



R/UDAT VISIT REPORT

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November 9-13, 1989

Brainerd, Minnesota
R/UDAT
November 10 - 13, 1989

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INTRODUCTION

In September of this year, an evaluation of downtown Brainerd was conducted by Charles Harper, FAIA, of the Urban Planning and Design Committee of the American Institute of Architects, to see whether particular problems of the area could benefit from the visit of a Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT). The major issue is the continuing deterioration of the Central Business District.

The evaluation concluded that like many cities of comparable age and size Brainerd is suffering from the draw of the outlying malls. It was thus determined that Brainerd could, indeed, benefit from a visit from R/UDAT.

The Urban Planning and Design Committee of the American Institute of Architects has been sending Urban Design Assistance Teams to various American cities since 1967. Members are not compensated for their service and agree not to accept commissions for work which might result from their recommendations.

The Brainerd R/UDAT was comprised of seven professionals experienced in particular problems facing Brainerd — two architect/urban designers, one landscape architect/urban designer, one economist, one resort planner/development consultant, one tourism

expert, and one transportation consultant. They approached the project in a comprehensive manner, acquainting themselves with the area through intensive sessions with community leaders, concerned citizens, and resource groups over a four-day period. They toured the area by bus, foot and air.

The intent is not to offer the final work on what should be done in the area. But, given the expertise of the various team members in their respective fields, the feeling was that their recommendations would be professionally reasonable as well as politically and economically feasible and publicly understandable.

The ensuing pages explain the Brainerd R/UDAT mission in detail. The report outlines the present situation and how it came to pass; it highlights the major areas to be developed; it makes proposals for change, and it tells how those changes may be made.

THE CHARGE TO THE TEAM

The charge to the team is to address issues contributing to the deterioration of the downtown area. In investigating these issues, it became clear immediately that the spheres of influence extended into the metropolitan area and included transportation, open space, policy and environmental issues.



The charge deals with downtown. Ways are to be sought to revitalize the downtown activity, solve the parking, traffic and image problems. The charge deals with housing, housing issues and how to address them. New construction and re-use opportunities will be explained. Single use and mixed use implications will be examined. Accommodation of the needs of various social and income groups will be studied.

The charge deals with process. What are the procedural issues? What are the responsibilities of government leadership? What are the needs for development predictability? What are the roles and responsibilities and how do the lines of communication function between them?

And finally, the charge deals with implementation. How can the development and rehabilitation atmosphere be made more attractive? How can development tasks and responsibilities be clarified? And what are the financial and structural tools that will enable achievement of these goals?

HISTORY

"Starting near the Mississippi River on Front Street, Brainerd's retail business centers have presented a changing picture throughout the 100 years of the city's history.

The first trading post was located near First Street in the vicinity of Northland Clinic today.

From that point, the business district spread eastward along Front Street. By the late 1870's and early 1880's, larger buildings were being constructed in the vicinity of Fifth and Sixth Streets with some development along Laurel Street, but Front Street was the chief business street in Brainerd for many years."

Brainerd, Minnesota 1871-1971.

From these humble beginnings, Brainerd has grown to an extensive downtown. The railroad formed the early development growth and still affects the Brainerd central area.



VISION

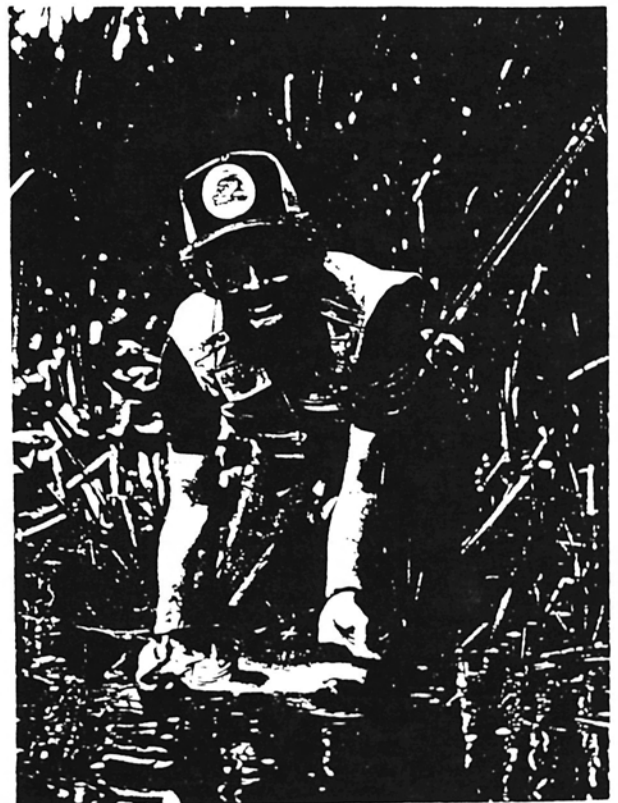
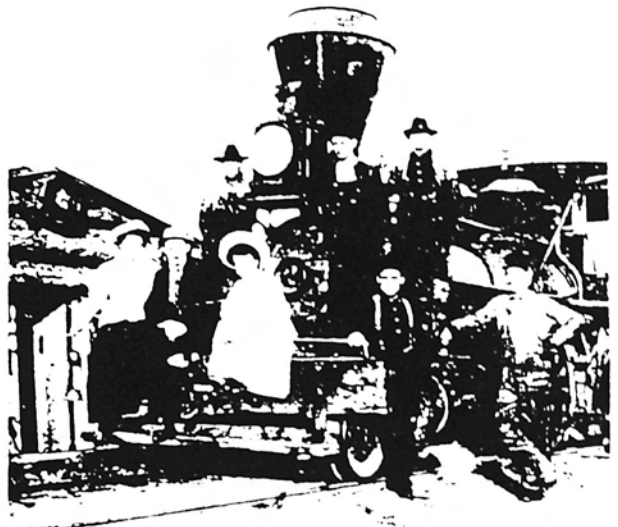
Environmental protection and the careful stewardship of those resources should be at the center of a vision for the Brainerd Lakes Area. Future generations should be able to benefit from its beauty and bounty as Brainerd townspeople have in the past and still are today. But that same vision will be only a shell without an equal commitment to the economic health of existing businesses and the encouragement of economic opportunities in and around Brainerd. Fortunately, both the environment and business interests are in many ways self-reinforcing because the area's most significant industry, tourism, depends on the environment for its stability and growth. With a thoughtful and far-reaching plan for the healthful growth of the Brainerd Lakes Area, spinoff benefits of an expanding capital and tax base can be expected more jobs at higher than minimum wage.

