seat, surface mounted Stormcloud Powdercoat Finish</i>

### 2. Garden District

	pavings and curbs	
	sidewalks	<i>concrete</i>
	crosswalks	<i>painted</i>
	street paving	<i>asphalt, gray limestone aggregate</i>
	curbs	<i>concrete</i>
	street furnishings	
	adapted cobra head	<i>add banner brackets &amp; Cooper Epic style ped. level luminaire with modified rounded lower bar mounting arm</i>
	medium pendant, 16' ht.	<i>AAL-UCM-SR-STR-H2-FTG/175 MH - DBZ on a DB6-4R16-DBZ pole w/ SLA 24-DBZ arm</i>
	tall pendant, 20' ht.	<i>AAL-UCL-SR-ANG H3-FLD/400 MH-DBZ on a DB10-5R20-DBZ pole w/ SLA 18-2-DBZ arm, provide 4" tenon</i>
	traffic signal lights	<i>continue with enhanced bronze poles, replace yellow light boxes with matching bronze fixtures</i>
	trash receptacles	<i>DuMor Trash Receptacle 48, Green Powdercoat Finish, Embedded Mounting</i>
	benches	<i>DuMor Bench 160, 6' long, Green Powdercoat Finish, Surface Mounted</i>

## Harrisonburg Downtown Study - Streetscape Standards (cont.)

3. Post Urban Renewal		
	pavings and curbs	
	sidewalks	<i>concrete</i>
	crosswalks	<i>painted</i>
	street paving	<i>asphalt, gray limestone aggregate</i>
	curbs	<i>concrete</i>
	street furnishings	
	tall pendant	<i>AAL-UCL-SR-ANG H3-FLD/400 MH-DBZ on a DB10-5R20-DBZ pole w/ SLA 18-2-DBZ arm, provide 4" tenon</i>
	medium pendant, 16' ht.	<i>AAL-UCM-SR-STR-H2-FTG/175 MH - DBZ on a DB6-4R16-DBZ pole w/ SLA 24-DBZ arm</i>
	adapted cobra head	<i>add banner brackets &amp; Cooper Epic style pedestrian level luminaire with rounded lower bar mounting arm</i>
	traffic signal lights	<i>continue with enhanced bronze poles, replace yellow light boxes with matching bronze fixtures</i>
	trash receptacles	<i>DuMor Trash Receptacle 48, Green Powdercoat Finish, Embedded Mounting</i>
	benches	<i>DuMor Bench 160, 6' long, Green Powdercoat Finish, Surface Mounted</i>
4. Rail/Industrial District		
	pavings and curbs	
	sidewalks	<i>concrete</i>
	crosswalks	<i>painted</i>
	street paving	<i>asphalt, use brown stone aggregate</i>
	curbs	<i>concrete</i>
	street furnishings	
	tall pendant, 20' ht.	<i>AAL-UCL-SR-ANG H3-FLD/400 MH-DBZ on a DB10-5R20-DBZ pole w/ SLA 18-2-DBZ arm, provide 4" tenon</i>
	medium pendant, 16' ht.	<i>AAL-UCM-SR-STR-H2-FTG/175 MH - DBZ on a DB6-4R16-DBZ pole w/ SLA 24-DBZ arm</i>
	adapted cobra head	<i>add banner brackets &amp; Cooper Epic style ped. level luminaire with modified rounded lower bar mounting arm</i>
	traffic signal lights	<i>existing ok</i>
	trash receptacles	<i>DuMor Trash Receptacle 48, Bronze Powdercoat Finish, Embedded Mounting</i>
	benches	<i>DuMor Bench 160, 6' long, Bronze Powdercoat Finish, Surface Mounted</i>





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## PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES

Harrisonburg Streetscape - Preliminary Cost Estimate				1/25/05
Main Street Block - 1. Elizabeth Street to Court Square				
<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Unit Cost</i>	<i>Total</i>
Demolition				
Sidewalk	1,749	SF	1.25	\$2,186
Curb and Gutter	300	LF	3.00	\$900
Street milling		LS		\$5,000
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$8,086
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$11,038
Hardscape				
Granite Curb	380	LF	30.00	\$11,400
brick sidewalk paving	3,026	SF	15.00	\$45,390
pre-cast paver street paving	340	SF	17.00	\$5,780
pre-cast crosswalk	856	SF	17.00	\$14,552
re-pave asphalt street	5,500	SF	4.50	\$24,750
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$101,872
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$139,055
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$155,742
Site Furniture				
Scarborough Waste Receptacle	1	EA	900.00	\$900
Tear Drop Light Standard	2	EA	6,225.00	\$12,450
<i>Total - Site Furniture</i>				\$13,350
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$18,223
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$20,409
Softscape				
Remove trees	1	EA	200.00	\$200
Prune trees	4	EA	100.00	\$400
<i>Total - Softscape</i>				\$600
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$819
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$917
Total this sheet				\$188,106
Note: This estimate does not include utility re-locations, traffic or wayfinding signage, traffic striping				

Harrisonburg Streetscape - Preliminary Cost Estimate				1/25/05
Court Square Block - 2.				
<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Unit Cost</i>	<i>Total</i>
Demolition				
Sidewalk	21,500	SF	1.25	\$26,875
Curb and Gutter	1,605	LF	3.00	\$4,815
Street milling		LS		\$20,000
remove & dispose of concrete planters		LS		\$10,000
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$51,690
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$70,557
Hardscape				
Granite Curb	1,605	LF	30.00	\$48,150
brick sidewalk paving	17,500	SF	15.00	\$262,500
concrete sidewalk paving	3,000	SF	4.00	\$12,000
pre-cast paver street paving	11,550	SF	17.00	\$196,350
pre-cast paver crosswalk	6,000	SF	17.00	\$102,000
re-pave asphalt street	24,650	SF	4.50	\$110,925
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$864,172
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$1,179,595
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$1,321,146
Site Furniture				
Scarborough Bench	4	EA	1,100.00	\$4,400
Scarborough Waste Receptacle	2	EA	900.00	\$1,800
Tear Drop Light Standard	8	EA	6,225.00	\$49,800
<i>Total - Site Furniture</i>				\$56,000
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$76,440
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$85,613
Softscape				
Prune trees	8	EA	100.00	\$800
Plant new street trees	5	EA	500.00	\$2,500
<i>Total - Softscape</i>				\$3,300
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$4,505
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$5,045
<b>Total this sheet</b>				<b>\$1,482,361</b>
Note: This estimate does not include utility re-locations, traffic or wayfinding signage, traffic striping				



Harrisonburg Streetscape - Preliminary Cost Estimate				1/25/05
Main Street Block - 3. Court Square to Water Street				
<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Unit Cost</i>	<i>Total</i>
Demolition				
Sidewalk	3,690	SF	1.25	\$4,613
Curb and Gutter	400	LF	3.00	\$1,200
Street milling		LS		\$5,000
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$10,813
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$14,759
Hardscape				
Granite Curb	400	LF	30.00	\$12,000
brick sidewalk paving	3,690	SF	15.00	\$55,350
pre-cast paver street paving	189	SF	17.00	\$3,213
pre-cast paver crosswalk	756	SF	17.00	\$12,852
re-pave asphalt street	5,921	SF	4.50	\$26,645
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$110,060
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$150,231
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$168,259
<i>Total with Contingency (15%)</i>				\$193,498
Site Furniture				
Scarborough Bench	2	EA	1,100.00	\$2,200
Scarborough Waste Receptacle	1	EA	900.00	\$900
Tear Drop Light Standard	2	EA	6,225.00	\$12,450
<i>Total - Site Furniture</i>				\$15,550
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$21,226
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$23,773
<i>Total with Contingency (15%)</i>				\$27,339
Softscape				
Remove trees	1	EA	200.00	\$200
Prune trees	3	EA	100.00	\$300
Remove asphalt and replace soil		LS	3000.00	\$3,000
shrubs to screen parking area	24	EA	35.00	\$840
trees at parking edge	3	EA	300.00	\$900
groundcover at parking edge	9	FLATS	100.00	\$900
<i>Total - Softscape</i>				\$6,140
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$8,381
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$9,387
<i>Total with Contingency (15%)</i>				\$10,795
<b>Total this sheet</b>				<b>\$246,390</b>
Note: This estimate does not include utility re-locations, traffic or wayfinding signage, traffic striping				

