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# DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN & DESIGN GUIDELINES



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# DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN & DESIGN GUIDELINES

May 2006

Prepared for:  
The City of Imperial



Prepared by:  
RBF Consulting's Urban Design Studio



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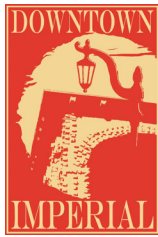


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## I. INTRODUCTION

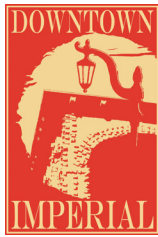
### A. PURPOSE

The Downtown Imperial Redevelopment Master Plan is the foundation to facilitate positive change within Downtown Imperial. The main objectives of the Master Plan are to:

- ▣ Develop a community-driven vision of the future for Downtown Imperial;
- ▣ Develop a set of design guidelines that will illustrate the desired Downtown development; and,
- ▣ Foster economic development through an action-based implementation plan.

### B. HOW TO USE THE PLAN

- ▣ *Use the Plan as a Guide.* The Master Plan should be used as a guide for City Staff, elected and appointed officials, property owners, tenants, developers, and community members. It should be referenced throughout the process for any new, rehabilitated, or remodeled development.
- ▣ *Share the Plan.* The Downtown Imperial Redevelopment Master Plan should be shared with property owners, tenants, developers, and anyone interested in investing in Downtown Imperial. Share the Plan's principles, goals, and implementation methods.
- ▣ *Coordinate Plan Activities.* Use the Plan and especially the Implementation Program to coordinate efforts and collaborate with others throughout the implementation process.
- ▣ *Measure Your Performance.* Record and track activities and, whenever necessary, refine and adjust goals, priorities, and action items.



# C. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

## WATER TO THE IMPERIAL VALLEY

Imperial's history is closely tied to the region's irrigation history. Dr. O.M. Wozencradft, who originally came to California for the Gold Rush had the idea of bringing water to the Imperial Valley. The State Legislature granted him rights to the land if he could establish a water supply.

C.R. Rockwood, an irrigation engineer from Colorado, was sent to investigate the possibility of irrigating Sonora, Mexico with water diverted from the Colorado River. After starting his investigation he found that a canal would be more feasible into the Imperial Valley. The project was approved and Rockwood was named the chief engineer. The Colorado River Irrigation Company was formed, but soon dissolved.

In 1886, the California Development Corporation was founded. A.H. Heber from Chicago was the president and Rockwood became the vice-president. Three years later Rockwood headed the company. Later George Chaffey and L.M. Holt founded the Imperial Land Company, a subsidiary to the California Development Corporation. To help fund the canal project the Imperial Land Company sold shares of water stock through locally owned mutual water companies.

## AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT BEGIN

Dredging of the canal project began in 1900 and the Imperial Land Corporation plotted out the "to be" town of Imperial. By early 1901, the company was offering lots for sale.

Success came on May 14, 1901 as water was diverted from the Colorado River to the canal for the first time. During the next two years, more mutual water companies were formed, with the California Development Company building most of the water infrastructure. Settlers began to move to Imperial and the agriculture industry began to thrive.

Imperial was the location of the first church, brick building, print shop, grocery, drug store, hardware store, blacksmith shop, and lumberyard in the Imperial Valley. By 1904, Imperial had reached a population of 700 and the residents voted to incorporate. The City of Imperial was founded on July 12, 1904.





*Imperial's old City Hall building at Imperial Avenue.*

## FLOODS

Silt deposits began to create problems in the irrigation project and an opening was dug as a bypass, but without a control gate. A series of floods in the winter of 1904-1905 led to rapid erosion and widening of the temporary bypass. Numerous attempts to close the flooded bypass were not successful until February 1907 when the river was diverted back to its proper channel.

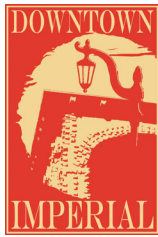
Results of the flooding were profound. Thirteen thousand acres were lost to erosion. The Salton Sink, virtually dry before the floods, filled to become the current Salton Sea. Damage to the railroad line was significant. Two water companies were without a water supply, which caused the loss of 12,000 acres of crops and forced families to move out, some never to return.

Heavy expenditure for canal improvements and floodwater diversion as well as lawsuits over losses from floods, strained the California Development Company to its financial limits. In 1911, voters approved the formation of the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) to acquire the property owned by the California Development Company. By 1922, the IID had acquired 13 mutual water companies throughout the Imperial Valley.

Since 1942, water to the Imperial Valley has been diverted at the Imperial Dam on the Colorado River through the All-American Canal, all of which is operated and maintained by the IID.



*Historic view of the Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard intersection*



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

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### THE EARTHQUAKE OF 1940

The earthquake of 1940 was the strongest recorded quake in the Imperial Valley and caused significant damage to the irrigation system and the rail lines. In addition, numerous buildings in Imperial also collapsed during the earthquake – a combination of a lack of reinforcements in the old brick buildings and a limed mortar that over the years deteriorated in the salty desert soil and failed to hold the bricks together. Unfortunately, most of the buildings that collapsed were never rebuilt.

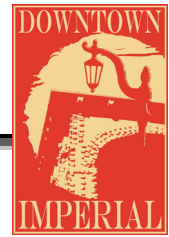
In 1979, another significant earthquake hit the Imperial Valley with similar effects. The result was decline and disinvestment in Downtown Imperial, including the loss of the Worthington Building.

### TODAY

Today Imperial is growing at a rapid rate with new development occurring throughout the City. Opportunities for new infill development and expansion of underutilized properties in Downtown offer a starting point for redevelopment and revitalization.

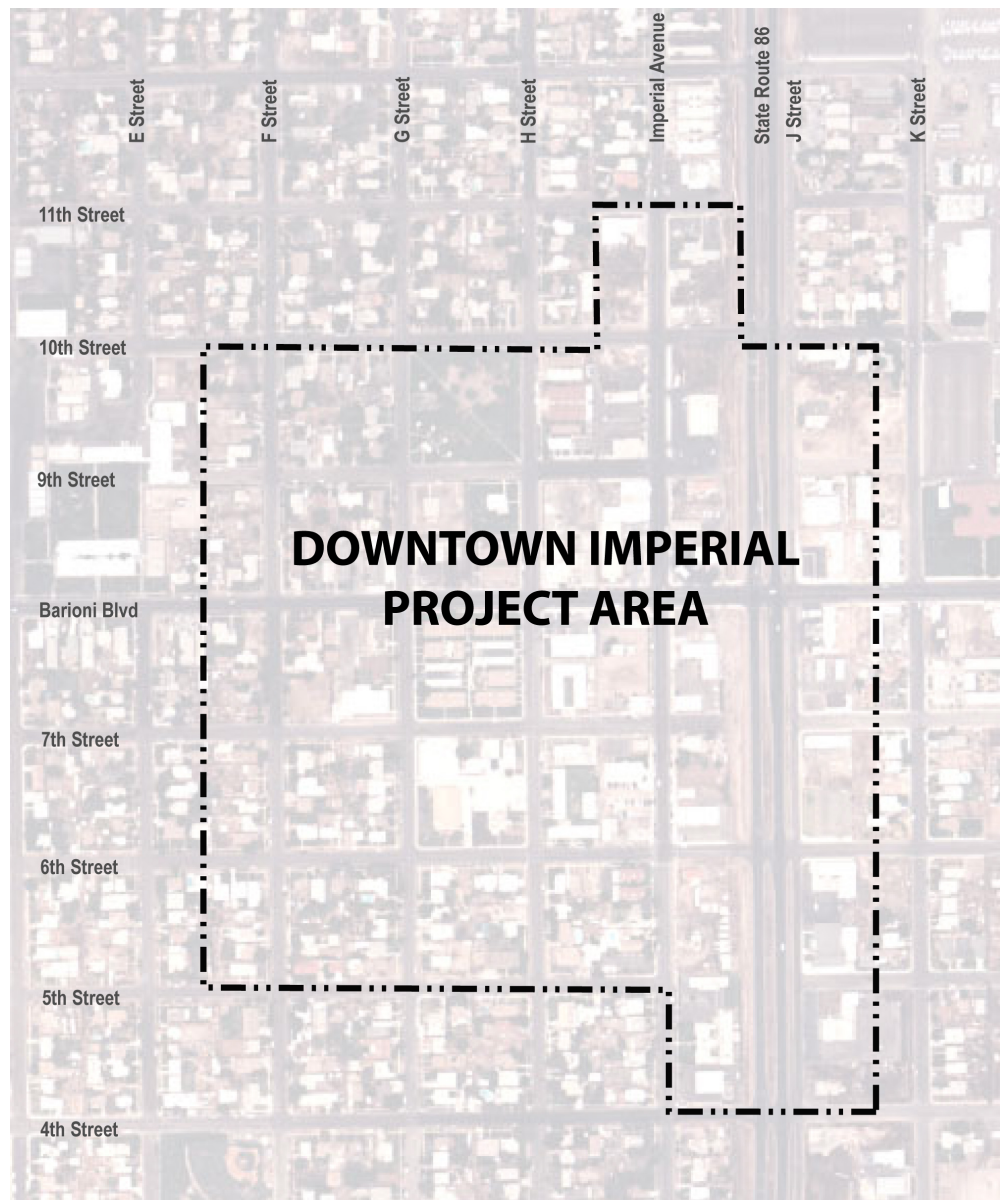


*Downtown Imperial offers many excellent redevelopment opportunities.*

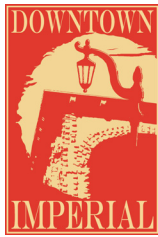


## D. PLANNING AREA

The Downtown Imperial Master Plan encompasses the area generally between 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Streets and E and K Streets. The area includes a variety of commercial, residential, and civic uses. Commercial uses are center primarily along Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard. The majority of the residential areas are developed with single-family homes although a number of multi-family developments have been developed closer to commercial uses.



*The Downtown Imperial Redevelopment Master Plan project area.*



### E. PLANNING PROCESS

To effectively redevelop and revitalize Downtown Imperial, a solid framework that includes an understanding of existing conditions, opportunities for the future, and community goals is very important. To this end, the Downtown Imperial Redevelopment Master Plan employed a three-phased planning process over a six month period that involved City staff, citizen-based committees, property owners, merchants, and interested community members.

#### PHASE 1: UNDERSTANDING DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL

Phase 1 of the Downtown Imperial Redevelopment Master Plan project officially kicked-off on Monday, November 21, 2005 with the first staff meeting and Downtown Redevelopment & Gateway Beautification Committees meeting. The weeks following these meetings were used by the Project Team to gather and analyze information on existing conditions, opportunities, and constraints. To convey this information, a series of "Pattern Sheets" were developed (See Appendix A).

Key community involvement activities during Phase I included:

- **Kick-off Meeting with City Staff and Committee Chairs.** The Project Team met with key City Staff and Committee Chairs to discuss the proposed planning process, identify a schedule and milestones, and to review the Committee's role.
- **Committee Walking Tour of Downtown.** Committee members and interested community members walked with the Project Team on November 21, 2005 to identify and discuss enhancement opportunities, historic significance of sites, and point out potential and existing issues.
- **Kick-off Meeting with the Downtown Redevelopment & Gateway Beautification Committees.** Although the Committees had met twice prior to this meeting, this November 21, 2005 meeting marked the first time the group had the opportunity to meet with the Project Team. In addition to a review of the project objectives and schedule, Committee members engaged in a Post-It Note visioning exercise in which they were asked to identify Downtown "treasures", "challenges", and "ideas for the future".
- **Downtown Logo Contest with Imperial High School.** To help develop and create an identity for Downtown, a logo contest was organized with



the assistance of the Imperial High School's graphic and visual arts classes. Following a brief presentation on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005 that focused on the Downtown project and on logo designs, over 100 students worked to create a unique logo design for Downtown Imperial. The resulting logos were presented to the Committees and the community in Phase 2.



*The Redevelopment and Gateways Committees explore the future of Downtown*

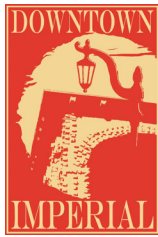
## PHASE 2: DEVELOPING THE VISION FOR DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL

Phase 2 of the Downtown Imperial Redevelopment Master Plan and Design Guidelines Project focused on the preparation of a draft Vision that included land use concepts, streetscape and gateway design ideas, and architectural design guidelines. The community was involved in developing the Vision throughout this phase in the following ways:

- ▣ **Downtown Redevelopment & Gateway Beautification Committees Design Charrette.** Committee members expressed their visions for the future of Downtown Imperial during a hands-on design charrette on December 19, 2006. The Project Team used this feedback to prepare a "vision" for the future of Downtown Imperial through a series of graphics and design palettes.
- ▣ **Stakeholder Interviews.** The Project Team interviewed several local stakeholders (property owners, merchants, and organizations) to discuss the vision for Downtown and obtain their thoughts and ideas to incorporate into the Plan.
- ▣ **Downtown Redevelopment & Gateways Beautification Committees Meeting.** The draft vision and related graphics were presented to the Committees for feedback and review during a meeting on January 23, 2006. Additionally, the High School student's logo designs were shared and a preferred logo design was selected.
- ▣ **Community Open House.** The community at-large was invited to an Open House on February 13, 2006 to learn about the project and view



*Preferred Downtown  
Imperial logo design*



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

all the vision concepts and final logo design. With additional feedback from the community, a Draft Vision Plan and architectural illustrations were then prepared.



*Hands-on design workshop developed ideas and preferences for the Downtown Vision Plan*

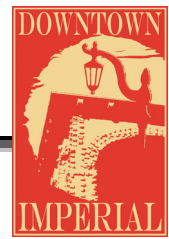


*A community workshop provides widespread feedback and input on the Vision Plan.*

### PHASE 3: PREPARING THE DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Phase 3 focused on implementation of the vision plan. A realistic Implementation Program was prepared to facilitate the Vision Plan, including key action items and implementation tools, an implementation matrix, and a rough order of magnitude costs for public improvements. These implementation items were incorporated into the vision plan components and design guidelines to create the Final Downtown Imperial Redevelopment Master Plan, which was presented to and refined by the Committees.

- ▣ **Downtown Redevelopment & Gateway Beautification Committees Meeting.** On March 20, 2006, the Project Team presented the completed draft Redevelopment Master Plan to the Committees. The implementation steps and project priorities were the focus of the meeting.
- ▣ **Downtown Redevelopment & Gateway Beautification Committees Meeting.** Upon revision of the Master Plan, the final draft was shared with the Committee on April 17, 2006 and recommended for approval by the Redevelopment Agency. The Committees also used this meeting as an opportunity to celebrate their work on the Plan.



## F. PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Downtown Imperial Redevelopment Master Plan is divided into four chapters: I. Introduction, II. Vision Plan, III. Design Guidelines, and IV. Implementation Program.

### CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The Introduction provides an overview of the planning process and background for the project.

### CHAPTER II: VISION PLAN

The Vision Plan sets the guiding principles for the future of Downtown Imperial. The Plan incorporates a land use plan and vision to steer the revitalization of Downtown Imperial. The Vision Plan includes graphics that define and illustrate the preferred Downtown character, streetscape improvements, and gateway monuments.

### CHAPTER III: DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Design Guidelines are intended as a tool to promote the desired level of quality and character of future development. The Design Guidelines are divided into four sections:

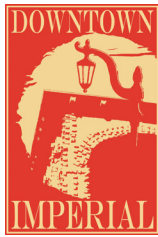
- ▣ Introduction
- ▣ Commercial Design Guidelines
- ▣ Commercial Sign Design Guidelines
- ▣ Residential Design Guidelines

### CHAPTER IV: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The Implementation Program sets the course of action to achieve the vision for Downtown Imperial. In addition, the Implementation Program provides ideas for funding, grants, and other programs the City could pursue.

### APPENDICES

- ▣ Appendix A: Existing Downtown Conditions Pattern Sheets
- ▣ Appendix B: Community Involvement Materials
- ▣ Appendix C: Traffic and Circulation Memorandum
- ▣ Appendix D: Order of Magnitude Costs for Public Improvements
- ▣ Appendix E: Streetscape Manufactures
- ▣ Appendix F: Property Ownership Map



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## II: VISION PLAN

### A. INTRODUCTION

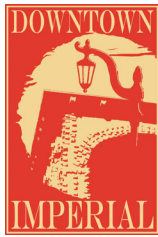
A vision describes what a community wants to be and where it wants to go. The vision for Downtown Imperial was developed through a process of hands-on Committee meetings and reflects the heritage and values of the community. This chapter describes and illustrates Downtown Imperial's vision for the future.

### B. VISION STATEMENT

*"Downtown Imperial is the true social and civic heart of the community. It boasts attractive housing, small retail shops, outdoor dining, parks, and civic facilities in a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly and family-oriented atmosphere. Downtown Imperial fosters a strong sense of community and its unique identity reflects its rich heritage and culture."*



Enhanced Imperial Avenue



## C. KEY COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

▣ **Developing a Pedestrian-Friendly Downtown.** *Downtown Imperial is designed as a pedestrian-friendly village. Creating a comfortable environment through the use of key design elements such as, landscaping, street furniture, and lighting is what makes Downtown a great place to be.*



▣ **Spurring Economic Development.** *Retaining and attracting businesses is a priority. Integrating restaurants, cafes, coffee shops, retail, offices, and services allows for a diverse, vibrant atmosphere.*



▣ **Maintaining a Small Town Atmosphere.** *Downtown Imperial continues the history of Imperial as a small town. Residential, retail, service, and dining are integrated to make Downtown Imperial a truly walkable place where community members regularly socialize.*

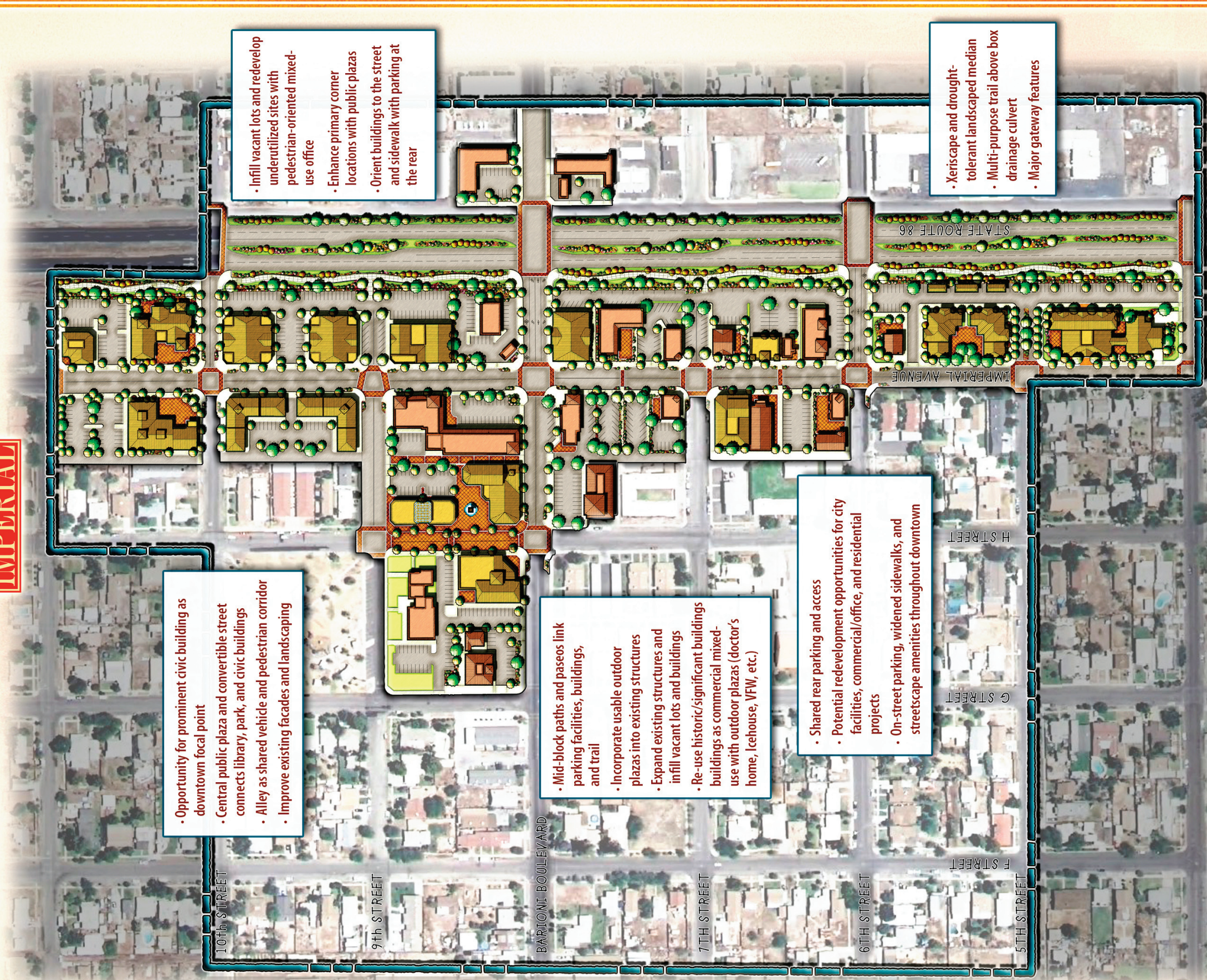


▣ **Creating a Center for Activity.** *Downtown Imperial is the heart of the City. Events, festivals, concerts, parades, and other family-oriented activities are held in Downtown Imperial and key civic buildings are a source of community pride.*

▣ **Ensuring a Comfortable and Attractive Environment.** *Downtown architecture draws upon the past for inspiration, while still reflecting a contemporary, up-to-date style. Aesthetics and comfort for the pedestrian are key attributes of what makes Downtown unique.*



▣ **Making a Statement of Arrival.** *Gateway and intersection enhancements are designed for both the pedestrian and the automobile. Creating an effective circulation system is a key focus for Downtown Imperial.*



- Opportunity for prominent civic building as downtown focal point
- Central public plaza and convertible street connects library, park, and civic buildings
- Alley as shared vehicle and pedestrian corridor
- Improve existing facades and landscaping

- Infill vacant lots and redevelop underutilized sites with pedestrian-oriented mixed-use office
- Enhance primary corner locations with public plazas
- Orient buildings to the street and sidewalk with parking at the rear

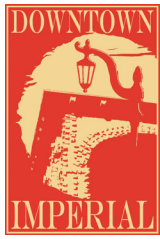
- Mid-block paths and paseos link parking facilities, buildings, and trail
- Incorporate usable outdoor plazas into existing structures
- Expand existing structures and infill vacant lots and buildings
- Re-use historic/significant buildings as commercial mixed-use with outdoor plazas (doctor's home, Icehouse, VFW, etc.)

- Shared rear parking and access
- Potential redevelopment opportunities for city facilities, commercial/office, and residential projects
- On-street parking, widened sidewalks, and streetscape amenities throughout downtown

- Xeriscape and drought-tolerant landscaped median
- Multi-purpose trail above box drainage culvert
- Major gateway features

\*The vision for Downtown Imperial is intended to serve in a guiding capacity only. It should not be viewed as a policy or regulation. Instead, the vision shows the intent and overarching values and priorities that serve to guide future development and redevelopment.

# VISION PLAN



# DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

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## D. THE COMMUNITY VISION PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL

The Vision Plan for Downtown Imperial includes five main components:

- ▣ Urban Design & Streetscape
- ▣ Circulation & Parking
- ▣ Land Use, Redevelopment, & Infill
- ▣ Cultural & Historic Celebration
- ▣ Economic Development

This section describes and illustrates each of the five components and how each works together to form the vision for Downtown Imperial (Exhibit II-1).

### 1. URBAN DESIGN & STREETScape

#### Encourage Diverse and High Quality Architecture

The City should encourage diverse and high quality architecture in all new development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation in Downtown Imperial. A mix of different architectural styles and details will create a timeless and authentic downtown that is able to continue to evolve over time. The Design Guidelines (Chapter III) are intended as a tool to achieve this goal.

#### Improve Highway 86

Highway 86 is the main point of entry into the City and Downtown and does not currently provide an inviting entrance essential for revitalizing Downtown Imperial. In the future, both short-term and long-term enhancements will create a more inviting entrance to the City and to Downtown Imperial.

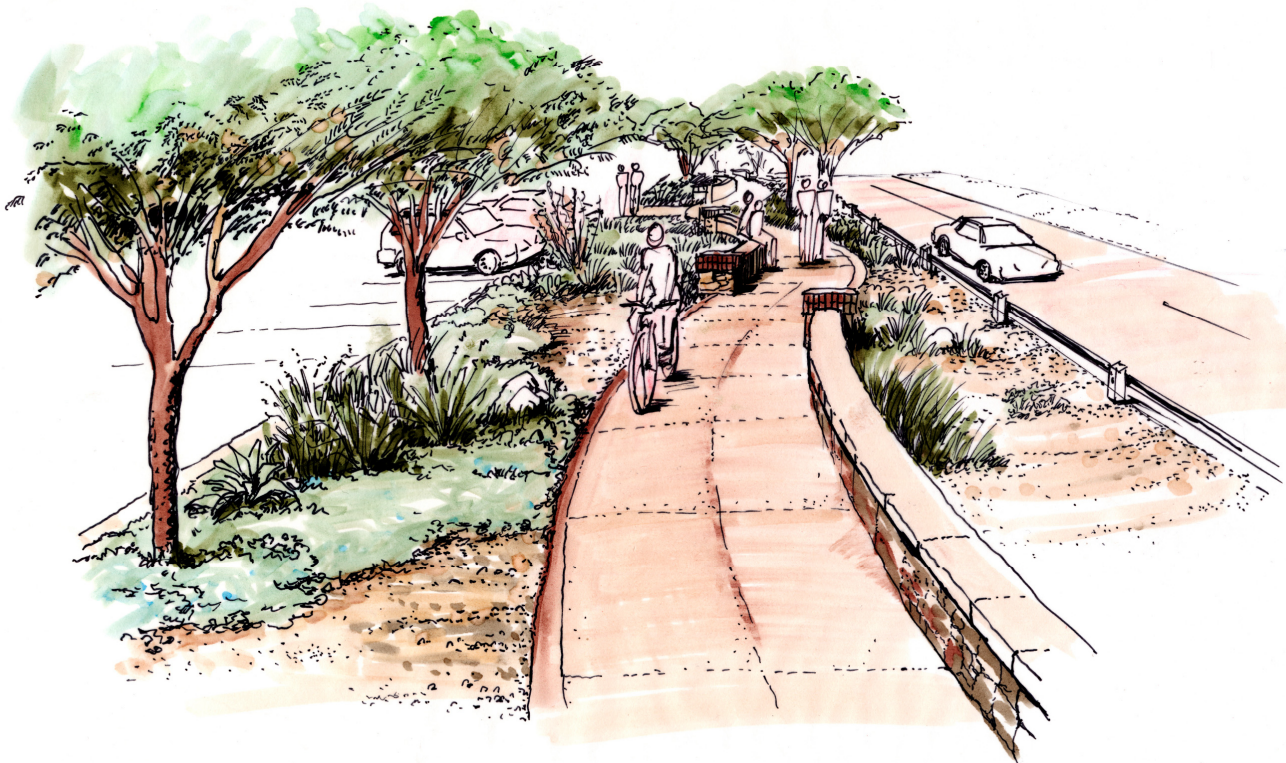
- ▣ **Short-term Enhancements.** In the short-term, planting and landscaping (such as bougainvillea or other drought tolerant vines) along the property line should be added to screen buildings and delivery areas from public view. Additionally, improvements to existing fences and improvements (repainting, cleaning of rear storage areas, etc.) may also enhance the views from Highway 86.