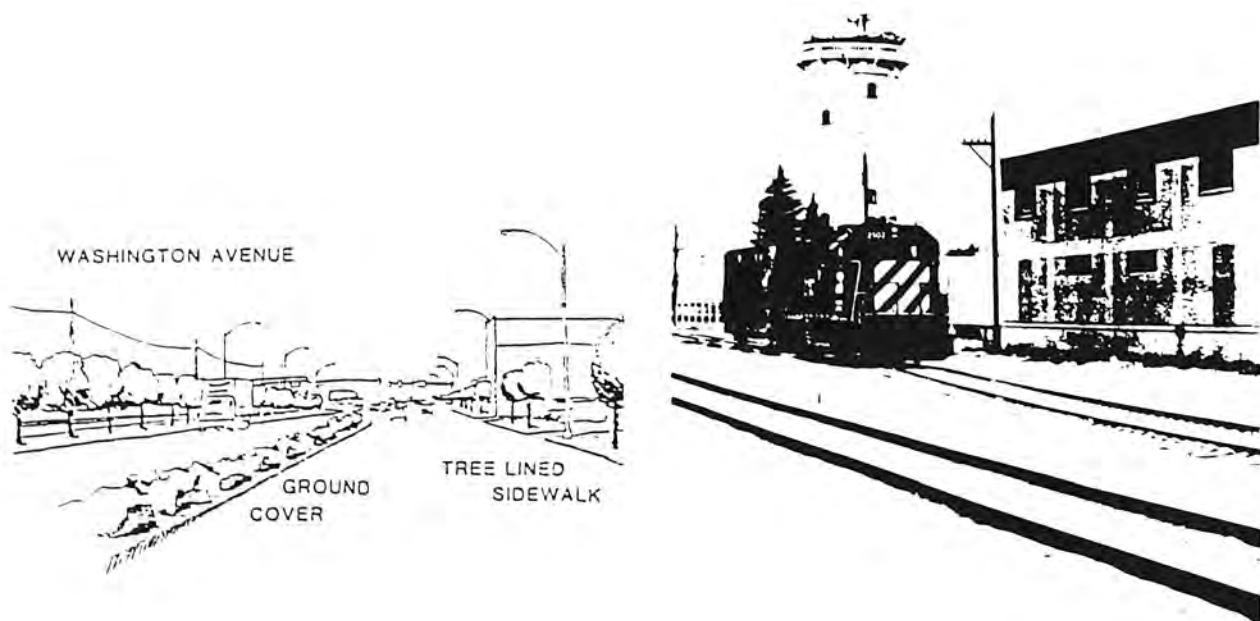
Educational opportunities at all levels from preschool to four-year college degrees, the development of recreational programs for young to senior citizens, the growth of the arts and cultural offerings, a greater diversity of the housing stock, the continuous expansion of open space and parklands and finally, the dynamic rejuvenation of the Downtown Brainerd area will be maintained and perhaps, even improve, the enviable quality of life of this area.

But there is a proviso.

The integration of environmental protection and economic health cannot be allowed to be destroyed by narrow minds and special interests groups, nor can public officials shrink from their roles of responsibility to foster a comprehensive plan and implement that plan through proper land use. Theirs is a role of leadership to solve the overlapping and/or unclear relationships between area governments, to negotiate the sometimes tricky and unsure path to fair compromise and to make the difficult political decision prudently in a timely way and accept the consequences.

On the other hand, R/UDAT's strong impression is that both the leadership and the citizens of the Brainerd Lakes Area are committed to make the R/UDAT report a point of beginning and not allow it to be shelved and forgotten.





TRANSPORTATION

The objective of any roadway system is to safely and effectively move vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Freeways are high speed, high capacity roadways with complete access control. Freeways are intended to move large volumes of through traffic and can effectively carry between 1400 and 1700 vehicles per traffic lane per hour.

Arterial highways are roadways intended to move both through and local traffic and are designed with limited access. Minor cross streets are controlled with stop signs; major cross streets are controlled with traffic signals. Curb cuts (driveways) are usually subject to location and design standards.

The ability of an arterial roadway to carry vehicular traffic is normally determined by the signalized intersections along the roadway. Factors that affect the vehicular capacity of a signalized intersection include the number of traffic lanes, lane widths, parking conditions, the percent of heavy vehicles, (trucks and buses) pedestrians crossing the intersection and the green signal time allotted to each approach. An urban signalized arterial intersection can normally effectively carry between 500 and 700 through vehicles per lane per hour.

BRAINERD, MINNESOTA/BRAINERD LAKES AREA ROADWAYS

In Brainerd, State Highway Routes 210, 371, 18, and 25 are the primary roadway system intended to carry vehicular traffic to and through Brainerd and the Brainerd Lakes Region. In Brainerd, the roadways are signalized arterial highways. During the summer season (May 15 through Labor Day), the system carries major traffic volumes traveling to area resorts and summer homes. There are an estimated 1400 resort rooms and 25,000 weekend summer homes in the Brainerd Lakes Region which generate this summer weekend traffic.

The largest volumes of traffic come from the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area and access the Brainerd Lakes Area by Route 371. In Brainerd, there is a major constriction in the Route 371 corridor where Route 371 and Route 210 temporarily merge at a "T" intersection located at Sixth Street and Washington Street. During summer weekends, traffic volumes far exceed the capacity of this intersection as well as other signalized intersections along the Route 371 corridor resulting in extensive traffic congestion in and around Brainerd.

On five summer weekends each year as many as 70,000 spectators attend events at the Brainerd International Raceway located to the north of Brainerd adding to the traffic problems.

Major roadway improvements would be necessary along the Route 371 corridor to reduce summer weekend traffic congestion. The construction of major roadway improvements and the resulting increase in traffic volumes in Brainerd would negatively impact the quality of life for its residents.

PROPOSED BY-PASS ROADWAY

The construction of a 4-lane by-pass roadway to the west for Route 371 traffic is presently under study by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Four alternative corridors are being considered for the bypass.

The construction of this by-pass roadway is recommended by the R/UDAT to address the extensive traffic congestion now being experienced in the City of Brainerd during summer weekends.

