

RESOLUTION NO. 2485

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOLEDAD
APPROVING THE DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC
PLAN UPDATE INITIATED BY THE CITY OF SOLEDAD
FOR THE DOWNTOWN AREA

WHEREAS, the City of Soledad updated its General Plan in August of 1993; and

WHEREAS, the General Plan contains policies for updating the previously approved Downtown Specific Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Soledad adopted a Downtown specific Plan in March of 1981 that has become outdated due to the current General Plan and State guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the City has contracted with the firm of Crawford, Multari & Starr to prepare a Downtown Specific Plan update, pursuant to Section 65350 of State law; and

WHEREAS, a Negative Declaration has been prepared for the proposed General Plan update; and

WHEREAS, Public Hearing notices for the February 7, 1996 Public Hearing were mailed to all property owners within the proposed Downtown Specific Plan area and property owners within three hundred (300) feet of the area, along with notices being delivered to all commercial tenants in the area by January 26, 1996 and notice was published in the Soledad Bee on January 24, 1996, pursuant to Section 65353 and Section 65450; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Specific Plan is consistent with the City's current General Plan as required by State Planning and Zoning Law, Section 65454; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has held a Public Hearing on December 14, 1995 and did receive public testimony concerning the proposed update as required by State law; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission adopted Resolution 95-14 recommending approval of the proposed Downtown Specific Plan Update, subject to three revisions.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council does hereby adopt the Downtown Specific Plan Update as prepared by the firm of Crawford, Multari & Starr per State code, Section 65354, with the revisions as shown on "Exhibit A", hereunto attached and by reference made a part hereof.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council at a regular meeting duly held on the 21st day of February, 1996, by the following vote:

AYES, and in favor thereof, Councilmembers: John Holguin,
Fred Ledesma, Richard Ortiz, Mayor Ben Jimenez, Jr.

NOES, Councilmembers: None

ABSENT, Councilmembers: Mayor Pro Tem Fabian Barrera


MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SOLEDAD

ATTEST:


CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF SOLEDAD

1) Deletion of Policies (Policies 14, 15, on Page 26) regarding the providing of low and moderate housing policies. This was based on the fact that the City's Housing Element contains similar language and policies. The Housing Element was certified by the State Department of Housing and Community Development.

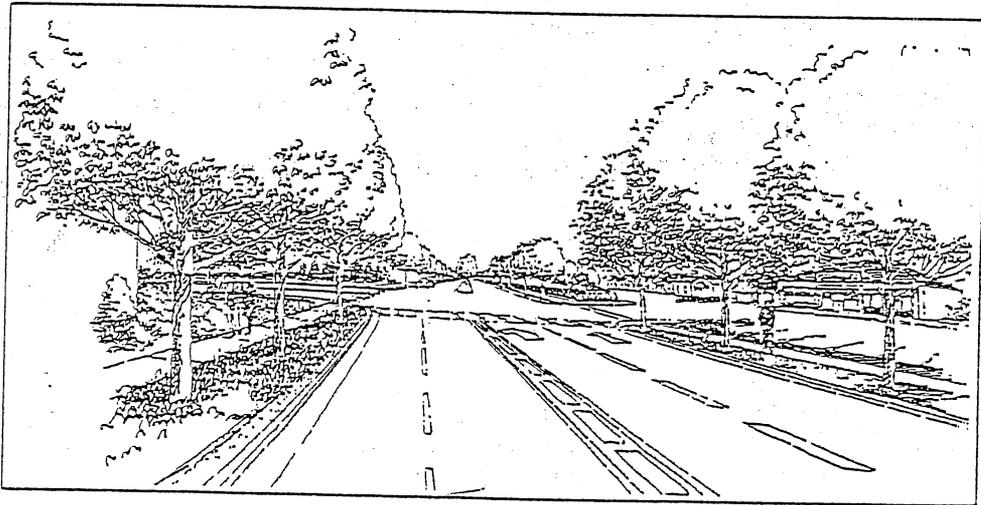
2) Revising the proposed truck routes as shown on the Conceptual Design Plan (Figure 2) to exclude the use of Front and Monterey Streets from West to East Streets, as through truck routes. The use of the State highway as the through route would be preferred as directing through traffic out of the downtown and on to a State highway.

3) Adding recreational type services to the lists of allowed uses.

City of Soledad

DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN & FRONT STREET REHABILITATION PLAN Public Hearing Draft

May, 1994



Prepared for:

*The Soledad Redevelopment Agency and
The City of Soledad*

by:

Crawford Multari & Starr
North Coast Engineering
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Approved by Resol. 95-15
Dec 14, 1995 by PC

Adopted by CC
By Resol. 2485.
02/07/96

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document combines an update of the *Downtown Soledad Specific Plan* with a rehabilitation plan for Front Street, the City's principle commercial corridor. The *Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan* (hereafter "the Plan") sets forth policies, standards and illustrations that provide a "vision" for the development and revitalization of downtown Soledad. The Plan expands upon the principles contained in the first Downtown Soledad Specific Plan adopted in 1981, and incorporates necessary language and policies to bring the Plan into conformance with the City's recently adopted General Plan.

The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation plan consists of the following eight Chapters:

Chapter I is the executive summary of the Plan.

Chapter II provides an introduction to the Plan by describing the project area boundaries, the reasons for their selection, and the methodology used to prepare the Plan.

Chapter III provides an overview of existing conditions relative to the adequacy and limitations of public infrastructure, current and proposed land uses, the condition of buildings in the area and other relevant data that were used to identify the constraints and opportunities afforded by the Plan area.

Chapter IV discusses land use within the Plan area, consistency of the Downtown Soledad Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan with the General Plan, and discusses land use issues in the downtown. Although the Plan does not recommend changes to the land use designations identified by the recently-adopted General Plan, it does provide policies to supplement those contained in the General Plan to address land use issues that are specific to the downtown.

Chapter V discusses circulation in the downtown for automobiles, pedestrians and bicycles, as well as public transit and other forms of transportation.

Chapter VI contains the Conceptual Design Plan that provides the overall vision for the development of downtown Soledad. The Conceptual Design Plan provides a "menu" of improvements and their respective costs that will be implemented by the City, the Redevelopment Agency and by new development in the downtown.

To help implement the Plan as new development occurs in the downtown, development standards and guidelines are provided in Chapter VII, along with illustrations of how the guidelines can be applied. These Guidelines are also published separately as the Handbook of Downtown Design that is available from the Soledad Planning Department.

Finally, Chapter VIII discusses how the Plan will be implemented and includes a list of other potential funding sources.

For ease of explanation, throughout this Plan locations and directions (ie, north, south, east, west) are referred to based on common perception rather than the true compass direction. Front Street, which parallels Highway 101, is considered to run north and south; with the north end in the direction of Salinas and the south end pointed in the general direction of King City. Similarly, the west side of Front Street faces the railroad tracks and the east side faces the town center. These directions do not exactly match compass directions because the City was not laid out to conform with true north and south. However, it is felt that most readers regard Highway 101 as running north and south and therefore directions in the town are based on its relative location to Highway 101.

II. INTRODUCTION

Background

The City of Soledad is a small, rural community located in the Salinas Valley, about midway between Salinas and King City. Soledad incorporated in 1921 and is one of the oldest communities in the Salinas Valley. As with older communities elsewhere, the City's downtown commercial area is finding it difficult to compete with newer, larger shopping centers in surrounding communities. The downtown businesses that are holding their own and want to expand are hampered because much of the City's infrastructure is deteriorating and in need of rehabilitation and repair. The lack of infrastructure to support expanded commercial development has made it difficult to attract investment capital for downtown businesses so that the amenities necessary to attract additional customers can be provided.

Previous Planning Efforts

To help address these problems, the City adopted the *Downtown Soledad Specific Plan* in 1981. That plan established an urban design "theme" for downtown Soledad that focused on the rehabilitation of existing buildings, and the provision of amenities to make walking and shopping in the downtown more enjoyable. It also provided a conceptual design plan for Front Street, the principle commercial corridor in the downtown, and provided design guidelines for new development.

In 1983 the City formed a Redevelopment Agency and adopted a *Redevelopment Plan* that covers about two-thirds of the City, including all of Front Street and the existing downtown area (see Figure 1). The primary goal of the Redevelopment Plan is to eliminate constraints to the full utilization of land and buildings within the Redevelopment Project Area and to foster a climate conducive to economic growth and stability.

More recently, the Agency allocated \$750,000 toward the rehabilitation and renovation of Front Street. To assist the Agency with this task, a team of consultants was hired to prepare a rehabilitation plan to serve as a guide for the expenditure of the Agency's funds in the downtown. The rehabilitation plan is being implemented in three phases. Phase I involved the preparation of the Conceptual Design Plan for the downtown (see Chapter VI) which provides an overall vision for downtown Soledad and Front Street in particular. The Conceptual Design Plan includes detailed descriptions of improvement projects for the downtown that will be funded primarily by the Redevelopment Agency. Phase II will include the preparation of design and construction drawings for the projects identified in the Conceptual Design Plan. Phase III will involve the construction of the various rehabilitation projects.

Some noteworthy improvements along Front Street are already in place, including landscaped medians and street lighting. However, property on the west side of the street, owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad, remains vacant and underutilized; many

of the buildings on the east side are vacant, underutilized or in need of rehabilitation. Additional public improvements are needed, such as curbs, gutters, and sidewalks; some of the underground utilities (sewer, water lines and drainage systems) may need to be replaced or upgraded.

Goals of the Plan

The principle goals of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan are:

- *To implement the policies and programs of the Soledad General Plan and Redevelopment Plan.*
- *To provide a long-term "vision" for the development and revitalization of downtown Soledad by:*
 - *Improving its appearance and by providing design guidelines for future development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation.*
 - *Replacing and upgrading public infrastructure (sewer and water lines, storm drains, streets, etc.).*
 - *Making walking and shopping more enjoyable.*
 - *Preserving and enhancing the character of the Front Street Area as the City's cultural and economic center.*
 - *Promoting economic stability and continued vitality.*
- *To provide more inviting entryways to the City from the north and south.*
- *To provide guidelines and standards for new development to insure that the unique character of the downtown is preserved and enhanced.*
- *To provide a comprehensive plan for the alleviation of infrastructure inadequacies in the downtown to enable the full development of undeveloped and underdeveloped land in the downtown.*
- *To provide options for public improvements that provide the greatest benefit to the community for the money expended.*

Relationship of the Specific Plan to the General Plan and Zoning

The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan establishes policies and standards for the development and rehabilitation of downtown Soledad. Subsequent to its adoption, all new development proposals within the Plan area must be found to be consistent with this Plan, which in turn must be consistent with the Soledad General Plan. Consistency with relevant policies and standards of the General Plan is discussed in greater detail in Chapter IV: Land Use.

The City's Zoning Ordinance and subdivision regulations as applied through the development review process will govern the manner in which the Plan is implemented on a property-specific basis.

Plan Area Boundaries

The boundaries of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan are shown on Figure 2. Generally, the Plan includes the area bounded by the Front Street/US 101 interchange to the north, Park Street and the railroad underpass to the south, the Southern Pacific Railroad property to the west, and Market Street to the east.

The Plan boundaries are centered around the Front Street corridor, which is essential to the economic vitality of Soledad. Besides providing direct access to the 101 Freeway, the majority of the City's large community retail businesses are located along the portion of Front Street between Oak Street and West Street. Moreover, the businesses located within the blocks bounded by Front Street, Encinal Street, Soledad Street and Monterey Street provide products and services that complement and support the other businesses located along Front Street proper.

The other principal commercial boulevard in downtown Soledad is Main Street which intersects Front Street in the center of the City. Main Street is also the primary location of civic facilities, with the City Hall, police station, fire station and public park all within a one block area bounded by Main Street and Monterey Street. Main Street is also the location of the Catholic Church, the Main Street elementary school and the Eden Valley skilled nursing facility.

Methodology For Plan Preparation

Recognizing that any plans for the revitalization of the downtown must begin with improvements to Front Street, the first step in the preparation of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan was a detailed aerial survey and infrastructure map of the Front Street area. This information was used to assess the condition and limitations of public infrastructure and to help define areas where the expenditure of Redevelopment Agency funds would be most beneficial. Concurrently with the infrastructure analysis, a land use inventory of the entire Plan area was compiled to provide information relative to the amount of vacant and underutilized land, parcel sizes, the condition and floor area of existing buildings and how they are being used, and the

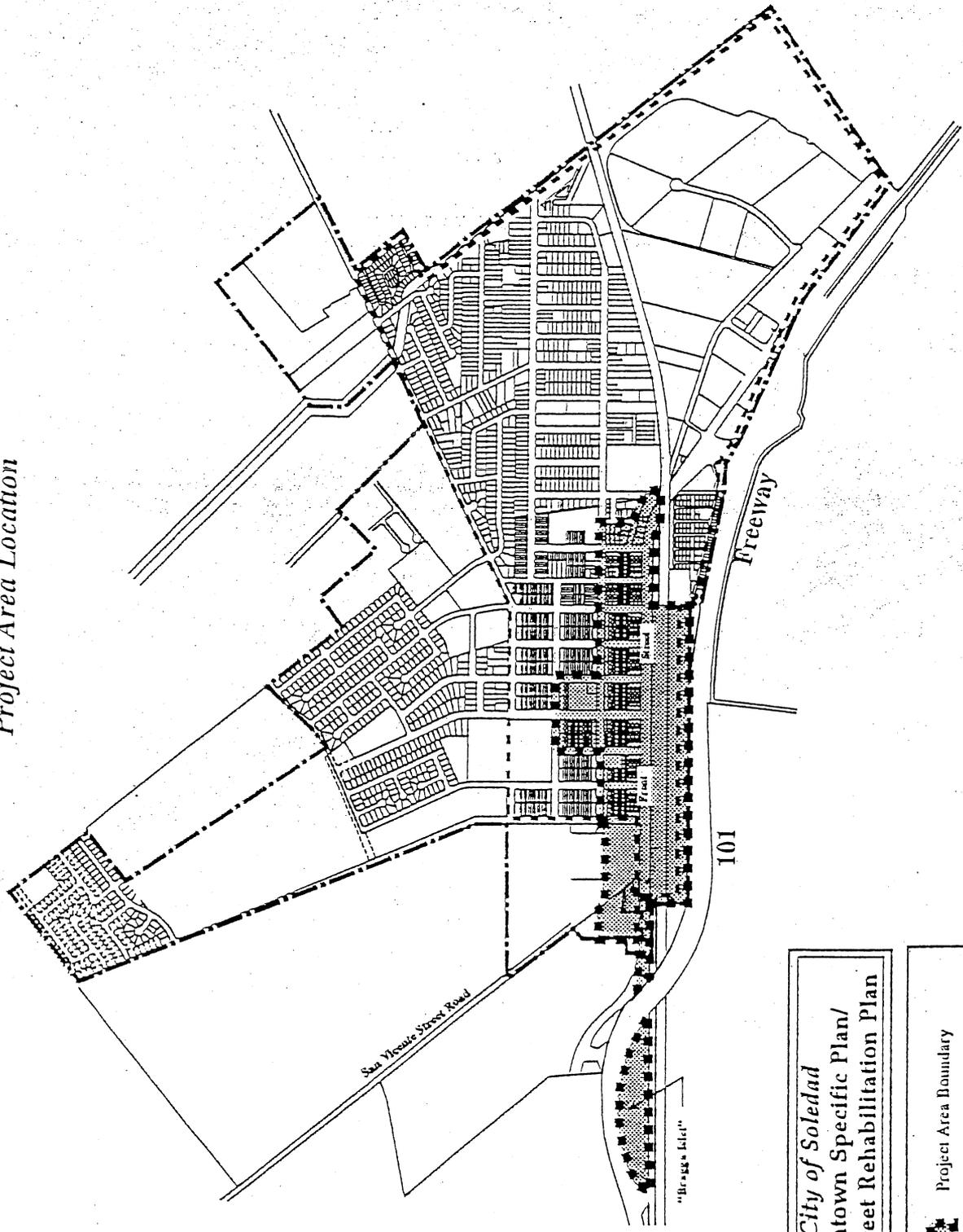
amount of parking provided.

The analysis of constraints and opportunities was used to define a set of planning principles to guide the formulation of the vision for downtown Soledad expressed in this Plan. These principles were also used to help narrow the scope of potential rehabilitation projects to those that would best serve the community and achieve the objectives of the General Plan and Redevelopment Plan.

From the analysis of existing conditions, and discussions with the City, a "menu" of downtown improvement projects was prepared, along with their respective costs (Chapter VI). These projects may be implemented through the expenditure of Redevelopment Agency funds (or other funding sources), by the City through its Capital Improvement Program, and through private development.

To help achieve the overall goals of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan as new development occurs in the downtown, Chapter VII contains standards and guidelines for new development that supplement the standards contained in the General Plan, and other applicable City plans and standards.

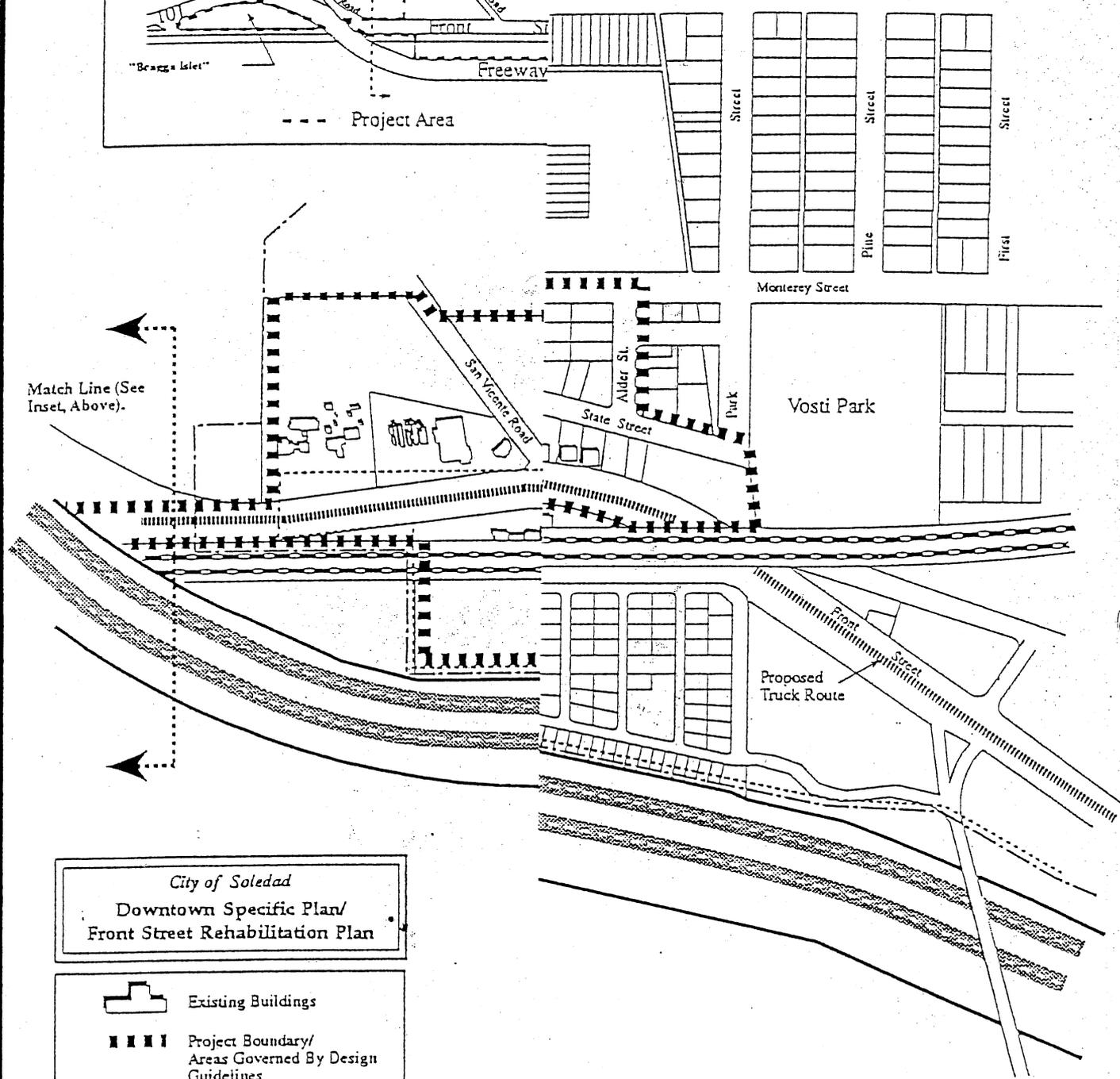
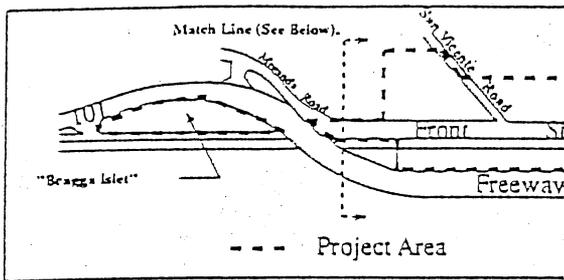
Figure 1
Project Area Location



City of Soledad
Downtown Specific Plan/
Front Street Rehabilitation Plan

	Project Area Boundary
	Redevelopment Project Area
	City Limits

Inset



Match Line (See Inset, Above).

City of Soledad
Downtown Specific Plan/
Front Street Rehabilitation Plan

-  Existing Buildings
-  Project Boundary/
Areas Governed By Design
Guidelines
-  City Limits
-  Redevelopment Area
-  Property Lines

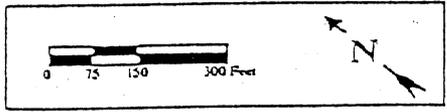
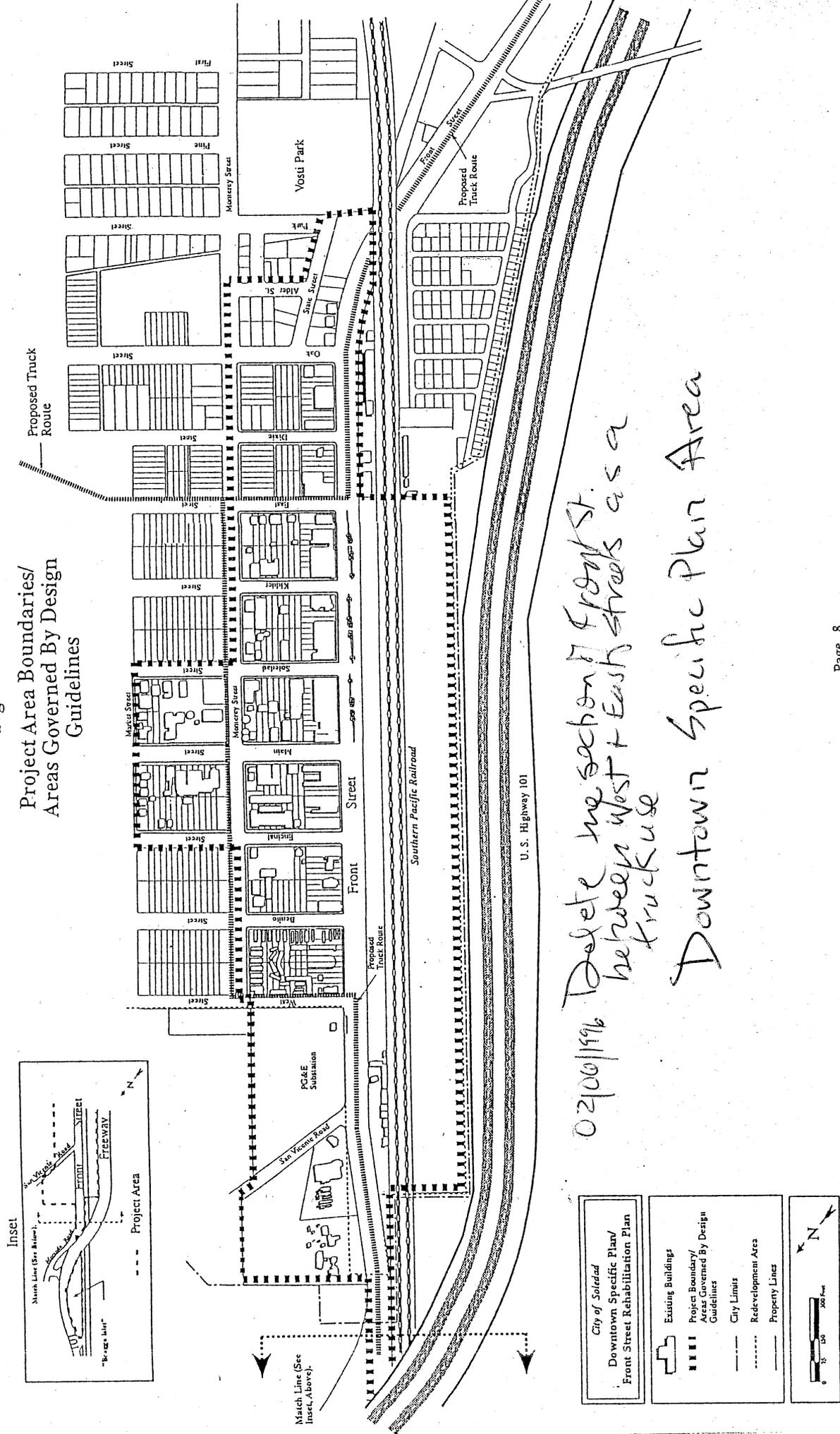


Figure 2
Project Area Boundaries/
Areas Governed By Design
Guidelines



02/00/1996 Delete the section of Front St. between West & East streets as a truck use
Downtown Specific Plan Area

III. OVERVIEW OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

This chapter provides an overview of existing conditions within the Plan area, and includes an assessment of public improvements and a summary of existing land use.

Assessment of Public Improvements

This section of the Plan assesses the current condition of public improvements in the Plan area, including roads, landscaping, lighting, sidewalks, curbs, water lines, sewer lines and storm drain improvements.