Harrisonburg Streetscape - Preliminary Cost Estimate				1/25/05
Main Street Block - 4. Water Street to Newman Avenue				
<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Unit Cost</i>	<i>Total</i>
Demolition				
Sidewalk	2,296	SF	1.25	\$2,870
Curb and Gutter	300	LF	3.00	\$900
Street milling		LS		\$5,000
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$8,770
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$11,971
Hardscape				
Granite Curb	300	LF	30.00	\$9,000
brick sidewalk paving	2,296	SF	15.00	\$34,440
pre-cast paver street paving	340	SF	17.00	\$5,780
pre-cast paver crosswalk	737	SF	17.00	\$12,529
re-pave asphalt street	3,829	SF	4.50	\$17,231
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$78,980
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$107,807
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$120,744
Site Furniture				
	85	1	EA	900.00
Tear Drop Light Standard		2	EA	6,225.00
<i>Total - Site Furniture</i>				\$13,350
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$18,223
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$20,409
Softscape				
Prune trees	2	EA	100.00	\$200
<i>Total - Softscape</i>				\$200
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$273
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$306
Total this sheet				\$153,430
Note: This estimate does not include utility re-locations, traffic or wayfinding signage, traffic striping				

Harrisonburg Streetscape - Preliminary Cost Estimate				1/25/05
Main Street Block - 5. Newman Avenue to Bruce Street				
<i>Item</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Unit Cost</i>	<i>Total</i>
Demolition				
Sidewalk	1,749	SF	1.25	\$2,186
Curb and Gutter	300	LF	3.00	\$900
Street milling		LS		\$5,000
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$8,086
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$11,038
Hardscape				
Granite Curb	300	LF	30.00	\$9,000
brick sidewalk paving	1,749	SF	15.00	\$26,235
pre-cast paver street paving	110	SF	17.00	\$1,870
pre-cast paver crosswalk	756	SF	17.00	\$12,852
re-pave asphalt street	6,743	SF	4.50	\$30,344
<i>Total - Hardscape</i>				\$80,301
<i>Total with Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$109,610
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$122,763
Site Furniture				
Scarborough Bench	1	EA	1,100.00	\$1,100
Scarborough Waste Receptacle	1	EA	900.00	\$900
Tear Drop Light Standard	2	EA	6,225.00	\$12,450
<i>Total - Site Furniture</i>				\$14,450
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$19,724
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$22,091
Softscape				
Prune trees	2	EA	100.00	\$200
<i>Total - Softscape</i>				\$200
<i>Total w Indirect Cost (36.5%)</i>				\$273
<i>Total with Design (12%)</i>				\$306
<b>Total this sheet</b>				<b>\$156,198</b>
Note: This estimate does not include utility re-locations, traffic or wayfinding signage, traffic striping				



Harrisonburg Streetscape - Preliminary Estimate Summary	1/25/05
Main Street Block 1. Elizabeth Street to Court Square	\$ 188,106
Court Square Block 2.	\$ 1,482,361
Main Street Block 3. Court Square to Water Street	\$ 246,390
Main Street Block 4. Water Street to Newman Avenue	\$ 153,430
Main Street Block 5. Newman Avenue to Bruce Street	\$ 156,198
	\$ 2,226,485.00
Note: This estimate does not include utility re-locations, traffic or wayfinding signage, traffic striping	



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## FUNDING AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE SOURCES

This section provides information on funding resources and information on assisting local businesses.

There are numerous funding sources that have potential applicability. At the Federal and State level, these funding sources typically take the form of grants, matching grant programs and loan programs. At the local level, funding sources can include the capital portion of the general fund, tax increment financing, donations, bond referendums, public/private partnerships and the creation of business improvements districts (BID). Several private foundations offer grants for projects related to improving downtowns and redevelopment areas.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS:** The Department of Housing & Urban Development sponsors the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. CDBG provides 100% grants for the acquisition, rehabilitation or construction of certain public facilities. Harrisonburg is an entitlement city and downtown projects must compete with other projects in the community. The use of the funds is restricted to projects that would benefit lower and moderate-income persons. This program is a potential funding source for streetscape improvements if slum and blight is shown to exist.

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT:** The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has several loan and mortgage programs that could be applicable to the provision of housing within activity centers. These include: mortgage insurance for purchase or refinancing of existing multi-family rental housing; mortgage insurance for construction and/or rehabilitation of con-

dominium projects; urban revitalization demonstration program (HOPE VI); and the Section 108 loan guarantee program.

**TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT ACT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY (TEA-21):** The United States Congress enacted ISTEA in 1991 to facilitate creation of transportation enhancement activities and alternative methods for pedestrian movement, including trails and bikeways. This Act is up for renewal in May 2005 and will be known as TEA-3. Funding is available for the acquisition and development of greenways, bikeways and pedestrian trails, provided that proposed projects can emphasize the alternative transportation potential of these types of facilities, and not solely their recreation value.

The TEA-21 program provides approximately 80 percent of project planning, design and development funding, with the remaining 20 percent being contributed by the applicant. The TEA-21 program is administered by the Virginia Department of Transportation. Grant applications take approximately two years for approval and funding. Eligible expenses are:

- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Historic preservation
- Establishment of transportation museums
- Rails to trails projects
- Landscaping and scenic beautification
- Removal of outdoor ads
- Scenic and historic highways
- Mitigation of water pollution from highway runoff
- Safety and education activities for bicyclists and pedestrians

- Acquisition of scenic easements and historic sites
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings and facilities
- Archaeological planning and research

**HISTORIC TAX CREDITS:** Property owners who complete a certified rehabilitation of a significant historic building can receive an income tax credit on 25% of their eligible expenses through the Virginia Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program and an additional 20% credit through the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program.

**TAX INCREMENT FINANCING:** Tax increment financing (TIF) offers an opportunity to develop public/private partnerships allowing the public sector to provide needed improvements within activity centers, with the private sector paying for them in the form of future tax payments. TIF would make use of the increased tax base created by new development by capturing revenue from new construction to finance downtown improvements, as opposed to alternative revenue generation methods such as an across-the-board tax increase.

**COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT PARTNERSHIPS:** In low- and moderate income neighborhoods, Main Street programs can form partnerships with local banks to increase their small business and community development lending in historic commercial districts and their home lending in adjoining areas. Some direct Main Street funding is also possible.

**USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING:** The community facility loan program is for the purpose of construction, enlargement, extension, or otherwise improvement to community facilities for health care, public safety and public services in rural areas and towns with a population of 20,000 or less.

## THE VIRGINIA MAIN STREET PROGRAM

The Virginia Main Street Program is a wonderful resource. The following business assistance program summaries were supplied by the Virginia Main Street Program. More about these programs is also available on-line at [www.dhcd.virginia.gov/MainStreet/](http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/MainStreet/).

**LOCAL TECHNOLOGY ZONES:** locally-adopted technology zones can provide regulatory and fee relief (e.g. water and sewer tap fees, building permit fees, business licenses, etc.) to qualifying businesses. Enabled under Code of Virginia section 58.1-3850 and adopted by ordinance in the downtowns of Winchester ([www.techzoneva.org](http://www.techzoneva.org)), Charlottesville ([www.charlottesville.org](http://www.charlottesville.org)), Falls Church, Hampton and Lynchburg.