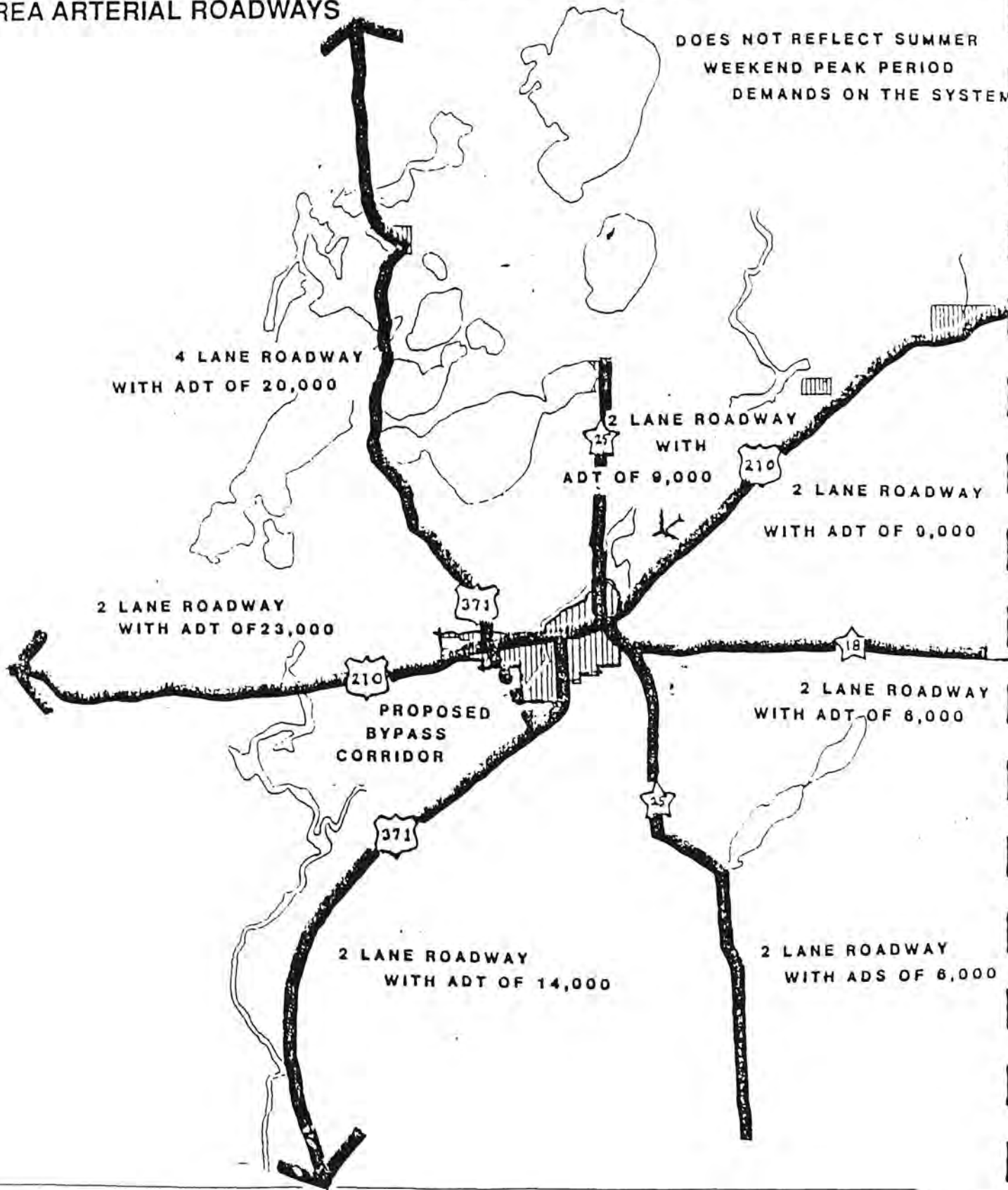
A license plate cordon study conducted by the city on October 27, 1989, indicated that approximately 55% of vehicles using the Route 371 corridor simply proceeded through the city without stopping. The reassignment of this traffic to the bypass roadway



BRAINERD/BRAINERD LAKES AREA ARTERIAL ROADWAYS

ADT is Average Daily Traffic

DOES NOT REFLECT SUMMER
WEEKEND PEAK PERIOD
DEMANDS ON THE SYSTEM



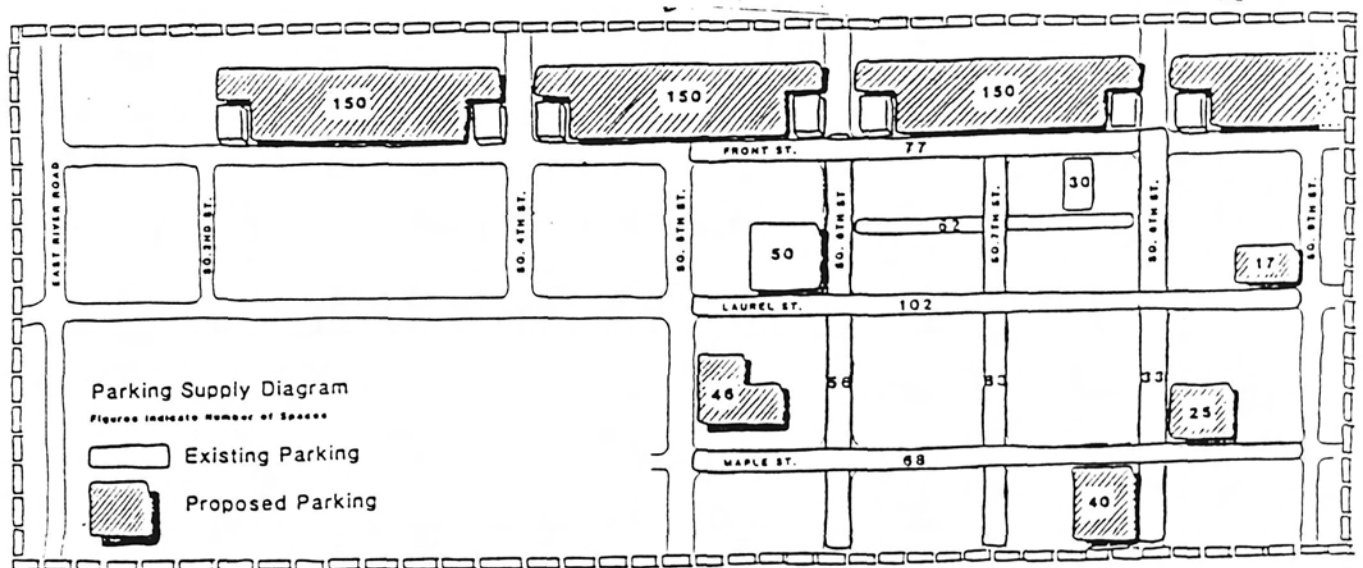
would significantly reduce summer weekend traffic congestion in Brainerd.

Legitimate concerns have been raised by members of the Brainerd business community that the by-pass roadway will divert economic opportunities from the downtown shopping area. The experience of other cities in Minnesota and elsewhere where similar by-passes have been constructed has shown that with the development of an appropriate land use plan along the bypass corridor, problems have not developed.

