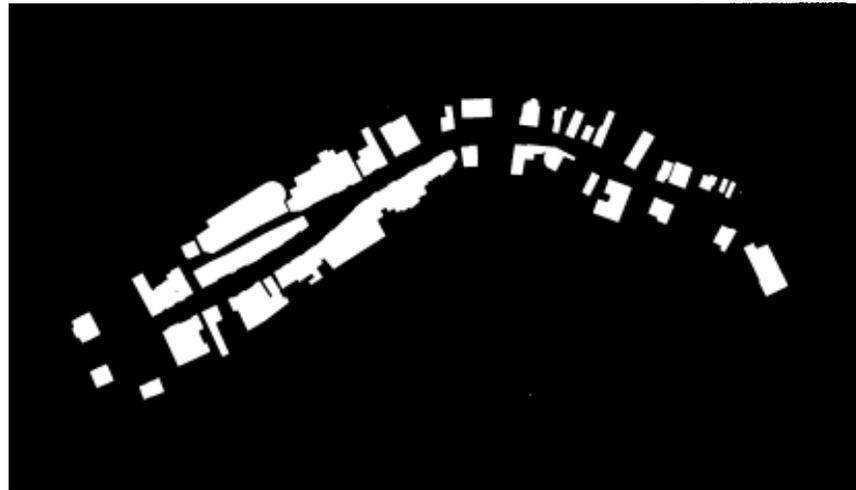


*City of Placerville*

# DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ACTION PLAN



*Revitalization Strategy* ■ *Catalyst Program* ■ *Financial Incentives*

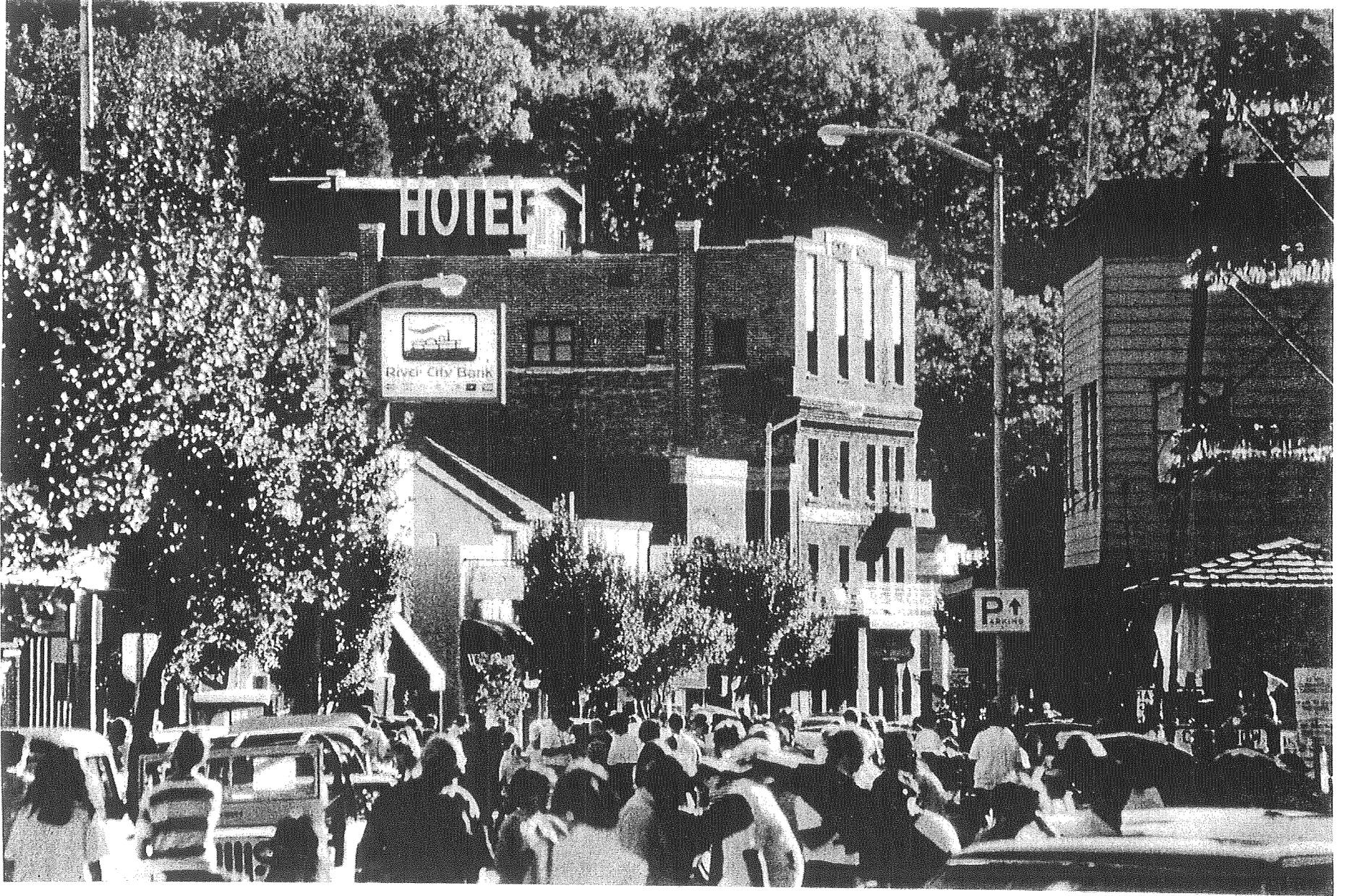
*City of Placerville*

# **DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ACTION PLAN**

*Revitalization Strategy ■ Catalyst Program  
Financial Incentives*

Prepared for the City of Placerville by  
Freedman Tung & Bottomley  
*Urban Design and Town Planning*

*March 1996*



## **PREFACE**

### **PLACERVILLE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION - A COMMUNITY EFFORT**

*This Downtown Revitalization Plan is the product of a strong community effort to ensure that Placerville's Downtown will continue to be economically successful. The plan promotes a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly commercial district ensuring that Downtown will continue to be one of the most popular destinations in the region.*

*This Revitalization Plan represents the beginning of a new vision for Downtown. It was developed through a series of community workshops and enjoys the broad-based, strong support of the community. To this end, the project was not only funded by the Placerville City Council, but also by the Placerville Downtown Association, Downtown merchants and numerous contributions by individual citizens of Placerville.*

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*Chapter I*

**ORIENTATION**

# ORIENTATION

## Background

The purpose of the Downtown Placerville Revitalization Action Plan is to provide a framework of actions towards revitalizing Downtown's economy, preserving and enhancing its historic heritage, and insuring its vitality as the community's center. The program is designed to promote substantial and visible results at the beginning of the revitalization effort. This document represents the completion of a public workshop process and planning phase of the revitalization effort, describing what the community intends to accomplish and how its resources should be invested.

Downtown is Placerville's heart, where its commercial and civic functions were originally established. For many decades after the city's founding, Downtown served as a regional hub. It was a marketplace for goods and services, and the focus of civic, cultural and community activity in its foothills region. But in the last generation, fundamental shifts in retailing and business have transformed the development patterns of American cities, and Placerville has not been excepted. The shift of retailing and offices to large sites with more auto access and parking and the economies of scale of larger "big box" stores, multiplex cinemas, chain stores and franchise restaurants are phenomena that have withered many downtowns. For Downtown Placerville, its greatest challenge was the construction of Highway 50 and the resulting bypassing of Main Street. But despite this change and another of new private investment having shifted to the City's newer commercial areas such as the Broadway and Placerville Drive corridors, Downtown has survived, if not thrived.

This is largely due to Downtown's having been blessed with a number of unique assets. With its charming historic buildings and beautiful wooded setting, its pedestrian scale and picturesque streets, its concentration of civic facilities and tradition of community events, Downtown Placerville maintains a special significance for visitors as well as residents.

The Revitalization Action Plan seeks to build on these strengths and correct Downtown's "invisibility" from Highway 50 - the major impediment to its access to potential customers. Targeted public investment projects will create dramatic change and demonstrate the City's commitment to a more vital district, setting the stage for new private sector investment. Recommended policy changes will shape both renovation and new construction so that each individual effort will contribute towards a shared community vision.

### **A note on Caltrans Highway 50 widening improvements proposed by the El Dorado County Transit Commission:**

The potential Highway 50 widening projects may pose as great a challenge to the Downtown economy as the original freeway construction did. While addressing the potential impacts of the various widening and other road construction scenarios is outside the scope of this document, the broad-brush principles embodied in the Revitalization Strategy will largely be as applicable to Downtown with the proposed freeway improvements (those proposals current at the time of preparation of this document) as for present existing conditions.

## Program Overview

There are five types of Program Recommendations:

1. **Revitalization Strategy** - Recommended strategic actions targeted to enhance the economy and environment of Downtown are described in Chapter II.
2. **Architectural Character: Building on Downtown's Heritage** - In Chapter III, the primary characteristics that make up Downtown Placerville's identity are discussed, followed by recommendations for Downtown Design Guidelines to insure the preservation and enhancement of Downtown's character.
3. **Catalyst Projects: Stimulating Economic Activity** - Public improvements targeted to stimulate increased customer patronage and new private investment in the district are described in Chapter IV.
4. **Financial Incentive Programs: Make Downtown Attractive to Investors** - Recommendations for a Business Recruitment and Relocation Program, Design Assistance Program, Downtown Marketing Program, and other programs that will help "kick-start" economic revitalization in Downtown are described in Chapter V.
5. **Next Steps: High Priority Actions** - What must be done first to achieve substantial results right away is described in Chapter VI.

## The Revitalization Planning Process

The decision-making process that resulted in this document's recommendations was community-driven, and the purpose of the various programs, actions and projects outlined herein

is to implement a shared community vision. This vision was developed through a series of community workshops and City Council Study Sessions in which various options for Downtown were reviewed and discussed; see "Community Participation Summary" below.

## Community Participation Summary

The planning and concept design process was organized around a series of public workshops involving the community-at-large, the City Council, and City Staff. In each workshop, participants provided direction to City Staff and the consultants regarding the purpose and content of the next stage of program development.

A total of four Community workshops and one City Council Study Session were held. Community Workshops lasted between two and four hours, and were well attended (sessions were also carried on local cable television). Decision-making process reflected informal consensus through discussion rather than vote-taking. Workshops and Study Sessions were all publicly noticed and conducted in public buildings.

The content and results of the four Community Workshops are summarized below:

### *Workshop #1: June 8, 1995*

This was an initial forum for collecting the workshop participants' views on "Main Street Visions" - Downtown's present assets, its problems, people's dreams and visions of what it could become, and ideas for actions to improve Downtown.

### *Workshop #2: August 16, 1995*

This session was the first formal workshop of the

Revitalization Action Plan, and initial discussion was concentrated on determining what parts of the City should be included in the focus on Downtown. Participants then reconfirmed that the study should focus on Main Street extending between Sacramento Street and Cedar Ravine, and not include areas that were more "strip commercial" in nature. Participants then divided into two focus groups, "Downtown Character" and "Entering Downtown" for more detailed discussions of problems and opportunities. Identifying local character, and balancing authenticity and residents' needs with the need for improvement, growth, and tourism were major topics brought up.

*Workshop #3: September 29, 1995*

A slide presentation on Downtowns and Economic Revitalization was presented to the workshop, followed by a presentation of the Revitalization Strategy for review and discussion. A Downtown Context was identified in terms of cataloguing some of the elements of the local character, and development patterns of the Downtown Core versus the "Extension" were demonstrated to have consequences on development. The three major areas of discussion were policy changes for Downtown development and economic activity; physical improvements for downtown; and prioritization of actions. Individual topics drawing the most comment included recommended changes in parking, elimination of new ground floor office uses in the Downtown Core, and a request for the addition of new street trees in the downtown Core as well as the recommended trees in the Extension. There was a strong consensus to focus the initial Catalyst Project on the Downtown Core - Highway 50 Edge, to tap the lost potential customer base there as the most critical missed economic opportunity for downtown.

*Workshop #4: January 17, 1996*

The previous workshop findings and the Revitalization Strategy were summarized to refresh memories and update newcomers. The Recommended Catalyst Project was then presented, with details of the wall/fence and flowering tree planting for the Downtown Edge Treatment, the screening conifers at the western downtown approach, and the bridge railings and cross-street banners comprising the Gateway treatments at entry streets. In addition, the requested change from the previous workshop to show new street trees in the Downtown Core was presented. A discussion followed about the proposed improvements, other components of the revitalization strategy, financing, and next steps. The overall consensus was strongly supportive of the Catalyst Project, with the exception of the exact conifer tree type proposed; the consultant was directed to modify this selection. Some participants had second thoughts about the necessity of street trees in the Downtown Core. It was then determined that no further workshops were necessary, and that a Council Study Session would follow for Council action on the Revitalization Strategy and Catalyst Project.

*Chapter II*

**REVITALIZATION STRATEGY**

# REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

To stimulate interest and investment Downtown, the Revitalization Strategy recommended below seeks to enhance the identity and visibility of an already charming mountain village core. Since Downtown's primary asset is its character and accessibility to Highway 50, the first several strategy recommendations capitalize on those assets by making Downtown more attractive to passing motorists, and by enhancing and preserving that character. Since the greatest threat to Downtown's viability is the spreading of its customer base too thin, subsequent recommendations focus on strengthening the retail base of the district, by keeping the retail core concentrated in a walking-scale cluster, and by enhancing its ability to attract investment. Some of the strategy items involve capital improvements, others are programmatic, requiring policy changes or the setting aside of financial incentives rather than physical construction. The strategy is illustrated in the "Revitalization Strategy" diagram on the following page. Specific high-priority actions are described in more detail in subsequent chapters of this document.

1. ***The highest priority should be placed on transforming the visual identity of the City and its center as perceived by passing motorists on Highway 50.*** Given the speed of the passing motorists, improvements should focus on providing a simple, bold and unified design that calls attention to the presence of the Downtown, and identifies Placerville as a charming and unique mountain village. To achieve this effect, distinguish between "approach" and "arrival" as follows:
  - a. ***The Central Half-Mile.*** Focus attention on the location of the city's historic center by installing unified and dramatic improvements along the southern side of

the central half-mile of Highway 50 between Canal and Bedford Streets. The specific design and selection of these improvements must express the unique character of Placerville's setting and historic core.

- b. ***The Approaches.*** Flanking the central area to the east and west, provide a screening green edge that improves the motorist's (eastbound) first view of Placerville. what currently appears as a cluttered and unattractive cacophony of signs, fencing, unlandscaped areas, and backs of buildings. If the budget allows, add decorative fencing and ground-cover to add to the impression of unity and proper care. The selection and style of this portion of the improvements should seek to "knit" the approaches back into the landscape of the mountain foothills.
  - c. ***Special Points.*** Strategically place openings in the unified green edge treatment (described in "b" above) to prominently display public landmark features, such as the information caboose, the City welcome sign, and the Country Courthouse. Floodlight the County Courthouse building to enhance its visibility as a public landmark of regional significance and architectural quality.
  - d. ***Highway exits/Downtown Entries.*** Install special gateway features at the three main entrances to the downtown district, making them more visible to motorists, and attractive points of enhanced visual character along the City's edge.
2. **Preserve and enhance the visual character of Downtown with architectural design guidelines.**

Downtown's tourist and visitor economy lives off of the distinct character of Downtown. Some new building and renovation projects in recent years - while providing the city with desirable businesses and reinvestment in buildings - have been unsympathetic to this character and have unwittingly damaged it. While encouraging continued reinvestment in Downtown buildings, the City must insist on the preservation and extension of its well known and unique character. Done properly, this can help the city increase the attractiveness of the downtown to investors.

- a. Establish architectural design guidelines for the historic downtown district that build on the best of what is already there - see Chapter II for more detailed recommendations.
- b. Establish design guidelines for Downtown building mounted signs (free standing signs should not be allowed in the Downtown) that are compatible with the architectural character of the district, and that reflect the variety and color of Downtown shops and services.
- c. Particular emphasis should be placed on providing all design expectations in writing at the City Planning Desk, and on the benefits to investors of being a part of a district with a memorable character.
- d. Make the process of obtaining approval for modifications to buildings, sites and signs in the district very clear in the guidelines document. Set up a process that insures investors that conformance to the guidelines will insure swift and easy approval.

For more information on the specific architectural character recommended for downtown, see Chapter III.

3. **Enhance the Character of the Downtown with Public Improvements.** Focus additional public investment on fine-tuning an already distinctive Downtown environment.

a. *Short-term Improvements:*

- (1) *Street Lights.* Replace the existing utilitarian poles with decorative ones that extend the character of the historic architecture out into the streetscape. Improve light color and illumination levels as well.
- (2) *Seating.* Provide frequent comfortable places for people to sit down. This is particularly important in a tourist-serving downtown in which convenience retail is less prevalent than specialty retail. A speciality retail core must keep people interested and comfortable for long periods.
- (3) *Street Trees.* Add trees for spatial definition, amenity and summertime shade, without detracting from shopfront visibility. To do so, place street trees as far from the buildings (and as close to the motorist) as possible. Select street trees that are structurally open, and prune them open and far up on the trunk. Also remove existing street trees that inhibit storefront visibility.
- (4) *Refuse Containers.* Keep Downtown neat and clean by replacing leaking and deteriorated trash receptacles with new ones. New receptacles

should be durable and permanent, and selected to match the historic downtown character.

b. Medium-term Improvements:

- (1) *Bell Tower Square*. Bell Tower Square is the center of town. Add simple improvements to make that obvious to everyone, and to enhance the comfort and identity of the new public space here.
- (2) *Center Street*. Center Street has the potential to be a charming, "European-scale" streetscape with a unique mountain village flavor.
  - (a) Inset new shopfronts into the first bay of parking in the structure facing upon the lane.
  - (b) Encourage businesses located across from the parking garage to open building backs as storefronts on to the lane.
  - (c) Improve the lanes' paving and lighting.
- (3) *Downtown Rest Room*. Designate a location for public restroom facilities and construct them. If they are to be located in the parking garage, evaluate the safety and attractiveness of existing garage lighting and upgrade if necessary.
- (4) *Hangtown Creek Improvements* (Note: short-term creek-related improvements will be made to the bridges crossing the creek as part of the Highway 50 / Downtown Edge improvements -- see above, no.1).

- (a) Clean up the creek bed along the edge of Downtown.
- (b) Investigate the potential of removing or undergrounding the visible storm drain pipe in the creek bed.
- (c) Re-landscape the portion of Hangtown Creek that passes through Downtown with attractive riparian and screening vegetation.
- (d) Encourage street-fronting businesses to open up toward the creek for views, outdoor dining and seating areas.

4. **Provide financial incentives to accelerate the rate of private investment in the district.**

- (1) Establish a *Business Relocation Program* to facilitate the relocation of Placerville retail and restaurant businesses to the Downtown Core.
- (2) Establish a *Business Recruitment Program* to promote the location of successful new businesses in Downtown Placerville.
- (3) Establish a *Building Facade Improvement Program* to promote reinvestment in existing buildings in the Downtown Core. The program will also accelerate the implementation of the Downtown Architectural guidelines recommended in Strategy item #2, above.

5. **Promote the concentration of retail, restaurant, service and entertainment uses in a compact cluster in the center of Downtown between Sacramento and Bedford Streets. Designate that central portion of the district as**

the Downtown Core in all Downtown policies and programs.

a. Revise all public policies that result in an overly diffuse (and almost entirely auto-oriented) pattern of retail development. At the very least, the following four policy elements should be revised:

- (1) *Ground-level shops in the Core:* To promote an active downtown street life, permitted ground-level uses along Main Street between Sacramento and Bedford must be limited to retail, restaurant, entertainment, civic, personal service and business service uses.
- (2) *Nightlife.* Promote the development of a center for evening activity in the Downtown Core. Cluster all entertainment and nightlife ventures in the Core.
- (3) *Overabundance of land zoned for commercial use:* To avoid spreading the market for critical Downtown uses too thin, limit restaurant and downtown-type retail development in other parts of the city - directing small-scale restaurant and entertainment retail, uses to the Downtown Core.
- (4) *Shared Parking:* To make the most efficient use of Downtown's parking supply, establish a program for shared parking in the Core, and set new parking requirements that reflect the shared nature of parking in the district. This will allow a reduction in the ratio of parking lots to shops allowing a more compact development pattern than in the rest of the City.

b. Consolidate a specialty and convenience retail market niche for Downtown.