Virtually all of the public infrastructure (ie, street improvements, municipal water service, public sewers, etc.) extend along Front Street from the downtown north to West Street. The section of Front Street between West Street and Main Street lacks the landscaped medians that have been installed farther south between Main Street and East Street. The portion of Front Street from West Street north to the Highway 101 interchange lacks most of these public improvements. For convenience, this less developed section of Front Street, from West Street to the interchange, is generically referred to as the "northern portion of Front Street".

Methodology

In September of 1993, aerial photographs of the Project Area were flown of the Front Street corridor. A base map of existing improvements and topography was prepared from the photos. Subsurface improvements were later added based on field reconnaissance, discussions with City of Soledad staff and a review of existing documentation.

To properly assess the adequacy of regional infrastructure, (water, sewer, storm drainage and roads) it is necessary to examine these systems as a whole. For example, sufficient treatment and disposal capacity may be available at the wastewater treatment plant, yet portions of the transmission lines may have inadequate capacity to convey the expected volume of effluent.

The City of Soledad has prepared citywide analyses for water distribution and is preparing master plans for sewer and storm drainage. Given that information on sewer and storm drainage is somewhat the incomplete, the review and assessment that follows is based on general observations, discussions with maintenance personnel and an examination of existing utility maps. This information alone is insufficient to form a reliable engineering judgement regarding capacities but does give a general indication of potential problems or apparent adequacy of a particular system.

Water Distribution System

The water distribution system along Front street is comprised mainly of cast iron pipe with less than 8" diameter. Pipes of this size will not supply an adequate quantity of water to fire hydrants (>1000 gallons per minute). The problem is aggravated if several hydrants are used at once.

In addition, the water distribution system west of Berito Street appears to be inadequately "looped"; that is, interconnected to form a network. Water supply systems are designed with an interconnecting pipe network to permit water to flow to a point of use (such as a fire hydrant) through several different travel routes, insuring greater flow capacity.

Areas that are served with only a single supply pipe not only have lower flow capacity, but also are subject to complete loss of water if the supply pipe is ruptured.

Data regarding the adequacy of both the well system to supply the water distribution system and the capacity of water storage system to meet peak flow and fire demands were not available. As stated above, this information can only be assessed by performing a citywide water system analysis.

The present water system was recently extended north of West Street to serve recently-annexed properties.

Sanitary Sewer Collection and Treatment System

The buildings along the east side of Front Street are served by sewers that flow along the rear of the buildings. Except for a small portion of the study area opposite East and Dixie Streets, sewer lines have not been constructed in Front Street or across Front Street to the railroad property.

The sewer pipes running along the rear of the buildings are not recorded as being a part of the City's sewer system. Their condition and size are unknown. Due to their age and lack of identification on City maps, it is reasonable to expect that they are substandard, deteriorated and in need of replacement.

The general location of sewer lines may be ascertained based on the location of street manholes and the rear lot lines of the commercial buildings. However, small structures, garages and sheds have been constructed over the probable pipe locations concealing any evidence of an easement.

Each side street from Dixie to West Street has a sewer manhole located in the center of the street adjacent to the rear property lines of the commercial lots. Presumably, the commercial properties flow in some manner to these manholes.

From the in-street manholes, wastewater flows east to Monterey Street. The pipelines in the side streets are 6" vitrified clay pipe (VCP). This pipe size is regarded as substandard for handling the flow generated by modern plumbing fixtures. The current standard minimum pipe diameter for any public sewer line is 8". Any rehabilitation program for Front Street commercial property should include both 1) the installation of a properly designed and sized pipeline at the rear of the buildings and 2) replacement of the 6" VCP with a new 8" line.

At Monterey Street a new 15" diameter trunk line has been installed. This size line should accommodate any increased flows generated by any new or rehabilitated structures constructed in the rehabilitation project area.

If development is contemplated on land owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad on the west side of Front Street, a new sewer collection trunk line would be required. Several configurations are possible for a new sewer line, including an alignment along Front Street or extending the existing lines from the cross streets across Front Street into the Southern Pacific property. Further study would be necessary to determine the pipe sizes, configuration, and possible need for a sewage pump station.

Two pipes (10" and 15" in diameter), located at the intersection of Front and West Streets carry wastewater east, under the highway and railroad tracks to the treatment plant. These two pipes should provide ample capacity to convey all of the wastewater currently generated within the City plus any future development which may result from the Front Street improvements.

The sewage treatment plant is rated at a 1.0 mgd capacity and currently is treating approximately 0.65 mgd, leading to the overall conclusion that the backbone facilities are in place to provide adequate sewer service capacity for the foreseeable future.

The City is currently discussing the possibility of a cooperative sewage treatment agreement with the Soledad Prison. The impacts of such an agreement on the present sewage collection and treatment system are not known.

The present public sewer system ends at West Street and does not extend to the northern portion of Front Street. The commercial and residential uses are served by septic tank/leach line systems. To accommodate future commercial and residential development in this area, the municipal sewer collection system must be extended to those presently unserved areas.

The City also has extended an 8" pipe from the treatment plant to the north end of Front Street to convey reclaimed water. One use for this water would be to irrigate the landscaping proposed within the public rights-of-way (medians, etc.) described in the projects in Chapter VI.

Stormwater Drainage System

The City of Soledad is characterized by an irregular drainage system. The City apparently drains to two defined watercourses: Bryant Creek and the Salinas River. Most storm runoff must travel along a series of poorly defined drainage channels, street gutters, and man-made storm drains and channels before finally reaching the Salinas River. Because of the flat topography, defining the carrying capacity and the limits of flooding from each of these watercourses during heavy rainfall is impossible to predict with the data currently available.

No quantitative data could be obtained regarding the stormwater drainage system. A series of collector storm drains capture stormwater from both the downtown area and the newer residential developments located northwest of downtown. All of the collector drains terminate at a 60" pipe which begins at the corner of West and Front Streets and carries runoff water to the Salinas River.

Early 100 year floodplain maps show much of the town being inundated from water from Stonewall Creek. However, in flat areas, the course and extent of floodwaters can be modified significantly with the construction of every new road, channel, housing development or other similar man-made alterations to the topography. Currently, no reliable information is available to determine the impact of a 100 year storm.

For smaller storms flooding in the downtown area would be determined by the characteristics of the drainage basin tributary to the 60" pipe. A pipe of this size can carry approximately 100 cubic feet per second (cfs). The urbanized and potentially urbanized area tributary to this drain is approximately 1000 acres.

If the natural terrain were steeper, a rainfall of even 1/4 inches per hour would exceed the carrying capacity of the 60" pipe and flooding would occur in the downtown area. However, the flat topography keeps the velocity of runoff quite slow. As such, much of the rainfall is detained within the basin and does not reach the 60" pipe as a large surge of water. When the 60" pipe receives flow from the basin over a longer period of time it is able to transport the storm runoff to the river without reaching its full capacity. As a result many storms can be handled with only minor impact.

Every few years a storm will occur with sufficient intensity and duration that the existing storm drain system becomes overloaded and localized flooding will occur in the low lying areas, including portions of Front Street.

When heavy rainfall events occur, say at the 10-year or 25-year frequency level, flooding will cover a wider portion of the downtown area, but should remain fairly shallow in most areas. For extremely heavy storms with long duration, such as a 100 year storm, damage to Front Street properties is likely to be extensive.

It should be noted that, while the main business district of Front Street to West Street is served by a complete, urban storm drain system, the northern portion of town has

virtually no storm drain infrastructure. This area is drained by earth swales on both sides of the road. Storm water flows into these swales which transports the water northwesterly and eventually reaches the Salinas River.

The swale on the east side of Front street is relatively deep and wide. The rural character of these drainage swales is in direct contrast to well developed storm drain pipes and inlet structures characteristic of the southerly portion of downtown. If urban improvements are contemplated for northern end of town, a new, formalized storm drain system will be required.

Curbs, Gutters and Sidewalks

Curbs and sidewalks are provided along Front Street south of the West Street intersection; on the Southern Pacific property only curbs are provided.

The only portion of Front Street north of the West Street intersection with edge-of-road improvements is along the Pacific Gas & Electric substation property. Curb and gutter has been installed in this area; however, the road surface has not been extended to meet these improvements.

The remaining portion of the northern end of Front Street lacks curb, gutter and sidewalk. These improvements will be required to bring Front Street to urban arterial standards.

Street Lighting

Adequate street lighting is provided along both sides of Front Street, south of West Street. Conversely, the northern portion of town has only one major street light, at the intersection of San Vicente and Front Streets. If the northern section of Front Street is to be improved to match the remainder of the downtown, additional yard-arm type lighting will be needed on both sides of the street at approximately 200 foot intervals.

Landscaping, Street Furniture, and Public Parking Lots

Irrigated landscaping is provided within the three median strips that have been installed in Front Street between Main Street and East Street, at scattered locations on the Southern Pacific property, and in front of the PG&E property. Trees and brush also grow in an irregular pattern on vacant property or properties with low intensity land use. Other than the median landscaping, the remaining vegetation does not form what may be considered an organized landscape program. Reclaimed water from the sewage treatment plant may be needed to irrigate landscaping proposed within the public rights-of-way, as described in Chapter VI.

Summary Conclusions

- *The City is in need of master plans for water, sewer, drainage, and roads.*

These plans need not be highly detailed; however, a foundation is necessary as a basis of designing infrastructure improvement projects, including those recommended for the Front Street Rehabilitation Plan. Without an understanding of needed infrastructure systems and facilities, planning and engineering decisions for individual projects cannot be made with the assurance they will integrate into the City's overall public facilities program.

- *The existing water distribution system is incapable of providing adequate fire flow to many portions of the City.*

Physical rehabilitation of Front Street would not be provided with minimum levels of fire protection if the existing system is relied upon.

- *Drainage improvements will be needed to avoid the recurrence of flooding along Front Street.*

Under existing conditions, buildings along portions of Front Street would be subject to periodic flooding. Future development in the area will aggravate the situation. A program is needed to prevent the accumulation of stormwater runoff in the downtown area.

- *Limitations in sewer lines serving the buildings along Front Street may restrict future development.*

Local upgrades to the sewer system along the back of the commercial buildings and in the side streets are required if increased intensity of use is contemplated.

- *Additional development north of West Street will necessitate the extension of sewer, water, storm drainage and other infrastructure.*

The area north of West Street lacks virtually all urban level infrastructure. Without providing the necessary public improvements, this area is incapable of being developed into viable commercial property.

IV. LAND USE

The existing and proposed land uses in the Plan area bear a direct relationship to the revitalization of the downtown by determining the volume and composition (ie, trucks versus passenger cars) of traffic that will be generated, the size and type of infrastructure improvements that will be needed, and the overall urban form and character of the downtown.

Existing Land Use

Tables 2 and 3 summarize existing land uses in the Plan area. The businesses along Front Street are primarily engaged in retail activities, although there are a few service-related businesses that include a bank and medical clinic.

The west side of Front Street, south of East Street, has been developed with a variety of heavy commercial businesses that include a hardware store, a tire store and auto parts sales; the portion north of East Street to West Street is vacant and used for parking. Farther north along the west side of Front Street is a cluster of small apartments and a service station opposite San Vicente Road.

The land between the 101 Freeway and the railroad tracks has been developed with a mobile home park with access to Front Street south of the railroad underpass. Adjacent to the mobile home park is a lumber yard; the remainder of the property is vacant. There are no improved public road crossings of the railroad tracks to provide access to this portion of the property from Front Street. The General Plan recommends providing two at-grade crossings: one at East Street and one at West Street. There is a private, unimproved at-grade crossing west of Main Street, and an approved at-grade crossing at East Street that has not been constructed.

At the north end of Front Street just inside the City limits is a single family residence and a mobile home park. At the northeast corner of San Vicente Road and Front Street is a small commercial business with a gas pump island and a restaurant. The parcel bounded by West Street and San Vicente Road is occupied by a trucking company and a Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) electrical substation.

The blocks on the east side of Front Street between West Street and East Street are occupied by a variety of retail and service businesses; a new laundry is proposed on the vacant lot at the southeast corner of Encinal and Front Street. Further east of Front Street in the blocks bounded by Encinal Street, Monterey Street and Kidder Street, are a variety of residential, office and commercial businesses. The residences are primarily older single family dwellings.

As Table 2 illustrates, there are a number of vacant buildings and vacant and underutilized lots in the Plan area, suggesting a substantial amount of remaining development potential. In particular, there are a number of commercial lots currently occupied by residences that can be considered underdeveloped with respect to the General Plan designation.

General Plan Designations and Relevant Policies

The Soledad General Plan (adopted in 1993) includes goals, policies and programs to guide land use within the Plan area consistent with the overall objectives for the continued development of the City. *Goals* represent a desirable future condition or state towards which the community will work to achieve. The *policies* of the General Plan state the communities position regarding land use, development and environmental quality issues, and are used to guide future actions. The General Plan contains policy statements covering a wide range of issues, including development of the downtown. *Objectives*, as described in the General Plan, are statements of the City's philosophy that are intended to guide decision-making.

Land uses in the downtown designated by the General Plan include both residential and commercial designations, as well as public uses such as the civic center and fire station as shown by Figure 3. The majority of the Plan area is designated for three categories of commercial development: Retail/Office Commercial, Highway Commercial and General Commercial. The differences among these designations is described in the General Plan as follows:

Retail/Office Commercial – Uses of a community retail nature such as appliance stores, offices, banks and other uses for the community as a whole. Both sides of Front Street between San Vicente Road and East Street bear this designated.

General Commercial – Uses such as wholesale and retail stores and shops of a heavy commercial character conducted inside or outside a building, such as auto repair shops, farm equipment repair and sales, etc.. This designation is applied to the portion of the Southern Pacific Railroad property west of the railroad tracks.

Highway Commercial – Facilities providing city-wide, regional and tourist-serving services that rely on customers making trips by automobile, and located on major thoroughfares, such as motels, gas stations, restaurants, etc.. This designation is applied to the property at the northeast corner of San Vicente Road and Front Street.

Much of the land designated for commercial development between Front Street and Monterey Street has been developed with housing, which at present is only allowed in the C-R, Residential Commercial zoning district (see discussion of zoning, below). As a consequence, these dwellings are considered "non-conforming" land uses, meaning that they do not conform to existing regulations.

There is also land designated for multi-family residential development within the Plan area north of San Vicente Road and between Main Street and Encinal Street east of Monterey street. The following designations are applied:

Residential 7-12 Units/Acre (duplex residential) – Allows duplexes and attached housing clusters.

Multiple Residential, 13 - 20 Units/Acre – Allows multi-family densities for attached apartments, condominiums and townhouses.

The following is a summary of selected policies, objectives and programs of the General Plan relating to downtown Soledad and the revitalization of the Front Street commercial area.

Land Use Element

Objective 2: Take steps to enhance the economic viability and vitality of the City's downtown area.

Objective 3: Provide adequate area for commercial land uses which meet the service needs of residents, visitors, and motorists, which are located near freeway access and are compatible with surrounding land uses.

Discussion: These broad economic objectives reflect the need to maintain a viable downtown in Soledad and to encourage commercial development on land with freeway access. The rehabilitation of Front Street will help meet these objectives by encouraging continued economic vitality along the City's principle commercial corridor and by providing a more inviting transition between the commercial core and the freeway.

Policy 5: The City of Soledad shall promote efficient use of urban services by encouraging the in-filling and intensification of land uses, consistent with existing neighborhood patterns, within the already built up portion of the City.

Discussion: Although the General Plan designates land for additional commercial development outside the downtown, this policy encourages the infilling of the existing commercial areas, too. Providing amenities in the downtown commercial core area will help implement this policy by raising property values and encouraging investment.

Policy 6: The City of Soledad shall maintain and enhance community qualities by implementing programs which encourage desirable community design, protection of environmental resources, and the preservation of historic features.

Discussion: This policy promotes the preservation of the town's character through a variety of programs, including the General Plan, Downtown Specific Plan, and development review process. The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan is intended to help implement this policy.

- Program 24. *The City of Soledad shall implement the Downtown Specific Plan by revitalizing the downtown Central Business District (CBD) in a functional and efficient manner, creating an attractive center for retail services and social/cultural activities. Achievement can be obtained by applying for available grants, utilizing the Redevelopment Authority, and providing incentives to developers.*

Discussion: The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan addresses this program directly by providing a plan for the application of Redevelopment Agency funds in the downtown to create a more attractive and inviting place to visit, shop and work.

- Policy 2. *The City of Soledad shall maintain a mix of housing types, designs, and prices throughout the City.*

Discussion: The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan will help implement this policy by maintaining the residential land use categories in and around the downtown, and encouraging mix-use projects with commercial and residential development.

- Policy 8. *The City of Soledad shall permit institutional facilities in or adjacent to residential areas to provide accessory uses, including, but not limited to churches, schools, nursery schools, day care centers, youth and senior centers and nursing homes.*

Discussion: Many of these support facilities are currently provided within the downtown at present. The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan will encourage the provision of additional support services and facilities, and the retention of existing facilities.

- Policy 4. *The City shall promote a mix of commercial and residential uses in instances where good site design and utilization of the property can be demonstrated.*

Discussion: Mix-use projects offer several advantages. For example, providing housing near commercial and other support facilities lessens dependence on the automobile, reduces traffic and makes the provision of public services more efficient and cost effective. Providing housing in conjunction with downtown commercial businesses will be encouraged by the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan.

- Policy 3. *The City of Soledad shall promote the development and adequate maintenance of a coordinated system of parks and recreational facilities within the city.*

Discussion: The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan designates land for a park and other public open spaces, such as *The Paseo* which seeks to create an open plaza to serve as a focal point for the downtown.

Housing Element

Program 26. The City of Soledad shall encourage the development of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Hotels/Boarding Houses to help meet the housing needs of migrant farm workers who generally reside in the community only on a temporary basis. The City shall investigate the possibility of implementing an SRO ordinance that identifies and provides development standards for SRO facilities. The City shall also identify potential sites suitable for SRO development and investigate possible funding sources for such development.

Discussion: Downtown Soledad is well-suited for such SRO development. Policies in the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan encourage the development of such units in the downtown.

Circulation Element

Policy 5. The City of Soledad shall encourage the coordination of land use planning with existing and future transportation facilities, so that mobility is neither impeded or significantly impacted on adjacent land uses.

Discussion: This policy recognizes the close interrelationship between land use and circulation. Plans for the downtown must be designed to serve buildout of the downtown area with the land uses envisioned by the General Plan.

Policy 2. The City of Soledad shall encourage the provision of adequate sidewalks in all residential and commercial areas for easy pedestrian circulation.

Discussion: This policy recognizes the importance of providing safe and efficient pedestrian circulation within commercial areas, such as the Front Street area. The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan will help implement this policy by helping to create a more inviting pedestrian environment.

Program 5. The City of Soledad should consider redesigning Moranda Road to intersect Front Street at a right angle and incorporate additional needed improvements in the design.

Discussion: Moranda Road is the northerly extension of Front Street that wraps around the freeway interchange and provides access to the north-bound onramp/offramp at the north end of the City. This policy suggests one way to correct the present inefficiency in the geometry of the road alignment by forming a 90° intersection with Front Street. Other changes to the configuration of the north-bound interchange are being analyzed by the City in anticipation of future commercial development on the north end of the City.

Zoning

The following zoning districts correspond to the land use designations for the Plan area as described above:

C-1, Retail Central Business District – This district is applied to areas designated Retail/Office Commercial by the General Plan. The intent of this district as described in the Ordinance is to implement the Downtown Specific Plan, preserve and enhance older architectural styles, provide an increased variety and density of development, promote pedestrian enjoyment, and provide an area of intensive retail commercial activity.

C-2, General Commercial District – This district is applied to the portion of the Southern Pacific Railroad property on the west side of the tracks where heavy commercial activities are designated by the General Plan. The intent of this district is to provide a district for vehicular-oriented uses with architectural and landscaping controls to protect the amenities of the area and to allow for the heavier types of commercial and semi-industrial uses that do not depend on pedestrian traffic and are more appropriately located away from the central business district.

C-R, Commercial Residential District – This designation is applied in two locations within the Plan area. One is the area south of Monterey Street between Oak Street and East Street, the other is the area at the southeast corner of Benito Street and Monterey Street. The General Plan designates both of these sites for Retail/Office Commercial. The purpose of the C-R district is to provide for both residential and light commercial activities within the downtown.

H-C, Highway Commercial District – This district is applied to the property designated for Highway Commercial development at the northeast corner of San Vicente Road and Front Street. The purpose of this district is to provide for vehicular-oriented uses with sufficient architectural and landscaping controls to protect the amenities of the area.

M, Industrial District – This district is applied to the railroad property between the tracks and the 101 freeway, and is intended to support manufacturing and other industries. The General Plan designates this area for General Commercial use, which would carry a likely zoning designation of C-2.

PF, Public Facility District – This district includes the property at the north east corner of Encinal Street and Monterey Street, as well as the property between Main Street and Soledad Street where the City Hall, fire station and park are located. The Public Facility zone is intended to provide a wide range of public uses likely to be located on public property, such as those conducted by governmental or non-profit agencies.

R-2, Duplex Residential – This district is applied to residential property north of Monterey Street between Encinal Street and Main Street where duplex residential development is proposed.

R-3, High Density Multiple Residential – This district is applied to residential property that is expected to develop at the highest densities allowed within the City (up to 16 units per acre). This designation is applied to the mobile home park north of San Vicente Road.

The Zoning Ordinance limits development along Front Street to 40 feet in height in Highway Commercial zones, and 35 feet in Central Commercial zones. Almost all of the buildings have been built to cover the entire lot, although some offstreet parking is provided in nearly every block.

Table 1 summarizes the applicable development standards for each zone.

Table 1
Development Standards
By Zone

Development Standards	R-1	R-2	R-3	P-F	C-1	C-2	C-R	H-C	M
Minimum Lot Area (square feet)	6,000	5,000	6,000	N/A	None required				
Street Yard Setback' (feet)	20	15	15	N/A	None required	None required	10	10	None required
Other Yard Setbacks (side and rear yards, in feet)	5 on sides, 10 at rear	5 on sides, 15 at rear	5 on sides, 15 at rear	N/A	None required				
Coverage	40%	60%	60%	N/A	None required	None required	60%	60%	None required
Parking	320 square feet	2/D.U.	2.5/D.U.	N/A	5/1,000 square feet	5/1,000 square feet	5/1,000 square feet	5/1,000 square feet	2 spaces/3 employees
Building Height (feet)	30	30	30	N/A	35	35	35	40	Determined by PC

NOTE: Additional regulations apply. Consult the Soledad Zoning Ordinance and Planning Department for specific requirements.

Urban Form

Parcelization and Development Pattern

Parcel sizes in the downtown vary in size, but are mostly small, narrow lots of 3,000 - 7,000 square feet, reflecting the historical development of the town. (See Figure 6.) As a result, most downtown commercial buildings cover more than one legal lot. The Southern Pacific Railroad consists of two parcels comprising about 25 acres. The portion along Front Street is long and narrow (about 120 feet deep).

Street trees have been provided sporadically in the downtown. There are no street trees along Front Street; some new development has provided street trees on the side streets that intersect Front Street and in the residential neighborhoods that surround the downtown. Sidewalks have been provided on nearly every block within the Plan area, although they have not been made handicapped accessible.

Architecture

Commercial buildings in the downtown tend to be older (35 years or more) and display a wide range of architectural styles and materials; most are wood frame or masonry block with plaster or stucco exterior and flat roofs. Colors are generally muted earth-tones (light brown, tan and beige).

Store-fronts consist of standard fixed-pane display windows with aluminum store-front systems and a narrow (three feet or less) bulkhead underneath. Many of the stores have awnings that extend over the sidewalk. Two-story corner buildings typically have little or no architectural detailing on the side street, often appearing as a tall, blank face.

Most of the two-story buildings along Front Street have retail businesses on the ground floor and are mostly vacant on the upper floors, although a few have offices or residences. As a result, the upper floors have smaller windows and more window openings.

The residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown recall turn-of-the century "Victorian" style architecture. Many of the dwellings are small bungalows with wood siding, porches and double-hung windows. Multi-family residential development reflects a similarly eclectic mix of age, architectural styles and materials.

Land Use Issues

- *The downtown possesses considerable commercial development potential.*

The General Plan would accommodate as much as about 200,000 square feet of additional commercial development within the Plan area. If this development potential is realized, it would represent a 55% increase over the existing floor area within the Plan area.

- *Infrastructure inadequacies may impede the revitalization of the downtown.*

Because of the age and limited size of infrastructure serving the downtown (sewer, water, storm drainage, etc.) much of the development potential described above will not be realized without substantial improvements. To address this problem, the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan identifies a number of infrastructure projects that will be undertaken to remedy these inadequacies and enable full development.

- *Commercial land uses in the downtown should be restricted to those conducive to comparison shopping.*

The present land use designations and zoning districts would allow a variety of land uses that are not conducive to the comparison shopping character encouraged for the downtown. Businesses such as auto repair, tire sales, large appliance sales and lumber and building materials yards are not appropriate for the downtown.

The Plan does not recommend changing the land use designations for properties within the downtown. However, additional land use policies are needed to supplement those contained in the General Plan to restrict allowable land uses to those that would be most conducive to the revitalization and rehabilitation of the commercial core.

- *Residences within the downtown should be retained and additional residences provided where they will be compatible with commercial activities.*

At present, the Soledad Zoning Ordinance allows housing within commercial zones only in the C-R, Commercial Residential district, which at present is applied sparingly in the downtown. There are at least two possible regulatory remedies: one would be to zone a greater portion of the downtown as C-R, and another would be to allow residences as conditionally allowed use in the C-1, Retail Central Business District zone. Retained residences in the downtown may be desirable where the combination of residences and commercial activities is compatible, such as when apartments are constructed on the upper floors of an office building. Besides helping to provide an additional source of affordable housing, such dwellings may also be appropriate for Single Room Occupancy

units that are encouraged by the General Plan.