DURING THE INTERIM

The Minnesota Department of Transportation has indicated that a by-pass roadway will not be realized for a minimum of 7 to 12 years. Summer traffic problems will continue during this period of time and be exasperated by a 2 1/2% projected increase in traffic volumes per year. Recommended traffic control measures to reduce traffic congestion during the interim include:

1. To install seasonal traffic signal timing schedule changes based on summer weekends peak period traffic volumes at signalized intersections having fixed time traffic signal controllers;
2. To use police control at key problem signalized intersections possibly with traffic signal hand controllers;
3. To increase the effective capacity of intersections through the use of revised pavement markings based on summer weekend peak period traffic demands. This may include the addition of second turning lanes.
4. The establishment of alternate routes through Brainerd to utilize existing roadway capacity opportunities such as the College Drive bridge across the Mississippi River. The proposed access road to College Drive via Willow Road would improve this access. The proposed extension of Excelsior Road west of Westgate Mall would also provide additional roadway capacity. The operations could be implemented through the use of special portable signing with messages such as 'NORTHBOUND ROUTE 371 THROUGH TRAFFIC - AVOID CONGESTION - FOLLOW SIGNS';
5. The resolution of operational traffic problems during the interim is an issue that should be discussed on an ongoing basis with the affected residents of Brainerd. The formation of a Brainerd Lakes Traffic Operations Committee, including resort management as well as representatives of the community of summer weekend homeowners should be considered by the Chamber of Commerce.
6. The training of a Brainerd technical staff person in traffic engineering. There are a good number of minor operational changes that could be implemented



along the arterial street system in Brainerd that could contribute to alleviating weekend traffic congestion problems. The Traffic Institute of Northwestern University offers a 3 week training program. A similar program may be offered through the University of Minnesota. An added benefit of such training would enable staff to better represent issues related to the urban needs of Brainerd when discussing improvements on state highways with the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

URBAN ARTERIAL PARKWAY OPPORTUNITIES

Arterial roadways in Brainerd which presently carry regional traffic are constructed and designed to optimize their ability to move traffic. This includes the use of 12 foot lane widths and turn lanes which extend for maximum distances. Speed limits on these streets are 30 miles per hour.

The opportunity to include parkway design elements in the Brainerd arterial roadway system should be explored, most particularly after the construction of the by-pass roadway.

Traffic engineering studies have shown that there is a minimal reduction in the effective capacity of an urban arterial street when lane widths are reduced to 11 feet and right turn lanes or approach parking clearances extend for a maximum distance of 250 feet.

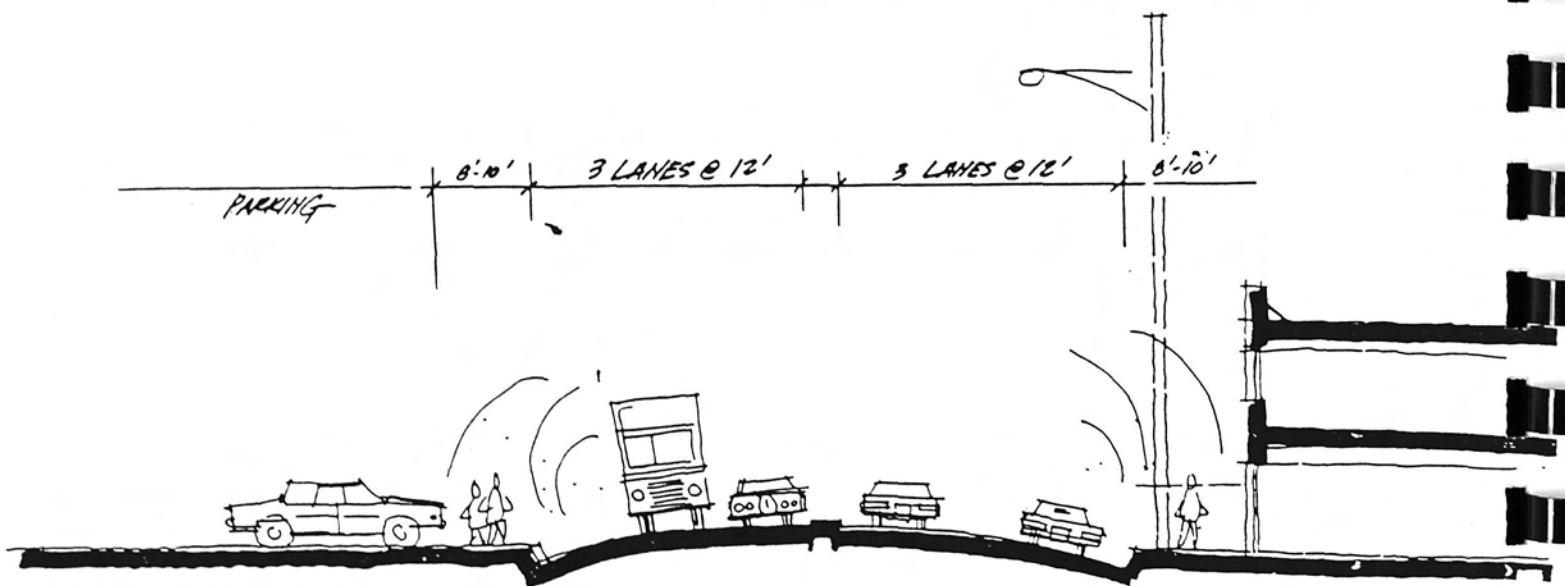
DOWNTOWN BRAINERD TRAFFIC AND PARKING ISSUES

1. There is a perceived problem of there being a significant parking shortage in downtown Brainerd. A cursory evaluation of parking demand based on estimates of existing land use indicates there is a demand for 520 parking places. A survey of existing parking conducted by a Downtown Task Force indicated there are 650 parking spaces available.

It is recommended that an improved enforcement program be developed to insure appropriate turn-over. Streets are already posted with two hour parking limit signs.

The availability of parking at critical downtown frontages may be regulated through the development of a commercial business permit parking program; whereby, customers of local businesses are provided parking permits by the businesses. Such a program is presently under consideration in Chicago. The program would require the development of unique ordinances.

2. Downtown Brainerd has a significant population of handicapped and elderly. The development of a complete system of curb ramps for the handicapped has been realized. The installation of audible traffic



EXISTING CONDITIONS.
WASHINGTON R.O.W.

signals at locations for the blind should also be considered.