Although the short-term enhancements described above will improve the views from Highway 86, more extensive improvements are envisioned for the roadway in the long-term. These improvements, which will require a high

THE ONLY LIMITS  
ARE, AS ALWAYS,  
THOSE OF VISION.  
~ JAMES BROUGHTON

degree of coordination with Caltrans (or a relinquishment of the roadway to the City), are described below.

- **Landscaped Center Median and Shoulder.** Landscape the center median and east shoulder along Highway 86, beginning at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, to identify the entrance to the City and Downtown. The landscaping should focus on xeriscaping and drought-tolerant plants in a manner that still provides for ample “green” and vibrant colors. (Exhibit II-5).
- **Multi-Purpose Trail.** A landscaped multi-purpose trail in the western shoulder area provides a great pedestrian and bicycle amenity while also providing for a unique visual enhancement. The meandering trail will include decorative low walls, xeriscaping, and interpretive features (e.g. names of trees, historic markers, etc.). Building of the trail may require the development of a box culvert to accommodate drainage. (Exhibit II-5 and illustration below).
- **Gateway Features.** Described in more detail later in this chapter, major gateway features, along with enhanced crosswalk treatments, should be added to the right-of-way to signify entrance to the City of Imperial and the Downtown. (Exhibits II-8 and II-9).



*Concept for a multi-purpose trail along Highway 86*



## Implement Unique Streetscape Improvements

One of the most important objectives expressed by the Committee and the community was the creation of a pedestrian-friendly downtown. Landscape, hardscape, and street furniture, along with wider sidewalks and amenities, all contribute to a positive downtown experience. The following unique streetscape improvements are recommended for Downtown.

THE RICHNESS AND MEANING OF A PLACE DERIVES NOT FROM SINGLE ITEMS, BUT FROM DETAILS WHICH, WHEN TAKEN TOGETHER, CONTRIBUTE TO A MOSAIC GREATER THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS.

- PETER RANDALL PAGE, IN THE FURNISHED LANDSCAPE

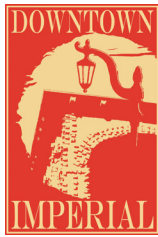
- ▣ **Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard.** Colored and textured crosswalks with concrete accent pavers will add interest as well as provide safety to the pedestrian while crossing the street. In high traffic areas, mid-block crossings with similar paving can be provided. Landscaped bump-outs and new street trees will soften the appearance of the buildings while keeping streets open. Other improvements include new streetlights, benches, and trash receptacles consistent with the streetscape palette described in this section.



*Improved streetscape on Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard*

Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard are Downtown's primary circulation routes and range in width from approximately 54 to 58 foot curb to curb. The roadways are envisioned as supporting one lane of traffic in each direction with on-street parking provided on both sides of the street (except on Barioni Boulevard between Highway 86 and Imperial Avenue where no on-street parking will be permitted). Three distinct options for the street section are provided below. A selection of a preferred alternative should be based on traffic, parking, and aesthetic considerations. (Exhibits II-2 and II-3)

- ▣ **Parallel Parking.** This option provides parallel parking on both sides of the street, allowing for an additional 4-foot wide concrete paver band along the edge of the sidewalks that would narrow the roadway and create additional space for pedestrian circulation and streetscape amenities. Travel



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lanes would be reduced to approximately 15 to 16 foot travel lanes in each direction.

- ▣ *Diagonal and Parallel Parking.* The second option provides diagonal parking on one side of the street and parallel on the other (could alternative by block). This option would allow for a sidewalk extension of two feet on each side and would reduce lanes to approximately 13 to 14 feet.
- ▣ *Diagonal Parking.* The third option provides diagonal parking on both sides of the street. With this option, no sidewalk expansion is accommodated and travel lanes would be narrowed to approximately 10 to 11 feet.

▣ **Streetscape Furniture Palette.** Streetscape furniture (streetlights, trash receptacles, benches, pavers, etc.) helps to create a unique Downtown identity. All of the chosen streetscape amenities, illustrated in Exhibit II-2, reflect the desired Downtown character and help create a unique and exciting pedestrian experience. Sidewalks, crosswalks, and other surface paving treatments are textured materials with soft earth tones, including historic imprint markers in sidewalks, accent concrete brick pavers, and plant-patterned imprints on porous pre-cast tree grates. Streetlights in a reddish-brown hue are single arm pendant luminaries with decorative details reflecting the historic era, and trash receptacles are custom pre-cast material with embossed City or downtown logo and decorative brick top cap to match other elements in the downtown such as entry monuments and low wall treatments. Benches are a “garden style” with wooden or recycled material slats on the seating and back surfaces – either of which is sensitive to the area’s harsh summer suns. Many items on the palette are custom designed as developed from public input. Others are catalog pieces, which come from excellent manufacturers across the country (See Appendix E).

▣ **Transit stops.** The identity of Downtown Imperial should be carried over into the design of the existing transit stops on Imperial Avenue and into any future stops. Both custom and catalog bus shelters can be designed to be compatible with the character of Downtown. See Exhibit II-6 for bus shelter design concepts.

▣ **Enhanced Residential Neighborhood Streets.** Sidewalks with a landscaped parkway will keep the pedestrian feel of the neighborhood and should be maintained. Continuity is important for the surrounding residential streets. (Exhibit II-5)



*Existing neighborhood character*





- ▣ **Alleys and Paseos.** Creating attractive alleys and paseos is an important circulation and design component for revitalizing Downtown Imperial. Alleys and paseos should incorporate decorative paving and lighting consistent with other streets and should be inviting to both vehicles and pedestrians. (Exhibits II-2 and II-5)



*Example of improved alley*

- ▣ **Landscape Palette.** Creating a unified landscaping program will help tie each street and adjacent property together with the overall character of Downtown. A palette of recommended landscaping materials (Exhibit II-7) for Downtown Imperial incorporate drought-tolerant and colorful plants that will thrive under Imperial’s weather and soil conditions. A combination of these trees, shrubs, and ground cover will enhance both buildings and streets.

## Establish Gateways & Wayfinding Program

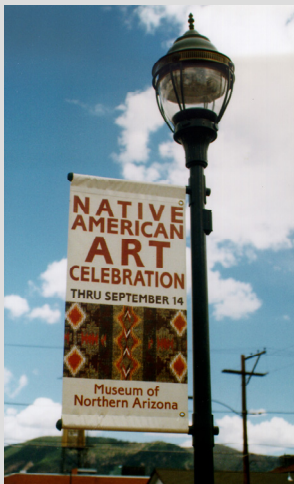
A good “wayfinding” (signage) program can celebrate the unique character of Downtown Imperial and helps develop a sense of place, while providing a specific function to both pedestrians and automobiles. The following wayfinding concepts are proposed for Downtown Imperial. Recommended locations for potential wayfinding concepts are provided in Exhibit II-8.



*Westerly view of Barioni Boulevard from Highway 86 with downtown entry monuments and enhanced crosswalks.*

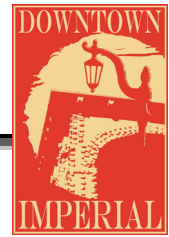
## Guidelines for Banners

- *Banners are an effective way of advertising special events, focusing attention on community activities and groups, and establishing identity.*
- *Appropriate hardware should be installed on streetlight poles to accommodate banners.*
- *Banners should be used at entryways and major streets throughout Downtown to reinforce its identity.*
- *The bottom edge of the banner should be at least 8 feet above the sidewalk to minimize vandalism.*
- *Banners should be constructed with a durable material so they are easy to maintain.*



*Appropriate banner placement*

- ▣ **Citywide Entry Monument.** Located at primary entry nodes into the City (ideally near 2nd Street), the citywide entry monument signs are designed to make a positive statement when vehicles or people enter and exit the City of Imperial. The proposed signs are designed with a rock base and brick cap and shaded by a bougainvillea-covered wood trellis. (Exhibits II-8 and II-9)
- ▣ **Downtown Entry Monument.** Similar to the citywide entry monuments, the Downtown entry monuments will create a sense of arrival when entering Downtown. These monument signs are designed to a slightly smaller scale and would not include the bougainvillea-covered trellis. Downtown Entry Monuments are envisioned at the intersections of Highway 86 and Barioni Boulevard, Sixth Street, and Tenth Street. (Exhibits II-8 and II-9)
- ▣ **Information “Kiosks”.** To help direct pedestrians, information kiosks should be placed in high pedestrian traffic areas of Downtown. Information displayed on the two- or four-sided kiosks would include names of businesses, a downtown map, dates and bulletins for key community events, as well as other important community information. (Exhibits II-8 and II-9)
- ▣ **Directional Signage.** Directional signs designed in a manner consistent with entry can help to guide visitors effortlessly through Downtown. Signs should indicate the location of or direction to parking lots, businesses, and public facilities. (Exhibits II-8 and II-9)
- ▣ **Streetlight Banners.** Incorporating a banner program can help promote the identity of Downtown Imperial. Streetlight banners can advertise events and activities, display important holidays or dates, or they can simply display the Downtown Logo. As discussed during the planning process, many of the youth-designed logos not selected as the final would make excellent banner designs. (Exhibit II-8 and II-9)



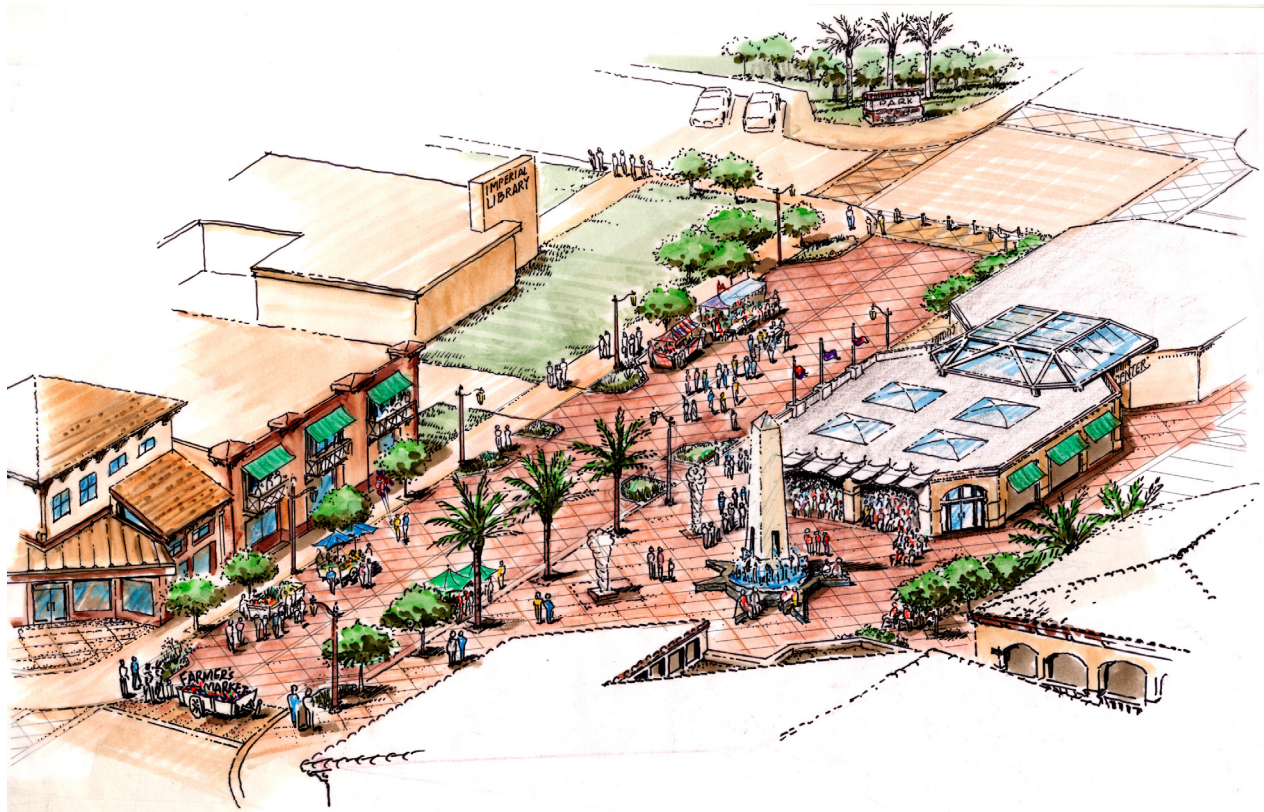
## Create Pedestrian Plazas and Paseos

THE SIMPLE SOCIAL INTERCOURSE CREATED WHEN PEOPLE RUB SHOULDERS IN PUBLIC IS ONE OF THE MOST ESSENTIAL KIND OF SOCIAL "GLUE" IN SOCIETY.

— CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER, *A PATTERN LANGUAGE*

Pedestrian plazas and spaces are strongly desired in Downtown Imperial to provide places to socialize, relax, and enjoy outdoor dining. Connections or paseos are also encouraged to link people from parking areas to buildings and from buildings to amenities.

- **Civic Center Plaza.** On H Street between Barioni Boulevard and Ninth Street, in the heart of Downtown, is an ideal location for a central plaza. The plaza, located between an envisioned new civic center and the Imperial Library, could incorporate public art, seating, and landscaping (and perhaps even a cooling tower as a focal point!).
- **H Street "Multi-Use" Street.** Through the use of special paving materials, bollards, and rolling curbs, the street can function as an extension of a dedicated public plaza on the Worthington Building site. While accommodating automobile traffic and parking during non-event times, H Street could be easily closed to traffic for festivals, farmers markets, and other special events.



*Envisioned Downtown Imperial public plaza and H Street "convertible" street*

- Plazas.** Potential locations for private plazas exist throughout the Downtown at major street corners, within new mixed-use projects, and at redeveloped or expanded sites such as the Ice House and restaurant sites. A small public plaza and tower element is also proposed at the corner of Barioni Boulevard and Imperial Avenue to strengthen the importance of this Downtown intersection.



*Corner plaza and tower element at Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard*

- Paseos.** Connections should be made to bring people into the heart of Downtown (the civic center), to parking areas, and to the multi-purpose trail. Specific opportunities for paseos include a path through the existing shopping center on the northwest corner of Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard to the civic center and through the proposed public parking area adjacent to Johnny's Burritos.



*Paseo connects pedestrians from rear parking lot to sidewalk and plaza provides amenity*

## 2. CIRCULATION & PARKING

### Improve Access at Highway 86

At peak hours, heavy traffic is a concern at Barioni Boulevard, Imperial Avenue, and Highway 86 (SR-86). Alternative access points in and out of Downtown will be important to providing adequate circulation.

- Gateways and Enhanced Intersections.** The addition of gateway features, signage, and enhanced crosswalks will highlight alternative access points to Downtown while also improving the safety at the Barioni Boulevard intersection.
- Second Street Stoplight.** The addition of a traffic signal at Highway 86 and Second Street will provide an additional level of visibility, access, and safety. This will provide vehicles with an alternative method of access to Downtown, therefore reducing the traffic congestion on Barioni Boulevard.

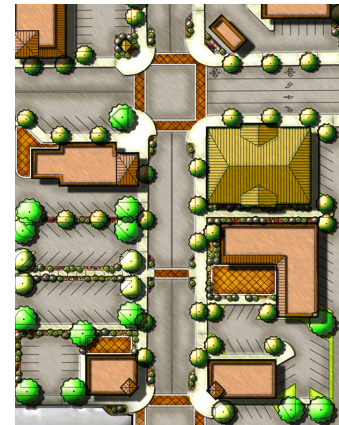


- ▣ **Limit Driveways.** For new development or future redevelopment, driveway cuts on Barioni Boulevard between Imperial Avenue and Highway 86 should be strongly discouraged. Existing driveways should be consolidated to reduce driveway cuts where possible.
- ▣ **Restrict Access to J Street.** J Street provides local access to businesses and residences that front SR-86, but the proximity of J Street to SR-86 and the stop-controlled intersection results in unusual operations and conflict. It is highly recommended that access be restricted, if not eliminated, at J Street/Barioni Boulevard.

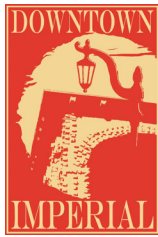
## Institute Traffic Calming Measures

The addition of traffic calming measures throughout Downtown will help to control traffic speeds and keep pedestrians safer. Traffic calming measures that reduce vehicle speeds enough to create a safer pedestrian environment, while not creating traffic congestion are recommended for Downtown Imperial.

- ▣ **Narrow the Roadway.** Narrowing Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard by extending the sidewalk and/or through diagonal on-street parking (as described earlier in this chapter) is a specific traffic calming measure that may contribute to reduced traffic speed.
- ▣ **Enhanced Crosswalks.** Throughout the Downtown, crosswalks will be enhanced with special paving to highlight them as pedestrian priorities. On Highway 86, these crosswalks should be identified with highly visible pedestrian signage to increase the safety for pedestrians.
- ▣ **Bulb-outs and Mid-block Crosswalks.** “Bulb-outs,” curb and sidewalk extensions, and mid-block crossings will reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians, while also creating a visual barrier for drivers that helps reduce their speed.
- ▣ **“Side Friction”.** The addition of a narrowed roadway, more parked cars, pedestrians, and streetscape elements (street lights, street trees, etc.) will all contribute to reducing speed of traffic by creating what is know as “side friction” for drivers.



*Bulb-outs crosswalks and mid-block crossings as traffic calming measures*



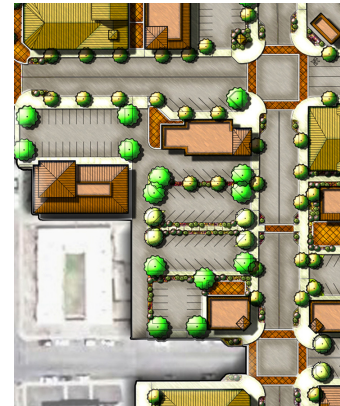
## Encourage a “Park Once” Mentality

IN SOME AMERICAN CITIES, SO MUCH OF DOWNTOWN HAS BEEN CLEARED FOR PARKING THAT THERE IS NOW MORE PARKING THAN THERE IS CITY.

— WILLIAM H. WHITE,  
IMAGE OF THE CITY

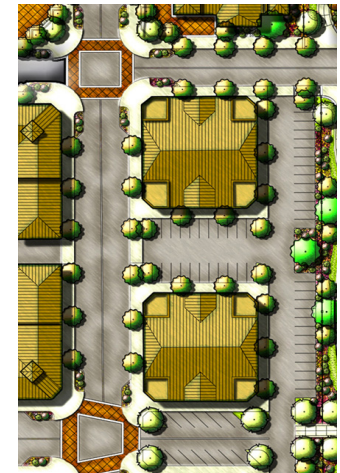
Downtown Imperial should be designed and promoted as a destination. Patrons should be able to park once and then walk throughout the downtown. To encourage this “park once” mentality and to avoid “paving over” the Downtown for parking lots, the following actions should be considered.

- **Develop Centralized Public Parking.** The development of centralized public parking lots throughout Downtown should be pursued. Potential opportunities for such centralized lots may exist at the future civic use site, between Barioni and 7<sup>th</sup> Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Street at Highway 86, and in the lot adjacent to the Veterans building. However, these locations may also prove to be excellent redevelopment sites and should be available as such. At some point in the future, an opportunity to convert a parking lot into a parking structure with retail on the first floor may also be warranted.



Potential public parking lot

- **On-Street Parking.** On-street parking will provide ease of access and convenience to downtown shoppers by increasing the proximity to shops and services. Additionally, it will identify Downtown as different from strip commercial and suburban retail developments. Each of the three street section scenarios described on page II-7 to 8 will facilitate a different number of on-street parking spaces. The numbers provided below provide a rough estimate of the potential number of spaces provided on Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard through the core of Downtown.



Example of a shared parking lot in Downtown

- ▣ *Parallel Parking.* This scenario could provide approximately 90 on-street parking spaces.
- ▣ *Diagonal and Parallel Parking.* This scenario could provide approximately 125 on-street parking spaces.
- ▣ *Diagonal Parking.* This scenario could provide approximately 170 on-street parking spaces.



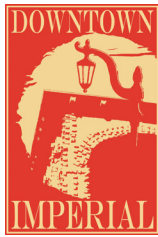
- ▣ **Promote Shared Parking.** To maximize the efficiency of Downtown’s parking resources and to limit the number of curb cuts, encourage formalized shared parking among uses with alternate hours of operation. Additionally, property owners and merchants are encouraged to consolidate parking lots and share egress and ingress.
  
- ▣ **Enhance Existing Parking Lots.** Improve existing parking areas, especially those in front yard setbacks, with perimeter landscaping and trees to create a buffer between the paved parking surface and the sidewalks. To increase the protection from heat paving materials, such as concrete and pavers, which don’t absorb as much heat as asphalt should be used, whenever possible. Landscaping is another way to reduce heat in parking lots. These enhancements will improve the overall Downtown appearance and will enhance the pedestrian experience.
  
- ▣ **Revise Parking Policy.** The City’s parking policies should be a tool to implement the vision plan. Imperial’s parking policies should be reviewed to incorporate a more flexible parking policy, including:
  - ▣ Contribution of on-street parking spaces toward total count of required spaces;
  - ▣ Reduced parking requirements for Downtown;
  - ▣ Shared parking and access incentives and/or credit;
  - ▣ Establish an in-lieu parking fee; and
  - ▣ Establish a parking district.
  
- ▣ **Consistent Parking Signage.** Consistent and easily identifiable parking signs should be located to direct drivers to public parking facilities. Kiosks should include locations of Downtown parking facilities and businesses should provide brochures and maps to educate visitors of the various resources available.

## 3. LAND USE, REDEVELOPMENT & INFILL

### Encourage Mixed-Use Throughout Downtown Core

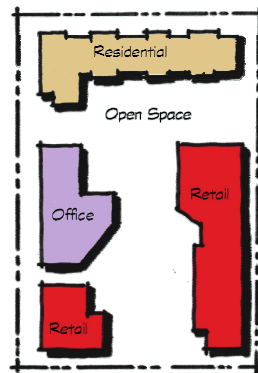
Mixed-Use projects allow commercial and residential to be in a close proximity to one another by combining both uses on the same parcel. This reduces the need for vehicles; encourages pedestrian activity and social interaction; and extends the hours of activity and vitality of the space.

There are two basic types of mixed-use projects. The first type is vertical mixed-use, which is characterized by the residential use placed over the commercial use in the same building. The second, referred to as horizontal

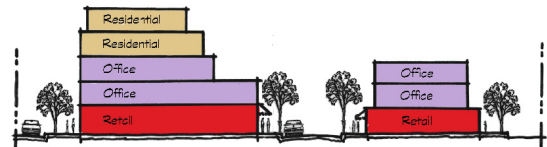


## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

mixed-use, combines residential and commercial uses on the same parcel, but in separate buildings.



*Horizontal Mixed-Use*



*Vertical Mixed-Use*

A flexible mixed-use “themed district” is proposed for the core area of downtown that will facilitate unique and innovative redevelopment that responds to current market conditions. (Exhibit II-10)

Within the mixed-use area, a range of different land uses are encouraged to provide a balanced downtown, including residential, retail, civic, service, office, entertainment and dining opportunities. (Exhibit II-11) The following provides general areas where different uses could potentially be focused.

- ▣ **Civic/ Mixed-Use.** The civic/mixed-use area is the social heart of the downtown. Opportunities include civic and cultural uses (such as a youth center, arts center, etc.), as well as a public place space for gathering. A convertible street/plaza area on H Street links the civic area with the library and park.
- ▣ **Commercial/ Mixed-Use.** The primary focus of the commercial/ mixed-use is to provide for pedestrian-oriented retail development. Opportunities exist for rehabilitation and expansion of existing businesses, as well as new infill development.
- ▣ **Office/ Mixed-Use.** Located in the northern portion of the mixed-use theme district, the office/ mixed-use provides an excellent opportunity for the infill of vacant lots and redevelopment of underutilized sites with pedestrian-oriented professional office and service uses.
- ▣ **Residential/ Mixed-Use.** The residential mixed-use area is designed to incorporate a balanced mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses compatible with the existing residential in and surrounding the area. Opportunities for new infill residential-mixed use development, as well as the potential redevelopment of the civic facilities exist in this area.





The residential neighborhood surrounding the mixed-use theme district are also important to the revitalization of Downtown Imperial. These residential units are located within walking distance and may frequent Downtown's restaurants, coffee shops, and stores.

WITHOUT A STRONG AND *INCLUSIVE* CENTRAL HEART, A CITY TENDS TO BECOME A COLLECTION OF INTERESTS ISOLATED FROM ONE ANOTHER.

— JANE JACOBS, *LIFE AND DEATH OF GREAT AMERICAN CITIES*

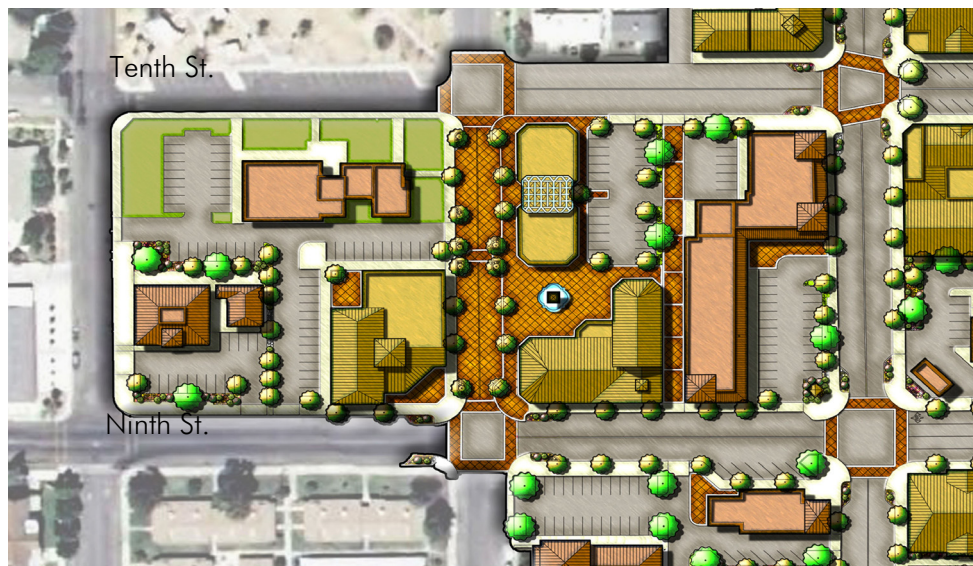
## Develop a Civic Center and Downtown “Heart”

A new civic use on the former site of the Worthington Building should become the social and civic “heart” of Downtown Imperial. Civic, cultural, and commercial uses can draw people into the Downtown and prominent, beautiful architecture can create a strong visual statement and presence.