**STATE ENTERPRISE ZONES:** The Virginia Enterprise Zone Program provides general income tax credits, investment tax credits, job grants and real property improvement credits to qualifying businesses in state-designated enterprise zones. Administered by Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development's (VDHCD) Community Revitalization & Development Office at (804) 371-7030 or visit [www.dhcd.state.va.us/cd/crd/ezp/ezpindex.htm](http://www.dhcd.state.va.us/cd/crd/ezp/ezpindex.htm).

**FEDERAL HUB ZONES:** Certified small businesses may receive preferential federal contracting benefits if they are located in qualified geographic areas, as are many Virginia Main Street areas. The Small Business Administration's Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zone program certifies businesses for Federal contracting preferences that employ staff that live within the HUB Zone. The company must also maintain a "principal office" in one of these specially designated areas. Information about HUB Zone benefits, certification and geographic qualification may be obtained by contacting SBA staff at 202-205-7663 or at <https://eweb1.sba.gov/hub-zone/internet>.



**SMALL BUSINESS START-UP AND EXPANSION ASSISTANCE:** Assistance with business planning, financing, and counseling are provided under several programs. The Virginia Department of Business Assistance's (VDBA) Business Launch Pad ([www.dba.state.va.us/smdev/launchpad](http://www.dba.state.va.us/smdev/launchpad)) provides online resources and assistance for new and expanding businesses, including business planning, financing and registration. VDBA's network of 30 Small Business Development Centers across Virginia provide training, business plan assistance and counseling (804-371-0438 or [www.dba.state.va.us/smdev](http://www.dba.state.va.us/smdev)). DHCD's Virginia Enterprise Initiative partners and supports 15 local and regional microenterprise programs across Virginia. DHCD's Community Development Block Grant Program allows non-entitlement localities to compete for microenterprise program funding (804-371-7029 or [www.dhcd.state.va.us/CD/CDBG](http://www.dhcd.state.va.us/CD/CDBG)). The Virginia Microenterprise Network, a statewide membership organization, provides training conferences, publications and assistance (276-619-5500 or [www.vmn.org](http://www.vmn.org)).

**LOANS, GRANTS & TAX ABATEMENT:** Many Main Street downtown revitalization organizations have partnered with local banks to create loan pools that allow existing businesses to borrow for inventory and equipment. Loan pools, smaller matching grants and real estate tax abatement are also used to encourage physical improvements to buildings, including storefronts, signs, interiors, etc. Harrisonburg offers programs like these.

**FACADE GRANTS:** A Facade Grant Program could stimulate improvements to the visual image of downtown storefronts. This program might provide matching grants of up to \$TBD for exterior improvements.

**SIGNAGE GRANTS:** The signage incentive grant program sponsored by development authorities is typically a fifty percent matching grant up to \$TBD for new, or existing business owners.

**SUBORDINATED DEBT INVESTMENTS TAX CREDITS:** Section 58.1-339.4 of Code of Virginia allows a taxpayer to receive a tax credit equal to 50 percent of the amount of cash invested in a qualifying Virginia business that has annual gross revenues of less than \$5 million (ineligible businesses include financial, architecture, engineering, construction, health care, mining and real estate development). The maximum credit per year is \$50,000, but unused credits may be carried forward up to 15 years. The investor, family members and affiliated entities cannot be compensated by the business in which the investment is placed.

**FEDERAL NEW MARKETS TAX CREDITS:** The New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program of the US Treasury permits taxpayers to receive a credit against Federal income taxes for making qualified equity investments in designated Community Development Entities (CDEs). Substantially all of the qualified equity investment must in turn be used by the CDE to provide investments in low-income communities. Wachovia Community Development Enterprises and the National Trust Community Investment Corporation are the two primary tax credit allocators for Virginia downtowns that have local CDEs, such as Lynchburg. Investments made in partnership with Wachovia or the National Trust provide private sector investors a credit of 39% of the cost of the investment over a seven-year credit allowance period. For more information about the NMTC program or becoming CDE certified go to [www.cdfi-fund.gov/programs/nmtc](http://www.cdfi-fund.gov/programs/nmtc).

**SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATORS:** Small business incubators have been created in several Virginia communities. An incubator grant fund is administered by VDBA (804-371-8260 or [www.dba.state.va.us/smdev/sbincubator.asp](http://www.dba.state.va.us/smdev/sbincubator.asp)) to provide funds to assist with feasibility, construction and operating expenses. The Giles County Business Development Center in Narrows was funded by federal Appalachian Regional Commission and CDBG funds. The Virginia Business Incubation Association promotes, encourages, and supports the successful establishment and operation of small business incubation programs to stimulate economic development activity in Virginia. To locate an existing business incubator near you go to [www.vbia.org](http://www.vbia.org).

**NEW BUSINESS WELCOME PACKAGE:** Downtown organizations can also play a critical role in promoting new businesses to potential customers through ribbon cuttings, press releases, etc. The Downtown Wytheville Inc. welcome package provides an array of free or discounted services including radio and print ads, interior design, legal, accounting, insurance, consultations with the SBDC and a free lunch for the business owner on opening day. Helena, MT's package includes a free business plan review and parking strategy assessment, half price membership dues, a welcome banner and press release. Other communities have offered free banking, construction, day care, physical therapy and carpet cleaning ([www.downtownhelena.com](http://www.downtownhelena.com)).

**LEASING INCENTIVES:** The Downtown Hampton Development Partnership offers a finder's fee of up to \$1,200 to licensed commercial realtors when a tenant that is on a list of preferred business types (retail, service and office) signs a lease within the business improvement district. (Dan Seachord at 757-727-1771 or [www.downtownhampton.com](http://www.downtownhampton.com)).

**RENT SUBSIDY:** Rent subsidy is a business recruitment incentive used by some Main Street organizations (e.g. Shawano, WI and Elgin, TX) for reducing the burden of overhead expenses on new businesses that are in the difficult start-up period. Shawano's program underwrites \_ rent in year one, one third in year two and one sixth in year three.

**BUSINESS VISITATION OR MENTOR PROGRAMS:** Business visitation or mentor programs such as Norfolk's "Downtown 100" use qualified volunteers to visit and offer assistance to retain and strengthen the viability of existing businesses. The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), an SBA resource partner, offers confidential business counseling to entrepreneurs. Call 1-800-634-0245 for the chapter nearest you. Additional business training seminars are conducted by Main Street and downtown organizations to strengthen existing businesses in several Virginia communities. Topics include retail trends, advertising, cash and inventory management, theft prevention, customer service, employee development, etc.

**VIRGINIA MAIN STREET TECHNICAL SERVICES:** Virginia Main Street technical services include several publications, audiovisuals and assorted material on business planning, recruitment, management and promotion, available to designated Main Street communities in the form of technical specialist visits, and to all communities through the Main Street resource library (804-371-7030 or [www.vamainstreet.org](http://www.vamainstreet.org)). Resource publications in the Main Street library include:

- The Virginia Entrepreneur's Guide: How to Start & Manage a Business in Virginia (University Press)
- Virginia Business Resource Directory: A Guide to Services Available for Existing & Potential Businesses (Virginia Employment Commission)

- Starting & Operating a Business in Virginia (Ernst & Young, Oasis Press)
- The Instant Business Plan: Twelve Quick & Easy Steps to a Successful Business (Puma Publishing)
- Virginia Capital Resources Directory (Virginia Small Business Financing Authority)
- Small Store Survival: Success Strategies for Illinois Retailers (Illinois Retail Merchants Association)

The following videos and workbooks from the Oklahoma State University Center for Apparel Marketing & Merchandising:

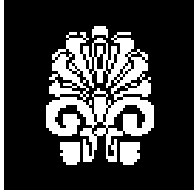
- Store Layout & Design
- Small Store Merchandise Planning
- Small Store Management
- Retail Promotion Strategies
- Small Store Advertising & Promotion
- Visual Merchandising
- Displays That Sizzle & Sell
- Customer Care