Policies

The following policies are recommended to supplement those contained in the General Plan and to address the issues described above.

1. The downtown should remain the center for the City's cultural, governmental and comparison shopping activities. The City Hall and post office should be retained in the downtown.
2. As the downtown becomes revitalized, consideration should be given to restricting the ground floor of downtown buildings to comparison retail businesses and restaurants that depend on foot traffic and exposure to pedestrians, reserving the upper floors for offices and residences.
3. Downtown should provide a safe, attractive and pleasant environment for walking, sitting and shopping that is sheltered from the wind.
4. Existing buildings in the downtown contribute to the character of the City and should be retained and rehabilitated.
5. New development in the downtown shall not be allowed unless adequate public facilities and services are available to serve such new development.
6. New development in the downtown shall pay its fair share of providing additional public facilities and services needed to accommodate such development.
7. New development in the downtown shall be required to help implement this Plan by installing their fair share of the improvements identified for their particular property. This participation may be in partnership with the City, the Redevelopment Agency, or both.
8. New development, and the substantial remodel of existing development in the downtown, shall be subject to the design guidelines and standards contained in this Plan.
9. The key gateways to the City from the north (via Moranda Avenue and Front Street) and the south (via Front Street) should be renovated to provide a more inviting entrance to the City.
10. Street trees shall be provided in the downtown as described in the Guidelines and Standards for new development.

- 11. The following are examples of the types of land uses that should be allowed in the downtown:

Retail sales of clothing,
books, shoes, stationary, etc.
and general merchandise

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Professional Offices | Service-related businesses |
| Medical clinics | Self-serve laundry |
| Bakery | Video Rental |
| Motels/hotels | Banks |
| Sit-down Restaurant | Barbers/hairstylists |
| Transit center/bus stop | Churches |
| Post office | Library |
| Government offices | Second-story residences |

Add recreational uses to list of permitted uses

- 12. The following are examples of land uses that should not be allowed in the downtown, but would be appropriate in the heavy commercial land between the railroad tracks and the 101 Freeway:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| Retail sale of building and landscape materials, furniture, tires and batteries | |
| Warehouses | Contractor's yard |
| Equipment rental | Mini-storage |
| Feed stores and farm supply sales | Manufacturing |
| Repair services | |

- 13. A variety of housing types shall be encouraged in residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown.

- 14. Affordable housing shall be encouraged and maintained in the downtown. New residential development that is affordable to low income households should be provided in the downtown where it is compatible with commercial activities.

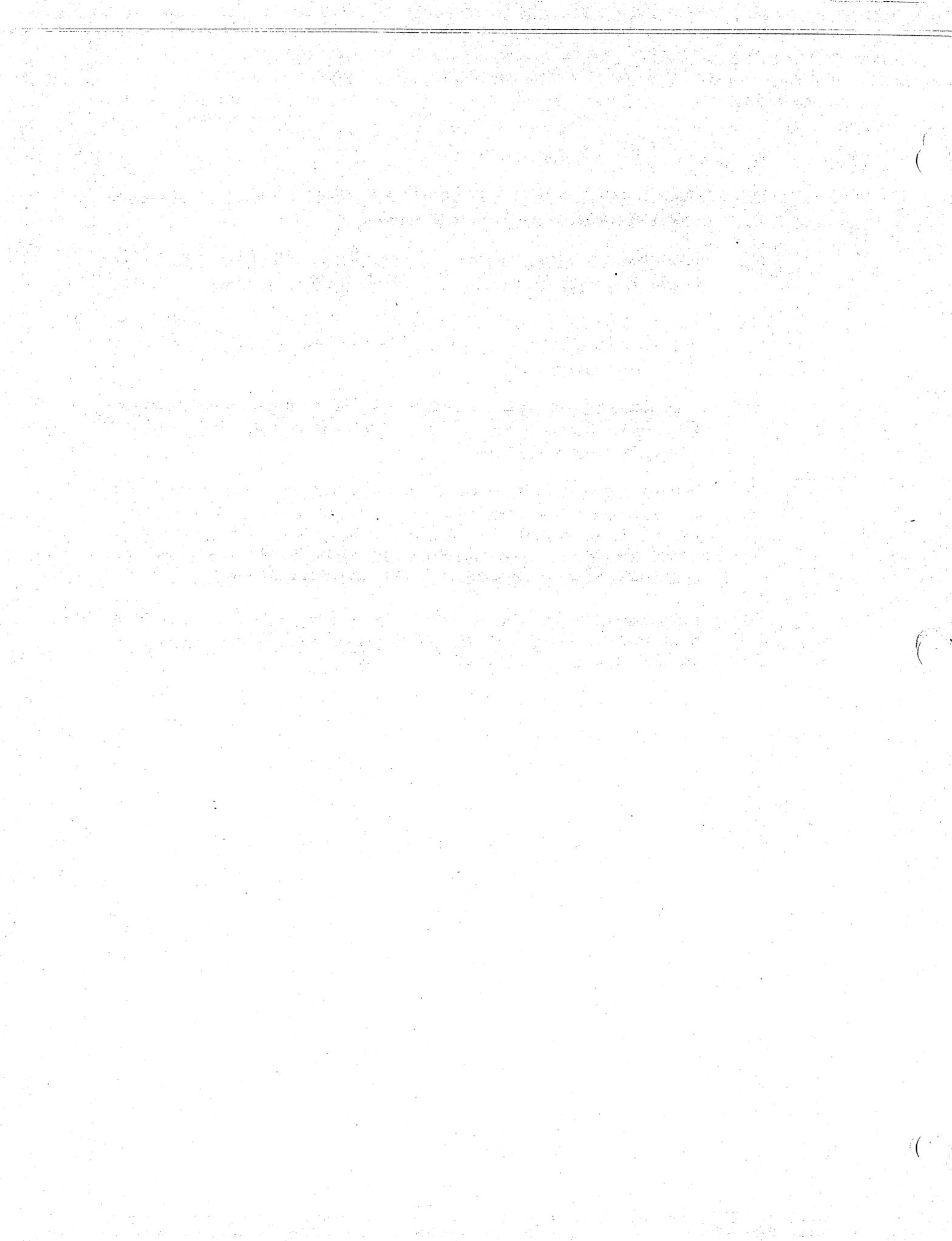
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- 15. Downtown residential uses contribute to the character of the area, allow a 24 hour presence which enhances security, and help the balance between jobs and housing in the community. Existing residential uses within the around the downtown should be protected, and new ones developed where they will be compatible with commercial activities. Examples of residential development compatible with commercial activities include:

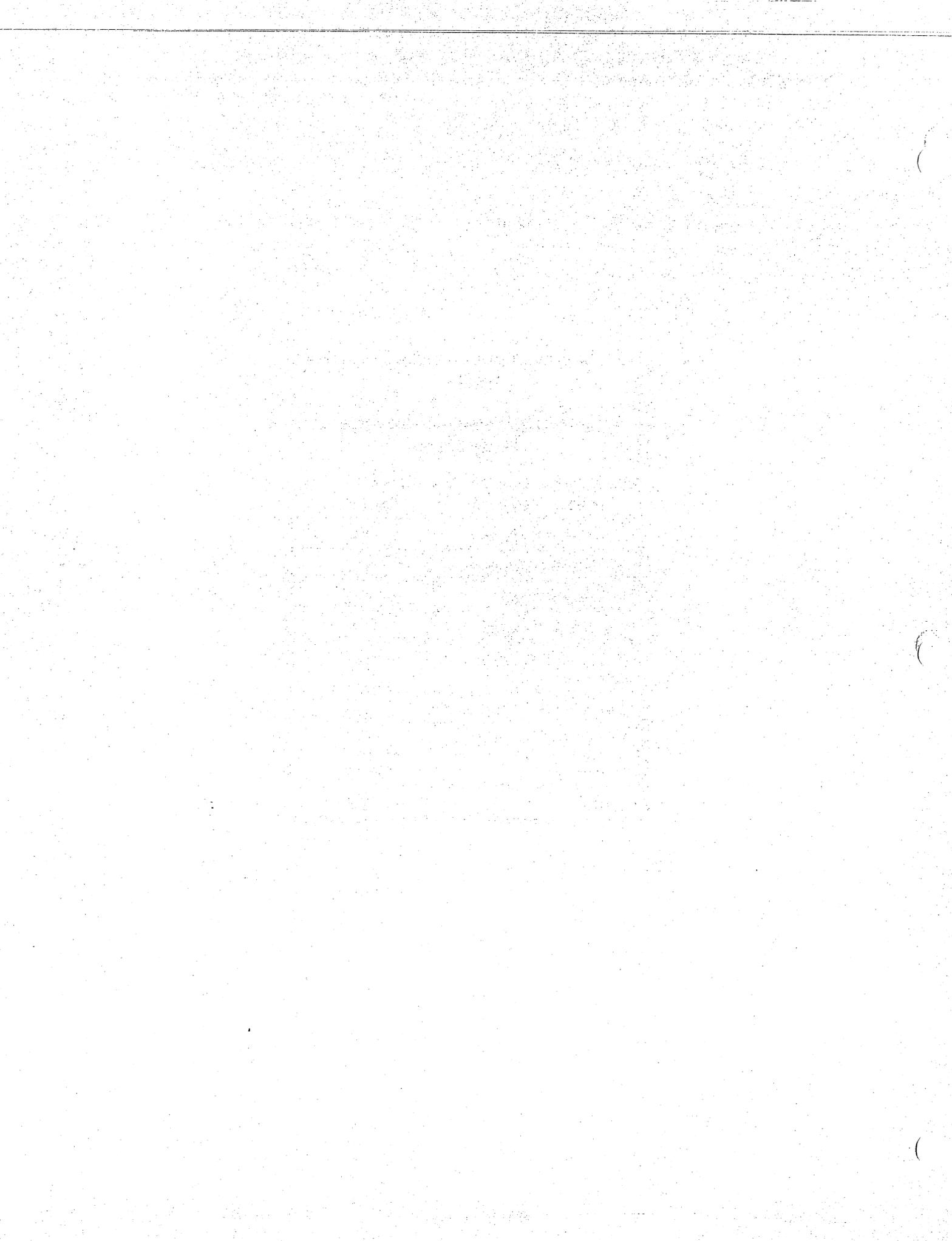
- Mixed-use office development with residences
- Residences on the second floor of downtown commercial buildings
- Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units in conjunction with downtown commercial buildings, primarily on the second floor

This may have been deleted by the Council's action on Feb 6, 1996

- ✧ 16. Treated effluent and/or agricultural runoff shall be used for irrigation of street trees and other public landscaping.
17. New public facilities, such as a new fire station, should be located with consideration for compatibility with surrounding land uses.
18. Public open space and parks should be provided in the downtown consistent with the General Plan and the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan.
19. Commercial development consistent with the policies and standards of this Plan should be developed on the west side of Front Street between West Street and East Street.
- ✧ 20. Development of land on the west side of Front Street between West Street and East Street (the Railroad Property) may include a public transit/train station, public parking lots, and public open space. Development of public facilities will be funded by the City, by the Redevelopment Agency, or by some other combination of public and private funding.
- ✧ 21. Development of the land on the west side of Front Street between West Street and East Street (the Railroad Property) shall include measures to achieve the noise standards of the General Plan.



Zoning Designation	Total Acres
R-2, Duplex Residential	2.41
R-3, Multi-family Residential	4.32
P-F, Public Facilities	2.59
C-1, Retail Commercial	6.76
C-2, General and Service Commercial	6.33
C-R, Residential Commercial	1.99
H-C, Highway Commercial	23.39
M, Industrial	24.48
TOTAL :	72.27



<p style="text-align: center;">Table 3 Summary of Developed Area Source: CMS, 1993</p>	
Total Number of Parcels In Project Area	93 parcels
Total Acreage of Parcels Within the Project Area	72.47 acres
Number of Vacant Parcels	16 parcels
Acres of Vacant Parcels	39.20 acres
Total Square Feet of Buildings	361,255 square feet
Vacant Buildings	3 buildings
Total Offstreet Parking	372 spaces
Total On-Street Parking	489 spaces
Total Square Feet of Vacant Buildings	12,350 square feet
Acres Devoted to Parking	1.24 acres
Number of Parcels With a Residential Use	26 parcels

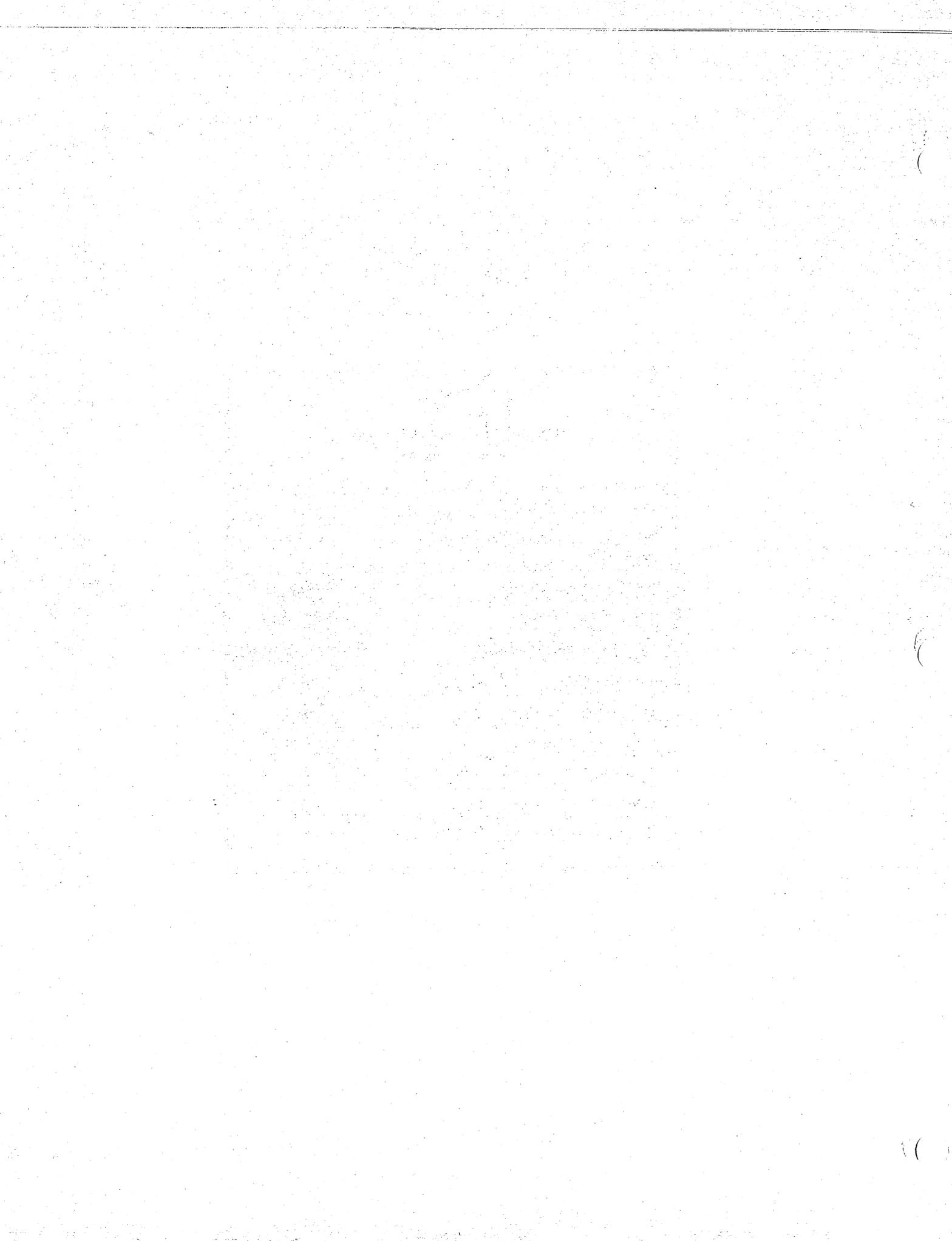
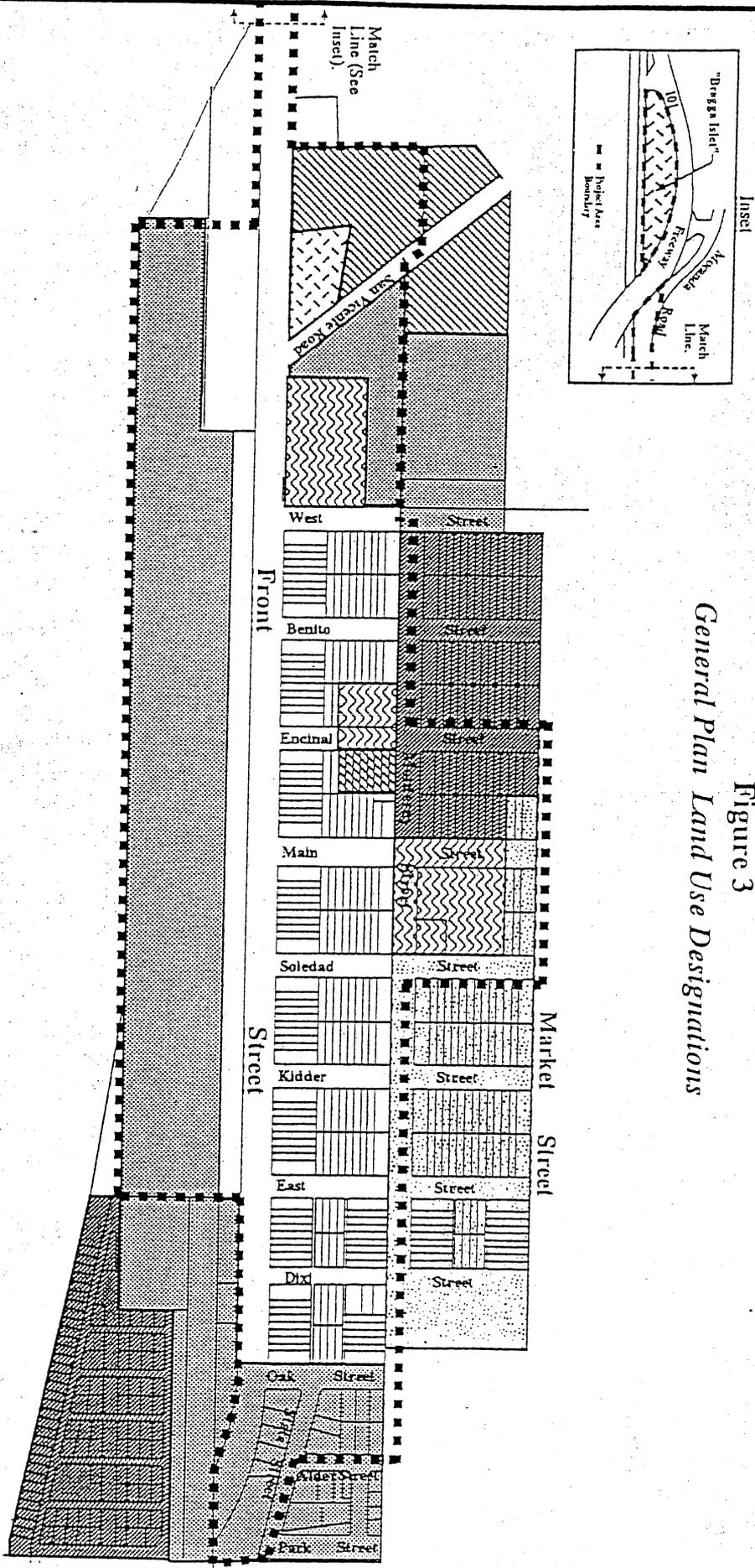


Figure 3
 General Plan Land Use Designations



City of Soledad
 Downtown Specific Plan/
 Front Street Rehabilitation Plan

General Plan Designations

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| | Residential 1-6 Units/Acre | | General Commercial |
| | Residential 7-12 Units/Acre | | Highway Commercial |
| | Residential 13-20 Units/Acre | | Public/Institutional/Recreational |
| | Retail/Office Commercial | | Plan Area Boundary |

Source: City of Soledad General Plan, 1993

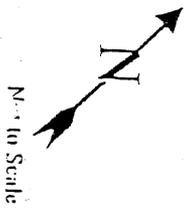
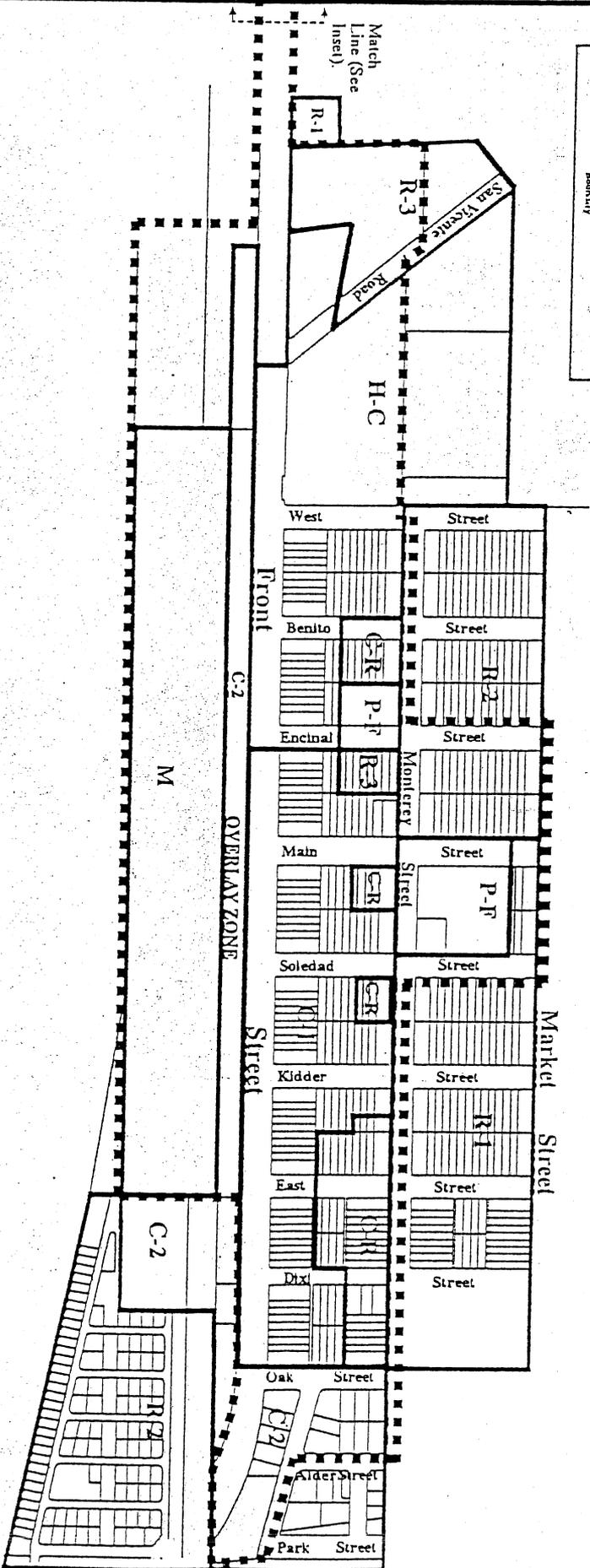
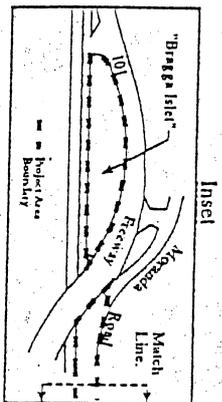


Figure 4
Zoning Districts

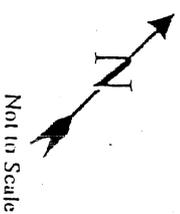


City of Soledad
Downtown Specific Plan/
Front Street Rehabilitation Plan

— Zoning District Boundaries

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| R-1, Single Family Residential | C-R, Residential Commercial |
| R-2, Duplex Residential | H-C, Highway Commercial |
| R-3, Multiple Residential | P-F, Public Facility |
| C-1, Retail Commercial | M, Industrial |
| C-2, General Commercial | |

■ ■ 1 Plan Area Boundary
Source: City of Soledad Zoning Ordinance



V. CIRCULATION

Introduction

For the downtown to become a revitalized commercial center, the transportation needs of the area must be satisfied for both motorized (ie, cars and trucks) and non-motorized (ie, walking and bike riding) modes of travel.

Circulation System Serving the Plan Area

Motor Vehicles

The downtown between West Street and Oak Street is primarily a grid system of local streets, with Front Street serving as the principle traffic artery connecting the downtown with the freeway interchanges located at the north and south ends of the City. San Vicente Road intersects Front Street near the north entrance to the City and provides access to the residential neighborhoods currently being developed on the east side of the City. Monterey Street parallels Front Street and is a wide thoroughfare serving both residential and commercial land uses. Main Street forms the principle intersection with Front Street in the center of the downtown.

The US 101 freeway borders the City on the west parallel to Front Street and provides the primary connection to other communities. There are two interchanges in Soledad near the north and south entrances to the City. State Highway 146 follows Front Street from the southern freeway interchange to East Street, where it turns east through the City towards Pinnacles National Monument.

The Circulation Element of the General Plan assigns roadway classifications to the major streets serving the downtown, as follows:

<u>Street</u>	<u>Classification</u>
Front Street	Two lane arterial
San Vicente Street	Two lane collector
Main Street	Two lane arterial
Monterey Street	Two lane collector
East Street	Two lane arterial
West Street	Two lane collector

Arterials are major roads that connect communities within the City. *Collector streets* are road segments that provide for circulation within the community, such as residential areas, employment centers, stores, and public services.

The Circulation Element identifies two truck routes serving downtown Soledad. One follows Front Street between the two freeway interchanges, while the other follows State Route 146 along Front Street from the freeway interchange on the south end of the City and then turns east on East Street toward the Pinnacles National Monument.

Rail Service

The Southern Pacific Railroad maintains rail service through Soledad on tracks that parallel the 101 freeway adjacent to the downtown. According to the General Plan, about twelve trains pass through town each day, four passenger trains and eight freight trains. At present there is no train station in Soledad; the nearest train station is in Salinas, about 23 miles to the north.

