Downtown Burien Streetscape Design Plan

September 20, 1999

PREFACE

Imagine enjoying a leisurely stroll along Burien's main street (Southwest 152nd Street) on a spring evening sometime in the future. You have just attended a live concert at the town square. The square opens to the main street and lends a festive air to its surroundings.

Traffic on the street flows at a relaxed pace, the result of a landscaped center median and a narrow roadway. Walkers cross the street frequently to greet on another or to look in the windows of the shops forming the ground floors of their condominium buildings. Drivers look at the interesting displays in the storefronts as they pass and make mental notes to stop and shop at this store or that one. The coordinated landscaping, lighting, sidewalks, and street furniture invite you to linger a while and savor the evening.

The street radiates a vitality fueled by the mix of residents and activities. Businesses are encouraged to use a designated portion of the street right-of-way for colorful displays, street cafes, and other activities, adding to an enriching experience.

As you stroll along, you reflect that the change to Burien's main street is just the first project of the revitalization of downtown Burien, and you nod approvingly. Plans already are in place for tree-lined streets throughout the downtown. The once ever-present parking lots have been landscaped and the newly constructed pedestrian walkways provide safe passage across them. The uniform elements of the new streetscape have been tastefully blended with the distinctive segments to create a unified main street, the hallmark of our successful downtown and community.

The Downtown Burien Streetscape Design Plan recommends urban design measures to be incorporated into construction documents for development of streets and parking lots for an exciting, successful downtown.

Downtown Burien Streetscape Design Plan

September 20, 1999

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INTRODUCTION

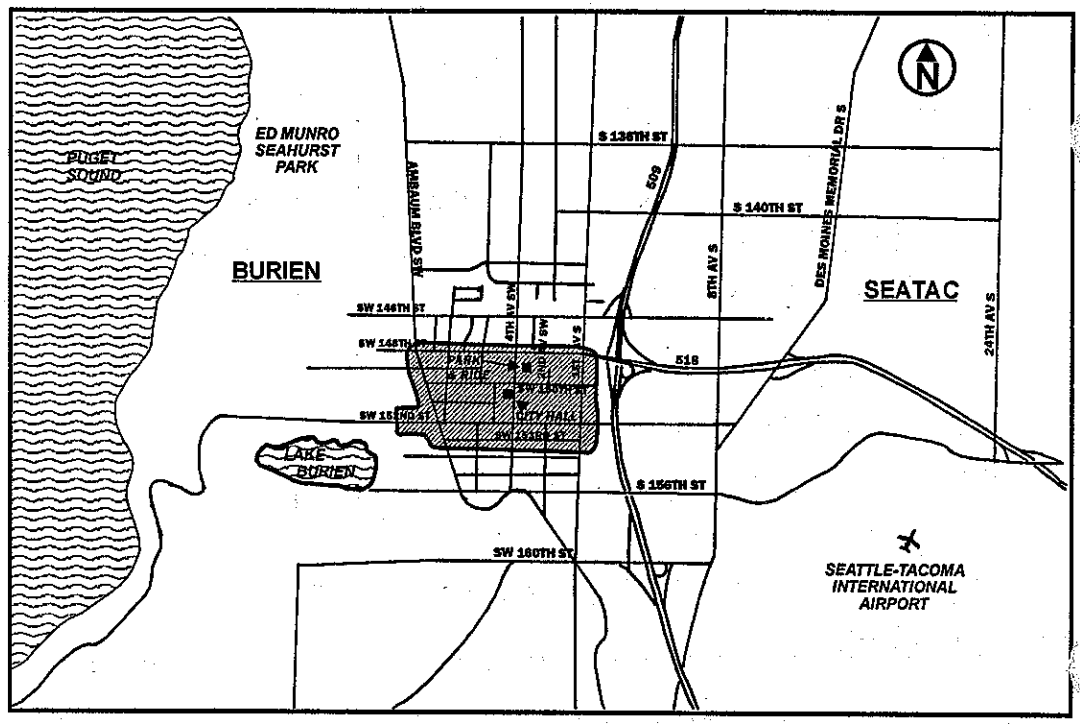


Figure 1: Study area.

Purpose

The Downtown Streetscape Design Report is an improvement plan focusing on the enhancement of streets and public spaces in downtown Burien. The implementation of this plan is based on a combination of public and private investment intended to shape downtown Burien into a dynamic, pedestrian-oriented community center. Critical to the success of this plan are the immediate improvements to help reinforce and strengthen Southwest 152nd Street's "Main Street" character. Although these improvements will require significant initial public investment, a great number of the improvements are dependent upon private redevelopment throughout the downtown core in the years to come. Hence, through the adoption of this plan and the subsequent public-oriented improvements, the City of Burien seeks to attract new private investment downtown by demonstrating its strong commitment to downtown.

History

Development in the downtown area dates back to the late 19th century when the first roads, such as Military Road, were built into the area. An electric streetcar was installed in 1912 along Ambaum Boulevard Southwest, connecting the community with Seattle. A business district soon would develop at the intersection of Ambaum Boulevard Southwest and Southwest 152nd Street, where the streetcar turned westward toward Seahurst. Southwest 152nd Street became an important retail corridor, as it connected Burien to Sunnydale and points east. Burien's population tripled between 1939 and 1942 due to nearby production activities at Boeing during World War II. Shortly after the war, the future Seattle-Tacoma Airport opened as Bow Lake Airport.

Southwest 152nd Street would remain the primary lifeline and retail corridor of the area until SR-518 was built in 1971. Southwest 148th Street would become the principal east-west route through Burien, causing a loss of visibility to retail establishments on Southwest 152nd Street. Since the 1960s, automobile-oriented development has dominated much of the larger downtown area, resulting in a pattern of disconnected retail buildings surrounded by expansive asphalt parking lots with little or no landscaping features.

Downtown Planning Efforts

Although previous planning efforts such as King County's Burien Downtown Urban Design Plan in 1988 made valid attempts to reinforce Southwest 152nd Street's "Main Street" character, limited initial public investment, a downturn in the regional economy, and the area's unincorporated status may have helped to limit the success of the plan. Burien residents, however, took a major step toward managing the direction of their community for the first time when they voted to incorporate in 1993. One of the primary focuses of the city's first comprehensive plan, adopted in 1997, was the enhancement and revitalization of its long dormant downtown.

Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the city prepared the Downtown Burien Economic Enhancement Strategy *(hereafter referred to as the HyettPalma report)* and the Burien

Gateway Design Report *(MAKERS)*. The HyettPalma report demonstrated that urban design improvements could play a major role in downtown's economic revitalization. This plan follows up on specific improvement concepts listed in the report, including the Southwest 152nd Street Pedestrian Spine and Town Square concepts.

The Gateway Design Report focused on the enhancement of the city's most important entryway, located at Southwest 148th Street and First Avenue South, the northeast corner of the downtown planning area. This plan illustrated how a public urban design process could involve the business community.

The forthcoming Downtown Burien Master Plan will incorporate and expand upon the public-oriented proposals of this plan to create a cohesive action plan. Altogether, these coordinated planning efforts demonstrate a firm commitment to downtown and offer a level of predictability that merchants, property owners, and prospective developers have never witnessed in this long-unincorporated community.

Planning Process

The process for the Downtown Burien Streetscape Design Plan commenced immediately after the Burien City Council's acceptance of the HyettPalma report and the Burien Gateway Design Report. Plan consultants and city staff conducted field work and several team meetings to determine the strategy for the process and analyze the area's goals and objectives. The first public workshop was conducted on Feb. 16, 1999, to discuss the vision for downtown and the possible barriers to achieving that vision. Based on the vision for downtown, consultants and staff prepared alternative street designs for Southwest 152nd Street and improvement concepts for downtown for review by the public at the March 30, 1999, public workshop. The favored design and concepts have been carried forward and presented in this plan.

Project Area Boundaries

The planning area is generally bordered by Southwest 148th Street in the north, First Avenue South to the east, 10th Avenue Southwest in the west, and Southwest 153rd Street in the south.

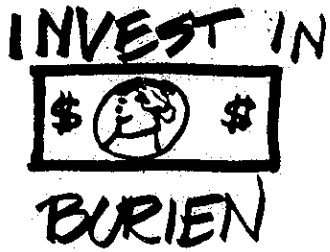
Figure 2: Southwest 152nd Street.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives were drawn from public input received throughout the planning process and from other recent planning-related projects in the downtown area, including the Burien Gateway Design Report and the HyettPalma report.

Broad Economic Goals

- A downtown that capitalizes on excellent market-area opportunities and local/regional assets.
- A downtown in which the community and the region invest.
- A downtown with quality destination shopping.
- A downtown that provides unique and enriching cultural opportunities.
- A downtown with healthy businesses.



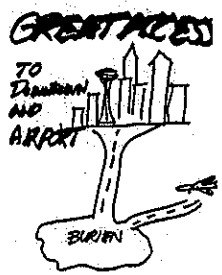
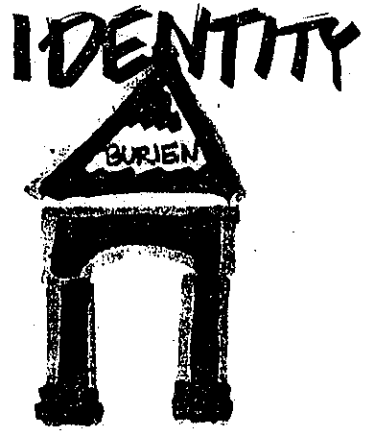
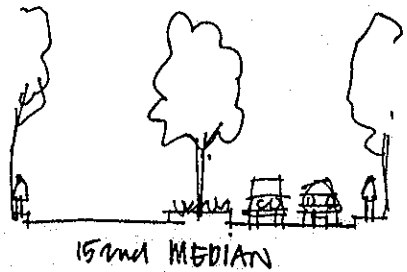


Image and Identity Goals

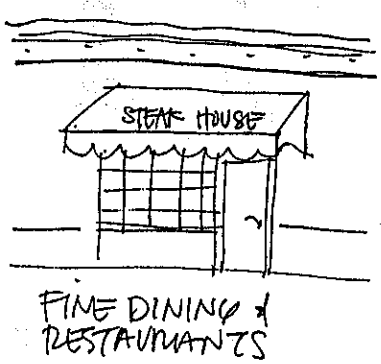
- A downtown with a genuine sense of identity.
- A downtown that demands quality in new development.
- A downtown that portrays Burien as a lively, friendly, traditional, caring, artistic, and family- and business-oriented community of which local citizens are proud.
- The establishment of a new image for Burien in the minds of those living through-out the Puget Sound area.

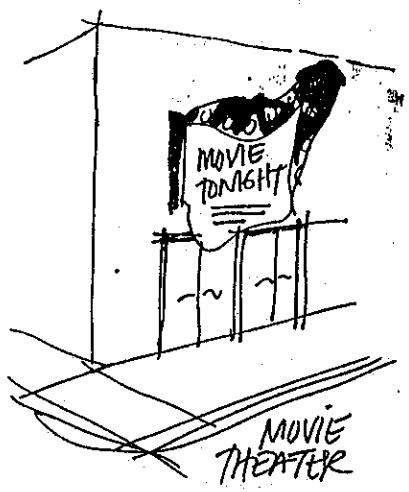




Design and Development-Oriented Objectives/Directives

- **Land Uses:** A downtown with a great variety of uses serving a diverse local and regional population and providing a colorful sense of vibrancy and opportunity. A multi-use and multi-faceted downtown appealing to a broad spectrum of users as a place to work, shop, be entertained, and live – a downtown of businesses that are fun, funky, and functional, offering both the essentials and the enjoyments of life. (Hyett Palma)

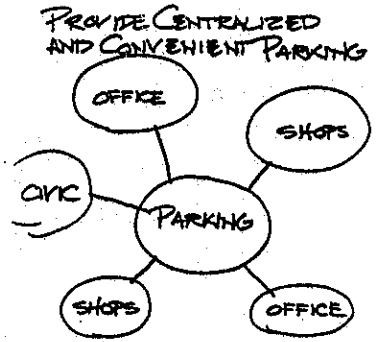




- **Pedestrian Features:** A pedestrian-friendly downtown with efficient and attractive linkages between uses and activity centers.

- **Urban Design Features:** A cohesive and vibrant downtown with identifiable, playful, and functional urban design features.

- **Accommodating the Automobile Downtown:** Balance the needs for improved pedestrianization downtown with measures to maintain and improve the convenience of automobile movement and parking downtown.



- **Property Upkeep:** A downtown that is well cared for and maintained.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Very little new development has occurred in downtown Burien over the last 20-30 years. This is in contrast to much of the area to the east, notably in Tukwila at Southcenter mall, and at Sea-Tac International Airport to the southeast. Most improvement efforts over the past 20 years have focused on improved automobile convenience. Despite such improvements, downtown businesses have found it difficult to compete with the larger regional shopping centers, such as Southcenter.

Today, downtown Burien is characterized as an aging commercial area with expansive asphalt parking lots and disconnected, ambiguous development. The incomplete street grid and lack of pedestrian connections and amenities make downtown generally uninviting for pedestrians. High vehicular traffic speeds on many of the streets has been a major concern of downtown merchants, as a number of pedestrian fatalities have occurred on downtown streets.

Reasons for Optimism

While downtown Burien has been relatively dormant over the last 30 years, it has retained the opportunity to recreate a vital city center. As the backbone of downtown, Southwest 152nd Street retains much of its streetfront retail uses, particularly from Fourth Avenue Southwest to 10th Avenue Southwest. The HyettPalma report noted that although Burien exists in a highly competitive marketplace, its downtown has a great deal of economic potential, including retail, office, and residential uses. The first major physical signs of change are already underway with the redevelopment of the Burien Plaza shopping center at the northwest corner of First Avenue South and Southwest 148th Street. In addition to completely redeveloping the existing grocery store and retail center, the developer is partnering with the city on major streetscape and gateway improvements consistent with the Burien Gateway Design Report. Plans also are underway for redevelopment at Burien's park-and-ride lot on Fourth Avenue Southwest. Owned by King County/METRO, this is one of a handful of park-and-ride lots countywide specified for transit-oriented development. While the transit station function of the site will remain, the parking lot may be replaced or co-located with pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development. Further, AT&T recently began construction for the expansion of its facility at Southwest 150th Street, while the city is reviewing plans for a multi-story hotel on Southwest 150th Street and Second Avenue Southwest.

The adoption of this streetscape plan, together with the implementation of Southwest 152nd Street improvements and significant current redevelopment activities, provides a tremendous opportunity to reshape downtown Burien into the attractive, lively, and functional downtown that local merchants and residents seek.

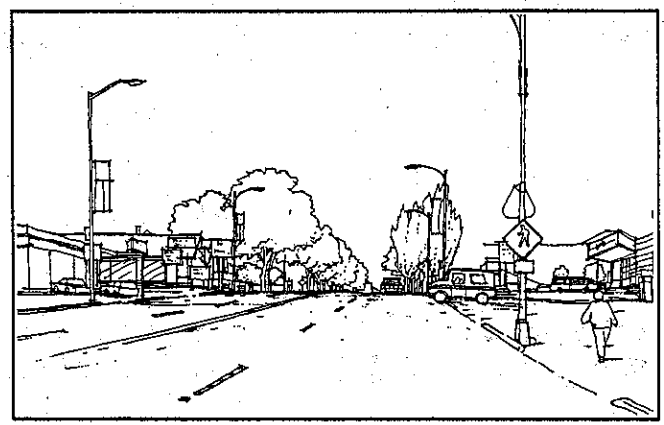


Figure 3: Existing conditions.