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## APPENDIX



FRAZIER  
ASSOCIATES

Date: September 17, 2004

Job Name: Harrisonburg Downtown Revitalization Plan  
Project Number: 2003.104

In attendance:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Phone / Fax</u>
Eddie Bumbaugh,	Executive Director, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR)	
Roger Baker,	Harrisonburg City Manager	
Stacy Turner,	Harrisonburg City Planning Director and HDR Task Force	
Jim McKone,	HDR Task Force, James McHone Jewelry	
John Sease,	HDR Task Force, Sease & Associates	
Ron Davenport,	HDR Task Force, Blue Ridge Design Studio	
Mike York,	HDR Task Force, HEC	
Eugene Stoltzfus,	HDR Task Force, Rosetta Stone	
Kathy Frazier,	Frazier Associates	
Tom Clayton,	Frazier Associates	
Arthur Bartenstein,	Frazier Associates	

1. Kathy Frazier began by revisiting the Task Force's initial sixteen project goals. All were re-confirmed. It was further agreed than an additional objective includes the identification of potential funding sources.
2. Kathy Frazier next played "Keeping Up Appearances", an audio-visual show prepared ten years ago by Frazier Associates for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program. The committee found the presentation highly relevant.
3. Photographic images of proposed north, south, east, and west downtown gateway locations were reviewed. The committee responded that all suggested locations are logical and appropriate. Mr. Stoltzfus pointed out that the proposed gateway location as approached from the east is viewed from a great distance. Seen from afar its scale must be legible; perhaps "building" scale. Eddie Bumbaugh reported that there are current plans to install six Virginia Main Street welcome signs well outside the downtown core. Two will be placed on Route 42, two on Route 11, and two on Route 33. It was also noted that in many ways, the overhead railroad crossing light that one passes under while entering downtown from the west represents a gateway.
4. Following gateways discussion turned to analysis of individual downtown districts. Kathy Frazier explained that her team had broken the downtown study area into five individual districts for the sake of clarity. Copies of the

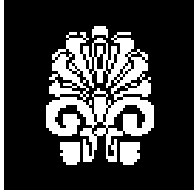
preliminary district plans were delivered earlier the same week to the HDR's Design Committee for purposes of performing a SWOT survey. SWOT is shorthand for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Following a brief image and verbal summary of each district by Kathy and Arthur, the Task Force Committee members sitting on the Design Committee reported findings. The Garden District was addressed first.

5. John Sease, reporting for the Garden District SWOT team, first recommended that the district boundary be changed to transfer the area from Bruce Street South to the Post Urban Renewal District. These streets are neither well landscaped nor pedestrian friendly. Frazier agreed to modify the plan. He listed as strengths of the Garden District its generous landscape and tree cover, lack of commercial signage, relative safety, and collection of historic buildings. Weaknesses include a lack of outdoor, public seating and narrow sidewalks. He observed that pedestrians often must compete with sidewalk invading street signs. The district's primary opportunity was identified as the potential for increased student pedestrian traffic; its primary threat vulnerability to vandalism and the tendency of traffic to speed on north/south arterial South Main and Liberty Streets making them threatening to pedestrians. Jim McKane, a downtown merchant, has paid particularly close attention to the behavior of JMU students given that they are his best clients. He has observed that less than 10-15% of his student customers walk from campus to downtown. Some take the bus. Most drive. It was noted that more students tend to walk in the evening to downtown destinations and that the streets are reasonably well lit and seem safe at night.
6. Ron Davenport reported on the Core Downtown District. Strengths include its ample landscape, attractive and diverse buildings, economic vitality as the city's financial center, the centrality and beauty of historic Town Square, and the relative absence of overhead utility lines. Unlike new areas of Harrisonburg there's a there there thanks to the concentration of tall buildings. The downtown core's weaknesses include the general clutter of directional traffic signs, difficulty of parking, lack of wayfinding signage, presence of "missing teeth" in the overall urban fabric, and the narrowness of selected sidewalks. The possibilities of increased student housing, enhanced parking, outdoor dining on sidewalks, improved lighting, and availability of the Court Square open space for outdoor events were mentioned as opportunities. Threats include hazardously uneven sidewalks, trees that block signage and compete with sidewalk space, and the perceived danger and lack of use of municipal parking decks. The most frequent criticism of the city center expressed to Eddie Bumbaugh has been the poor condition of the sidewalk surface due to differential settlement of the poured concrete and pre-cast unit pavements. The Committee appears unanimous that the time has come to completely re-do the mid-70s streetscape improvements. Not only has the pavement deteriorated, the paving patterns now seem arbitrary, the landscape overgrown and/or uneven and in need of refurbishment, and there is no consistent, downtown-wide streetscape theme. Merchants complain that the trees block storefronts and signage. Trees on main street are also impediments to frequently passing feed trucks. The '76 installed, tall, shoe-box light fixtures, while not very attractive, provide an acceptable level of ambient lighting. Several members of the committee voiced strong opposition to any lighting where the light source might be visible. Indirect



- lighting is superior. Holiday season twinkle lights have not been a tradition in Harrisonburg presumably due to a lack of exterior electrical outlets.
7. Eddie Bumbaugh reviewed findings of the Government Services District survey team. Strengths listed include continued existence of the government center downtown, surplus of parking, and the presence of public art and street amenities such as seat walls and raised foundation plantings at the new Courthouse annex. Weaknesses are the poorly lit first level parking deck, the absence of trash containers, the crowding of the sidewalk by the parking deck's clipped holly foundation plantings, and crowding of the sidewalk by intruding traffic signs. Opportunities include future conversion of the lawn space behind City Hall to a public park and a Fun-Fest performance stage, conversion of a soon to be vacated police building to a positive new use, and the likely benefit of improved way finding signage. The largest threat is prospective expansion of the jail across Water Street.
  8. Stacey Turner reported on the Post Urban Renewal District. She noted as strengths the diversion of large trucks and heavy traffic to Mason Street and private landscape improvements on miscellaneous, isolated lots. Weaknesses include dominance of the automobile, absence of way finding signage to and from the district's parking deck, a preponderance of underutilized space, and inaccessibility to the handicapped of many sidewalks. Opportunities include better street signage, enhanced landscape on Mason Street, and both excellent and plentiful future redevelopment options. The primary threat concerns the perceived danger of the isolated open space between Rock Street and Kline's Dairy Stand.
  9. The leader of the Rail/Industrial District survey team was not present but had discussed her district with John Sease. John reported that the strengths were the districts' impressive industrial buildings and dissecting Black's Creek. Its opportunities include potentials for re-use of the industrial buildings, strengthening of east/west pedestrian and vehicular connections, and a second pedestrian greenway should the rail line be abandoned. The possibility of rail abandonment may also of course be recognized as a threat to survival of all remaining rail-dependent industry.
  10. Kathy Frazier concluded Frazier's presentation with a review of historic images of downtown Harrisonburg. She noted the prior existence of handsome and abundant streetscape elements including attractive gas lights, limestone curbing, brick paved streets, well delineated crosswalks, and highly ornamented store fronts.
  11. The final agenda item concerned the upcoming, September 23rd Public Workshop. Eddie Bumbaugh emphasized the importance of all Task Force members to attend. Kathy Frazier intends to bring to next week's meeting an abbreviated version of this meeting's presentation. Eddie Bumbaugh and Frazier Associates both heartily thanked the Task Force members for their participation in the just finished meeting.

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FRAZIER  
ASSOCIATES

Date: November 24, 2004

Job Name: Harrisonburg Downtown Revitalization Plan  
Project Number: 2003.104

In attendance:

Name, Representing

Eddie Bumbaugh, Executive Director, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR)

Roger Baker, Harrisonburg City Manager

Jim Barnes, City of Harrisonburg

Drew Williams, City of Harrisonburg

Randy See, Resource Network

Stacy Turner, Harrisonburg City Planning Director and HDR Task Force

James McKone, HDR Task Force, James McHone Jewelers

John Sease, HDR Task Force, Sease & Associates

Ron Davenport, HDR Task Force, Blue Ridge Design Studio

Mike York, HDR Task Force, HEC

Tom Austin, City of Harrisonburg Public Works

Charles Chenault, Harrisonburg City Council

Kathy Frazier, Frazier Associates

Arthur Bartenstein, Frazier Associates

Kathy Frazier updated the committee on the project's status and reviewed a clarified project goals and strategies statement. She then discussed the Core Downtown District reviewing first feedback received at the September 17, 2004 public meeting, then a draft of design proposals. Lengthy discussion followed. Below is a summary.