Transit Service

Soledad is served by Soledad Taxi, an on-call service providing intra-city transit, and by Greyhound Bus Lines which provides transit to surrounding communities. The Greyhound Bus stops along Front Street in downtown Soledad; there is no formal transit station.

Bicycles/Walking

The City has not designated formal bicycle routes. However, the flat topography and relatively compact city form make bike riding an attractive alternative to the automobile for many residents.

Sidewalks are provided throughout most of the downtown, although portions of Monterey Street, for example, lack curbs, gutters and sidewalks.

Existing Traffic Conditions

Based on traffic counts taken in May 1990, the Circulation Element of the General Plan shows Front Street to be operating at an "A" Level of Service (LOS). The average vehicle traffic per day for Front Street was set at approximately 10,000 vehicles.

Due to a lack of engineering data necessary for traffic projections, the General Plan was unable to specify required future improvements to Front Street needed to accommodate buildout. However, evidence suggests that traffic congestion is increasing to unsatisfactory levels, particularly during periods of heavy commuter traffic. In addition, both the City's circulation pattern and anticipated future development indicate that Front Street will become increasingly congested.

Current Capital Improvement Plans call for the installation of traffic signals at both West Street and East Street. Without the benefit of an in-depth traffic analysis, it is impossible to determine whether additional traffic control measures are needed.

In the northern portion of Front Street (outside the City limits), the street cross-section rapidly narrows from the 80' wide arterial street to a deteriorated two-lane road. When urban improvements are extended to this portion of town, this road must be upgraded to meet current arterial street standards, such as those found in the main business district.

In addition, San Vicente Road should be realigned to create a perpendicular intersection with Front Street. This can be accomplished by curving or hooking the eastern end of road so that it meets Front Street as a square intersection rather than at an angle. This realignment is necessary to allow safe turning motions to be made by vehicles traveling from San Vicente on to Front Street. The current angled configuration increases the risk that a vehicle traveling south on San Vicente will not see a vehicle traveling south on Front Street.

Driveways into residents and businesses should also be better defined to establish defined points of entry and exit from Front Street.

Parking

Parking does not appear to be a problem in downtown Soledad, even at times of peak use (usually around 6 PM). A recent parking survey counted about 372 offstreet spaces and about 489 onstreet spaces within the specific plan area for a total of about 861 spaces. Dividing the total floor area of the commercial businesses in the project area by the total number of onstreet and offstreet spaces gives a parking ratio of about one space per 420 square feet, which is fairly typical for commercial development in other cities. If just the offstreet spaces are counted, then there may be a parking shortfall (about one space per 970 square feet). The City requires parking for retail and office businesses at a ratio of one space per 200 square feet which is considerably higher.

Discussions with several downtown business owners suggest that there may be localized parking problems in some areas such as in the block of Kidder Street that contains the post office and grocery store. Parking lots in other areas, however, remain largely unused. Although parking is provided at the rear of most businesses facing Front Street, patrons appear to prefer the convenience of the parallel parking provided on the street, and the angled parking provided on Main Street, Soledad Street and Kidder Street.

Circulation Issues

- *Front Street, Main Street and East Street are designated as arterials by the Circulation Element. The volume of traffic implied by these designations may be incompatible with efforts to create a more pedestrian-oriented environment in the downtown.*

Arterials usually carry large traffic volumes at higher speeds. The improvements identified in the Conceptual Design Plan for Front Street and Main Street would reduce their capacity and speed by, among other things, narrowing the right-of-way with bulb-outs and by providing angled parking.

- *Although ample parking appears to be provided in the downtown at present, the development potential described above will necessitate the provision of additional offstreet parking.*

The parking requirements for new commercial development in Soledad are high

in comparison to other towns of comparable size. In order to accommodate expanded commercial development in the downtown and realize the goals of this Plan, additional parking will be needed.

- *Truck traffic will need to be routed around the downtown to maintain the pedestrian orientation envisioned by this Plan.*

Truck traffic through the downtown has been a continuing problem in Soledad, particularly from trucks serving the gravel operations east of the City. Recognizing that continued access to the downtown for deliveries is vital to the success of downtown businesses, the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan provides for an alternate truck route that avoids Front Street and Main street.

- *Walking in the downtown can be unpleasant because of the wind that blows down the Salinas Valley from the north.*

To help revitalize the downtown into a desirable place for comparison shopping, the pedestrian environment for shoppers must be improved. The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan designates areas on the west side of Front Street for the planting of windrows to provide protection from the wind, as well as provide an amenity for the community to enjoy. The Plan also recommends development of a paseo, or open pedestrian plaza, behind Front Street to provide shelter from the wind and to create an inviting place for people to meet and shop. Also included in the Plan is the provision of street furniture, such as seating and drinking fountains, to make walking in the downtown more enjoyable.

- *The freeway interchange at the north end of the City will need to be redesigned to accommodate future commercial and residential development.*

Traffic volumes on the freeway interchange at Moranda Road and Front Street will increase in the future as new residents commute to jobs in Salinas, the State prison and other locations to the north of the City. To accommodate this increased traffic, the interchange will need to be redesigned. The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan provides for improvements to the north entrance of the City which will make the transition between the downtown and the interchange more inviting, and are designed to complement whatever design for the interchange is ultimately constructed.

- *For the railroad property west of the tracks to be developed with commercial uses, two at-grade railroad crossings must be developed.*

The Circulation Element identifies the need for two at-grade crossings to access this property, and discusses ways to make the crossings safer. The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan provide for the two crossings as the westerly extension of West Street and East Street, respectively.

Policies

The following circulation policies are recommended to supplement those contained in the Circulation Element of the General Plan and address the issues identified above.

1. New development in the downtown shall provide parking in accordance with Section 17.36 of the Soledad Zoning Ordinance. The provision of offsite parking for businesses fronting on Front Street should be encouraged so that the form and character of Front Street is maintained.
2. The principle role of Front Street in downtown circulation should be to provide access for patrons of downtown businesses and not to serve through-traffic and trucks. Street sections should be consistent with those described in the Conceptual Design Plan (Chapter VI).
3. The principle role of Main Street between Front Street and Market Street should be to provide pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle access between surrounding residential neighborhoods and the downtown.
4. Truck traffic should be discouraged along Front Street between East Street and West Street. Truck routes should be as shown on Figure 2.
5. Facilities that promote the use of alternate modes of transportation, including bicycle lanes, pedestrian and hiking trails, park-and-ride lots and bus turn-outs and shelters should be incorporated into new development.
6. New development shall contribute its fair share to the funding of needed traffic signals and intersection improvements in the downtown.
7. A park and ride lot should be considered near the north entrance to the City to serve commuters between Soledad and employment centers to the north.
8. Development of the property west of the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks shall not occur unless suitable vehicular access is provided across the railroad tracks, to the satisfaction of the City, the Southern Pacific Railroad and all other applicable agencies with jurisdiction over such crossings. Such crossings shall, at a minimum, incorporate the elements described by the Circulation Element of the General Plan.
9. Street improvements should occur within existing public rights-of-way to the maximum extent possible.
10. Improvements to the downtown circulation system should be designed to serve the land uses in the Plan area as designated in the General Plan and should accommodate the traffic volumes expected at buildout.

11. New driveway openings along Front Street should be minimized to help preserve and reinforce the pedestrian character of the downtown.

VI. CONCEPTUAL DESIGN PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN SOLEDAD

This section describes the Conceptual Design Plan which provides the overall vision for the development and revitalization of the downtown. For ease of discussion, the Design Plan has been divided into four sub-areas with corresponding project elements: The North Gateway, Streetscape Improvements, The Railroad Property, and The Paseo. Although each project sub-area is integral to the overall Design Plan, the cost of implementing all of the projects would far exceed presently available funding. For this reason, the elements of each project sub-area are listed separately so that pieces can be done individually and the projects can be implemented over time.

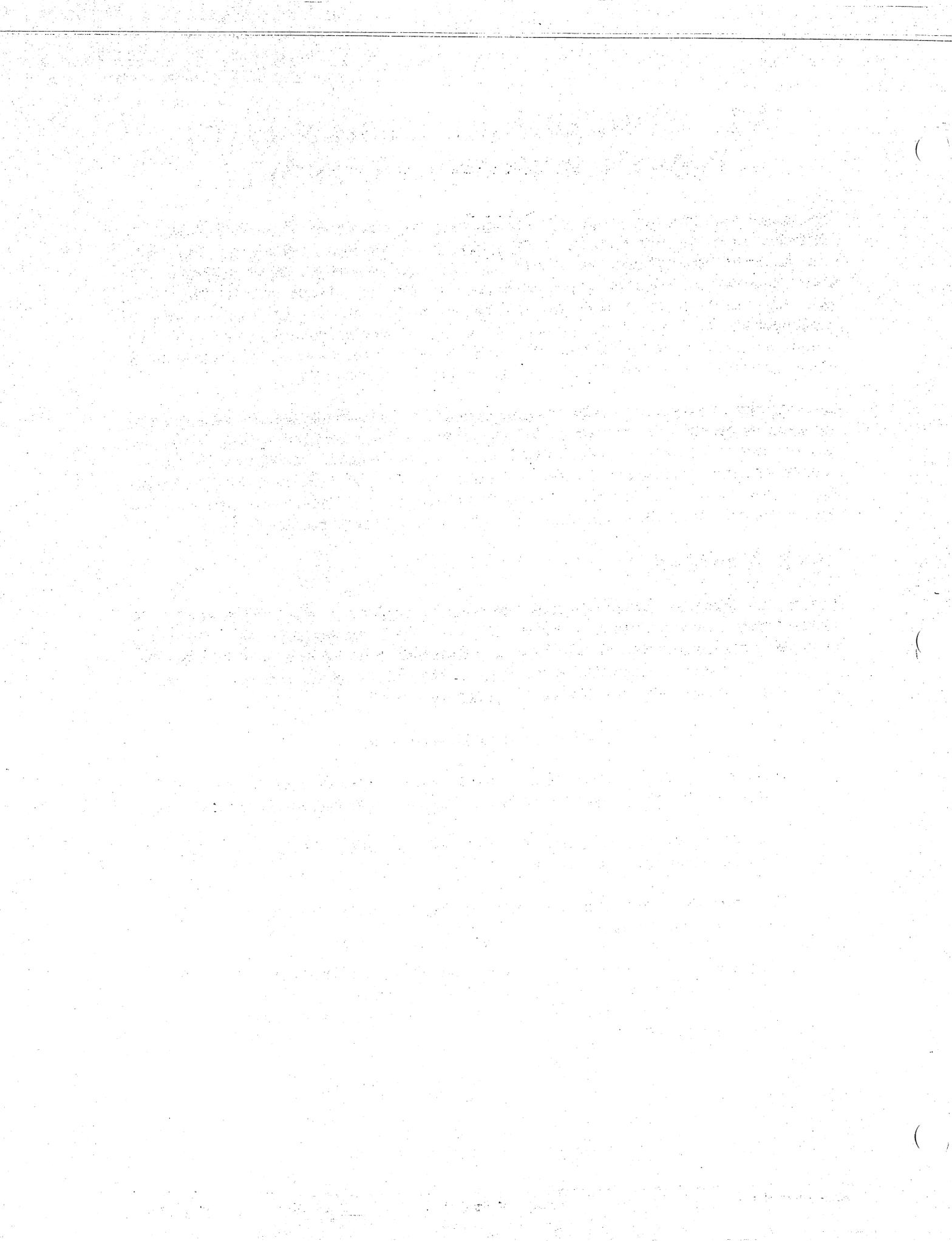
Although the Conceptual Design Plan is intended to help implement the General Plan and Redevelopment Plan, in some instances it departs from the City's existing plans and development standards. For example, The Streetscape Improvements project recommends the construction of street vendors within the public right-of-way along Main Street. The use of a public right-of-way for commercial activities would necessitate a revision to the City's regulations governing allowable uses of public property.

Design Principles

Design principles are statements that serve as guideposts in the formulation of the various improvement projects described below for each project sub-area. The design principles were formulated in part from the assessment of existing conditions described in Chapter III, from the objectives of the General Plan and Redevelopment Plan, and from discussions with the City and downtown property owners.

Overall Design Principles

- *The rehabilitation of Front Street should provide infrastructure for the long-term development of the commercial core of the City in accordance with the General Plan.*
- *The Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan should enhance the commercial viability of the downtown.*
- *The downtown should provide a more inviting pedestrian environment for shopping, dining and entertainment.*
- *There does not appear to be a parking problem in the downtown area at present. However, new development in the downtown should be required to provide needed parking either at the rear of the building to preserve the uniform character of Front Street, or to provide parking offsite.*



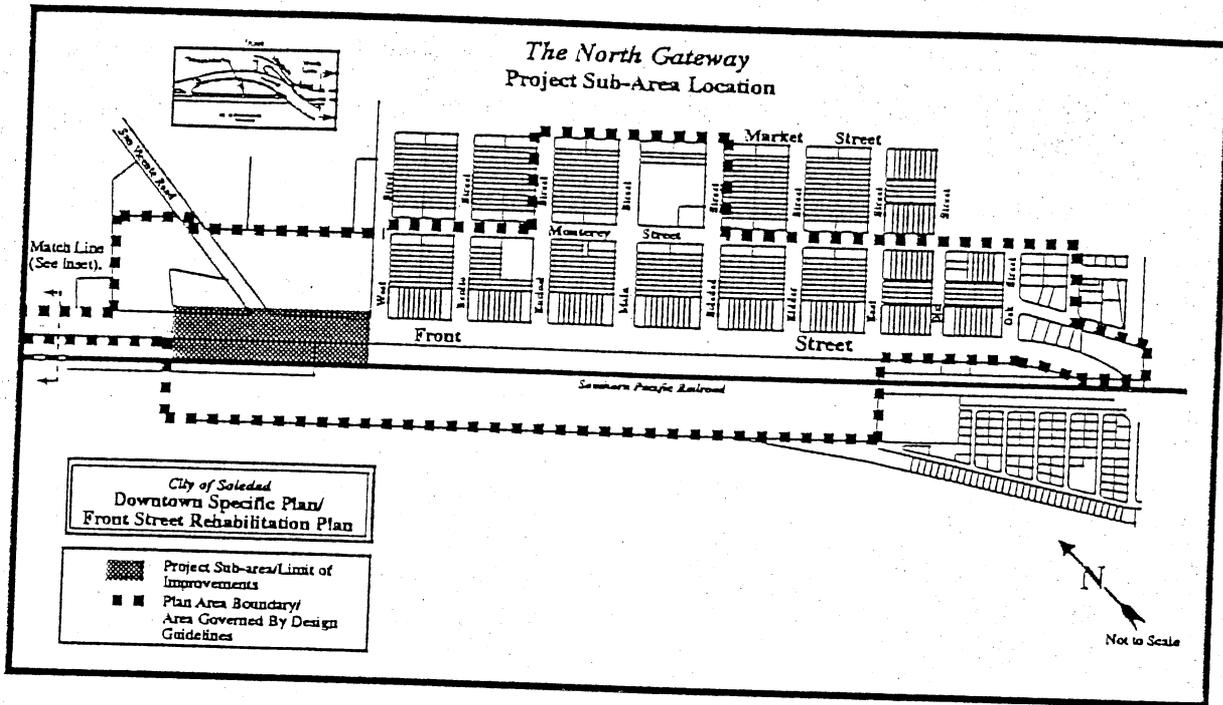


- *The character of the downtown commercial core area should be preserved and enhanced. Design guidelines are needed to ensure that new development is consistent with the size, scale, and architecture of existing development.*



- *Residences should be preserved in the downtown and incorporated into new development.*
- *New development, both public and private, should help implement the projects described in this Conceptual Design Plan.*
- *Truck traffic should be routed around the downtown using side streets generally as illustrated by the proposed truck route on Figure 2.*

The North Gateway



The North Gateway includes the properties along both sides of Front Street between West Street and the redevelopment project area boundary at the north end of the City. This section of Front Street provides the first impression of the City to visitors arriving from the north and is heavily travelled by workers commuting to jobs north of the City at the State prison, and other destinations. The parcels between San Vicente Road and the freeway interchange have been developed with a hodgepodge of land uses that lack paved parking, landscaping or other amenities; Front Street itself is not fully improved with pavement, curbs, gutters, sidewalks or drainage facilities. Between San Vicente Road and West Street is property owned by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) occupied by an electrical sub-station. The lack of full street improvements combined with the type and quality of development make the transition from the City to the freeway interchange unattractive. With the construction of the Dole factory just north of the City, and the expansion of the State prison in the near future, the volume of traffic using this section of Front Street will grow proportionately, as will the importance of this entryway to the City.

*not within
redvelopment
area*

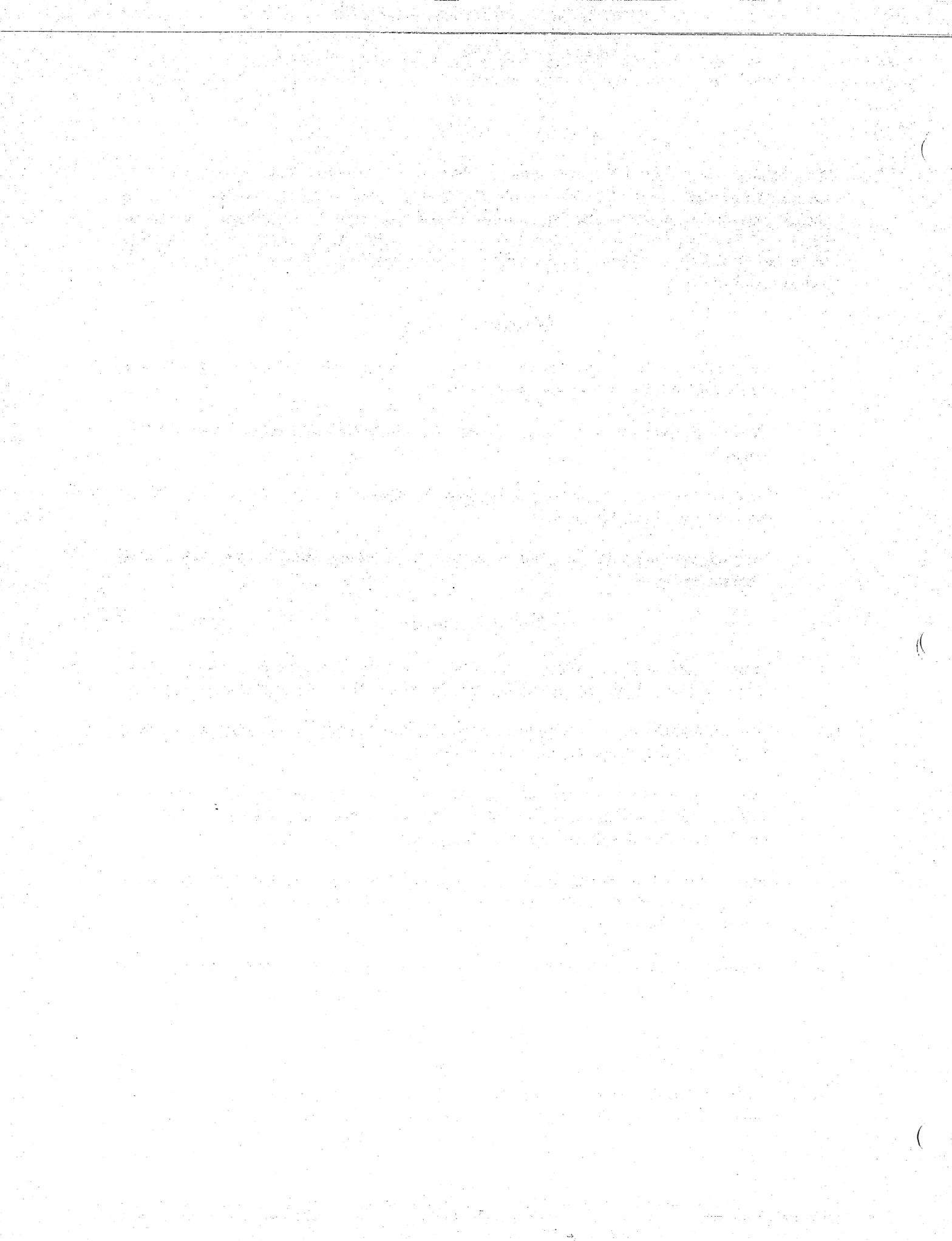
The primary goal of the North Gateway projects is to improve the appearance of this important entrance to the City by completing needed roadway improvements, extending needed sewer and water lines and other infrastructure, and installing landscaping. Figure 7 illustrates how these elements would be combined to form a boulevard-like entrance to the City. Figures 8 and 9 show a cross sections of Front Street at the north entrance to the City.

Design Principles

- *The section of Front Street between the City limits and West Street should be renovated to provide a more inviting entrance to the City.*
- *The PG&E property needs to be screened and landscaped and frontage improvements installed.*
- *The overhead utility lines along Front Street between West Street and the 101 Freeway should be placed underground.*
- *The property immediately south of the Exxon service station should be redeveloped with a commercial use.*

Project Elements

1. Install additional pavement, curbs gutters and sidewalks on the east side of Front Street between West Street and San Vicente Road in front of the PG&E property.
2. Provide additional landscaping along the PG&E frontage consisting of screen trees, foundation planting and ground cover.
3. Provide a 10 foot wide landscaped planter on the east side of Front Street from West Street to within about 120 feet of the San Vicente intersection. Plant with street trees and shrubs and provide irrigation.
4. Install additional pavement, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, 10 foot wide parkway planter strip and drainage system along the north side of Front Street between San Vicente Road and the City limits.
5. Install landscaping consisting of street trees and ground cover in a 10 foot wide planter strip between San Vicente Road and the City limits.
6. Install landscaped median between West Street and San Vicente Road that provides left turn pockets at both ends.
7. Install pavement, curbs, gutters, sidewalks and 10 foot wide planter strip on west side of Front Street between West Street and the City limits.



8. Install landscaping consisting of street trees, shrubs and groundcover and irrigation in planter strip on west side of Front Street between West Street and the City limits (including the PG&E property).
9. Landscape the property north of the existing service station to the city limits with trees and groundcover; provide berms to add visual interest and gateway signage that announces the arrival in Soledad.
10. Extend sewer, water and storm drain lines to serve properties along Front Street north of San Vicente Road.
11. Underground overhead utilities between West Street and San Vicente Road.

Figure 7
View of Front Street at North Entrance to
the City Showing Boulevard Arrival to
Soledad.