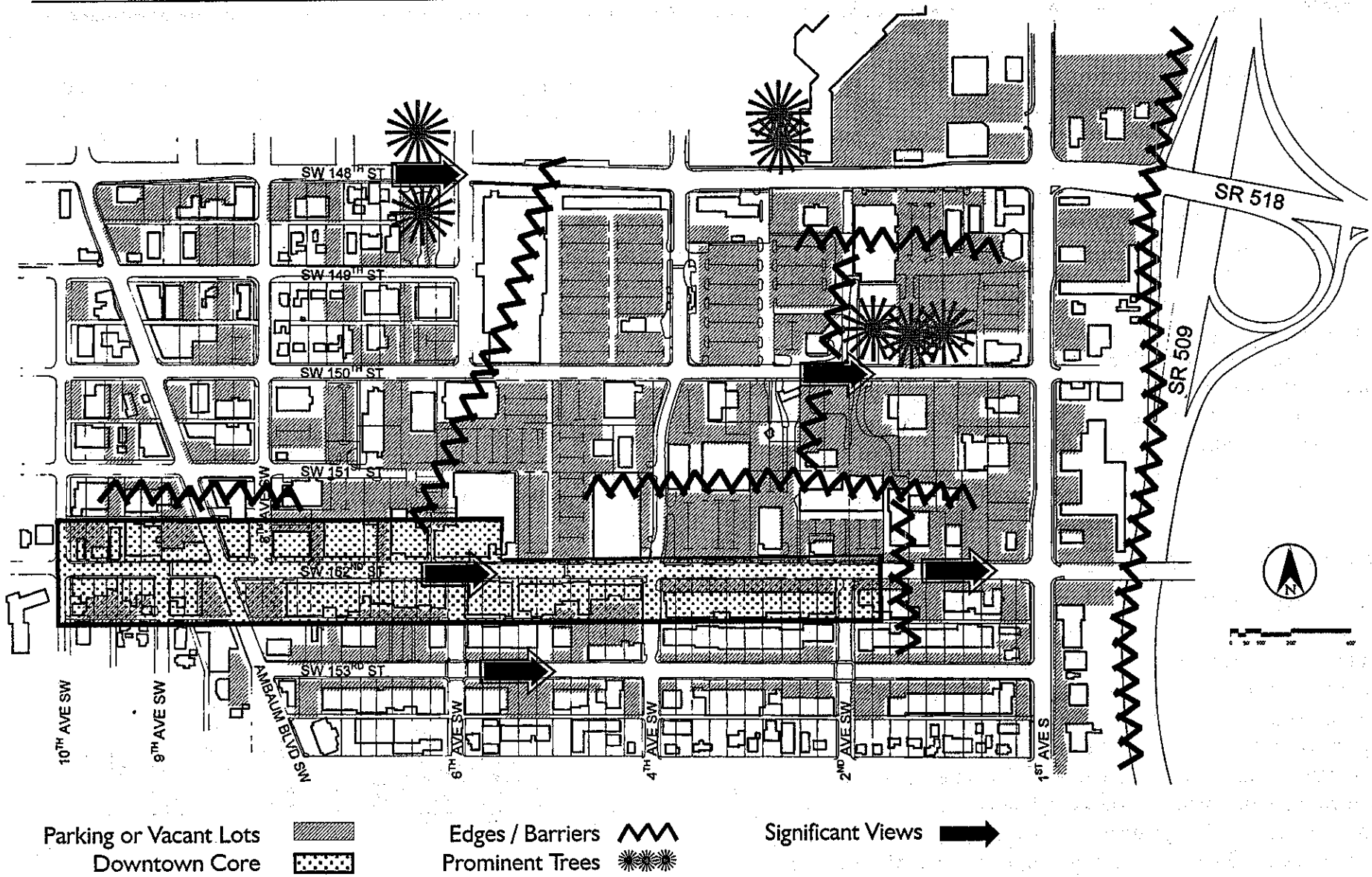
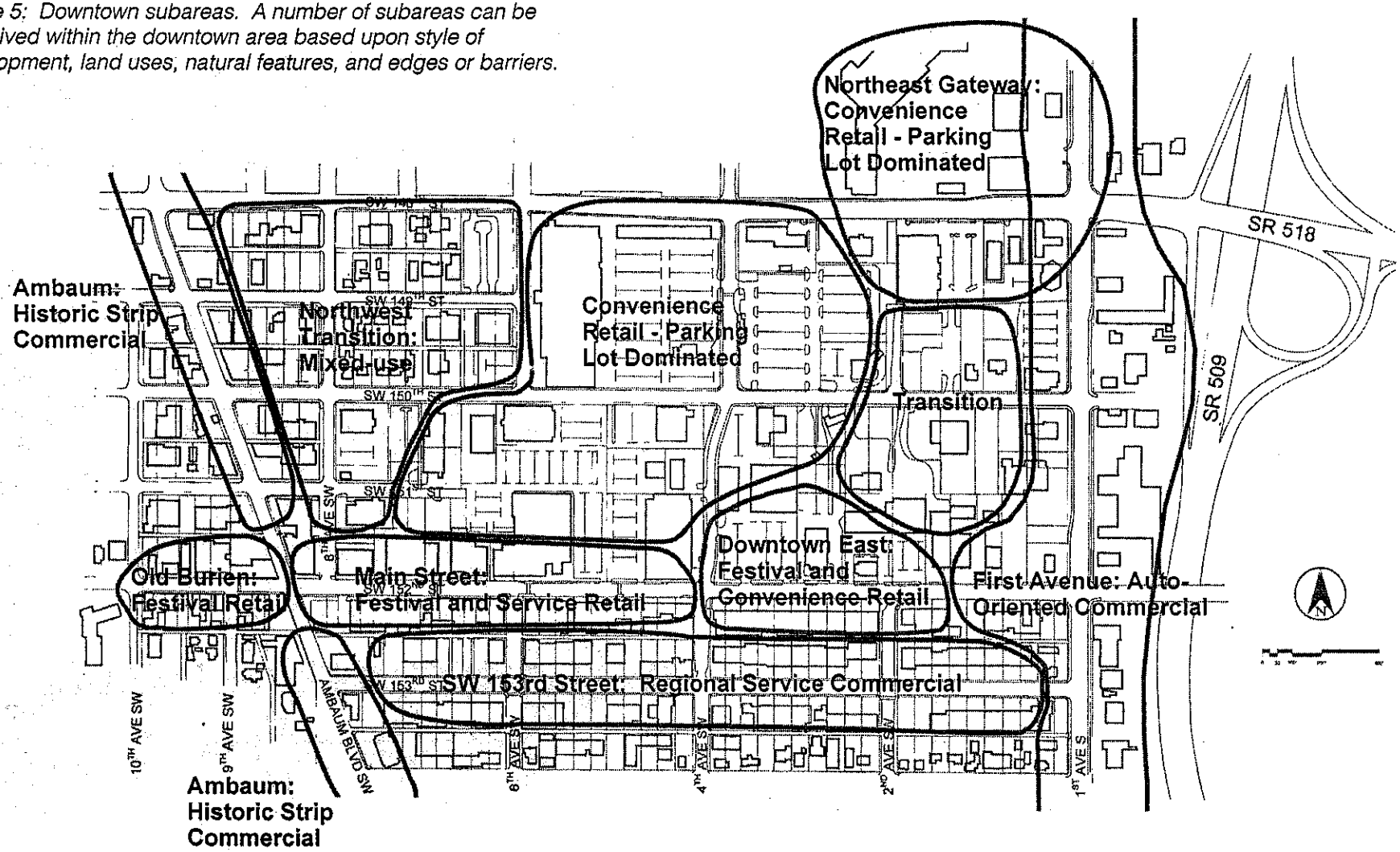


Figure 4: Downtown visual structure.

Figure 5: Downtown subareas. A number of subareas can be perceived within the downtown area based upon style of development, land uses, natural features, and edges or barriers.



CONCEPT

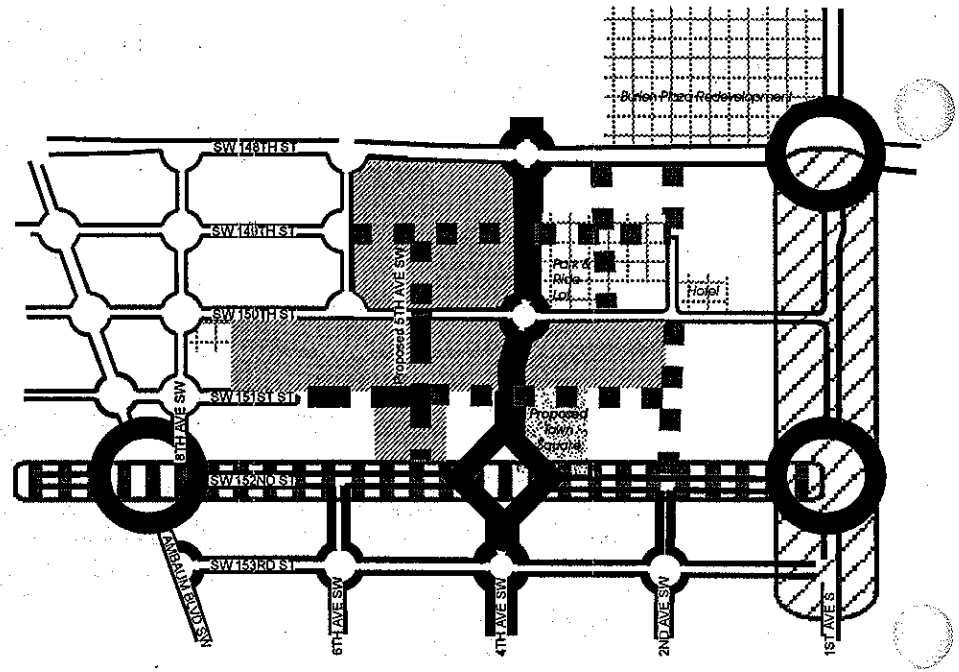


Figure 6: Redevelopment concept.

REDEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The focus of the Downtown Burien Streetscape Design Report is to stimulate private investment in downtown Burien through physical improvements on Southwest 152nd Street, other key downtown streets, and parking areas. The plan also provides the framework for the improvement of public spaces throughout downtown. This plan is based on the town's vision for Burien – what Burien should be like – vibrant, welcoming, diverse, and beautiful. Together, these actions seek to provide a level of assurance and predictability to residents, property owners, developers, merchants, and investors in how the downtown will develop in the years to come.

Strategically conceived urban design improvements to streets, parking lots, and public spaces are a proven method of stimulating economic activity and private investment in a downtown. Public improvements help to revitalize older downtowns by making them more convenient and attractive for shoppers, building on distinct and unique characteristics to develop a marketable identity, and demonstrating a public commitment for the future. Public improvements are most successful when accomplished in conjunction with land use, marketing, and public/private partnership programs. The city currently is reviewing building height and zoning regulations and working with King County/METRO and Burien Plaza developers as part of its downtown revitalization strategy.

In terms of physical urban design improvements, there are a number of actions that are based on implementation by the city. First and foremost, this includes Southwest 152nd Street, Burien's "Main Street." Traveling north and south on Ambaum Boulevard Southwest or First Avenue South, there is little to let the traveler know that there is a downtown Burien, let alone indicate the nature of the business district. For these reasons, gateway improvements are recommended. Southwest 152nd Street itself lacks continuous and inviting sidewalks and public spaces. Further, large stretches of sidewalk on Southwest 152nd Street lie on private property, outside of the public right-of-way, creating maintenance difficulties. Providing convenient, attractive walking spaces and on-street parking on Southwest 152nd Street is a top priority for upgrading the downtown.

Upgrading the Fourth Avenue Southwest corridor also is vital because it connects Burien's community center and library with the park-and-ride lot, downtown, and residential areas to the south of Southwest 153rd Street. Other key streets include Southwest 148th Street and First Avenue South, which form the entry into downtown from most directions. Southwest 153rd Street will remain a service street. Improving its intersections is important for public safety.

Most other physical improvements will be dependent on new private development. This plan provides the guidelines for the types of public improvements necessary in concurrence with new private development. Depending on the location, required improvements may include new sidewalks, planting strips, pedestrian lighting, and/or street trees. These conditions are not intended to hinder development, but rather to ensure quality development and the long-term health of Burien's downtown.

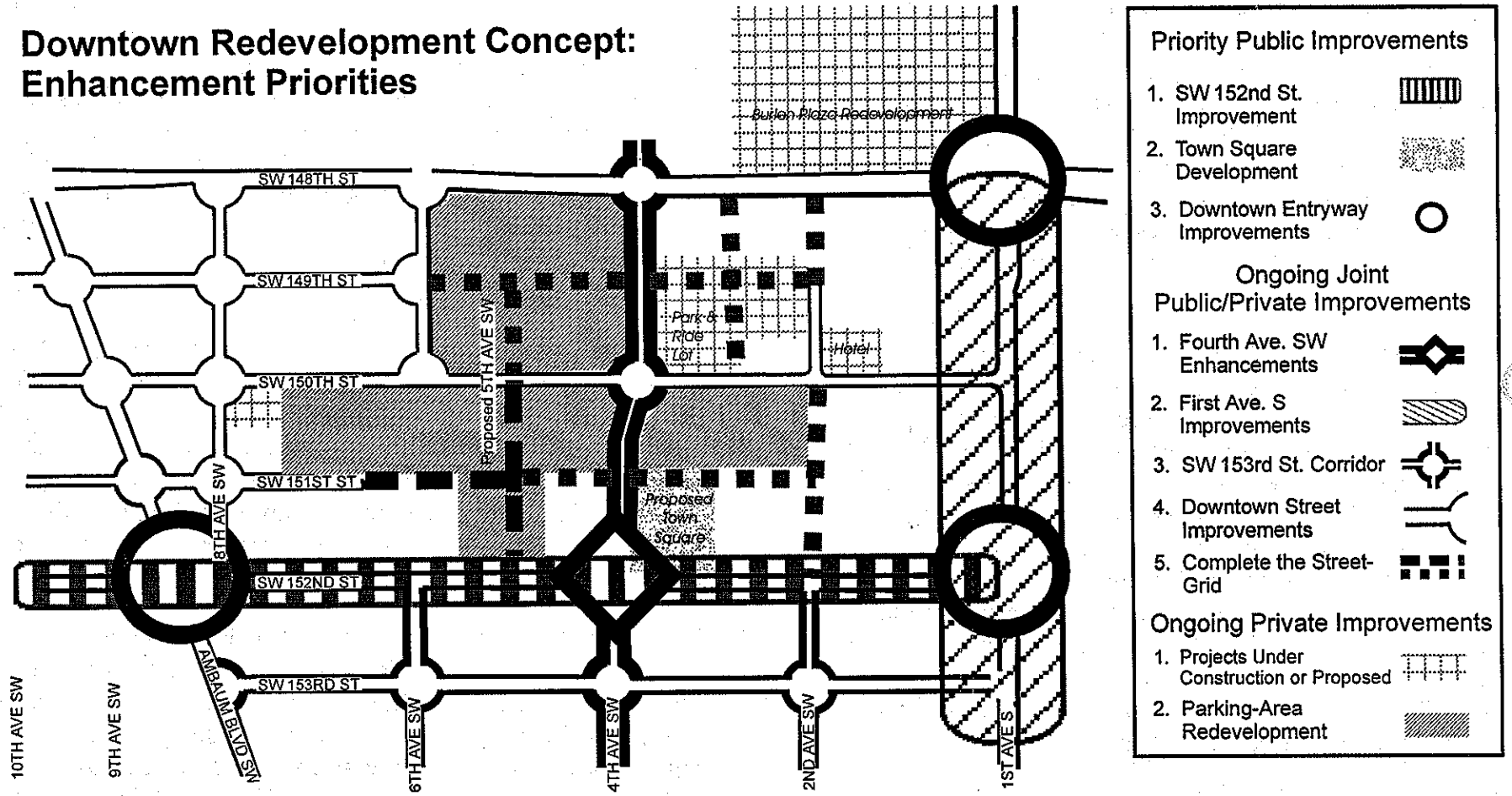


Figure 7: Downtown Burien redevelopment concept.

CIRCULATION CONCEPT

f Burien is to reinvigorate its downtown, its circulation pattern must be improved. First and foremost, traffic speeds and volumes must be reduced on Southwest 152nd Street, Burien's "Main Street," where merchants often have complained that the area is uninviting to pedestrians.

Traffic on Southwest 152nd Street

The design plan for Southwest 152nd Street provides several traffic calming features. First, the plan recommends reducing the number of travel lanes from four to two. Second, adding on-street parallel parking between First Avenue South and Fourth Avenue Southwest not only will help to slow traffic, but it will provide pedestrians ith a comfortable buffer between the sidewalk and auto traffic. Third, curb bulbs, a street median (between Fourth Avenue Southwest and Ambaum Boulevard Southwest), street trees, and other urban design elements such as pedestrian lights can effectively narrow the apparent width of a street and thus reduce travel speeds. Together, these features will provide the feeling of a typical downtown "Main Street" rather than a high-speed thoroughfare. Special emphasis will be placed on pedestrian safety.

Redirection of Traffic to Southwest 148th Street

To compensate for the reduced traffic flow on Southwest 152nd Street, the plan recommends improvements to Southwest 148th Street between First Avenue South and 12th Avenue Southwest nd 12th Avenue Southwest between Southwest 148th Street and Southwest 152nd Street. Such improvements may include roadway surface improvements, road widening, and additional signage.

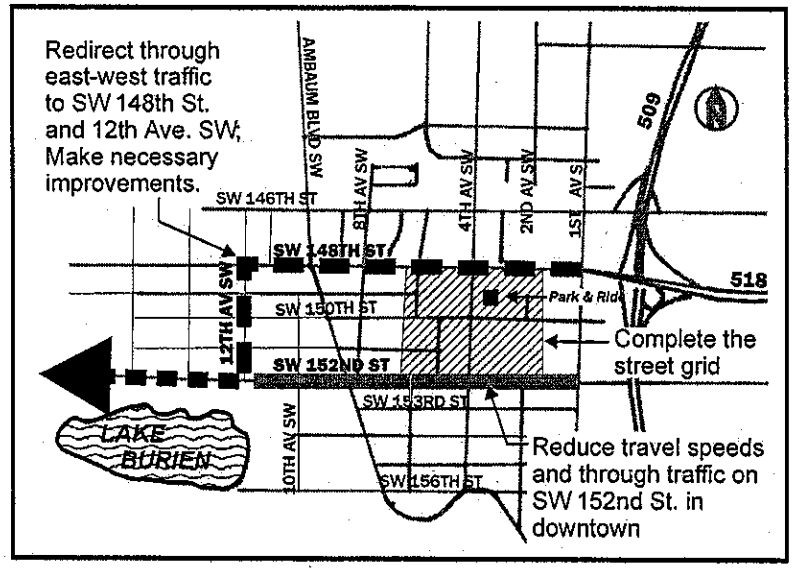


Figure 8: Traffic routing through downtown.

Completion of Street Grid

Completing or adding to the existing street grid can be a very effective way of improving auto circulation and providing better pedestrian circulation between uses. The highest priorities include the creation of a new Fifth Avenue Southwest from Southwest 150th Street to Southwest 152nd Street and the extension of Southwest 151st Street from Eighth Avenue Southwest westward to the proposed Fifth Avenue Southwest. Both function as streets now, but without safety measures and amenities. Additional connections include Second Avenue Southwest (between Southwest 148th and Southwest 152nd) and Southwest 149th Street (between Second and Sixth). The plan recommends incorporating these connections into redevelopment activities on applicable properties.