- 1. Proposal:* As a general development strategy, capitalize on that which is currently prospering best in downtown. Concentrate re-development strategies to stabilize, connect, and gradually build out from the healthiest urban tissue.  
*Response:* All in favor.
- 2. Proposal:* Simplify the five, previously outlined downtown study area districts to four by dissolving the Government District; splitting it along West Bruce Street between the Garden and Downtown Core Districts. This not only reflects the present dual character of the government area, it also promises better integration and linking of Government facilities within neighboring districts.  
*Response:* All in favor.

3. *Proposal:* Remove 70's streetscape improvement curb bump-outs on Main Street. Substitute either an on-street lane of parallel parking or designated bike route.  
*Response:* Parking is better hidden away in rear lots. Waynesboro is uniquely configured to allow this. Parallel parking is both dangerous and unsightly on presently narrow Main Street. Parallel parking activity impedes traffic flow of Main Street. Any non-essential traffic calming on Main Street courts disaster. Like it or not, the street becomes a major artery when 81 shuts down. This occurs more frequently than one might expect. Don't however dismiss too quickly the utility of the current duck-in parking spots on Main Street. These provide customers a convenient way to run quick errands. The delivery only stalls should be converted to 10 minute only parking spaces to better facilitate this use. Parking is not meaningfully increased by adding back the parallel lane of parking. Not more than a handful of spaces would be gained. Jonesville Virginia (?) offers an excellent example of an effective off-street, back lot parking strategy. Remote parking has been proven to work if it is both easy to find and linked within a three block range to all presumed destinations by a safe and attractive pedestrian route.  
*Counter Response:* A bike path in a University town makes a great deal of sense. Students are likely to use a bike lane. It adds a unique, people vs. car oriented feature to the downtown scene. A bike lane might also do away with the confusion surrounding policies governing the present duck-in, parallel parking bays. Other streets may be better alternatives to Main Street for bike lane traffic, however. Additional options should also be considered.
4. *Proposal:* Trees currently lining Main Street and Court Square should be thinned to achieve a greater sense of spaciousness, better penetration of light to both buildings and sidewalk, and visibility of retail and professional storefronts. This issue is linked to Proposal #3, noted above, in so far as removal of the current bump-outs requires removal of many existing street trees.  
*Response:* Cutting trees may be inadvisable from a political standpoint. The public would miss the trees and their shade. As a compromise, why not simply prune up the trees to allow greater storefront visibility and light penetration?  
*Counter Response:* Due to narrowness of the streets, the trees in fact provide limited shade to sidewalk pedestrians; not more than a couple of hours a day. Consider selected removal of the trees where they are bunched up.
5. *Proposal:* Replace the contemporary/utilitarian style, 28' tall shoe box light fixtures with a traditional tear drop street light fixture reminiscent of an earlier, Harrisonburg light standard visible in old pictures.  
*Response:* There may be an opportunity to re-use the existing shoe-box fixtures elsewhere in town. The proposed, traditional tear drop fixture is distinctive, complements Harrisonburg's historic architecture well, and offers the opportunity for further adornment with colorful banners or hanging flower baskets.  
*Counter Response:* Contemporary approaches to illuminating downtown are superior to those available in the past. Flood lighting projected at buildings may accent their architecture while indirectly lighting streets. Trees may also be effectively lit from in-ground floods. The present shoe box fixtures, high above one's general line of sight, are little noticed and provide satisfactory, general



street lighting. With this school of thought, the primary aim is to conceal the bright light source or filament.

*Counter Response:* Flood lights projected at buildings risk disturbing upper level, inhabitants.

6. *Proposal:* Pave core Main Street and Court Square sidewalks with red brick laid in a perpendicular, running bond pattern reminiscent of the City's former brick sidewalks. Pave crosswalks with brick pavers in a herringbone pattern, better tolerant of wear from vehicular turning movements. Provide a rigid, concrete sub-slab base to all proposed street and sidewalk unit paving to prevent uneven settling. Should brick paving prove too expensive, consider re-paving sidewalks with a well-crafted, well proportioned all-concrete pattern. Replace existing concrete curbing with cut limestone curbing should it be locally available. If not consider granite.

*Response:* The present, 70s era unit paved sidewalks laid on a gravel-only base are definitely in need of replacement given their presently hazardous, uneven condition. The zig-zag paver style is also no longer fashionable. The proposed, traditional brick look both enriches the downtown streetscape and complements the core's important historic architecture. Unit pavers are preferable to asphalt Street Print which holds up under busy street conditions for no more than a couple of years.

*Counter Response:* The City cannot easily afford brick paving. Basic concrete paving would be better than the present hodgepodge of both unit and concrete paving. Let's settle for all concrete. Of all the options, plain concrete is the easiest to maintain.

7. *Proposal:* Pave the level street area fronting the historic County Courthouse building to the south with a herringbone brick unit-pave pattern to establish a grand urban plaza that might be closed to traffic on special occasions. Consider removal of the raised concrete planters that presently edge and confine both sides of this street, replacing the trees with judiciously spaced and planted flush to grade street trees. Similarly pave the primary east/west and north/south intersections denoting arrival to the Downtown Core.

*Response:* Doing so would both magnify the County Courthouse building's presence and provide a fitting setting for civic events. Perhaps more sides of the Square should be considered for such treatment although the proposed, south front seems a logical start. There is demonstrated need for a satisfactory, large public gathering space downtown.

8. *Other General Committee Comments:*

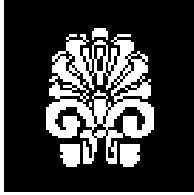
Parking must be both better clarified and simplified in downtown Harrisonburg. Horror stories abound. Every indication suggests that Downtown will turn the corner again and grow. As the downtown re-builds, serious consideration should be given to additional structured parking solutions. For the present, Harrisonburg would do well to eliminate all meters and continue to discourage merchants and their respective employees from monopolizing the most convenient parking spots.

Cosmetic changes to the downtown such as the addition of crosswalks may be in order. More substantial improvements such as re-doing of the sidewalks replacement of the streetlights may be too costly. Improvements to the core area of downtown must be evaluated against improvements to potentially needier districts.

Downtown Harrisonburg's experiments with shop-front decorative container planters have proven successful. Downtown merchants are willing and capable of caring for these.

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CC: Eddie Bumbaugh, KF, TC



FRAZIER  
ASSOCIATES

Date: December 14, 2004

Job Name: Harrisonburg Downtown Revitalization Plan  
Project Number: 2003.104

In attendance:

Name, Representing

Eddie Bumbaugh, Executive Director, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR)

Roger Baker, Harrisonburg City Manager

Jim Barnes, City of Harrisonburg

Drew Williams, City of Harrisonburg

Jim Baker, City of Harrisonburg Public Works

Stacy Turner, Harrisonburg City Planning Director and HDR Task Force

Mike York, HDR Task Force, HEC

Eugene Stoltzfus, HDR Task Force, Rosetta Stone

Charles Chenault, Harrisonburg City Council

Kathy Frazier, Frazier Associates

Tom Clayton, Frazier Associates

Arthur Bartenstein, Frazier Associates

The committee resumed its discussion of the downtown comprehensive streetscape plan shifting attention from the Downtown Core area to the surrounding Garden, Post Urban Renewal, and Rail/Industrial districts. The meeting was led by Eddie Bumbaugh and Kathy Frazier.