Developed around an outdoor plaza, this site provides an excellent opportunity for a public gathering place. The public plaza should include a “focal point” such as a water feature, piece of public art, or even a cooling tower. Located next to the civic area is H Street – providing potential as a convertible plaza space for festivals, farmers markets, and other events. This plaza space will also provide a link to the park and library.



*The civic complex should make a prominent architectural statement*



*Envisioned civic center complex*

## Encourage Infill of Vacant Lots with Mixed-Use

In addition to the old Worthington Building site, there are a number of vacant parcels within Downtown with the potential for new infill development (Exhibit II-12). Incentives to encourage public art, plazas and paseos, and other amenities should be developed to enhance the contribution of new projects to Downtown. The following identifies just a few of the examples of Downtown infill opportunities illustrated on the vision plan graphic (Exhibit II-1).



*Corner of 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Imperial Avenue*

- The vacant parcels at the southwest and southeast corners of Imperial Avenue and 10th Street present important northern gateway properties.
- The vacant gas station parcel at the southeast corner of Imperial and Barioni, a prominent and important site, presents a prime opportunity for a gateway structure.

## Encourage Redevelopment of Underutilized Sites

Downtown Imperial has great potential for expansion of existing businesses and for the redevelopment of underutilized sites. There are opportunities for adaptive reuse of some of the vacant buildings into viable commercial and restaurant spaces. In addition, there are also opportunities for expansion of some of the existing buildings. Some of the redevelopment ideas illustrated on the vision plan graphic (Exhibit II-1) are listed below.



*The Ice House could be converted into a café or restaurant*

- Conversion of the “Ice House” at the southeast corner of 6th Street and Imperial Avenue into a coffee shop, café, or restaurant with an outdoor dining area; or an art gallery/ antique shop with an outdoor display area.
- Conversion of the “Brock House” at the southeast corner of 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Imperial Avenue into a café, restaurant or retail space.





- “El Zarape Restaurant” at the northwest corner of 7th Street and Imperial Avenue could be expanded to include an outdoor dining area.
- The small residential cottage lot located on Imperial Avenue just south of 6th Street presents a key opportunity to bring residential development Downtown through a mixed-use residential project.
- The “Melchor Apartments” on the northwest corner of Barioni Boulevard and H Street represent a key redevelopment opportunity due to the close proximity to the proposed new civic center. This property could be redeveloped with restaurants and retail on the ground floor and offices or apartments on the upper levels.
- The vacant “Arrellano Building” located on Imperial Avenue, south of Barioni Boulevard offers another opportunity for redevelopment. Façade improvements and the addition of a public plaza will enhance the existing building. Additionally, there is the opportunity to add a second story for offices.

## Encourage Façade Renovation and Rehabilitation

Façade renovations and rehabilitation of existing structures can have a vital impact on the character of Downtown. Property and business owners are strongly encouraged to consult the Design Guidelines (Chapter 3) and make improvements to their buildings, such as the addition of awnings, improved entries, new paint or siding, and other enhancements. The City can encourage improvements by adopting a facade and signage improvement program. This program can offer façade and rehabilitation incentives including matching grants, design assistance, and establishing a list of pre-approved sign and design professionals.

## Improve Downtown Infrastructure

Current concerns regarding Downtown’s infrastructure include drainage, overhead power lines, and utility poles. Additionally, with new development comes a consideration for service delivery and capacity. These issues should be further investigated and analyzed to ensure that Downtown’s future is enhanced and protected.

## 4. CULTURAL & HISTORIC CELEBRATION

### Tell the Story of Downtown Imperial

The rich history and culture of Downtown Imperial and the Imperial Valley should be celebrated and shared with existing residents, future residents, and visitors. Through the built environment, it is possible to tell the unique story of Imperial.

#### ▣ **Public Art and Streetscape Details.**

As described earlier in Urban Design and Streetscape, elements of local Imperial history and culture can be integrated into the two-foot band of pavers in the expanded sidewalk. (Exhibit II-2) Additionally, public art features in plazas and paseos should also reflect local tradition and character, such as the incorporation of concretion elements.



Concretion replica

▣ **Interpretive Plaques.** The development of a plaque program and walking tour is an excellent way to educate and inspire residents and visitors when they come to Downtown Imperial. Elements of important buildings (or former buildings!), places, natural features, events, Imperial “firsts”, and general history can be described on simple plaques that can be placed on buildings, on monument signs, or set into the pavement of the sidewalk. Small interpretive signs could also be integrated into the landscape to educate pedestrians on xeriscaping, plant names, soil conditions, etc.

▣ **Downtown Walking Tours.** Walking tours can also be organized as an amenity to Imperial County residents, as well as visitors. Tours can emphasize the culture and history of the area, while also highlighting key locations for shopping and dining. Partnership with the Imperial County Museum and the formation of a local Imperial Historical Society should be considered.

### Preservation of Downtown Treasures

The preservation of significant buildings and other area treasures is an essential part of being able to share the unique history and culture of Imperial. The recent loss of the Worthington building creates a strong sense of urgency to protect Downtown’s history. The following “treasures” in Downtown Imperial have been initially identified as worth saving and protecting (See Exhibit II-12):



- ▣ **“Ice House”**. Formerly an ice cream storage facility, the Ice House on Imperial Avenue and Sixth Street is a significant building from both an architectural and nostalgia standpoint. Efforts should focus on adaptive reuse of this facility as a coffee shop, art gallery, antique store or similar use that incorporates an outdoor plaza and/or outdoor dining opportunity.

- ▣ **“Brock House”**. The location of the first doctor’s home in Imperial, the Brock House at Seventh Street and Imperial Avenue is important to the community as a piece of local history. The conversion of this single-family residence into a commercial use would allow the structure to contribute significantly to Downtown Imperial.



*Brock House on Imperial Avenue*

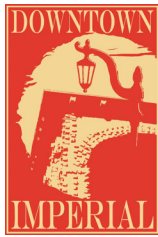
- ▣ **Veterans Memorial Hall**. The Veterans Memorial Hall has been identified as a key social and architectural attribute for Downtown Imperial. Efforts to enhance the building may explore the expansion of the structure as a multi-use facility providing local theater and other community events.
- ▣ **Post Office Interior Woodwork**. The interior woodwork in the post office has been identified as unique and significant and is recommended that it be preserved with any redevelopment at the site.

## Preserve Character of Surrounding Neighborhood

Keeping the mix of single-family and multi-family residential surrounding the Downtown core is important to maintain the small town character of Imperial. The intimate scale of the homes and the historic architectural styles are character-defining features of the neighborhood and should be preserved in redevelopment and improvement.



*Existing neighborhood home*



## 5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Organize for a Strong Future

Although much of the Downtown Imperial Redevelopment Master Plan is focused on *physical* improvements and enhancements, it is important to note that significant and positive change must take into account more than just the physical. Plans for Downtown must also address issues and opportunities related to organization, promotion, and economic restructuring (see Main Street Approach sidebar). Each of these elements is important in their own right and should not be overlooked.

#### The Main Street Four-Point Approach

The National Trust Main Street Center offers a comprehensive downtown revitalization strategy. The strategy focuses on four points which work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.

**Organization** involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement the revitalization program. An organizing body is essential to this step. This body could be formed as a:

- ▣ Downtown Committee or Merchants Group
- ▣ Downtown Manager and volunteer staff
- ▣ Redevelopment Agency

**Promotion** sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in Downtown Imperial through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in the district and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

**Design** means getting Downtown Imperial into top physical shape by creating an inviting atmosphere through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping. This conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Good maintenance practices and long-term planning are also an important component of good design.

**Economic Restructuring** strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. By sharpening the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruiting compatible new businesses and new economic uses.

[www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org)



## Focus on Special Events and Activities

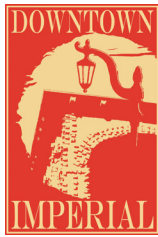
Special events such as parades, festivals, concerts, farmers markets, and other community gatherings bring people together. Events like the Annual Parade of Lights and Community Christmas Tree Lighting, the Annual Christmas in a Small Town, Crusin' Imperial, and the Annual Fair Parade and Festival give people a reason to come Downtown and have fun. Downtown should continue to promote these and similar types of events to bring people to the area.



*Outdoor events bring people Downtown*

## Understand the Market

In order to attract desired businesses into Downtown Imperial, an understanding of the desired business mix and the market is needed. Consult community members to create a list of desired businesses or business types and then undertake a market analysis to clarify the ideal business mix and niche for Downtown Imperial. A market study can give confidence to existing businesses and investors that Imperial is the right place to invest and also provides the City with specific guidance for mix and size of uses and absorption rates. Understanding the market will aid in the recruitment of preferred businesses and encourage existing property owners and tenants to invest in revitalization efforts.

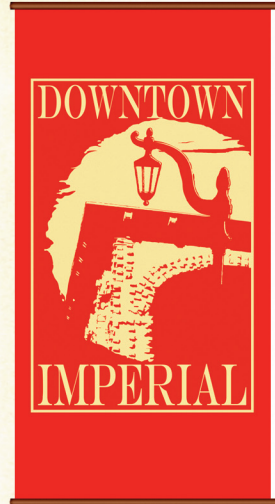


# DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

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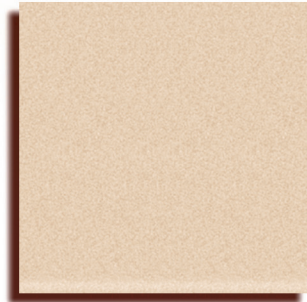




Historic Light Fixture



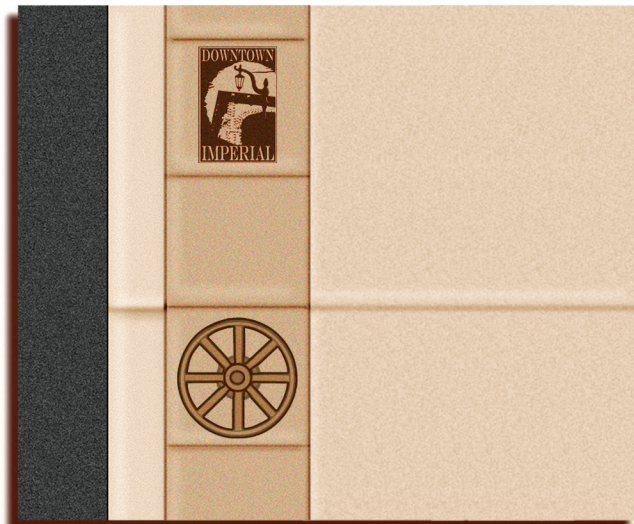
Exposed Agregate Crosswalk Paving



Accent Sidewalk Concrete Color



Accent Pedestrian Concrete Pavers



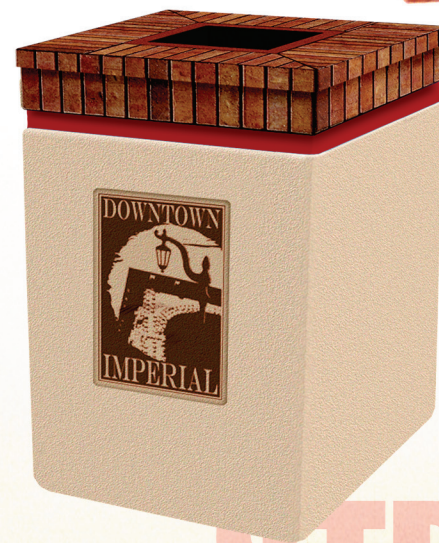
Sidewalk Accent Historic Imprints and Markers



Metal Framed Bench with Wooden Slats



Metal Framed Bench with Recycled Plastic Slats



Custom Trash Receptacle Concrete Embossed Base with Brick Accent Cap



Street Art Tree Grate

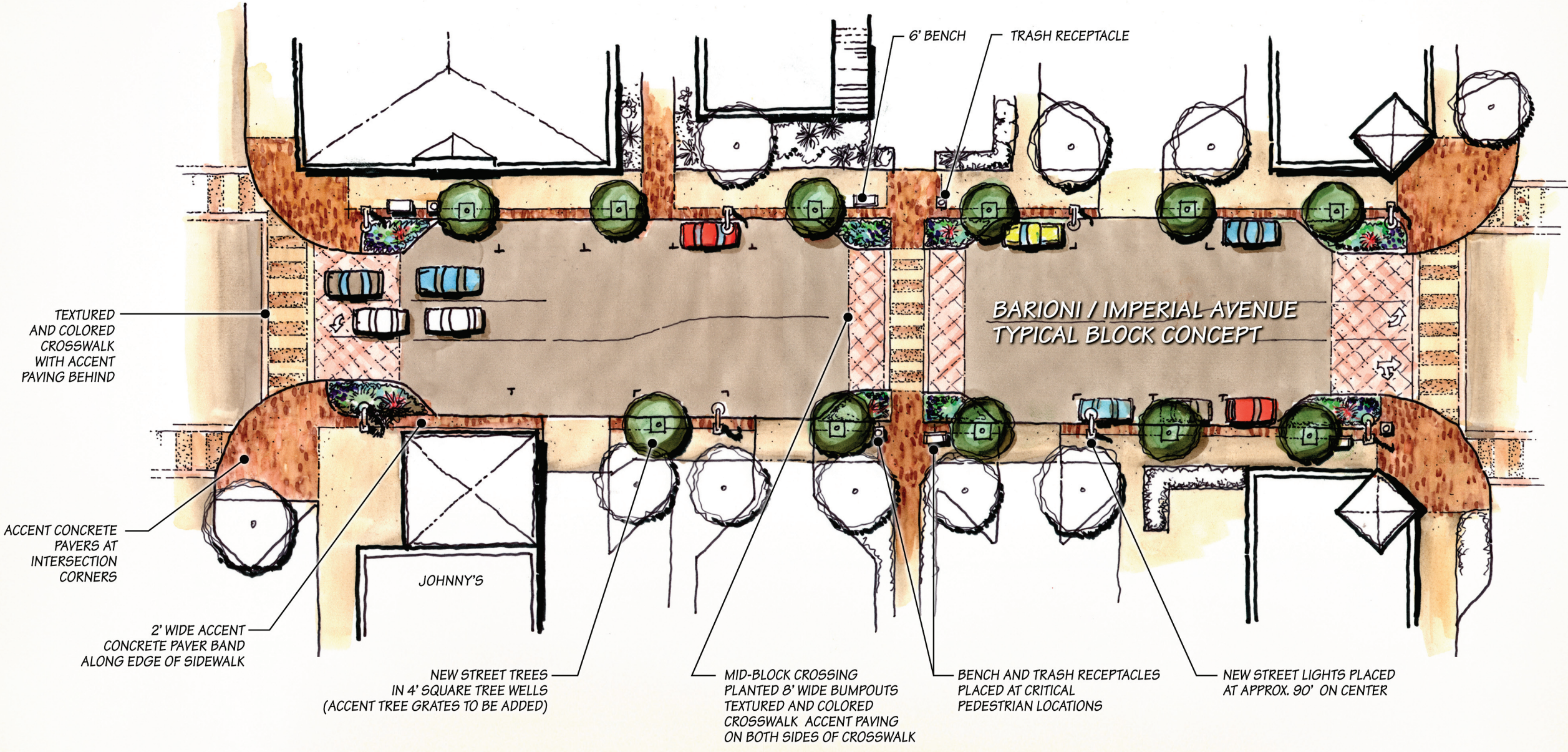


Exhibit II-2

# STREETSCAPE PALETTE

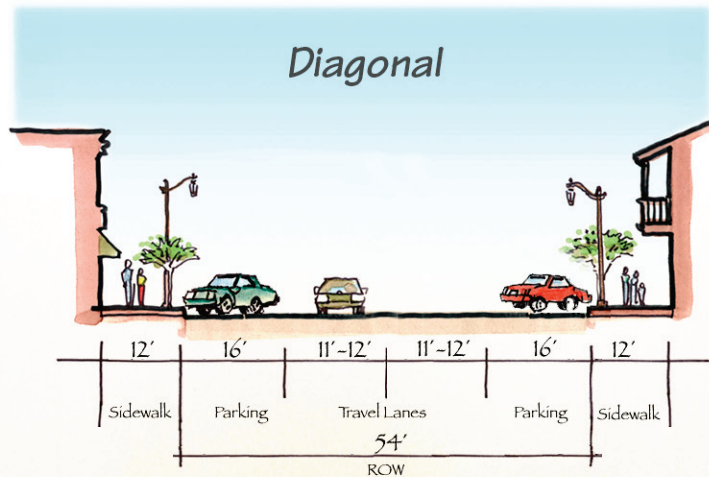
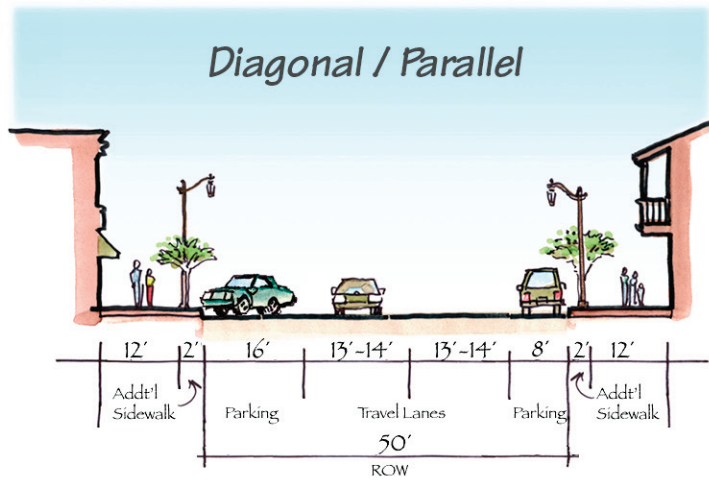
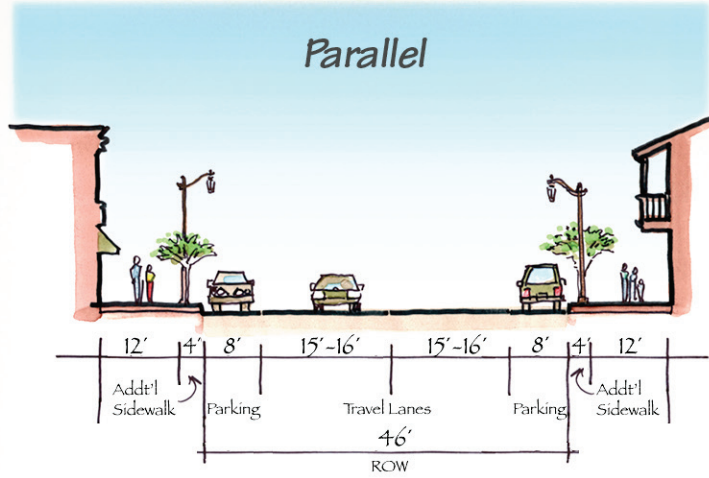
# TYPICAL BLOCK

Concept



# Barioni Blvd. and Imperial Avenue

## ALTERNATIVES

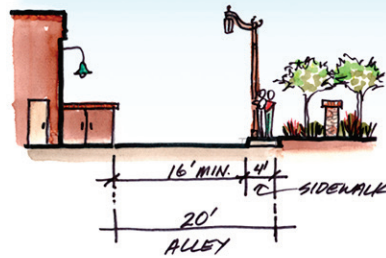


\*Existing roadways vary from 54-58'

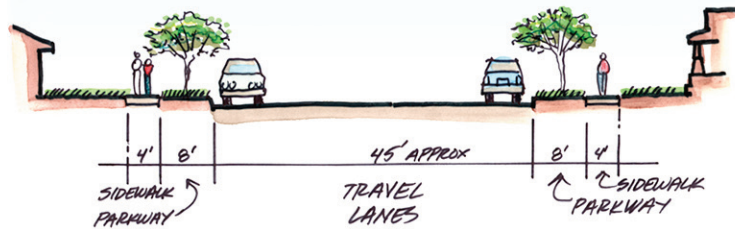
# Typical STREETS



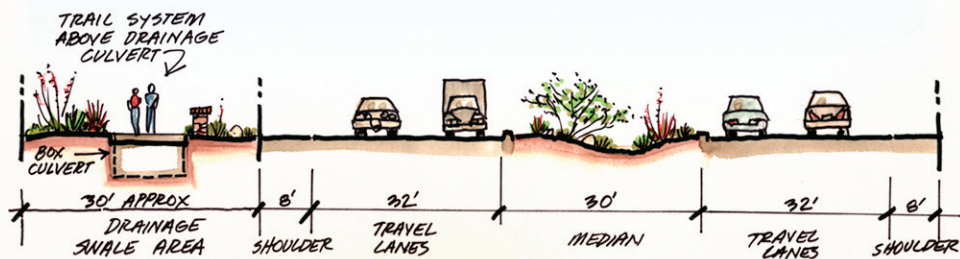
## ALLEYS / PASEOS



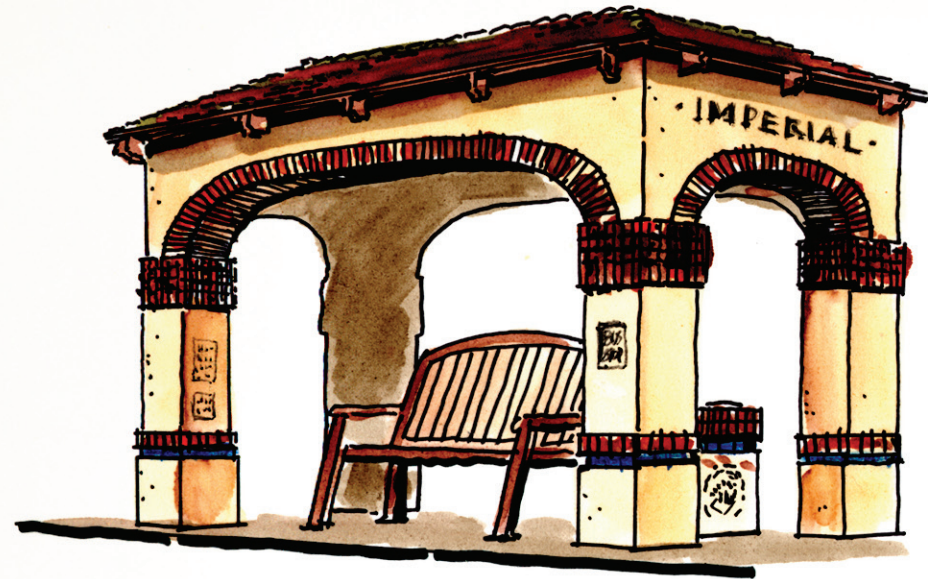
## TYPICAL NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL STREETS



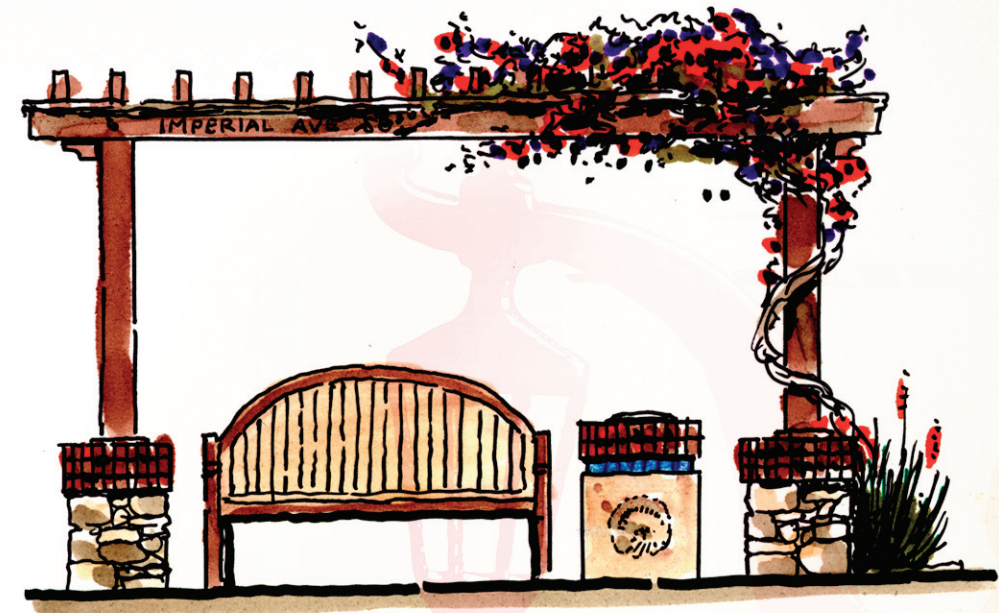
## HWY 86 CROSS SECTION



# BUS SHELTERS



Custom Bus Shelter  
"Worthington Style"



Custom Bus Shelter  
"Arbor Style"

Catalog Bus Shelter  
"Historic Style"



# PLANT PALETTE



Mexican Blue Sage



Cotoneaster



Gazania



Hesperaloe / Red Yucca



Lavender



Santolina



Chilean Mesquite



Mimosa

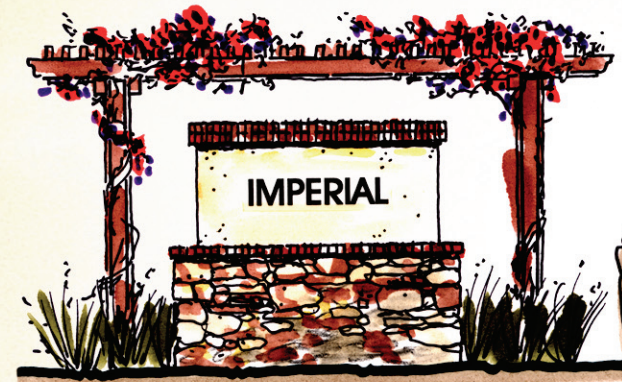
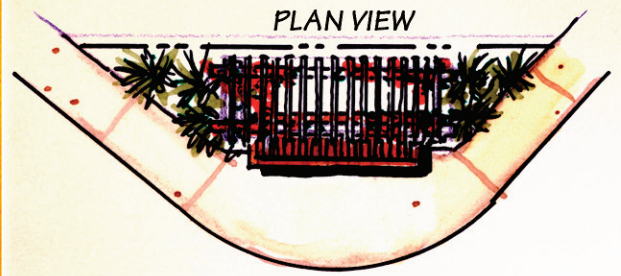