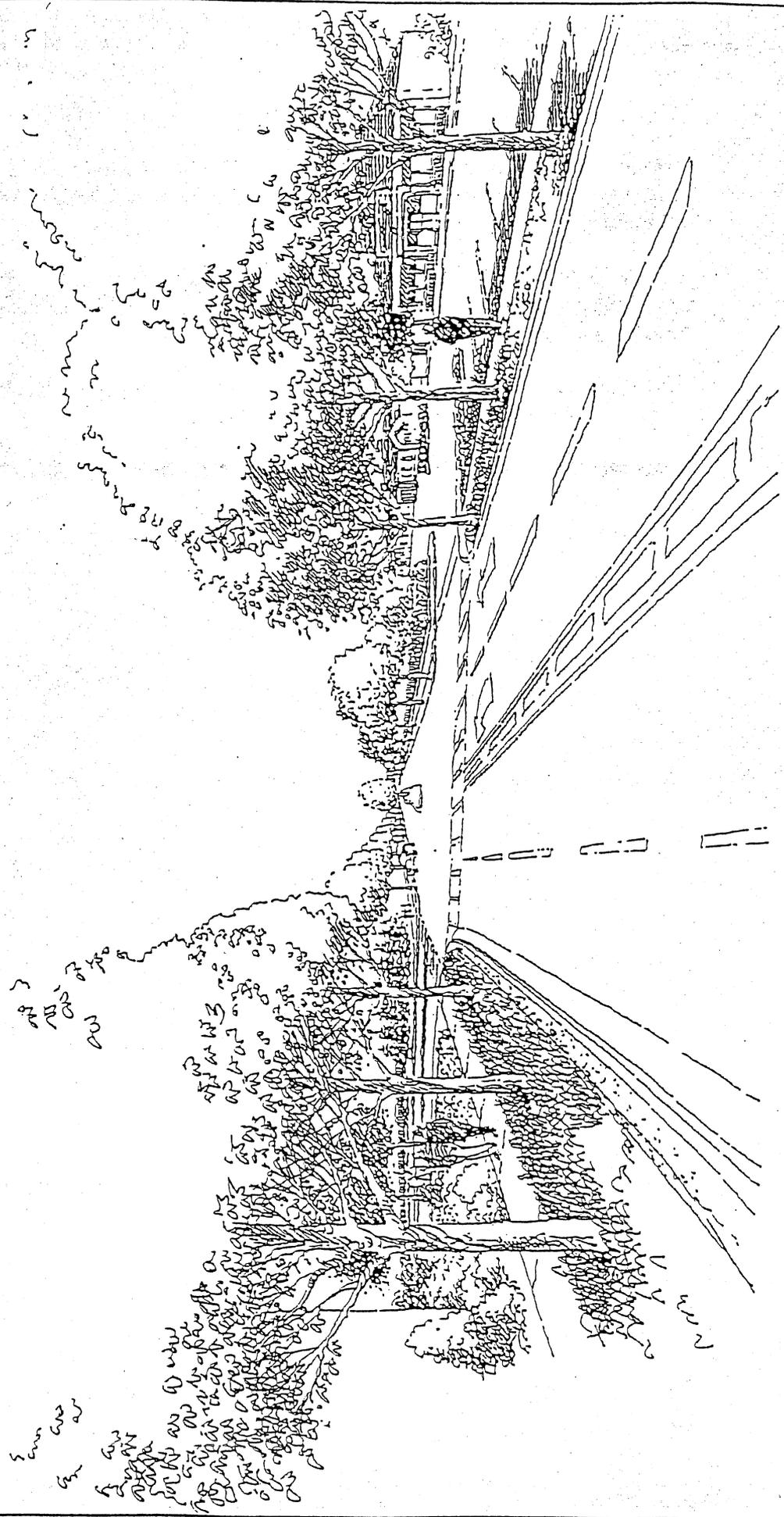
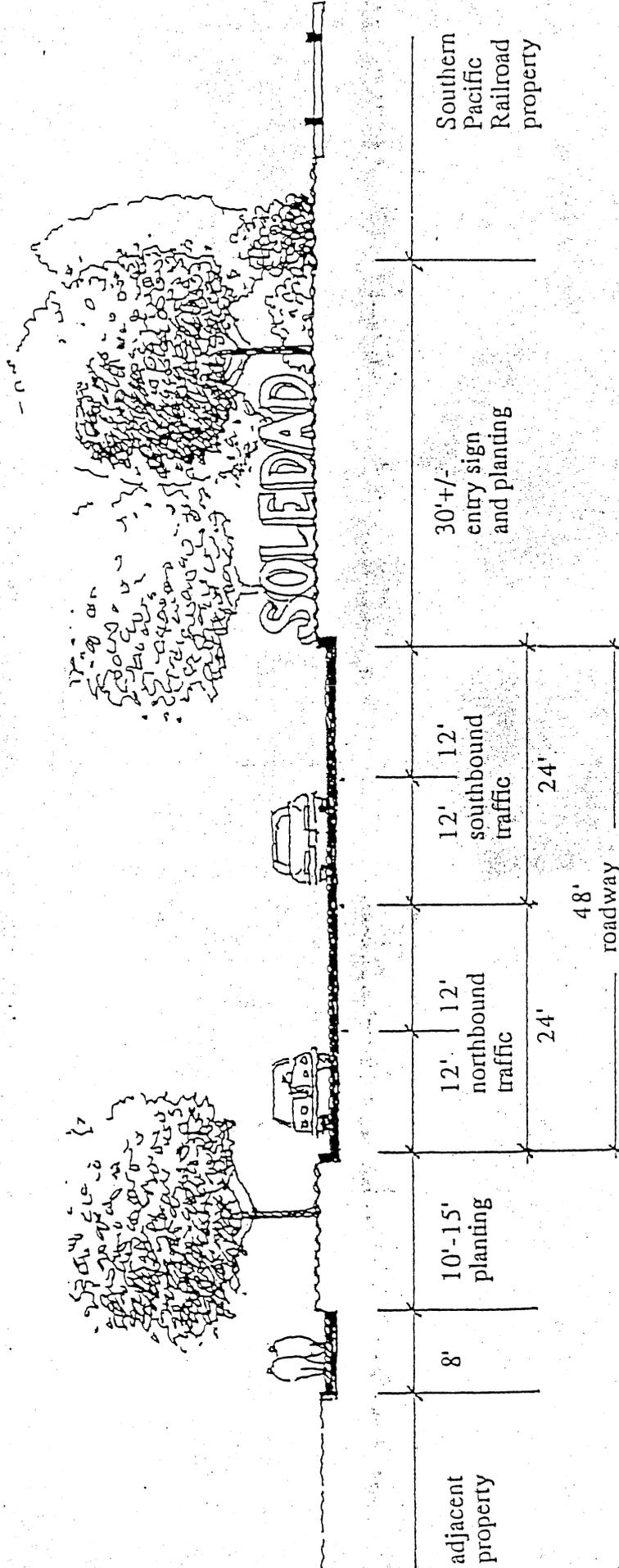


Figure 8

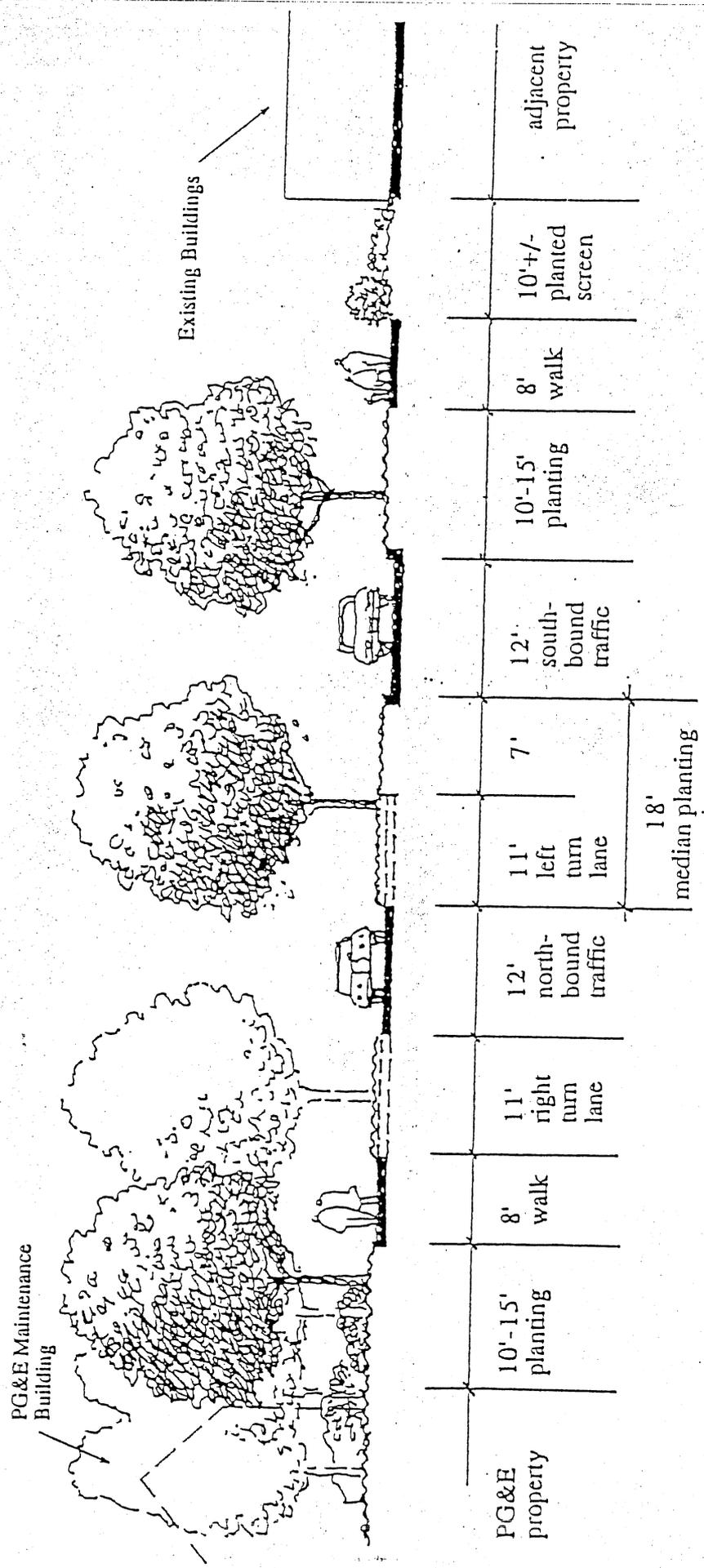
Street Section at the North Entrance to the City.



A landscaped entry statement is provided on the west side of the street, and a planter strip with curbs, gutters and sidewalks, and street trees ~~has~~ been provided along the east side to create a more inviting gateway to the City. *have*

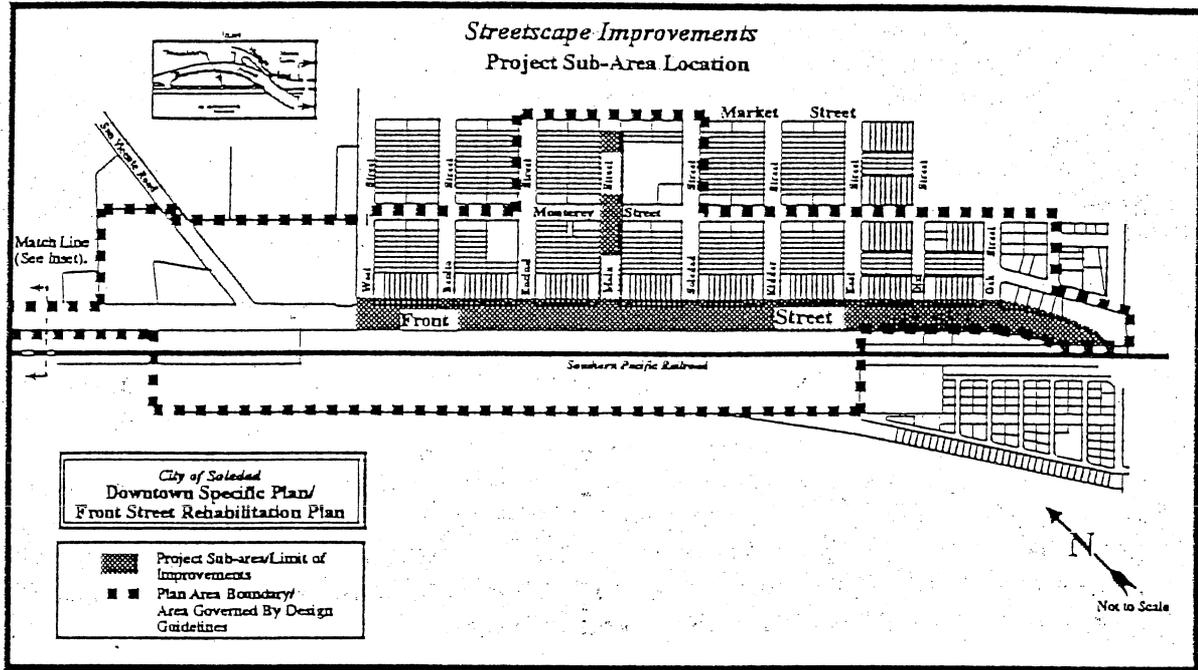
Figure 9.

Street Section Between San Vicente Road and West Street.



A landscaped median has been added and trees are planted along the east side of the street to help screen the PG&E substation.

Streetscape Improvements



Front Street is a key component of the City's circulation system and is the basis of the grid pattern of streets serving the commercial and residential neighborhoods in the downtown. In this sense, Front Street helps define the form, scale and character of the City. With freeway interchanges at either end, Front Street is a convenient stopping-off place for regional truck traffic and serves as a staging area for busses transporting farm workers to the surrounding fields.

At the same time, Front Street is part of the downtown shopping district where the bulk of commerce in the City takes place. However, a variety of factors combine to make the shopping environment along Front street (and in the downtown generally) unpleasant, which in turn diminishes the vitality of the commercial core of the City. For example, much of Front Street lacks amenities that would encourage pedestrian use, such as street trees, benches or other street furniture, and offers little protection from the strong northwesterly winds that blow down the Salinas Valley. Furthermore, commercial development along Front Street lacks common design elements that would unify the district into a cohesive "downtown".

Main Street is the other principal commercial street in downtown Soledad. Main Street is wider than the other streets intersecting Front Street, lending importance to this boulevard that contains the City Hall, police station, and fire station, as well as Our Lady of Solitude Catholic Church.

The Streetscape Improvements are intended to provide amenities primarily to Front Street that result in a more desirable shopping environment. Bulb-outs, landscaping and street furniture are intended to encourage pedestrian use; the on-street parking provided along the east side of Front Street has been angled to provide more spaces and to slow traffic through the area. Figure 11 provides a plan view of how these concepts would be applied at intersections along Front Street; the street section is shown by Figure 12. Figures 13A, 13B, 13C, and 13D show the streetscape improvements for Front Street within the Plan area.

Along Main Street between City Hall and Front Street, landscaping and other improvements are recommended to help draw people to the blocks surrounding Front Street. The sidewalks along the portion of Main Street mid-block between Monterey Street and Front Street have been widened to accommodate small street vendors that could sell food, arts and crafts produced by local artisans, and produce grown by surrounding farmers (a Farmer's Market). Figure 10 provides a view looking east down Main Street with the street vendor units added. Figures 14 and 15 provide conceptual illustrations of Main Street just east of Front Street as it exists today, and how it would appear after the addition of the street vendor units.

Design Principles

- *Street improvements should occur within existing public rights-of-way to the maximum extent possible.*
- *Improvements to the downtown circulation system should be designed to serve the land uses in the Plan area as designated by the General Plan and should accommodate the traffic volumes expected at buildout.*
- *New driveway openings along Front Street should be minimized to help preserve and reinforce the pedestrian character of the downtown.*
- *Infill commercial development along the Front Street corridor should be encouraged to provide parking offsite, or at a minimum, to provide parking at the rear of the building with access from a common alleyway.*

Project Elements

Overall Improvements

1. Prepare a Public Works Master Plan for sewer, water, roads, storm drainage, and other improvements.
2. Upgrade the sewer lines serving downtown in accordance with an overall Master Plan for the City.
3. Upgrade the water lines serving the downtown in accordance with an overall master plan for the City that will ensure adequate fire flow.
4. Install storm drainage improvements in the downtown in accordance with an overall master plan for the City.



West Street to Benito Street

1. Install corner bulb-outs that wrap around Front Street onto Benito Street on the south and West Street on the north. Include 10 foot wide planters in each. Street section as shown in Figure 12.
2. Install landscaped median between West Street and Benito Street with left-turn lanes.
3. Install curb, gutter and sidewalks along west side of Front Street with bulb-outs that correspond to those proposed on the east side. Include 10 foot wide landscape planters in bulb-outs. Provide opening in sidewalk for driveway or street-type entrance onto railroad property opposite West Street.
4. Provide parallel parking on both sides of Front Street in this block.

Benito Street to Encinal Street

1. Install corner bulb-outs that wrap around Front Street onto Encinal Street on the south and Benito Street on the north. Include 10 foot wide planters in each.
2. Install landscaped median between Benito Street and Encinal Street with left-turn lanes.
3. Install curb, gutter and sidewalks along west side of Front Street with bulb-outs that correspond to those proposed on the east side. Include 10 foot wide landscaped planters in bulb-outs. Provide opening in sidewalk for driveway or street-type entrance onto railroad property opposite Benito Street.

4. Provide angled parking on east side of Front Street (minimum 45°), parallel parking on west side.

Encinal Street to Main Street

1. Install corner bulb-outs that wrap around Front Street onto the vacant property at mid-block and that wrap around Main Street on the south. Include 10 foot wide planters in each.
2. Install landscaped median between Encinal Street and Main Street with left-turn lanes.
3. Install curb, gutter and sidewalks along west side of Front Street with bulb-outs that correspond to those proposed on the east side. Include 10 foot wide landscaped planters in bulb-outs. Provide opening in sidewalk for driveway or street-type entrance onto railroad property opposite Encinal Street.
4. Provide angled parking on east side of Front Street (minimum 45°), parallel parking on west side.
5. Install street trees on both sides of Encinal Street between Front Street and Monterey Street.

Main Street to Soledad Street

1. Install corner bulb-outs that wrap around Front Street onto Main Street on the north and that wrap around Soledad Street on the south. Include 10 foot wide planters in each.
2. Install curb, gutter and sidewalks along west side of Front Street with bulb-outs that correspond to those proposed on the east side. Include 10 foot wide landscaped planters in bulb-outs. Provide opening in sidewalk for driveway or street-type entrance onto railroad property opposite Encinal Street.
3. Provide angled parking on east side of Front Street (minimum 45°), parallel parking on west.
4. Install street trees on both sides of Main Street between Front Street and Monterey Street.

Soledad Street to Kidder Street

1. Install corner bulb-outs that wrap around Front Street onto Soledad Street on the north, into the bank property at mid-block, and that wrap around Kidder Street on the south. Include 10 foot wide planters in bulb-out between Kidder Street and bank property driveway and on north side of bank driveway.

2. Install curb, gutter and sidewalks along west side of Front Street with bulb-outs that correspond to those proposed on the east side. Include 10 foot wide landscaped planters in bulb-outs. Provide opening in sidewalk for driveway or street-type entrance onto railroad property opposite Encinal Street.
3. Provide angled parking on east side of Front Street (minimum 45°), parallel parking on west side.
4. Install street trees on both sides of Soledad Street between Front Street and Monterey Street. Install street trees and sidewalk along north property line of bank property between Front Street and rear parking lot.

Kidder Street to East Street

1. Install corner bulb-outs that wrap around Front Street onto Kidder Street on the north, into the health clinic property, and that wrap around East Street on the south. Include 10 foot wide planters in bulb-out between East Street and the clinic property driveway and on north side of the clinic's driveway.
2. Install curb, gutter and sidewalks along west side of Front Street with bulb-outs that correspond to those proposed on the east side. Include 10 foot wide landscaped planters in bulb-outs. Provide opening in sidewalk for driveway or street-type entrance onto railroad property opposite Kidder Street.
3. Provide angled parking on east side of Front Street (minimum 45°), parallel parking on west side.
4. Install street trees on both sides of Kidder Street between Front Street and Monterey Street.

Main Street Between Front Street and Market Street

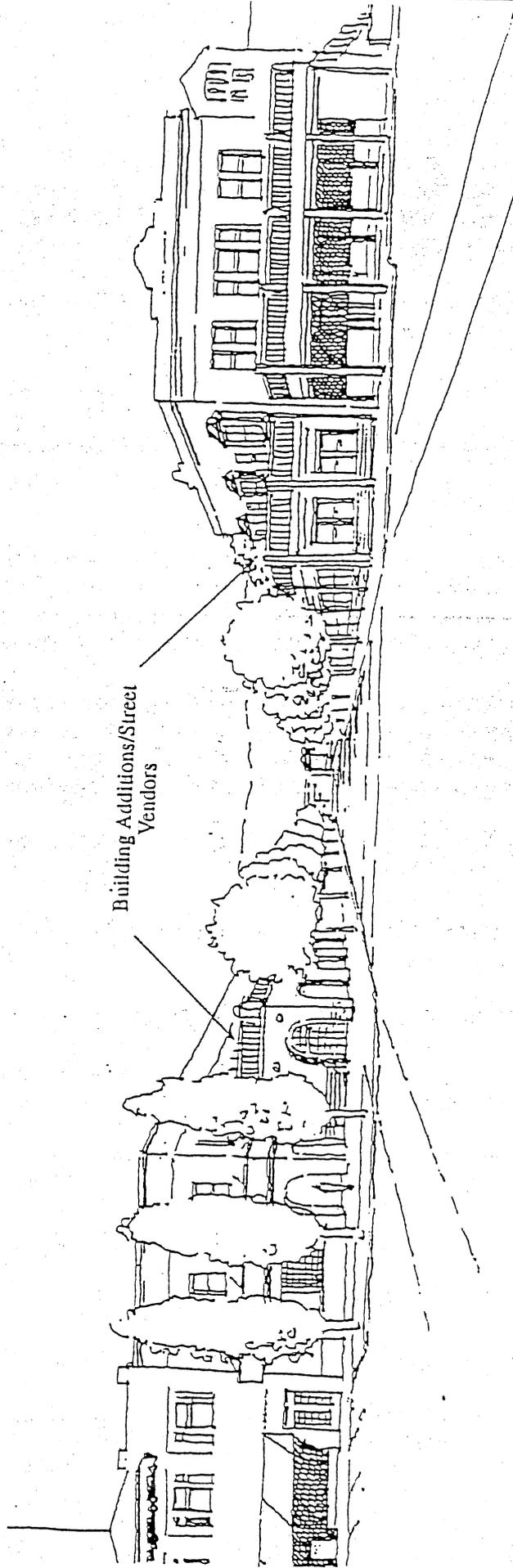
1. Widen the sidewalk between Front Street and mid-block between Front Street and Monterey Street.
2. Construct street vendor units between Front Street and mid-block between Front Street and Monterey Street.
3. Provide street trees in sidewalk planters between Front Street Market Street.

South of East Street to Railroad Underpass

1. Install street trees and irrigation on both sides of Front Street.
2. Install landscaping and pedestrian/bike path in Caltrans right-of-way from Oak Street to Vosti Park

Figure 10

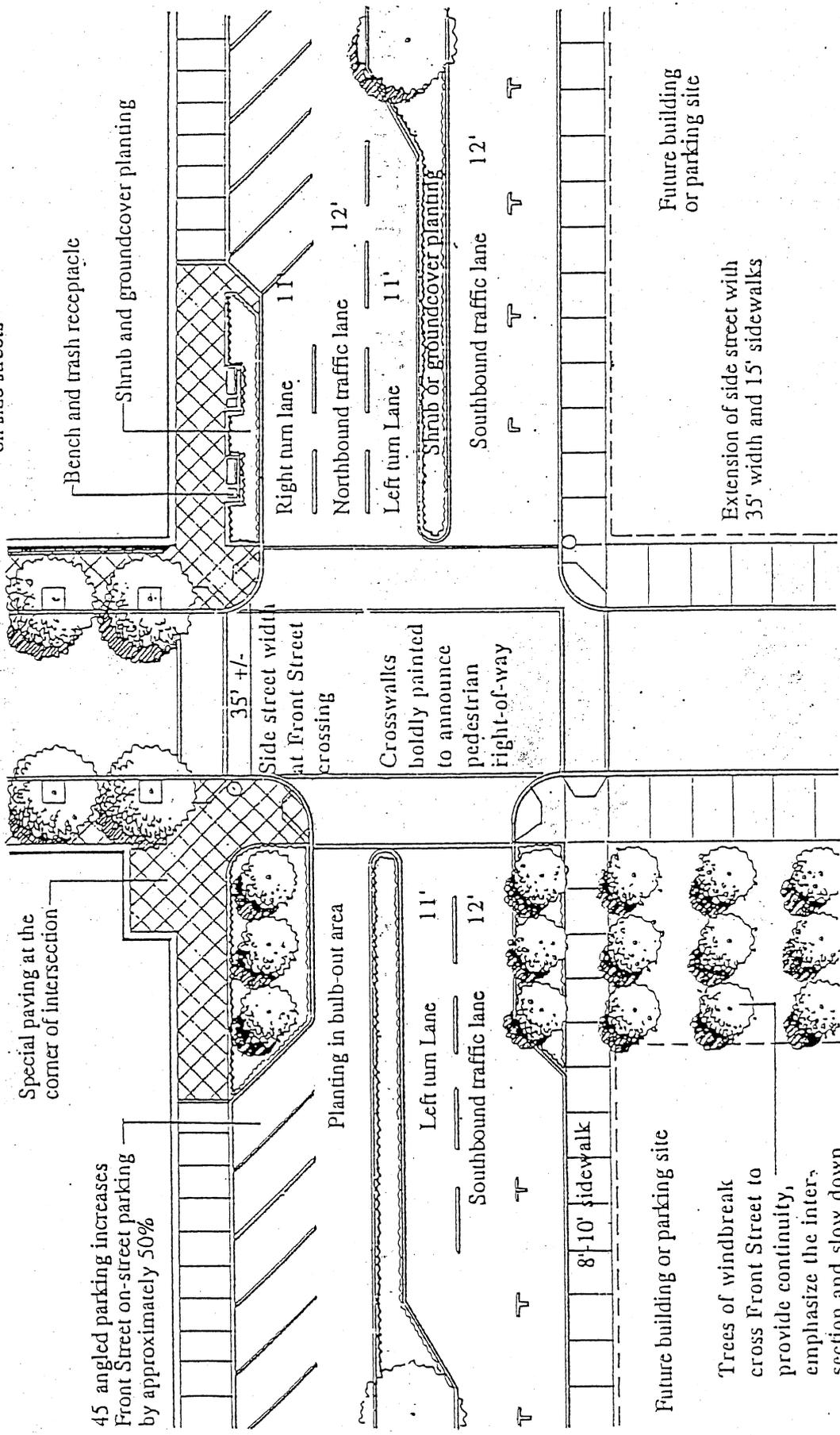
Looking East Down Main Street.



The street has been narrowed by the addition of retail vendor spaces to the side of existing buildings. The sidewalk has been widened and street trees have been added to help create a sense of enclosure for pedestrians.