1. *Garden District Proposals:* Because this district links the downtown with hospital and JMU areas, it is important to further encourage both walking and biking. Painted crosswalks should be provided at all intersections. The present cobra head street lights should be retrofitted with pedestrian level luminaries and banner brackets. If the street width permits, add a bike lane to the east side of Main and west side of Liberty Streets. Benches should be located at bus stops. The City should adopt a landscape ordinance with stricter requirements for the Garden District including installation of street trees, screening of off street parking, screening of utility and trash collection areas, and limitations on size and materials of signage. The large parking area behind City Hall should be considered a prime, mixed-use commercial/residential development site. The City should not commit to a final design of the designated park area to the south of the parking lot until plans are finalized for the entire parcel.



*Response:* The Committee appeared in general support of all above proposals. It may be difficult to continue a bike lane into the heart of downtown where the overall street width narrows however that may be quite acceptable given that most bikers slow down and disperse once in downtown. Evaluation of optimal bike routes requires a more regional view than the present, downtown-focused study permits.

2. *Post Urban Renewal District Proposals:* Kathy noted that this district offers tremendous potential for mixed-use commercial/residential development. She showed the committee several examples of projects reflecting Main Street urban design principles. Should full scale redevelopment of this area be far in the future, rudimentary site improvements are in order. Sidewalk repairs are required, parking and utility areas should be screened, billboard signage should be banned, the public parking garage requires both a facelift and improved lighting.

*Response:* The Committee appeared in general support of all above proposals. Mr. Stoltzfus spoke in favor of an urban design overhaul of this area with traditional urban street vs. contemporary suburban strip oriented development. He believes that plans should be developed to illustrate the potential. Stoltzfus mentioned that a project in Chapel Hill, North Carolina offers an excellent example of a mixed use retail/retirement community center. Parking areas are contained and there is an excellent mix of green space and water features. Eddie Bumbaugh would like to consider both better lighting of the structured parking facility for security purposes and large scale art murals. He also believes that it is important to stress improvement of pedestrian links from the parking structure to core downtown destinations.

3. *Rail/Industrial District Proposals:* Kathy noted that this district offers excellent opportunities for creative adaptive reuse projects. Advantage should be taken of incentive programs such as historic tax credits. The area will greatly benefit from the Black's Run Development Project. An important objective of the streetscape plan is to effectively link this district with the downtown core. Street and sidewalk paving and street furnishings should relate both to the core downtown area and the existing industrial buildings. Wayfinding must be emphasized given the diverse and fragmented nature of this district.

*Response:* The Committee appeared in general support of all above proposals. Mr. York informed the Committee that HEC is scheduled to underground the electric lines on a portion of Bruce Street which should greatly enhance this street providing access to the noteworthy Chesapeake Avenue Rail/Industrial neighborhood. Abandonment of the tracks appears to have been a false rumor.

4. *Gateway Proposals:* Proposed improvements for Gateways consist of unit paved street crosswalks and intersections, the start of period street lighting and decorative banners, and general consolidation of signage. Kathy showed a before and proposed after image of the East Market Street Gateway.

*Response:* The Committee appeared in general support of all above proposals. There was considerable discussion of the optimal location for the north gateway. It was noted that the intersection of Mason and Route 11, one block further north, might offer more latitude for an entrance statement. The Noll

Drive/Main Street intersection, however, may better represent the actual threshold to downtown. Should the Channello's Pizza Shop ever become available, consideration might be given to relocation of the business and removal of the building yielding opportunities to celebrate both the downtown gateway and northern terminus of the Black's Run Greenway project. The Pizza Shop might better prosper at a location nearer to both downtown and the university campus. A nearly identical win/win example may be found in the relatively recent relocation of Salerno's Pizza from Lexington's northern gateway to central downtown.

5. *Other discussion:*

Mr. York informed the committee that HEC also has imminent plans to underground the overhead lines on Water Street from Federal Street to South Liberty. This fits perfectly with Frazier's suggestion that West Water Street be a priority for streetscape improvement given its current vitality and adjacency to Court Square.

Mr. Chenault inquired if it might not be advisable to close Graham Street, opening up possibilities for an outdoor café component to Calhoun's restaurant and superior Black's Run Greenway link to Court Square. Displacement of the Presbyterian's Church parking might be compensated by development of a mixed use center with structured parking situated in the lot directly behind the Public Safety building. It was agreed that this option should be noted by Frazier's plan.

Kathy Frazier informed the committee that the draft report should be available for review towards the end of January. A second, follow up meeting with the public might occur as early as March.

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CC: Eddie Bumbaugh, KF, TC



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FRAZIER  
ASSOCIATES

QUESTIONS FOR HARRISONBURG DOWNTOWN PUBLIC MEETING:

1. What are the top attractions that bring people downtown?
2. What is each district's greatest asset?
3. What is each district's greatest need?
4. How critical is Harrisonburg city center's historic identity to present day downtown?  
What priorities may supersede historic preservation?
5. Please evaluate the convenience, safety, and quality of experience of circulation downtown including public transit, travel and parking by car, and travel by bicycle or on foot.



**RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS  
FOR  
HARRISONBURG DOWNTOWN PUBLIC MEETING:**

**1. What are the top attractions that bring people downtown?**

**GROUP I**

Court Square	Wine & Cheese Shop
Calhouns	Klines
Artful Dodger Restaurant	Post Office
Bike	Walking Tours
Children's Museum	Festivals – First Night
Library	Church
Farmers Market	

**GROUP II**

**NOW:**

Courthouse  
Feel of downtown/ old fashioned feel  
Small town feel- can walk from one end to the other in a reasonably short period  
of time/pleasant walk  
Court Square Theater  
Specialty Shops  
Library  
Government Business  
Restaurants

**FUTURE:**

Hotel More Restaurants  
More Specialty Shops – food/grocery/convenience store

**GROUP 3**

Church	Childrens Museum
Work Destination	Courthouse
Banking	Restaurants
Shopping	Post Office
City/County Government	Library
Quilt Museum	Court Square Theater
Residential	

1. Government Agencies
2. Churches
3. Banking/Legal/Financial Services
4. Dining/Entertainment

## 5. Work Destinations

### GROUP 4

Business & Government offices	Merchants
Children's and Quilt Museums	Historical Architecture
Library	Farmer's Market
Churches	Outdoor Festivals
Oasis Art Gallery	Pedestrian Friendly
Restaurants – Sole proprietorships	

### GROUP 5

Restaurants	Children's Museum
Farmer's Market	Court Square Theater
Library	First Night
Quilt Museum	Wineshop
Oasis Artist's Cooperative	Wetzel's
Fabric Shop	Funfest
Concerts on the Square	Churches
Playhouse	

(The top six attractions are the first three in each column).

### GROUP 6

Restaurants	Churches
Retail	City Government
Gov. Services	Arts Venues
Entertainment	Library
Planned Events	

## 2. What is each district's greatest asset?

### GROUP 1

**Garden District** – architecture, wider sidewalks, green trees  
**Core** – courthouse and grassy area, theater, art district  
**Post Urban Development** – easy parking, Klins  
**Government** – Municipal Parking Lot  
Landscaping around gov't buildings  
**Rail & Industry** – Black's Run – Non conforming  
Architecture  
Liberty Park

## GROUP 2

**Garden District:** Shade/greenery/history (monument, older homes)

**Central core:** Court Square - Keep the facades (historic look)  
Economic center /business

**Urban renewal:** Kline's

Vacant land – opportunity

**Industrial/Rail:** Great old buildings (turn of the century)  
(lends itself to new uses)

Industry/business working

Black's Run

**Governmental District:** Brings employees downtown

Lots of parking space

## GROUP 3

**Garden** (green) -mature trees, nice place to take a walk, open green space

Joshua Wilton

Diversity is a good thing

Cows – minimal but inconsistency of JMU students from flowing down to Main Street