Shoestring Acacia



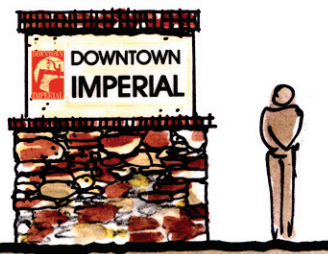
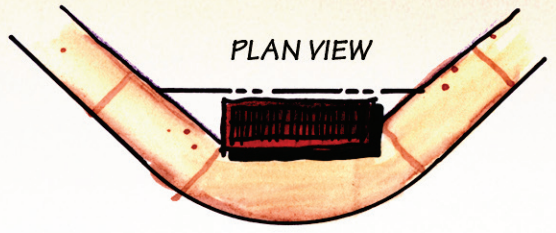
Willow Acacia

**CITY-WIDE ENTRY MONUMENT**



- Larger Monument with arbor/trellis will require more right of way
- Rock base with brick cap
- Sign wall is smooth colored concrete with double row brick cap
- Sign lettering either 3 dimensional individually cut letters or recessed within sign
- Trellis set slightly back from monument to allow for full sign view
- Colorful bougainvillea on trellis
- Appropriate accent plant materials as back drops

**DOWNTOWN ENTRY MONUMENT**



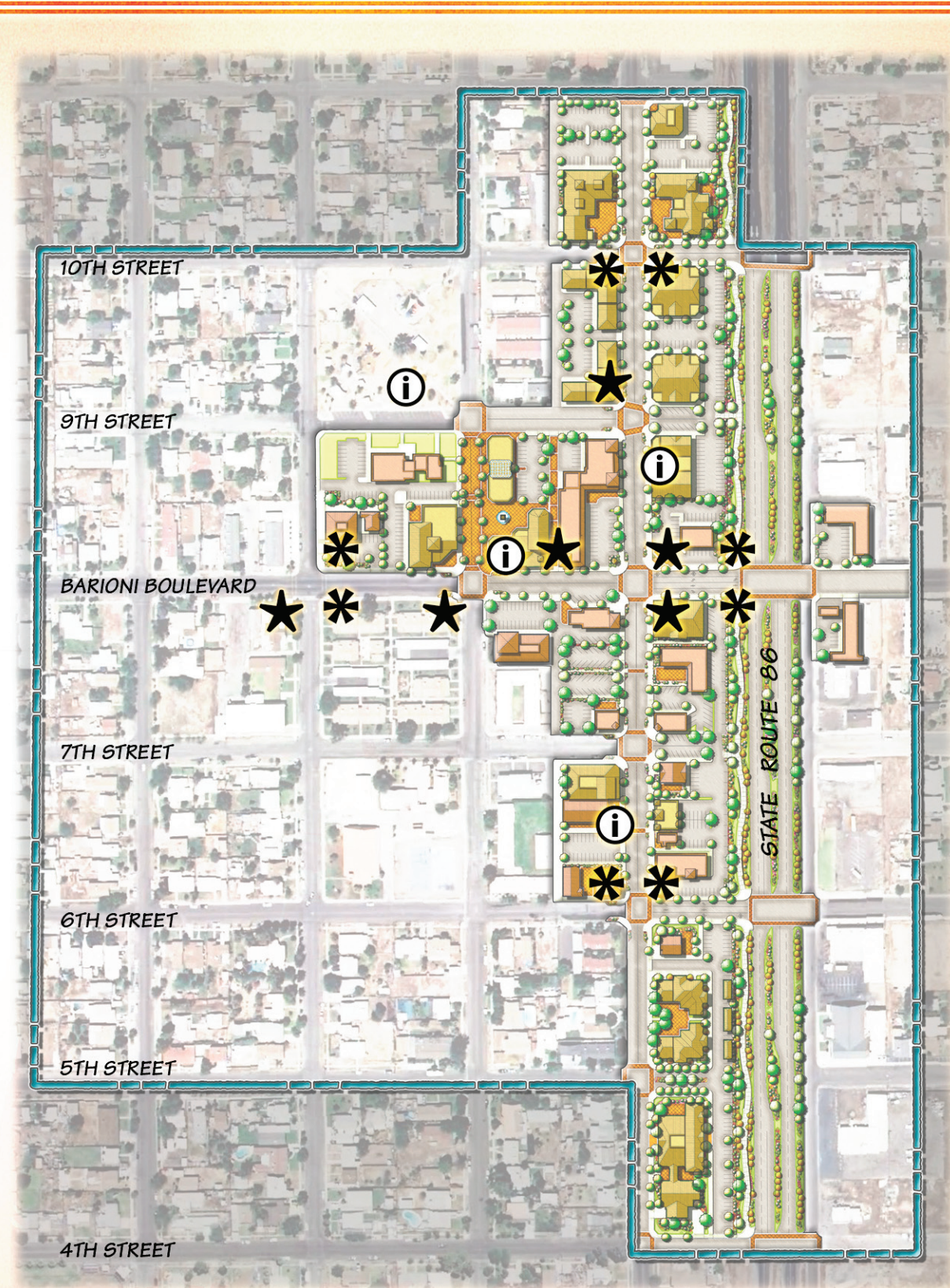
- Smaller version of entry monument sign can be used in areas with less-right of way
- Rock base with brick cap
- Sign wall is smooth colored concrete with double row brick cap
- Sign lettering either 3 dimensional individually cut letters or recessed within sign



**LEGEND**

- \* Downtown Entry Monument
- ★ Directional Signage
- i Informational Kiosk

Note:  
Major Citywide Entry Monuments are located at primary entry nodes into City, off this map.



**STREET BANNERS**

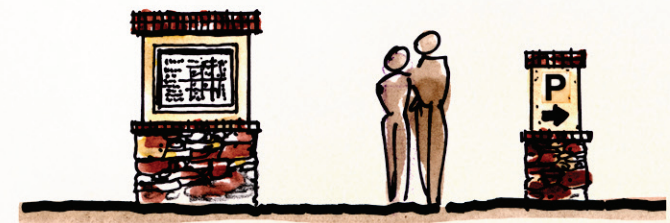


- Festive and Seasonal Banner

**INFO 'KIOSK'**



PLAN VIEW 2-SIDED    PLAN VIEW 4-SIDED



**DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE**



PLAN VIEW

- INFO 'KIOSK'**
- Pedestrian oriented
  - 4 sided or 2 sided depending on location
  - Rock base with brick cap and detail
  - Info board is recessed/ removeable plate for necessary seasonal changes

**DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE**

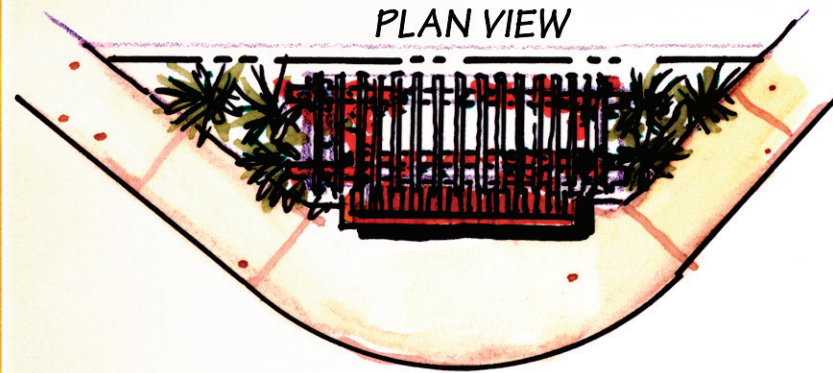
- To Parking
- To City Hall
- To City Park
- Vehicular Direction

# WAYFINDING System



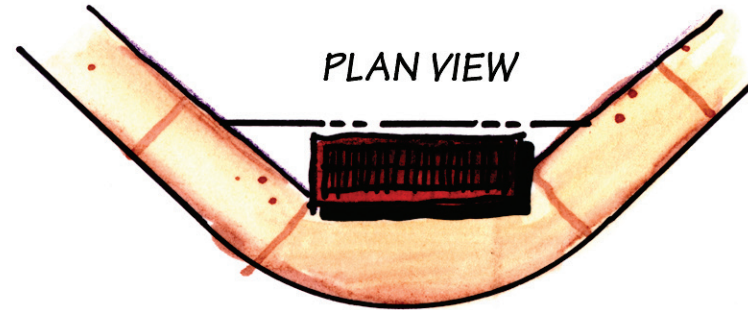
## CITY-WIDE ENTRY MONUMENT

PLAN VIEW

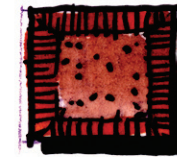


## DOWNTOWN ENTRY MONUMENT

PLAN VIEW



## INFO 'KIOSK'



PLAN VIEW  
4-SIDED



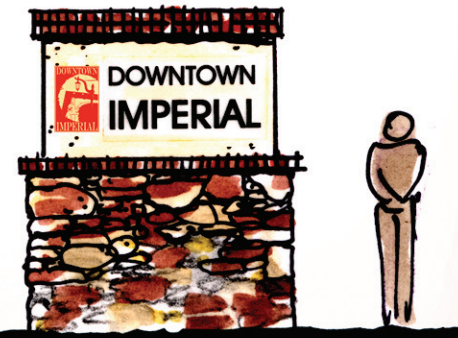
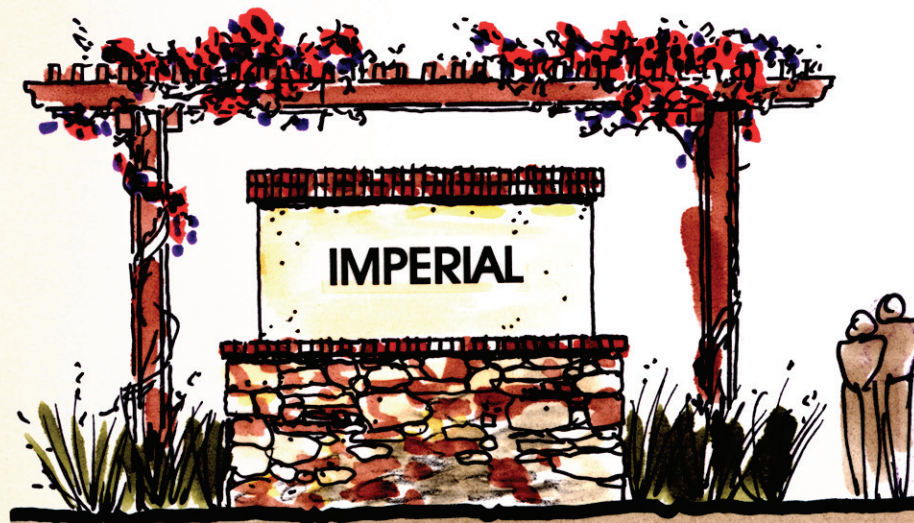
PLAN VIEW  
2-SIDED

## DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE



PLAN VIEW

## STREET BANNERS



- Larger Monument with arbor/trellis will require more right of way
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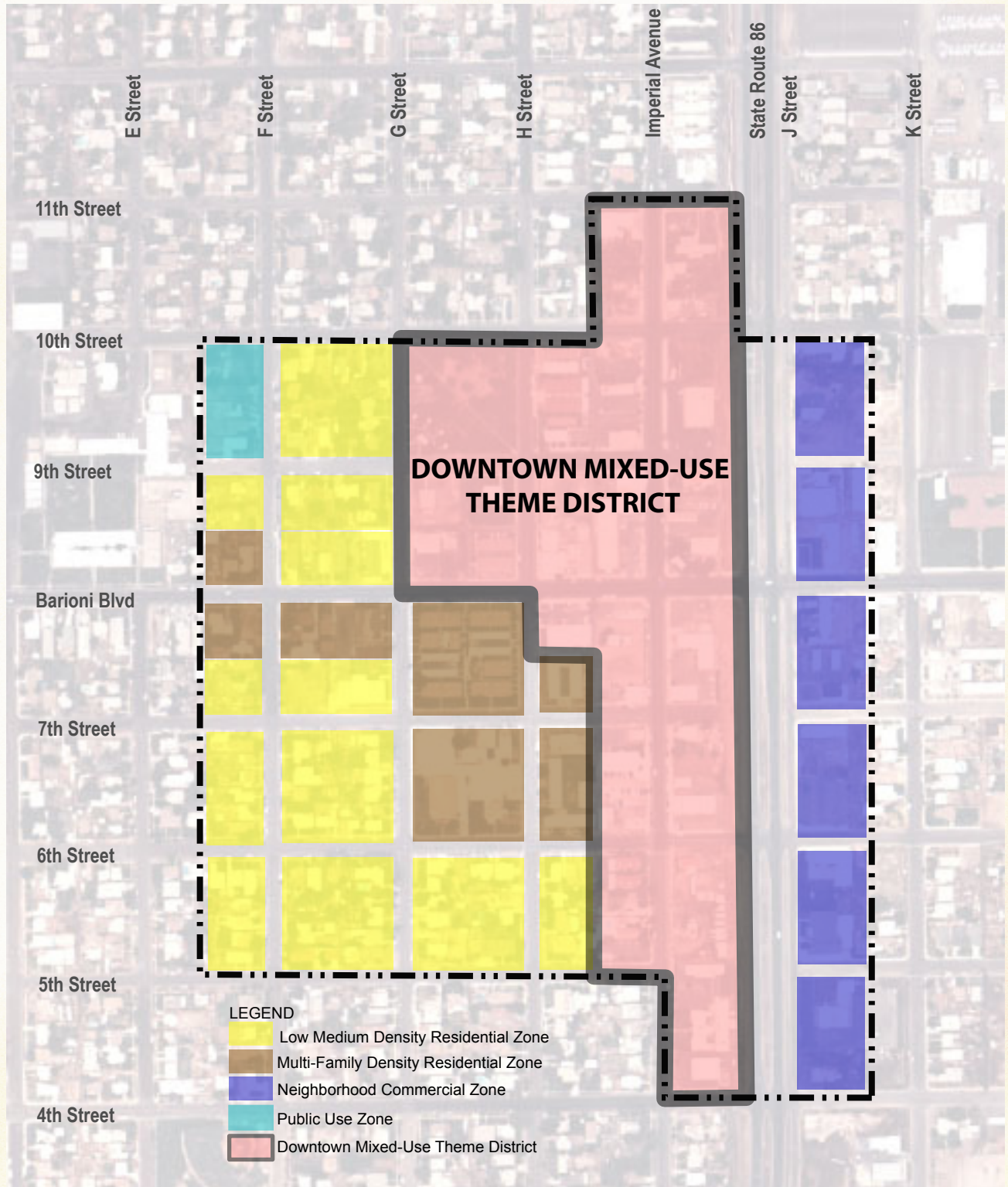
- Pedestrian oriented
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- To Parking
- To City Hall
- To City Park
- Vehicular Direction

- Festive and Seasonal Banner

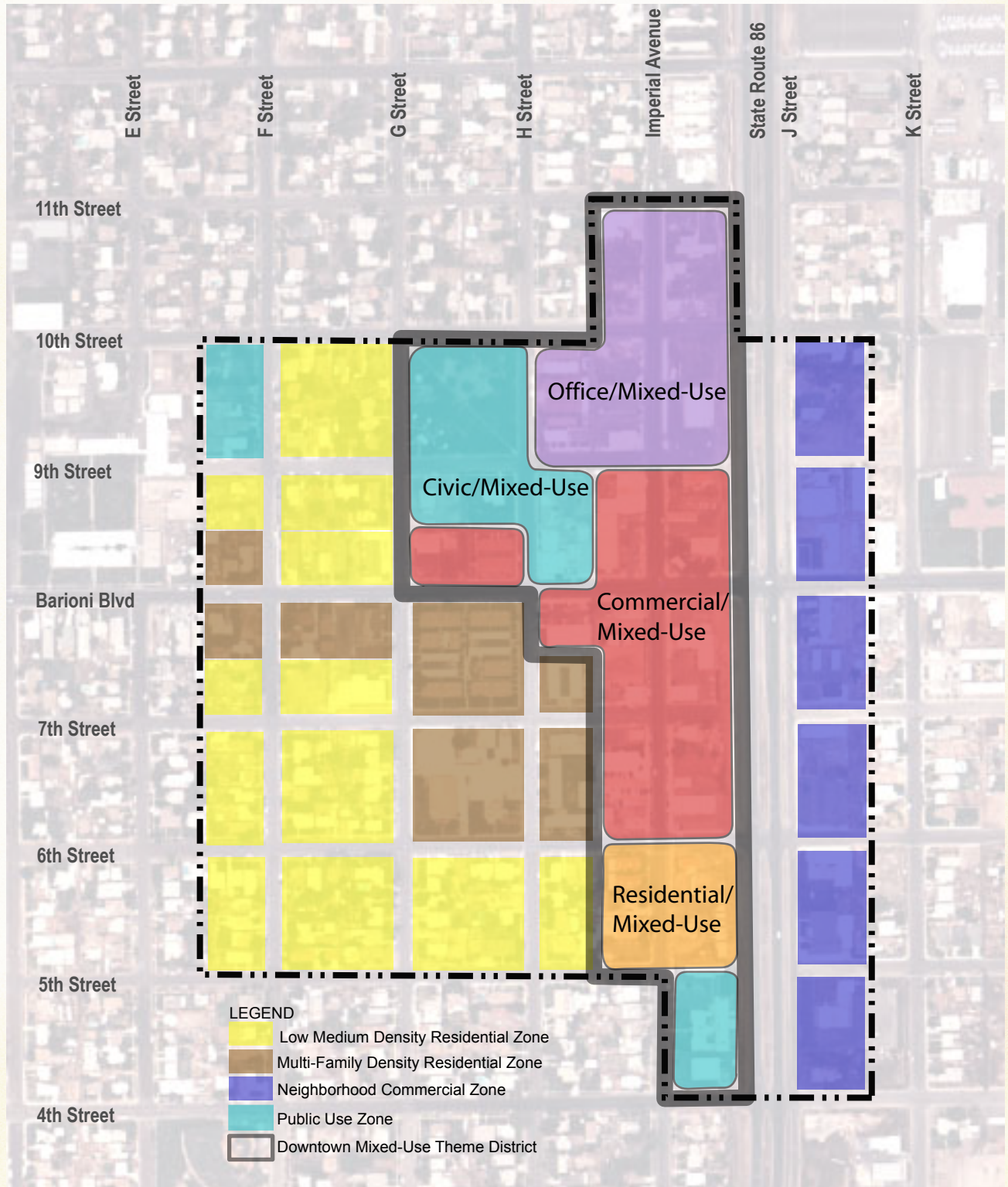


# LAND USE Concept

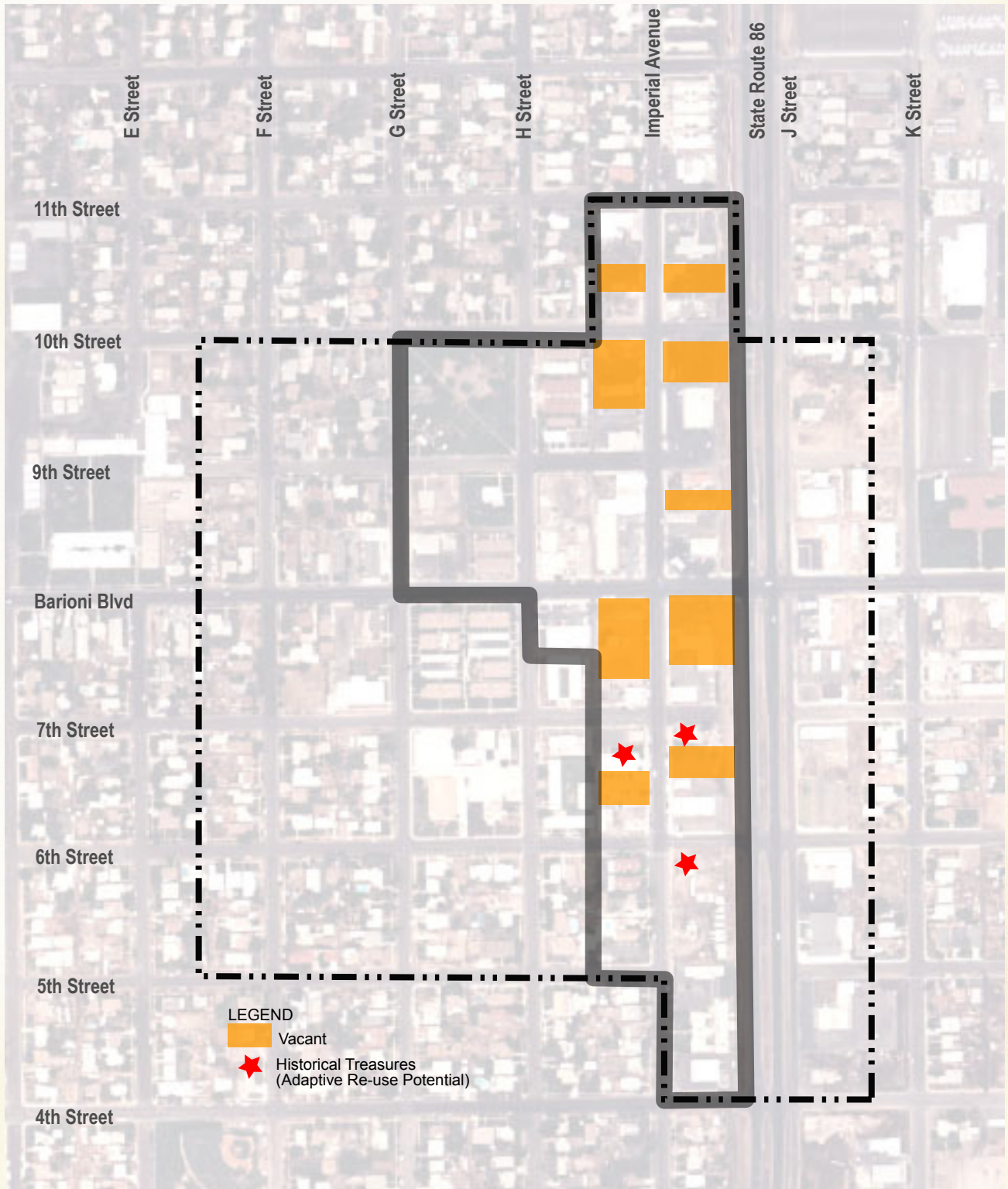


# MIXED USE

## Details



# Redevelopment & Infill OPPORTUNITIES



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# III. DESIGN GUIDELINES

## A. INTRODUCTION

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Downtown Imperial Master Plan design guidelines are intended to promote and encourage a high quality of design in future development. The Design Guidelines will:

- ▣ Promote a clear identity and sense of place within Downtown Imperial;
- ▣ Give private property owners and public agencies a basis for quality development within Downtown; and,
- ▣ Provide guidance and inspiration while still allowing for an organic, authentic, and creative Downtown to develop over time.

These Design Guidelines should be used as the minimum standard for new development, rehabilitation, and additions. The guidelines, while attempting to be comprehensive in scope, certainly are not exhaustive in every detail. The aim of these standards is to provoke creative approaches and solutions with a workable framework, rather than mandating only a few workable solutions.

### 2. ORGANIZATION

The Downtown Imperial Master Plan Design Guidelines are divided into four chapters.

**A. Introduction:** This section provides a clear purpose, and organization of the design guidelines. It also provides a description of appropriate architectural styles for Downtown Imperial.

- 1. Purpose of the Design Guidelines..... page III-1
- 2. Organization..... page III-1
- 3. Architectural Character .....page III-3 to 5



# DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

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**B. Commercial Design Guidelines:** This section describes general guidelines for commercial uses, public spaces, and a number of special uses, like mixed-use projects. The guidelines describe standards for site planning, architecture, and landscaping and public spaces.

- 1. *Commercial Design Guidelines* ..... page III-6
  - 1.1 Introduction ..... page III-6
  - 1.2 Site Planning ..... pages III-6 to 7
  - 1.3 Architecture ..... pages III-7 to 10
  - 1.4 Storefronts ..... pages III-11 to 13
  - 1.5 Porticos, Colonnades, Arcades, and Awnings ..... pages III-13 to 14
  - 1.6 Rear Entrances ..... page III-14
  - 1.7 Lighting ..... page III-15
  - 1.8 Building Materials ..... page III-15- to 16
  - 1.9 Building Color ..... page III-16
  - 1.10 Landscaping and Public Spaces ..... pages III-17 to 19
  
- 2. *Special Use Commercial Design Guidelines* ..... page III-19
  - 2.1 Mixed-Use Development ..... page III-20
  - 2.2 House Conversions ..... page III-21
  - 2.3 Service Stations ..... pages III-22 to 23
  - 2.4 Hotels and Motels ..... pages III-24 to 25

**C. Commercial Sign Design Guidelines:** The section includes general guidelines for commercial signs as well as detailed guidelines for specific types of signs appropriate for Downtown Imperial.

- 1. *General Sign Design Guidelines* ..... page III-25
  - 1.1 Introduction ..... page III-25
  - 1.2 Sign Legibility ..... pages III-25 to 26
  - 1.3 Sign Placement ..... page III-27
  - 1.4 Sign Color ..... page III-27
  - 1.5 Sign Materials ..... page III-28
  - 1.6 Sign Illumination ..... page III-29-30
  
- 2. *Design Guidelines for Specific Sign Types* ..... page III-30
  - 2.1 Introduction ..... page III-30
  - 2.2 Wall Signs ..... pages III-30 to 31
  - 2.3 Projecting Signs ..... page III-32
  - 2.4 Hanging Signs ..... page III-33
  - 2.5 Awning Signs ..... page III-33
  - 2.6 Window Signs ..... page III-34
  - 2.7 Figurative Signs ..... page III-34
  - 2.8 Monument Signs ..... page III-35



**D. Residential Design Guidelines:** This section includes guidelines for single-family residential, multi-family residential, as well as residential rehabilitation, additions and accessory buildings.