Figure 11
Detail of Intersection Improvements

15' +/-
Typ. Sidewalk Width
on side streets



Special paving at the corner of intersection

45 angled parking increases Front Street on-street parking by approximately 50%

Side street width at Front Street crossing 35' +/-

Crosswalks boldly painted to announce pedestrian right-of-way

Planting in bulb-out area

Left turn Lane 11'
Southbound traffic lane 12'

8'-10' sidewalk

Future building or parking site

Trees of windbreak cross Front Street to provide continuity, emphasize the intersection and slow down traffic, and shelter the pedestrian

Bench and trash receptacle

Shrub and groundcover planting

Right turn lane 11'

Northbound traffic lane 12'

Left turn Lane 11'

Shrub or groundcover planting

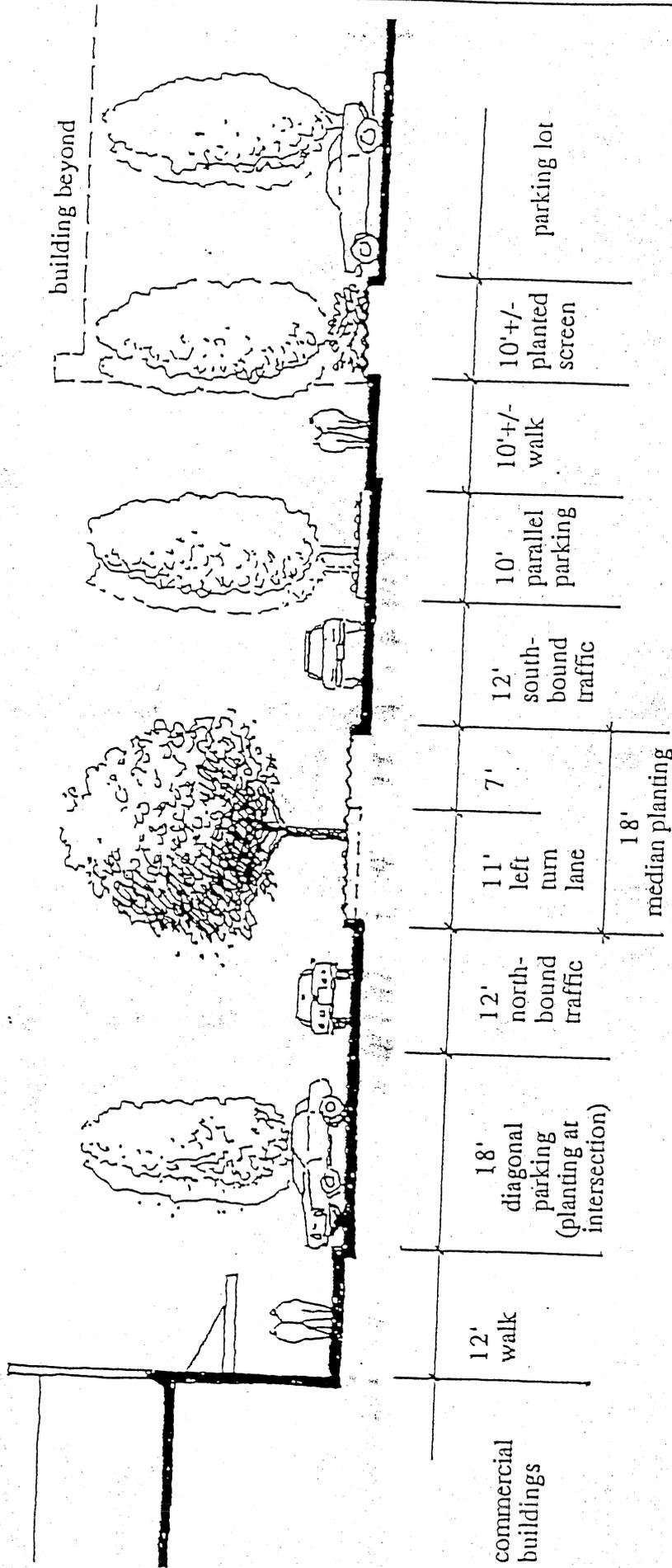
Southbound traffic lane 12'

Future building or parking site

Extension of side street with 35' width and 15' sidewalks

Figure 12

*Typical Street Section for Front Street
Between West Street and Oak Street.*



Angled parking has been provided along the east side of the street and the outline of potential future development on the railroad property is shown to the west.

Figure 13A

Streetscape Improvements Between the City Limits and West Street

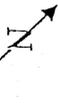
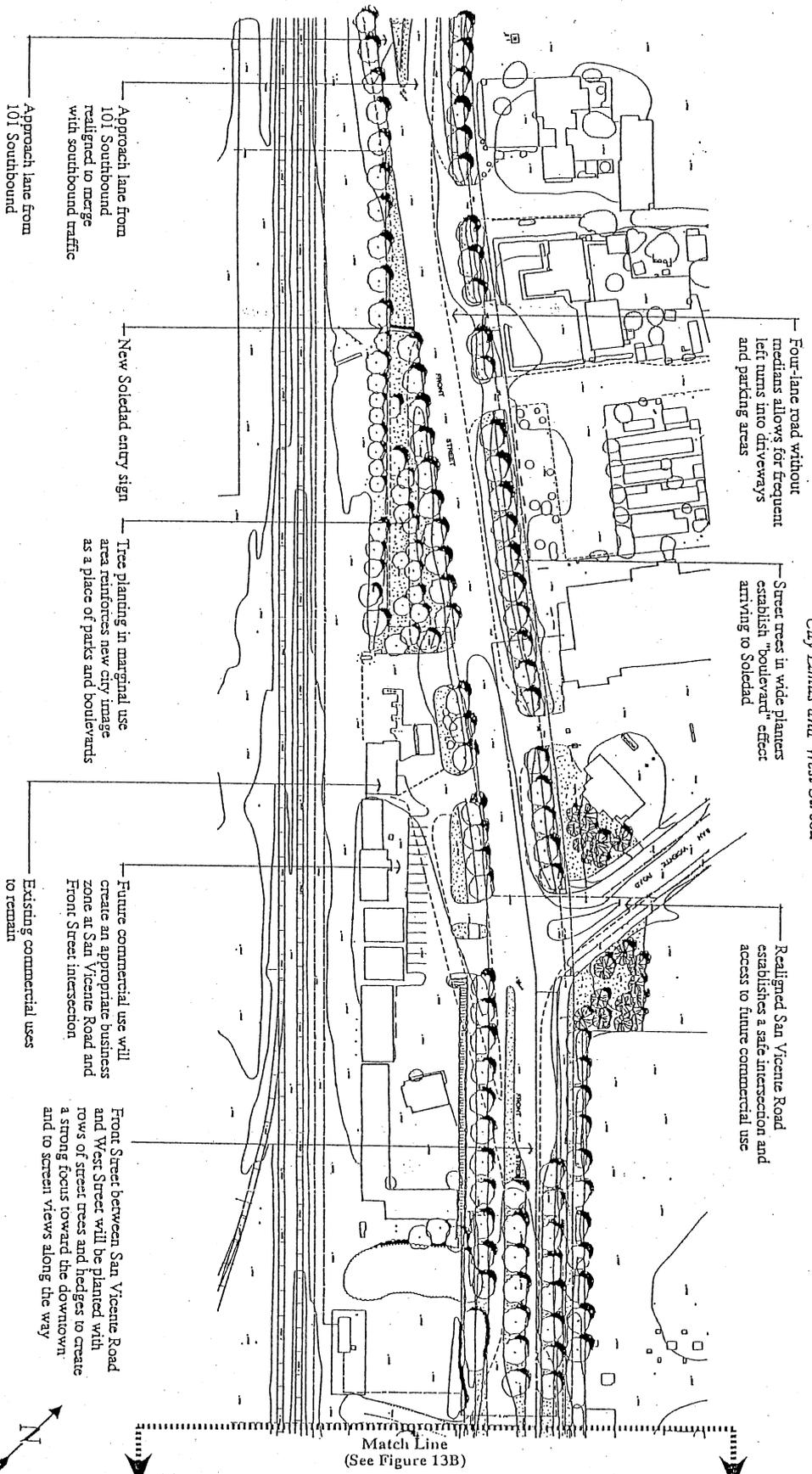
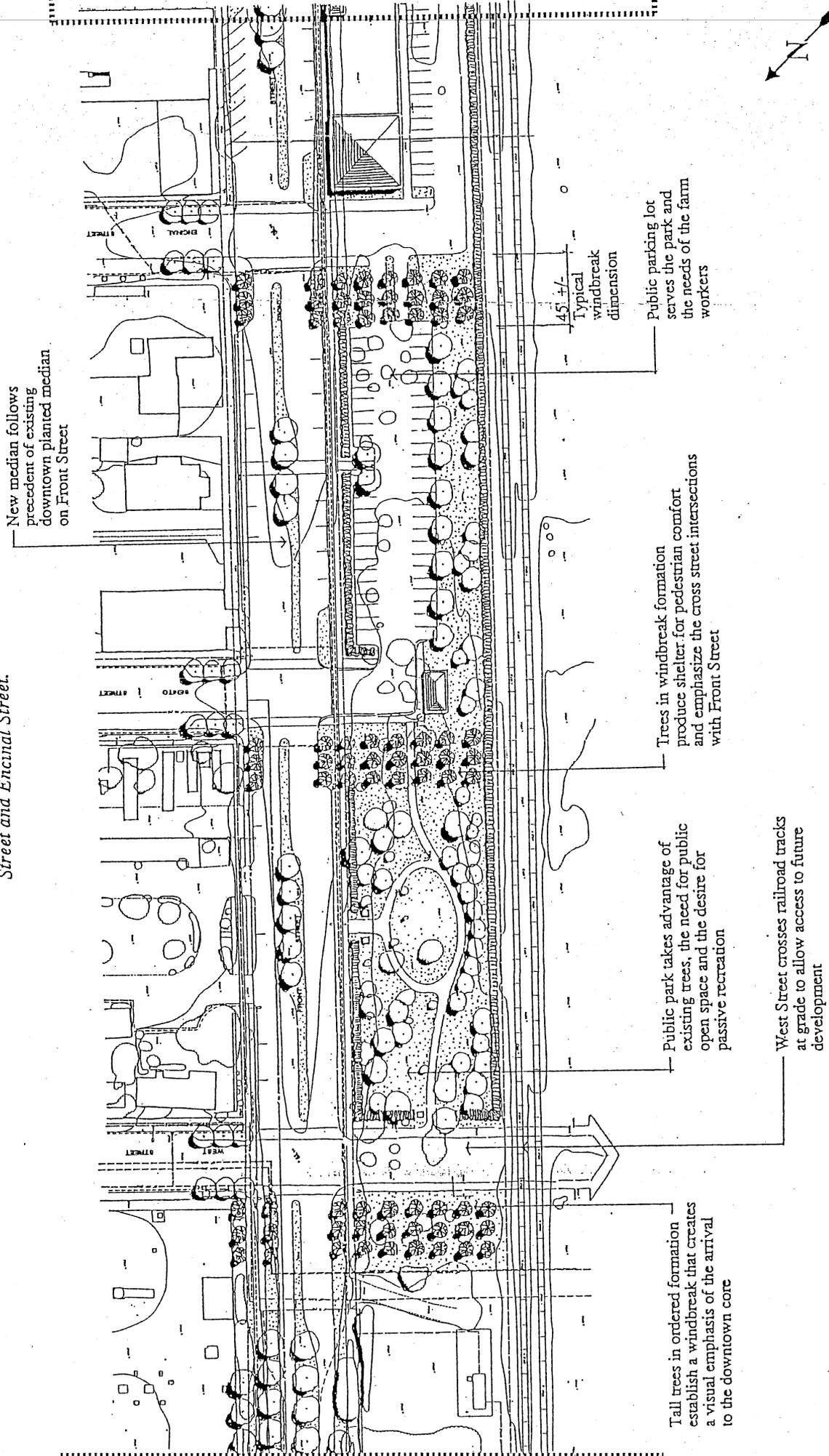




Figure 13B

Streetscape Improvements Between West Street and Encinal Street.

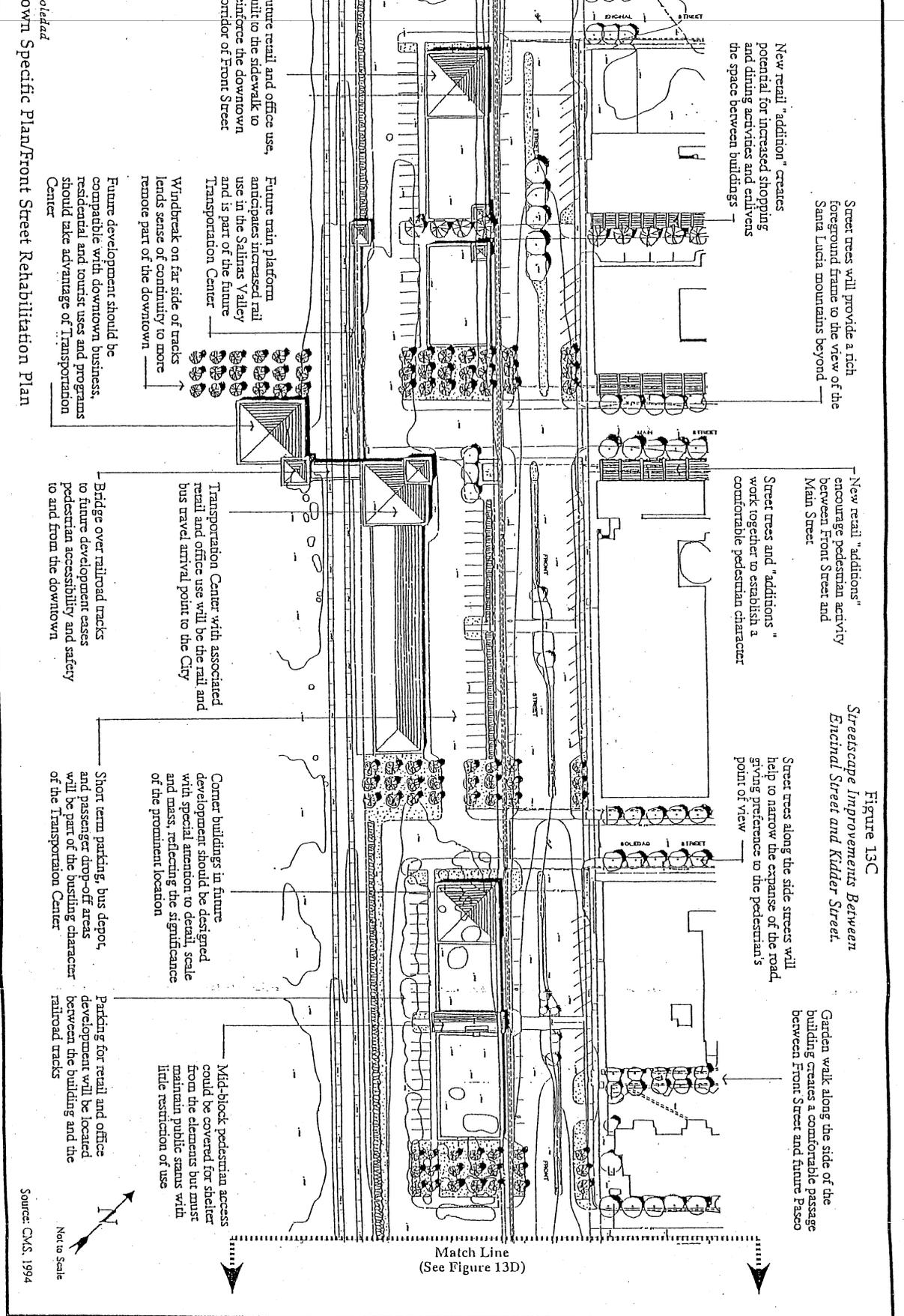


(See Figure 13A)

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Street trees will provide a rich foreground frame to the view of the Santa Lucia mountains beyond

New trail "addition" creates potential for increased shopping and dining activities and enhances the space between buildings

New rail "additions" encourage pedestrian activity between Front Street and Main Street

Street trees and "additions" work together to establish a comfortable pedestrian character

Streetscape Improvements Between Enchinal Street and Kildar Street

Street trees along the side streets will help to narrow the expanse of the road, giving preference to the pedestrian's point of view

Garden walk along the side of the building creates a comfortable passage between Front Street and future Paseo

Future retail and office use, in addition to the sidewalk to reinforce the downtown corridor of Front Street

Future train platform anticipates increased rail use in the Salinas Valley and is part of the future Transportation Center

Future development should be compatible with downtown business, residential and tourist uses and programs should take advantage of Transportation Center

Transportation Center with associated retail and office use will be the rail and bus travel arrival point to the City

Bridge over railroad tracks to future development eases pedestrian accessibility and safety to and from the downtown

Corner buildings in future development should be designed with special attention to detail, scale and mass, reflecting the significance of the prominent location

Short term parking, bus depot, and passenger drop-off areas will be part of the bustling character of the Transportation Center

Mid-block pedestrian access could be covered for shelter from the elements but must maintain public transit with little restriction of use

Parking for retail and office development will be located between the building and the railroad tracks

Match Line (See Figure 13D)

Source: CMS, 1994

Not to Scale

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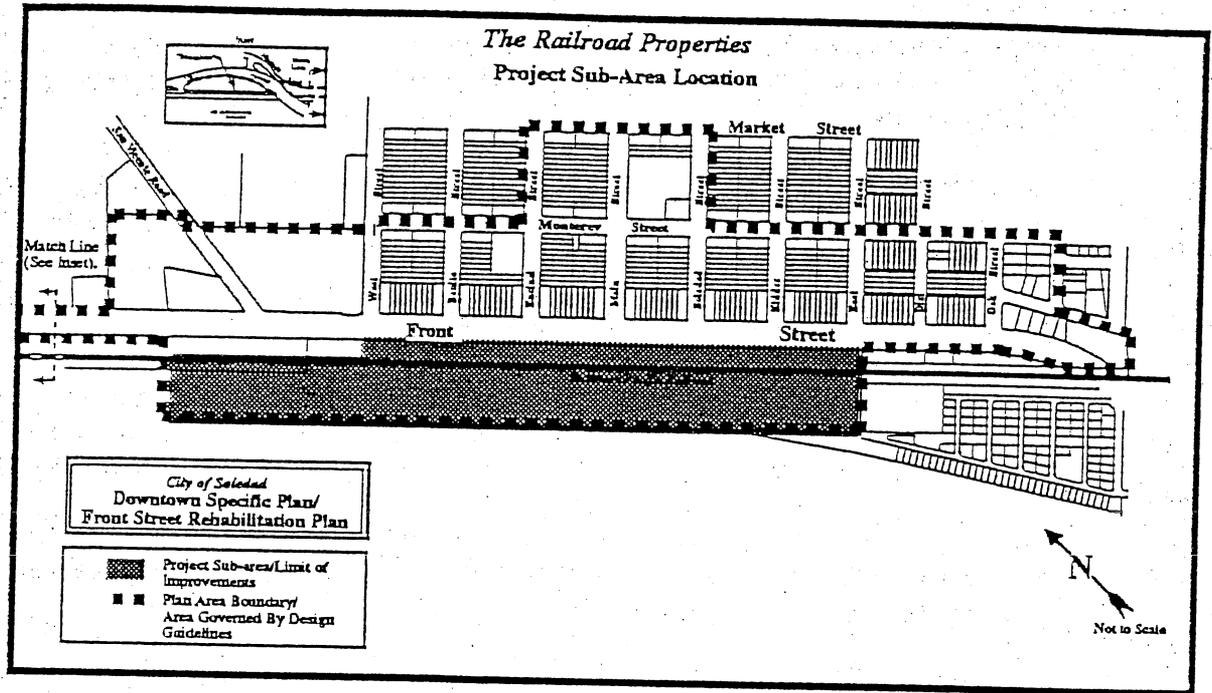
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The Railroad Property



The west side of Front Street consists of vacant land owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad designated for commercial and industrial development. The portion of the property that lies between Front Street and the railroad tracks (the East Property) consists of about 8 acres. This portion provides an opportunity for the expansion of the Front Street commercial corridor. The other portion lying between the railroad and the 101 freeway (the West Property) consists of about 25 acres. This portion contains abandoned railroad spurs and is designated for heavy commercial use which could accommodate light industrial and service related businesses such as repair shops and tire stores. Access to this property is proposed via two at-grade crossings of the railroad tracks at West Street and East, in accordance with the General Plan.

Commercial development on the west side of Front Street would help enclose the corridor, providing shelter from the wind and making pedestrian circulation and "window-shopping" more enjoyable. The property with frontage on Front Street could also be used to provide additional parking for Front Street businesses and/or parking for commuters and busses for field workers. If train traffic increases, it may also be an

appropriate location for an intermodal transportation center with a train station and transit stop for busses, which could encourage the development of amenities nearby to serve the travelling public, such as restaurants, and overnight accommodations.

However, the railroad property is also constrained by the narrowness of the lots, the noise and vibration of rail traffic, and by the availability of the property for development. Access to the West Property between the tracks and the freeway is constrained by the at-grade crossings which the railroad may not find acceptable.

Project elements for the Railroad Properties provide options for both public and private uses, recognizing that a substantial investment by both sectors will be needed to enable successful development of the property.

Design Principles

- *The Southern Pacific Railroad property provides an opportunity for expansion of the Front Street commercial corridor. While development of this property may not occur in the near term, it should be planned as an integral part of the revitalization of the downtown.*
- *New commercial development on the East Railroad Property (along Front Street) should complement the existing retail character of the downtown. Offices, retail and service-oriented uses should be encouraged.*
- *New commercial development on the East Railroad Property should reflect the form, scale and architectural character of the existing development on the east side of Front Street.*
- *Heavy (service) commercial uses, such as auto repair businesses, tire stores and lumber yards, should be located on the West Railroad Property.*

Project Elements

The East Railroad Property

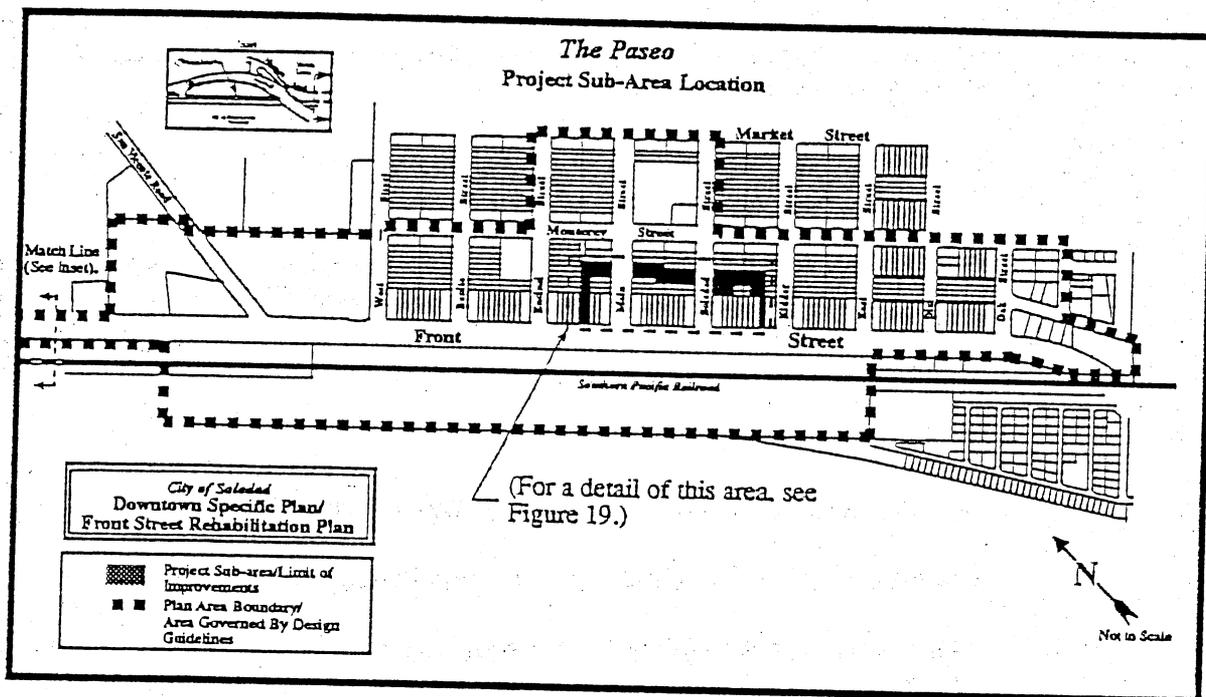
1. Acquire easement for planting of hedgerows/windbreaks spaced at one-half mile increments between West Street and East Street, and along the west side of the railroad property between West Street and Main Street.
2. Install hedgerows/windbreaks between West Street and East Street.
3. Design and install public neighborhood park between West Street and Benito Street, incorporating hedgerows/windbreaks at either end.
4. Install paved parking lot (double loaded aisles, 90° stalls, about 50 spaces) between Benito Street and Encinal Street with landscaping that wraps into adjoining public park.

5. Reserve building site on railroad property for commercial development between Encinal Street and Main Street.
6. Install parking facing Front Street (single loaded aisle, 90° stalls, about 20 spaces). Reserve rear portion of block for development of a transportation center that could incorporate regional and long distance rail service, a bus depot and other commercial uses.
7. Reserve building site for commercial development between Soledad Street and Kidder Street.
8. Install paved parking lot (double loaded aisles, 90° stalls, about 50 spaces) between Kidder Street and East Street with landscaping and hedgerow along west property line adjacent to tracks. Incorporate hedgerow/windbreak at south end of parking lot.

The West Railroad Property

1. Plant a hedgerow of trees along the freeway right-of-way.
2. Plant a hedgerow of trees along the railroad tracks.
3. Install two, at-grade railroad crossings (at East Street and West Street) including crossing arms, lights and other requirements consistent with the standards of the PUC.

The Paseo



During the recent update of the General Plan, Soledad residents expressed a desire for expanded shopping opportunities in the City. To address this concern, and to stem the "leakage" of sales tax revenue to surrounding communities, the General Plan designates a substantial amount of vacant land at the north end of the City for commercial development. A major retail center is envisioned for this area, which would include a grocery store, drug store, and other shops.

New commercial development accommodated by the General Plan could have adverse consequences for existing businesses in the downtown. The General Plan encourages the enhancement of the economic vitality of the commercial core. Clearly, the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan should respect the integral relationship between Front Street and the commercial viability of the downtown.

In order to maintain the viability of businesses in the downtown as new commercial development occurs elsewhere in the City, it will become increasingly important to provide amenities and a physical character conducive to the continued viability of the existing businesses. There must be an attraction to draw people to the downtown.

The Paseo is envisioned as the "engine" that will help drive the revitalization of the downtown by providing an inviting outdoor place to gather, stroll and shop. Figures 16, 17, and 18 provide street-level views of how The Paseo might look when completed. Figure 19 provides a detailed plan view of The Paseo show how these elements would be combined into an inviting downtown.