- (1) *Strengthen Downtown's role in the daily life of the community.* Target business relocation efforts (see below - financial incentive programs) to consolidate stores that provide essential goods and services for businesses and residents in the center of the city.
  - a) Pay particular attention to meeting the needs of government employees and related services within walking distance of the "civic core" of the Downtown.
  - b) Support the Downtown hardware store as an anchor of residents' patronage, and strengthen the presence of residential services -- particularly those that might serve the convenience retail needs of residents within walking distance (a quarter mile from the center) or a short drive away.
- (2) Target business recruitment activities toward businesses that are capable of providing the City with an enhanced reputation as a tourist destination.
- (3) Target business recruitment activities toward the promotion of the Downtown Core as a center for nighttime entertainment. This will serve both objectives "(1)", and "(2)", above.
- (4) Promote the expansion of the specialty retail and services niche. Target business recruitment activities toward businesses that are most likely to

reflect existing demand and can capitalize upon the pedestrian-oriented character of the district.

6. **Repair the portion of the Downtown district that is located between Bedford and Cedar Ravine - referred to in this document as the "Downtown Extension" to distinguish it from the Downtown Core. Give it a distinctive identity that complements yet is different from the Downtown Core.**

a. The Downtown Extension is a remnant of a traditional downtown. The formerly unified building pattern, consisting of shopfronts built to the sidewalk, has been eroded over time, with parking lots, setbacks and ground-level private uses inserted in between shopfronts. This can be seen in the illustration of the Downtown building pattern on the following page. In that illustration, note the difference between the very consistent pattern in the retail core versus the "gap-toothed" one in the Downtown Extension (the Downtown Extension occupies the eastern half of the mapped area - the right half of the illustration). This has resulted in a pedestrian environment that is much less comfortable and appealing than the one in the Downtown Core. The following actions are recommended to "re-knit" that damaged Main Street "fabric".

(1) Add vertical streetscape elements that can "knit" the fragments back together - particularly neat rows of trees and street lights. Using one species of tree, plant street trees close together and evenly separated all along both sides of the street. This will reestablish a well defined and pleasing volume of space along the street. Add street lights along the curb in a straight line and with

even spacing.

(2) For buildings set back from the sidewalk, encourage the addition of low decorative fences along the back of the sidewalk, to help define the village-like character of the Downtown. These fences should be designed in keeping with the desired architectural character for the town as described in Chapter III.

(3) Install decorative fence/wall edges along Downtown Extension parking lots. This will reduce the "gap-toothed" character of Downtown Extension frontages, and extend the existing character of frontage fences in this area.

(4) Allow and encourage infill construction on key sites. In particular, pursue infill construction on a portion of the parking lot to the west of the community center, which is now cut off from the rest of the district with parking lots on both sides. Also, investigate opportunities for new construction on parking lots in locations where there is an excessive amount of frontage lined by parking spaces instead of shops. The Revitalization Strategy diagram suggests some desirable infill locations.

b. Amend land use policies conditioning Downtown development to distinguish between the Downtown Core and the Greater Downtown.

(1) While requiring ground level retail in the Downtown Core, allow ground level offices in the "Downtown Extension" between Bedford and Cedar Ravine. The Downtown Extension can

capitalize on a services niche, in part directed toward meeting the needs of the government sector located in the district. Overall, the Downtown Extension is envisioned as a quieter portion of Downtown, less frenetic, equally pedestrian-friendly.

(2) Direct nightlife uses to the Downtown Core.

**7. Reorganize the use and management of Downtown's parking supply.**

- a. Obtain a high rate of usage (and turnover) of Downtown's parking spaces. Encourage the Downtown business community to make the transition from leased to shared public parking.
- b. Reserve the most conveniently located spaces for customers.
  - (1) Again, facilitate in the transition of as many private lots as possible to publicly accessible ones. Move employee parking to the spaces farthest from shops.
  - (2) Explore the potential of providing employee parking as part of the redesign of the Caltrans right-of-way along the northern edge of the district.
  - (3) Reallocate parking supply within the Downtown parking structure, moving employee parking to the upper level.
  - (4) Establish employee and overflow parking on the old S.P. right-of-way to the rear of downtown

shops and businesses in the "Downtown Extension" area.

- c. Revise Downtown parking standards to reflect the shared nature of its parking supply (i.e. require less parking spaces per square foot for retail uses).

**8. Retain public buildings and facilities.**

One of Downtown's strongest assets is its public buildings and facilities. The City Hall, Community Center, County Courthouse, Post Office and County office building offer a wide variety of public services and infuse the district with patrons, enhance the employment base of the district, and establish Downtown's identity as the "Heart of the Community". One of the most important keys to the revitalization of the district is to support this aspect of Downtown.

- a. Retain public facilities in the Downtown district.
- b. Locate new public buildings in the Downtown whenever possible to enhance Downtown's identity as the "Heart of the City" and to benefit from additional patronage and larger employee base.

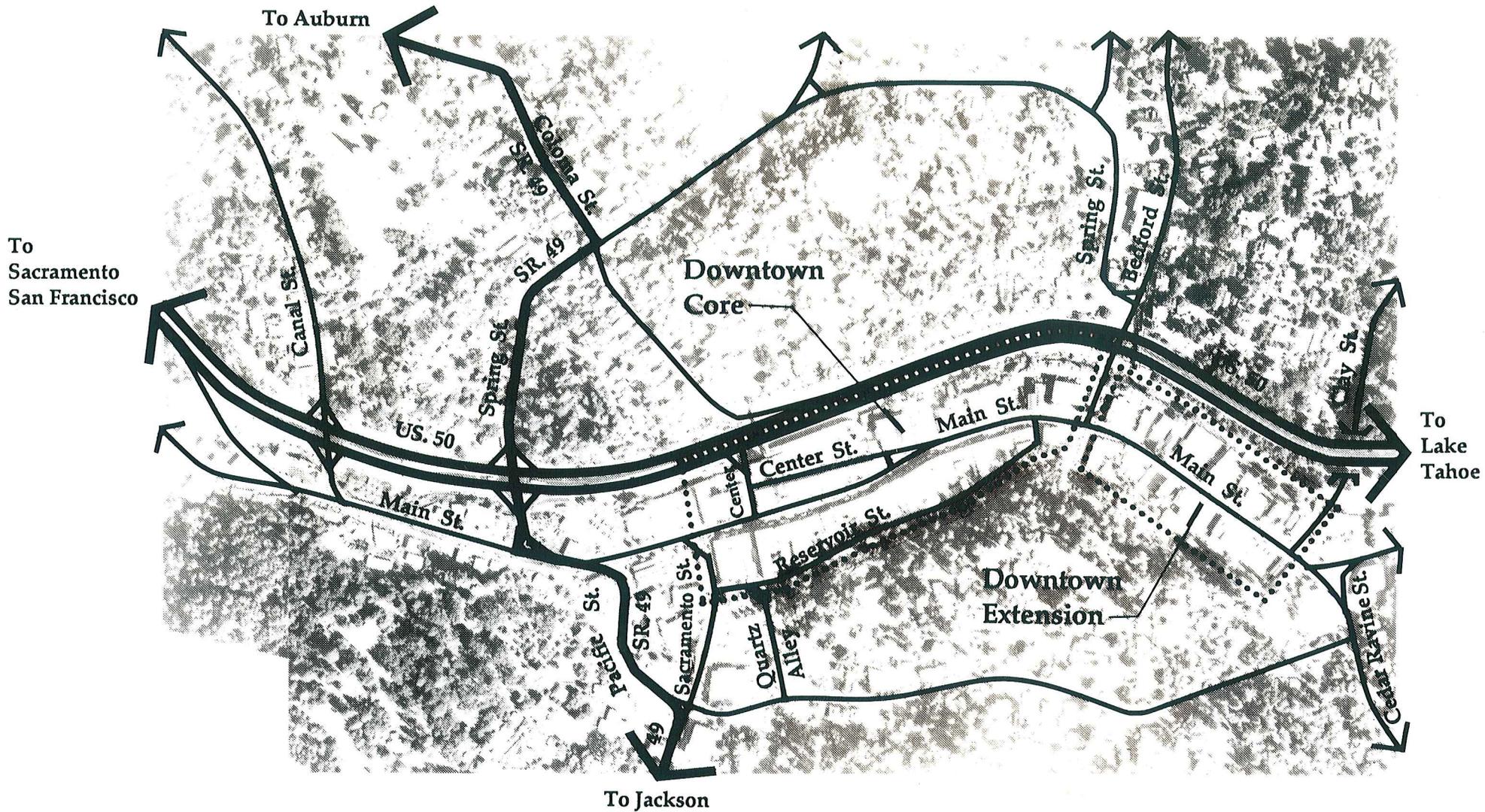
**9. One of the Downtown's best assets is its success with staging special events. Build on that special role for the district by accommodating existing special events and by exploring the potential to add other creative, useful and appropriate ones.**

**10. Investigate the potential to attract "anchor uses" to the Downtown.** Although there are no easily available large sites for anchor uses in the Downtown, three areas have the potential for large-site development, as follows:

- a. The collection of contiguous sites bound by Spring, Highway 50, Sacramento (unused portion) and Main (north of Main Street) have excellent visibility from the highway, and are currently somewhat underutilized. This area could be assembled for an anchor tenant such as a multi-screened movie theater.
- b. The parking lot north of the post office may also provide a development opportunity, given the fact that it is assembled and owned by the city. The site had good visibility along Sacramento Street, and is contiguous with Downtown. However, the parking for the post office would have to be at least partially relocated nearby.
- c. The parking lot opposite Cedar Ravine, north of main Street and East of Clay Street is also a potential larger-scaled development site. It has excellent visibility from Main Street.

All these "opportunity sites" would be difficult to develop, and would likely require some form of public financial assistance to enable private development. These should be considered "wild-cards" for Downtown, and any investigations into should begin with seeking potential tenants rather than property acquisition or relocation.

11. **Investigate opportunities to establish transit service to Placerville.** Although not likely to happen in the near future, a transit stop in Downtown would be a financial boon to the city and would be an important part of establishing a more livable city and region.

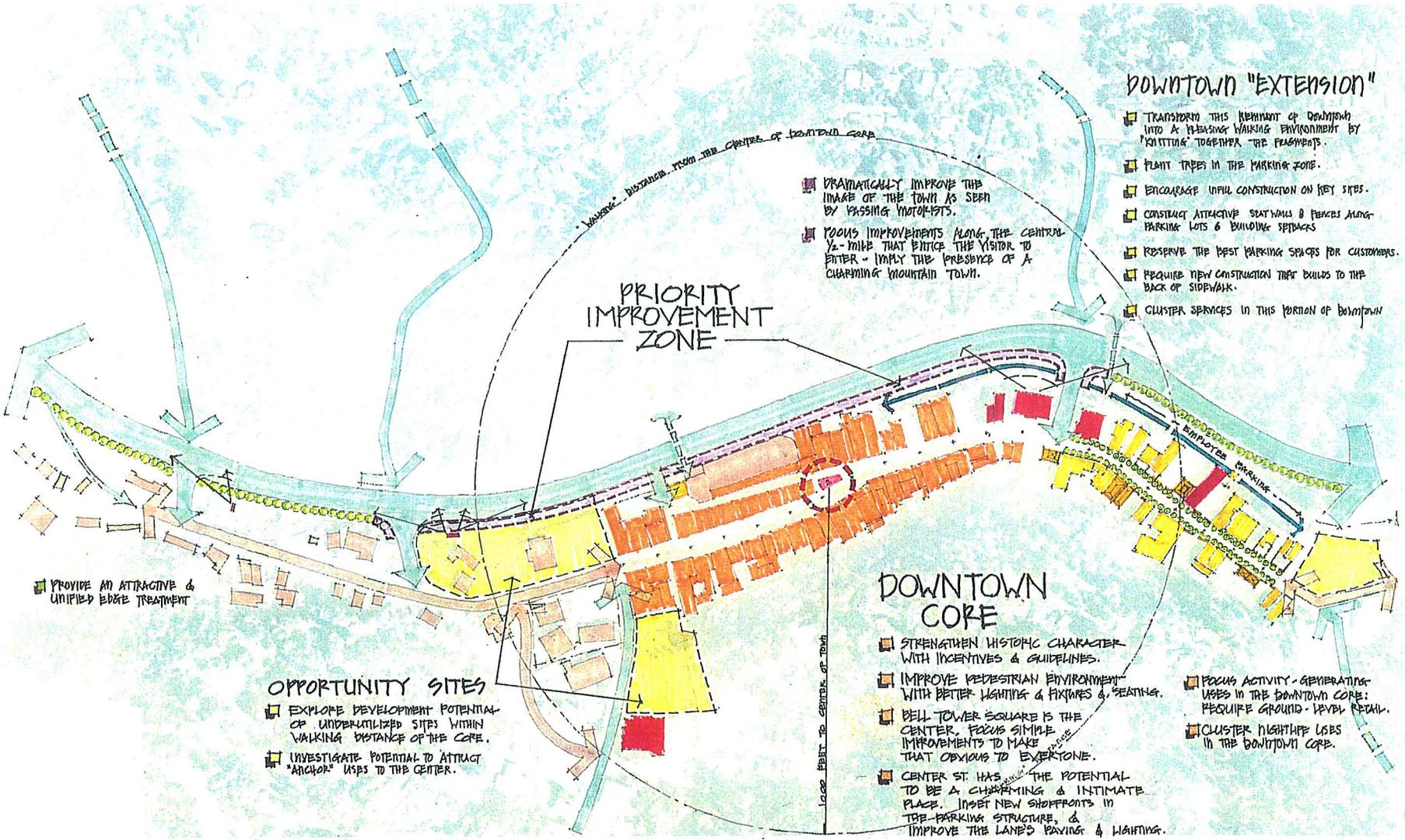


DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE  
**CONTEXT MAP**



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DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE  
**BUILDING PATTERN**



**DOWNTOWN "EXTENSION"**

- ☐ TRANSFORM THIS REMNANT OF DOWNTOWN INTO A PLEASING WALKING ENVIRONMENT BY "KNITTING TOGETHER" THE FRAGMENTS.
- ☐ PLANT TREES IN THE PARKING ZONE.
- ☐ ENCOURAGE INFILL CONSTRUCTION ON KEY SITES.
- ☐ CONSTRUCT ATTRACTIVE SEATWALLS & FENCES ALONG PARKING LOTS & BUILDING SETBACKS.
- ☐ RESERVE THE BEST PARKING SPACES FOR CUSTOMERS.
- ☐ REQUIRE NEW CONSTRUCTION THAT BUILDS TO THE BACK OF SIDEWALK.
- ☐ CLUSTER SERVICES IN THIS PORTION OF DOWNTOWN

- ☐ DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF THE TOWN AS SEEN BY PASSING MOTORISTS.
- ☐ FOCUS IMPROVEMENTS ALONG THE CENTRAL 1/2-MILE THAT ENTICE THE VISITOR TO ENTER - IMPLY THE PRESENCE OF A CHARMING MOUNTAIN TOWN.

**PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT ZONE**

**DOWNTOWN CORE**

- ☐ STRENGTHEN HISTORIC CHARACTER WITH INCENTIVES & GUIDELINES.
- ☐ IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT WITH BETTER LIGHTING & FIXTURES & SEATING.
- ☐ BELL TOWER SQUARE IS THE CENTER. FOCUS SIMPLE IMPROVEMENTS TO MAKE THAT OBVIOUS TO EVERYONE.
- ☐ CENTER ST HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE A CHARMING & INTIMATE PLACE. INSET NEW SHOPFRONTS IN THE PARKING STRUCTURE, & IMPROVE THE LANE'S PAVING & LIGHTING.
- ☐ FOCUS ACTIVITY-GENERATING USES IN THE DOWNTOWN CORE: REQUIRE GROUND-LEVEL RETAIL.
- ☐ CLUSTER NIGHTLIFE USES IN THE DOWNTOWN CORE.

**OPPORTUNITY SITES**

- ☐ EXPLORE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF UNDERUTILIZED SITES WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF THE CORE.
- ☐ INVESTIGATE POTENTIAL TO ATTRACT "ANCHOR" USES TO THE CENTER.

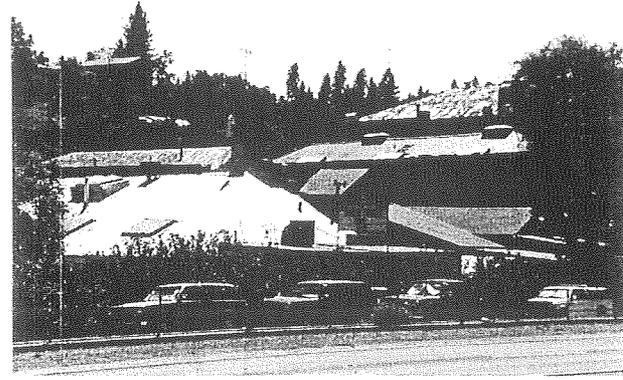
☐ PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE & UNIFIED EDGE TREATMENT

**DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE**

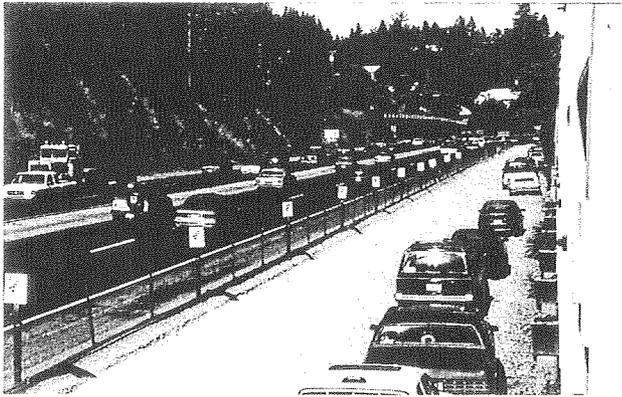
**REVITALIZATION STRATEGY**



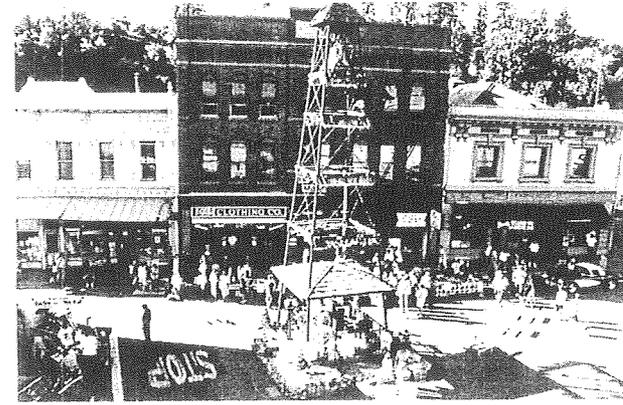
*Visual clutter at western approach  
to downtown on Highway 50*