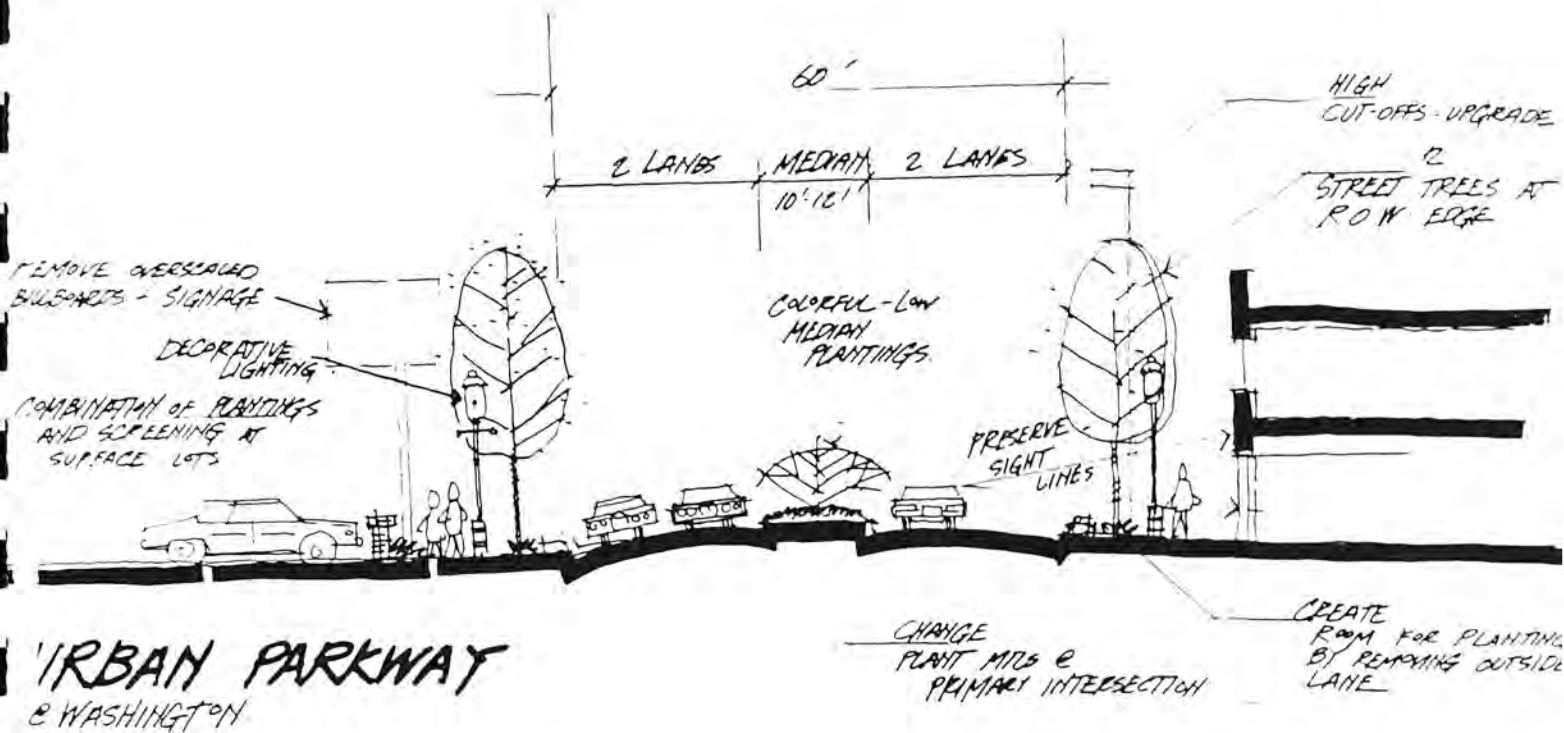
GENERAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

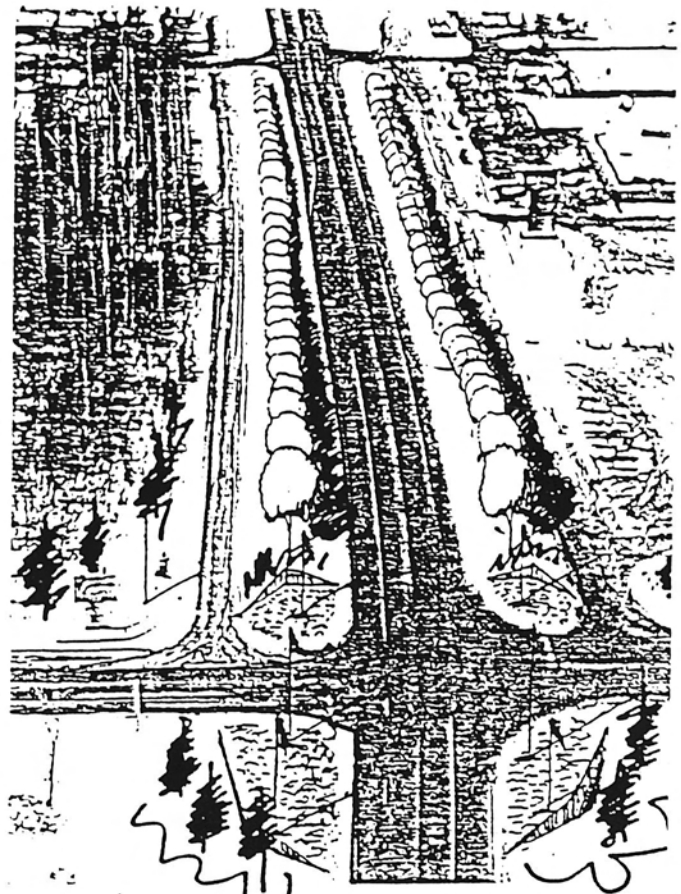
1. Airport Facilities

Brainerd or Crow Wing Airport has a 6,500 ft. paved runway and is capable of handling significant passenger emplanaments. Presently, commercial services are only provided by Mesabi/Northwest Airlines. This level of service limits area resort convention and related opportunities.

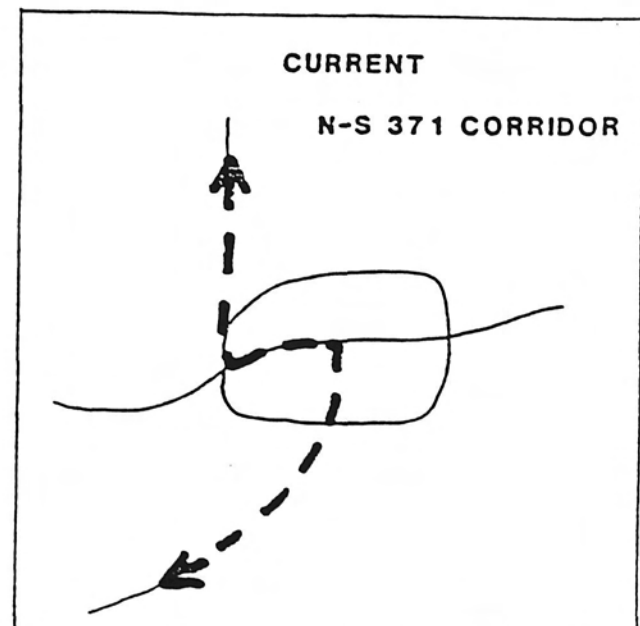
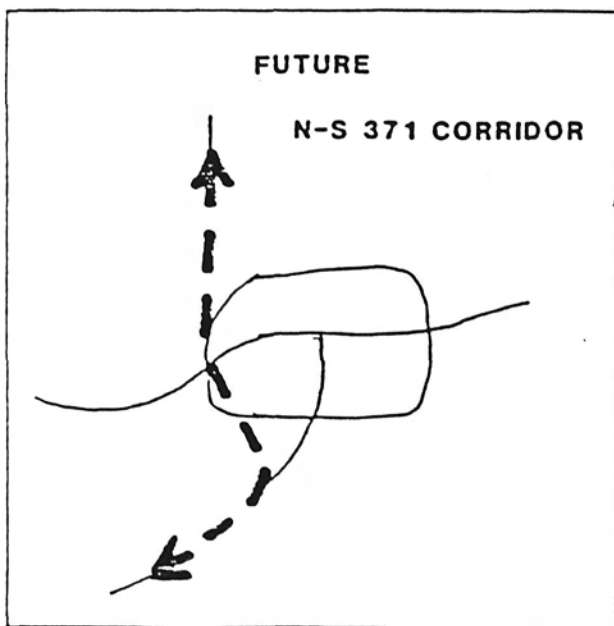
2. Public Transportation

A dial-a-ride bus service presently services Brainerd. Fares are .75; Senior Citizens, students, and handicapped, have .50 fares. This service is not available to the residents of Baxter. Consideration should be given to developing a cooperative bus service for both Cities.