**Municipal** (Blue) – GOOD: Lot so parking, convenient access

BAD: Lot of parking lots, disconnectivity of style,  
color,location

**Core downtown** (pink)- GOOD: Most potential to become unified with renewal, plentiful attractions, parking

BAD: Insufficient parking for amount of people

Sidewalks in bad condition for strollers

Gaps in viewscape – missing teeth where older buildings

**Post Urban** (yellow) – Visual or aesthetic

Gioffoli on RMH Public Library, no defining eastern  
boundry, parking decks not expandable

**Rail & Industry** (brown)- Spoke to appearance more than purpose

## GROUP 4

**Garden** – appearance (considering trees), church, JW (Elks club)

**Post Urban Land Use** – Land dev oppt., Klines, Roses

**Downtown Course** – Court House, smooth sidewalks, garbage pickup, Jesse's,  
VA. Theater location

**Rail/Industrial** – Brick warehouses for development, railroad bldg., Blacks Run

**Gov't Area** – Free parking, City Hall



## GROUP 5

**Garden** – landscaping, well kept, interesting architecture,  
**Post Urban Renewal** – Kline’s, parking  
**Rail/Industrial** – Black’s Run, Adaptive reuse of interesting buildings  
**Govt. Services** – Muncipal Bldg., (architectural interest)  
**Downtown core** – Courthouse, Court Square

## GROUP 6

**Garden** – well preserved, occupied homes, etc., accessable, parking, walking is good, safe, Hardesty-Higgins  
**Core** – Shopping, Diversity, Library, Banks, Foot traffic, Strong retail, Court Square, Arts Venues, Old Churches, Museums  
**Railroad**- Great retail and restaurant potential, strong architecture, Fairfield Language Technologies  
**Government Services** – Accessable, clean, architecture, safe, efficient, clustered, funfest venue, adaptive reuse of police department  
**Post Urban Renewal** – parking, potential new building sites, businesses, post office, parking deck, convention visitors bureau

### 3. What is each district’s greatest need?

#### Group 1

**Garden** – slow traffic, more consumer interest in this area (pass thru it), protect statue (move), more landscaping, better traffic pattern around statue, better light fixtures  
**Core**- shops or professional offices, housing (condos), loft apartment, small grocery store, drug store, better lights (old fashioned) benches, shade with trees and awnings, banners, on street parking, reroute truck traffic, more landscaping, fill in hole on Gus’ parking lot  
**Post Urban Development**- everything, more shops, more green in parking lots  
**Government** – lighting, expose Black’s Run, sidewalks, benches, slow traffic down  
**Rail & Industrial** – move train if possible

#### Group 2

**Garden District** – Some properties in poor repair (rental properties especially)  
**Central Core** – Fill in empty spaces and empty buildings, plaza or park-like areas, parking for bikes/shuttle bus from parking, later hours for businesses downtown, underground utilities, consider alternative means of transportation, bike paths, handicapped accessibility (all sidewalks with ramps)  
**Urban Renewal** – Well thought out plan for development – knit the section together with the other districts, residential housing

**Industrial/Rail** – Renovation of existing buildings  
**Governmental** – Mixed use development, more plantings

### **Group 3**

### **Group 4**

Eliminate graffiti, bike friendly access, north-side lighting, eliminate parking meters, quality of landscaping, safety,

### **Group 5**

**Garden Problem** – no continuity, professional zone that doesn't connect. No reason to stop. Not a gateway. The "dead" zone.

**Post Urban Renewal** – needs green space, character, clean it up

**Rail/Industrial** – clean it up, it's now a (pedestrian) void

**Government** – Turn funfest lot into actual park – greenspace

**Core** – Convenience/ grocery store

### **Group 6**

Maintain as is, avoid degradation of existing structures; potential vacant hospital use creep

Deteriorating sidewalks, empty spaces and store fronts, more appropriate infrastructure (lights, benches), upper story housing, related parking, directional signage – distinctive and innovative, signature landscaping, informational center  
Decaying sound existing historic buildings, more innovative uses – loft residences, restaurants; greenway completion

Improve farmers market area parking, parking more efficiently used, more landscaping

Lifeless, difficult to walk, more business activity, landscaping, nondescript architecture

#### **4. How critical is Harrisonburg city center's historic identity to present day downtown? What priorities may supersede historic preservation?**

### **Group 1**

No more building removals if possible.

### **Group 2**

Preserve what is useful/beautiful/unique – make it functional/ make it work

Memorialize lost landmarks

Model JMU quad – pavers/rockwalls/planters

Acknowledge history but not imitation = street lights

Replicate historic scale and values without imitation

### **Group 3**

Historic downtown is important because it give character  
Respects the more important architecture  
Owner's rights to do what they want with their property, signage and architecture  
change will bring cartention  
Cost and availability of older materials  
Traffic flow

### **Group 4**

Uniqueness and tourism

### **Group 5**

Continuity – tying the zones together, upkeep (weeds etc), and actual streetscape  
that is continuous – fill in the voids, straighten out the signs, clean it up (make it  
appealing), the brick sidewalks look awful, streetlights

### **Group 6**

Infrastructure (roads, sidewalks) resemble city's past indicating out from  
courthouse. Current uses are consistent with historically past uses. Continue uses  
with new uses that are basically consistent with the public safety.

- 5. Please evaluate the convenience, safety, and quality of experience of circulation downtown including public transit, travel and parking by car, and travel by bicycle or on foot.**

### **Group 1**

Walking: sidewalks – even out. Safety? Lighting?  
More parking, signing (readable signs)  
Trolley to look like a trolley

### **Group 2**

### **Group 3**

Biking next to impossible  
Major e/w, w/s arteries go right through downtown (this is both good and bad)  
Good – brings in business that might not have otherwise come downtown  
Grid layout a success because it provides list of options  
Bad – bad for biding, danger to biding and walking

#### **Group 4**

More shops and advance downtown to attract students who are tired of the mall.

#### **Group 5**

Accessibility for wheelchairs

#### **Group 6**

Public transit appears adequate, encourage mass college use or redirect to downtown.

Vehicular – encourage deck use

Bicycle – need more dedicated paths

Traffic circulation – adequate as is



## Core Downtown

Findings:

### Committee Walk-around

Ron Davenport reported on the Core Downtown District.

Strengths include:

- Ample landscape,
- Attractive and diverse buildings,
- Economic vitality as the city's financial center,
- The centrality and beauty of historic Town Square, and
- The relative absence of overhead utility lines.

Unlike new areas of Harrisonburg there's a there there thanks to the concentration of tall buildings.

The downtown core's weaknesses include the

- General clutter of directional traffic signs,
- Difficulty of parking,
- Lack of way finding signage,
- Presence of "missing teeth" in the overall urban fabric, and
- The narrowness of selected sidewalks.

The possibilities

- Increased student housing,
- Enhanced parking,
- Outdoor dining on sidewalks,
- Improved lighting, and
- Availability of the Court Square open space for outdoor events.

Threats include hazardously uneven sidewalks,

- Trees that block signage and compete with sidewalk space, and
- The perceived danger and lack of use of municipal parking decks.

The most frequent criticism of the city center expressed to Eddie Bumbaugh has been the poor condition of the sidewalk surface due to differential settlement of the poured concrete and pre-cast unit pavements.

The Committee appears unanimous that the time has come to completely re-do the mid-70s streetscape improvements. Not only has the pavement deteriorated, the paving patterns now seem arbitrary, the landscape overgrown and/or uneven and in need of refurbishment, and there is no consistent, downtown-wide streetscape theme.

Merchants complain that the trees block storefronts and signage. Trees on Main Street are also impediments to frequently passing feed trucks.

The '76 installed, tall, shoebox light fixtures, while not very attractive, provide an acceptable level of ambient lighting. Several members of the committee voiced strong opposition to any lighting where the light source might be visible. Indirect lighting is superior. Holiday season twinkle lights have not been a tradition in Harrisonburg presumably due to a lack of exterior electrical outlets.