*Downtown Core Edge at Highway 50  
(backs of buildings)*



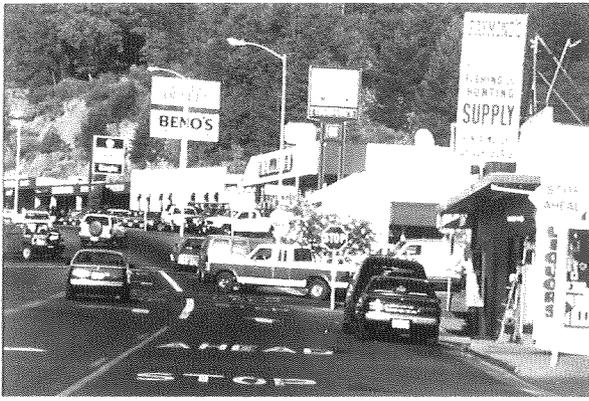
*Downtown Core Edge at Highway 50  
(former Southern Pacific right-of-way)*



*The charm of historic Main Street  
is invisible from Highway 50*

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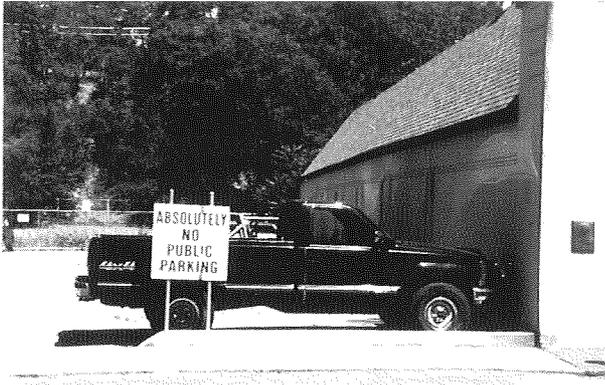
DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE  
**EXISTING CONDITIONS**



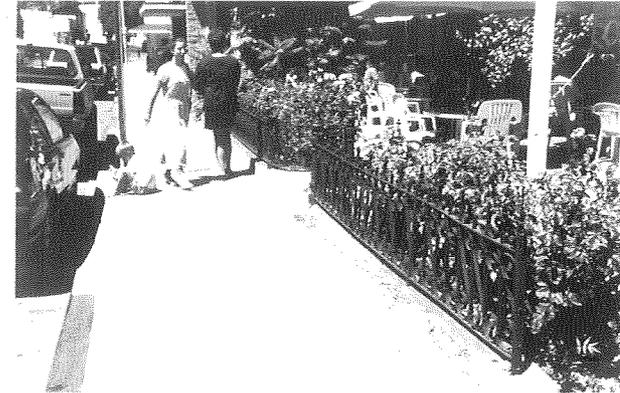
*Pole signs are appropriate in areas of town that market to drivers...*



*...but not in a pedestrian oriented Downtown district.*



*Parking lots next to Main Street should have an attractive wall or fence buffering the open space from the pedestrian sidewalk.*



*There are existing walls and fencing in Downtown that are excellent models to follow, showing craft and historic detail.*

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## DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - CORE AND EXTENSION

# SIGNS AND PARKING LOTS

*Chapter III*

**ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER: BUILDING ON  
DOWNTOWN'S HERITAGE**

# ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER: BUILDING ON DOWNTOWN'S HERITAGE

## Background

The participants in the community workshops identified Downtown Placerville's primary asset as its unique historic character. Although the active content of that character was the subject of considerable debate, there was complete agreement as in Placerville's case. The strengthening of that character was the City's best route to revitalization.

When it was first discussed in an early public workshop, the idea that Downtown Placerville had a distinct character at all was not self-evident to all participants. Some felt that Downtown didn't have a special or unique character and that a "theme" needed to be created or brought in. Many others disagreed and responded that there was a strong history and physical distinctiveness to Downtown. They felt it could be seen in its historic buildings and spaces and experienced through its people, businesses, and the both everyday and special events taking place there. This became the majority consensus on what was precious about Downtown.

## Design Context Matrix

Analyzing Downtown's Character was the aim of subsequent field investigation, which resulted in the "Design Context" illustration. It is an matrix of images of features and qualities that captured many essences of Downtown Placerville from an outsider's perspective. Some of these were:

**Historic buildings and landmarks** - 19th century brick and stone storefront and civic buildings, with robust Victorian and "mountain" architectural expression, such as the County Courthouse; the Bell Tower; the "Hangman's Tree"; the Cary House Hotel; the "Druid Monument"; the "Placerville Soda Works" building.

**Scale, proportions and rhythms** - Buildings and spaces comfortable and perceivable from the human scale, moving at walking speed; the density and proximity of small shops; the verticality and repetition of window openings, storefront building facades, railing pickets.

**Colors and materials** - red brick and rough granite walls; dark painted walls with deep saturated colors; white window and door trim; the contrast of the white terra cotta County Courthouse against dark green foliage; the black iron of the Bell Tower.

**Sense of craft and detail** - colorful handcrafted shop signs; old and new typefaces of lettering; Victorian multicolor paint schemes for facades; intricate cast balcony railing shapes; arched forms in brick and stone windows; historic plaques on stone markers.

**Unique spaces** - the curving Main Street with buildings forming a sequence of well-defined "public living rooms;" a framed view of the County Courthouse building; the narrow, brick paved Quartz Alley; an irregularly shaped Bell Tower square.

**Diversity of activity** - retail and service businesses catering to both tourists and townspeople; public institutions bringing in people from the region.

**Sense of the landscape** - the surrounding backdrop of dark conifer forested hills, the presence of Hangtown Creek.

**People** - the everyday attention of merchants; the spectacle of community events; the evidence of local pride and care.

These are identifiable and strongly compelling qualities that make up one of the main reasons that Downtown Placerville has *not* disappeared or failed - visitors and residents alike find it an unique and attractive place with desirable goods and services. From a marketing standpoint, Downtown's historic character is its best asset. As identified in the revitalization strategy, however, some of these qualities within Downtown have been weakened by changes over time. Some private investment in renovation, new building construction, and sign installation has not been sympathetic to these desirable Downtown Character qualities.

## Architectural Design Guidelines

A district with a unique and historic character must have its essential physical characteristics identified, in order to determine what it is that needs to be preserved and promoted. An essential tool for accomplishing this is a set of design guidelines. They help to guide private investment by explaining to property owners and developers how to maintain and enhance the Downtown Character in both renovation and new construction projects. These would be defined for the Downtown District only, and would not be city-wide. If guidelines were desirable for other districts, different qualities and patterns of organization specific to those districts would need to be identified.

Design guidelines can be written at different levels of enforcement. At the lightest level, they can be written as an advisory booklet - made available at the planning or building permits counter - that has no force of law and only explains "how we like to build here." Next up from there would be an advisory or discretionary review process, where a written guidelines document would be provided and a follow-up informal review process would identify aspects of a design that weaken instead of maintain or enhance Downtown Character, but again only on an advisory basis.

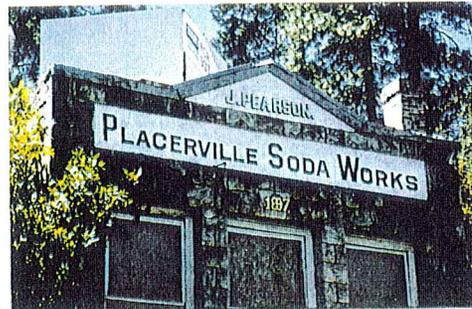
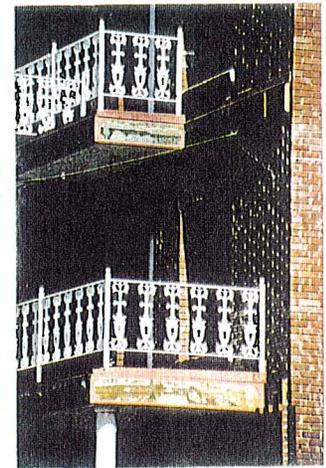
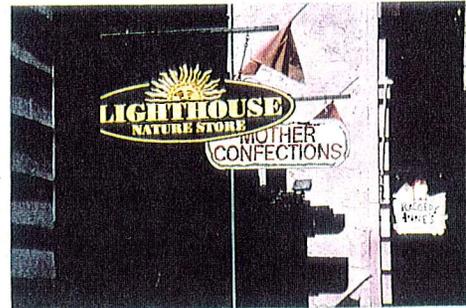
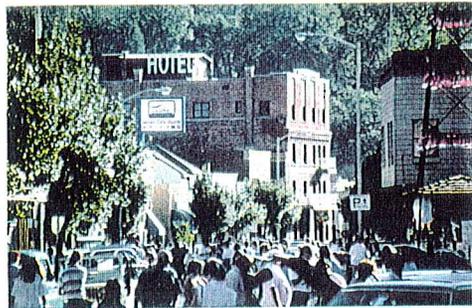
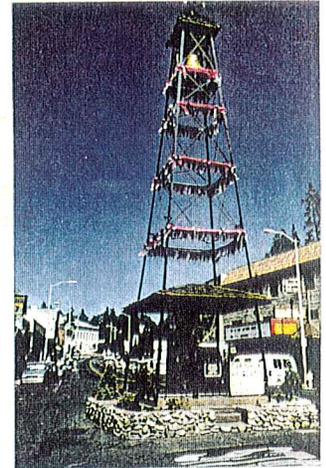
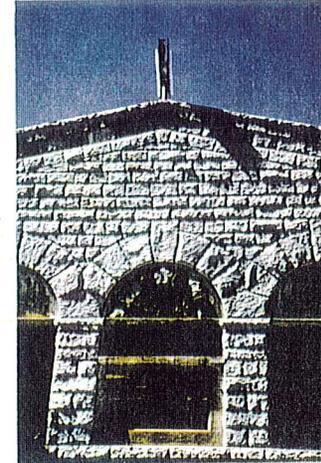
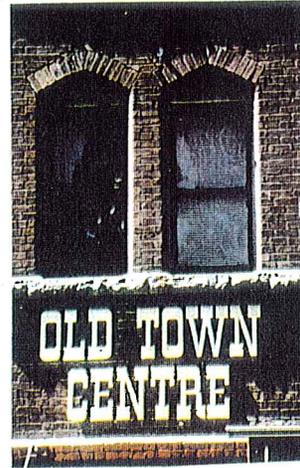
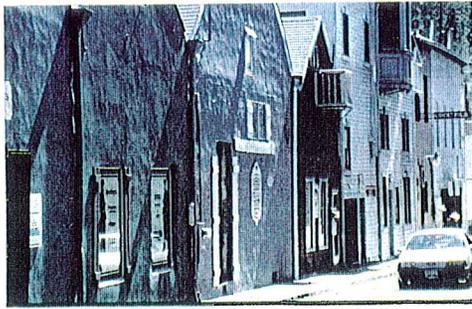
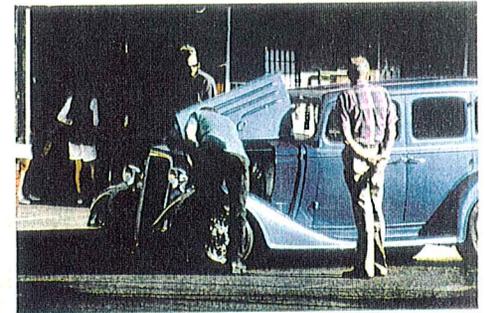
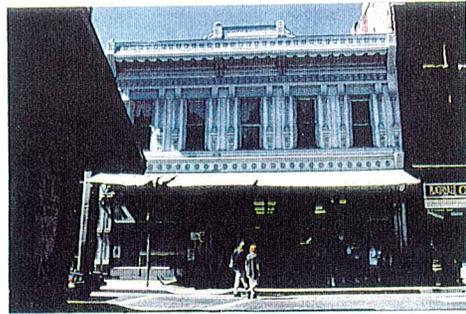
Alternately, a more formal design review process can be put into place, where the design guidelines become a set of *Design Standards and Guidelines*, and design review becomes a part of the planning or building permit application process. Compliance of projects with design *standards* would be mandatory ("shall") (including most zoning requirements) and compliance with design *guidelines* would be discretionary ("should"). In such a case, it is strongly recommended that a trained professional City staff person be designated for the application review function. A design review board composed of non-Staff volunteers is not recommended, as it is often vulnerable to being perceived as partisan or biased.

Design guidelines do not guarantee or substitute for good design. Instead, they insure that fundamental principles of how Downtown Character has been established in Placerville are maintained.

## Recommendation

It is strongly recommended that a set of design guidelines be drafted and implemented to identify, preserve and enhance Downtown's Historic Character. Given the essential role

architectural character plays in the economic fortune of the City's Downtown, it is recommended that the Design Standards & Guidelines approach coupled with a formal City staff review process be immediately implemented.



DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE  
DESIGN CONTEXT

*Chapter IV*

**CATALYST PROJECTS: STIMULATING ECONOMIC  
ACTIVITY**

# CATALYST PROJECTS: STIMULATING ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

## Catalyst Project #1: The Downtown Highway Edge Improvements

The recommended focus of the first catalyst project is Downtown's Edge where it engages Highway 50. Downtown's invisibility or even negative appearance from Highway 50 is a lost opportunity for its business economy and public image. The district's present highway frontage displays backs of buildings (in varying states of repair), parking lots, large commercial signs, and irregular landscaping. Immediately adjacent to the highway are the gravel service road (the former Southern Pacific right-of-way) and a rusty chain link fence. Passing motorists are unaware of Downtown's unique historic ambience and human-scaled business and retail services and do not stop.

The Downtown Highway Edge Improvements are intended to immediately screen and unify unsightly views that will not easily change, to use attractive built features and plantings to project the presence of a well-maintained, high quality mountain town, and to highlight points of entry into Downtown. There are three principal elements: (1) Plant an open but uniform screen of low conifer trees along the western approach to Downtown, beginning at the first eastbound off-ramp to Main Street and extending to Spring Street; (2) Install an ornamental fence/wall and a screen planting of flowering trees at the Downtown Core's edge, extending between Spring Street and Bedford Avenue; and (3) Build special "gateway" treatments at the three major downtown street entries off Highway 50 (Spring, Center, and

Bedford), consisting of ornamental bridge railings with streetlights and changeable cross-street banners mounted on tall poles.

## WESTERN DOWNTOWN APPROACH EDGE: SCREENING CONIFER PLANTING

**Purpose:** The Downtown edge at Highway 50 at its western approach (extending between the first eastbound downtown off-ramp and Spring Street) requires greater visual unity. At present, the motorists'-eye view of this area is that of a jumble of gas stations, fast food restaurants, and their visually competitive pole-mounted signs. These businesses are important and useful services for both residents and visitors, but the present visual character of the area is not supportive or indicative of Downtown's historic character.

**Screening Conifer Planting:** A row of low conifer trees such as Arizona Cypress (*Cupressus glabra*) is recommended as a partial visual screen planting for the western downtown approach edge. The Arizona Cypress tree will create a strong visual relationship with the surrounding conifer forests, but their regular spacing will begin to distinguish a man-made landscape character leading up to the Downtown Core. The Arizona Cypress trees will be low (25' maximum height at maturity) to allow existing pole signs of businesses to remain visible above them. They have a vertical form and with the proposed 31' spacing, there will be noticeable gaps between trees that will permit partial visibility of businesses beyond. The overall effect will be that of a formal planted edge which will greatly aid in unifying the appearance of the area. The centerline of trees is to be set back behind the existing chain link fence just enough for trees to clear the fence, or enough to allow access for parking if required.

**A note on the Eastern Downtown Approach:** At the eastern approach, the restricted available view from the sloped and banked portion of eastbound Highway 50, the lack of level land for tree planting, and the adequacy of the present screening planting all combine to make additional screen planting unnecessary, and it is not recommended at this location.

## **DOWNTOWN CORE EDGE**

The Downtown Core Edge Improvements are recommended for treatment of the Highway 50 frontage of Downtown between Spring Street and Bedford Avenue. This segment encompasses the edge of the Downtown Core area and the three major street entrances into Downtown from Highway 50. The recommended improvements consist of two elements: a screen planting of regularly spaced flowering trees within the former Southern Pacific right-of-way, and the replacement of the existing rusty chain link fence with a new ornamental metal fence and stone piers.

**Purpose:** The flowering trees are to attractively screen irregular and unsightly backs of Main Street buildings and sites. Painted steel ornamental fencing and mortared stone piers take several materials characteristic of Downtown's historic buildings and put them out on display to Highway 50. In combination with the tree planting, the intention is to present a welcoming presence of a permanent, high quality mountain town - a "piece of civilization" in the forest - along the half-mile freeway frontage of the downtown core.

**Flowering Tree:** The recommended flowering tree is the Japanese Crabapple (*Malus floribunda*), which flowers abundantly in spring with pinkish white blossoms, has reddish fall leaf color, and reaches a maximum height of 25 feet with a rounded canopy. These trees are to be irrigated,

planted at a 31' regular spacing, and uplighted from ground-mounted light fixtures for an attractive nighttime appearance. The spacing will allow one car to be parked between two trees where parking is desired (with protective wood bollards with reflectors to be furnished in parking locations). The centerline of trees is recommended to be planted at the back of the former Southern Pacific right-of-way (as far away as possible from the highway), to avoid conflict with potential highway widenings.

**Fence/Wall:** The fence/wall consists of three painted steel ornamental fence panels that span between stone piers at a constant 31' spacing. The flowering trees will be located to center between piers when viewed from the freeway. Fence panels are approximately 8'-7" in length. Each is mounted on two fence posts attached to independent footings, making individual panels easily replaceable if damaged by vehicle impact. The two attachment points also simplify relocation of the panel in case of road widening. Caltrans requires the fence to function solely as a pedestrian barrier. Its 3'-8" height and 4" vertical picket spacing are to comply with the current UBC code.

Fence panels will be welded up of standard steel stock (tubes, plates, bars, etc.) or castings. The decorative diagonal struts will also provide structural reinforcement to the panel. A decorative cast-iron floral rosette is mounted atop a cover plate located at the crossing of the diagonal struts. Panels are to be hot-dipped galvanized for long-term corrosion resistance, and painted with a high-build aliphatic acrylic polyurethane paint (such as Tnemec Endura-Shield) with a clear topcoat for graffiti and fade resistance. The piers are to be mortared stone or precast concrete (molded to resemble stone), and are each mounted atop a single independent footing to simplify relocation if required by road widening. The fence/wall will begin and end at the same locations as

the existing chain link fencing, so as not to interfere with established patterns of movement.

## **GATEWAY TREATMENTS AT DOWNTOWN ENTRY STREETS**

**Purpose:** The existing visual character of the three street entrances to Downtown is not highly noticeable or memorable, yet they are potentially strong opportunities for helping to attract and invite passing motorists to enter Downtown. A visual highlighting of the three entry points into Downtown from Highway 50 (Spring Street, Center Street and Bedford Avenue) is recommended, consisting of two elements: a bridge railing enhancement and cross-street pole mounted banners.

**Bridge Railing Enhancement:** Each of the three entry streets is a bridge as it crosses Hangtown Creek immediately adjacent to Highway 50, but the existing utilitarian roadway bridge structures give little indication of the Creek's presence. A redesigned bridge railing treatment is recommended in order to use the opportunity to create a prominent and attractive entry feature, restate the downtown design theme of metal and stone, and mark the presence of the creek. The recommended design uses the same fence panel and stone pier as the fence/wall, but with the addition of streetlamps to mount on top of each pier to create a bridge entryway to Downtown. The length and number of fence panels would need to be adjusted for each individual bridge structure's dimensions. A structural examination of each bridge would also need to be performed to determine proper railing mounting conditions. The recommended streetlamp is a historic type fluted pole with a single post-top "acorn" type luminaire, made of prismatic borosilicate glass for attractive daytime and nighttime appearance. A 3000 degrees Kelvin metal halide lamp is recommended for

the streetlight, in order to provide a welcoming and attractive warm white light.