LANDSCAPED ENTRANCE



The Brainerd Lakes Area Development Plan

Development occurs in this area because of its pristine environment but the rapid pace of development poses a risk to the quality of that environment. The balance between preservation of the natural environment and development is acknowledged to be the key goal of citizens of Brainerd Lakes Area.

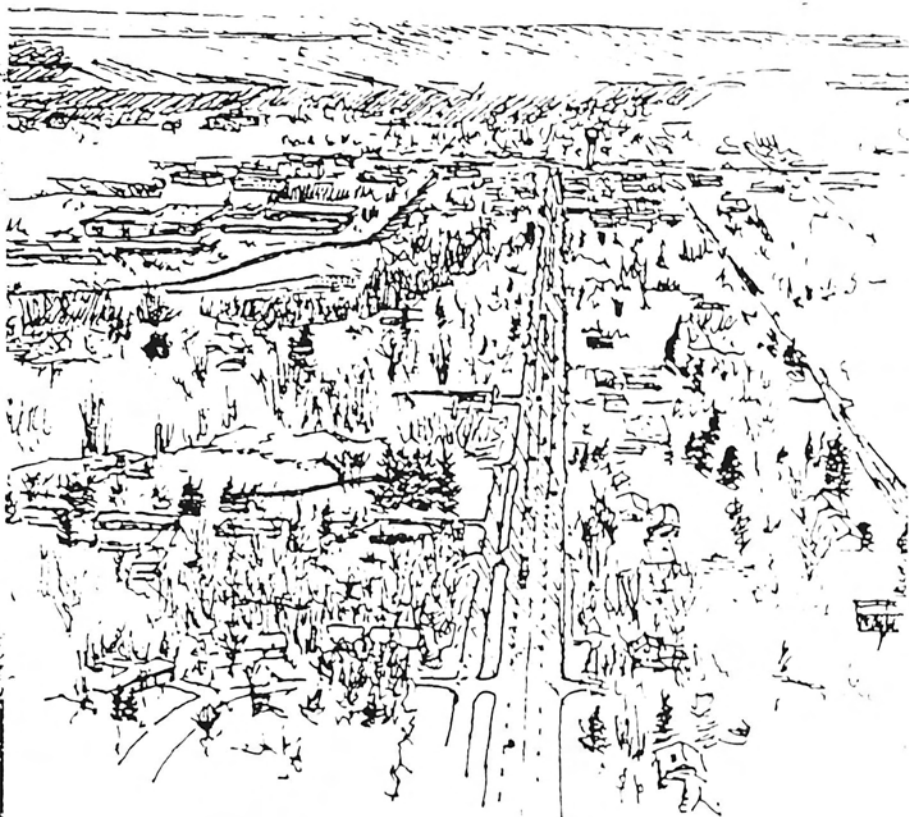
There are two major constraints on development in the Brainerd Lakes Area. The first is the natural resources of the Mississippi River and the wetlands. The second is those that are physical in nature. They consist of the roads, railways, airport and the existing land use patterns.

The objective of this Development plan is to determine the likely pattern for future growth and understand the implications of unrestricted and unguided development might have on the local area.

The Plan also consists of the proposed Bypass road. It proposed controls and land uses adjacent to the bypass.. The implications for growth that are derived from

the plan indicate that Brainerd's growth can only take place in the south and in the East. The Plan recognized the wetland system and the Mississippi River as an opportunity to delineate different land uses. The plan suggests growth towards Baxter but since to distinct municipalities are involved this growth is prohibited.

Entryways into the area should be well defined. A Brainerd Lakes area Welcome Center which serves as an introduction to the entire region should be located at the intersection of Route 371 and the new Bypass. Also located in the area adjacent to the Bypass, up to and including the Mississippi River, is a proposed county park. The Park will act as a terminus of the Brainerd park network. The park represents an opportunity to provide more access to the river.



A vertical strip of 20 black and white photographs showing the progression of a plant's growth over time. The images are arranged in a single column, with each photo showing a different stage of development, from a small seedling to a mature plant with large leaves and a tall stem.



Open Space

The R/Udat Team recognizes that Brainerd's unique natural resources are among the area's most treasured assets. In this regard, special consideration must be made in understanding ways of bringing the natural environment into the urbanized areas of the county.

However, while the area has a nationally significant recreational open space network, the system is as yet incomplete and somewhat fragmented. Brainerd is in a position to capitalize on its natural setting which attracted visitors and residents alike to the area.

The R/UDAT team proposes that there should be an attempt made to connect these open spaces in more comprehensive pedestrian network, in such a way as to allow exercise trails, greater access to the Mississippi River and in general facilitate a better utilization of recreational and open space opportunities.

The first step in this process clearly is to do a natural resource inventory in order to guide growth to preserve and protect significant resources. From these will stem guidelines for preservation and recommendations for appropriate recreational opportunities and the demand for such facilities.

Additions to the existing regional open space system include trails on the abandoned right-of-ways, a linear open space along the downtown railroad right-of-way. The existing open space system, therefore, can be linked up by the strategic addition of these linkages in such a way to create one comprehensive system.

In addition, further consideration needs to be made for future open space needs which will occur at the edge of the urbanized areas. These include parks such as the proposed Frog Hollow Park and Wetlands areas which presently abut the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Most importantly with visitors and county residents coming to Brainerd, a better planned open space system can direct and focus people's activities to better understand the natural setting. A bold plan for open space can also attract and direct new development. The function of open space becomes a visual, functional and activity organizer and connector.

Roads and Transportation

The Plan consists of the proposed Bypass road which requires controls of land uses and design adjacent to the bypass East. The intersection at the Bypass and 371 should be well defined. A Brainerd Lakes area welcome Center which serves as an introduction to the entire region should be located at the intersection.

This portion of the plan proposed design standards and guidelines for the bypass and Route 371 into Brainerd. Between the City limits and the airport the following standards would be included:

- set backs
- buffers
- signage
- curb cuts
- lights
- height limits

Areawide Implementation

The principle obstacle confronting the governments of the Crow wing, Brainerd, and Baxter is that there has not been communication either close or constant enough to develop a common vision for the area; perhaps even more telling, there has not been the effort to correct that situation despite long standing citizen frustration and manifest problems.