Emergency Access

The circulation activities proposed by the plan have important implications on emergency access, particularly with the city's fire station downtown. The project team met with the fire department during the process to discuss downtown circulation issues and plan recommendations. In response to this meeting, Burien's fire district chief advised that the plan's recommendation will not negatively impact emergency access within downtown Burien.

Utility Improvements

A number of utility companies maintain facilities in the road rights-of-way on downtown streets, notably Southwest 152nd Street. Of these companies, several have scheduled upgrades. The plan recommends coordinating with utility districts to install scheduled utility improvements with street improvements. All efforts should be made to upgrade utility services before the roadway improvements begin.

Metro Park and Ride

Downtown Burien maintains an important regional transit station and park-and-ride lot. While this contributes to an increase in activity downtown, the park-and-ride's large parking lot does not contribute to downtown's vitality. King County/METRO has identified this site as one of several slated for transit-oriented redevelopment. This provides an opportunity to partner with the private sector to develop above the existing park-and-ride lot. Plan recommendations support this proposal, particularly since it provides an opportunity to properly shape and revitalize downtown, as well as attract spin-off development.

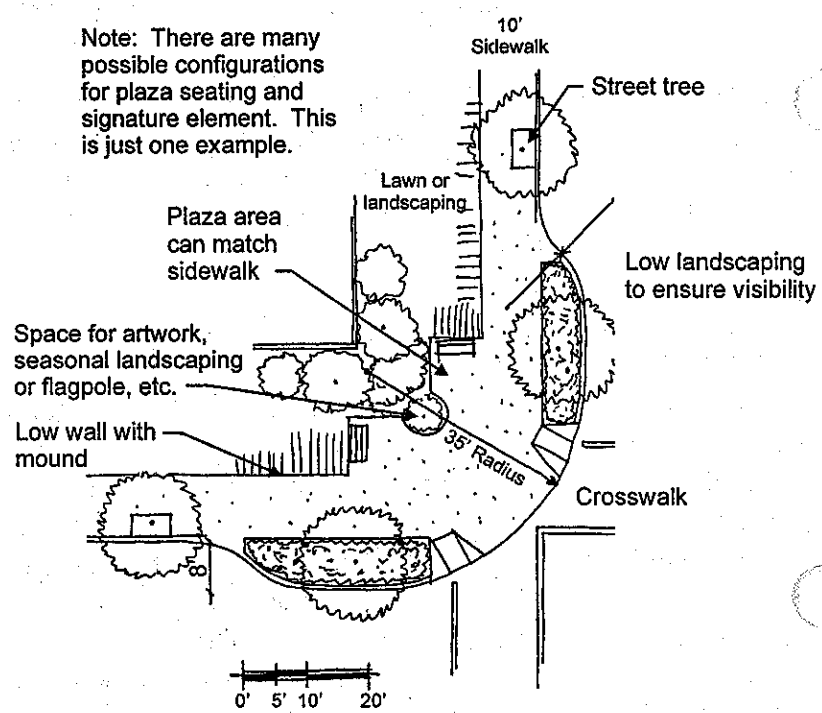


Figure 9: Proposed curb bulb design.

Curb Bulbs

Curb bulbs are a very important feature proposed by the plan to enhance pedestrian safety and improve the appearance of downtown. Curb bulbs extend the sidewalk into the street thereby reducing the distance a pedestrian must walk to cross the street. Curb bulbs also encourage motorists to drive more slowly by narrowing the roadway. Turning radii, however, can actually be larger for corners with curb bulbs if designed properly *(see Figure 9)*.

STREET TREE CONCEPT

Urban streetscapes are composed of many elements working together to create a successful environment for pedestrians and automobiles. Street trees are one of the strongest of these elements. Their canopies shade the sidewalk and define the outdoor corridors that link businesses to the street. Street trees form transitions for pedestrians from the automobile orientation of the street to the sidewalk. Vehicular traffic is slowed because of the feeling of a constricted space formed by the trees. Speeds traveled on Southwest 152nd Street could be significantly reduced, and the overall quality of the street enhanced, with the proper selection of urban street trees.

In order to create a unified streetscape, it is important to look at how the street trees are arranged throughout the streets of the downtown. The patterns that are created with the distribution of specific types of trees can reinforce the activities that are occurring within those streets. The street tree master plan addresses the formation of these spaces over the public right-of-way, therefore reinforcing the overall urban streetscape of the downtown.

Street Tree Master Plan

- **First Avenue South as a corridor**

  These large trees are columnar in form and will help to visually shape a strong corridor that reinforces the movement of traffic through downtown. They should be placed out from underneath the low-lying power lines.
  - Bowhall columnar maple *(Acer rubrum 'Bowhall')*
  - Columnar hornbeam *(Carpinus betulus 'Fastigiata')*
  - Columnar ginko *(Ginko biloba 'Princeton Sentry')*
  - Columnar linden *(Tilia cordata 'Chancole')*

- **Fourth Avenue Southwest: A boulevard with plane trees**

  Seen as a major pedestrian street, Fourth Avenue Southwest currently is shaded by London plane trees. These large trees calm traffic and support a pedestrian linkage between several civic functions within the downtown.
  - Norway maple *(Acer plantanoides)*
  - Sycamore maple *(Acer pseudoplantanus)*
  - Sycamore/London plane *(Plantanus acerfolia)*

- **Southwest 148th Street: A welcome to the downtown**

  From the Gateway to Ambaum Boulevard Southwest, Southwest 148th Street is a major entry into downtown. This approach should be greeted by a grand procession of large boulevard trees.
  - Norway maple *(Acer plantanoides)*
  - Sycamore maple *(Acer pseudoplantanus)*
  - Sycamore/London plane *(Plantanus acerfolia)*

- **Southwest 150th Street: A pedestrian-oriented street**

  Pedestrian movement on Southwest 150th Street should be reinforced with shade trees that arc over the sidewalk and roadway, creating a comfortable setting. Spaced every fourth tree, specimen trees will give the street seasonal color.

  Flowering Trees
  - Crab apple *(Malus x zumi 'calocarpa')*
  - Lavelle hawthorn *(Crategus lavellii)*
  - Red horsechestnut *(Aesculus x Carnea 'Briotii')*

  Shade Trees
  - Homestead elm *(Ulmus 'Homestead')*
  - Japanese zelkova *(Zelkova serrata)*
  - Honey locust *(Gleditsia tricanthos var. Inermis)*

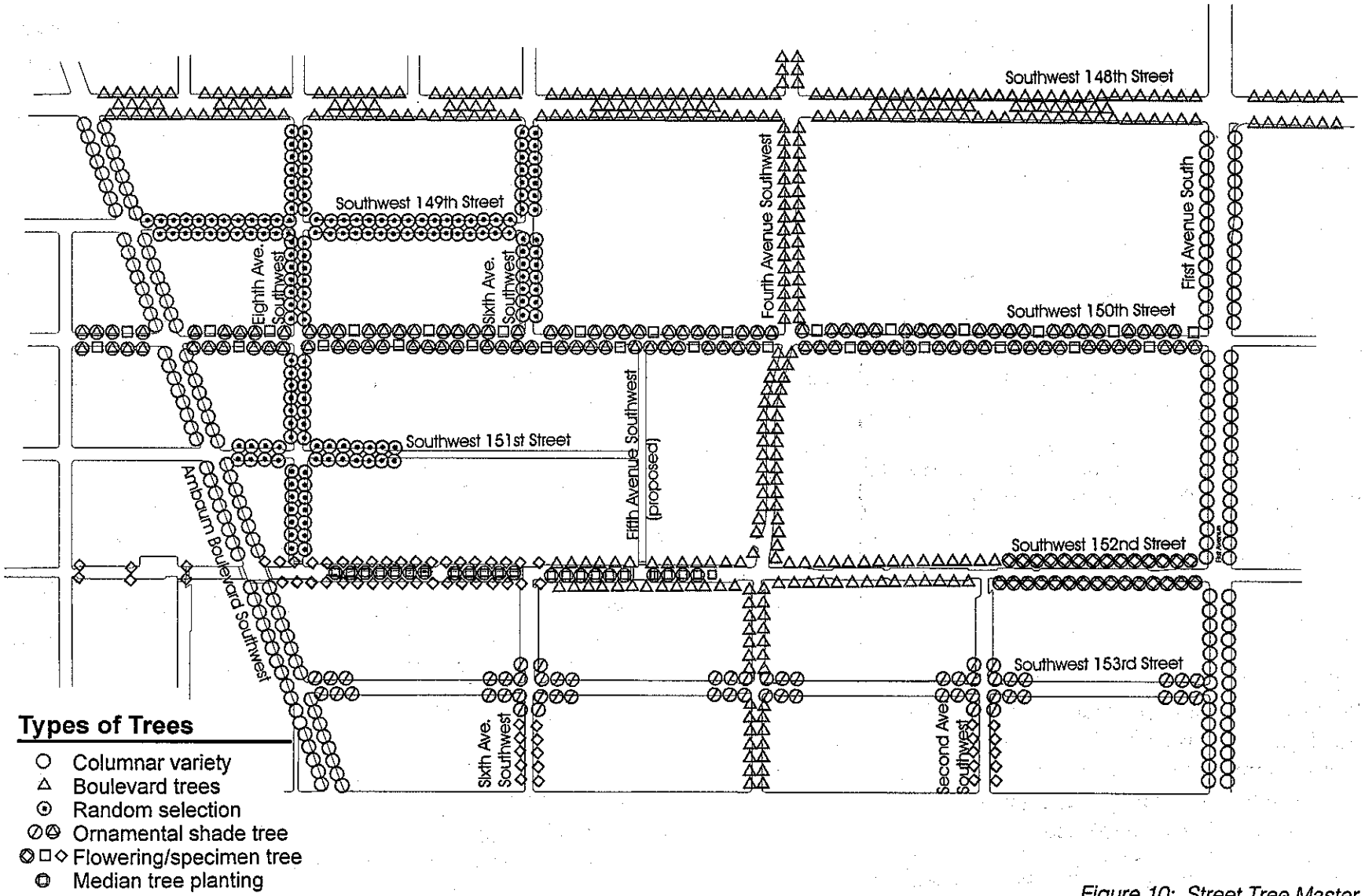


Figure 10: Street Tree Master Plan.

Southwest 152nd Street: Tree design and objectives

Slowing traffic and creating an enriched pedestrian environment is the overall goal for Southwest 152nd Street. These trees are selected to give a unique canopy over the street, providing seasonal colors, textures, and protection from the sun. The sequence of trees will start with a more open form at the corners of First Avenue South and Ambaum Boulevard Southwest and slowly close in the street as one travels to Fourth Avenue Southwest in the middle of Southwest 152nd Street. This urban forest will strive to give Southwest 152nd Street a unique main street design, helping to define the downtown.

Between First Avenue South and Second Avenue Southwest

- Raywood ash *(Fraxinus oxycarpa 'Raywood')*
- Honey locust *(Gleditsia tricanthos var. 'Inermis')*
- Sweet gum *(Liquidamber styraciflua)*

Between Second and Sixth Avenues Southwest

- Sycamore *(Plantanus acerfolia)*
- Sycamore maple *(Acer pseudoplantanus)*
- Norway maple *(Acer plantanoides)*

Median (Fourth Avenue Southwest to Ambaum Boulevard Southwest)

- Ash *(Sorbus aria)*
- Linden *(Tilia cordata)*
- Columnar ginko *(Ginko biloba Princeton Sentry')*
- Highlight/accent tree: *Calocedrus deccurens*

Flowering tree (Fourth Avenue Southwest to Ambaum Boulevard Southwest/Old Burien)

- Eastern redbud *(Cercis Canadensis)*
- Hedge maple *(Acer campastre 'Evelyn')*
- Flowering pear *(Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticler')*
- Yoshino cherry *(Prunus x Yedoensis 'Akebono')*

Southwest 153rd Street: Enhancing intersections to make cars aware of pedestrians

Accenting the intersections with these stately trees will give the downtown a sense of permanence, and provide a safer pedestrian environment by slowing traffic at the intersections.

- October Glory maple *(Acer rubrum 'October Glory')*
- Red oak *(Quercus rubra)*
- Sweet gum *(Liquidamber styraciflua)*

Ambaum Boulevard Southwest: The future with street trees

Planning the future of Ambaum Boulevard Southwest, this corridor should include broad columnar street trees that will reinforce the movement of traffic through downtown.

- Bowhall columnar maple *(Acer rubrum 'Bowhall')*
- Columnar hornbeam *(Carpinus Betulus 'Fastigiata')*
- Columnar ginko *(Ginko biloba Princeton Sentry')*
- Columnar linden *(Tilia cordata 'Chantcole')*

Northwest area streets tree design and concept

The concept for the northwest streets is an urban neighborhood street tree layout. The tree species will be a mix of all trees listed and vary according to city lots, reinforcing the individual ownership and character of a residential neighborhood.

Parking lot street tree list

Trees selected for use in parking lots should provide a good canopy for shade and not create a lot of litter or pitch.

- Sweet gum *(Liquidamber Styraciflua)*
- Ash *(Fraxinus Oxycarpa)*
- October Glory maple *(Acer Rubrum 'October Glory')*
- Homestead elm *(Ulmus Homestead)*
- Japanese zelkova *(Zelkova Serrata)*

PLAN ELEMENTS

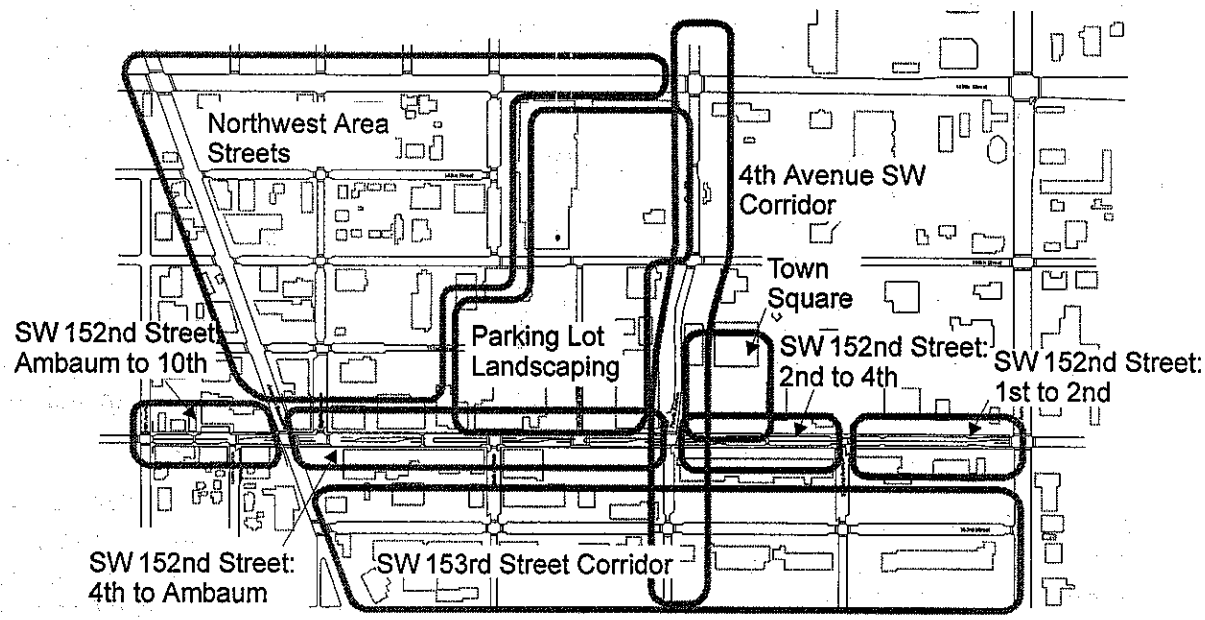


Figure 11: Plan elements.

SOUTHWEST 152ND STREET CORRIDOR

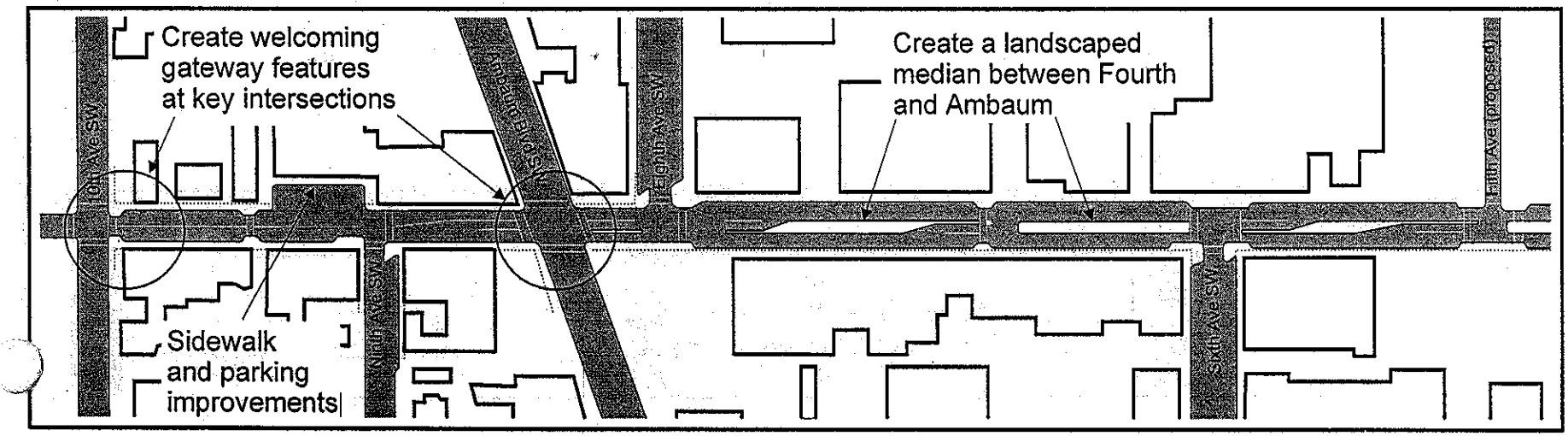
Burien residents established a "vision" set forth in the HyettPalma report for what they thought Southwest 152nd Street should ultimately be like:

> ***"The most intense pedestrian-oriented area of downtown, with a high level of pedestrian-oriented streetscape amenities and a solid streetwall of buildings that ensure an intimate street level environment."***

While the stretch of Southwest 152nd Street contains remarkably different styles of development, from Old Burien in the western end to the strip commercial-style development on the eastern end, five key urban design objectives have been identified to revitalize Southwest 152nd Street. Although the unique nature of each stretch of Southwest 152nd Street requires variations in how these objectives are achieved, the overall design of the plan stresses simplicity, quality, and cohesion.