**Cross-Street Banner and Support Poles:** Together with each bridge treatment, cross-street banners and support poles are recommended, in order to highlight an entrance to Downtown and provide an inexpensive and highly visible means of graphically announcing Downtown Placerville's presence and its seasonal events to passing motorists. Though the banner poles are to be sited immediately behind the bridge (relative to Highway 50), they are to be located and constructed separate from the bridge railing treatment in order to provide flexibility of location and foundation design. The 24' height poles are to be simple tapered tubes topped by a ball finial, painted to match fence and bridge railing metalwork. The engineering of the poles will need to be coordinated with the structural design of the banners for high winds. Outrigger arms will support floodlighting for nighttime upright illumination of banners.

The fabric banners and support cables are to create a three segment banner set, with angled flanking banners separately indicating DOWNTOWN and PLACERVILLE (there could be several sets with similar design but different colored versions possible for different seasons), and a changeable central rectangular banner announcing downtown events such as the Farmers' Market, Antique Show, etc. The flanking panels are angled in form in order to enhance an arch-like gateway appearance. The banner form and graphic design (typeface) should be carefully designed to complement and enhance (but not overdo) Downtown's historic character. Banner anchorages, breakaway connections and air vents will need to be carefully engineered for high winds. A specialized and experienced banner fabrication company should be engaged to design and fabricate the initial set of banners. In addition, Caltrans permits will need to be obtained for cross-street

banners at Spring Street due to its status as State Highway 49.

## **Catalyst Project #2: Main Street Improvements in the Downtown Core and Extension**

The second catalyst project focuses on public improvements to Main Street within the Downtown Core (from Sacramento St. to Bedford Ave.) and the Downtown Extension (from Bedford Ave. to Cedar Ravine). The character of the Downtown Main Street environment is already distinctive and unique, but many aspects of the public space could be "fine tuned" to make it an even more attractive and memorable place.

### **DOWNTOWN CORE MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENTS:**

Within the Core area, the street section between the buildings is highly constrained in terms of the through-movements to be accommodated . The existing widths of traffic lanes, parking, and sidewalks are all minimal, and no realignment is recommended. However, changes can be made to provide improved conditions for visitors and users.

**Install New Streetlights:** Though economical to operate, the existing widely spaced and tall "cobrahead" type street light poles used in Downtown are appropriate for freeways and arterials but are not suitable in character for a historic pedestrian-scaled retail environment. These poles should be removed and reused elsewhere. A replacement installation should be made of 12' high (measured to light source) ornamental post-top type streetlights at approximately 64' spacing. The lower, more closely spaced poles help to reinforce the pedestrian scale and rhythm of the streetscape. These poles should be mounted just behind the curb

(centered between every other pair of street trees, see description of street trees following).

The pole base should be an ornamental cast iron or aluminum type and the shaft should be a fluted type appropriate to the historic Downtown character and architecture. The paint color should be black, dark green, or dark red, and a gloss finish to better shed dust and dirt. The luminaire head should be of a ornamental style appropriate to Downtown's historic architecture. It should also have an optical distribution system such as a prismatic glass globe or a "cutoff" type design to direct light downward for reduced glare and less upward waste light. Instead of the current high pressure sodium lamps with 2200K temperature pale orange light, a 3000K metal halide lamp type is recommended for efficient energy use, long bulb life, attractive warm white light color, and non-distorting color rendering. An outdoor electrical outlet at the top of pole should be installed for powering of Christmas lighting and other temporary uses. Support arm(s) for hanging flower baskets may be specified if desired.

**Remove Existing Street Trees and Install New Street Trees in New Location:** The existing street trees are not in good health, due to their tree type not being suited to the soil and planting conditions. They also have an inappropriate type of foliage structure (too bushy, shrub-like and visually obstructive) for a shopping street. These trees should be removed and their planting holes in the sidewalk should be patched. The existing Vietnam memorial plaques should be removed and cleaned for reuse.

A replacement street tree planting should be located in the parking lane, with centerline of trees set 4' out from the existing face of curb. This creates the appearance of a more generous portion of the street section for the pedestrian

(between the tree and the building) and a narrower territory for the vehicle (between trees on either side of the street), without actually changing locations of cars and people. Tree planter wells constructed of 6" high curbs in a 6' x 6' square with 9" outside radius corners should be cut and installed in the asphalt, set 12" clear of the existing face of curb to maintain the current drainage. Wells should be spaced for trees at 32' on center so that one 26' clear length parallel parking space (22' typical stall length + 2' extra at each end) fits between every two tree wells. Parking meters and stall striping should be relocated accordingly.

For tree protection, two pipe bollards topped by ornamental caps should be mounted on 12" x 12" concrete footings, each centered on and flush with the two respective tree well curbs facing parked vehicle bumpers. Drip irrigation should be provided. The salvaged Vietnam memorial plaques should be mounted in the new tree wells. Uplighting of trees is strongly recommended for safety and attractive appearance. One flush upright should be installed at each well, mounted at the traffic side of the well, using a metal halide lamp.

The tree species should be a proven deciduous street tree type - hardy and resistant to pollution, insects, and disease, capable of being limbed and shaped for an open "habit" for storefront visibility, and tolerant of minimal watering in dry years. Examples include the "Yarwood" variety London Plane (*Platanus acerifolia*) and the Idaho Locust (*Robinia ambigua idahoensis*). The final selection should be verified with a professional horticulturalist for suitability with local soil conditions. Contract grown 36" box size trees are strongly recommended for a good visual impact; 24" box size are the minimum acceptable size.

**Replace Leaking and Deteriorated Trash Receptacles with New Receptacles:** New receptacles should be made of

painted cast metal (paint to match streetlights) and selected to complement the historic Downtown character and other street furnishings.

**Provide Additional Benches and Other Seating:** These should also be painted metal frame (cast iron or aluminum) with wood slats and complement the historic Downtown character.

**All Street Furnishings:** In general, the design character of catalog street furnishings should be simple and restrained. Overly florid forms and gaudy colors can put the furnishings too far in the foreground when they should be an attractive background "civic infrastructure" for the Main Street. Historic-styled furnishings should also not be cartoons of the real thing, in being a crude or "plastic" imitations. A too-loud "Olde Towne" style of street furnishings can drown out the authenticity of the existing environment. Furnishings should be substantial and permanent in materiality and craftsmanship, appropriate to a civic environment. They need not be absolutely identical in style, but should form a related "family of objects" to reinforce a sense of care and quality in the public realm.

**Provide Downtown Maps, Directional Signs and Business Directories:** A signage program should assist visitors and customers in locating Downtown district entrances, streets, public parking, pedestrian walkways, recreational and public facilities, visitor information, and business areas. Downtown Business Directory(s) can provide more detail on locating specific business types. The design of these signs should have relation to Downtown gateway features, street furnishings and historical plaques in color, material, and/or form.

## **DOWNTOWN EXTENSION MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENTS**

The Downtown Extension portion of Main Street is a vestige of a dense Core-type shopping street, where the storefront building pattern has become discontinuous. Open lots separating the storefront buildings have resulted from demolitions or from never having been built upon, producing a "gap-toothed" development pattern. The following streetscape improvements are suggested to strengthen the physical enclosure of the corridor and increase pedestrian comfort:

**Install New Street Tree Planting:** Center trees in parking zone at 32' on center, as described for the downtown core. This is more important in the Extension segment than in the Core as a means of "healing" the gap-toothed building pattern and creating more visual and spatial continuity.

**Install New Streetlights:** As recommended previously for the Downtown Core.

**Provide Trash Receptacles and Seating:** As described for the Downtown Core but in more limited locations, in accordance with a lower intensity of pedestrian use.

**Main Street Frontages of Public Parking Lots:** Open frontages of public parking lots abutting Main Street should be treated with continuous fence and/or wall treatments to help "build out" the gaps between buildings. These should be of painted metalwork and/or stone to complement existing downtown ornamental ironwork fences, stone piers and buildings, and brick facades. A repeating module of posts, piers or fence panels of up to 8' maximum spacing is encouraged to emphasize a rhythm of pedestrian-scaled

increments. Taller posts or piers may be used to frame vehicle or pedestrian entries from the street.

## **Longer-term Downtown Capital Improvements Projects**

**Uplight the County Courthouse Building:** The County Courthouse is one of Downtown's architectural jewels, and its prominent location and light color make it a highly visible landmark feature and eastern gateway for the Downtown as seen from Highway 50. Floodlighting of its facades and roof crown is strongly recommended to make the Courthouse an even more powerful nighttime landmark and eastern gateway than in the day. From either direction, it would become a symbol that would come to strongly signify Downtown Placerville, as the courthouse dome does for Auburn. The uplighting should be accomplished with energy-efficient, high color rendition type lighting such as 3000K metal halide. A qualified lighting designer/engineer experienced in exterior illumination of buildings should be engaged for this installation.

**Develop the Center Street Alleyway as a Unique Shopping Lane:** The Center Street Alley (extending between the Center Street Highway 50 entrance and the Bell Tower, running parallel between Main Street and Highway 50) is a narrow lane with dimensions and proportions resembling a European medieval street. It has the potential to become a charming retailing environment, unique in all the Sierra Nevada. Ground floor storefronts are recommended to be constructed into first bay of parking within the parking structure facing upon the alley. Across the alley, the rear facade of Main Street buildings should be encouraged to open backs as storefronts on the alley. In some cases, subdivision of rear shops may be feasible and appropriate. The resulting small shopping lane should be treated with

high quality lighting and other streetscape cues to encourage slow vehicle movement and attract pedestrians. If possible, repave the street from the garage entry to the "Bell Tower Square" with unit pavers to de-emphasize its automotive use, and provide removable bollards at both ends to permit temporary closure to vehicles for special events.

**In Conjunction with an Alley Renovation, Design and Construct Public Restroom Facilities in the Parking Garage Structure:** Public restroom facilities should be safe, attractive, and maintainable. The public approach and entry areas should be well lit and easily visible from neighboring businesses, and restroom hours of operation should be tied to business hours of adjoining shops. Existing garage interior lighting should be upgraded for safer and more attractive appearance (3000K metal halide recommended lamp type).

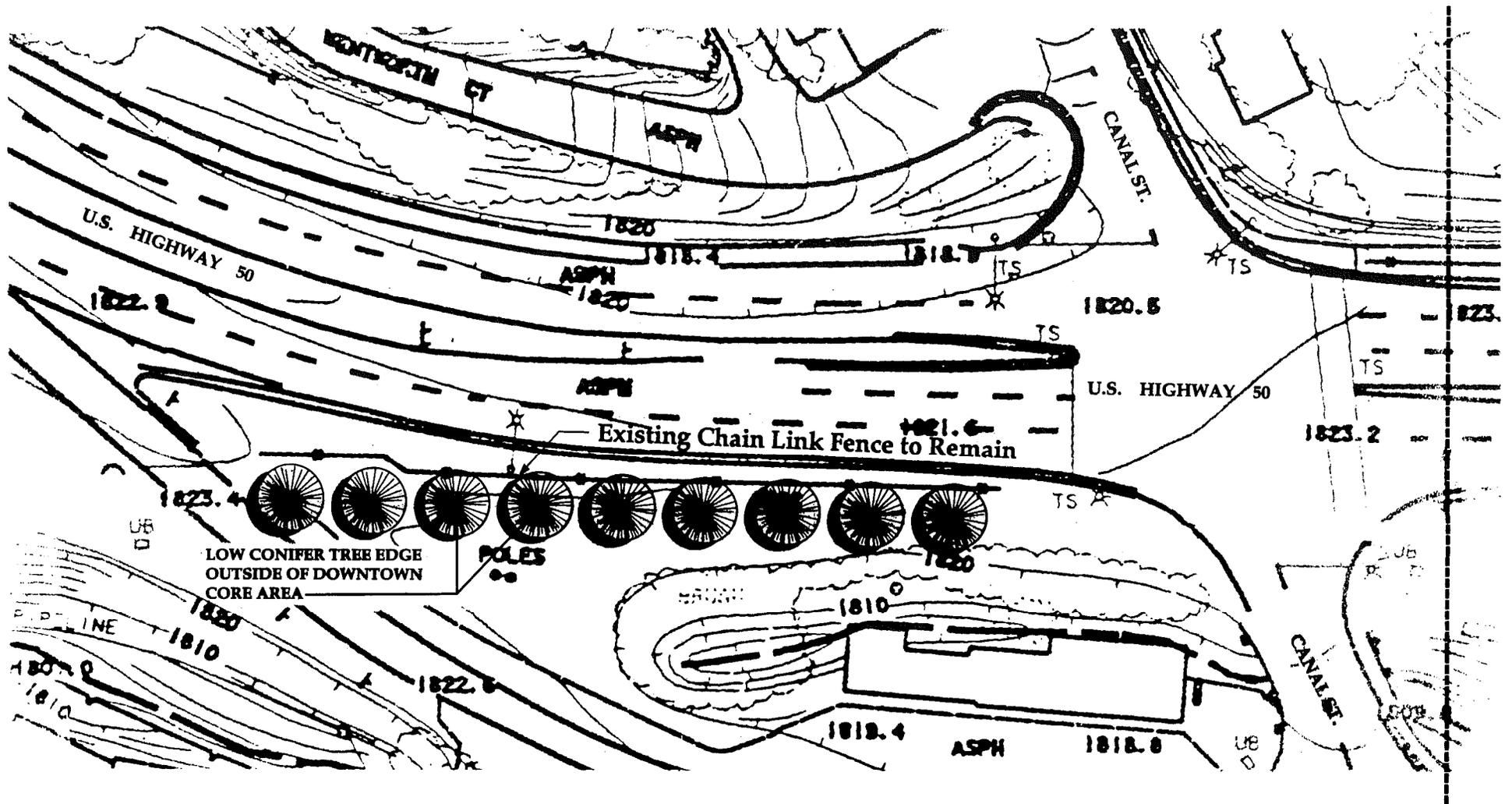
**Designate and Improve Overflow Downtown Public Parking Facilities.** These parking facilities should be well signed and illuminated for safety and attractiveness. Public pathways to these parking lots should be easily discernable through use of fencing, walls, signs, lines of streetlight poles, and other cues related to the vocabulary of downtown improvements.

**Improve "Bell Tower Square".** As the central and best-loved landmark of the Downtown Core, the Bell Tower should be able to preside over a community gathering place, and the area at its base can be substantially improved from its present configuration. A number of workshop participants suggested "pedestrianization" of some of the roadway area around the base of the tower, especially between the island and the "flatiron" building between Main Street and the Center Street alleyway. Complete elimination of that vehicular access and circulation around the base of

the tower is not recommended, however. A reduction of the turn-around lane width and an expansion of the Bell Tower island may be the most appropriate. Possible uses of an enlarged island area include seating and paver areas and broader grass or flower bed areas.

Alternatively, a mostly "hardscaped" treatment of the island with paved pedestrian areas and flowers set in planter pots may be more flexible and durable. If desired, unit paving (such as precast concrete interlocking pavers) may be installed to cover portions of the roadway surface adjacent to the Bell Tower island, but it is strongly recommended that this treatment be restricted to the more lightly travelled areas (the north and west sides of the bell tower island). At heavily travelled areas (such as crossing the Main Street thru-traffic flow south of the island), the unit paver areas should be kept within crosswalk lines. This is because unless they are universally used for roadway paving, unit paver materials underfoot create a "subliminal impression" of a pedestrian-only area, and pedestrians will not pay as close attention to the prospect of speeding cars.

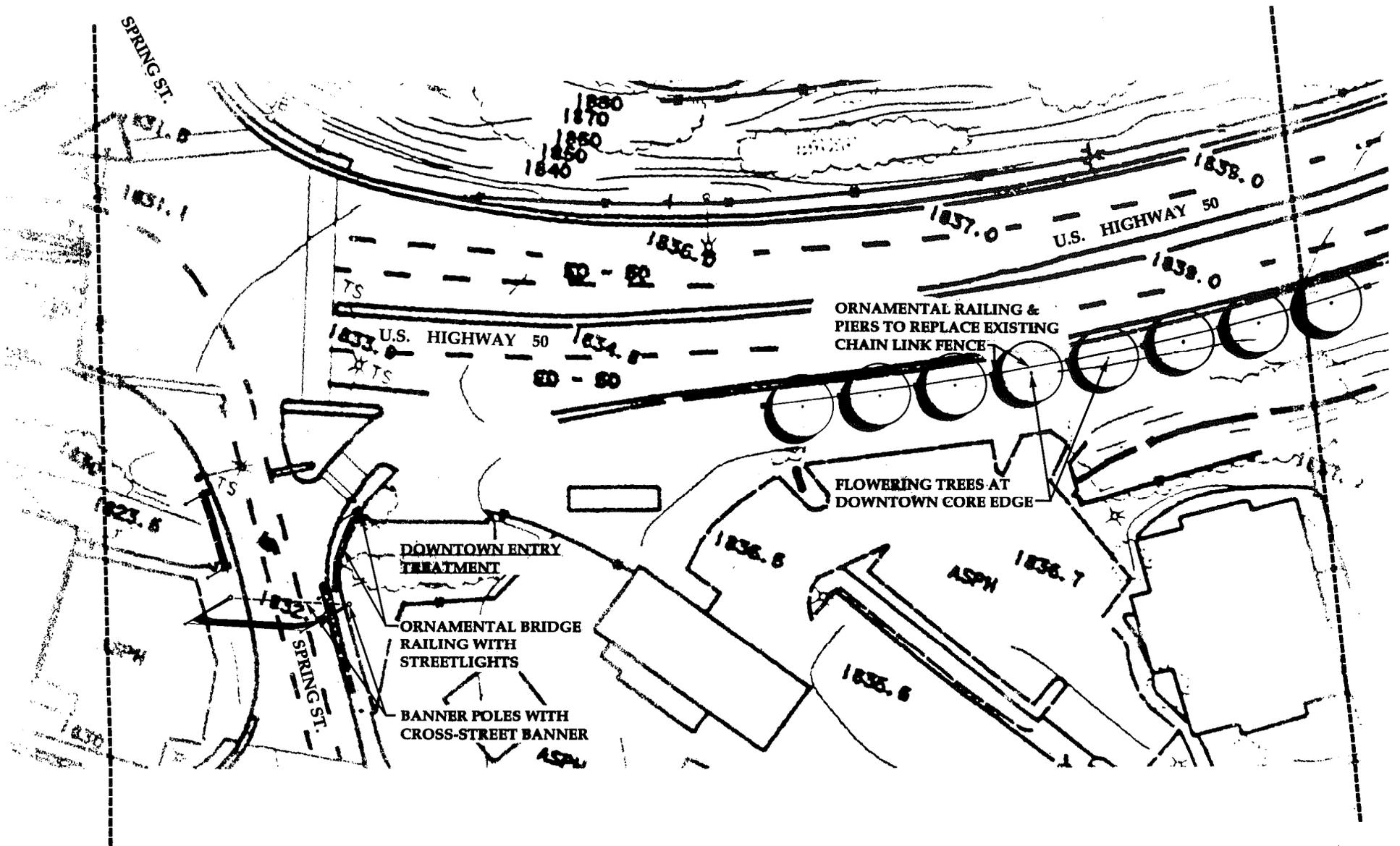
**Paint Existing Pedestrian Overcrossing Structures above Highway 50 to Match the Metalwork Paint Color of New Downtown Edge Improvements:** These large infrastructure elements can be made to appear as gateway-like features if tied into the color scheme of other downtown improvements. Caltrans permission and cooperation must be pursued for this change.



DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - HIGHWAY EDGE IMPROVEMENTS

# LAYOUT PLANS - SHEET 1 OF 7

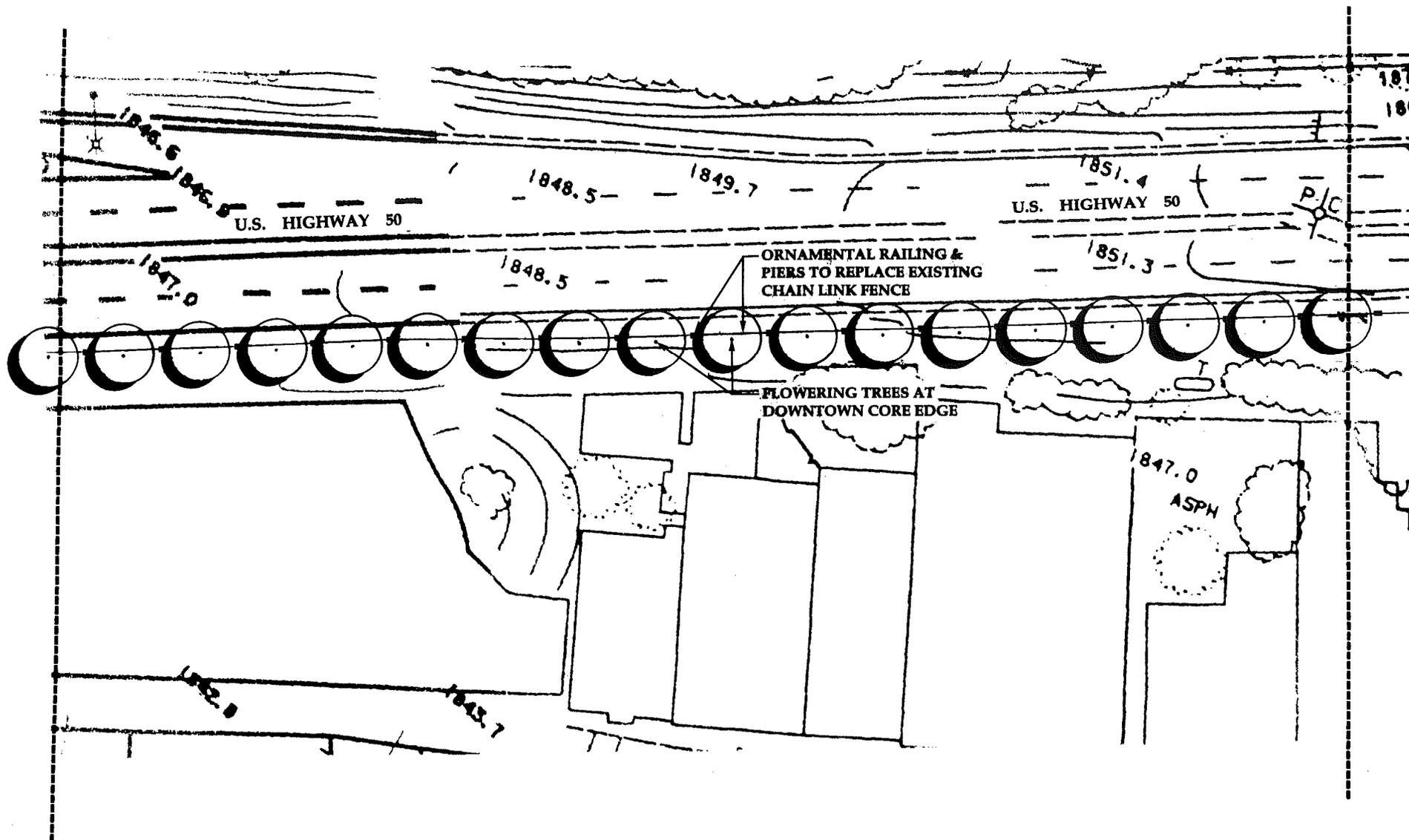




DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - HIGHWAY EDGE IMPROVEMENTS

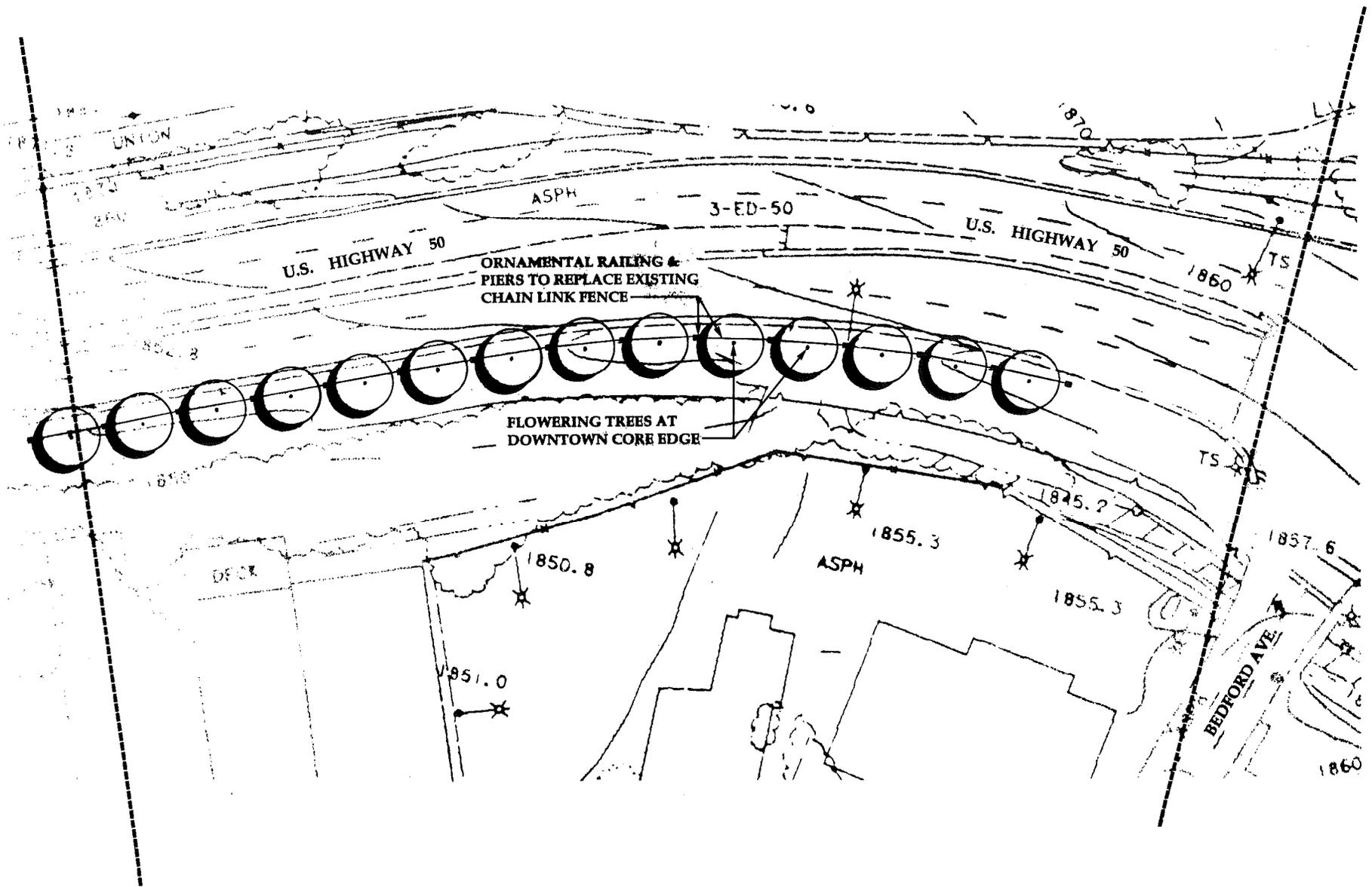
LAYOUT PLANS - SHEET 3 OF 7





DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - HIGHWAY EDGE IMPROVEMENTS

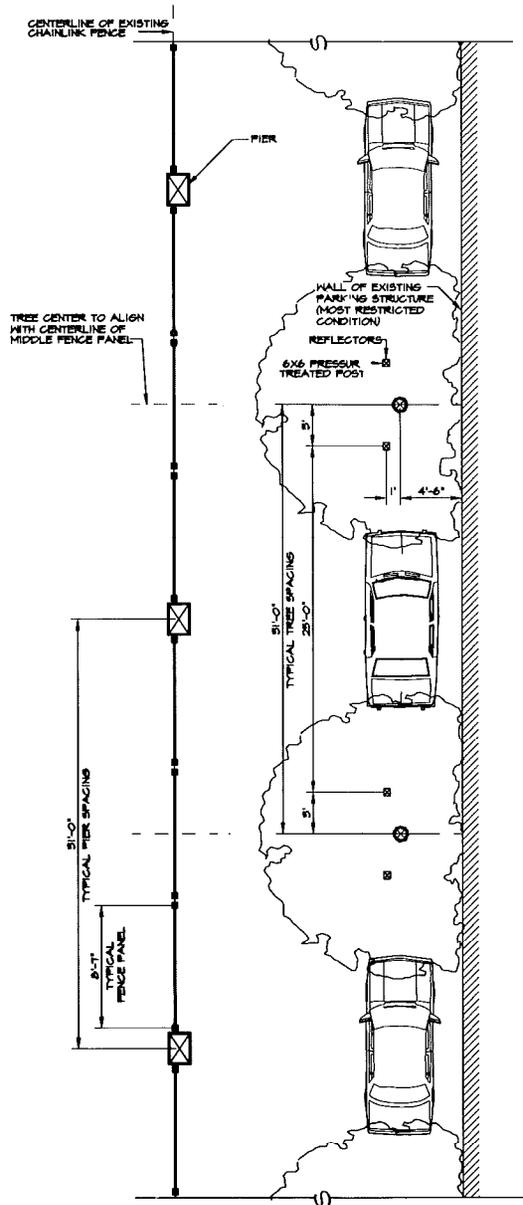
LAYOUT PLANS - SHEET 5 OF 7



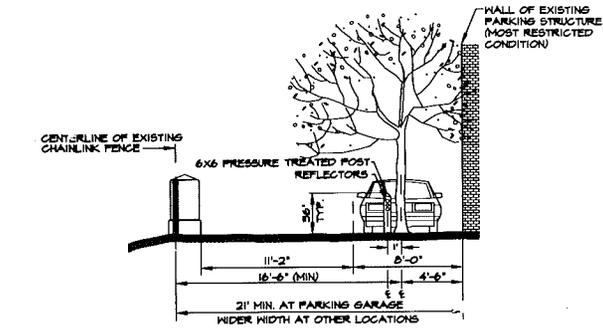
DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - HIGHWAY EDGE IMPROVEMENTS

LAYOUT PLANS - SHEET 6 OF 7

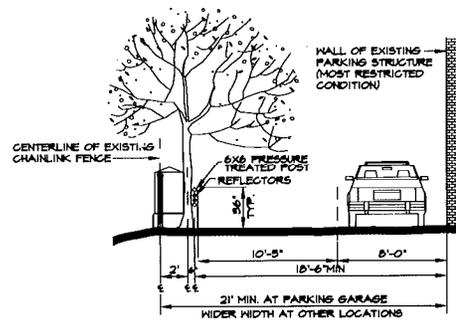




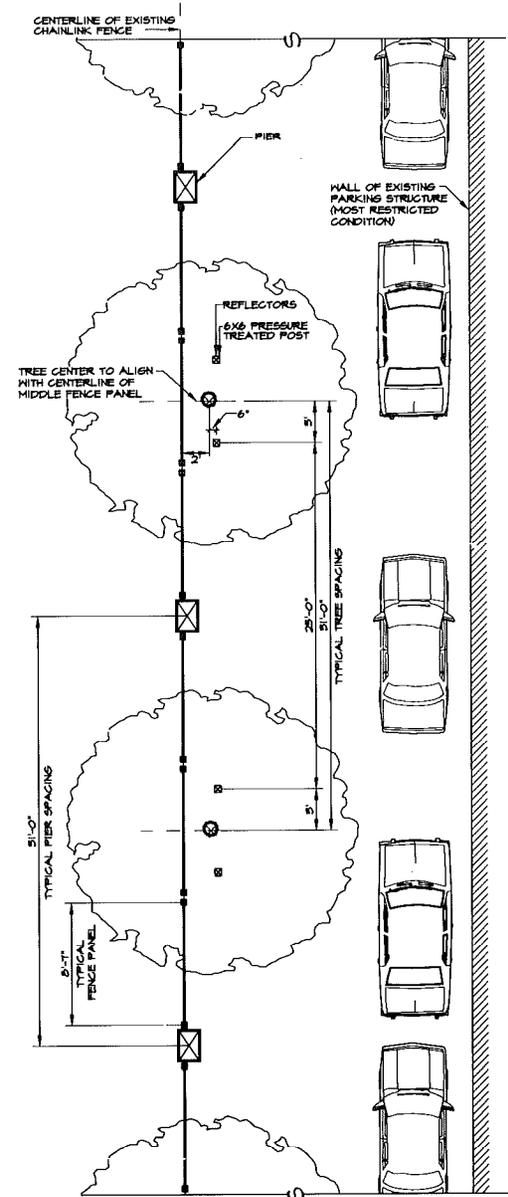
PLAN - ALTERNATE A



SECTION - ALTERNATE A



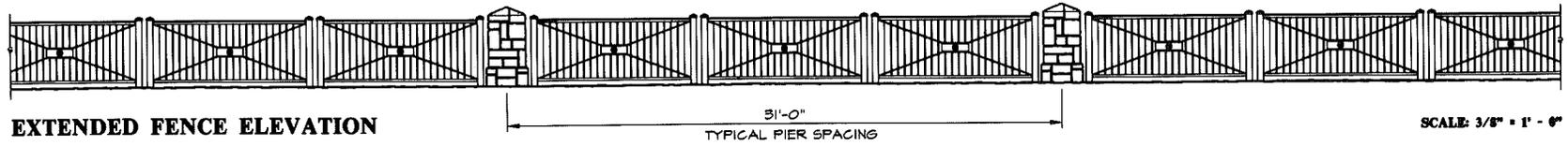
SECTION - ALTERNATE B



PLAN - ALTERNATE B

DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - CORE EDGE

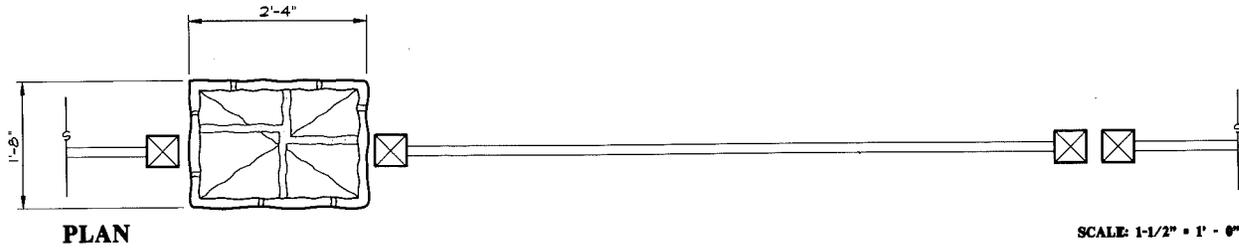
FENCE / WALL AND FLOWERING TREES



**EXTENDED FENCE ELEVATION**

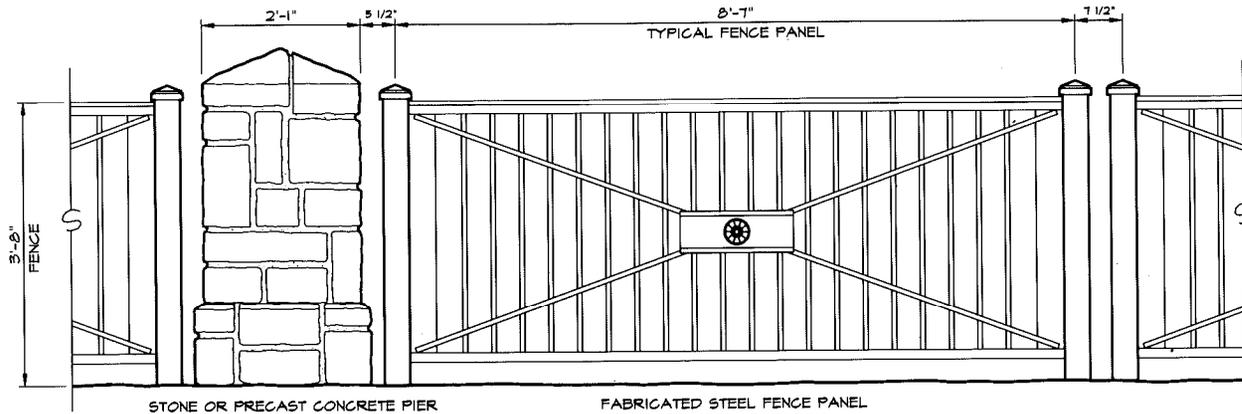
31'-0"  
TYPICAL PIER SPACING

SCALE: 3/8" = 1' - 0"



**PLAN**

SCALE: 1-1/2" = 1' - 0"

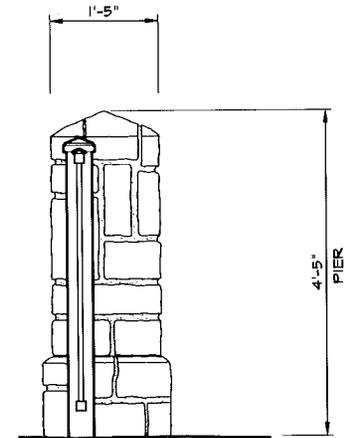


**ELEVATION**

STONE OR PRECAST CONCRETE PIER

FABRICATED STEEL FENCE PANEL

SCALE: 1-1/2" = 1' - 0"



**SECTION**

SCALE: 1-1/2" = 1' - 0"

**DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - CORE EDGE  
FENCE / WALL DETAILS**



*Existing chain link fencing at  
Highway 50 edge*



*Existing bridge railing (Spring Street)*

*The present fencing and railing at Downtown's edge does not project on image of quality,  
nor does it convey the historic character of Downtown.*



*Stone pier in Downtown Core*



*Ornamental iron railing in  
Downtown Extension*

*Existing materials of historic piers and railings in Downtown are the inspiration for  
the new fence/wall and bridge railing designs.*

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**DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - HIGHWAY EDGE IMPROVEMENTS**  
**FENCING AND RAILING DESIGN**



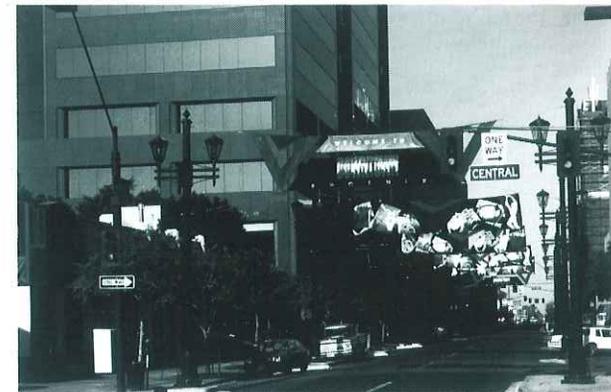
*The eastern Highway 50 approach to Downtown has adequate landscape screening.*



*The County Courthouse is an attractive landmark and eastern "gateway" to Downtown, and should be uplift.*



*Existing street entrances into Downtown from Highway 50 are visually undistinguished.*



*Street entrances into Downtown can become gateways with colorful cross-street banners announcing special events.*