<b>1. Multi-Family Residential Design Guidelines</b> .....	page III-36
1.1 Introduction .....	page III-36
1.2 Site Planning .....	pages III-36 to 37
1.3 Architecture .....	pages III-38 to 39
1.4 Landscaping and Site Amenities .....	pages III-40 to 41
1.5 Parking and Circulation .....	page III-41
<b>2. Single Family Residential Design Guidelines</b> .....	page III-42
2.1 Introduction .....	page III-42
2.2 Site Planning .....	page III-42
2.3 Architecture .....	page III-43
2.4 Landscaping and Fencing .....	pages III-43 to 44
<b>3. Residential Rehabilitation, Additions, &amp; Accessory Buildings</b> .....	page III-44
3.1 Introduction .....	page III-44
3.2 Architectural Compatibility – Remodel and Rehab ...	pages III-44 to 45
3.3 Additions and Accessory Buildings .....	pages III-45 to 47

## 3. ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

A mix of architectural styles and details can create an authentic and timeless Downtown. Each of the following themes has been selected based on Downtown Imperial’s culture and heritage as well as community input. These architectural styles are not intended to be a requirement. They are designed to inspire a unique and creative development. The themes are provided to encourage compatibility and to ensure quality development in Downtown Imperial, but no one single theme or period is required. See Exhibits III-1 and III-2 for additional images or architectural styles and character that are encouraged in Downtown Imperial.

**Mission.** The Mission style draws its inspiration from the missions of the Southwest. The style is typified by quatrefoil windows; curved parapets; low-pitched; red-tile roofs and coping (usually with overhanging eaves); porch roofs supported by large; square piers; arches; and smooth stucco wall surfaces.



*Mission style*

**Spanish Eclectic.** This architectural style is characterized by elements such as varied rooflines and smooth facades made of stucco, reminiscent of adobe structure; red clay tiles; and wide overhanging eaves. The Spanish eclectic style also draws from an array of historical Spanish architectural details, such as prominent archways, mission-shaped dormers and parapets, second-story balconies and heavy timber.



*Monterey influence*



*Spanish Eclectic*

**Monterey.** The Monterey style is a variant of Spanish style architectures. It is an eclectic mix of Spanish Colonial with Colonial Revival details. The style is characterized by a broad second story balcony, usually cantilevered and covered by the main roof, and ceramic tile or wood roofs.





**Western.** Identifying elements of Western style architecture include flat or stepped-parapet rooflines, and covered walkways; material of natural wood, board and batten, wood shingles, and heavy timber.



*Western influence*

**Traditional Downtown.** Traditional Downtown architecture is characterized by relatively modest scale, brick construction, and façade topping parapet, which could be partially raised in a stepped or triangular pattern. The arrangement of windows is generally straightforward, with storefronts and display windows banded by transoms on lower stories and double-hanging sashes on upper stories, when present. Architectural detailing is typified by contrasting color bricks or by variations in brick patterns. Storefronts are primarily glass for the purpose of display and piers frame the storefront.

**Contemporary.** Contemporary styles may be appropriate in new construction although buildings should consider local material and design elements from surrounding structures. Creative interpretations of traditional design elements will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.



*"Traditional" downtown style*



*Contemporary style*



## B. COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 1. COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

#### 1.1 Introduction

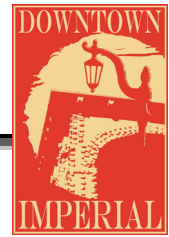
The commercial design guidelines for Downtown Imperial are intended to promote high quality new development and rehabilitation of existing buildings that will strengthen the small town character of Downtown, enhance pedestrian activities, and encourage continued economic growth and investment through the development of well-designed projects. The following section includes guidelines on site planning, architecture, landscaping, and public spaces that should be considered for both new development and renovation of existing structures.

#### 1.2 Site Planning

Site planning considers how the various components of a development (i.e. buildings, circulation, parking, open space, landscaping, etc.) relate to adjacent streets and existing development, and how the various components relate to each other within the development site. Site planning is an important consideration in new development, in order to develop a strong pedestrian-oriented environment in Downtown Imperial.

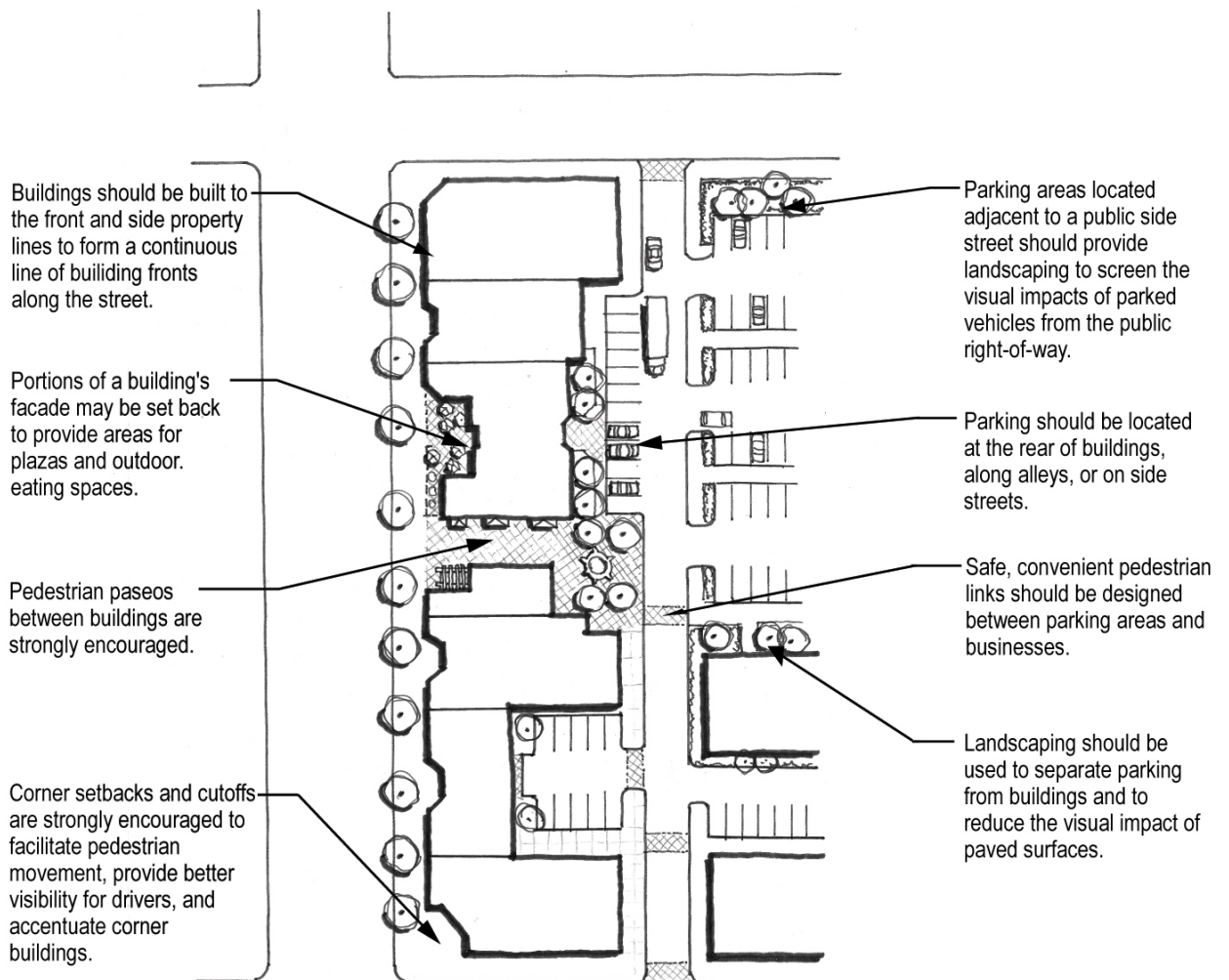


*Mid-block passages and active open spaces are encouraged*



## Site Planning Guidelines

Site planning in Downtown Imperial should incorporate appropriate building setbacks, effective parking and circulation, and adequate open space in the design of each project. See graphic below.



*Pedestrian-oriented site planning is an important component of downtown design*

## 1.3 Architecture

A mix of architectural styles and details are recommended to create an authentic and timeless Downtown. Architectural character and design features are presented on pages III-4 to 6 and in Exhibits III-1 and III-2.

### *Architectural Mass and Scale*

- ▣ To create a pedestrian feel in Downtown Imperial, ideal building height should be two to three stories.
- ▣ Buildings located on street corners should have prominent corner entrances. Special architectural features such as gables, turrets, towers, or similar elements should be used to accent buildings at street corners and at the terminus of a street corridor, alley, or pedestrian way.



*Architectural element at corners add interest / identification*



*Facades should be broken up by vertical and horizontal detailing*

- ▣ Generally, storefronts and building bays should be based on modules of approximately 25 feet in width. In larger buildings, walls can be broken up into a series of “structural bays” or storefront segments by a series of columns or piers.
- ▣ To reduce mass and bulk, facades should be “broken” by vertical and horizontal variations in wall and roof planes, building projections, projecting ribs, reveals, balconies, doors and window bays, and similar design elements.



*Before*



*After*

*Facade details can reduce mass and bulk of large buildings*



## Architectural Form and Composition

- ▣ Side and rear building facades should have a level of articulation and design detail compatible with the front façade, particularly if they are visible from streets, adjacent parking areas, or residential uses.
- ▣ Windows are an important element of a building's overall composition. The manner in which they are designed is a strong indicator of a building's quality. Ground floor storefronts are typically comprised of 30 to 50 percent window area. In general, upper stories should have a window to wall area proportion that is smaller than that of ground floor storefronts.
  - Glass should be inset a minimum of 3 inches from the exterior wall surface to add relief to the wall.
  - Clear glazing is strongly recommended. Reflective glazing and tinting is discouraged. Visibility into and out of stores and businesses must be maintained.
  - Shaped frames and sills should be used to enhance openings and add additional relief. They should be proportional to the glass area framed (e.g. a larger window should have thicker framing members).
  - The use of security grilles on windows is discouraged because they communicate a message of high crime and are difficult to integrate into the building design. If security grilles are necessary, they should be placed inside the building behind the window.



Windows on the upper story should have a smaller window to wall area proportion

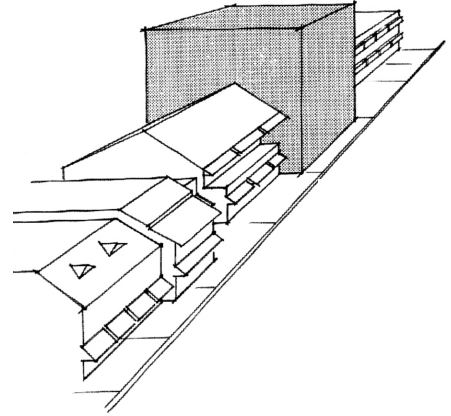


Windows are an important element of a building's composition



## Architectural Compatibility

- ▣ Architectural styles should be compatible with the surrounding character of Downtown Imperial, including building style, form, size, material, and roofline.
- ▣ Although variation in building heights is encouraged, compatibility with adjacent projects should be considered.



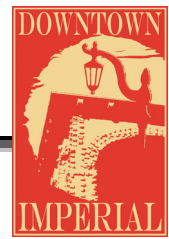
*Avoid unrelated form or scale in new buildings*

## Roof Articulation

- ▣ Roofs should be designed as an integral component to the overall form of a building.
- ▣ Roofline elements should be developed along all elevations, regardless of orientation from the public right-of-way.
- ▣ Offset roof planes, eave heights, and rooflines are encouraged in order to add visual interest and to help break up large buildings into smaller modules.
- ▣ Roof-mounted mechanical or utility equipment should be screened from view.



*Variations in rooflines are **encouraged***



## 1.4 Storefronts

Each building should generally be designed with a well-defined base, a mid-section or body, and a top story or roofline.

- **Base** – the design of the building base should differentiate it from the upper floors of the building. This may be a projection of the lower wall surface and/or a different material or color. It may be created by a heavier or thicker design treatment of the entire ground floor for a building of two or more floors, or by a setback of the upper floors
- **Mid-Section** – the preferred architectural character of the mid-section is to treat it as a solid wall with recessed windows or groupings of windows. Long or large wall surfaces with flush-mounted windows or no windows should be avoided.
- **Roofs and Rooflines** – the design of roofs and rooflines should provide visual interest from the streets below and should complement the overall façade composition. Roofs of historic commercial buildings should be used as an inspiration for new designs. Flat roofs are acceptable if a strong, attractively detailed cornice and/or parapet wall is provided.



*Typical Architectural Elements of a Downtown Commercial Building & Storefront*

- ▣ Each storefront should be treated as a small building with its own base, roofline, and door and window pattern.



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

- ▣ Large display windows should encompass a minimum of 65 percent of the storefront surface area. Upper story windows should be smaller and evenly spaced to provide balance to the building.
- ▣ The base panel or bulkhead below the display window should be a minimum of 24 inches and a maximum of 40 inches. Materials in this area should be visually heavier or the same as adjacent walls.



*Well-designed storefronts with good proportions*

- ▣ The main building entry should be emphasized at the street to announce a point of arrival. Use elements such as:
  - Flanked columns, decorative fixtures, or other details
  - Covered by portico or awnings
  - Recessed entry
  - A change in roofline, a tower, or a break in the surface of the wall
- ▣ Recessed entries of up to five feet that provide for a transition zone from sidewalk activity into the store are strongly encouraged. Recommended treatments may include:
  - Special paving materials such as ceramic tile or brick
  - Ornamental ceilings such as coffering
  - Decorative light fixtures
- ▣ Doors should be substantial and well detailed. They should match the materials, design, and character of the display window framing.





*Cornice detail helps to differentiate first and second floors.*

- ▣ In two-story or taller buildings, a cornice should be provided at the second floor to differentiate the storefront from upper levels of the building and to add visual interest.
- ▣ Details incorporated into the storefront design can add a degree of visual interest and functionality. Appropriate details may include:
  - Hanging or mounted light fixtures with decorative metal brackets
  - Decorative scuppers, catches and downspouts
  - Balconies, rails, finials, corbels, plaques
  - Metal grille work at vent openings
  - Flag or banner poles



*Examples of appropriate architectural details*

## 1.5 Porticos, Colonnades, Arcades, and Awnings



- ▣ Traditional colonnades, porticos, or arcades are encouraged in the downtown area. Such treatments should match the architectural character of the adjacent building.
- ▣ Porticos, colonnades, and arcades should provide protection for pedestrians, add interest and color to buildings, and allow placement of pedestrian-oriented signs.
- ▣ Colonnade and arcade supports should be made of decorative material rather than simple poles.

- ☐ Awnings are also encouraged to provide protection from sun and add visual interest to storefronts. The traditional slanted fabric awning is most appropriate for storefronts and is preferred versus contemporary barrel or box styles.

- ☐ Awning placement should respond to the scale, proportion, and rhythm of the building's design and should not cover piers, pilasters, transom windows, or other architectural features.



*Awnings can add interest and color to a street scene*

- ☐ Awnings should be of canvas, acrylic or vinyl coated canvas that requires little maintenance and resists fading.

- ☐ Aluminum or backlit awnings detract from the character of Downtown and should be avoided. Awning frames and supports should be of painted or coated metal or other non-corroding material.

- ☐ Retractable awnings are recommended. Retractable awnings are functional, having a frame and support structure with the ability to be adjusted up or down depending upon conditions.



*Colonnades are appropriate in Downtown Imperial*

## 1.6 Rear Entrances

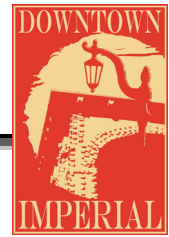
- ☐ Providing rear pedestrian entrances via alleys and parking lots is encouraged. Improvements to rear facades should be subtle and modest in nature.

- ☐ Potted plants, awnings, and decorative lighting are recommended at rear entrances to soften the appearance and provide a more pleasant space.



*Appropriate rear entrance*

- ☐ Signs should be modestly scaled to fit the informal character of the alley or rear parking lot.



## 1.7 Lighting

Good lighting can enhance the architecture of a building and help create a sense of place in Downtown Imperial. On the other hand, poor lighting can be a distraction from a building's architectural features and design elements.

- ▣ Exterior lighting should be designed as part of the overall architectural style of the building and should highlight interesting architectural features. The lighting of full façades or roofs is discouraged.
- ▣ Entrances should be well illuminated for safety and identification purposes. Entryways, arcades, and similar enclosed areas should also be well illuminated for safety.
- ▣ Lighting should not produce glare or spill over onto adjacent properties. The latest technical and operational energy conservation concepts should be considered in lighting designs.



*Stucco and brick are encouraged building materials*



## 1.8 Building Materials

- ▣ Building should be built to be long-term. Building materials should be highly durable and require only minimal maintenance. A variety of building materials are **encouraged**, including:
  - Stucco/ exterior plaster
  - Cut stone or rusticated block (cast stone)
  - Terra cotta
  - Ceramic tiles (bulkhead)
  - Masonry
  - Textured, treated, decorative concrete
  - Wood
  - New or used face brick
  - Clear Glass
  - Glass Block (transom)
  - Wrought iron (details)
- ▣ Vary building material to provide architectural interest; however, limit the palette of materials to no more than two.
- ▣ The following materials are **discouraged** for use on a building's façade:
  - Imitation rock work



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

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- Imitation brick
- Corrugated fiberglass, metal, or steel (except when used as accents on a contemporary building)
- Highly tinted, reflective, or opaque glass
- Silver aluminum window and door frames
- Imitation stone (fiberglass or plastic)
- Rough sawn or “natural” (unfinished wood)
- “Pecky” cedar
- Used brick with no fire face (salvaged from interior walls)
- Imitation wood siding
- Plastic panels

### 1.9 Building Color

- ▣ Colors should visually relate building elements to each other, and also individual facades to each other. The colors chosen for a building façade should relate, but not replicate, neighboring facades.
- ▣ No more than three colors should be used on any given façade. This includes any “natural” colors such as unpainted brick or stone. The three colors constitute the:
  - **Primary Base Color.** The color of the top, upper portion of the wall façade and the bottom storefront piers is defined as the primary base color. The larger and plainer the building, the more subtle the base color should be.
  - **Secondary Color.** A secondary color can be used to give additional emphasis to architectural features such as building bases, pilasters, cornices, and bands.
  - **Minor Trim Color.** If a minor trim is a third color, it should strengthen the color scheme already established by the base and secondary colors. In most cases, when two colors are used on the trim, the minor trim should be darker than the major trim color.
- ▣ Large areas of white are discouraged. White is the brightest of colors and should be used with careful consideration because of its glare and effect on surrounding buildings.



## 1.10 Landscaping and Public Spaces

Landscaping should be considered an integral design element in the planning for new or redeveloped sites. Landscaping can enhance the quality of Downtown Imperial by framing and softening the appearance of buildings, screening undesirable views, and providing shade and comfort to the pedestrian.



*Landscaping planters and pots are encouraged*

### *Landscape Design*

- ▣ Landscaping of parking areas is encouraged to provide shade; avoid direct views of parked vehicles from the public viewshed; and minimize noise, light, exhaust fumes and other negative effect to pedestrians.
- ▣ Where parking lots abut buildings, landscaping around the base of buildings is encouraged to soften the edge between the building and parking lot.
- ▣ Planters and pots placed in building recesses and adjacent to blank walls are encouraged to provide visual interest and enhance sidewalks, courtyards, and plazas. Planter and pot materials should complement the buildings architecture.
- ▣ Landscaping should not adversely impact on-site lighting, restrict access to emergence facilities, or interfere with the maintenance of overhead or underground utilities.



*Public open spaces are encouraged*



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

- ▣ Landscaping should be in scale with adjacent buildings and be of appropriate size at maturity.
- ▣ Landscaping should be used to relieve the negative appearance of any solid, windowless elevations.
- ▣ Trees and plants which flourish in the region should be selected when possible. Plant materials should also be selected for their low maintenance, heat resistant, and drought-tolerant qualities. (See recommended plant palette in Chapter II).

### *Site Amenities*

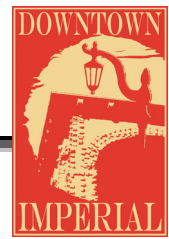
- ▣ The addition of pedestrian amenities, such as benches, shelters, drinking fountains, lighting, trash receptacles, and bicycle racks, are strongly encouraged in new projects. Trees, water features, and public art should also be incorporated into courtyard, plaza, and mid-block passage design.
- ▣ The design of private street furniture should be compatible with the architectural style of the building to which it relates, while also complementing street furniture in the public realm.
- ▣ Street furniture should be constructed of durable, easily maintained materials that will not fade, rust, or otherwise quickly deteriorate.
- ▣ The use of decorative paving at building entrances, plazas, and courtyards is strongly encouraged. In places where private and public paved surfaces join (i.e. plazas, outdoor cafes, etc.), the surfaces of each should be compatible in terms of color, material, pattern, and texture. In the case of plain concrete, compatibility is not an issue.



*Plazas should incorporate public amenities*

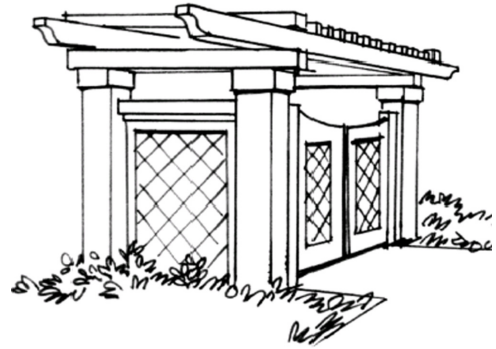
### *Screening*

- ▣ Refuse storage, fuel storage tanks, generators, fire check valves, service entrances, and loading areas should be located out of view



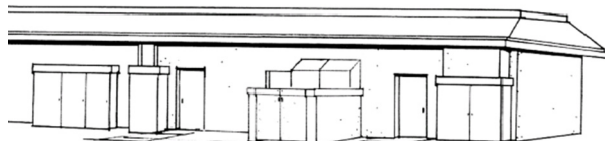
from the general public and so that their use does not interfere with parking and circulation. All screening devices should be compatible with the architecture, materials, and colors of the building.

- ▣ Landscaping should be incorporated into the design of refuse, storage and equipment areas to screen from public and private view.
- ▣ Refuse storage areas that are visible from upper stories of adjacent structures should have an opaque or semi-opaque horizontal cover/screen to mitigate unsightly views. The covering structure should be compatible with the architectural theme of the site's buildings.

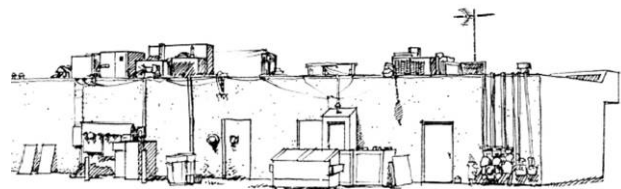


*Trellis structure used to screen top view of trash enclosure*

- ▣ Screening should not result in hiding places or entrapment areas.



*Screening is encouraged.*



*Visible equipment, storage, and refuse are discouraged.*

## 2. SPECIAL USE COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section provides design guidelines for specific commercial uses, which due to the nature of their use, potential impact on surrounding uses, and concerns related to overall design, have been identified for special attention and more detailed consideration. For each of the special uses, the following guidelines should be used in conjunction with the general commercial design guidelines of the previous section.



## 2.1 Mixed-Use Development

The primary design issue related to mixed-use projects is the need to successfully balance the requirements of residential uses, such as the need for privacy and security, with the needs of commercial uses for access, visibility, parking, loading, and possibly extended hours of operation.

### *Site Planning – Mixed Use*

- ▣ Separate parking facilities and entrances should be provided for residential uses and commercial uses.
- ▣ Loading areas and refuse storage facilities for the commercial use should be located as far as possible from residential units and should be completely screened from view from adjacent residential portions of the project and should mitigate nuisances from odors and noise when residential uses might be impacted.
- ▣ Residential buildings should be arranged to create opportunities for common open space for the residential use.

### *Architecture – Mixed Use*

- ▣ The architectural style and use of materials should be consistent throughout the entire mixed-use project. However, differences in materials and/or architectural details may occur to differentiate the residential portion of the project from the commercial portion of the project.



*Storefront design should be consistent with design guidelines.*

- ▣ The design of storefronts should be consistent with the design guidelines for General Commercial Development found in this chapter. The residential portion of a mixed-use project should be consistent with the design guidelines for multi-family development.





## 2.2 House Conversions

The practice for converting single-family residential housing into small commercial uses is generally encouraged as a means of maintaining the small-scale character of Downtown Imperial environs. House conversions require a special attention to ensure that the new use will have a logical relationship with the physical improvements on the site and that the converted project remains functionally and aesthetically compatible with adjacent development. Single-family residential design guidelines from Section D.2 may also be consulted for additional guidance.

### *Site Planning – House Conversions*

- ▣ The existing residential landscaped setbacks should be maintained and additions of building square footage placed to the side or rear of the building if feasible.
- ▣ Parking should never be located in the front setback area. Parking should be provided at the side or rear of the property and should be set back a minimum of 5 feet from the property lines.
- ▣ Site access should be maintained in a typical residential manner.

### *Architecture – House Conversions*

- ▣ The original architectural character and style of the house should be preserved and/or enhanced when the character of the surrounding area also has a residential quality, or when the house is architecturally significant.
- ▣ Front facades should not be altered to provide commercial storefronts. However, existing windows may be enlarged to provide additional visibility into the business.



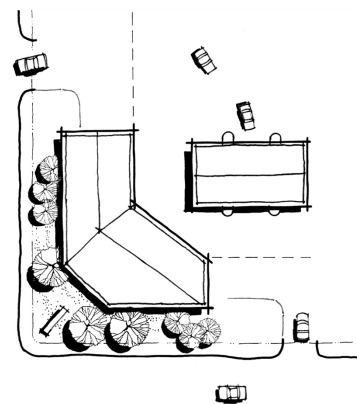
*House conversions to commercial use should retain a residential character*

## 2.3 Service Stations

Although service stations are generally discouraged in the core commercial center of Downtown, they may be appropriate east of Highway 86 or in other less visible locations. Service stations are intensive uses that are characterized by large volumes of traffic and expansive areas of paving that generally allow vehicles to maneuver freely. Traffic, aesthetics, and storage are common concerns associated with service stations. The following design guidelines are intended to improve the compatibility and appearance of service stations.

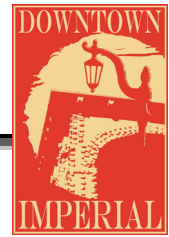
### Site Planning – Service Stations

- ▣ The site design for projects located at street corners should provide a strong design element at the corner to help frame the public right-of-way and anchor the corner. This can be accomplished by using a reverse building placement wherein the main building is placed at the corner or by using a prominent landscape feature.
- ▣ Landscaping along the perimeter of site to reduce visual impacts is encouraged. Landscaped berms or hedges should be located along public streets. Driveway cuts should be limited to two per site.
- ▣ Where commercial development abuts the service station, two-way vehicular access integrated with the adjacent commercial development should be provided.
- ▣ In areas developed with buildings adjacent to the sidewalk, service stations should also be oriented to the sidewalk, placing any service bay door and car wash openings at the rear of the structure.
- ▣ Each pump island should include a vehicle stacking area for at least three vehicles on at least one end of the pump island.