1. **Reduce travel speeds.**
   Dangerous traffic speeds have been the most common concerns among downtown merchants. The plan recommends eliminating a travel lane in each direction and adding parallel parking between First and Fourth Avenues Southwest and a landscaped median between Fourth Avenue Southwest and Ambaum Boulevard Southwest to address this concern and enhance the livability of the street.

2. **Provide landscaping.**
   While the stretch of Southwest 152nd Street between Second and Sixth Avenues Southwest contains a dramatic canopy of large London plane trees, the remainder of the corridor has very little greenery. Street trees and landscaping will be critical in enhancing the pedestrian environment in these stretches.



3. **Improve sidewalks and crosswalks.**
Sidewalks along Southwest 152nd Street range from nonexistent between First Avenue South and Second Avenue Southwest to 16 feet wide, albeit cracked and void of softening landscaping, between Sixth and Eighth Avenues Southwest. Plan recommendations stress continuity and simplicity while using permanent and high-quality materials. Specifically, this includes unit pavers along the outer 4- to 5-foot stretch of the sidewalk adjacent to the curb containing street trees and street lights; scored concrete (2-foot square pattern) along the main walking pathway in the middle (6 to 8 feet); and, where sidewalk width allows, the opportunity for more variable, semi-public, inner 0-5 feet of sidewalk depending on the desires/ needs of adjacent businesses.

4. **Provide pedestrian-scaled lighting.**
This will be one of the most important unifying features of the street. Pedestrian-scaled lighting will have a dramatic positive effect on improving the nighttime ambience of the street.

5. **Provide entryway/gateway features.**
Entryway features can be extremely valuable in establishing or strengthening a sense of identity for an area or a "place" for both local residents and visitors. For Southwest 152nd Street, gateway features are important from the east end between First Avenue South and Second Avenue Southwest and at Ambaum Boulevard Southwest and 10th Avenue Southwest at the west end.

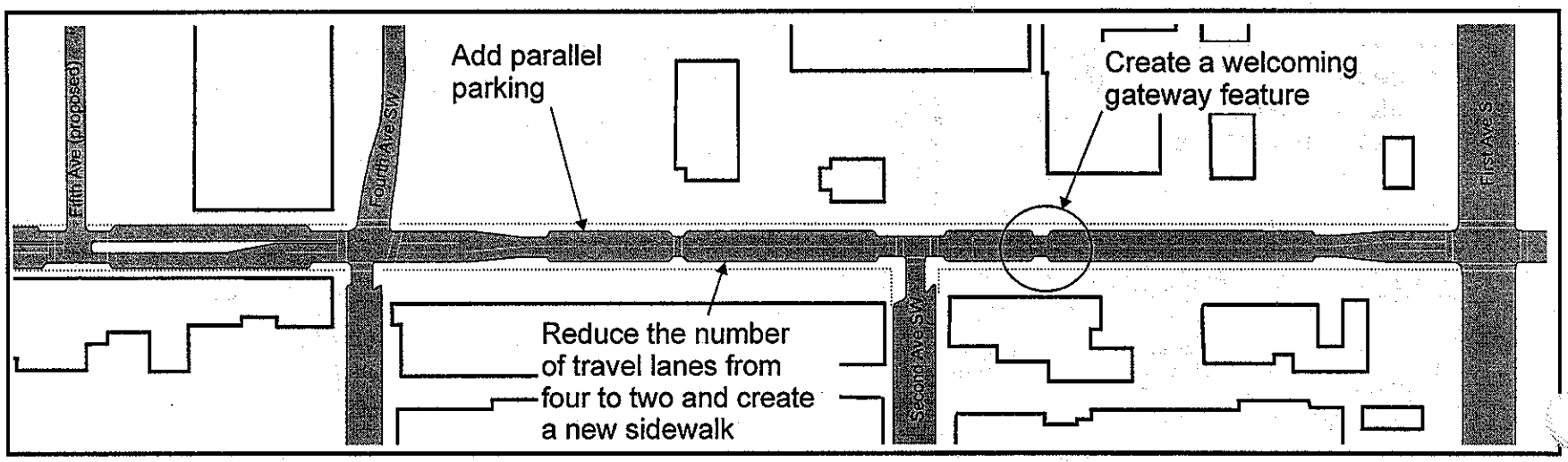


Figure 12: Southwest 152nd Street corridor.

Southwest 152nd Street – First Avenue South to Second Avenue Southwest

This is the eastern gateway to Burien's "Main Street." However, Southwest 152nd Street here more closely resembles First Avenue South than the rest of Southwest 152nd Street itself. Characteristics include little or no greenery, ambiguous buildings set back from the street with parking lots in front, unattractive signage, and little or no pedestrian features. Further, uncoordinated parking areas and undefined driveways and paths create a number of problems for pedestrians and motorists. The plan for this stretch of Southwest 152nd Street seeks to beautify and define the street here – to convey to pedestrians and motorists a sense of anticipation or arrival to the town's "Main Street."

Plan Objectives

- Provide a safe and attractive pedestrian environment by providing new sidewalks, improved crosswalks, and street trees and reducing auto traffic speeds.
- Provide an entryway element into Burien's "Main Street" by creating an overhead design feature.
- Reduce traffic speeds by reducing the number of travel lanes and providing on-street parking.
- Provide unifying design features by creating a consistent pattern of sidewalks, street trees, and pedestrian lights.
- Promote streetfront redevelopment by providing streetscape improvements, on-street parking, and regulatory measures that seek pedestrian orientation in new development.

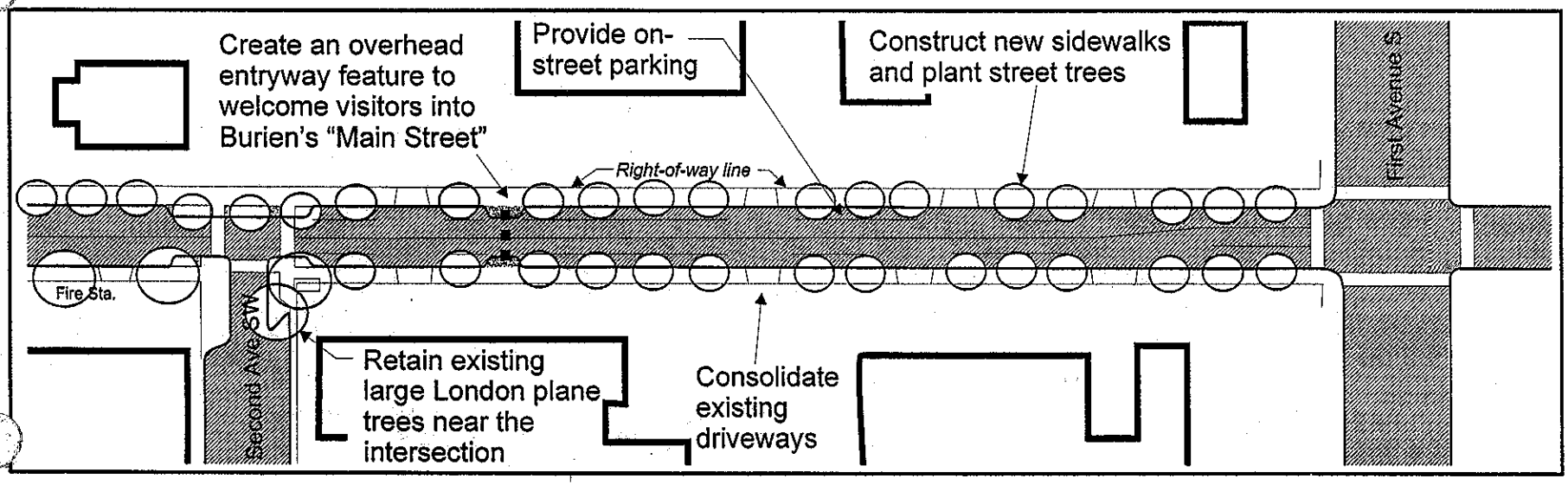


Figure 13: Southwest 152nd Street – First Avenue South to Second Avenue Southwest: Proposed improvements and layout.

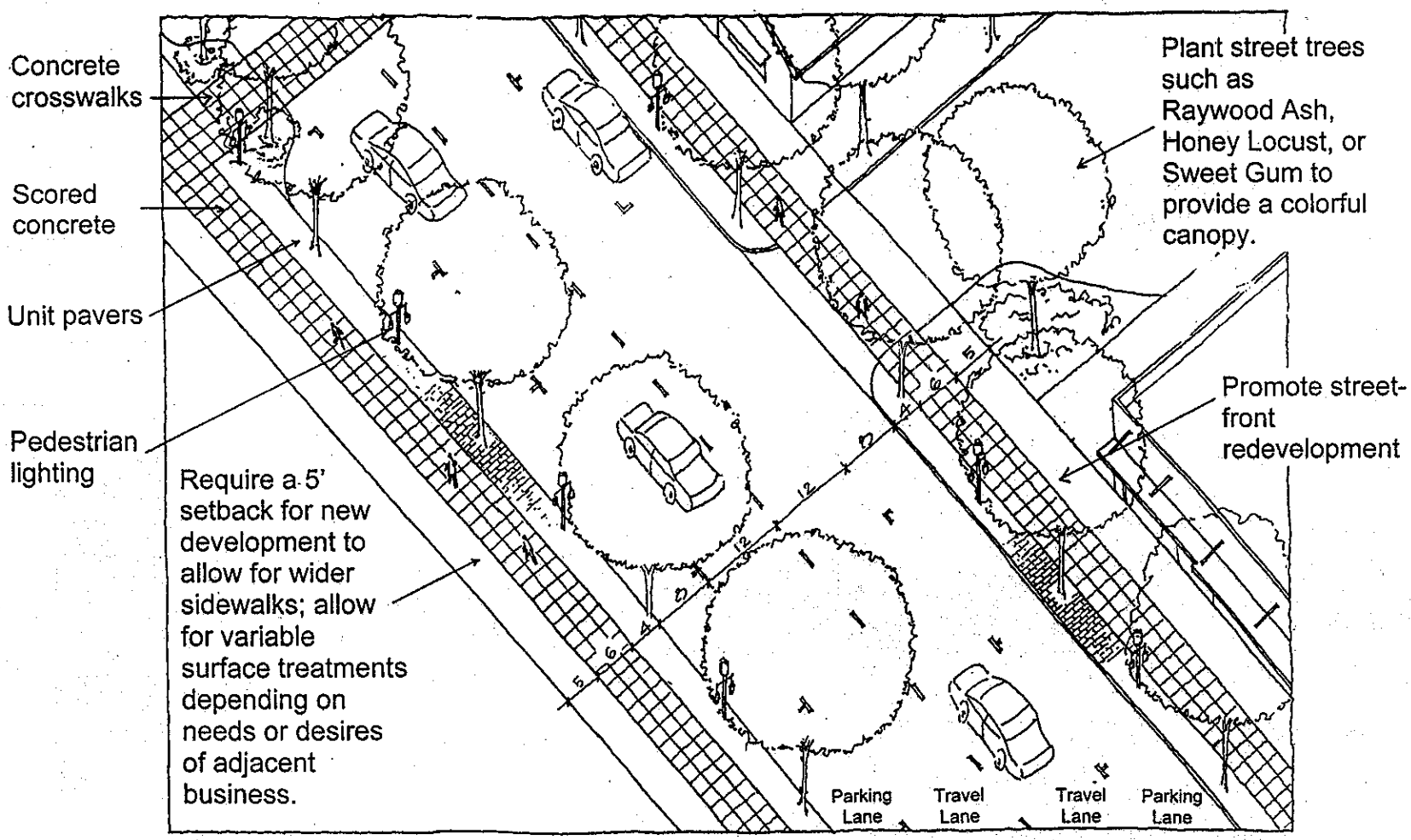


Figure 14: Typical street improvements on Southwest 152nd Street from First Avenue South to Second Avenue Southwest.

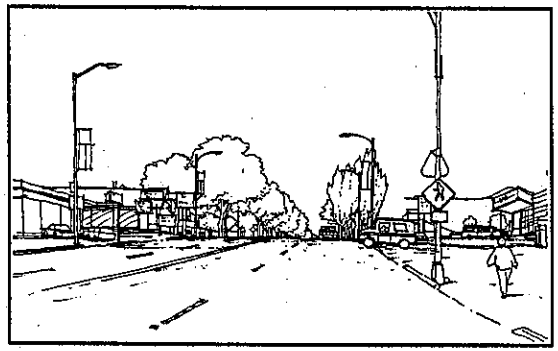


Figure 15: Southwest 152nd Street between First Avenue South and Second Avenue Southwest today.

Restrict on-street parking near driveways and cross streets with curb bulbs to ensure visibility for traffic entering the street.

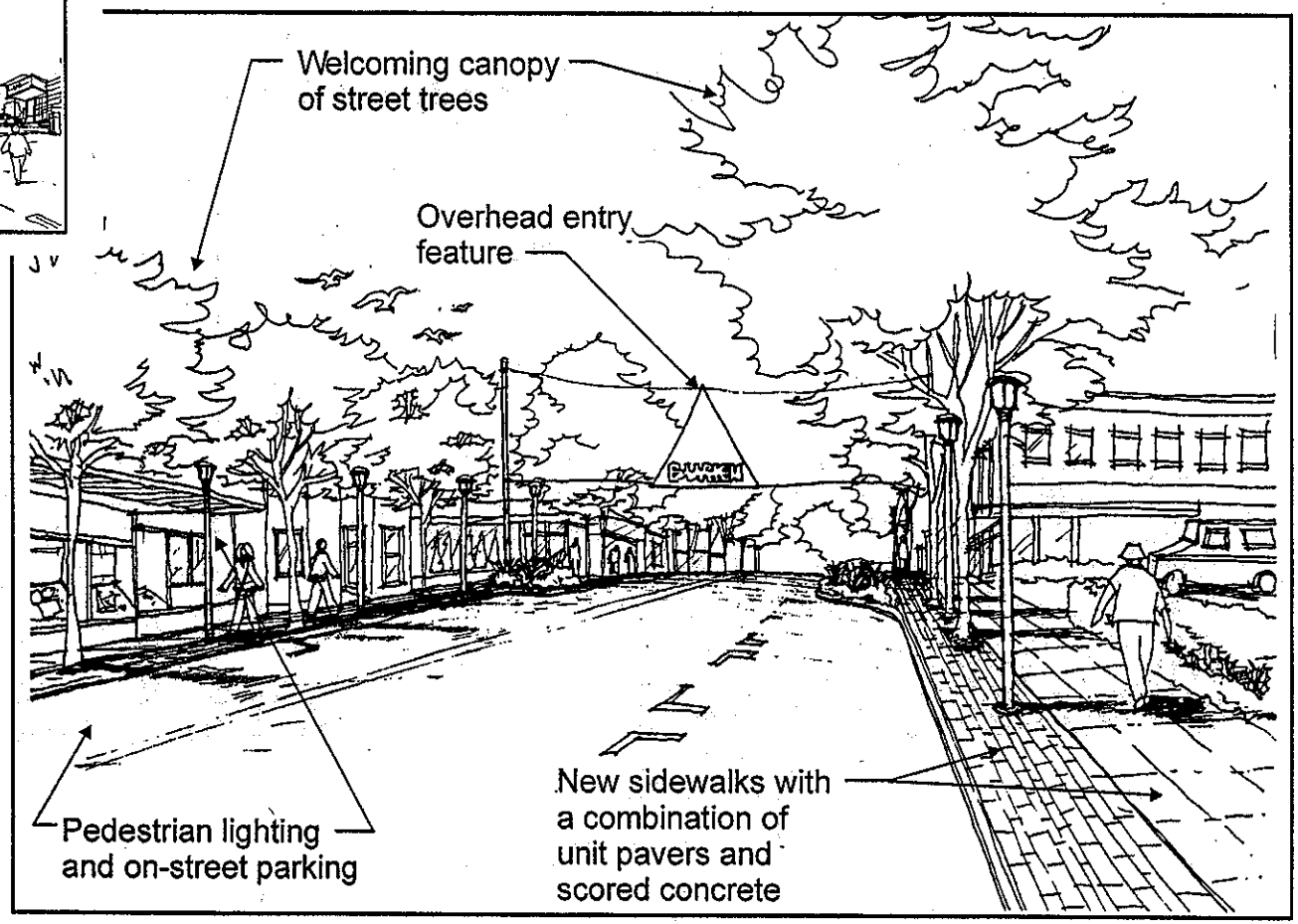
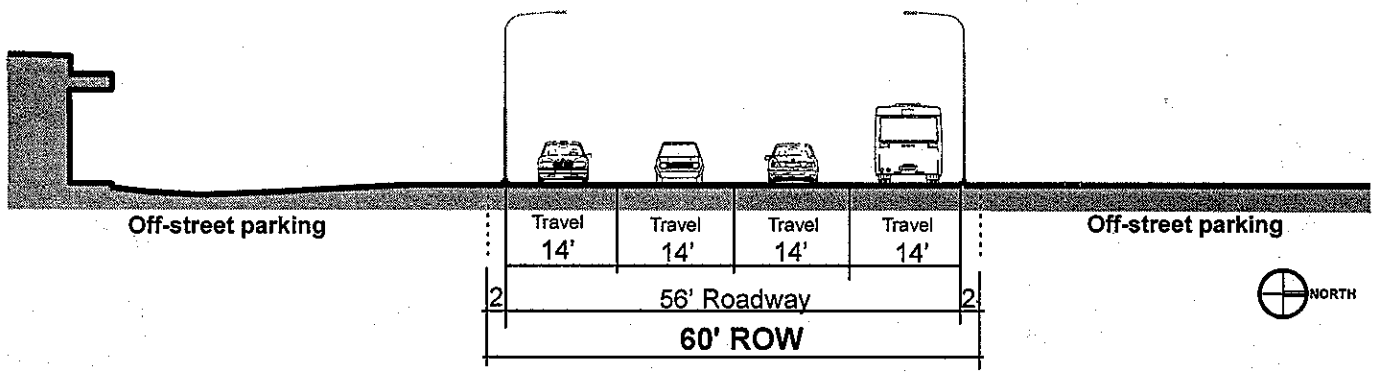


Figure 16: Southwest 152nd Street with proposed improvements.