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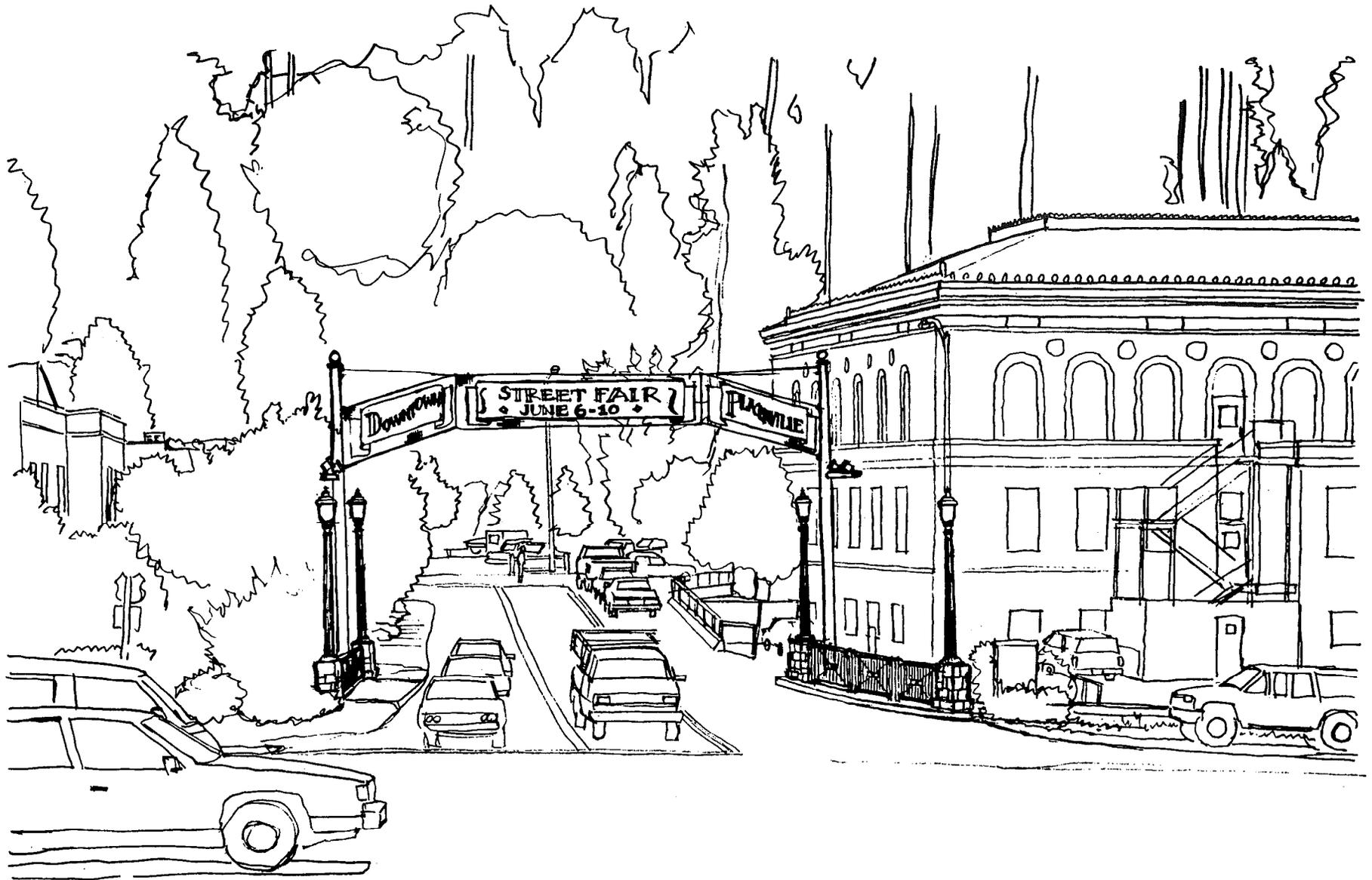
DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE  
**ENTRIES AND GATEWAYS**



---

DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - GATEWAY TREATMENTS

**EXISTING CONDITION AT BEDFORD AVE.**



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DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - GATEWAY TREATMENTS

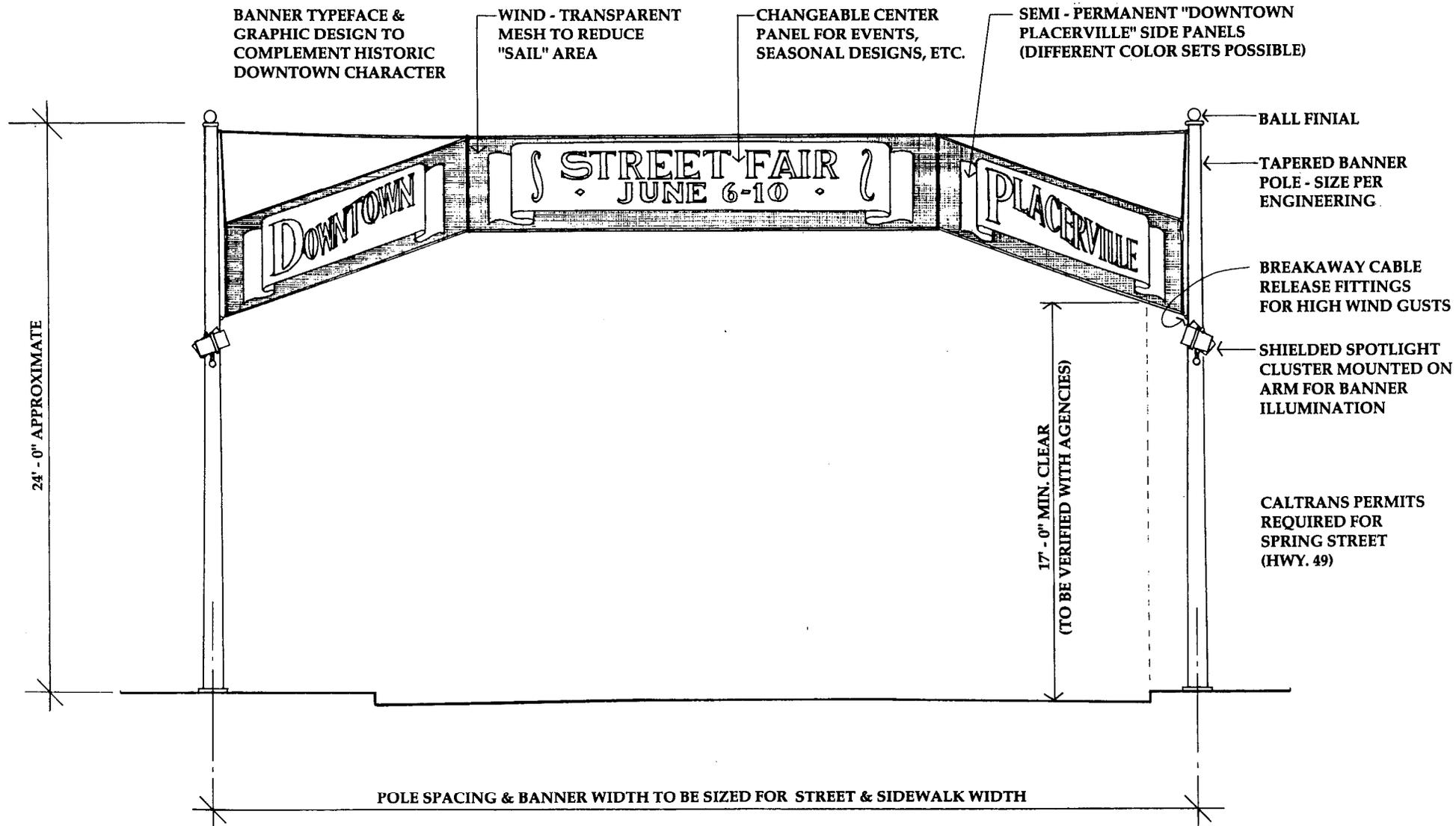
**ENTRY TREATMENT AT BEDFORD AVE.**



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DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - GATEWAY TREATMENTS

## ENTRY TREATMENT AT CENTER STREET



DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - GATEWAY TREATMENTS

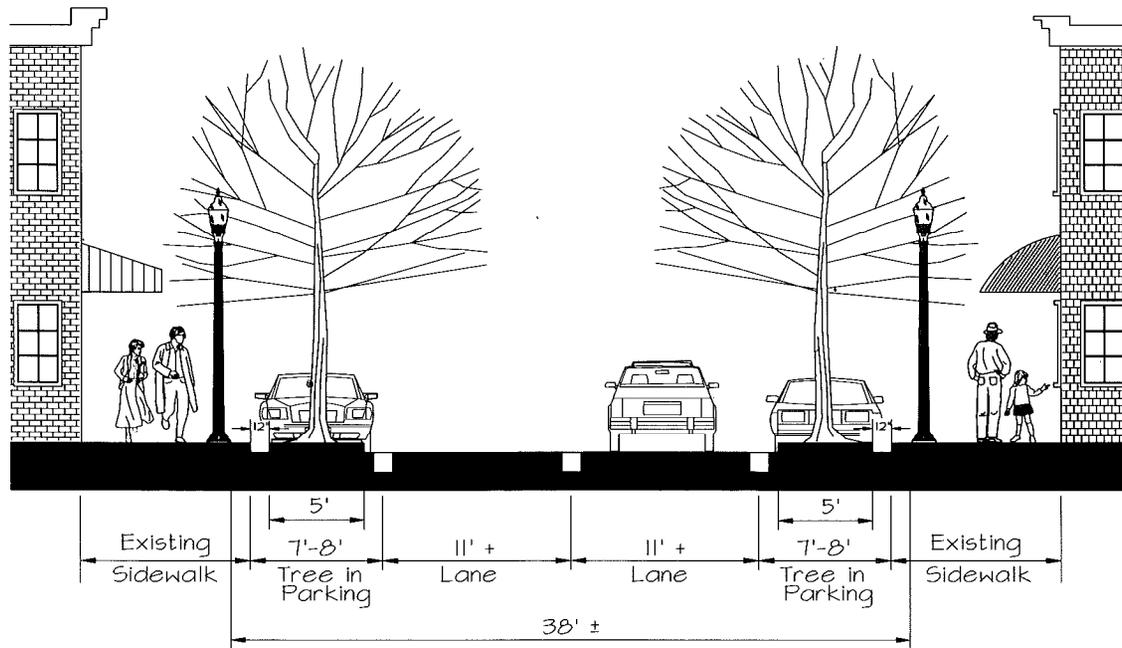
CROSS-STREET BANNERS - ELEVATION



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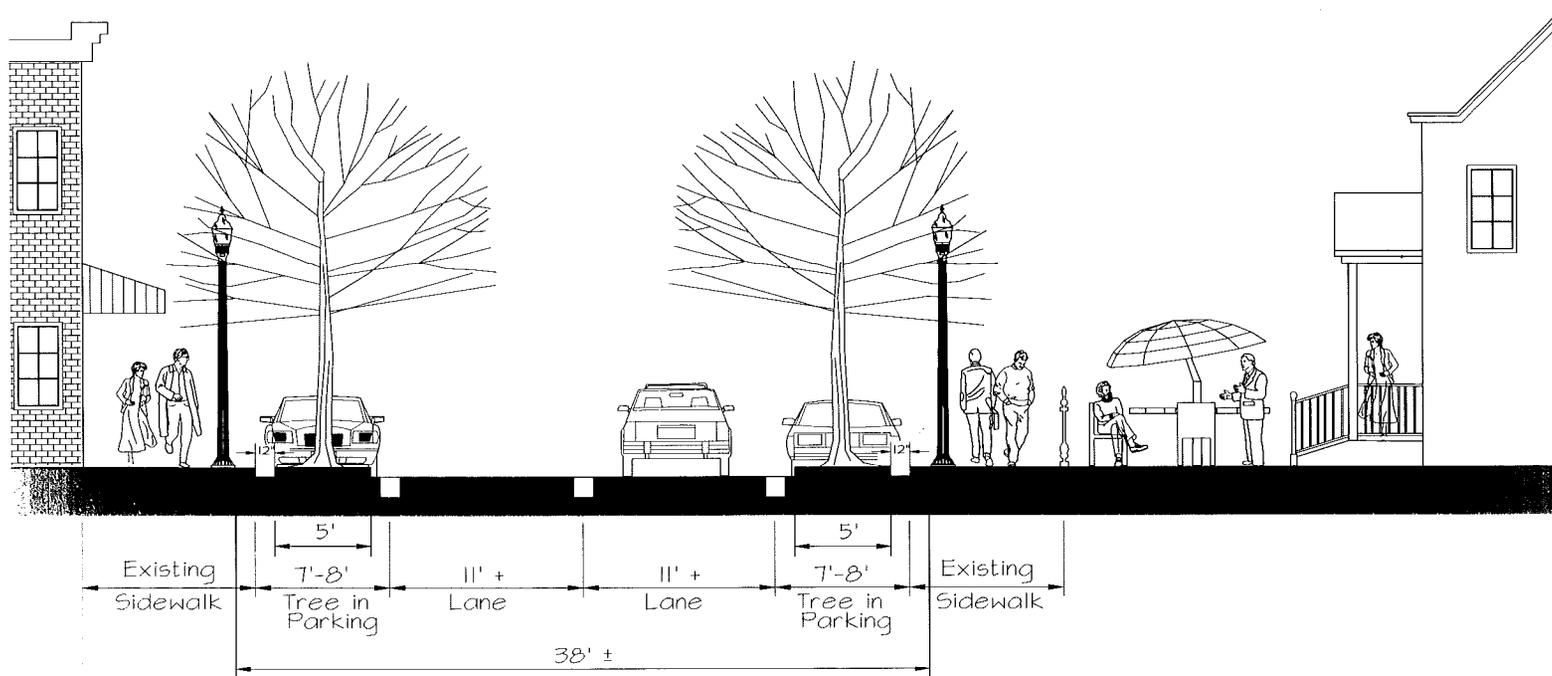
DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - GATEWAY TREATMENTS

# BRIDGE RAILING ENHANCEMENT



DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - CORE

# MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENTS - SECTION



DOWNTOWN PLACERVILLE - EXTENSION

# MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENTS - SECTION

*Chapter V*

**FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS: MAKING  
DOWNTOWN ATTRACTIVE TO INVESTORS**

## FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Financial Incentive Programs have two objectives: attract new investment, and encourage reinvestment. The programs are to be made available exclusively for business and property owners located in the Downtown district.

The City of Placerville should establish and fund the following programs:

1. **Business Recruitment and Relocation Program.** Two kinds of established businesses could be attracted to fill vacancies that occur in Downtown: a) existing businesses in less desirable locations within the community that could be interested in relocating, and; b) successful existing businesses within Placerville or other communities that could be recruited to open another store or office.

The City should recruit "catalyst" businesses through aggressive promotion efforts and financial assistance. Low interest loans could be used as an inducement to help with relocation expenses, start-up lease assistance, and/or renovation costs. Approximately \$200,000 should be budgeted to recruit two to three successful existing businesses that have a large, loyal customer base and could expand this customer base in Downtown. Waiving sewer hook-up fees should be considered as an ongoing incentive to attract eateries and other types of businesses for which these fees are a significant expense.

The City should also assist existing businesses in the Downtown Core to move to other locations in the City that offer better access to their target market. This would open up frontage for the types of businesses targeted by the Revitalization Program, such as restaurants and

specialty and convenience retail. Relocation expenses generally average approximately \$15,000 per business, including moving expenses, lease assistance for up to six months, and advertising related to the new location.

Relocation can be an involved effort that requires considerable energy on the part of both staff and business owners. Up to five relocations should be budgeted. This would require a budget of approximately \$75,000.

*Estimated program costs: \$275,000, plus City staff time.*

2. **Building Facade Improvement Program.** The City should establish a program that promotes short-term, small-scale investment in existing buildings in the Downtown. The program would also help to promote application of the Design Guidelines recommended by the Revitalization Program.

The City would hire a single architectural firm to provide services for Downtown businesses and buildings. Services would include: meetings with building owners and tenants to assess design needs; analysis of costs and benefits of alternative improvement approaches; drawings indicating colors, materials, and details of the recommended approach, and; recommendations for sign design. Program participants must demonstrate a willingness to establish a budget and set aside funds for carrying out the improvements.

It is recommended that approximately \$3,000 - \$5,000 be budgeted per design; building materials and labor would be provided by building owners and/or tenants. It is estimated that an average of five business per year

would participate requiring a budget of \$15,000 - \$25,000 per year.

*Estimated program cost:* \$40,000 for 2 years, plus City staff time.

3. **Downtown Marketing Program.** Three general approaches are recommended:
  - a) *Coordinate business promotion* - This could include a coordinated advertising approach as well as locally-oriented public events, such as a weekend sidewalk sale or farmers market. The City should assist Downtown merchants by allowing sidewalk events and other atypical activities that are part of a more aggressive retailing approach.
  - b) *Promote Downtown Placerville to outside investors* - This could include formal presentations by City officials and staff to members of the development and business community, but should also include informal networking by members of the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown merchants, and others interested in promoting revitalization of the area.

Brochures and other graphic materials that can be handed to interested parties are especially important. They must reflect the City's new approach to revitalizing Downtown. Where possible, images of renovations and new development projects should be used to portray a Downtown "on the move." Design and printing for color brochures ranges from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

- c) *Package and/or promote development of specific Downtown sites* - The City should actively assist development in priority locations as opportunities arise. The City

should also assist landowners to target specific developers who specialize in a high quality building product.

*Estimated program cost:* \$15,000 plus City staff time.

4. **Publicity and Special Events Program.** Publicity efforts should be coordinated to showcase progress and improvements as change occurs. This could include professional symposiums and tours by business and development associations, as well as parades, awards ceremonies, and the like.

*Estimated program cost:* \$30,000 (10 events over a 10-year period; \$3,000 average per event), plus City staff time.

5. **Business Development Program.** This program would provide access and/or financial support for technical assistance in the areas of retailing, business promotion, and advertising. Assistance could range from window displays to business plans, and would involve a retailing consultant on an as-needed basis.

*Estimated program cost:* \$50,000 (10 years at \$5,000 average per year), plus City staff time.

6. **Consider Central Retail Management (CRM) for the Downtown Core.** Downtown organizations in a number of cities have established CRM to compete effectively with shopping centers and malls. CRM typically involves merchants and landowners in coordinating advertising, setting business hours, targeting new tenants, and generally establishing a strong, market-based retailing strategy geared to the district's market niche and local demographics. In its most "aggressive" form, CRM can

become involved in the pooling and leasing of properties under a corporate ownership structure.

If all of the Programs described above were funded, costs would total approximately \$550,000 over a 10-year period, or an average of \$55,000 per year, plus associated staff costs. It is recommended that funds for the programs be budgeted in the form of a single Business Improvement Program "seed fund" that would allow them to be allocated flexibly among the individual programs as needed.

If some or all of these programs are established, a Revitalization Coordinator staff position may need to be created. The City cost for this position, including insurance and benefits, could range from \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year.

*Chapter VI*

**NEXT STEPS: HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS**

## NEXT STEPS: HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS

To effectively achieve substantial short-term results in the City's effort to revitalize Downtown's economy and physical environment, the following high priority actions must be taken immediately and simultaneously. They are listed in order of priority.