### **Finding from the Public Meeting:**

#### **What is each district's greatest asset?**

##### **Core Downtown:**

Courthouse and grassy area, theater, art district  
Court Square - Keep the facades (historic look)  
Economic center /business  
Most potential to become unified with renewal, plentiful attractions, parking  
Court House, smooth sidewalks, garbage pickup, Jesse's, VA. Theater location  
Shopping, Diversity, Library, Banks, Foot traffic, Strong retail, Court Square, Arts Venues, Old Churches, Museums

#### **What is each district's greatest need?**

##### **Core Downtown:**

Shops or professional offices, housing (condos), loft apartment, small grocery store, drug store, better lights (old fashioned) benches, shade with trees and awnings, banners, on street parking, reroute truck traffic, more landscaping, fill in hole on Gus' parking lot  
Fill in empty spaces and empty buildings, plaza or park-like areas, parking for bikes / shuttle bus from parking, later hours for businesses downtown, underground utilities, consider alternative means of transportation, bike paths, handicapped accessibility (all sidewalks with ramps)  
Maintain as is, avoid degradation of existing structures  
Deteriorating sidewalks, empty spaces and storefronts, more appropriate infrastructure (lights, benches), upper story housing, related parking, directional signage – distinctive and innovative, signature landscaping, informational center  
Decaying sound existing historic buildings, more innovative uses – loft residences, restaurants; greenway completion  
Improve farmers market area parking, parking more efficiently used, more landscaping  
Lifeless, difficult to walk, more business activity, landscaping, nondescript architecture

#### **How critical is Harrisonburg city center's historic identity to present day downtown? What priorities may supersede historic preservation?**

No more building removals if possible.  
Preserve what is useful/beautiful/unique – make it functional/ make it work  
Memorialize lost landmarks

Model JMU quad – pavers/rock walls/planters  
Acknowledge history but not imitation = street lights  
Replicate historic scale and values without imitation  
Historic downtown is important because it give character  
Respects the more important architecture  
Owner’s rights to do what they want with their property, signage and architecture  
change will bring contention  
Cost and availability of older materials  
Traffic flow  
Uniqueness and tourism  
Continuity – tying the zones together, upkeep (weeds etc), and actual streetscape  
that is continuous – fill in the voids, straighten out the signs, clean it up (make it  
appealing), the brick sidewalks look awful, streetlights  
Infrastructure (roads, sidewalks) resemble city’s past indicating out from  
courthouse. Current uses are consistent with historically past uses. Continue uses  
with new uses that are basically consistent with the public safety.

## **Garden District**

### **Committee Walk-around**

John Sease reported for the Garden District SWOT team.

Recommended that the district boundary be changed to transfer the area from  
Bruce Street South to the Post Urban Renewal District. These streets are neither  
well landscaped nor pedestrian friendly.

Strengths include:

- Generous landscape and tree cover,
- Lack of commercial signage,
- Relative safety, and
- Collection of historic buildings.

Weaknesses include:

- Lack of outdoor, public seating and
- Narrow sidewalks - pedestrians often must compete with sidewalk  
invading street signs.

The district’s primary opportunity was identified as the potential for increased  
student pedestrian traffic. Jim McKane, a downtown merchant, has paid  
particularly close attention to the behavior of JMU students given that they are  
his best clients. He has observed that less than 10-15% of his student customers  
walk from campus to downtown. Some take the bus. Most drive. It was noted  
that more students tend to walk in the evening to downtown destinations and  
that the streets are reasonably well lit and seem safe at night.

Its primary threat is vulnerability to vandalism and the tendency of traffic to speed on north/south arterial South Main and Liberty Streets making them threatening to pedestrians.

### **Finding from the Public Meeting:**

#### **What is each district's greatest asset?**

##### **Garden District**

Architecture, wider sidewalks, green trees  
Shade/greenery/history (monument, older homes)  
Mature trees, nice place to take a walk, open green space Joshua Wilton  
Appearance (considering trees), church, JW (Elks club)  
Landscaping, well kept, interesting architecture,  
Well preserved, occupied homes, etc., accessible, parking, walking is good, safe, Hardesty-Higgins

#### **What is each district's greatest need?**

Slow traffic, more consumer interest in this area (pass thru it), protect statue (move), more landscaping, better traffic pattern around statue, better light fixtures  
Some properties in poor repair (rental properties especially)  
No continuity, professional zone that doesn't connect. No reason to stop.  
Not a gateway. The "dead" zone.

## **Government Center**

### **Committee Walk-around**

Eddie Bumbaugh reviewed findings of the Government Services District survey team.

Strengths listed include:

Continued existence of the government center downtown,  
Surplus of parking, and the  
Presence of public art and street amenities such as seat walls and raised foundation plantings at the new Courthouse annex.

Weaknesses are:

The poorly lit first level parking deck,  
The absence of trash containers,  
The crowding of the sidewalk by the parking deck's clipped holly foundation plantings, and  
Crowding of the sidewalk by intruding traffic signs.

Opportunities include:

Future conversion of the lawn space behind City Hall to a public park and a Fun-Fest performance stage,



Conversion of a soon to be vacated police building to a positive new use,  
and  
The likely benefit of improved way finding signage.

### **Finding from the Public Meeting:**

#### **What is each district's greatest asset?**

Municipal Parking Lot  
Landscaping around gov't buildings  
Brings employees downtown  
Lots of parking space  
Free parking, City Hall  
Municipal Bldg., (architectural interest)  
Accessible, clean, architecture, safe, efficient, clustered, funfest venue,  
adaptive reuse of police department

#### **What is each district's greatest need?**

Lighting, expose Black's Run, sidewalks, benches, slow traffic down  
Mixed-use development, more plantings  
Turn funfest lot into actual park – green space

## **Post Urban Renewal**

Findings:

### **Committee Walk-around**

Stacey Turner reported on the Post Urban Renewal District.

The strengths are:

The diversion of large trucks and heavy traffic to Mason Street and  
Private landscape improvements on miscellaneous, isolated lots.

Weaknesses include:

Dominance of the automobile,  
Absence of way finding signage to and from the district's parking deck, a  
preponderance of underutilized space, and  
Inaccessibility to the handicapped to many sidewalks.

Opportunities include better

Street signage,  
Enhanced landscape on Mason Street, and  
Both excellent and plentiful future redevelopment options.

The primary threat concerns the perceived danger of the isolated open space  
between Rock Street and Kline's Dairy Stand.

## **Finding from the Public Meeting:**

### **What is each district's greatest asset?**

- Easy parking, Klines
- Kline's
- Vacant land – opportunity
- No defining eastern boundary, parking decks not expandable
- Land dev oppt., Klines, Roses
- Kline's, parking
- Parking, potential new building sites, businesses, post office, parking deck, convention visitor's bureau

### **What is each district's greatest need?**

- Everything, more shops, more green in parking lots
- Well thought out plan for development – knit the section together with the other districts, residential housing
- Needs green space, character, clean it up

## **Rail/Industrial District**

Findings:

### **Committee Walk-around**

The leader of the Rail/Industrial District survey team was not present but had discussed her district with John Sease.

The strengths were:

- The districts' impressive industrial buildings and Dissecting Black's Creek.

Its opportunities include:

- Potentials for re-use of the industrial buildings,
- Strengthening of east/west pedestrian and vehicular connections, and
- A second pedestrian greenway should the rail line be abandoned.

The possibility of rail abandonment may also of course be recognized as a threat to survival of all remaining rail-dependent industry.

## **Finding from the Public Meeting:**

### **What is each district's greatest asset?**

- Black's Run
- Architecture
- Liberty Park
- Great old buildings (turn of the century) (lends itself to new uses)
- Industry/business working
- Black's Run

Brick warehouses for development, railroad bldg., Blacks Run  
Black's Run, Adaptive reuse of interesting buildings  
Great retail and restaurant potential, strong architecture, Fairfield  
Language Technologies

**What is each district's greatest need?**

Move train if possible  
Renovation of existing buildings  
Clean it up; it's now a (pedestrian) void