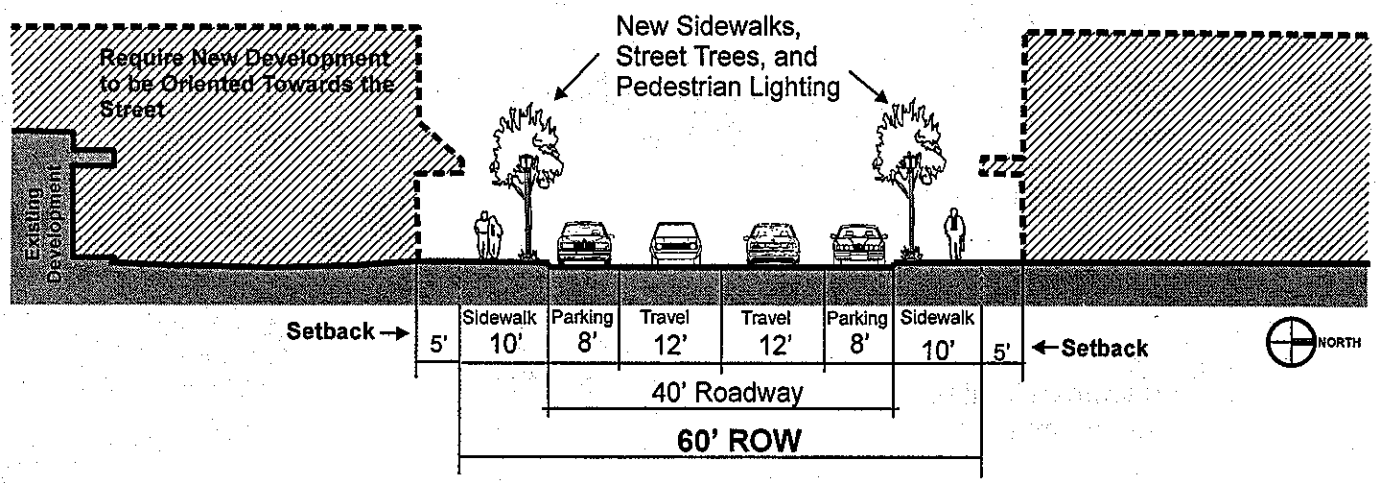


Figure 17: Existing and proposed street sections on Southwest 152nd Street between First Avenue South and Second Avenue Southwest.

Southwest 152nd Street – Second Avenue Southwest to Fourth Avenue Southwest

While the large London plane trees provide a dramatic canopy and definition to the street, the streetscape around the trees is less intimate and oriented towards the automobile. Each side of the street here has a strikingly different character. The south side of the street contains a continuous façade of small-scale businesses with a frontage road with angled and parallel parking in front. Development on the north side of the street is more ambiguous and set back far from the street with large parking areas in the front. With the four lanes of high-speed traffic and off-street parking in front of the buildings on both sides of the street, Southwest 152nd Street here is nearly an impenetrable barrier for the pedestrian. This plan seeks to change that through the use of traffic calming measures and pedestrian, landscaping, and signage improvements.

Plan Objectives

- Provide a safe and attractive pedestrian environment by improving sidewalks and landscaping and reducing auto travel speeds.
- Provide unifying design features by creating a consistent pattern of sidewalks, street trees, signage, and pedestrian lights.
- Reduce travel speeds by reducing the number of travel lanes and provide on-street parking.
- Promote streetfront redevelopment by providing streetscape improvements, on-street parking, and regulatory measures that seek a pedestrian orientation in new development.

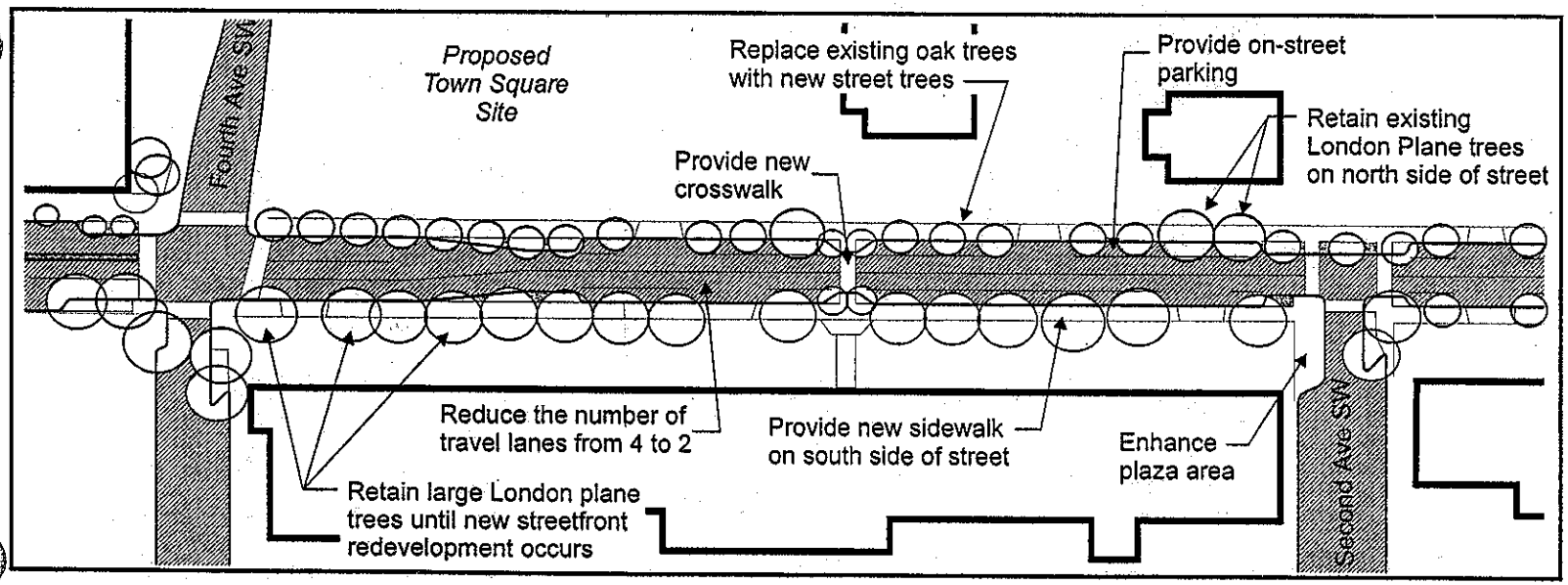


Figure 18: Southwest 152nd Street - Second to Fourth Avenues Southwest: Proposed improvements and layout.

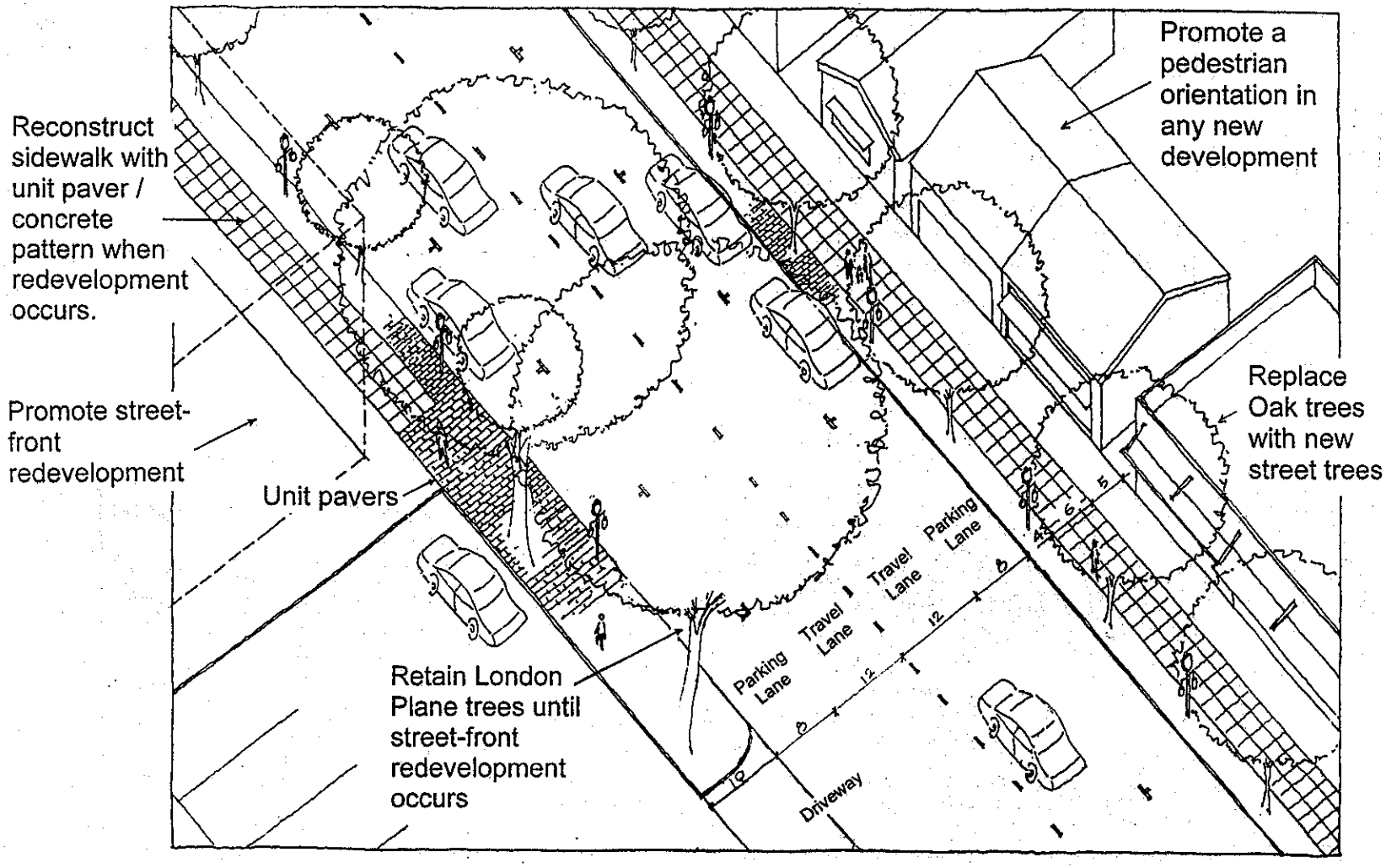


Figure 19: Typical street improvements on Southwest 152nd Street from Second Avenue Southwest to Fourth Avenue Southwest.

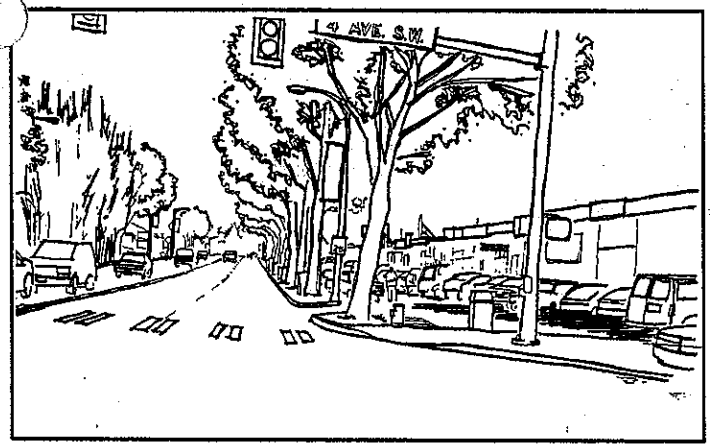


Figure 20: Looking east on Southwest 152nd Street at Fourth Avenue Southwest today.

Restrict on-street parking near driveways and cross streets with curb bulbs to ensure visibility for traffic entering the street.

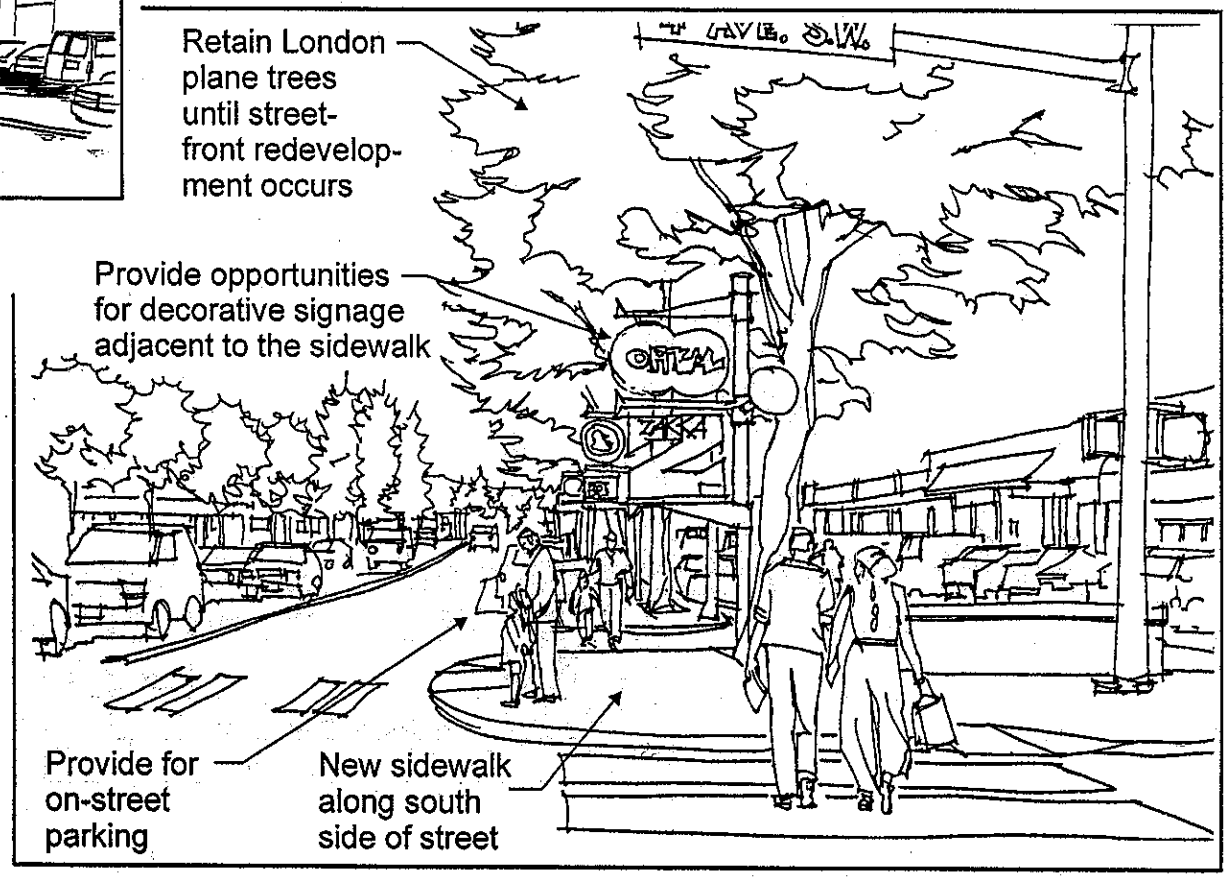
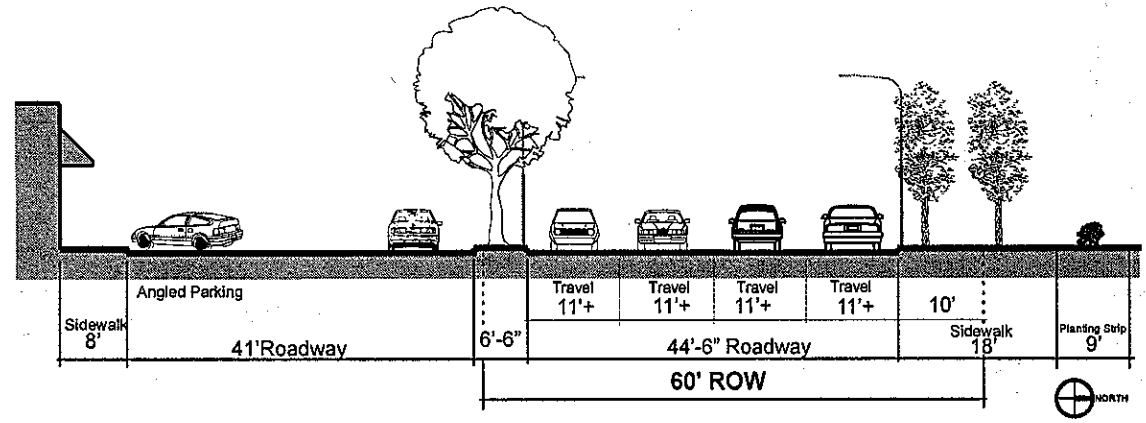


Figure 21: Southwest 152nd Street with proposed improvements.