The following thoughts are offered to remedy that situation:

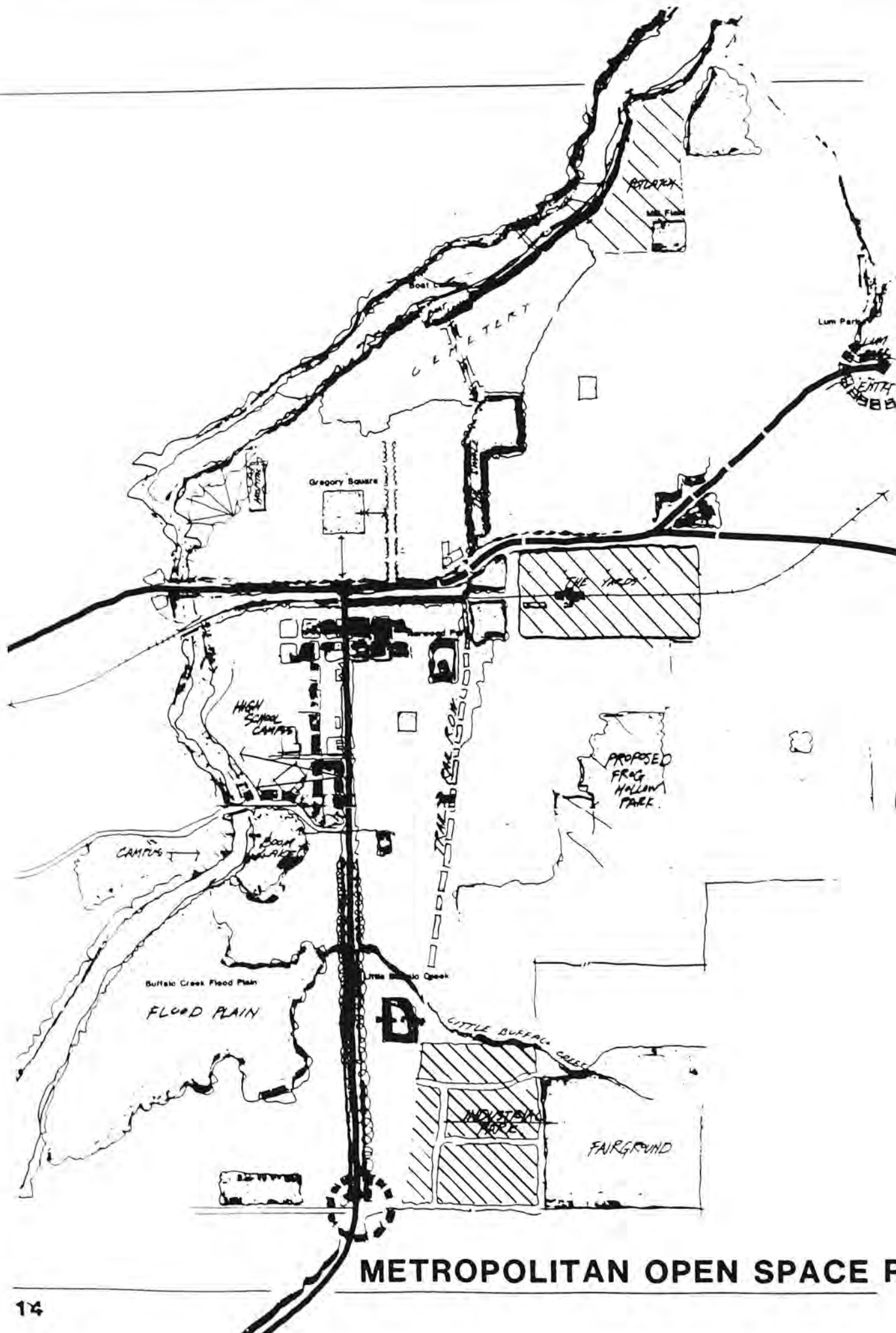
- Establish a Metropolitan Council of Governments with the immediate goals of inventorying natural resources, establishing a county-wide Comprehensive Plan and zoning maps, exploring avenues to avoid duplication of services and participate in the funding of areawide promotions.

- Develop guidelines for land adjacent to the Bypass and portions of routes 371 and 210.

- Establish coordinated endorsement of the bypass.

- City of Brainerd should pursue the annexation issues for prospective growth to the southeast.

- City of Brainerd should explore feasibility of a welcome center in relation to the bypass.



METROPOLITAN OPEN SPACE PLAN

DOWNTOWN PLAN

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The downtown of Brainerd is presently defined by the Mississippi River to the west, Front Street (Rt. 210) to the north, wetlands to the east and Oak Street to the south. Presently the community feels that the viability of the core is close to bottoming out as a result of:

- The mass exodus of government, office and retail uses from the core to outlying areas.
- Traffic generated by seasonal tourism on routes 371 and 210 which makes the downtown inaccessible for both tourists and residents on weekends.
- The concentration of bars in the downtown area has created the perception that the downtown is unsafe.
- The lack of a coordinated plan has discouraged capital investment in the downtown. Consequently, the visual quality of the downtown has deteriorated.
- The lack of adequate and convenient parking within the downtown retail core has discouraged shoppers and made mall shopping more attractive.
- The improper mix of merchants and services makes downtown shopping inconvenient and time consuming.
- The inability on the part of public and/or private sector to rebuild the on the three lots destroyed by fire has had a negative impact on the shoppers and the surrounding shop owners.
- There is no place for public activities and special events to attract people to the downtown.

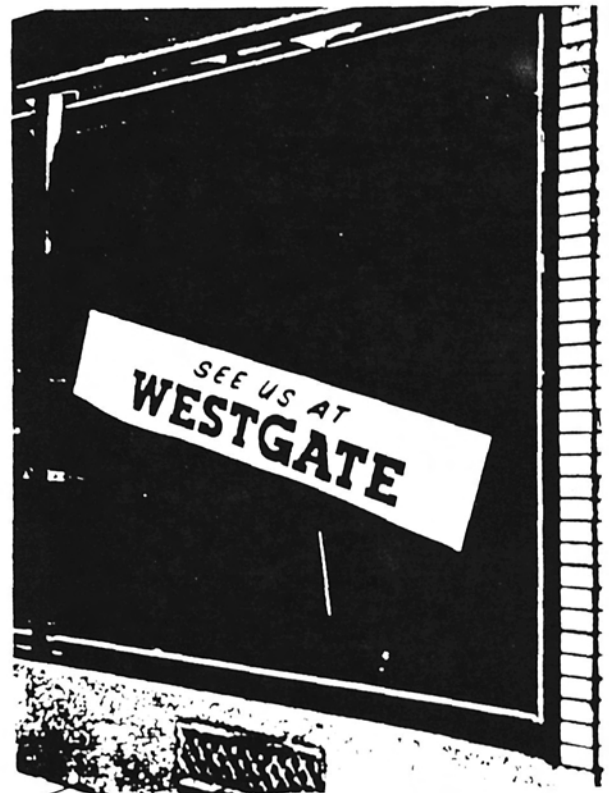
A coordinated approach to all of these issues will establish a base on which public and private investment will feel confident to again participate in the downtown.