1. *Adopt the Downtown Revitalization Action Plan and institute needed funding mechanisms for capital improvements, business incentive programs, policy changes, and ongoing operations and maintenance.*
2. *Construct Catalyst Project #1, the "Downtown Highway Edge Improvements."*
3. *Establish and fund incentive programs to stimulate near term investment in Downtown. At a minimum, these should include a business recruitment and relocation program and a facade improvements program.*
4. *Revise land use, parking, and signage policies for the Downtown Core and Extension as described in the Revitalization Strategy.*
5. *Draft and adapt Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines. Implement a design review process to enforce the guideline and streamline the approval process.*

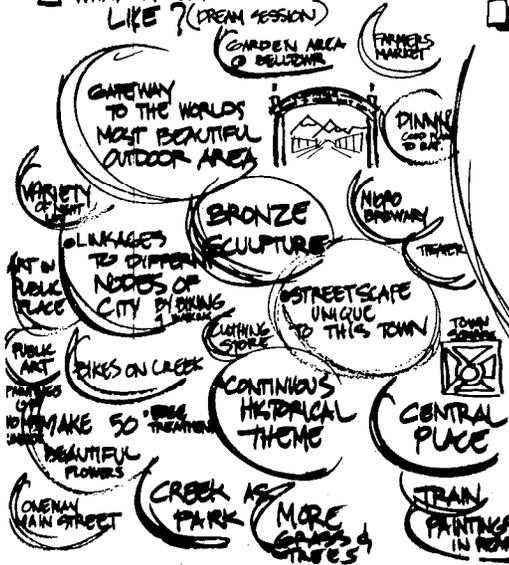
## APPENDICES

- A. Sample Community Workshop Notes
- B. Sample Workshop Survey Forms
- C. Survey Comments from Workshop #1

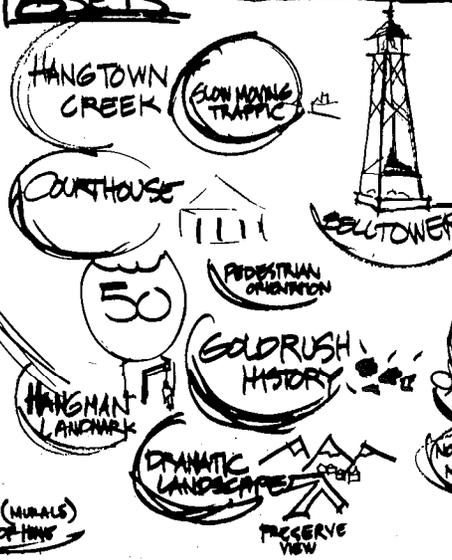
# IPLACERVILLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP | JUNE 8 1995

## MAIN STREET VISIONS

□ WHAT SHOULD IT LOOK LIKE? (DREAM SESSION)



□ ASSETS



□ ACTIONS



□ THINGS THAT NEED TO BE FIXED? (WHAT'S MISSING)



ADDRESS SCHISM BETWEEN STRIP & DOWNTOWN

1 OR 2 PEOPLE OF ALL OF DOWNTOWN

HOMO-IMAGE FROM EAST BLAH

NEEDS CLOSED NIGHT

COVER PIPE

NIGHT-LIFE NEEDS! SOME!

NIGHT LIFE SCARY

NO NICHE SPECIFIC TO DOWNTOWN

AUGUST  
-16-  
1995

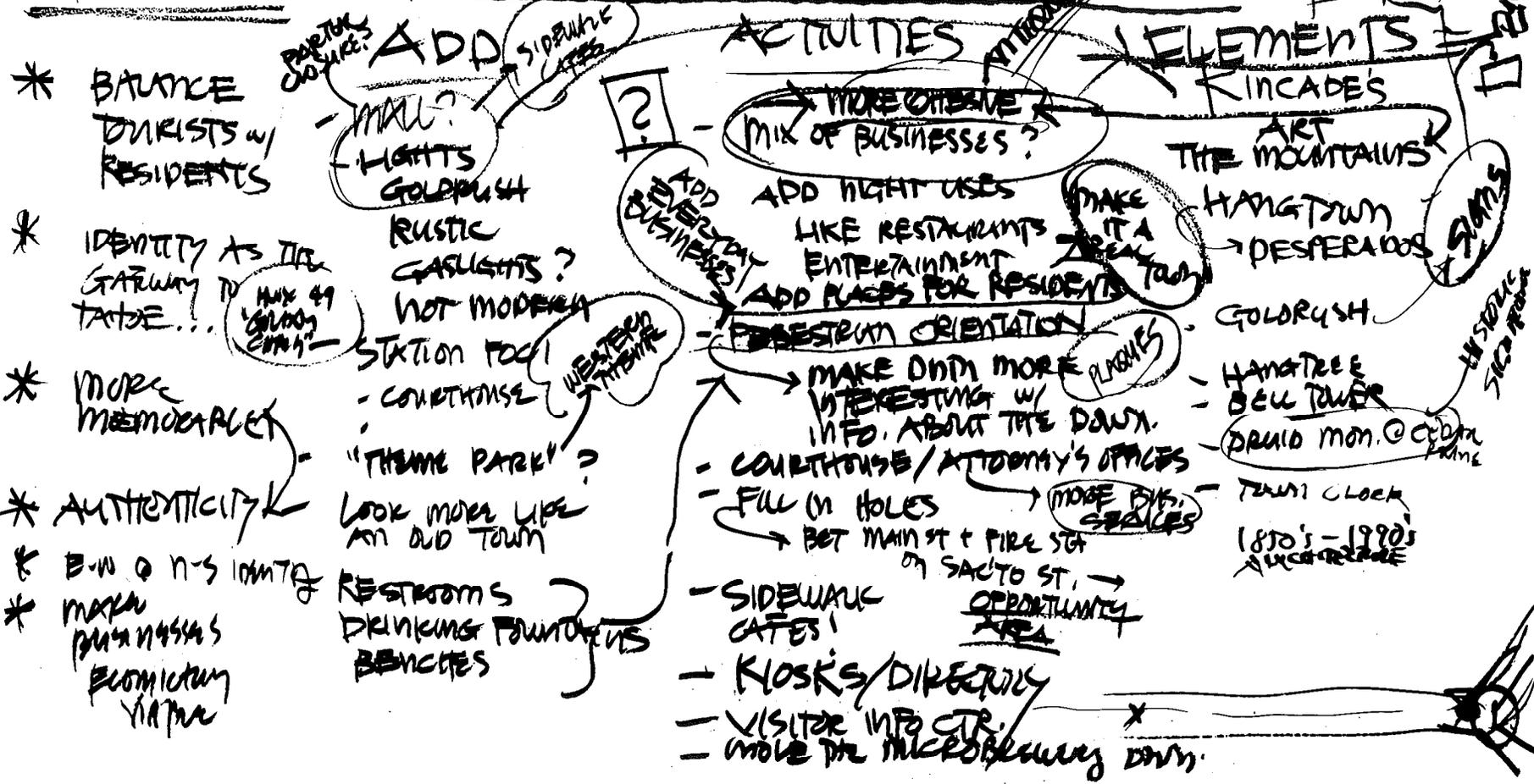
# DOWNTOWN ~ PLACERVILLE

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP



### GOALS

### DOWNTOWN CHARACTER



\* BAUNCE  
DURISTS w/  
RESIDENTS

\* IDENTITY AS THE  
GATEWAY TO  
TASTE...  
MAX 49  
GOLD RUSH  
CITY

\* MORE  
MEMORABLE

\* AUTHENTICITY

\* B-W & N-S LIMIT

\* MAKE  
PLACERVILLE'S  
ECONOMY  
VIA THE

AUGUST 16, 1995

# DOWNTOWN ~ PLACERVILLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

## ENTERING DOWNTOWN

COACH HALL  
MOVE KFC!?! - OR MODIFY  
DIVERSITY OF PEAR BLDG./  
CREEK/DE TREATMENTS

FALSE FRONTS  
ON BACKSIDES  
OF BLDGS.  
SCULPTURES  
OF FISHING  
COLD PAKS

HIGHWAY 50  
APPROACH NEEDS  
INPUT. @ UNION 76  
POSSIBLY 3 ENTRY TREATMENTS

MURAL OPPORTUNITIES  
ADVERTISING  
MORE SIGNAGE  
AVAILABLE  
FOR DONATIONS  
REVIEW ON  
ENTRY SIGNAGE  
- GOOD SIGNAGE?  
- NEED END

DOWNTOWN  
SLOGAN  
SIGN  
DIRECT  
VISITORS TO  
PARKING  
OFF 50

CREEK LANDSCAPING  
@ ENTRANCE  
SPOTLIGHT  
LANDMARKS  
LANDSCAPE

REPLACE CHAIN  
LINK FENCE  
N/BANNER  
OPPORTUNITIES  
PEAR  
ENTRIES  
VIA  
BRIDGES

MAKE MAIN ENTRY/  
CLOSER TO DOWNTOWN  
PAINTING BACKS OF  
BUILDINGS - +ROOFS  
- murals?  
GATEWAY ARCH  
@ BEDFORD

TOO MANY  
SIGNS  
COORDINATED  
DOWNTOWN  
SIGNS  
SOLARiums  
& GREENHOUSES  
@ BACKS.

USE P.R.  
ROW FOR  
TROLLEY  
TOWN'S HIGHWAY  
FRONTAGE SHOULD  
LOOK LIKE A TOWN  
SIDE NOT ROAD

CHECK  
OPPORTUNITIES TO UTILITY  
USE OVERPASSES/CLEANUP  
AS GATEWAYS IN CREEK  
MURAL ON THE  
PARKING STRUCTURES

TROLLEY/CREEK  
LINEAR PARK  
COORD. W/  
COURTNS &  
SO EXPANSE

CHRISTMAS TREES  
ENCOURAGE  
CALTRANS TO  
IMPROVE/MAINTAIN  
FRONTAGE  
SCREENING  
TREES  
PLACES TO  
PEST

HARVEY'S  
SIGN  
PROBLEM  
PLANNERS ON  
MEDIAN IN DTN.  
SEGMENT OF 50

CREEKSIDE  
WALK/PARK  
SERVE AS  
A LINK BTWN  
PARKS?

MAKE THE  
PIPE A VISUAL  
ASSET  
RELOCATE PARKING  
@ REAR

CLARIFY  
PATH INTO  
DOWNTOWN W/  
CREEK LANDSCAPING  
OR SLIGHTS

CONTINUOUS  
WALKWAY @  
PEAR OF BLDGS.

SEPTEMBER  
29  
1995

# DOWNTOWN ~ PLACERVILLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP



## REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

CHARACTER:  
NONE VS. PHONY?  
JACKSON HOLE - CARTOON CHARACTER - "They like it to the bank."



WHAT ABOUT STREET TREES IN THE DOWNTOWN CORE?



PHASED REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING TREES WITH DIFFERENT, NEW TREES  
(living, dried, memorial)

ALYND TREES IN HEADSBURG

STREETLIGHTS IN ST. HELENA

NEED SITE(S) FOR PUBLIC RESTROOM(S)



CHRISTMAS TREE EDGE

- HOW ABOUT A GREEK REVIVAL OPERA HOUSE ON THE PARKING LOT AT CEDAR RAVINE?



PLANTER BOXES ON ALL BUILDINGS



MORE GROUND FLOOR RETAIL IN THE DOWNTOWN EXTENSION

HOW ABOUT PLANTER BOXES COMBINED WITH BENCHES?



FOLDABLE BENCHES ON STOREFRONTS?



REPLACE MISSING VIETNAM MEMORIAL PLAQUES

RELocate VIETNAM MEMORIAL PLAQUES TO DOWNTOWN EXTENSION?

INVOLVE FAMILIES OF MEMORIALIZED SERVICEMEN/WOMEN

DIFFERENT TREE SPACINGS:



ACTIVATING?



BAR?

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVENT SIGNS/MARKERS ON FENCE/WALL

IDEAS FOR ENHANCING BELL TOWER



LOTS OF INTEREST IN THE CREEK - INCORPORATE IT INTO IMPROVEMENTS WHETHER AS A PEOPLE PLACE OR AS A VISUAL/NATURAL AMENITY

PRO'S & CONS OF DESIGN GUIDELINES AND INCENTIVES



CITY OF  
PLACERVILLE

# DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ACTION PLAN

## - COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #4 -

JANUARY 17  
1996

WILL RIGHT TURN LANES  
FORCE TREES TO SPECIFIC  
LOCATION(S)? WE RECOMMEND  
THAT PLANTING TREES BE SET  
BACK NOW, AND CHECK LATEST CALTRANS  
SITUATION TO DECIDE FENCE LOCATION AT  
CONSTRUCTION TIME

WHAT ABOUT GUIDELINES?  
WE RECOMMEND DISTRICT-BASED  
GUIDELINES ADMINISTERED BY A  
STAFF PERSON, NOT A DESIGN  
REVIEW BOARD

I'M A BUSINESS PERSON AND  
I SUPPORT THE PROJECT -  
AND I WOULD LIKE TO  
PAY FOR MY FAIR SHARE

SUGGEST THAT THE BRIDGE  
RAILING BE DIFFERENT  
THAN THE FENCE RAILING

ALL THE FENCES + LIGHTS  
LOOK TRADITIONAL BUT  
THE CONIFERS LOOK  
OUT OF PLACE - "THEY  
SHOULDN'T LOOK  
"IMPORTED"

- LIKE THE BRIDGE TREATMENTS

WOULD RIGHT TURNS AFFECT THEM?

→ CONSIDER PHASED IMPLEMENTATION

IF BRIDGES (ADD RAILINGS TO NEW  
BRIDGES LATER)

- FENCES ARE GREAT! WHEN CAN  
WE DO THE PLAN?

I LIKE THE DESIGN - DO THE PARKED  
CARS CONTRIBUTE TO THE JUMBLE?  
WE THINK THE PARKING IS USEFUL FOR  
DOWNTOWN + THAT TREES WILL UNIFY EDGE

PARKING MAY INFRINGE ON TRAIL

2 ASPECTS OF REVI-  
TALIZATION -  
ATTRACTING PEOPLE +  
RETAINING PEOPLE

~~DO NOT REMOVE~~  
I (AND MANY OTHERS)  
DON'T LIKE THE EVENTS  
SIGNS CURRENTLY ATTACHED  
TO THE EXISTING CHAIN LINK FENCE

WHAT'S THE ROUGH COST?

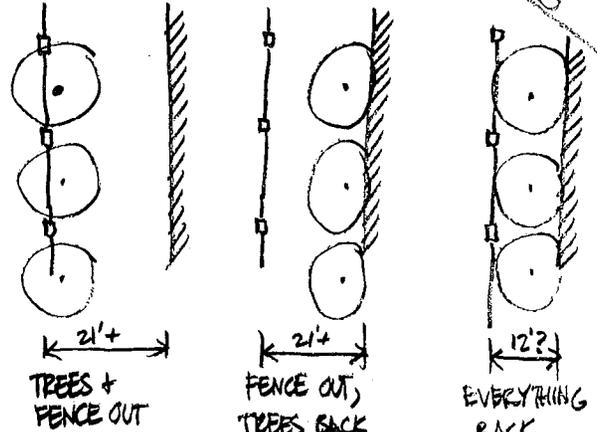
THE COST ESTIMATE WAS TAKEN  
OUT OF THE SCOPE OF SERVICES,  
AND THE FENCE + TREES ARE A  
UNIQUE ENOUGH DESIGN THAT  
THEY NEED MORE THAN AN  
"OFF THE CUFF" GUESS TO BE  
RELIABLE. PRIORITY SHOULD BE  
FENCE + TREES FIRST, CONIFERS  
NEXT, BRIDGES LAST

COME UP WITH  
"NON-SUBURBAN"  
CONIFER ALTERNATIVE

THE EDGE IMPROVEMENTS  
DON'T LOOK LIKE THEY  
WILL REVITALIZE THE  
DOWNTOWN ALONE!

- YES, THE OTHER REVITALIZATION  
STRATEGIES MUST ALSO BE  
IMPLEMENTED - ESPECIALLY  
DO THE "FREE" ONES  
IMMEDIATELY

HOW ABOUT  
GHOST PINES? -  
THEY'RE INDIGENOUS  
(NEED TO BE CHECKED  
FOR CAR EXHAUST  
RESISTANCE)



NOTE: WE DON'T HAVE TO DECIDE NOW!

WHAT ABOUT THE BILLBOARD?  
SCREEN? REMOVE?

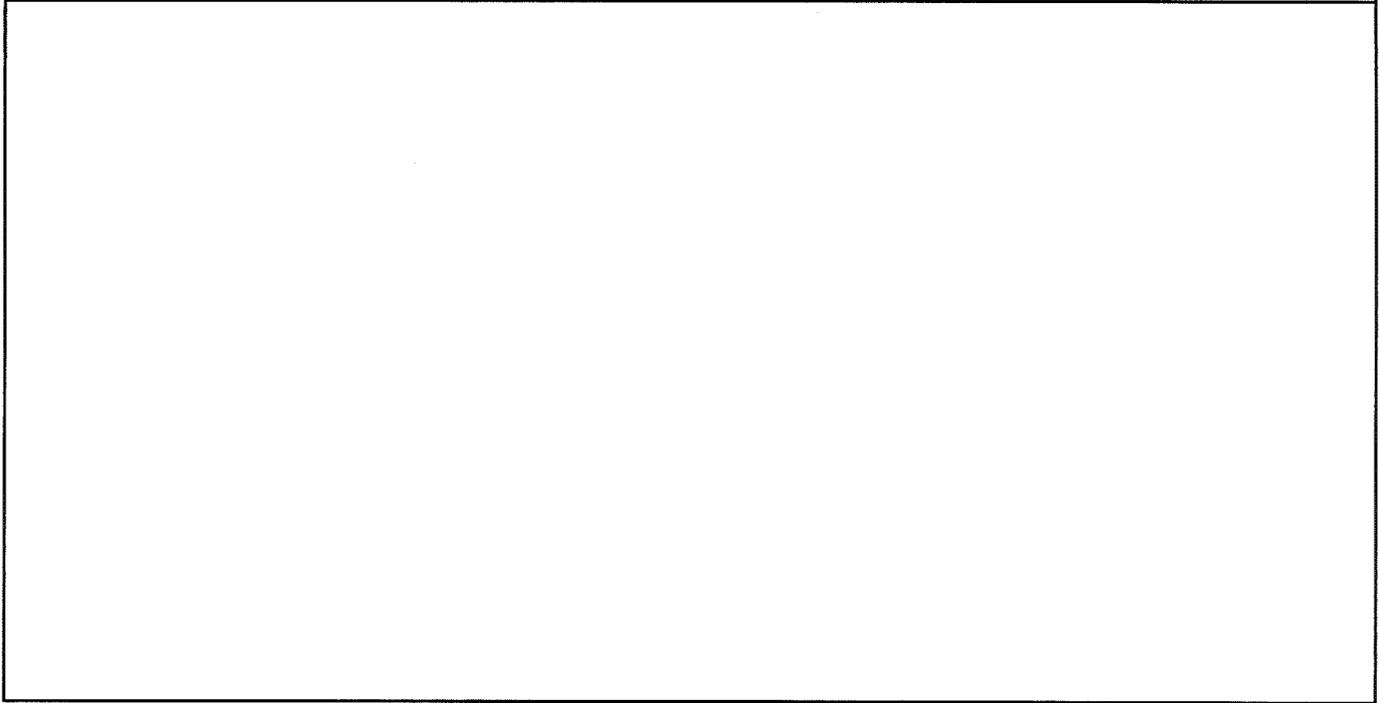
ADD PUBLIC RESTROOMS  
TO STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

IS THERE A FINANCING STRATEGY YET?  
NO, BUT THE CITY HAD THE CONSULTANT  
PREPARE A SCOPE OF SERVICES FOR  
THEIR CONSIDERATION

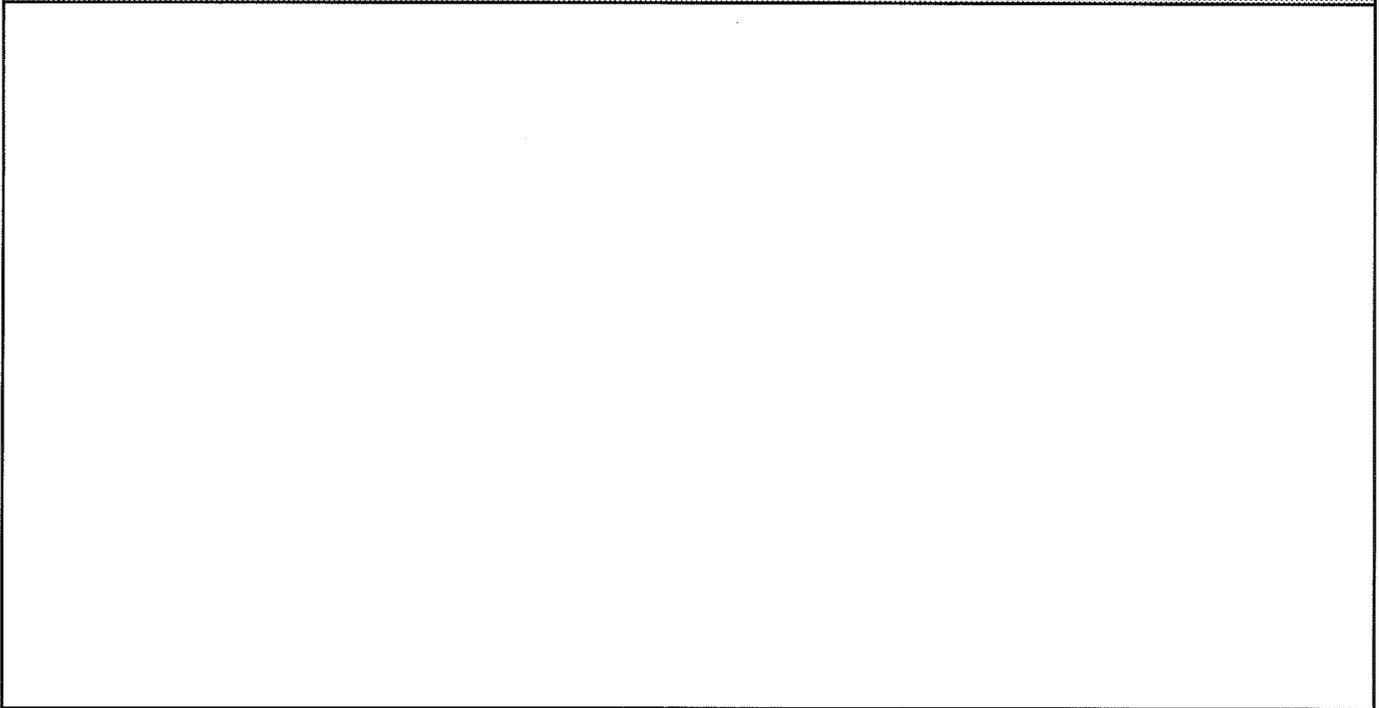
COUNCIL-APPROVED HIGHWAY  
50 CONCEPTS TO BE DECIDED  
UPON IN NEXT 12 MONTHS  
AND BUILT WITHIN 5 YRS.  
CAN WE SEE A VIEW OF  
MAIN ST. IN THE CORNER WITH  
PURNISHINGS BUT WITHOUT TREES?