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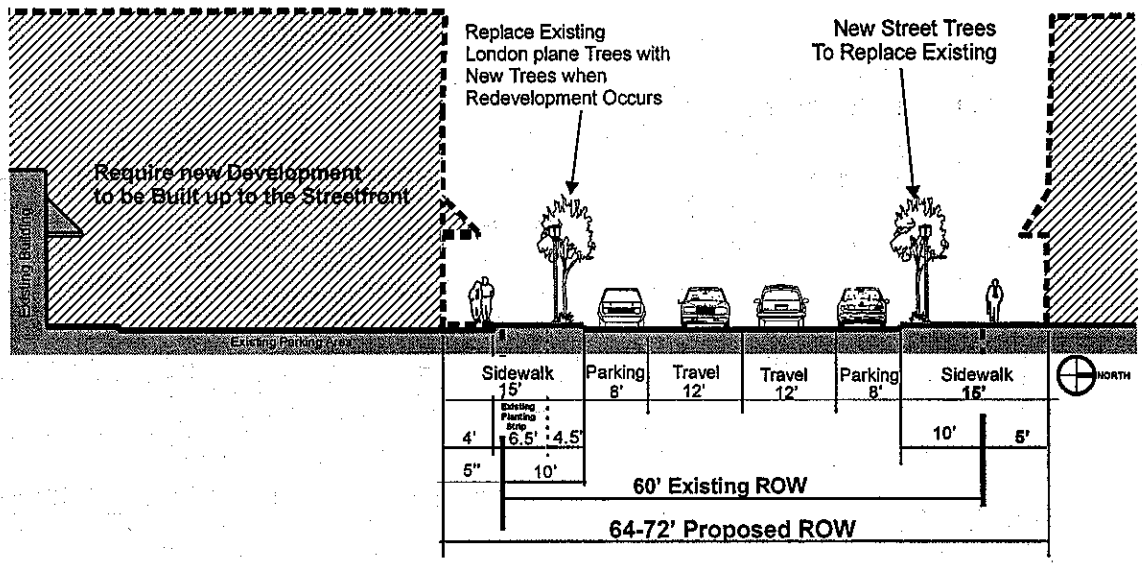


Proposed

Figure 22: Existing and proposed street sections on Southwest 152nd Street between Second Avenue Southwest and Fourth Avenue Southwest.

Southwest 152nd Street – Fourth Avenue Southwest to Ambaum Boulevard Southwest

This area is considered by many to be the heart of downtown, with near uninterrupted streetfront retail shops. While this may not be the oldest part of downtown, it is certainly the most centrally located. This stretch of Southwest 152nd Street also contains the widest sidewalks – 14 feet on the north side of the street and 16 feet on the south side. Nearly all of the sidewalk, however, on both sides of the street lies outside of the public right-of-way, creating a concern over maintenance. The wide roadway along this stretch (approximately 56 feet) creates a tremendous opportunity to dramatically enhance the appearance and identity of the street through the creation of a landscaped median.

Plan Objectives

- Provide a safe and attractive pedestrian environment by improving existing sidewalks, adding landscaping, and reducing auto travel speeds.
- Provide unifying design features by creating a landscaped median and sidewalks with a consistent pattern of surface treatment, street trees, and pedestrian lighting.
- Reduce travel speeds by creating a landscaped median, reducing the number of travel lanes, and maintaining on-street parking.

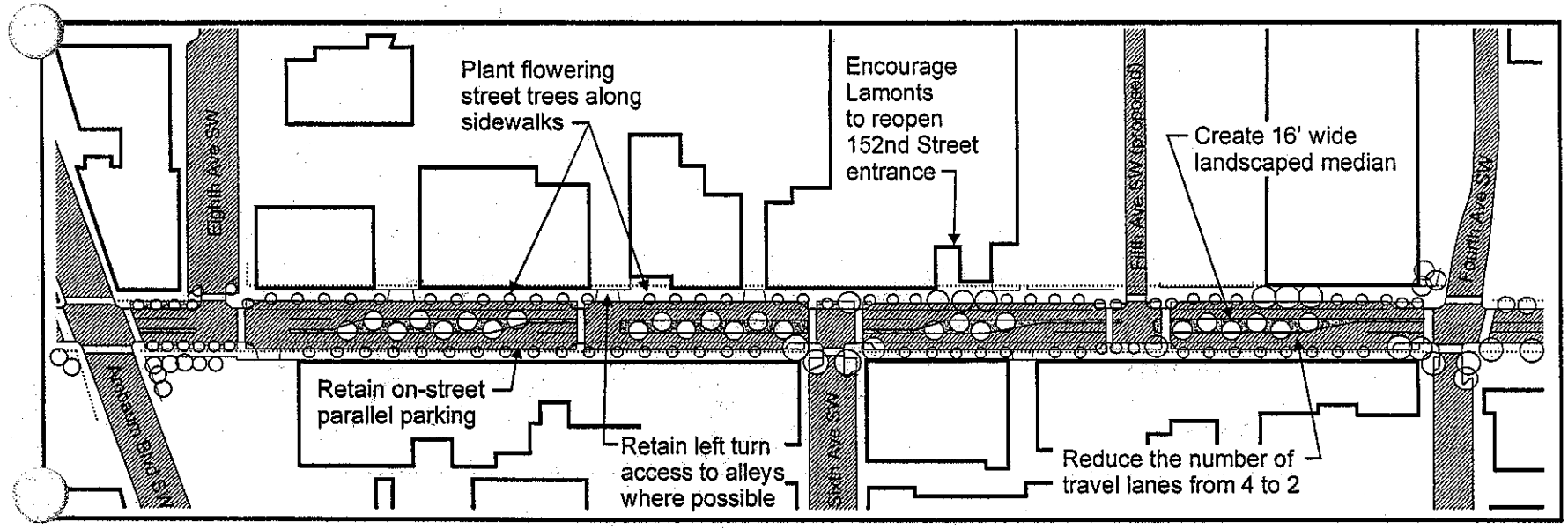


Figure 23: Southwest 152nd Street – Fourth Avenue Southwest to Ambaum Boulevard Southwest: Proposed layout and improvements.

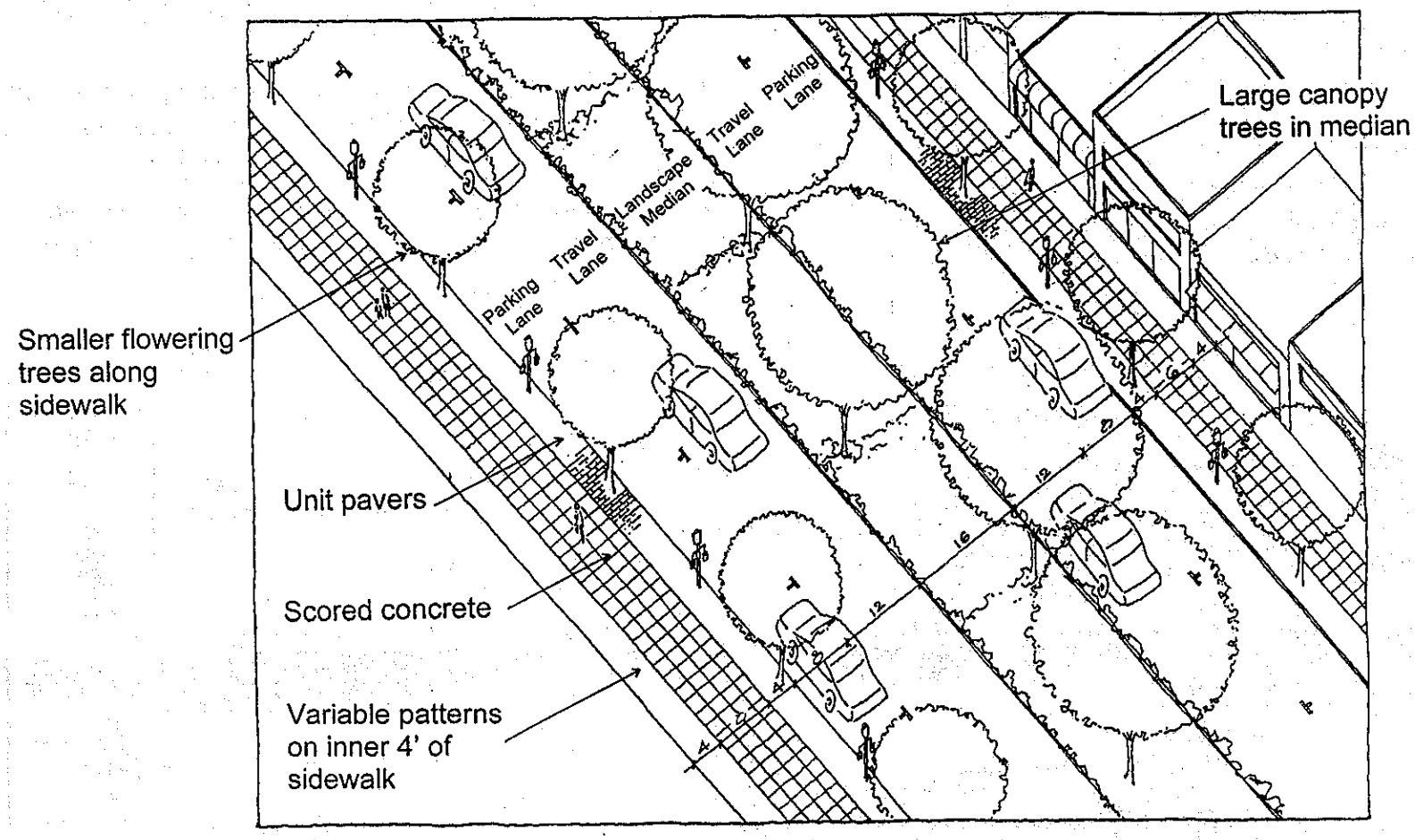


Figure 24: Typical street improvements on Southwest 152nd Street from Fourth Avenue Southwest to Ambaum Boulevard Southwest.

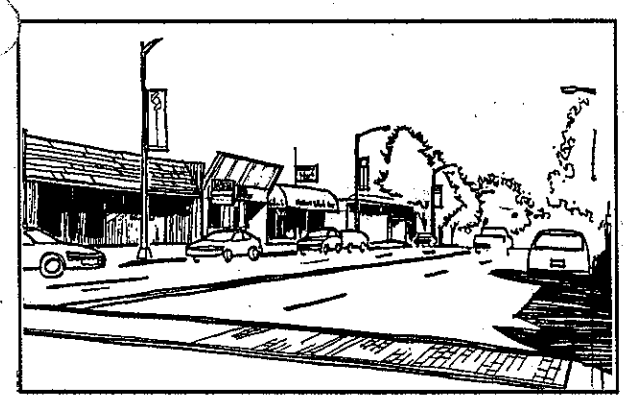


Figure 25: Southwest 152nd Street between Sixth Avenue Southwest and Fifth Avenue Southwest today.

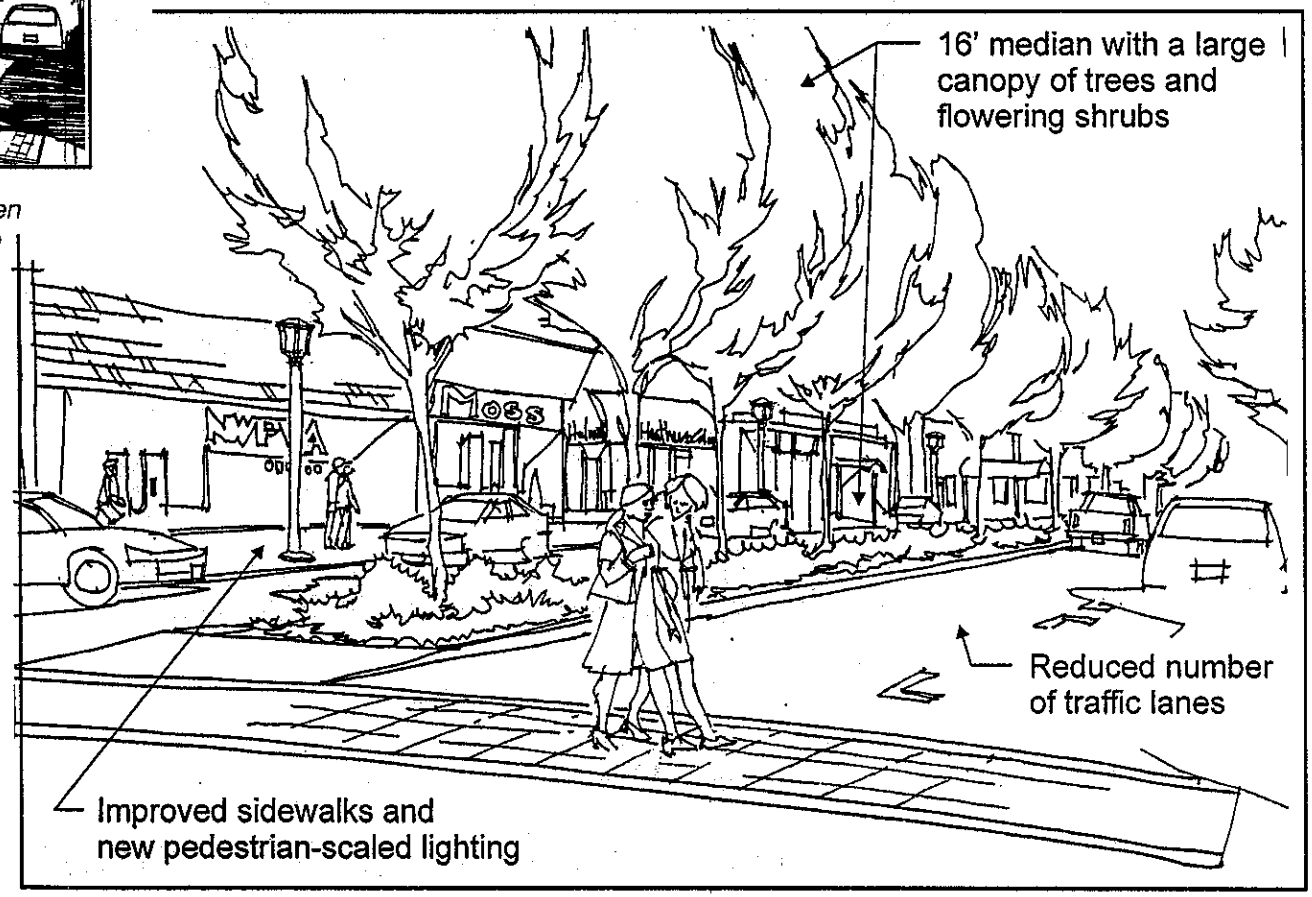
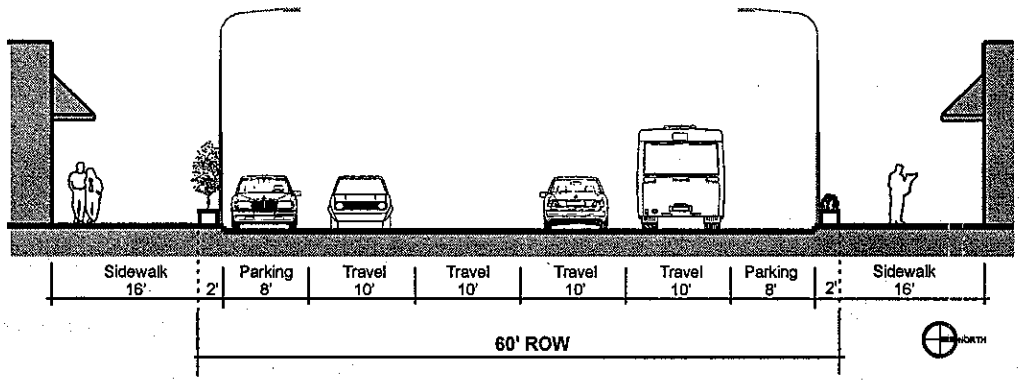
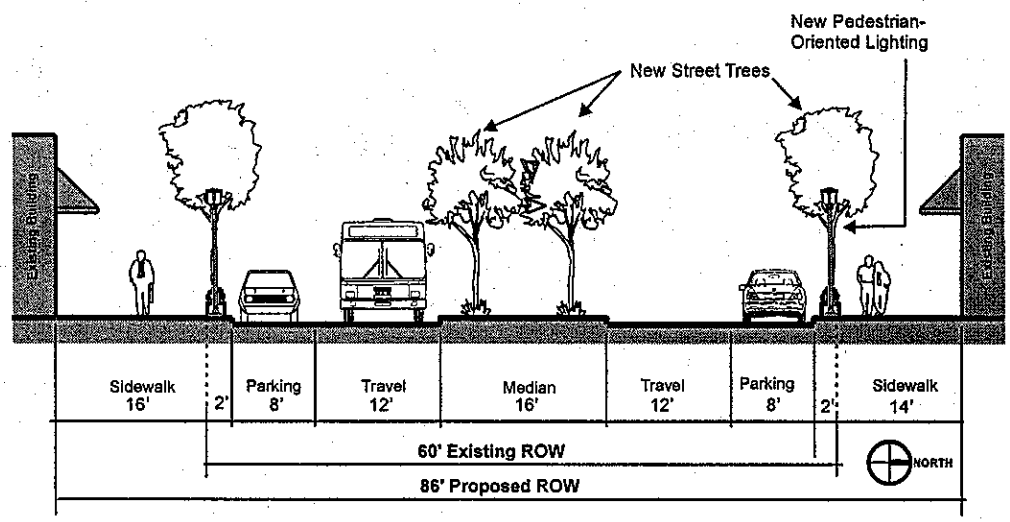


Figure 26: Southwest 152nd Street with proposed improvements.