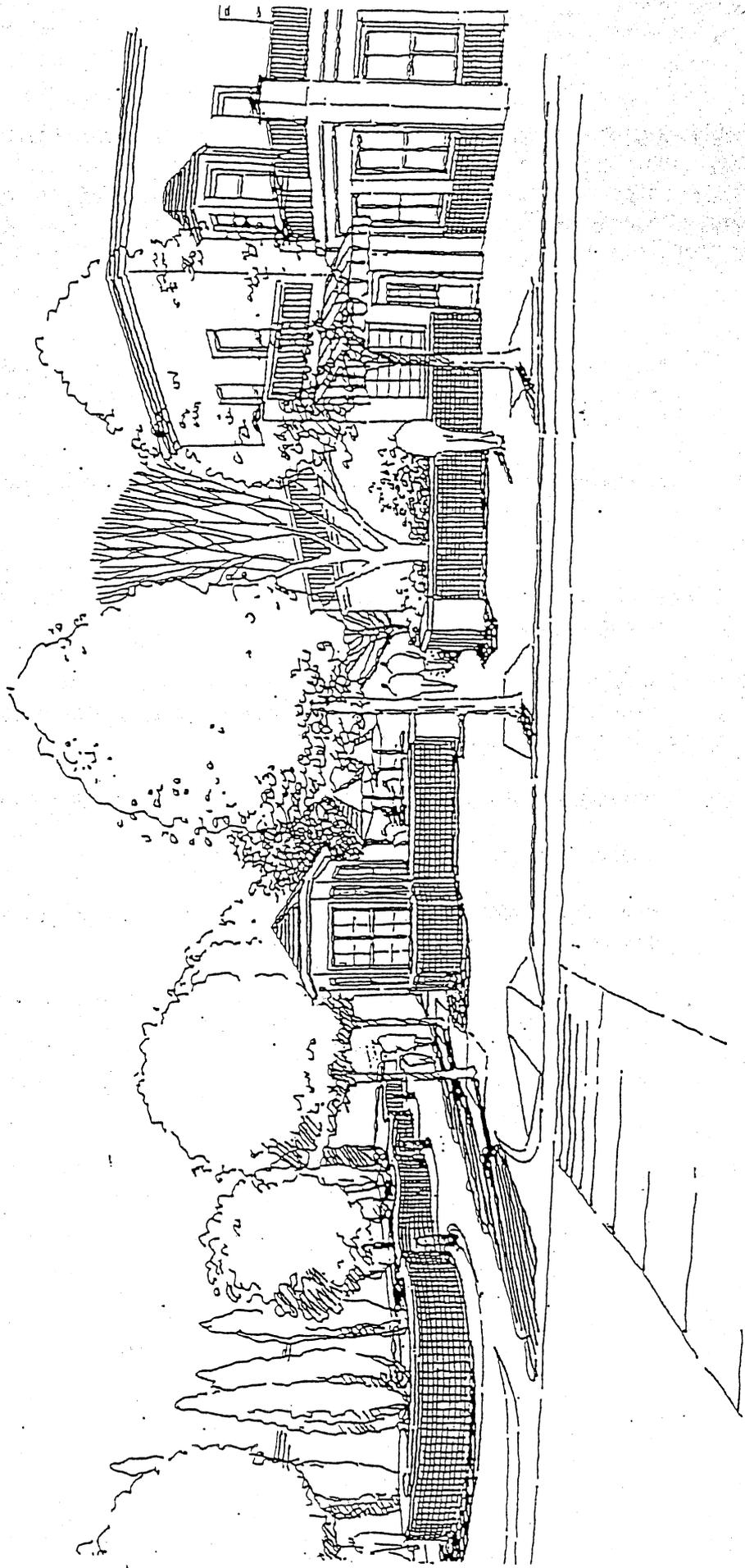
Design Principles

- *The parking areas and underutilized parcels at the rear of buildings facing Front Street provide an opportunity to create an open pedestrian plaza (or paseo) that could serve as an attraction for downtown.*
- *In the paseo area, parking and delivery uses should be subordinate to pedestrian use.*

Project Elements

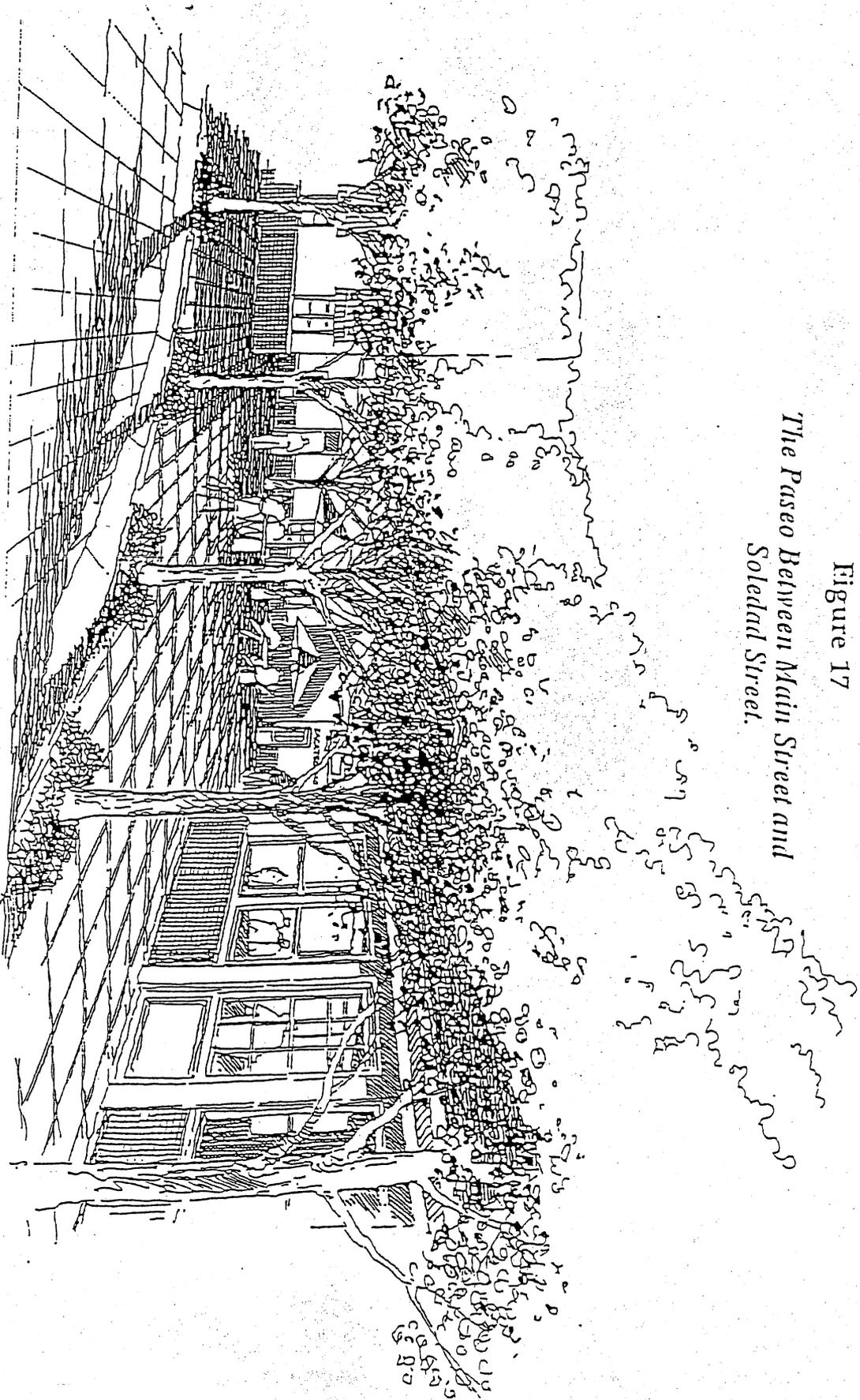
1. Install street trees and bulb-outs at corners of Front Street and Kidder Street, Soledad Street, and Encinal Street.
2. Install parking lot and pedestrian improvements to create pedestrian way (the *Paseo*) between Encinal Street and Kidder Street. Include additional landscaping and pedestrian circulation.
3. Provide fixed and movable seating, lighting, public art (fountain, etc.).
4. Provide signage and other orientation devices.
5. Provide kiosks for the display and sale of products created by local artisans and restaurateurs.
6. Install parking lot improvements in underutilized lots near the corner of Soledad Street and Monterey Street.
7. Provide pedestrian link between the paseo and parking areas near the corner of Soledad Street and Monterey Street.

Figure 16
*The Paseo Between Main Street and
Soledad Street.*



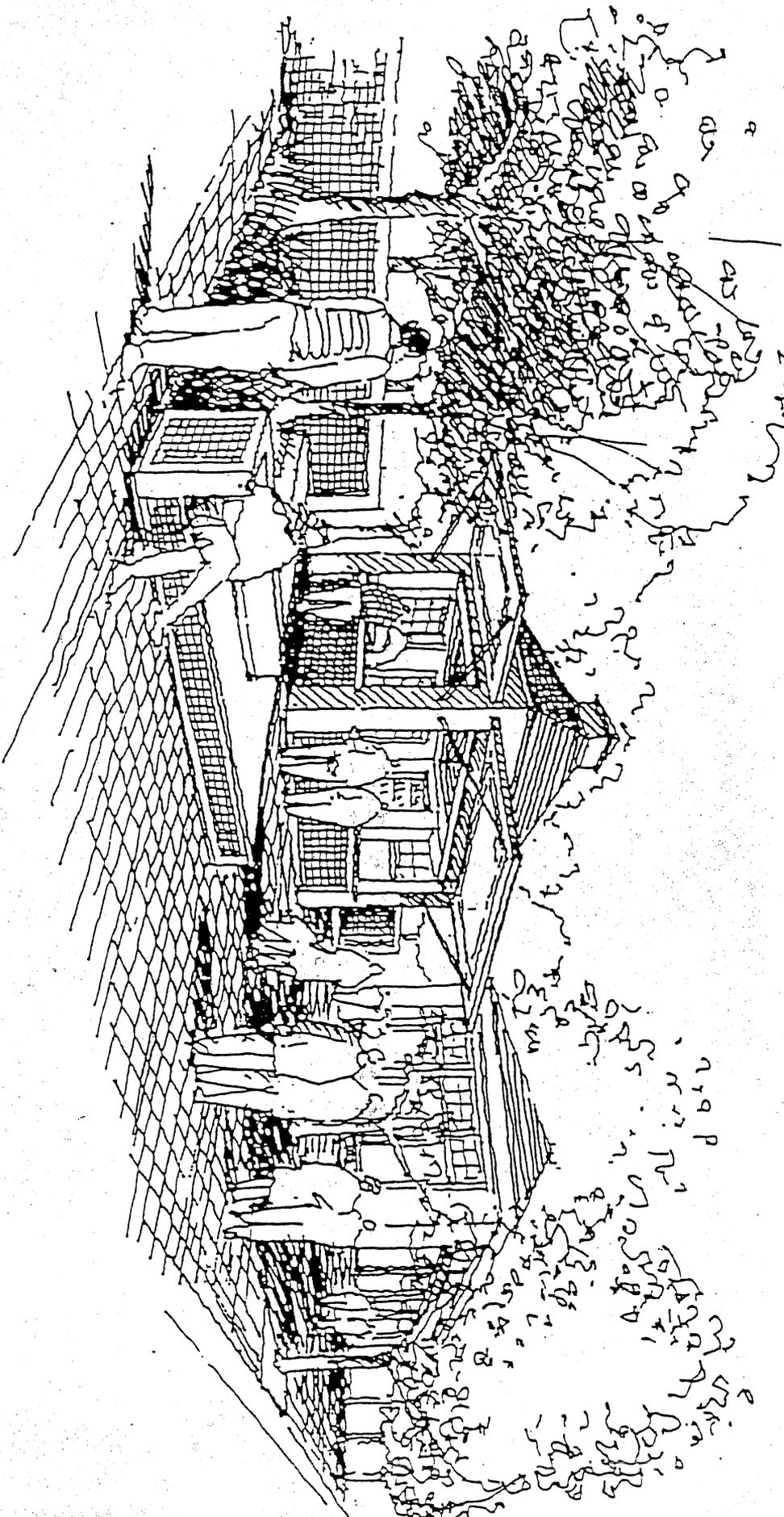
Landscaping, decorative garden walls and accent paving create a sheltered outdoor space behind Front Street for shopping, dining and festivals, and other events.

Figure 17
*The Paseo Between Main Street and
Soledad Street.*



View of outdoor dining area and cafe pavillion looking toward the Soledad Pharmacy,
Soledad Video and Zacataicano.

Figure 18
The Paseo South of Soledad Street.



The Paseo is intended to create a focal point for downtown Soledad where people can gather shop and stroll.

Figure 19
Plan View of The Paseo

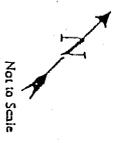
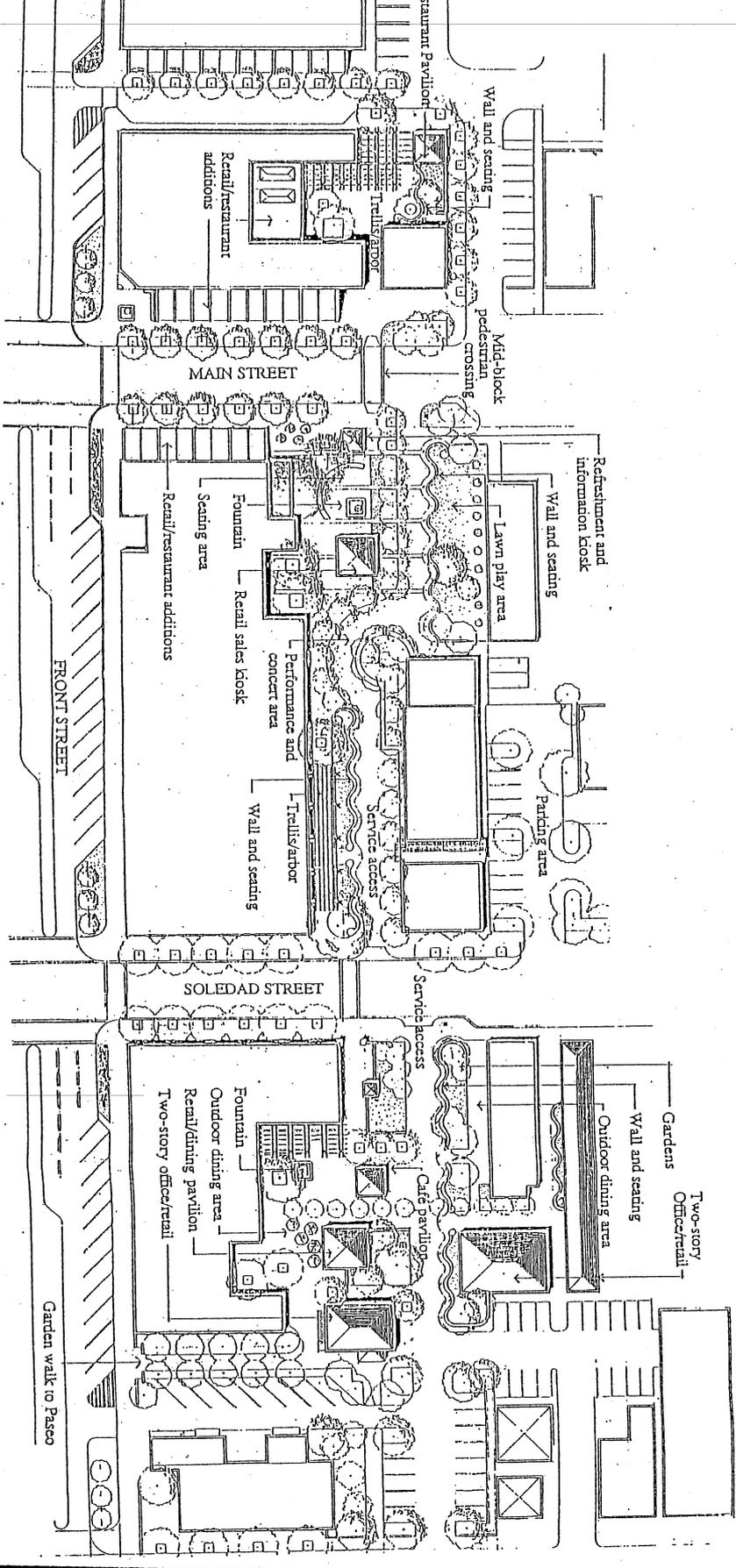
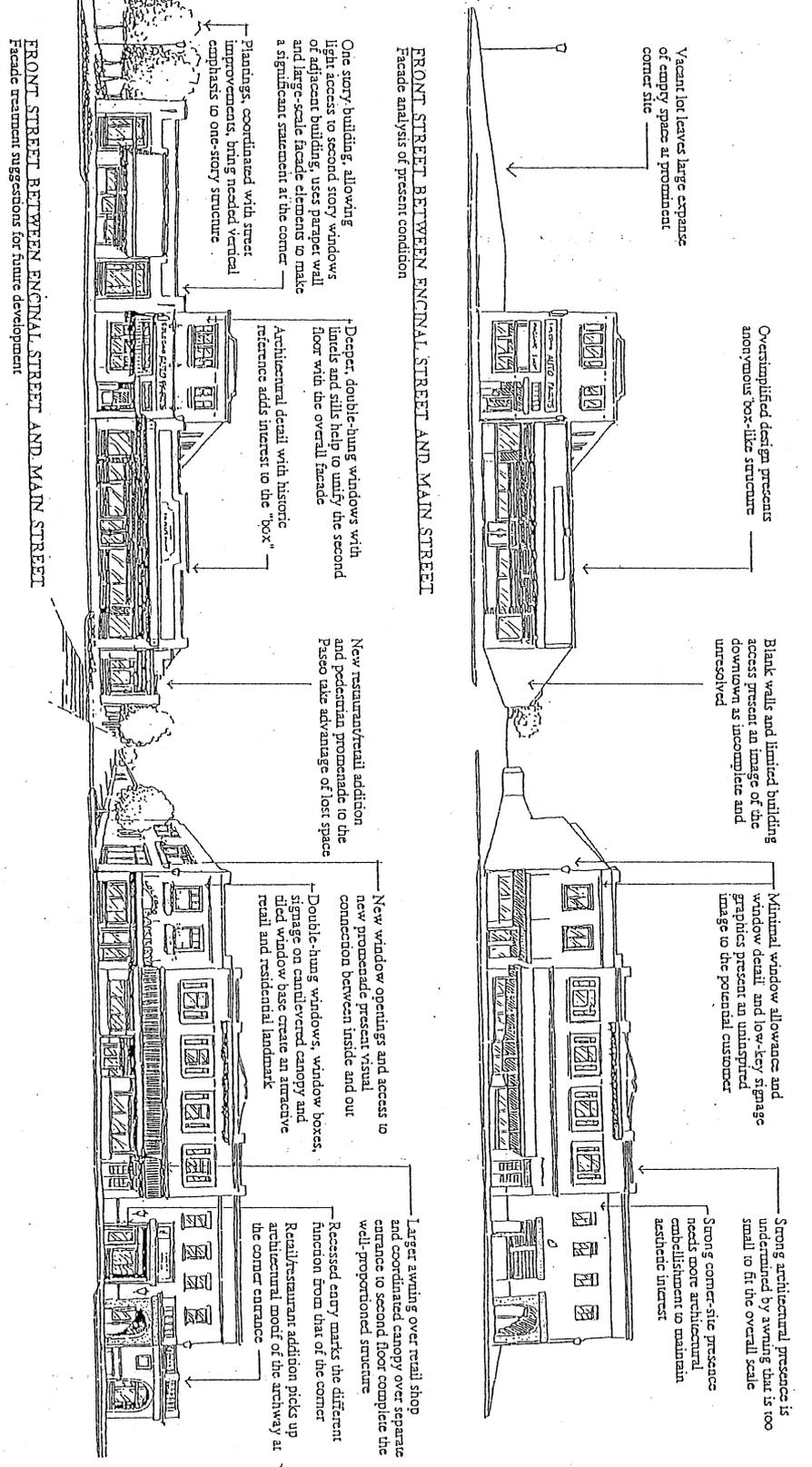




Figure 20
Suggested Facade Improvements: Front Street Between
Encinal and Main Street



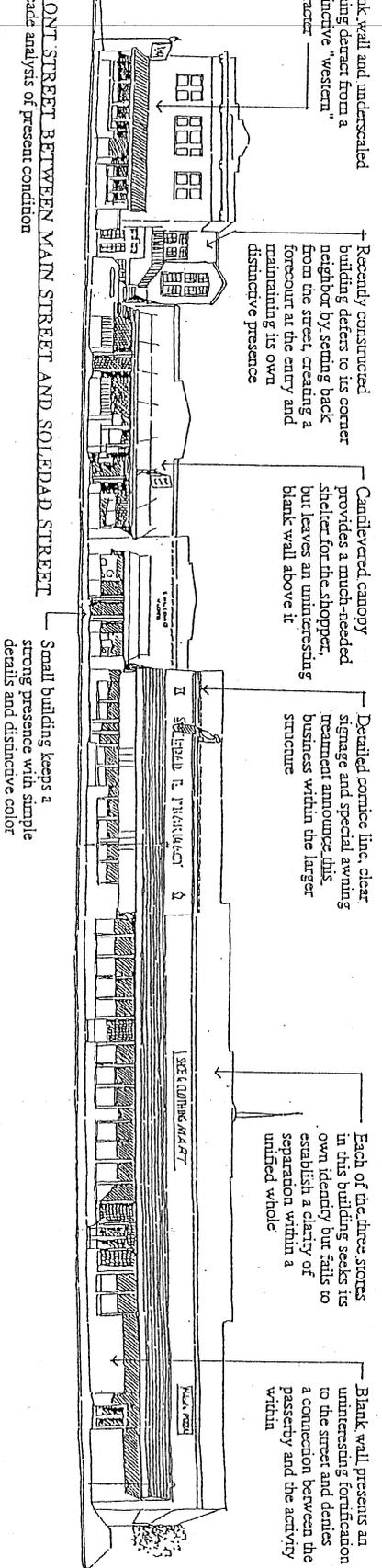
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Suggested Facade Improvements: Front Street Between
Main Street and Soledad Street

Figure 21



Blank wall and underscaled window detract from a distinctive "western" character

Recently constructed building detracts to its corner neighbor by setting back from the street, creating a forecourt at the entry and maintaining its own distinctive presence

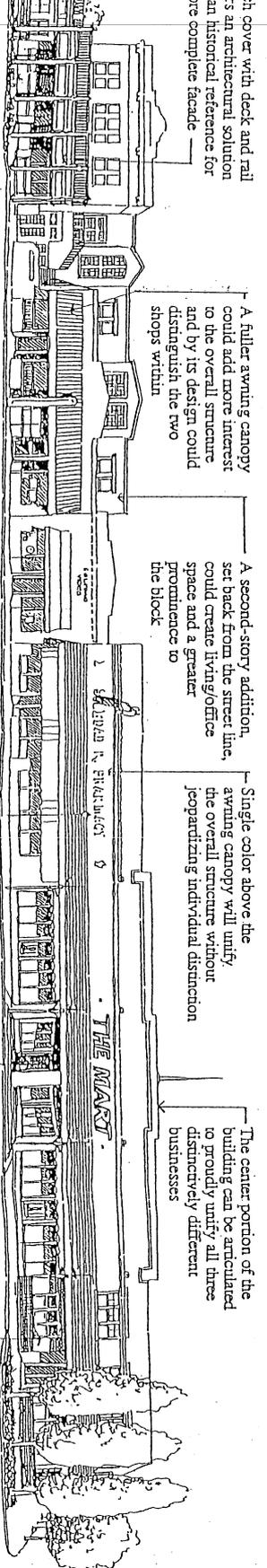
Cantilevered canopy provides a much-needed shelter for the shopper, but leaves an uninteresting blank wall above it

Detailed cornice line, clear signage and special awning treatment announce this business within the larger structure

Each of the three stories in this building seeks its own identity but fails to establish a clarity of separation within a unified whole

Blank wall presents an uninteresting fortification to the street and denies a connection between the passerby and the activity within

Small building keeps a strong presence with simple details and distinctive color



Blank cover with deck and rail is an architectural solution and historical reference for a more complete facade

A fuller awning canopy could add more interest to the overall structure and by its design could distinguish the two shops within

A second-story addition, set back from the street line, could create living/office space and a greater prominence to the block

Single color above the awning canopy will unify the overall structure without jeopardizing individual distinction

The center portion of the building can be articulated to provide unity all three distinctively different businesses

Bold graphic design and a dramatic entry call attention to a major retail business

The front and sides this end of the structure could open to the activity of the street at this improved location, possibly adding a second floor living or office space within the existing structure

FRONT STREET BETWEEN MAIN STREET AND SOLEDAD STREET

Blank cover with deck and rail is an architectural solution and historical reference for a more complete facade

A fuller awning canopy could add more interest to the overall structure and by its design could distinguish the two shops within