**CITY OF PLACERVILLE  
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ACTION PLAN - WORKSHOP #1  
Visioning for Economic Revitalization**

**HIGHWAY 50 - THE IMAGE TODAY**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for handwritten notes or drawings related to the topic of Highway 50's current image.

**MAIN STREET - LIKES & DISLIKES**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for handwritten notes or drawings related to the likes and dislikes of Main Street.

## **C. Survey Comments - City of Placerville Downtown Revitalization Action Plan - Workshop #1**

### **Main Street - Dislikes**

- No night life, not enough stores for the people of the community
- No parking.
- Lack of coordination between businesses (hours, etc.).
- Antiques industry dominates, a mix is necessary.
- No parking.
- Need business mix.
- Need for tourists.
- Attorney/Professional uses on ground floor.
- Need signage policy.
- City hall parking lot on Main St. side should be developed.
- Visual clutter.
- Too many signs.
- Many tasteless signs.
- A new fake western facade.
- Parking and traffic problems
- Light pollution of signs.
- Too many antique stores, not good for locals.
- Not enough nighttime activity.
- No grocery store, I see Berkeley-type wood floor bakery/deli/green grocers so tourists and residents could run in and buy bread, milk, fruit w/o going on 50.
- Where's the Creek? Make it a focal point.
- Retail businesses that do not look well run, clean, or welcoming need to clean up their act.
- Professional offices on retail level should be on 2nd floor on Main St.
- Need different type of retail shops on Main St.
- The county has plans to vacate the courthouse, therefore, if lawyers' offices on ground level facing Main St. do nothing for tourists; in fact detract, I believe we should encourage purely retail on ground level Main St. Encourage offices off-street and upper level.
- Need more up-scale stores.
- Another parking garage on Cedar Rains side of Main St. (to balance).
- Have insurance and lawyers move upstairs and put more retail there.
- Revitalization from Cedar Ravine-Sacramento St.
- Lower Main St. (east side) needs a complete upgrade.
- Main Marin Pacific to Cedar Ravine needs better theme.
- Too many antique stores, need more active merchants, more successful stores are clean and painted on the outside.
- Hodge podge of structures not true to their roots as currently evolved patchwork and quick fix modifications are evident.
- Character of downtown is not old west but hay day west from 20's-30's. If there is a soul to the town's success era it might be that.
- Sidewalks cluttered w/run down barrel planters, trash cans lead on the sidewalks. Dirty sidewalks has great potential w/Hwy. 50, if properly signed.
- Lack of continuity in buildings.
- Need general theme for decorating streets like "boundary" 1850-1900 (1990's too modern).
- Lack of public toilets, rest areas and ambiance. Change current signage on most stores.
- Unpleasing eclectic mix of signs, advertising, etc.
- Crowded, confusing traffic patterns.

- Need more bed and breakfasts.
- Needs trees.
- Architecture needs to be authentic and expensive (no cheap, false, plywood fronts).
- Need more benches, new streetlights.
- Lack of stores that serve my basic needs; groceries, shoes, 5&10, legitimate theater, outfitters.
- No cohesiveness. Dirty sidewalks. Owners of buildings that won't spend 10¢ on their buildings. Renters who won't buy a gallon of paint. Businesses that don't belong and detract from other businesses.
- Need to paint all buildings in complimentary colors. Add old fashion fronts to all buildings. -Remove bars! Add old fashioned lamps. Keep streets cleaner. Add more landscaping.
- Store fronts need more lighting. Need more greenery, bushes, trees, planters Signage on businesses. Overhangs/awnings are awful. Enhance brick and store work. Paint up, fix up, wash buildings!
- Needs a lot of cleanup of store from windows and facades. If we want to be a destination rather than a pit-stop, we need to entice quality dining establishments, more B & B's, art galleries, outdoor locations to just sit and enjoy the beauty of the area. Town has incredible potential.
- Look of benches, toilets, greenery. Trees are too close to buildings. Sidewalks cracking. Sign ordinance not enforced. Signs look home made. Sidewalks obstructed with A board signs, etc. Gateway to Tahoe theme takes away from Placerville and put focus on Tahoe. Lack of parking. Lack of cultural activities, and night life. Customers being ticketed for overtime parking. Merchants parking on Main St.
- Establishing a gold rush theme not 1850 - 1990 architecture, that only creates a hodge-podge look that we don't like!!
- Fake, cheap building materials covering historic buildings. Not enough places to sit, need attractive bus benches, too. Bell tower needs enhancement-seating. Upper Main St.- Cedar Ravine to Lutz needs big help!
- I, as a resident, go to downtown for 2 businesses, pharmacy and Placerville News Co. The rest of the businesses are of no interest. Don't have what I need. I use the Broadway strip more frequently for things I need such as groceries, water store, film processing, video rental, fast food. I would probably go downtown for nighttime entertainment but not now, it's too dangerous, feels unsafe. But, I like downtown and in the past have wanted to open a business. I'm willing to help make it a more fun and safe place to go.
- Hate the way the bell tower looks (base). Flower boxes are ineffective. Need places to sit, more landscaping, good bakery (not a donut shop) a fountain, creek restoration/path walkway for inviting feel like Rivendell's.
- Street is too linear, no room for outside cafe tables. Get rid of car traffic around bell tower, it serves no purpose, use the space for a town square, water fountain tied into bell tower. Must have old fashioned street lights, ASAP-high priority. Get rid of county court, move to location on Ray Lawyer Dr. w/ all other government facilities and move the museum to this building. This building should also be the new town info center, not the railroad car.
- The antique stores do not offer the local residents a broad selection as well. It very well could reduce the tax base which will reduce the city's buying power. We need to increase the tax base via recruitment with the current business attraction study. We need business that will attract many locals as well as tourists. To turn this town into a walking mall would discourage high volume business and run my high volume business out to better traffic areas. Our business has a 5-10% growth over the last

5 years, creating a large foot traffic volume. Business that belong here will do very well, check the taxes or dollar volumes of the antiques and it will be found to be very low.

- Not enough people come to Main St. to make businesses economically stable. For the amount of time and effort people put in trying, it is continuous frustration that they don't get the traffic to support their efforts. I feel the target client is important to define, so we can direct our efforts in the right direction. I wish we could close Main St. to cars so people could sit and dine, walk and shop, at leisure. This would take the place of our lack of center, or a park, and make the area more inviting for people to browse and stay longer.
- Mainly needs a cohesive look with landscaping, benches, lighting, kiosks, restaurants allowed to have outside dining and cocktails. The mix of businesses is fairly good.
- More overhanging canopies at the shops, shielding from rain and block sun. Create 2 story parking @ Cedar Ravine and Main St. at end of new trolley route.
- Like the character of some interesting shops though not enough. There seems to be no life after the court house, lost of holes, not very interesting mix of businesses. should ve controlled, some just take up space for more commercially viable stores.
- "Gold Rush" era image only.
- -Lack of adequate parking, too many compact car designations, those with large cars have a hard time finding places to park.  
Requires more parking rotation and still needs long term for out of towners. My business draws 50% from out of town, they don't have time to eat or visit other stores. would love to see validated parking.
- In recent years, positive steps have been made to restore large buildings. Some method to monitor design review

needs to be in place. Area isn't pedestrian friendly but has wonderful potential.

- Street lights. Garish colors some buildings are painted. People don't know where the downtown is or how to get to it from Hwy. 49, its easy to miss.
- Irregular street and very little landscaping. No nite life, too few restaurants. No cooperation between merchants on being open in evenings.
- Needs to have direction in architecture, signs, entry to parking areas. Lots of planters, flowers, trees, to coordinate throughout the town, street lamps needed sidewalk cleaning, overhangs to protect customers from weather, benches and park-like areas wherever we can.
- Streetlights. No outdoor cafe tables, some store fronts, need more planting, needs bike access.
- No services for residences ie. dress shop, nice gift shops; everything is western or country, take down old signs.
- Some buildings and/or businesses need to change their signs. Need restrooms and benches.
- Incentives can happen (our hospital helped bring in specialists). Look at Apple Hill, things sold must be grown on Apple Hill, can we adopt a similar philosophy downtown? To stay indigenous to the area in out overall play? Not enough cultural doings. Central area needed. Theme should be taken from our surroundings not "time" oriented. Cowboys die...Rocks don't.
- Consultants should provide additional success studies of the communities. Bad is the lack of design consistency, "dumpy" appearance and lack of a unifying theme in street furniture, etc.

the communities. Bad is the lack of design consistency, "dumpy" appearance and lack of a unifying theme in street furniture, etc.

### Main Street - Likes

- Historic buildings, Bell tower, think they both should be capitalized on.
- Historic character.
- Pleasant to walk, nice old fashion.
- Part historical, need to build on this.
- Small town.
- Flowers, street trees.
- Historic buildings.
- Authentic history and historic buildings.
- You can walk.
- Friendly businesses.
- Keeping balance of what locals want with what tourists want.
- Reservoir St. charming Gold Rush except back alley, nothing there. I see cafes w/terraces down the cliffside.
- Village aspect/small lunch places. Why can't there be similar small, hi-class restaurants at night?
- Has a natural warmth, can be inviting.
- I love this town for its antique stores, galleries, relaxed, pleasant shopping, visiting community its a break from shopping at the market or picking up dry cleaning.
- Similar to the historic old town.
- A real sense of history.
- Some nice architecture. Note: there is major agricultural tourism nearby.
- Store fronts.
- Downtown has a great flow-not one straight, boring

street. Some great buildings with historic significance.

- Bell tower.
- Diverse businesses. Real people conducting real life businesses. Vitality, lots of people. Everything approachable on foot.
- Ft. Plaza and coffee house (Gelato d'Oro) and jazz sessions, unique shops, window flowers @ Placerville Clothing.
- The old buildings and their varied architecture. Almost each and everyone is unique, we need to bring out their character.
- I like the close proximity to any home on Bedford, but I no longer walk to town. Few retail stores of my liking. Grocery's, small one okay- office supplies, clothing store-
- Some individual shops are terrific, coffee shops, restaurants, Pearson's Soda Works exterior, the hardware store and news stand.
- Antique shops.
- Main St. looks pretty good.
- Like the merchants!
- Good elements include building scale and exterior variety.

### Highway 50 - The Image Today

- Small town appearance, variety appearance of interesting elements.
- Dumpy building facades.
- Three stoplights=Placerville 40mph speedtrap Hey there is a place to eat and let the kids pee before we go to Tahoe, whoops missed the town. Need to change right, left, right into town.

- A mess, buildings and roofs need renovation. First "Exit" going East - weeds and junk - who wants to stop?
- Looks like a parking lot because of cars along old train track. Needs to remove weeds cleaning needed on Court House.
- Unattractive but authentic, not a Sam's Town. Parking along RR right of way and ugly fence along freeway and hillside and trees front the town. Fausel brick house, Pearson's and Court house could be emphasized more.
- Not a pretty sight, needs some buildings to be hidden by trees, etc. Needs notice that a beautiful, historical, special little town is worth stopping to visit. Needs a face lift.
- No landscaping, little or no signage. No advance signs or billboards from Sacramento. Rear of buildings facing highway not very attractive overall-very little to draw visitors off the freeway.
- With few exceptions, the backs of the buildings are uninviting. Also, what about putting some art/history of Gold rush etc. on the concrete walkways over 50 from Main St. to residential areas. We also need to make the railroad track right of way more useful and inviting.
- Highway ROW shows total lack of maintenance. Rear of buildings have much hidden potential, old railroad roadbed converted to hot, dusty parking area doesn't present any positive image to the welcome or draw travelers off Hwy.
- Looks like an alley.
- Expand focus area to include all exits off Highway 50 going east. Remove propane tanks along Hangtown Creek. Walkway along creek. My sense of town from 50 is an ugly place to visit - needs inviting appearance. Walkways, visible tables, chairs and relaxation.
- Stop lights on the highway? cross streets? is this the end of Highway 50? is that a town there? perhaps a place to fill up the gas tank...doesn't look very interesting.
- Approaching Placerville on Hwy. 50, heading East, between Placerville Dr. Exit and Main St. it is an eyesore, a junk yard, and an ugly area. How about a first class inn, motel, hotel, built to the contours of the area? a really nice draw into the heart of downtown.
- The entrance from Hwy. 50 should have more landscaping, and continued to be maintained CalTrans to mow the wild grasses along the highway. The chain link fence removed and replaced by either shrubs, trees, or another kind of fence (wrought iron). The overpass walkways to be cleaned, painted, murals, vines...
- Placerville is just a place where tourists get stuck on their way to and from Tahoe. There is nothing to attract anyone into town except to get gas and go to the bathroom.
- The town needs to decide what is going to happen as a final fix to the traffic congestion on Hwy. 50 - in the future, CalTrans due to complaints will either raise or lower Hwy. 50 from Bedford to Spring St. This is long term, but we need to have a plan in order to know how to fix the very poor appearance of the town from this highway. I think from Bedford to Spring St. there should be A) 4' to 5' brick wall with wrought iron fence on top and old fashioned street lights on this wall and then B) on the south side of this wall a pedestrian walkway that allows access to the back of all these buildings and Main St. thru alleys, etc. and C) widen river to create pools where space allows along this section.
- Like the image of the town set between the street-covered hillsides, like historical buildings, dislike ROW/parking land, like the brick-work, etc on parking structure, dislike the raggle-taggle creek area; not sure I

like the "Welcome to Hangtown" sign (new), dislike the train caboose (ineffective, unimpressive) dislike the overcrossing (ped.).

- The image today is parked cars, dust, gravel, inaccessible, uninteresting, what's that? Ugly, if I stop there it will take too long, do I want to stop there because it is fun? No, there is not a good image as me, the tourist or traveler down Hwy. 50. I wouldn't want to stop in this town.
- Asphalt - dirt - weeds - heat - noise - danger.
- Unappealing, ugly bill boards, ugly parking structure.
- Comments I hear from co-workers is Sacramento: "the irritating spot on Hwy. 50 with hellish traffic lights where you get held up in the way to Tahoe: seldom, if ever, is the town of Placerville the focal point in a positive manner. Beautify the outside of the package and you will entice travelers to unwrap it and look inside!! The west end is ,in my mind, of primary concern, since most visitors to the Sierras travel west to east. Cosmetic improvements to creek area can go a long way to creating a pleasant environment for the visitor and will encourage further exploration.
- Weedy, overgrown. What is calling me off the highway? A mess of signs (business). Unclear directional signs to 49' to Coloma' to Downtown. No theme. Center islands are a turn off (oops I don't mean they make me want to turn off-they are ugly). Uninteresting back of buildings. Fence along highway doesn't invite me in.
- False fronts on backside of Main St. Buildings. Paint backside with theme murals. Plant flowering screen, shrubs, or trees along freeway. Fix up creek area as a path/park area with attractive entrances in back of same buildings.
- I would like to see decks off every buildings facing 50.

Have a few solariums, umbrellas, kiosks with food vendors and improve the creek. This would be great to have evening business with food, music, etc. Basically, right now its UGLY! No wonder tourists don't pull off Hwy. 50.

- Creek no utilized. Backside of freeway.
- Boring.
- Poor image starts with the start of the commercial area/development. It appears to be too large of an area to work with. There's a lot of vacant areas. Signs could be used.
- Bottleneck through nothing place.
- CalTrans and Hwy 50 have destroyed the town. We need help in improving that. Ugly...Too many weeds, you see backyards of businesses, tacky, sloppy.
- Ramshackle backs of buildings/gas station/chain food outlets - Town's a surprise once you get off. When I've visited I loved the old homes on the hills to left across 50 and buildings down to Court House. Love idea of lit up glass "cage" of people eating/moving around - screens you view outdoors movie screen that lures you in.
- Signage to Main St. necessary. Get rid of parked cars on back of Main St. buildings.
- Of course, we all agree downtown looks horrible from 50. I believe the image reflected, through signage or facades, should be reflected in actuality on Main St. In other words, don't make it false advertising. Let the downtown successfully reflect and fulfill the image and expectations presented.
- It looks old and very tired coming from the west and almost non existent coming from east.
- East to west view at Main St. is ugly. Need to improve creek and dump grounds and old building with hotel or business buildings with lost of landscaping.

- The back of buildings look like the garbage- the creek needs enhancement and weeds cleaned up- decks built and pedestrian movement from Main St. to the backs.
- Need to keep in mind that we currently are showing our backyard to Hwy. 50. Need to landscape and streetscape the corridor to make it look healthy, prosperous and interesting enough to detour off 50 into downtown.
- Cluttered, run down, poorly signed, dirty, lack of group promotion.
- Dry, boring, no green, no warmth, nothing inviting. dirt-rocks.
- I find a certain intrigue to the back of the old buildings, needs lots of help.
- As with most people here, I have my own agenda: I am specifically interested in projects that deal with Hangtown Creek restoration and enhancement. I may be reached at 644-5438, 622-3634 Thanks, Debra Power, Hangtown Creek Stewardship Committee
- Messy, some exciting businesses, lost of funky, junky, garbage stuff. No good food. No special events/theater/arts. Very little upscale business. Some scary areas, little passages etc. Several low life bars. Too much fast food type restaurants.
- The creek is beautiful in spots (treed, shady, cool) hot in others, uncovered and ugly. Needs to treed. Fence needs to be replaced by green buffer. I like screening of backs of buildings with small ad signs, trail and access to buildings across creek that has all small, private sewer line removed.