*Corner building placement is encouraged*

- ▣ A gasoline tanker truck unloading zone should be provided and should not obstruct vehicle circulation and parking areas.



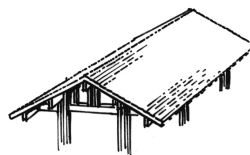
## Architecture – Service Stations



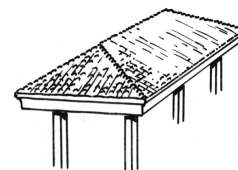
Use of appropriate architectural elements in service stations



- ▣ Building elevations facing public streets should be architecturally detailed to provide interest and should be designed to complement and be compatible with the predominant architectural character of the area.
- ▣ Rather than adapting a standard design, floor plans and elevations that are unique to the community, and are not a corporate or franchise design, are strongly encouraged.
- ▣ High quality, durable building materials should be used. Service stations should incorporate facades that create a textured design. Reflective, glossy, and fluorescent surfaces are discouraged.
- ▣ Roof design of service stations, including pump island canopies, should incorporate full, pitched roof treatments with a low to moderate slope. Flat roofs and mansard roof applications are strongly discouraged.
- ▣ Avoid glare in service stations with recessed lighting or internally illuminated canopies. Avoid over lighting canopies by using an average of 10 foot-candles (a unit of measure of the intensity of light).



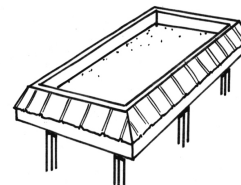
APPROPRIATE



APPROPRIATE



INAPPROPRIATE



INAPPROPRIATE

*Pump canopies should incorporate full roof treatments with low to moderate pitch*



### 2.4 Hotels and Motels

Hotels and motels are a commercial type of use with some residential attributes. They often highly visible from highways and primary streets, making the design and impact particularly important.

#### *Site Planning – Hotels and Motels*

- ▣ The primary visual presence along the major street frontage should be the hotel building and driveway approach, not a parking lot.
- ▣ A covered drop-off zone for vehicles and pedestrians, independent of drive aisles, should accommodate guest loading and drop-off. Delivery and loading areas should be located toward the rear of the property and screened to minimize impacts.
- ▣ Common open space should be provided on-site. Recreational facilities, such as swimming pools, should be designed to offer privacy and to minimize noise impacts on adjacent uses.
- ▣ Walls and fences along side and rear property lines should be designed to complement the architecture of the primary buildings.

#### *Architecture – Hotels and Motels*

- ▣ The scale of buildings should relate to the surrounding development patterns. In two or three-story buildings, upper floors should be set back to lessen the appearance of mass and bulk.
- ▣ Walkway, stairway, balcony railings, and other similar architectural details should be consistent with basic building design. For structures over two stories, access to guestrooms should be provided from the hallway interiors. Avoid room entrances directly adjacent to parking lots or exterior walkways.



*Upper stories set back from first level.*



## C. SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 1. GENERAL SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

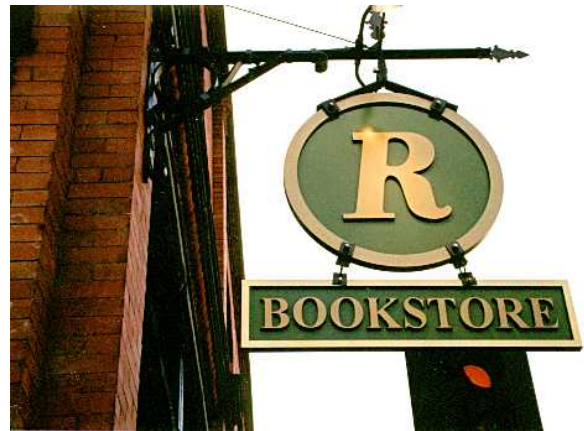
#### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides basic design guidance for all signs, regardless of specific type or location. The guidelines address issues related sign legibility, placement on the facade, color and materials, and effective illumination.

#### 1.2 Sign Legibility

▣ **Use a brief message.** The fewer the words, the more effective the sign's message. A sign with a brief, succinct message is simpler and faster to read, looks cleaner, and is generally more attractive. Businesses with long names are encouraged to use a generic identification (i.e. "CLEANERS") rather than force too many words into the allowed sign area.

▣ **Ensure legibility.** An effective sign should do more than attract attention; it should communicate its message clearly. Usually, this is a question of the readability of words and phrases. The most significant influence on legibility is lettering style and spacing. The following guidelines should be used to help ensure that signs are easy to read.



*Use easy to read lettering styles such as these*

▣ **Use easy to read lettering styles.** Avoid hard-to-read, intricate typefaces. Typefaces that are difficult to read reduce the sign's ability to communicate.

▣ **Avoid spacing letters and words too close together.** Crowding of letters, words, or lines will make any sign more difficult to read. Conversely, over-

spacing these elements causes the viewer to read each item individually, again obscuring the message. Lettering should not occupy more than 75 percent of the sign face.

- ▣ **Limit the number of lettering styles in order to increase legibility.** A general rule to follow is to limit the number of different letter types to no more than two for small signs (generally up to 10 square feet) and three for larger signs.

- ▣ **Encourage unique signs, but avoid typefaces that are too faddish or bizarre.** These typefaces may look good today, but may soon go out of style. The image conveyed may quickly become that of a dated and unfashionable business.



*Avoid typefaces that are hard to read at a glance*

- ▣ **Use significant contrast.** If there is little contrast between the brightness or hue of the message of a sign and its background, it will be difficult to read. Generally, light colored letters and a darker, contrasting background presents the most visible and best-looking image.



*Use significant contrast to increase legibility*

- ▣ **Avoid signs with overly strange shapes.** Signs that are unnecessarily narrow or oddly shaped can restrict the legibility of the message. If an unusual shape is not symbolic in nature, it will probably be confusing.
- ▣ **Use symbols and logos.** Pictographic images will usually register more quickly in the viewer's mind than a written message. If the nature of the business suggests a particular symbol or logo to identify the business, this should be incorporated into the sign.



## 1.3 Sign Placement

- ▣ Signs should be designed to relate to the architectural features of the building on which they are located and create visual continuity with other storefronts on the same or adjacent buildings.
- ▣ Signs should be placed at or near the public entrance to a building or main parking area to indicate the most direct access to the business.
- ▣ Signs should be placed consistent with the proportions of the building's façade. For example, a particular sign may fit well on an upper, more basic wall, but would overpower and obstruct the finer detail of a lower storefront area. A sign appropriate near the building's entry may look tiny and out of place above the ground level.
- ▣ Signs should not be located so that they cover or interrupt the architectural details or ornamentation of a building's façade.
- ▣ Signs should not project above the edge of the rooflines and should not obstruct windows and/or doorways.



*Signs should **not** project above the edge of the rooflines*

## 1.4 Sign Color

- ▣ Too many colors overwhelm the basic function of communication. The colors compete with the sign's content for the viewer's attention. Limited use of the accent colors can increase legibility, while large areas of competing colors tend to confuse and disturb. Colors should be limited to no more than three on a single sign.
- ▣ Contrast is an important influence on the legibility of signs. The most aesthetic and effective graphics are produced when light colored letters and images are placed on a dark contrasting colored background.
- ▣ Bright day-glo (fluorescent) colors should be avoided as they are distracting and do not blend well with other background colors.
- ▣ Sign colors should relate to and complement the materials or color scheme of the buildings, including accent and trim colors.



*Too many colors and words can create a chaotic and confusing message*

## 1.5 Sign Materials

- ▣ Sign materials should be selected with consideration for the architectural design of the building's façade. Sign materials should complement the materials on the façade and should contribute to the legibility of the sign.
- ▣ Sign materials should be very durable. Paper and cloth signs are not suitable for outside because they deteriorate quickly. When wood is used, it should be properly sealed to keep moisture from soaking into the wood and causing the sign's lettering to deteriorate.
- ▣ The following sign materials are **encouraged** for Downtown Imperial:
  - Wood (carved, sandblasted, etched, properly sealed and painted, or stained)
  - Metal (formed, etched, cast, engraved, and properly primed and painted or factory coated to protect against erosion)
  - Subtle custom neon tubing incorporated into sign or reminiscent of historic signs





## 1.6 Sign Illumination

- ▣ If the sign can be illuminated by an indirect source of light, this is usually the best arrangement because the sign will appear to be better integrated with the building's architecture. Light fixtures supported in front of the sign cast light on the sign and generally a portion of the building as well. Indirect lighting emphasizes the continuity of the building's surface and signs become an integral part of the facade. Conversely, internally illuminated cabinet signs where only the sign face is illuminated tend to stand out and not appear integrated with the building's facade.



*Good example of a backlit sign*

- ▣ Whenever indirect lighting fixtures are used, care should be taken to properly shield the light source.

- ▣ Individually illuminated letters, either internally illuminated or back-lighted solid letters (reverse channel), are a preferred alternative to internally illuminated plastic-faced cabinet signs. Signs comprised of individual letters will be better integrated with the building because they use the building's façade as their background.



*Signs illuminated by a direct-shielded light source are encouraged*

- ▣ The use of backlit, individually cut letter signs is strongly encouraged for all types of business and signs, including monument-type signs.
- ▣ If internally illuminated cabinet signs are used, their sign panels should be opaque so that when illuminated only the lettering, not the background, is illuminated. The background or field should have a non-gloss, non-reflective finish.



- ▣ Blinking, rotating, flashing, changing, or reflecting lights are highly discouraged.
- ▣ Electrical transformer boxes and raceways should be concealed from public view. If a raceway cannot be mounted internally behind the finished exterior wall, the exposed metal surfaces of the raceway should be finished to match the background wall, or integrated into the overall design of the sign.
- ▣ All exposed conduit and junction boxes should be appropriately concealed from public view.
- ▣ Use of energy-efficient, high intensity discharge lamps are encouraged.

## 2. DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC SIGN TYPES

### 2.1 Introduction

Each of the various sign types present particular issues that need to be considered. The guidelines in this section address issues of good design, placement, and compatibility for each of the following sign types:

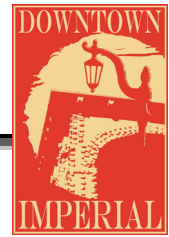
- ▣ Wall Signs
- ▣ Projecting Signs
- ▣ Hanging
- ▣ Awning Signs
- ▣ Window Signs
- ▣ Figurative Signs
- ▣ Monument Signs

### 2.2 Wall Signs

- ▣ A wall sign should be located where the architectural features or details of the building suggest a location, size, or shape for the sign. The best location for a wall sign is generally a band or blank area between the first and second floors of a building.
- ▣ Wall signs should not project from the surface upon which



*Appropriate wall sign*

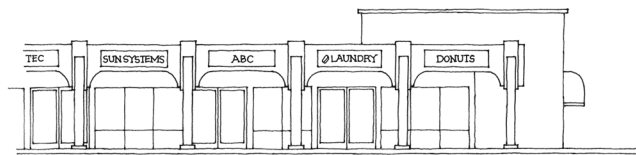


they are attached more than that required for construction purposes and in no case more than 6 inches.

- ▣ Wall signs painted directly on a structure may be appropriate in some cases. “Ghost” (faded to seem old) signs often lend an air of age and authenticity.
- ▣ Internally-illuminated cabinet-type signs are **discouraged**. Internally-illuminated, individually-cut channel letters are permissible.

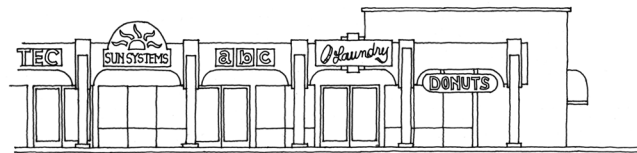


Wall sign painted directly on a building



APPROPRIATE

employ a consistent sign pattern



INAPPROPRIATE

inconsistent sign patterns create confusion

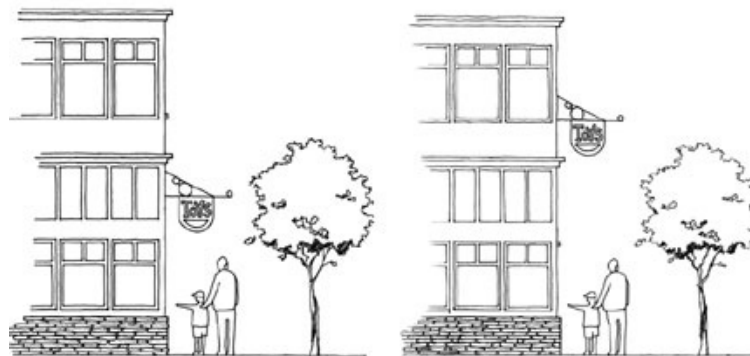
- ▣ New wall signs for individual businesses in a shopping center should be placed consistent with the location of signs for other businesses in the center. This will establish visual continuity among storefronts and create a unified appearance for the center.
- ▣ For new and remodeled shopping centers, a comprehensive sign program for all businesses in the center should be developed.

## 2.3 Projecting Signs

- ▣ The use of small, pedestrian-oriented signs is strongly encouraged. Projecting signs are especially appropriate in Downtown Imperial.
- ▣ Projecting signs should be used for ground floor uses only. On a multi-storied building, the sign should be suspended between the bottom of the second story windowsills and the top of the doors or windows of the first story. On a one-story building, the top of the sign should be in line with the lowest point of the roof.
- ▣ The scale of projecting signs should not detract from the architectural character of the building.



*Well-designed projecting signs*



***DO** use projecting signs that are oriented to the pedestrian*

***DON'T** use projecting signs not oriented to the pedestrian*

- ▣ Projecting signs should be hung at a 90-degree angle from the face of the building.
- ▣ It is recommended that the distance between projecting signs be at least 25 feet.
- ▣ Sign supports and brackets should be compatible with the design and scale of the sign and the architectural design of the building. Decorative iron and wood brackets are encouraged.
- ▣ Internal illumination of projecting signs is strongly discouraged.



## 2.4 Hanging Signs

- ▣ Where overhangs or covered walkways exist, pedestrian-oriented hanging signs are encouraged.
- ▣ Allow at least eight feet from the bottom of the sign to the sidewalk to avoid obstructing the public right-of-way.
- ▣ Hanging signs should be simple in design and not used to compete with any existing signage at the site, such as wall signs.



*Appropriate hanging sign*

## 2.5 Awning Signs

- ▣ The text of the sign should be located only on the valance portion of the awning.
- ▣ Letter color should be compatible with the awning and the building color scheme. Awning signs should be painted directly on the awning. The use of adhesive/press lettering is strongly discouraged.
- ▣ Backlit, internally illuminated awnings are strongly discouraged.



***Avoid** internally illuminated signs*



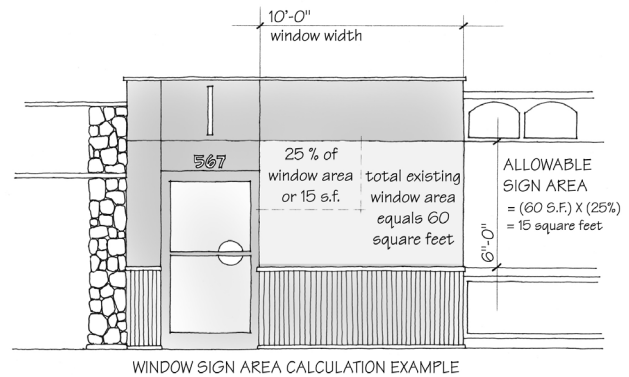
*Appropriate awning signs*

## 2.6 Window Signs

- ▣ Window signs (permanent or temporary) should not cover more than 25-percent of the area of each window.
- ▣ Window signs should be primarily individual letters placed on the interior surface of the window and intended to be viewed from outside. White and gold-leaf paint are the recommended colors. Glass-mounted graphic logos may also be applied.
- ▣ The text or sign copy of a window sign should be limited to the business name, and brief message identifying the product or service (e.g. “shoes” or “attorney”), or pertinent information (e.g. “reservations required”).



*Appropriate window signage*



## 2.7 Figurative Signs

- ▣ Signs, which advertise the occupant business through the use of graphic or crafted symbols, such as shoes, keys, glasses, or books, are encouraged.
- ▣ Figurative signs may be incorporated into any of the allowable sign types identified in this chapter.



*Example of a figurative sign*



## 2.8 Monument Signs

- ☐ Generally, monument signs should be avoided in Downtown Imperial. They are appropriate only where front yard setbacks exist (service stations). Small-scale monument signs may also be appropriate for single-family home conversions and bed and breakfast style uses.

- ☐ Monument signs may be internally illuminated, however, the sign copy should be the only portion of the sign face that is illuminated. The sign background or field should be opaque with a nongloss, nonreflective finish. Signs with individual back-lit letters, or stenciled panels with three-dimensional push-through graphics are encouraged.



*Monument signs may be appropriate for front yard setbacks.*

- ☐ The sign area and height of the sign should be in proportion to the site and surrounding buildings. Signs should not be overly large so as to be a dominant feature of the site.
- ☐ Monument signs should generally be placed perpendicular to the street and should not block sight lines at entry driveways and circulation aisles.
- ☐ Provide architectural elements on the sides and top to frame the sign pane(s). Use columns, pilaster, cornices, and similar details to provide design interest.



- ☐ Monument signs should incorporate landscaping at their base.



# D. RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 1. MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 1.1 Introduction

Multi-family developments tend to be large in scale and dominate their surroundings if not properly designed. Other common concerns regarding multi-family development include parking, circulation, site amenities, open space, and resident safety.

The purpose of this section is to provide design guidelines that address these particular issues as they relate to multi-family developments. The guidelines cover attached-type dwellings in general, including apartments, condominiums, and townhouses.

### 1.2 Site Planning

#### *Neighborhood Context*

- ▣ New multi-family residential development should be compatible with other development in the immediate area through complementary building arrangements, buffers, and avoidance of overwhelming building scale and visual obstructions.
- ▣ Developments should relate directly to the adjacent street, and present an attractive and interesting façade to passersby. Developments that ignore the street and create an isolated enclave are strongly discouraged.

#### *Building and Facilities Location*

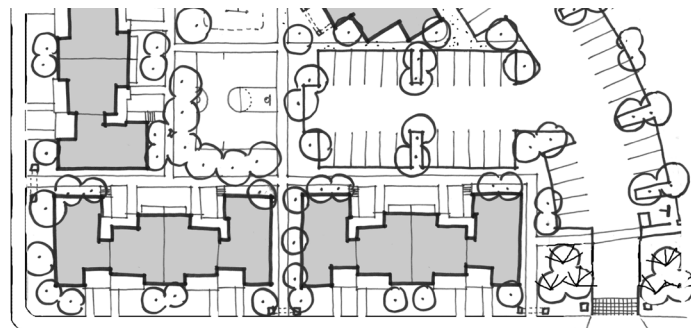
Appropriate building siting can reduce the perceived density of multi-family developments, maximize open space areas, and enhance neighborliness by creating community gathering spaces.

- ▣ The siting of buildings should consider the existing neighborhood context. Developments should generally be oriented parallel to the public street or to the development's internal streets, with some setback variation to provide visual interest.





- ▣ The clustering of multi-family units should be a consistent site planning element. Whenever possible, buildings should be configured around courtyards, gathering areas, and open spaces.
- ▣ Portions of the development that are not oriented to the street should be well integrated into the project's overall site design. As with the street-oriented area of the development, the same design considerations should be given to siting, appearance, circulation, landscaping, and safety issues.
- ▣ Buildings should be oriented to provide some privacy yet still relate to the street and the existing community. Doors should be visible from the street and windows should allow residents to have "eyes on the street" for natural surveillance.
- ▣ Pedestrian circulation should be considered when designing multi-family development, not only within the site, but to and from the site as well.



*Buildings sited adjacent to the public street*

- ▣ A series of connected open space areas of varying shape, appearance and usage are encouraged. Smaller areas may directly relate to a cluster of units, while the larger areas may serve several clusters as common open space.
- ▣ Private open space should be provided adjacent to the units it serves and should be immediately adjacent to the public right-of-way or common open space.



### 1.3 Architecture

Downtown Imperial is comprised with a range of architectural styles. The following guidelines focus on implementing a high quality residential environment that is compatible with the surrounding community. This section addresses the overall external appearance of the development, including building forms, details, and proportions.

#### *General Guidelines*

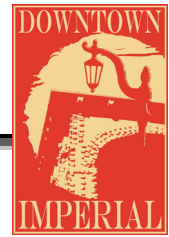
- ▣ Use of single-family residential design elements, such as pitched roofs, porches, and individual entries, are recommended to reduce perceived density, give identity to the development and its individual dwelling units, add visual interest, and be compatible with the neighborhood context.
- ▣ To create a unified appearance, all support buildings in the development, (i.e., laundry facilities, recreation buildings, carports, garages, and the management office) should be compatible in architectural design with the rest of the development.

#### *Architectural Features and Design*

- ▣ Buildings should incorporate smaller-scale architectural forms such as bays, recessed or projecting balconies, and dormers to visually reduce the height and scale of the building and emphasize the definition of individual units.
- ▣ Architectural elements such as bay windows, porches, projecting eaves, awnings, recessed windows, and similar elements that add visual interest and differentiate individual units are strongly encouraged.



*Porches and balconies are encouraged*



- ▣ Boxy and monotonous facades that lack human scale dimensions and have large expanses of flat wall planes should be avoided. Veneer materials should turn corners and avoid exposed edges.
- ▣ To provide visual interest and avoid an identical appearance, garage doors should incorporate architectural detailing, such as patterned garage doors or painted trim.
- ▣ In order to “scale down” facades that face incompatible uses, it may be desirable to set back portions of the upper floors of new multi-family buildings.
- ▣ Varied building heights are encouraged, both to provide visual interest and give the appearance of a collection of smaller structures. The development’s building height should create a transition from the heights of adjacent existing development, rather than form abrupt height changes.
- ▣ Roof pitches and materials should appear residential in character and should consider the prevailing roof types in the neighborhood, including flat roofs, hipped or gabled roofs.
- ▣ Rooflines should be broken up and varied within the overall horizontal plane. Combinations of roof heights that create variation and visual interest are encouraged.



*Façade articulation is important to avoid blank, monotonous walls*

*Materials and Color – See Sections 1.7 and 1.8*



### 1.4 Landscaping and Site Amenities

- ▣ Landscaping should complement existing landscape materials, location, and massing on adjacent developments.
- ▣ Use of landscaping is encouraged to define and accent specific areas such as building and parking lot entrances and the main walkways to community facilities.
- ▣ Plant materials should be used to define the edge between public and private space, buffer adjacent uses, when appropriate, and screen service areas.
- ▣ Landscape designs that emphasize water-efficient plants are encouraged. Water-intensive landscaping, such as grass, should be concentrated in areas of high visibility and use.
- ▣ Vines and climbing plants on buildings, trellises, perimeter walls, and fences are encouraged, both to provide an attractive appearance and to minimize graffiti.
- ▣ Landscape materials should be used to help screen trash enclosures and mechanical equipment so that they are not exposed to view from the street or major walkways within the development.
- ▣ Trees and shrubs should not be planted so close together that they create maintenance and or security problems at maturity.
- ▣ The design, selection and placement of all site furnishings (i.e., tables, benches, etc.) should be compatible with the overall site design and character of the development.
- ▣ Seating opportunities should be provided in both sunny and shaded areas. Seating in areas that offer opportunities for social interaction and informal surveillance, (i.e., a bench near the communal mailbox area or a bench near tot lot areas and laundry rooms) are strongly encouraged.



*Seating areas in a shaded location*



## Signs

- ▣ Signs contribute to the development's identity as a unique environment. Professionally designed, creative signs are strongly encouraged, especially for internal directions and building identification.
- ▣ Clear legible entry signs should be provided to identify the development. Internal circulation signs and visitor parking areas should also be clearly indicated. A directory that shows the location of buildings and individual dwelling units within the development is encouraged.
- ▣ Building numbers and individual unit numbers should be readily visible, in a consistent location, well lighted at night, and compatible with the overall design of the development.

## 1.5 Parking and Circulation

Parking and circulation should take into consideration the needs of pedestrians, children at play, parking lot appearance, and prevention of car theft or damage. The following guidelines are to aid in the development of safe and efficient circulation and parking arrangements.

- ▣ One large parking area where cars would dominate views and increase perceived density should be avoided. Parking areas should be divided into a series of small parking courts with convenient access that relates to adjacent dwelling units.
- ▣ Parking areas should be located in the development's interior and not along street frontages. Carports and tuck-under parking should not be visible from a public street.
- ▣ Carports, detached garages, and accessory structures should be designed as an integral part of the development's architecture. They should be similar in material, color, and detail to the main buildings of the development. Flat roofs should be avoided. Prefabricated metal carports should not be used.
- ▣ Parking courts should be well designed, with consideration given to landscaping, lighting, building massing, and pedestrian/vehicular circulation.
- ▣ Convenient pedestrian connections should be provided to adjoining residential developments, commercial projects, and other compatible land uses.



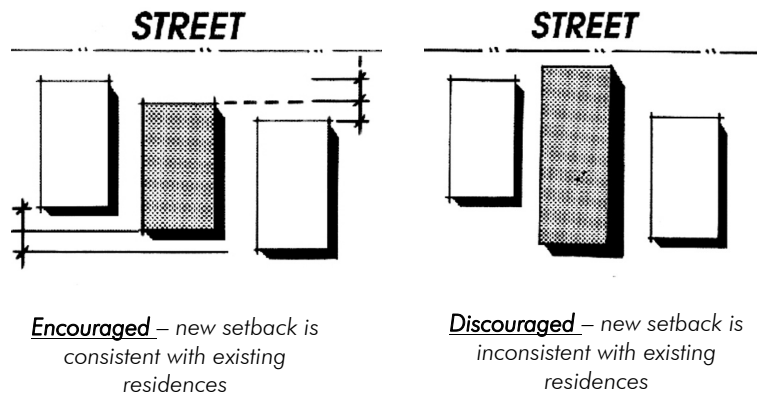
## 2. SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 2.1 Introduction

When new houses are developed adjacent to older single-family residences, the height and bulk of the infill houses should not have a negative impact on their surrounding neighbors by appearing out of scale and visually dominating. This section is intended to ensure that new infill development respect the existing pattern, scale, and character of existing neighborhood.

### 2.2 Site Planning

- ▣ Setbacks should be consistent with the prevailing setback of houses on the street; or be consistent with the average setback of the two immediately adjacent houses. In such cases, the new house may be averaged in a step pattern.
- ▣ New projects should be respectful of the existing open space pattern and should provide side yards that respect the existing pattern.
- ▣ Where residential properties are adjacent to commercial uses, landscaping should be used to screen and buffer these uses.
- ▣ Front doors should be oriented toward the sidewalk, when possible..