FRONT STREET BETWEEN MAIN STREET AND SOLEDAD STREET

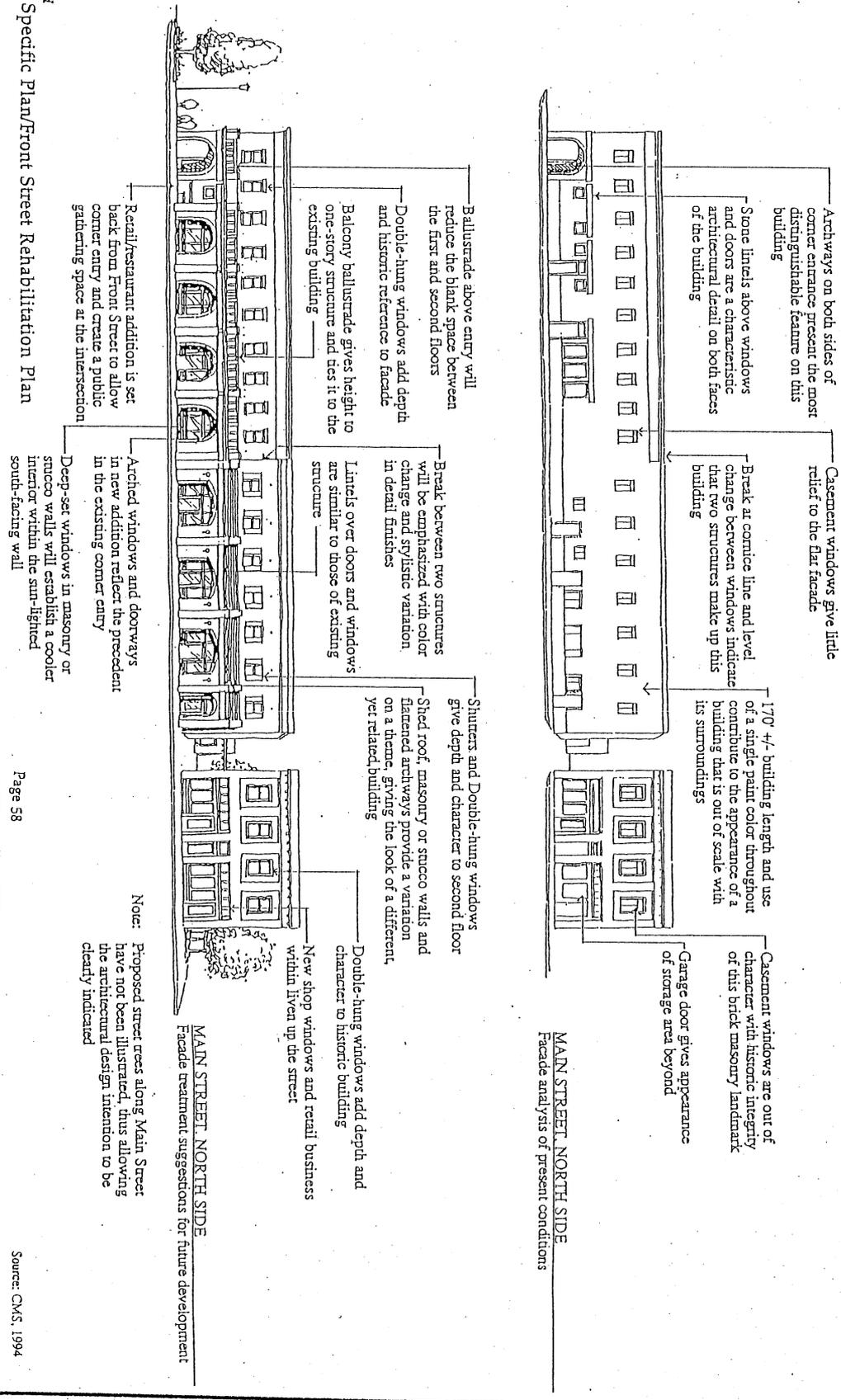
Blank cover with deck and rail is an architectural solution and historical reference for a more complete facade

A fuller awning canopy could add more interest to the overall structure and by its design could distinguish the two shops within



Figure 15

*Suggested Facade Improvements: Main Street
East of Front Street*



MAIN STREET NORTH SIDE
Facade analysis of present conditions

MAIN STREET SOUTH SIDE
Facade treatment suggestions for future development

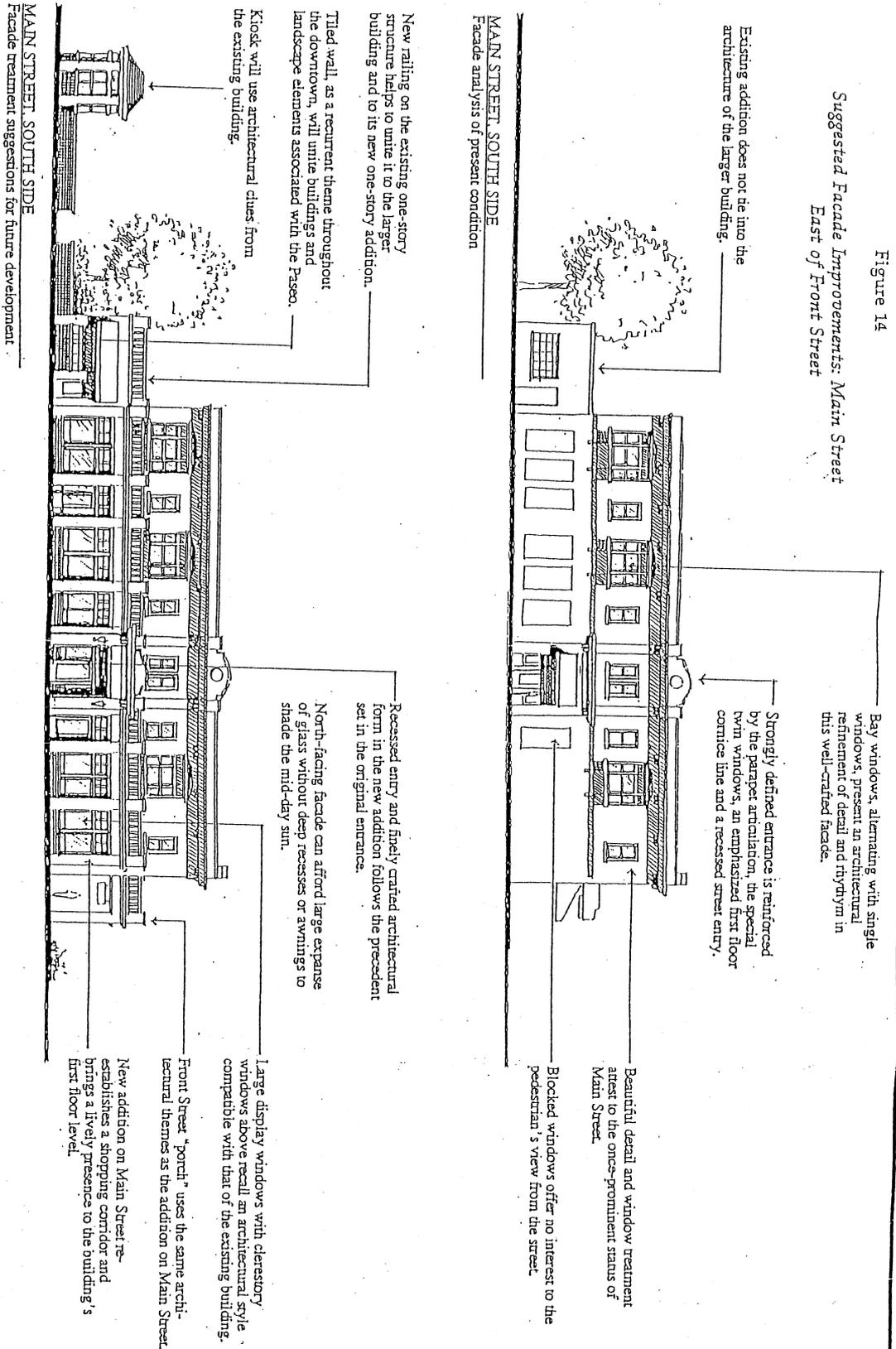
Note: Proposed street trees along Main Street have not been illustrated, thus allowing the architectural design intention to be clearly indicated

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Figure 14
Suggested Facade Improvements: Main Street
East of Front Street

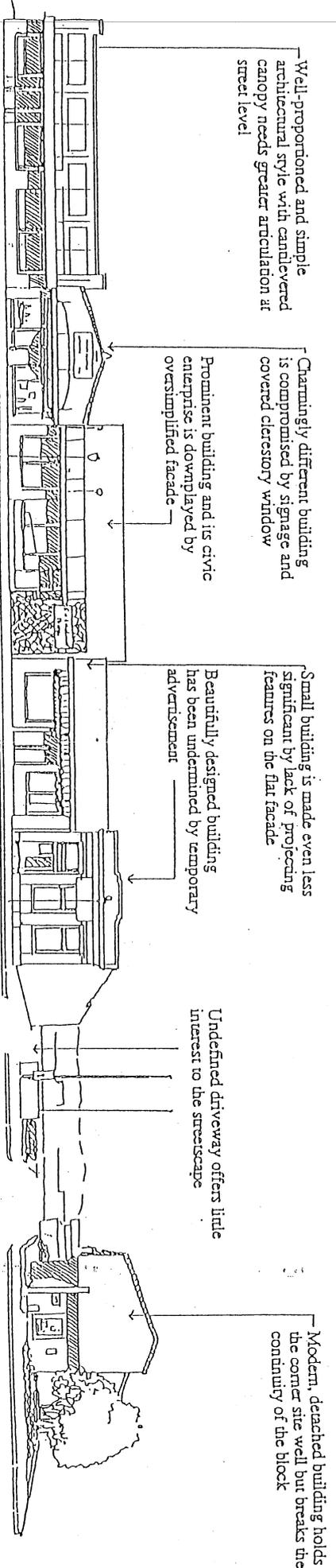


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Suggested Facade Improvements: Front Street Between Soledad Street and Kidder Street



Well-proportioned and simple architectural style with canelivered canopy needs greater articulation at street level

Charmingly different building is compromised by signage and covered clerestory window

Prominent building and its civic entrance is downplayed by oversimplified facade

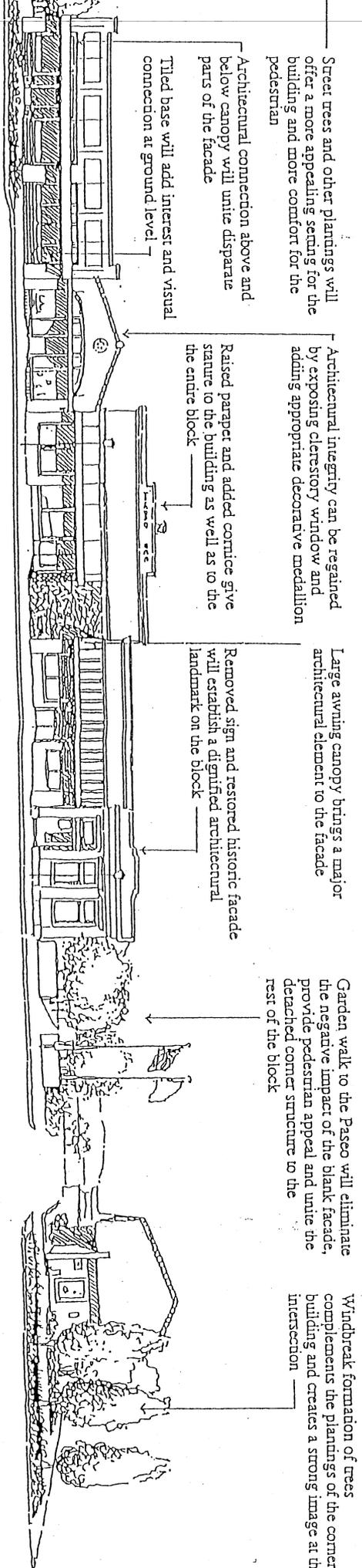
Small building is made even less significant by lack of projecting features on the flat facade

Beautifully designed building has been undermined by temporary advertisement

Undefined driveway offers little interest to the streetscape

Modern, detached building holds the corner site well but breaks the continuity of the block

FRONT STREET BETWEEN SOLEDAD STREET AND KIDDER STREET
Facade analysis of present condition



Street trees and other plantings will offer a more appealing setting for the building and more comfort for the pedestrian

Architectural connection above and below canopy will unite disparate parts of the facade
Tiled base will add interest and visual connection at ground level

Architectural integrity can be regained by exposing clerestory window and adding appropriate decorative medallion

Raised parapet and added cornice give stature to the building as well as to the entire block

Large awning canopy brings a major architectural element to the facade
Removed sign and restored historic facade will establish a dignified architectural landmark on the block

Garden walk to the Paseo will eliminate the negative impact of the blank facade, provide pedestrian appeal and unite the detached corner structure to the rest of the block

Windbreak formation of trees complements the plantings of the corner building and creates a strong image at the intersection

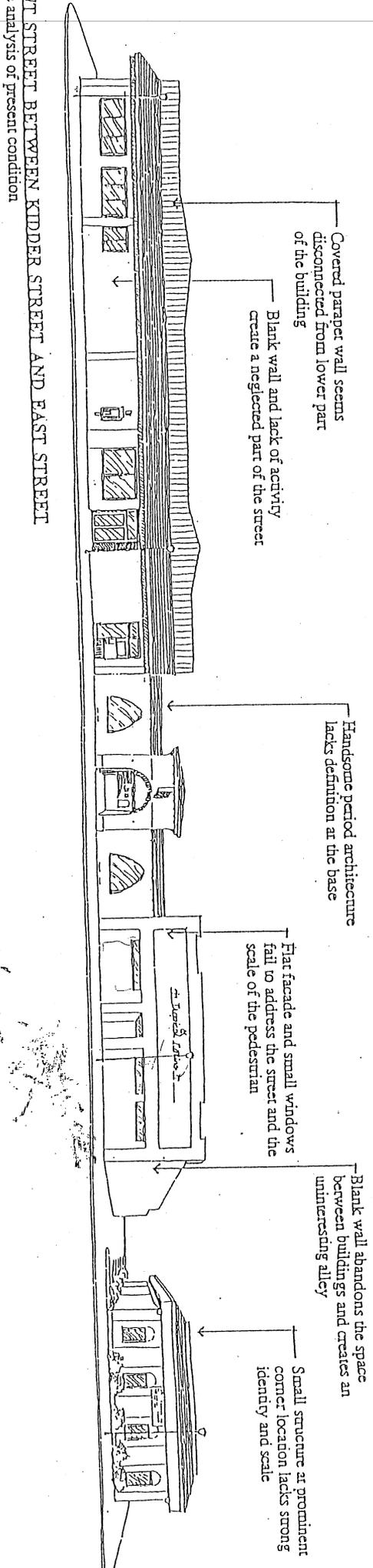
FRONT STREET BETWEEN SOLEDAD STREET AND KIDDER STREET
Facade treatment suggestions for future development

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Suggested Façade Improvements: Front Street Between Kidder Street and East Street



Covered parapet wall seems disconnected from lower part of the building

Blank wall and lack of activity create a neglected part of the street

Handsome period architecture lacks definition at the base

Flat facade and small windows fail to address the street and the scale of the pedestrian

Blank wall abandons the space between buildings and creates an uninteresting alley

Small structure at prominent corner location lacks strong identity and scale

STREET BETWEEN KIDDER STREET AND EAST STREET
analysis of present condition

Connection between upper and lower parts of the structure will bring the facade into a unified whole

Larger windows entice the passerby to view the contents within and invite the customer inside

New shops open to Front Street could be part of the retail services of the grocery and could be accessed from inside as well

Stone or ceramic tile base will unite the facade and the sidewalk, adding more texture and interest for the pedestrian as well as the auto traveller

Canopy over the entry adds character and dimensional relief from the flat facade

Larger windows, painted trellis or rich tile details give much needed visual interest to the lower facade

Painted mural or windows on side of building will transform the alley into a comfortable passage

Awnings that follow the form of arched windows will add a greater weight to the facade, balance weight of the roof and giving building greater prominence

Stronger planning definition to bring the building into scenic location

STREET BETWEEN KIDDER STREET AND EAST STREET
examined suggestions for future development

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VIII. IMPLEMENTATION

Consistency With The General Plan

California law requires that specific plans be consistent with the general plan. The policies, standards and regulations recommended by the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan were formulated to implement the goals, policies and programs of the Soledad General Plan. Although this Plan does not recommend changes to the land uses designated by the General Plan, it does provide additional land use and circulation policies to supplement those contained in the Land Use and Circulation Elements. Furthermore, the Land Use Element map should be amended to include the boundaries of this Plan as a way to alert property owners and designers of the requirements of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan.

Implementation Process

The process of implementing or carrying out the goals, policies and other recommendations of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan will require the completion of a series of steps. The implementation process will begin with the formal adoption of the Plan itself by the City Council and Redevelopment Agency. Following adoption, the Plan will be carried out through the review and approval of subdivisions and development projects in accordance with the policies and standards of the Plan, and the establishment of new public services, facilities and infrastructure as recommended by the Plan.

To implement the projects described in Chapter VI will require certain amendments to the Soledad Zoning Ordinance and other chapters of the Municipal Code. For example, the Streetscape Improvements projects described in Chapter VI propose that Main Street be narrowed and that retail vendors be constructed within the right-of-way which is currently not allowed. Likewise, the policies described in Chapter IV recommend allowing residential uses in the downtown in commercial districts which do not currently allow residences.

Finally, adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan is a "project" as defined by the California Environmental quality Act. For this reason, the Plan will require environmental review to determine the extent of potential adverse environmental impacts that may occur through its adoption and implementation. The individual projects described in the Conceptual Design Plan will necessitate project-specific environmental review when the description of the project is more well defined.

The overall steps leading to adoption and implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan/Front Street Rehabilitation Plan are summarized by the following flow chart

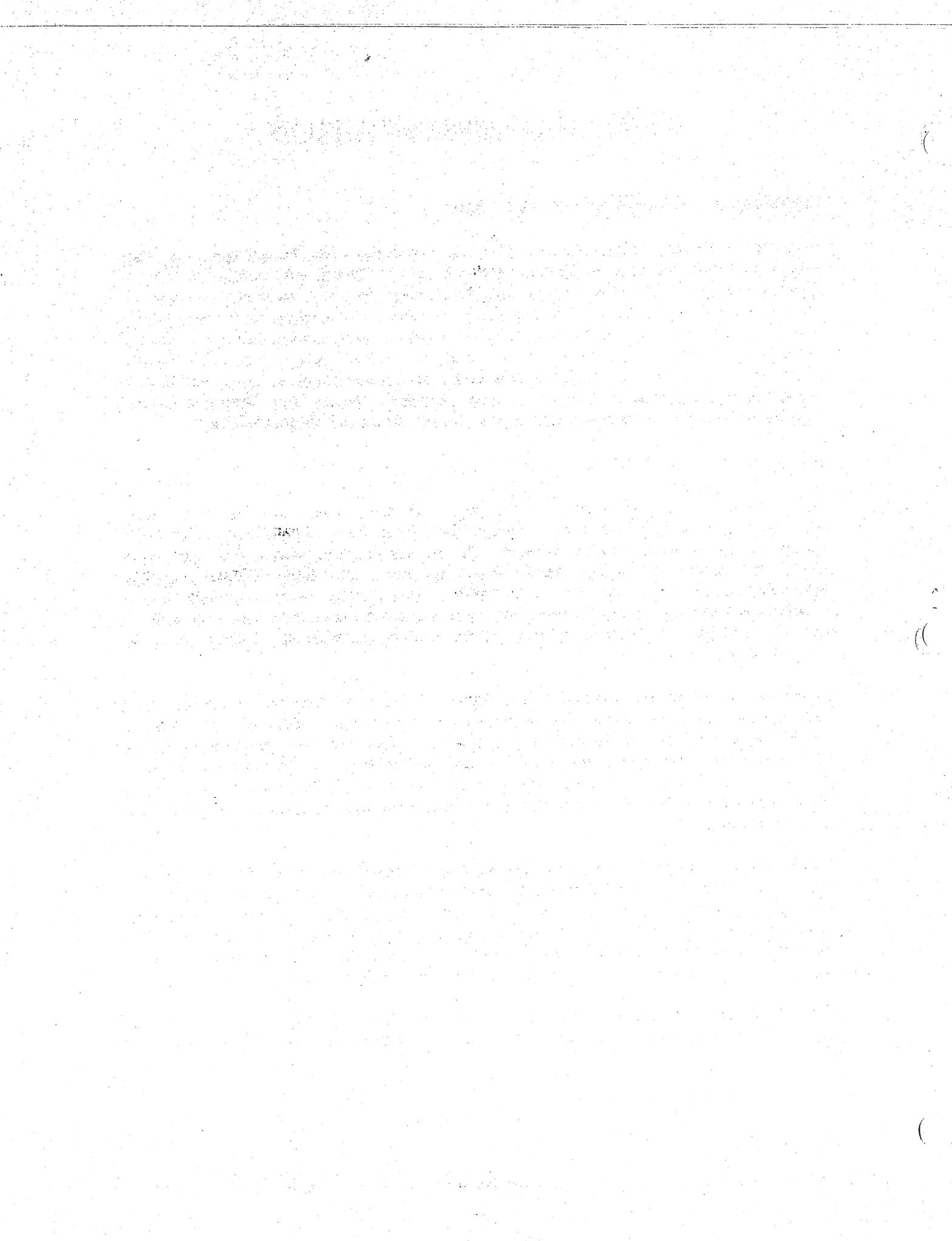
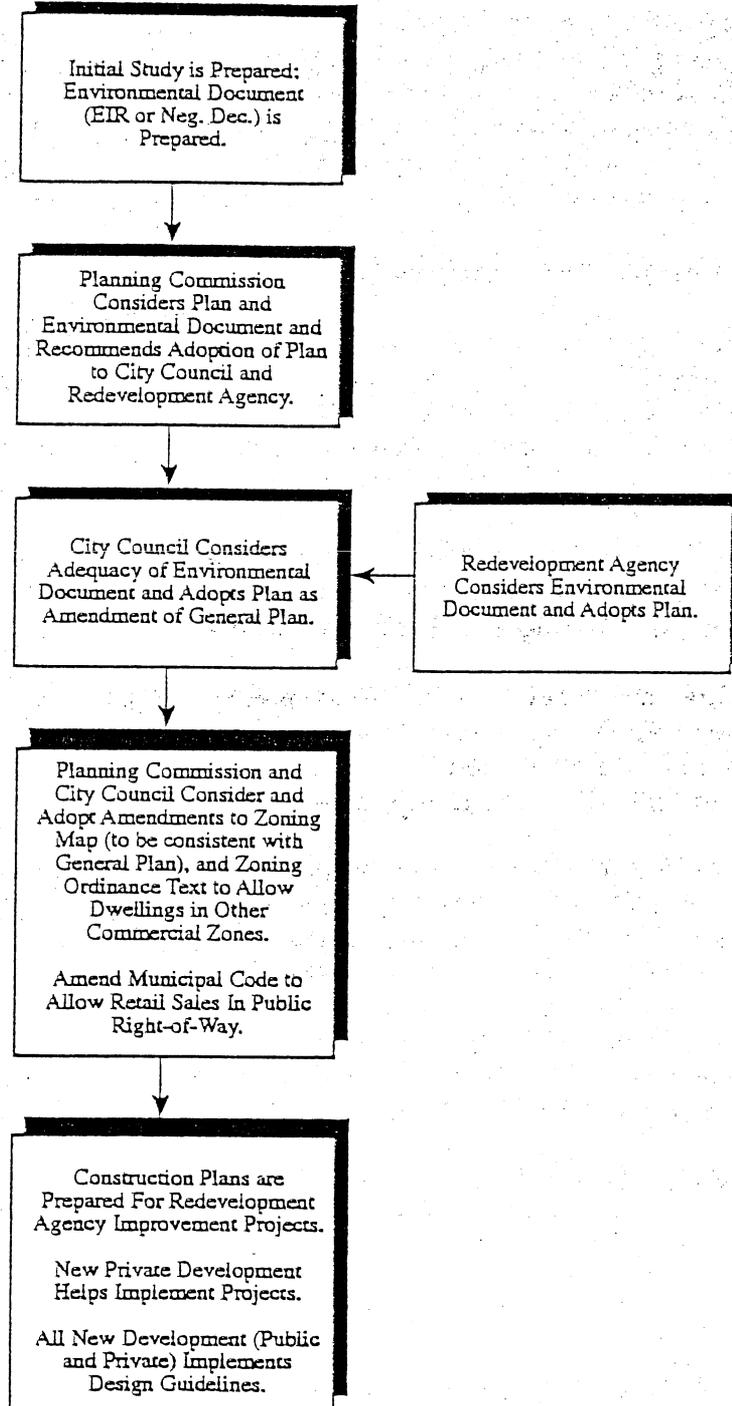


Figure 24: Implementation Flowchart



Amendments to the Plan

State law requires that an amendment of a specific plan be treated the same as an amendment of the general plan, except that a specific plan may be amended more than four times per year. An application for an amendment would be submitted to the City Planning Department, and would be reviewed for consistency with the goals, policies and intent of the Plan. The request would also be reviewed for its potential environmental impacts as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The request would be considered at a public hearing before the Planning Commission and City Council, and in some instances, by the Redevelopment Agency.

Other Sources of Funding

The projects described in Chapter VI are intended to be funded primarily through the direct expenditure of Redevelopment Agency funds. However, individual property owners will be asked to contribute their fair share to the overall rehabilitation of the downtown – in partnership with the Agency – by incorporating those elements of the Conceptual Design Plan into plans for the improvement of their properties.

Although the Redevelopment Agency has allocated funds to begin the projects described in this Plan, other funding sources should be used whenever possible to augment Agency funding. The following is list of other possible funding sources:

City of Soledad Capital Improvement Program. The City has prepared a five-year capital improvement program for infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate buildout in accordance with the General Plan. The CIP is funded through development impact fees and other sources.

State and Federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 established federally-administered block grants which may be used by Cities for housing, public facilities, and economic development. The activities funded by the CDBG must address at least one of three objectives: serve lower income people, eliminate blight, or resolve urgent community development needs. The federal CDBG program (through HUD) grants funding for urban renewal, water and sewer system improvements, rehabilitation and neighborhood facilities development.

Rural Development Assistance Program (RDAP). This federally-funded program is intended to assist rural cities (less than 20,000 population) and counties in applying for federal and state funding to enable the implementation of housing, public works, and economic development programs.

State Employment Development Department (EDD) Grants. EDD administers grants to local agencies that may be used for economic development.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) Grants for Undergrounding Utilities. PG&E is required by law to set aside funding for the undergrounding of overhead utility lines within each of the communities they serve.

Soledad Business Improvement Association (BIA). The BIA may also provide loans or grants to small businesses interested in expanding.

Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grants. The federal Department of Commerce administers the EDA grant program which provides funding for a wide range of programs, such as economic development, public works and facilities.

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) Funding. The federal government provides monies to the State of California for the purpose of enhancing the efficiency of surface transportation, including motor vehicles, pedestrian, bicycle, rail and other forms of transportation. The ISTEA monies are allocated by the State to the various local councils of government (COG). Each jurisdiction may submit an application to the COG for an ISTEA grant to fund various transportation enhancement projects, such as the provision of bike lanes, landscaping along highways and the acquisition of right-of-way. For projects other than pedestrian and bike path enhancement, a 12% match of local funds is required.

IX. APPENDIX

References

City of Soledad General Plan, 1993
City of Soledad Zoning Ordinance, 1992
City of Soledad Redevelopment Plan, 1983
Downtown Soledad Specific Plan Diagram, 1981, Pacific Urban Design, Ltd.

Document Preparation

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