Existing



Proposed

Figure 27: Existing and proposed street sections on Southwest 152nd Street between Fourth Avenue Southwest and Ambaum Boulevard Southwest.

Southwest 152nd Street – Old Burien

Old Burien is the city's birthplace. Although no one building individually stands out as a historic landmark, the buildings together are an invaluable part of Burien's history. Most of the buildings date back to the days of the electric streetcar that ran along Southwest 152nd Street, turning northward at Ambaum Boulevard Southwest, connecting the area with Seattle. Currently, narrow and neglected sidewalks, high traffic speeds, and parking are among the concerns of residents and local merchants. Proposed improvements thus seek to improve the "walkability" of Old Burien and the visibility of parking while celebrating the area's valuable heritage.

Plan Objectives

- Provide a safe and attractive pedestrian environment by improving and widening sidewalks and crosswalks and adding landscaping.
- Provide unifying design features such as sidewalks and pedestrian lighting.
- Celebrate Old Burien's heritage by adding historic-style pedestrian lighting, preserving the pedestrian scale of development through regulatory measures, and providing entryway features at 10th Avenue Southwest and Ambaum Boulevard Southwest to identify "Old Burien."
- Improve parking conditions by improving accessibility to off-street parking behind businesses.

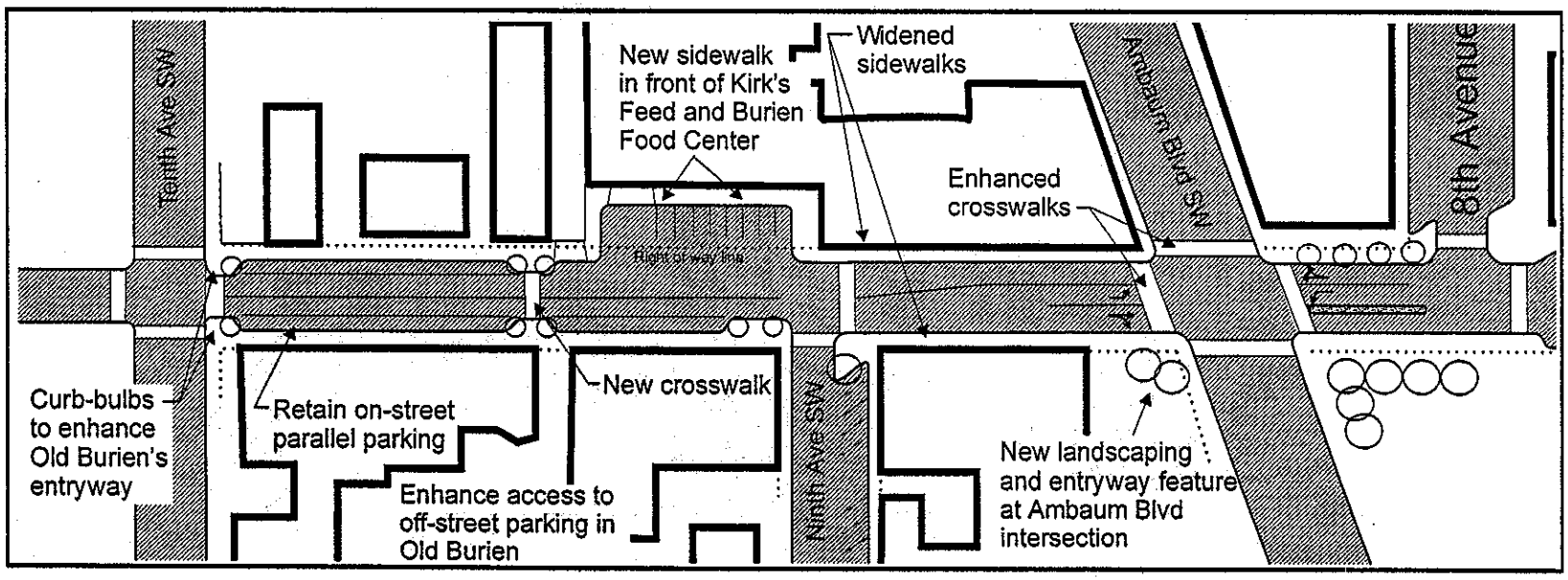


Figure 28: Southwest 152nd Street – Old Burien: Proposed layout and improvements.

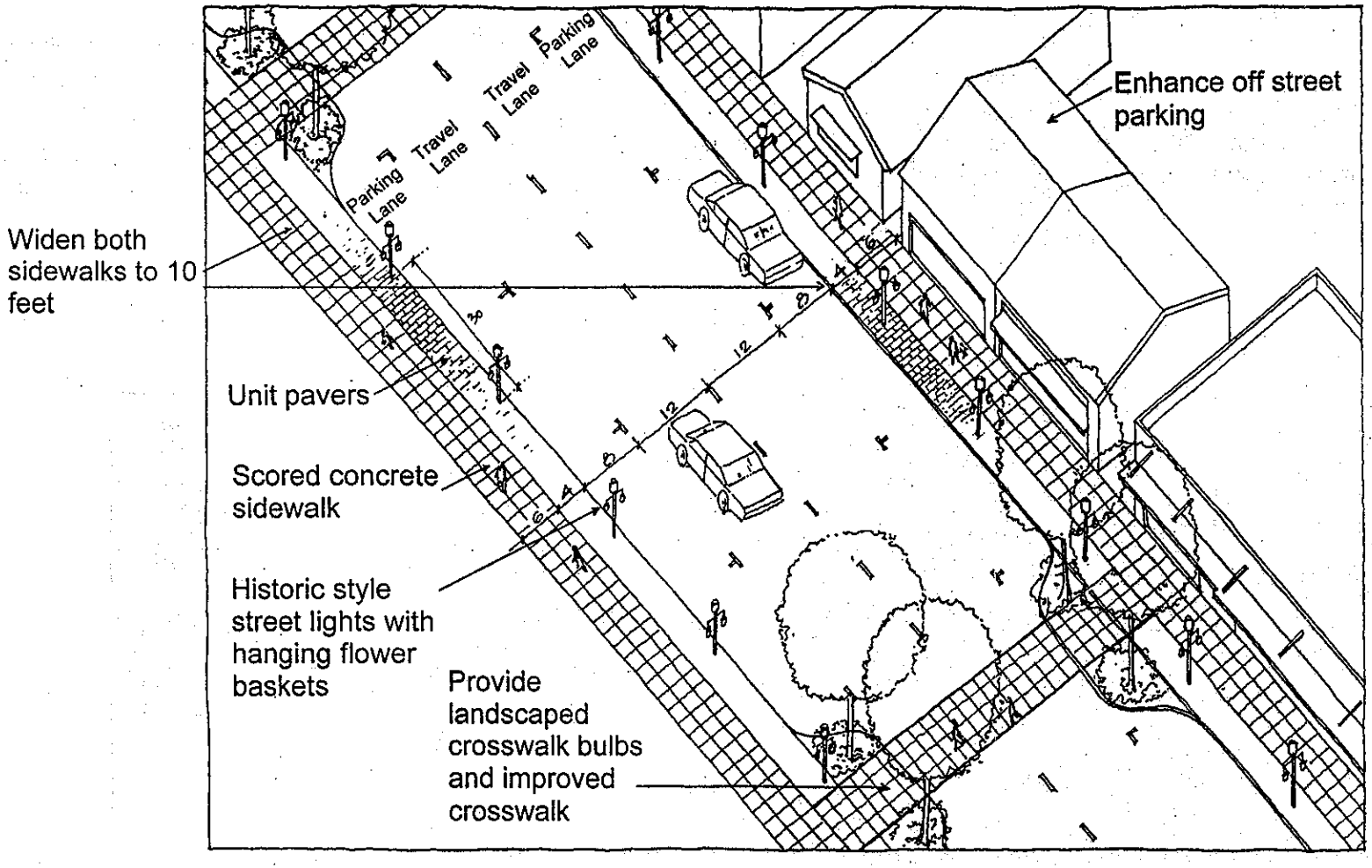


Figure 29: Typical street improvements on Southwest 152nd Street in Old Burien.

Figure 30: Old Burien today.

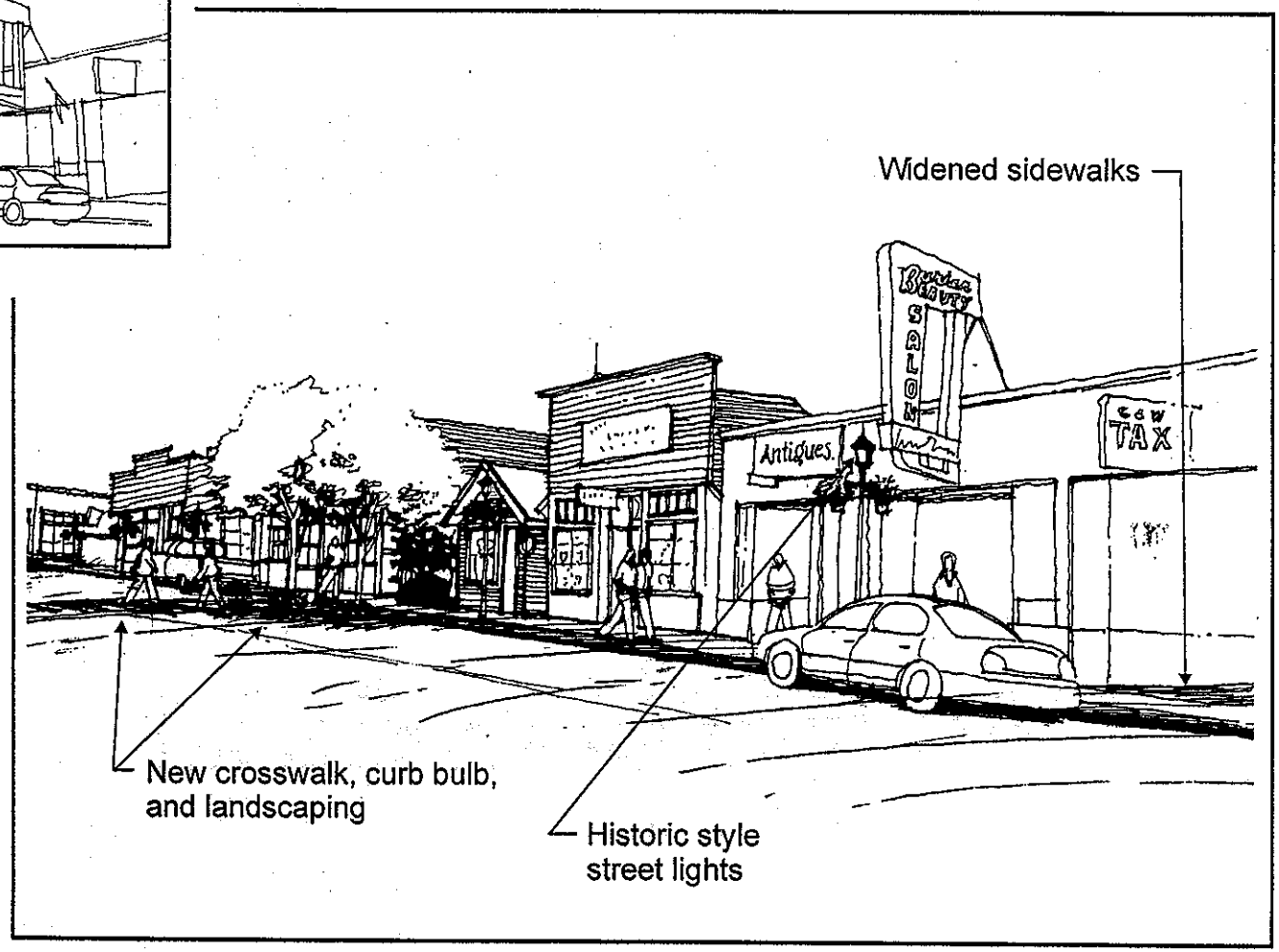
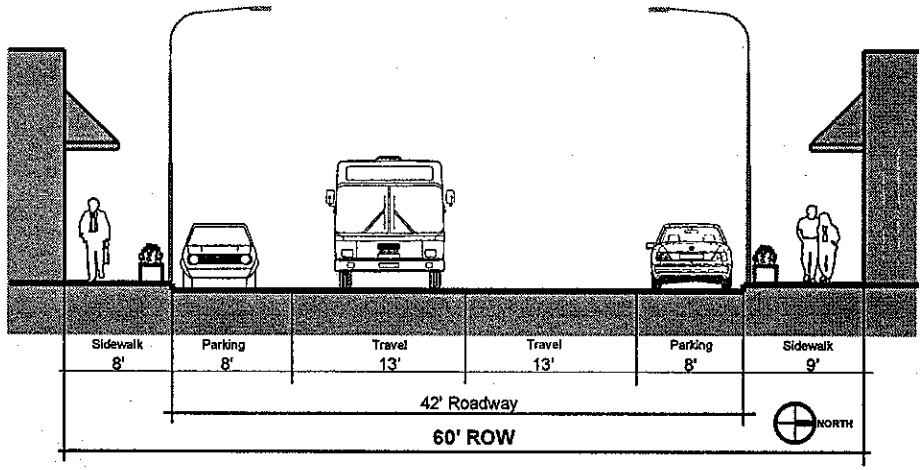


Figure 31: Old Burien with proposed improvements.



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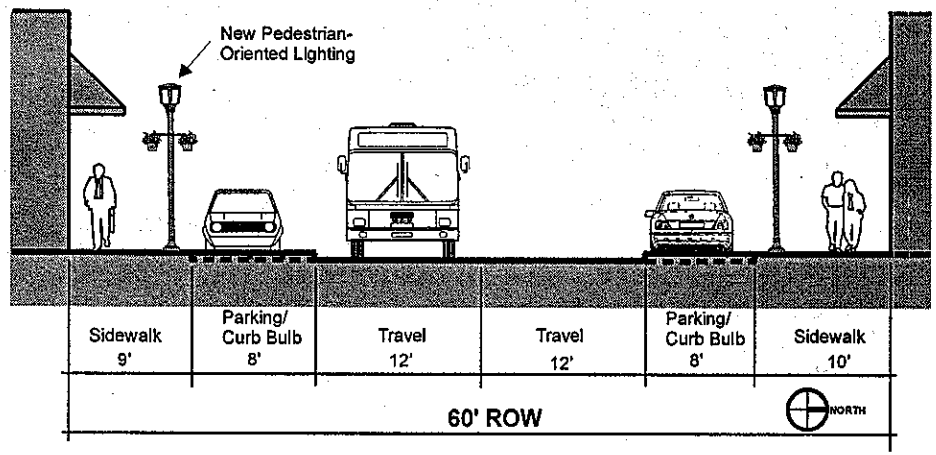

Proposed

Figure 32: Existing and proposed street sections on Southwest 152nd Street in Old Burien.

SOUTHWEST 153RD STREET CORRIDOR

The HyettPalma report defined the Southwest 153rd Street corridor as the "Destination Retail and Service District" because of its large concentration of highly specialized, unique destination retail and service businesses – not geared for browsing or impulse shopping. Thus, while the pedestrianization of Southwest 153rd Street may not be as critical to the long-term success of Southwest 152nd Street, the business climate has much to gain through minor physical improvements. The most important improvements along the corridor involve the intersections. The First Avenue South and Ambaum Boulevard Southwest intersections provide opportunities for modest entryway enhancements such as landscaped curb bulbs. The cross streets of Fourth, Sixth, and Eighth Avenues Southwest are particularly important as these streets receive significant pedestrian flow from the residential area to the west into downtown.

Plan Objectives

- Improve the visibility of businesses on Southwest 153rd Street by creating decorative directory signs incorporated with pedestrian and landscaping improvements at intersections to advertise businesses in each block.
- Improve pedestrian access on Second, Fourth, and Sixth Avenues Southwest between Southwest 152nd and Southwest 154th Streets by providing new and/or improved sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops.
- Improve the appearance of Southwest 153rd Street by creating curb bulbs with plantings at all intersections from First Avenue South to Ambaum Boulevard Southwest and providing incentives for parking lot landscaping.