## 2.3 Architecture

- ▣ Builders should be familiar with the various architectural styles in the community and particularly with those in the immediate vicinity of their property. While it is not necessary, nor desirable, to achieve an exact replication of an existing style, infill development should be respectful and compatible with surrounding styles.
- ▣ Height and scale are important considerations because new infill houses are sometimes taller than one story and their height and bulk can impose on adjacent residences. The height of new houses should be considered within the context of their surroundings. Buildings with greater height should consider setbacks at the second story to reduce impacts on adjacent single story residences.
- ▣ All building elevations should be architecturally detailed. Elevations that do not directly face a street should not be ignored, nor should they receive only minimal architectural treatment.

## 2.4 Landscaping and Fencing

- ▣ Balance the landscape using mass, color, or form to create equal visual weight on either side of a center of interest. This can be accomplished by creating mirror images of shrubs on each side of a stairway or balancing a large tree on one side of the house with a grouping of smaller trees on the other side.
- ▣ Landscaping should be in scale and proportion with adjacent buildings and other landscaping elements and should be of appropriate size at maturity.



*Landscaping is strongly encouraged*



- ▣ Avoid a monotonous landscape by selecting plants in a variety of shapes, shades, and textures.
- ▣ Existing mature, healthy trees should be preserved and incorporated within the overall landscaping plan of the project whenever possible.
- ▣ Residential fences should be kept as low as possible while still performing their intended security, screening, or separation functions. Fence materials and colors should be consistent with the architectural theme of the home on the site. Open, wooden fencing is the preferred fencing material.
- ▣ Unadorned, unarticulated fence and wall materials, such as plain concrete block, poured-in-place concrete and slumpstone will look out of place in front yards. Solid fences should not be used in front yards, but may be located behind the front yard setback.
- ▣ Chain link fencing, barbed wire, or razor wire should not be used.

### 3. RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION, ADDITIONS, & ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

#### 3.1 Introduction

Rehabilitation efforts should be aimed at maintaining and protecting the original architectural features of a house. The following guidelines should be utilized whenever repairs or alterations are planned for the exterior facade of an existing residence, or when additions are proposed.

#### 3.2 Architectural Compatibility – Remodel or Rehabilitation

- ▣ When repairing or remodeling exterior wall surfaces, the original building materials should be retained where possible. Replacement materials should match the original materials as closely as possible. Do not use mismatched materials of different sizes, types, shapes, textures, or finishes.
- ▣ Whenever possible, the exterior building colors should reflect the basic color palette of the particular architectural style or period. Colors should also be compatible with and blend with surrounding buildings (i.e. colors should not, because of their intensity, chroma or distinctiveness, be the most dominant feature of a site).





- Great care should be taken to ensure that roofs are watertight and that, when replacement is necessary, new roofing materials are compatible with the original architectural style of the house. Patching roofs with materials or color that do not match the rest of the roof is not appropriate.



*Not appropriate*



*Appropriate*

- When window replacement is necessary, the new window should match the original as closely as possible. Blocking or filling window openings should be avoided.

- The size, shape and style of doors are an important feature of an architectural style and the original type should be retained where possible. When replacement is necessary, doors should be replaced to match the original design and materials, especially where such doors are visible from the street.

- Porches add visual interest and create welcoming passages to homes. The original design integrity of porches should not be compromised during rehabilitation. Attempts to modernize or change the appearance of a porch should be avoided.



*Good example of front porch detail*

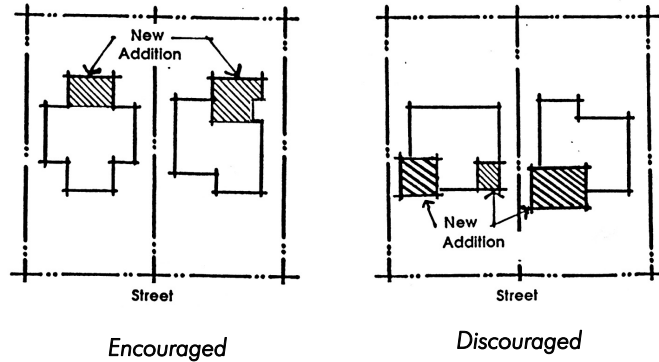
- All existing historic ornamentation and trim should be preserved in order to reinforce traditional character.

### 3.3 Additions and Accessory Buildings

It is not uncommon for homeowners to add new rooms to their house or to add accessory buildings in the form of workshops, garages, and second units. The following guidelines should be consulted when such changes are proposed.

## Site Planning

- ▣ Additions and accessory buildings should be placed to the side or rear of the property and should not obstruct the appearance of the home from the street.



- ▣ The placement of new garages should maintain the existing development pattern of the neighborhood. In many cases, this will require placing the garage to the rear of the lot.
- ▣ In situations where it is not appropriate to place the garage to the rear of the lot, the garage should be placed to diminish the visual impact of garage doors along the street frontage. This can be accomplished by offsetting the garage behind the front façade of the house, providing a side entry garage, or accessing the garage from the side street.

## Architectural Features

- ▣ The design of proposed additions or accessory buildings should complement the overall scale, massing, proportion, and detailing of the original structure.
- ▣ Roof style, pitch, and materials should match the original. Roof materials should also match as closely as possible in order to maintain the architectural style of the original house.
- ▣ The exterior appearance of additions and new accessory buildings should be compatible with the style, quality, dimension, texture, and color of materials on the main residence.



- ▣ A consistent rhythm of window placement, window style, and window size should complement the style of the house.
- ▣ Second story additions should follow similar two story examples of the particular style. Generally, second story additions should be set back from the front façade to better integrate into the original design.

## *Carports*

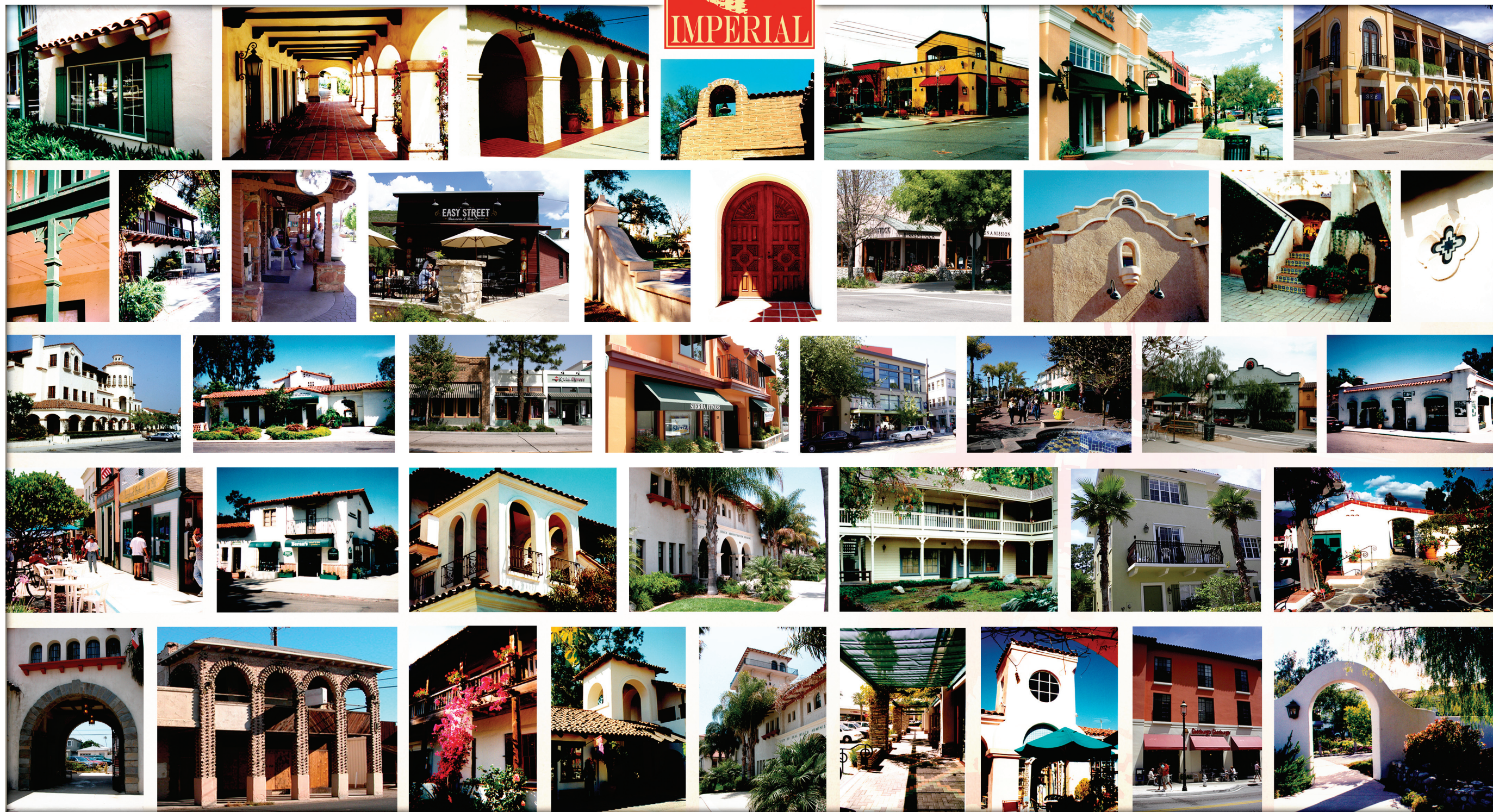
Generally, carports are discouraged in the Downtown Imperial neighborhood. However, when used, the following guidelines should be followed.

- ▣ Flat roofed carports are discouraged.
- ▣ Carports, whether attached or detached, should be placed to the side or rear half of a property and should not obstruct the appearance of the home from the street.
- ▣ Lamps and light fixtures under carports should be oriented to prevent glare.
- ▣ Screening of the open-sides of carports with fencing or attractive landscaping is strongly encouraged to minimize visual impact. Screening may also consist of a lockup storage facility at the rear of the carport.
- ▣ Whenever feasible, the roof style, pitch, materials, and colors of carports should be compatible with related primary structures.

# Architectural Styles

DOWNTOWN  
IMPERIAL

Exhibit III-1

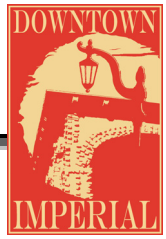


# Architectural Styles

DOWNTOWN  
IMPERIAL

Exhibit III-2





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## IV. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### A. INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapters create, articulate, and document the Vision for the future redevelopment and revitalization of Downtown Imperial into what is planned to be the civic, cultural and social center of the City, and to an extent, the Imperial Valley. This goal and the related objectives that have been identified to achieve it are appropriately ambitious, yet realistic. The supporting documents and plans are designed to educate, excite, and inspire action and investment.

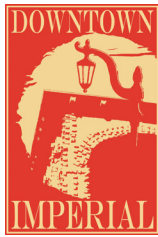
This chapter identifies actions that will achieve the vision. It is important to realize that the preparation and adoption of the Vision Plan and Design Guidelines, while essential to defining the goal and inspiring action, cannot be fully realized without a continual and steady program of specific steps.

The preparation and adoption of this plan is not the end of the process, but rather the first important step in what must be a continual process of efforts to improve the future of the Downtown Imperial. The success of this plan will be judged by the action taken to implement it by all those who have an interest in its success: residents, business and property owners, and City officials, agents, and employees. This chapter is designed to identify specific actions to help ensure the success of this Plan.

This chapter is organized around three principal components:

- Primary action steps and tools;
- Implementation matrix with specific action steps, timelines and responsible stakeholders organized around the elements of the Vision Plan; and,
- List and description of potential resources.

VISION WITHOUT  
ACTION IS A DREAM.  
ACTION WITHOUT  
VISION IS SIMPLY  
PASSING THE TIME.  
ACTION WITH VISION  
IS MAKING A  
POSITIVE DIFFERENCE.  
- JOEL BARKER



## B. PRIMARY ACTION STEPS & TOOLS

Overall, the primary action steps and tools for successful implementation of this Redevelopment Master Plan have been organized into the following basic groups.

- Policy and Regulatory
- Technical Assistance
- Communication and Community Building
- Strategic Partnerships
- Physical Improvements
- Long-Term Maintenance and Management
- Implement Priority Projects
- Document, Monitor And Demonstrate Progress

### 1. POLICY AND REGULATORY

One of the first actions for the City to consider is to formalize the Redevelopment Plan and Design Guidelines so that the goals and policies are consistently followed and adhered to over the life of the plan. The goal is to ensure long-term commitment to all the hard work that went into the planning process. The following actions should be considered:

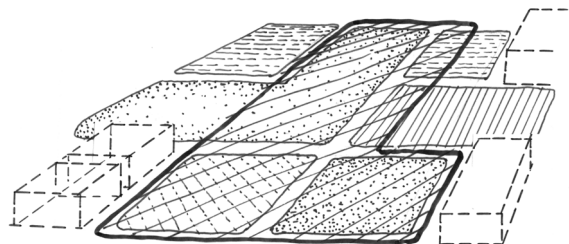
**Adopt the Redevelopment Plan and Design Guidelines** as official policy of the City.

**Update and Amend the Zoning Code.** Update the Zoning and Development code to incorporate the specific recommendations and design parameters into the entitlement process, requirements, and standards. This can also be accomplished in part by writing a new district or establishing an overlay zone. Examples of specific revisions and additions may include, at a minimum:

- Changes to the standards and requirements for setbacks, parking, architecture, landscaping, signage, etc.
- Establishment of mixed use as an allowed use;
- Establishment of an in-lieu parking fee;
- Development of an incentive program for desired improvements; and,
- Adoption of a formal design and architectural review process and standards;

#### **General Plan Amendment or Update.**

Amend the General Plan to reflect the recommendations, policies, and goals and objectives of the Redevelopment Plan and Design Guidelines (and to be consistent with the zoning). As the principal policy guide, amendment of the General Plan, along with formal adoption of the Redevelopment Plan, sends a very strong and clear message







of support and certainty to all stakeholders that development consistent with the plan will be approved. Further, these plans also give guidance and confidence to the development community, conditions that are particularly important for complex and challenging redevelopment, revitalization and mixed-use projects.

### **Parking Districts**

The creation of a parking district could improve coordination and efficiency of parking and ease regulatory requirements for individual property and business owners. Parking districts typically allow individual parking requirements for a particularly use or property to be deemed met where property is improved in accordance with overall plan, and improvements and maintenance (paving, striping, repairs, cleaning, waste removal, etc.) are managed by the “District Authority”.



### **Incentives for Infill & Rehabilitation**

Incentives for the creation or improvement of public/semi-public spaces such as courtyards, outdoor dining, patios, etc. are a great way to encourage downtown development and investment. Incentives may include the following:

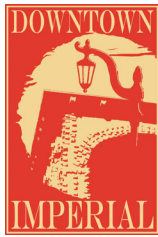
- ▣ Reduced parking requirements
- ▣ Increased floor area ratio (FAR)
- ▣ Increased density
- ▣ Financial assistance, grants, or loans
- ▣ Design assistance
- ▣ Maintenance
- ▣ Insurance

## **2. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Success of the plan will be largely dependent upon the willingness and ability of the City to become active partners with the development community. This can be done in a number of ways, primarily by ensuring that the necessary technical assistance and expertise is incorporated into the development process. Often, redevelopment, urban design and mixed-use development requires specialized skills in a number of arenas, including: urban design; architecture; legal; financial; and management.

These skills can be provided in a number ways including:

- ▣ Developing and providing to owners, applicants and developers a list of pre-approved consultants knowledgeable with and committed to implementing the City’s Redevelopment Plan and Design Guidelines.
- ▣ Directly funding or providing some or all of professional services for projects that meet established criteria. Amount of funding assistance could be based on a point system tied to redevelopment goals and objectives.



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

- Funding of professional design professionals as consultants to the City to review, work with and counsel applicants, owners and developers and their design professionals.
- Provide or facilitate small business assistance programs to allow existing businesses to expand and new locally-owned businesses to develop.

The City can also conduct necessary technical studies such as traffic and parking, infrastructure, drainage, marketing/economic studies, etc., to facilitate and expedite desired investment and development (such technical studies would be included in the preparation of a Specific Plan and EIR). In kind services through the use of City staff and departments can also add good value to a project.

### 3. COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY BUILDING

Key to implementation of the plan will be constant communication of the goals, objectives, and merits and benefits of the Plan and the status of progress on its implementation. This will require continued community and stakeholder outreach, and publication and distribution of the Plans. One objective of this communication will be to

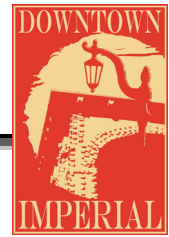


enhance and leverage the strength of the social, cultural, professional and institutional networks and organizations that constitute the community of the City of Imperial. To this extent, it will also be important to continue and strengthen the special programs, special events and functions that occur within the City, particularly Downtown. Creating public and semi-public spaces for official events and chance interaction between individuals is an essential component of this plan.

It should be a specific goal to ensure that the Redevelopment Master Plan and Design Guidelines, and any subsequent of amendments to the General Plan and adoption of a Specific Plan, will be regularly and continuously referenced, reviewed, and discussed as part of everyday activities. The Plan should be used daily by elected and appointed officials, employees and agents of the City as well as existing and prospective residents, business and property owners. It should be used as a guide for all capital investment plans and improvements, and all land use and environmental regulations and decisions.

Specific objectives to achieve this goal include the following:

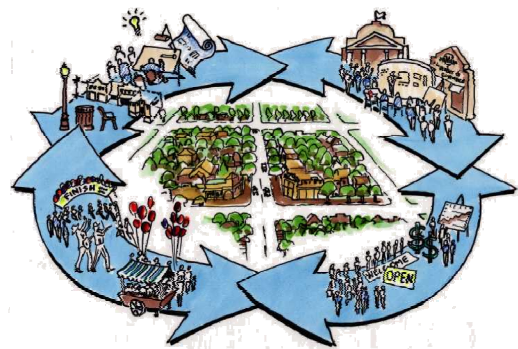
- Encourage and facilitate access, review and use of the plans.
- Ensure that the use of and reference to the plans are part of everyday operating procedure for all official City activities by elected and appointed officials, staff, consultants as well as residents and applicants and developers.

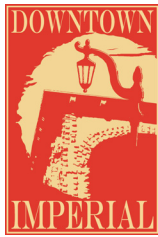


The following implementation strategies should follow completion and adoption of the plan:

- Distribute copies of the plans to all board and committee members and staff of the City.
- Copies of the entire plan should be made available on the City web site with the City Code.
- Copies of the plans should be made part of the application package for all applicants and part of a welcome package for new residents.
- Copies of the Plan documents and large-scale presentation maps should be kept in the boardrooms/ chambers and available at meetings for easy reference.
- Regular reference to the objectives and recommendations of the Plans should be required in all memos, reports, studies and resolutions affecting capital and planning decisions.
- The City should require frequent regularly scheduled review of the Plans (annual/continual) for all Board members and elected officials, including staff and consultants.
- The City should require regularly scheduled reviews of the Implementation Plan and Matrix and an annual or more frequent report on the status of implementation projects and progress. The review/report can/should be made part of a report to the residents to show progress and to reinforce the public's interest and awareness of the role and importance of the Plans.
- Consideration should be given to establishment of special implementation committees (by interest and topic), perhaps with an oversight committee.
- Consideration should be given to holding special public outreach and meetings on topics and issues of concern.

Overall, all of the above actions and tools are intended to keep the Plan alive. It should be thought of as a living, breathing document that requires constant and regular care and attention to ensure it survives and thrives.

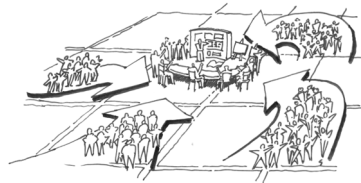




## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

### 4. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Many components of the Downtown Imperial Master Plan will require support from public agencies, most notably Caltrans. The City should work to familiarize and engage these potential partners with the Plan and its implementation strategies. Every effort should be made to ensure that agencies and legislators become familiar with and support the Downtown Master Plan soon after the City approvals. Regular communication should be established with Caltrans, the Imperial Irrigation District and other public agencies to ensure ultimate implementation of the Plan.



Additionally, there are numerous different individuals who own key properties Downtown. The City should initiate contact with these property owners and actively engage them in the implementation of the Master Plan through public-private partnerships, incentives, etc. Forging strategic partnerships with these property owners will be essential to making the vision for Downtown a reality.

### 5. PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

The majority of the Plan is oriented toward physical improvements that will give shape and form to an attractive environment that supports and encourages the goals of a revitalized Downtown. Outlined in the Implementation Matrix are many actions that support the implementation of the physical plan. In general, they can be summarized as follows:

- ▣ Design it
- ▣ Approve it
- ▣ Fund it
- ▣ Build it
- ▣ Enhance it
- ▣ Repair it
- ▣ Replace it
- ▣ Maintain it

TALK DOESN'T  
COOK RICE.

- CHINESE PROVERB

A rough order of magnitude cost estimate for the public improvements identified for Downtown Imperial is provided in Appendix D.

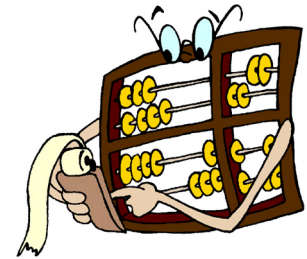
### 6. LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Responsibilities of long-term maintenance of enhancements and downtown management should be addressed. Although pursuit of grants, Redevelopment Agency support, and an involved community will assist in this endeavor, it is important to



explore more formalized mechanisms as well. The following options should be considered and further investigated.

**Establish a Downtown Main Street Program.** As described in Chapter II, a Main Street Program may be the best way to accomplish and sustain the goals and long-term enhancements identified in this Plan. The Main Street program could be responsible for overall downtown management, as well as fundraising activities. Local Main Street organizations have great success rate because of the program's unique development of public-private partnerships and its Four-Point Approach (organization, promotion, economic restructuring, and design) which have proven successful in communities ranging in size from 250 to over 1 million people. The National Main Street Center has numerous tools to assist communities in setting up a main street program, including "how to" handbooks and "to do" lists for boards and volunteer committees.



**Establish a Business Improvement District (BID).** A business improvement district (which could be established in conjunction with a main street program) would provide a steady income that could be used for project implementation and regular, ongoing maintenance. BIDs are self-taxing business districts in which a majority of business and property owners agree to pay for capital improvements, maintenance, marketing, parking, and other items.

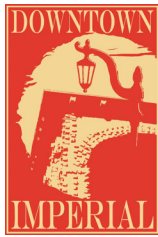
## 7. TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

To fully implement the Vision Plan a traffic analysis for Imperial Avenue and Barioni Boulevard is recommended. Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes should be collected for a one-week period (Sunday through Saturday) at a minimum of 3 locations. This data will be used to assess the available capacity for the existing cross-section and the future cross-section of the road.

Additionally, an Intersection Operational Analysis and Queue Analysis are also recommended. Using Synchro (traffic analysis modeling tool) to illustrate the changes reflected in the Vision Plan, an analysis of the future traffic volumes and queue lengths can be generated. It is recommended that the alternative on-street parking alternatives be modeled to evaluate the traffic operation for each roadway cross-section. These tools will play an important role in determining if the Vision Plan is feasible from a traffic standpoint.

## 8. IMPLEMENT PRIORITY PROJECTS FIRST

It is strongly recommended that the City initiate work on both priority and small-scale improvement projects immediately. Completing highly visible projects as early as



# DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

possible can be used as a means of rewarding the planning efforts and maintaining the strong momentum generated to date. It will be important to plan a succession of similar projects to follow. This process will also develop its own momentum and help ensure the on-going discipline that is necessary. The following key projects have been identified as initial projects on which to potentially focus. Further evaluation of available funding and a heightened exploration of City priorities may influence this preliminary priority list.

## 1. Create New Development Standards and Parking Policies

As noted earlier in this chapter, it is essential that Imperial's development standards and parking policies be carefully reviewed, revised, and updated to effectively implement the goals of the Master Plan.

## 2. Implement a Demonstration Pilot Project

One early strategy to ensure the right streetscape enhancements are incorporated in Downtown Imperial and get community buy in for the project is the demonstration pilot project. To showcase the streetscape furniture (and building façade enhancements if possible), the City can work with streetscape furniture manufacturers and property owners to improve one segment of a block as a model. Once the pilot area has been enhanced, it may encourage other property owners and tenants to make enhancements to their buildings as well. The demonstration project is also a good way for the community to sample landscaping, paving materials, and street furniture before implementing the designs throughout the community.



## 3. Install Streetscape Improvements

The installation of streetscape improvements, including gateways, on Barioni Boulevard and Imperial Avenue is a fundamental step in the revitalization process. Implementation of these improvements can occur on a block-by-block basis coinciding with private investment and development or be installed on a priority basis as determined by available funding.

- Determine appropriate street section (diagonal, parallel, or diagonal/parallel parking)
- Develop construction and landscaping plans
- Fund construction plans, bid (if necessary) and construct

## 4. Assist with Façade Improvements

One of the first steps to revitalization is updating and improving the current building supply. It is recommended that the City adopt and implement a proactive facade and



signage improvement program for downtown. The program can offer façade and rehabilitation incentives to property and business owners, including:

- Low-interest loans
- Matching grants
- Design assistance (recommendations and concepts by architecture, urban design, and/or planning professional)
- List of pre-approved sign and design professionals.

## 5. Highway 86 Improvements

Improving the appearance of Highway 86 was identified as a key priority. The Master Plan assumes that Highway 86 right-of-way will be relinquished by Caltrans (facilitating the full extent of all improvements), however, the median and shoulder landscaping, gateway signage, and enhanced crosswalks should be pursued in the short-term.

- Meetings with Caltrans to review and refine concepts, discuss maintenance, and determine timing
- Identify funding sources and maintenance plans
- Construction plans and bids

### Improving the Image of Imperial & Downtown from Highway 86

Small-scale improvements along the Caltrans right-of-way can also enhance the image of Imperial. Consider the following:

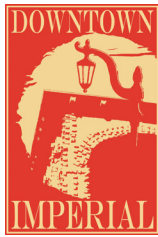
- Improve existing fencing and landscaping
  - Determine private ownership
  - Obtain owner permission and participation
  - Develop and construct landscape and interim improvement plan
- Paint, clean and repair existing dilapidated buildings
  - Contact and alert owners and tenants of clean up program
  - Seek participation (funding, volunteer and paid labor) to clean up
  - Promote Downtown Spring and Fall Clean up Days
  - City to provide dumpsters and carting, refuse removal, and tools

## 6. Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse of Key Downtown Properties

It is strongly encouraged that the City play an active role in the redevelopment of key sites within the Downtown (vacant parcels and buildings, structures with historic significance, prominent sites). The City should work closely with property owners and developers to redevelop these sites in a manner that is consistent with the vision for Downtown Imperial.

## 7. Initiate Plans for Civic Area at Worthington Building Site

To initiate plans for a potential new civic center, including a major public plaza, at the Worthington Building Site, it is recommended that funding and other implementation details be further investigated further to determine the breadth of the



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

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project. A potential first step would be for the City hire an architect to develop concept plans for the site that build on ideas expressed in the master plan. A community workshop (charrette) could be an excellent way to maintain community involvement and ownership of the project.

### 8. Focus on Downtown Festivals and Special Events

The City should continue to coordinate special events and promotional efforts that will showcase the improvements in Downtown Imperial. The City should work with the Chamber of Commerce, local business owners, the Imperial Library, and other local organizations to sponsor and promote more festivals and events.

### 9. DOCUMENT, MONITOR AND DEMONSTRATE PROGRESS

A key component of any successful significant long-term or on-going project such as the redevelopment and revitalization of the Downtown, and its many individual programs, is making sure that a process is established to ensure constant and continual progress. It is important that each improvement program be documented and monitored so that decisions can be made based on objective data. This does not need to be excessively costly or difficult as long as it is budgeted for and planned from the inception (e.g. before and after photos; existing sales tax and sales tax revenue in five years, etc.). To be useful the collected data must be used. One of the key uses is to regularly demonstrate progress, develop and sustain interest and support, and maintain positive momentum.

## C. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The following section provides a matrix of specific steps and actions that should be undertaken within the next several years to implement the projects identified in the Downtown Redevelopment Master Plan. The matrix includes the following components:

- **Implementation steps** corresponding to the Downtown Vision articulated in Chapter II
- Recommended **timeframes** for implementation
  - Short-term (0 to 1 year)
  - Mid-term (2 to 5 years)
  - Long-term (6 to 10 years)
- **Leaders and team members** to carry out the implementation steps
- Cross-references for potential funding or financing **resources** (See Section D)





Project/Program/Action Step	Timeline	Leaders & Team Members	Potential Resources
<b>I. URBAN DESIGN &amp; STREETScape</b>			
<b>ENCOURAGE DIVERSE AND HIGH QUALITY ARCHIECTURE</b>			
Adopt & Implement Design Guidelines	ST	City	L
<b>IMPROVE HIGHWAY 86</b>			
Implement Small-Scale Improvements	ST	City, Property owners	F, L
Initiate coordination effort with Caltrans	ST	City, Caltrans	L
Landscaped Median and Shoulder	MT-LT	City, Caltrans	F, L
Establish Multi-Use Trail and Landscaping	LT	City, Caltrans	F, L
Install Gateway Features	ST	City, Caltrans	L
Crosswalk Enhancements	MT-LT	City, Caltrans	F, L
<b>IMPLEMENT UNIQUE STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS</b>			
Implement Demonstration Pilot Project	ST	City, Property owners	F, L
Implement Streetscape Improvements on Imperial Ave & Barioni Blvd	ST	City	F, L
Implement Enhanced Transit Stops on Imperial Avenue	ST	City, transit authority	F, L
Implement Residential Street Improvements	LT	City	F, L
Implement Alley and Paseo Improvements	ST	City, Property owners	L
<b>ESTABLISH UNIQUE GATEWAYS &amp; WAYFINDING PROGRAM</b>			
Implement Wayfinding Signage System within Downtown	ST-MT	City	L
Develop a Streetlight Banner Program	ST	City, businesses	L
<b>CREATE PEDESTRIAN PLAZAS AND PASEOS</b>			
Implement Civic Center Plaza	MT-LT	City	L, P
H Street "Multi-Use" Street Improvements	ST-MT	City	L, P
Encourage and Incentivize Downtown Plazas and Paseos	ST	City, Property owners	L



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

Project/Program/Action Step	Timeline	Leaders & Team Members	Potential Resources
<b>II. CIRCULATION &amp; PARKING</b>			
<b>IMPROVE ACCESS AT HIGHWAY 86</b>			
Install Second Street Stoplight	MT	City, Caltrans	F, L
Limit Driveway Cuts	MT	City	L
Restrict Access to J Street	MT	City	F, L
<b>INSTITUTE TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES</b>			
Enhance Crosswalks	ST	City, Caltrans	
Implement Bulb-outs and Mid-block Crosswalks	ST	City	F, L
<b>ENCOURAGE A "PARK ONCE" MENTALITY</b>			
Develop Centralized Public Parking	ST-MT	City	L
Increase On-Street Parking	ST	City	F, L
Promote Shared Parking	ST	City, Property owners	L
Enhance Existing Parking Lots	ST	City, Property owners	L
Revise Parking Policy	ST	City	L
Develop Consistent Parking Signage	MT	City, Property owners	L
<b>III. LAND USE, REDEVELOPMENT &amp; INFILL</b>			
Develop a Civic Center & Downtown Heart	MT-LT	City, volunteers	F, L, S
Allow Mixed Use Throughout Downtown	ST	City	L
Facilitate Infill of Vacant Lots with Mixed Use	ST-LT	City, Property owners	L, S
Facilitate Redevelopment of Underutilized Sites	ST-LT	City, Property owner	F, L
Provide Façade Renovation & Rehabilitation Assistance	ST	City	F, L
Conduct an Infrastructure Analysis and Implement Improvements	ST	City	F, S, L



Project/Program/Action Step	Timeline	Leaders & Team Members	Potential Resources
<b>IV. CULTURAL &amp; HISTORIC CELEBRATION</b>			
<b>TELL THE STORY OF DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL</b>			
Develop a Public Art Program in Downtown	MT	City, volunteers	L, P
Develop an Interpretive Plaque Program	MT-LT	City, volunteers	L, P
Organize Downtown Walking Tours	MT-LT	City, volunteers	L, P
<b>PRESERVATION OF DOWNTOWN TREASURES</b>			
"Ice House"	ST	City, Property owner	F, L, S, P
"Brock House"	MT	City, Property owner	F, L, S, P
Veterans Memorial Hall	ST	City, County	F, L, S, P
Post Office Interior Woodwork	MT	Property owner	F, L, S, P
<b>PRESERVE CHARACTER OF SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD</b>			
Adopt & Implement Design Guidelines	ST	City	L
<b>V. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>			
<b>ORGANIZE FOR A STRONG FUTURE</b>			
Establish a Main Street Program or Management Program	ST	City, Businesses, volunteers	L
<b>FOCUS ON SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES</b>			
Increase the Number of Festivals in Downtown	ST	City, Businesses, volunteers	L
<b>UNDERSTAND THE MARKET</b>			
Create a List of Desired Business Types for Downtown	ST	City, Chamber	L
Conduct/Update Market Study	ST	City, Chamber	L



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

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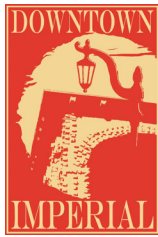
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## D. POTENTIAL FUNDING RESOURCES

This section provides a list of potential funding resources in five main categories: Local/Regional (L), State (S), Federal (F), and Private/Non-Profit (P).

Table IV-1 Potential Financing Mechanisms
<b>FEDERAL (F)</b>
<p><b>Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA)</b> The Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) is a potential source of grant money for the Downtown Master Plan. Funds from the EDA can be used to finance construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure and facilities that are necessary to achieve long-term growth and dynamic local economies. Grants to communities for site preparation and construction of water and sewer facilities, access roads, etc.</p>
<p><b>Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)</b> Provides partial funding for public infrastructure to support industrial and business expansion. Also downtown revitalization projects, low-income housing, physical infrastructure, low-income jobs, and reduction of blight. Projects must benefit low and moderate income households.</p>
<p><b>U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Transportation &amp; Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP)</b> Comprehensive initiative of research and grants to investigate the relationships between transportation and community and system preservation and private sector-based initiatives. States, local governments, and metropolitan planning organizations are eligible for these discretionary grants. Grants to plan and implement strategies that improve the efficiency of the transportation system; reduce environmental impacts of transportation; reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure investments; ensure efficient access to jobs, services, and centers of trade; and examine private sector development patterns and investments that support these goals.</p>
<p><b>Federal Highway Administration Department of Transportation (DOT)</b> Provides funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses.</p>
<p><b>Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (H.R. 2400)</b> TEA-21 gives local governments unprecedented flexibility in developing a mix of highway corridor enhancements, with funds for such projects as public transit, bikeways, highway enhancements, recreation, historic preservation, scenic byways, and other alternatives to address transportation and community needs. Contact source for funding amounts. States and localities are permitted to use federal dollars (provided primarily from the gas tax) for more flexibly to meet their transportation needs. More comprehensive planning, taking into account such factors as desired land use patterns and environmental effects, is required as a prerequisite to federal funding.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Program Grants</b> Federal grants for various purposes including State and local program research, demonstrations, development, and implementation of various environmental based programs including water pollution, conservation, solid waste disposal, etc.</p>



## DOWNTOWN IMPERIAL REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

### **EPA - Clean Water Revolving Fund**

Low interest-loan program established by the Federal Clean Water Act. Loans for projects that address point and nonpoint sources of water pollution

### **FTA Metropolitan Planning Program**

Operated by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), this program provides financial assistance, through the states, to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to support the costs of preparing long-range transportation plans required as a condition of obtaining Federal Capital Program and Urbanized Area Formula Program grants for transit projects. Funds can be used for technical studies relating to management, operations, capital requirements, innovative financing opportunities, and economic feasibility; evaluation of previously assisted projects; and other similar or related activities preliminary to and in preparation for the construction, acquisition or improved operation of transportation systems, facilities and equipment including the planning for "livability" features such as improved pedestrian and bicycle access to the station and shops and community services in the station area, incorporating arts and artistic design in stations and surrounding areas, and other improvements that enhance the usability and community-friendliness of the transit system environment. Up to a maximum of 20 percent of the preliminary engineering and design costs for a transportation facility.

## STATE (S)

### **Infrastructure State Revolving Fund Program of the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (CIEDP)**

This is a loan program that provides low-cost financing to public agencies for a variety of infrastructure programs, including: streets, bridges, drainage, water supply, flood control, environmental mitigation measures, sewage collection and treatment, solid waste collection and disposal, water treatment and distribution, educational facilities and parks and recreational facilities. Funding assistance ranges from \$250,000 to \$10,000,000. The application process is complicated and slow. There must be a dedicated source for debt service of the loan. Tax increment flowing from redevelopment projects is often favored as a funding source for retiring this debt because it flows for a long time and is steady. The term of the loan can be as long twenty years.

### **Building Equity and Growth in Neighborhoods Program (BEGIN)**

Reduce local regulatory barriers to affordable ownership housing, and provide downpayment assistance loans to qualifying first-time low- and moderate-income buyers of homes in BEGIN projects. Eligible activities include second mortgage loans for downpayment assistance to low- or moderate-income first-time homebuyers. Eligible homes must be newly constructed in projects facilitated by local regulatory incentives or barrier reductions, and may include manufactured homes

### **CalHome Program**

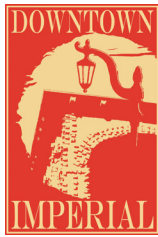
Enable low and very-low income households to become or remain homeowners. Grants eligible to local public agencies and nonprofit developers to assist individual households through deferred-payment loans. Direct, forgivable loans to assist development projects involving multiple ownership units, including single-family subdivisions.

### **Code Enforcement Grant Program (CEGP)**

Fund capital expenditure costs of existing or proposed local building code enforcement programs. Grants for three-year local programs. There is no formal match requirement, but grants must



<p>supplement existing funding for code enforcement that covers soft costs and staffing. Maximum grant amount to a single recipient was \$300,000. Minimum grant was \$30,000. Eligible activities include purchase of capital assets that will be dedicated to local housing code enforcement. These may include tangible physical property with an expected useful life of 15 years or more, major maintenance of a capital asset, and equipment with an expected useful life of two years or more, such as vehicles, computers and inspection equipment.</p>
<p><b>Multifamily Housing Program (MHP)</b>                  Assist the new construction, rehabilitation and preservation of permanent and transitional rental housing for lower income households. Eligible activities include New construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition and rehabilitation of permanent or transitional rental housing, and the conversion of nonresidential structures to rental housing. Projects are not eligible if construction has commenced as of the application date, or if they are receiving 9% federal low income housing tax credits. MHP funds will be provided for post-construction permanent financing only. Eligible costs include the cost of child care, after-school care and social service facilities integrally linked to the assisted housing units; real property acquisition; refinancing to retain affordable rents; necessary onsite and offsite improvements; reasonable fees and consulting costs; and capitalized reserves.</p>
<p><b>Predevelopment Loan Program (PDLP)</b>                  Provide predevelopment capital to finance the start of low income housing projects. Eligible activities include predevelopment costs of projects to construct, rehabilitate, convert or preserve assisted housing, including manufactured housing and mobilehome parks. Eligible costs include, but are not limited to, site control, site acquisition for future low-income housing development, engineering studies, architectural plans, application fees, legal services, permits, bonding and site preparation. Priority will be given to developments which are rural, located in the public transit corridors, or which preserve and acquire existing government-assisted rental housing at risk of conversion to market rents.</p>
<p><b>Workforce Housing Reward Program</b>                  Provides financial incentives to cities and counties that issue building permits for new housing affordable to very low or low-income households. Eligible activities include construction or acquisition of capital assets such as traffic improvements, neighborhood parks, bike paths, libraries, school facilities, play areas, community centers, police or fire stations.</p>
<p><b>State Waters Resources Control Board Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Control</b>                  Established by the federal Clean Water Act §319, these grants are for the implementation of State nonpoint source pollution control programs. Each State passes through a portion of these funds to other entities for implementing specific NPS management practices. State Water Quality agencies are the lead agencies for these grant programs.</p>
<p><b>California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (CIEDB)</b>                  The CIEDB was created in 1994 to promote economic revitalization, enable future development, and encourage a healthy climate for jobs in California. The CIEDB has broad authority to issue tax-exempt and taxable revenue bonds, provide financing to public agencies, provide credit enhancements, acquire or lease facilities, and leverage State and Federal funds. The Infrastructure Bank's current programs include the Infrastructure State Revolving Fund (ISRF) Program and the Conduit Revenue Bond Program.</p>
<p><b>California Pollution Control Financing Authority Sustainable Communities Loan and Grant Program</b>                  The SCGL program has been designed to be flexible and encourage creativity. Funding will be awarded to communities that wish to implement policies, programs and projects using sustainable development principles. All Projects must encompass sustainable development principles to be eligible for funding. Examples of eligible Projects include: 1) Specific plans, or portions of specific</p>



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plans that direct the nature of development and revitalization within the boundaries of a required general plan consistent with sustainable development principles. 2) Alternative transportation studies, urban design studies, finance plans, redevelopment plans and engineering studies that facilitate sustainable development. 3) Projects such as a community center, park enhancements, or infrastructure improvements that are key elements of a comprehensive community or neighborhood sustainable development plan. 4) Funding for local communities to hire individuals at various stages of planning depending on the needs of the community. An example would be hiring a new staff member or consultant to assist an individual community with the design and/or implementation of a particular plan for development or revitalization using sustainable development principles. 5) Funding for communities to hire technical experts to identify, assess, and complete applications for state, federal and private economic assistance programs that fund sustainable development and sound environmental policies and programs.

### **Sustainable Building Grants**

This grant is available from the California Integrated Waste Management Board to provide local, public funding for projects that advance the use of green building design and construction practices. There are no matching requirements and the amount available has ranged from \$50,000 to \$100,000. It is recommended that these grants be studied closely for their potential to undertake smaller building and retrofitting projects.

### **Renewable Energy Loan Guarantee Program**

This is a loan guarantee program provided by the California Trade and Commerce Agency. The loan guarantees are available to businesses that need financial assistance to purchase and install renewable energy systems.

### **Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund**

Low-interest loan program established by the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Amendments. U.S. EPA provides funds to each State to establishing ongoing loan programs. The State administers the State Revolving Fund (SRF) and makes loans to drinking water systems for projects which will ensure that drinking water remains safe and affordable. States may also fund wellhead and source water protection projects.

### **Solid Waste Assistance Funds**

Grants to fund program development or pilot projects which promote waste reduction, recycled-content products, markets for recycled materials, or assist in the development of solid waste management plans and the clean-up of open dumps. Incorporate EPA initiatives and priorities with source reduction, product stewardship, reuse, recycling, composting, and/or recycled product procurement projects. Stimulate market for difficult-to-recycle materials such as tires, construction/demolition debris, green waste and electronics.

### **Water Quality 104(b)(3) Grants**

Grants to support critical National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) water quality related projects.

### **Water Quality Assessment & Planning**

Grants established by the federal Clean Water Act §205/§604, these funds will support water quality assessment and planning projects which will lead to implementable actions that promote healthy aquatic ecosystems. Projects which foster local watershed management efforts that protect and enhance aquatic environmental conditions. Projects which result in Total Maximum Daily Loads calculations for impaired waters on State Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list.





**LOCAL AND REGIONAL (L)**

**General Fund**

The City’s General Fund is used to support ongoing City operations and services, including general government operations, development services, public safety and community services. Primary revenue sources for the General Fund include property taxes, sales taxes and intergovernmental revenues. It is not uncommon for cities that are seeking to improve their community to commit a certain amount of the General Fund to the effort over a period of years. Improvements and ongoing projects or programs should have general community-wide benefits.

**Redevelopment Agency (RDA) Tax Increment**

Downtown is located within the boundaries of the City’s Redevelopment Area. The funds could be used for land banking, public capital improvements or other projects or purposes that would support implementation of the Plan. The future for the generation of new tax increment in the redevelopment project area is also a possibility.

**Redevelopment Agency (RDA) Housing Set Aside**

State redevelopment law requires that the redevelopment agency set aside 20 percent of any property tax increment revenues for low- and moderate-income housing needs. Currently, the RDA budget is primarily allocated for the funding of affordable housing projects.

**General Obligation Bonds (G.O. Bonds)**

General Obligation bonds may be used to acquire, construct and improve public capital facilities and real property. However, they may not be used to finance equipment purchases, or pay for operations and maintenance. G.O. Bonds must be approved by two-thirds of the voters throughout the Issuer’s jurisdiction in advance of their issuance and typically require the issuing jurisdiction to levy a uniform ad valorem (property value) property tax on all taxable properties to repay the annual debt service.

**Revenue Bonds**

Debt undertaken wherein payback is tied to specific revenue streams. This form of debt does not require a public vote. Common uses for funds include housing and social services.

**Development Incentive Programs**

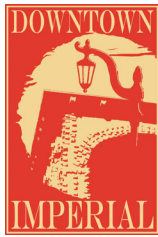
Incentives (as identified in Chapter 6) encourage the private sector to provide the desired public improvement.

**Business Improvement District (BID)**

Business Improvement Areas (BIA) Self-taxing business districts. BIAs include Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) and other such financial districts. Business and property owners pay for capital improvements, maintenance, marketing, parking, and other items as jointly agreed to through systematic, periodic self-assessment.

Districts can undertake a wide variety of programs, including but not limited to the following:

- ◆ Fountains, benches and trash receptacles and integrated signing
- ◆ Street lighting
- ◆ Security services that are supplemental to those normally provided by the municipality.



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- ◆ Special cleaning operations, graffiti removal, and waste management
- ◆ Decorations and public art
- ◆ Promotions of public events benefiting area
- ◆ Furnishing music to any public place in the area
- ◆ Promotion of tourism within the area (only businesses benefiting from tourist visits can be assessed for this type of benefit)
- ◆ Any other activities which benefit businesses located in the area

### **Landscape and Lighting Maintenance District (LMDs)**

The Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972 enables assessments to be imposed in order to finance the maintenance and servicing of landscaping, street lighting facilities, ornamental structures and park and recreational improvements.

### **Special Benefit Assessments**

Special Benefit Assessment Districts (AD) are formed for the purpose of financing specific improvements for the benefit of a specific area by levying an annual assessment on all property owners in the district. Each parcel of property within an AD is assessed a portion of the costs of the public improvements to be financed by the AD, based on the proportion of benefit received by that parcel. The amount of the assessment is strictly limited to an amount that recovers the cost of the "special benefit" provided to the property. Traditionally, improvements to be financed using an AD include, but are not limited to, streets and roads, water, sewer, flood control facilities, utility lines and landscaping. A detailed report prepared by a qualified engineer is required and must demonstrate that the assessment amount is of special benefit to the parcel upon which the assessment is levied. Prior to creating an assessment district, the City, county or special district must have a public hearing and receive approval from a majority of the affected property owners casting a ballot. Ballots are weighted according to the proportional financial obligation of the affected property. There are many assessment acts that govern the formation of assessment districts, such as the Improvement Act of 1911, Municipal Improvement Act of 1913, Improvement Bond Act of 1915 and the Benefit Assessment Act of 1982, as well as other specific facility improvement acts.

### **Development Impact Fees**

Dedications of land and impact fees are exactions which lessen the impacts of new development resulting from increased population or demand on services.

### **In-Lieu Parking Fee**

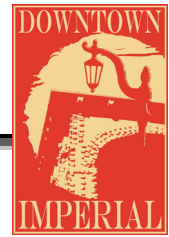
The use of a parking in-lieu fee to construct and fund common parking facilities serving the commercial businesses has been used successfully in other downtown revitalizations. Potential funding sources range from in-lieu fees for spaces to parking revenues from monthly parking and short-term parking fees. City will need secure, accessible, well-signed and reasonably priced off-street parking, in addition to on-street parking, as the Plan is realized and Downtown reaches its full potential.

### **Facade Improvement Program**

The City of Imperial's façade improvement loan program provides monetary assistance to property and business owners to upgrade and enhance their building facades.

### **Public Art Fee**

A public art fee provides a financing mechanism for the inclusion of public art in both private and public Downtown projects.



## PRIVATE/NON-PROFIT (P)

### **The National Endowment for the Arts Challenge America Leadership Initiative**

The National Endowment for the Arts will make a limited number of grants for design competitions to stimulate excellence in design in the public realm. The goal is to invest in projects that promote and use design to make communities across the nation more livable. This initiative is intended to bring institutions from across the country together with the best design talent, to raise the expectations and aspirations for public work, and to increase popular awareness of the importance of design in daily life. The Endowment will consider competitions for projects in areas of design that include: architecture, urban planning, industrial design, and/or landscape architecture. Projects may include, but are not limited to, competitions for schools, museums, performing arts spaces, municipal buildings, parks, public housing, emergency service vehicles, innovative building technologies, or transportation facilities. Funding is not for construction.

### **The Gunk Foundation Grants for Public Arts Projects**

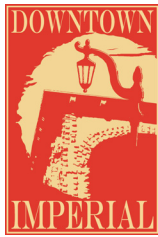
The Gunk Foundation aims to support the production of non-traditional public art projects related to public space. Support for artwork displayed in spaces of public transportation, city streets, or work places is given. Non-traditional, thought-provoking public work that is site specific. Grants are provided for works of public art that are non-traditional and have a meaningful connection to the space they are in. The committee will not fund art education, art festivals, art therapy, mural projects, community gardens, restoration projects, architectural design projects, traditional commemorative sculpture/painting, or traditional theater projects.

### **Other Private Donations**

Private donations for a variety of different types of projects are generally available from foundations, institutions and corporations that have major interests in these areas.

### **Donor Programs**

Some of the proposed improvements may lend themselves to a public campaign for donor gifts. Donor programs have been used very successfully in many cities in the United States for providing funds for streetscape and community design elements. Such programs can be tailored to solicit contributions from individuals, corporations, local businesses and community and business associations. Many improvements could be funded by donor gifts for items such as: benches, trash receptacles, street trees, street tree grates, public art elements and information kiosks. Donors could be acknowledged with a plaque on the element itself or other prominent display, such as a "wall of fame" with donor names. This type of program could be spearheaded by an active Main Street Program. It could draw from the wider community of business and residents.

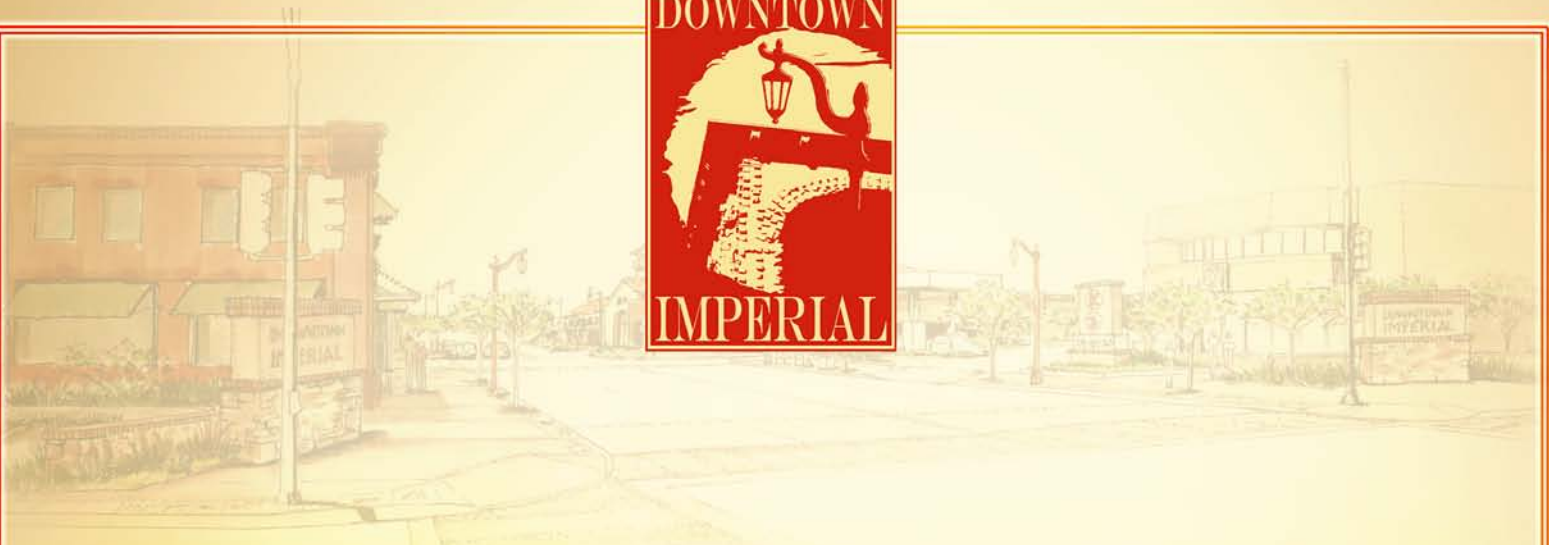


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**DOWNTOWN  
IMPERIAL**



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**RBF**  
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