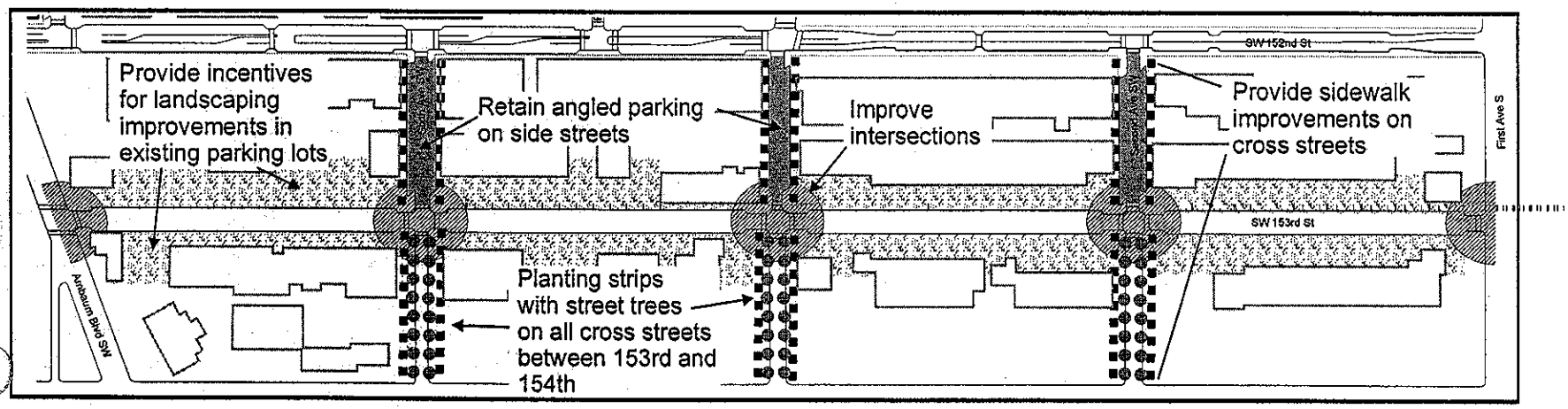

Figure 33: Southwest 153rd Street Corridor layout and plan.

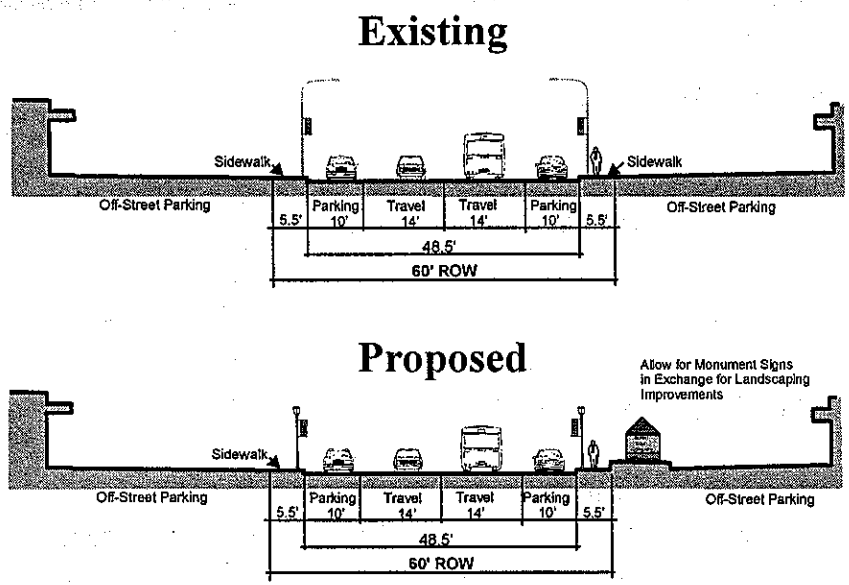

Figure 34: Existing and proposed street sections on Southwest 153rd Street.

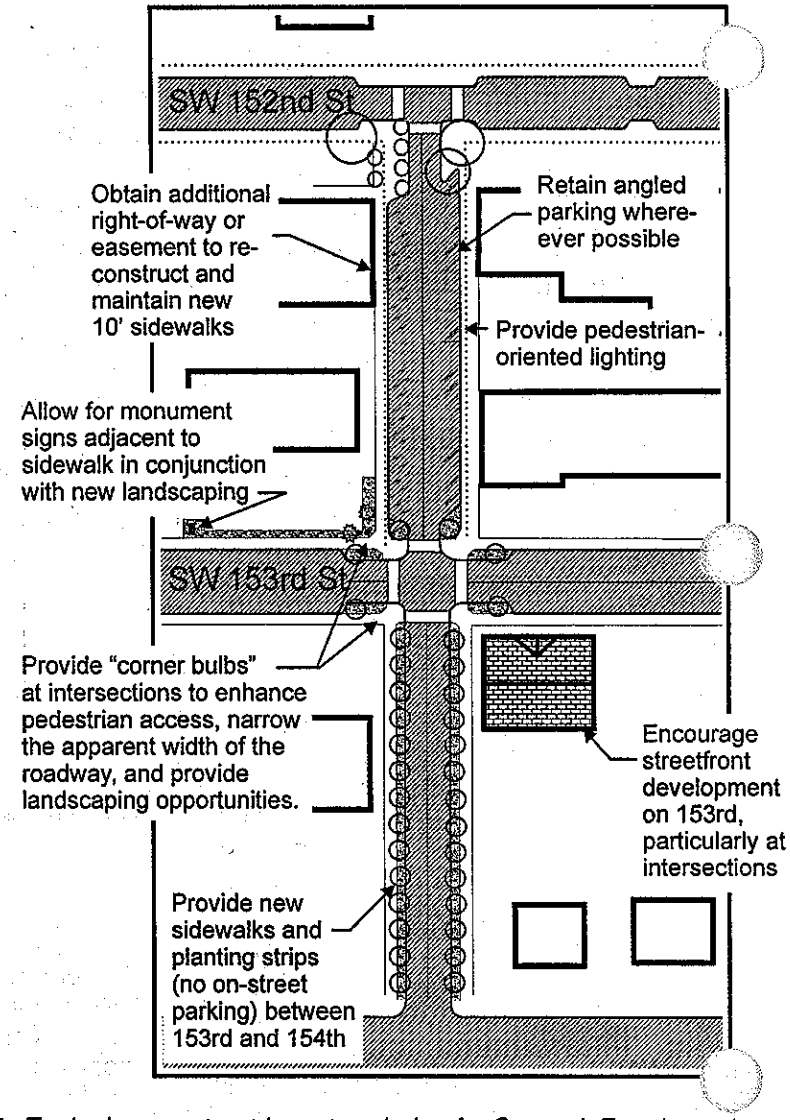

Figure 35: Typical cross street layout and plan for Second, Fourth, and Sixth Avenues Southwest between Southwest 152nd and 154th Streets.

FOURTH AVENUE SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR

The Fourth Avenue Southwest corridor serves as a major north/south pedestrian-oriented connection within the downtown environment of Burien. Existing London plane trees and a meandering street right-of-way keep vehicle speeds down, adding an attractive environment for pedestrians.

Goals

Fourth Avenue Southwest is an important regional link, connecting Dottie Harper Park, the public library, and the community center to the core of downtown. The pedestrian-oriented nature of the street should be maintained and strengthened. It will be important to ensure there is ample room for pedestrians on the sidewalks and the overhead canopy of the London plane trees is preserved.

Objectives

1. Celebrate the intersections: Unique design objectives to indicate each cross street.
2. Maintain continuity in street tree plantings.
3. Ensure vehicle speeds are kept to minimum.
4. Ensure sidewalks are capable of supporting pedestrians.

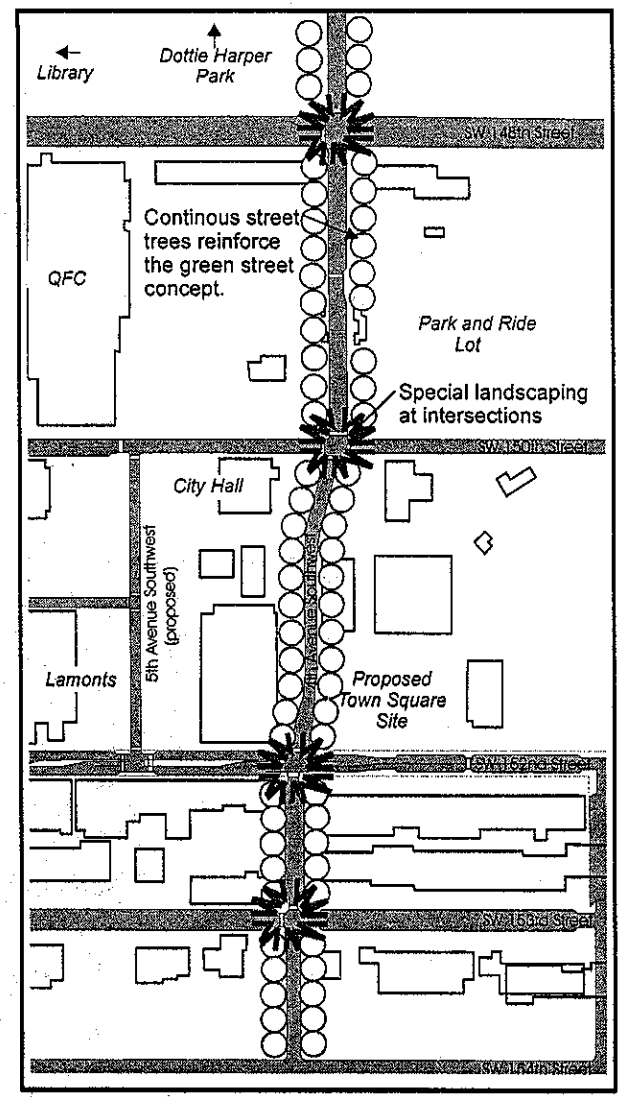

Figure 36: Fourth Avenue Southwest corridor plan.

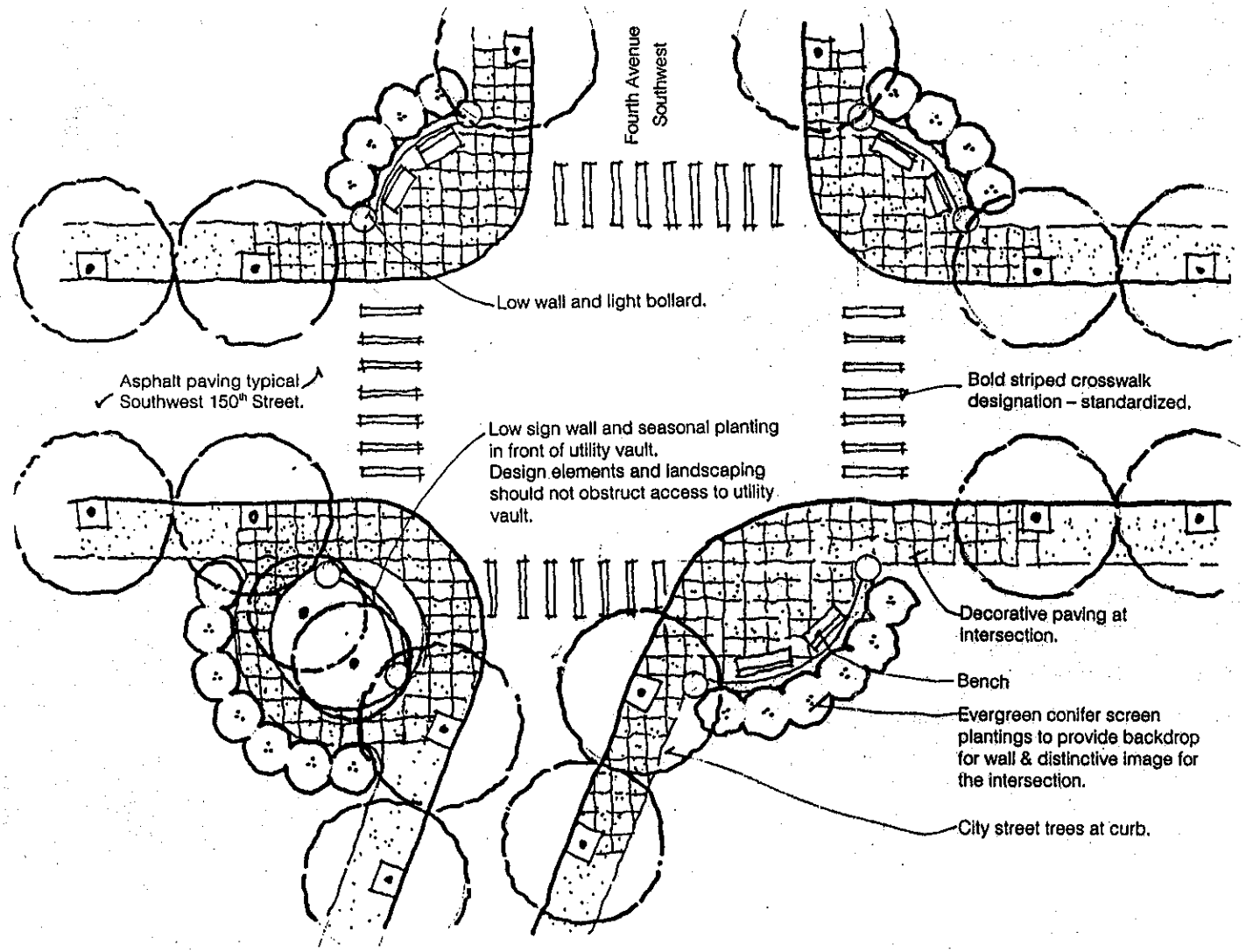

Figure 37: Fourth Avenue Southwest/Southwest 150th Street intersection improvements.

PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS

Currently, there is little organization of several parking lots in the downtown other than fading painted lines. These lots are seen as expanses of asphalt, with few devices that can discourage traffic from cutting through from one side of town to the other. Four-way stops are controlled by painted signs on the pavement that have faded to the point that they are hard to see on rainy or overcast days. Pedestrians feel uncomfortable in this environment, knowing that anyone can drive up to them from any direction.

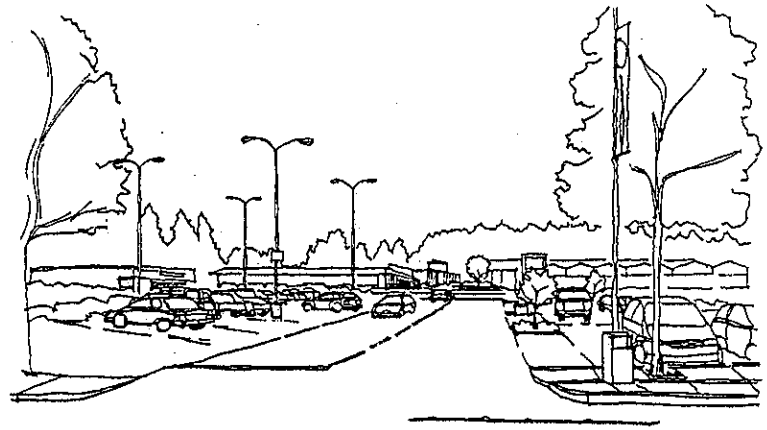

Figure 38: Sketch of the current conditions entering off Southwest 152nd Street into the Lamonts parking lot.

A few simple pedestrian-oriented devices can be used to help control vehicle routes and speeds in these parking lots. The addition of curbed sidewalks with planting strips would force vehicles to travel within designated lanes, slowing their speed and creating a safer environment for pedestrians. Street trees should be added to the planting strips to offer shade and reduce the negative visual impact these parking lots have on the downtown.

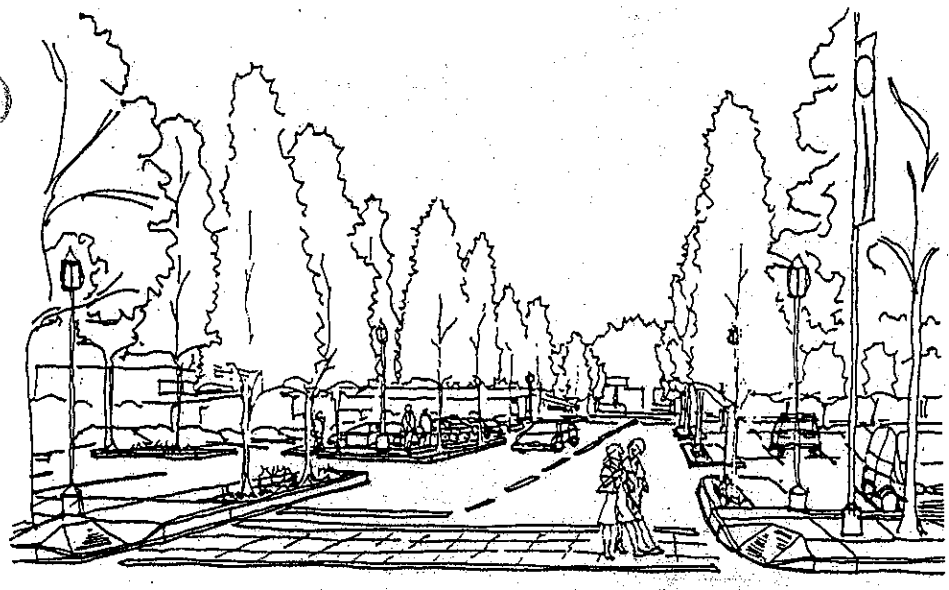

Figure 39: Proposed improvements showing Fifth Avenue Southwest as a new right-of-way and entrance to the Lamonts parking lot.