GOALS FOR REVITALIZING DOWNTOWN

- Attract public and private capital to the downtown for rehabilitation of existing buildings and new construction.

- Establish easy access to the downtown area by endorsing the by pass plan and making appropriate improvements to the downtown streets.
- Provide adequate and convenient parking without destroying the positive character of downtown Brainerd.
- Develop a framework for the proper mix and location of land use downtown within the existing fabric.
- Establish a place that is identified unmistakably as the center of downtown.
- Bring the natural and indigenous quality of the surrounding region to the downtown.

In order to achieve these goals, a comprehensive plan of the downtown must be established. The four major components of this plan are: Streets, Land Use, Concentration of Development and Open Space.



A. STREETS

1. The suggested treatment of major entry roads, Route 210 (Washington Street) and Route 371 (Sixth Street), can be undertaken before construction of the by-pass route.

Plant shade street trees within a grassed area at the street edge

Screen parked cars from view

Signage guidelines

Lighting standards and guidelines

Landscaped boulevard

2. Treatment of the downtown's "Main" Street - Laurel Street should be addressed the following manner:

Mississippi River to Sixth Street (Route 371)

Consistent building setbacks using the courthouse as the standard

Shade trees along the street and within the setback.

Lighting standards and guidelines East of Sixth Street

Consistent setbacks established by existing buildings

Street Trees

Lighting Standards and Guidelines

Amenities: Trash Receptacles, Benches, Planters, Awnings, Bike Racks

Signage Guidelines

Storefront Guidelines

3. The treatment of Local Streets within Retail District should consist of:

Consistent setbacks established by existing

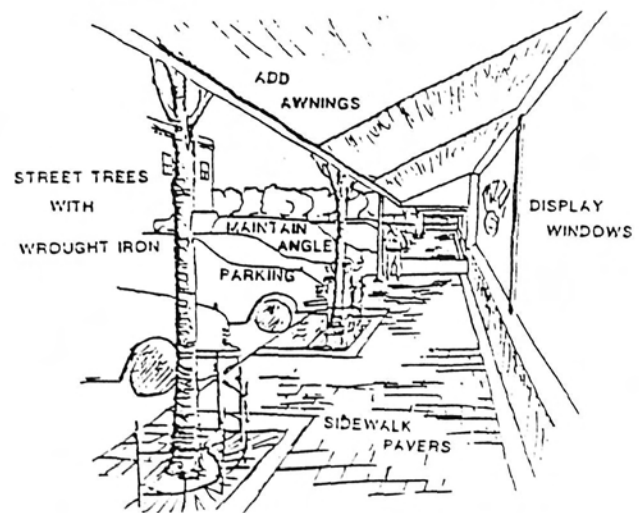
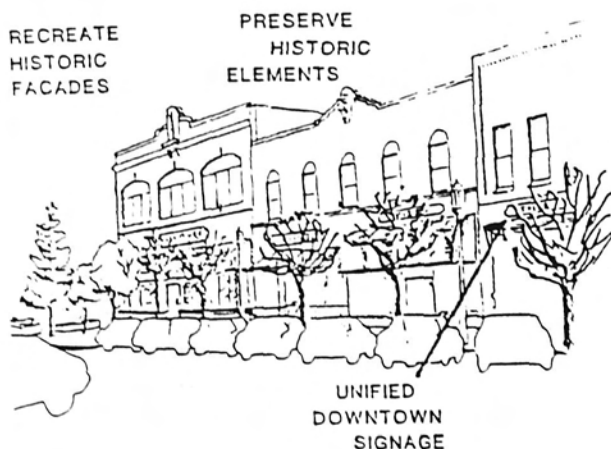
Street trees

Lighting standards and guidelines

Amenities: trash receptacles, benches, planters, awnings, bike racks

Signage guidelines

Storefront guidelines



4. The treatment of the Local Streets surrounding the Retail District should consist of:

Consistent setbacks established by existing buildings

Plant shade street trees within a grassed area at the street edge

B. Land Use Districts

The land use plan calls for the organization of land uses within six distinct districts. These six districts are: the Commercial Strip, Civic/Cultural, Retail, Expansion Area, Tourism/Recreation/ Entertainment, Mixed-Use Area.

1. Commercial Strip (Washington Street)

Through traffic and tourist related

One stop shopping

2. Downtown

• Civic/Cultural District

This district is now characterized by a mix of State, County and Local offices and support facilities, general business offices, a bank and general services. The predominant land use however, is government.

Several important older structures are located within this area, some of which R/UDAT recommends should be preserved and renovated. For instance the City Hall, County Courthouse and The Armory ought to play an important role in the future of this District. Whereas, the old Opera House is unlikely to be rehabilitated economically or functionally. In any case, it would not satisfy the proposed program requirements of the Performing Arts Theater expected by the community. Recommended Future Land Uses:

650 seat theater with ancillary uses

Youth recreation and/or Senior Citizens Center (Renovated armory)

City square

General business and government offices

Relocated and additional parking in railroad right-of-way adjacent to Front Street

• Retail District

The existing Retail District can be characterized by high vacancy rates, marginal businesses with a concentration of bars, and second floor residential rental spaces. The continuity of the facade of this retail area was destroyed by fire three years ago and has not been rebuilt.

It is proposed that this district become a concentration of quality speciality shopping appealing to both tourists and permanent residents. This area should be developed as an attractive alternative for tourists on rainy days. Other uses could included:

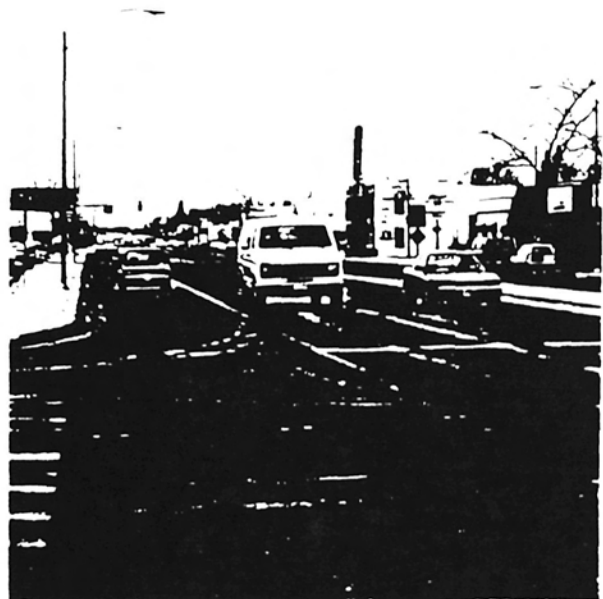
Restaurants

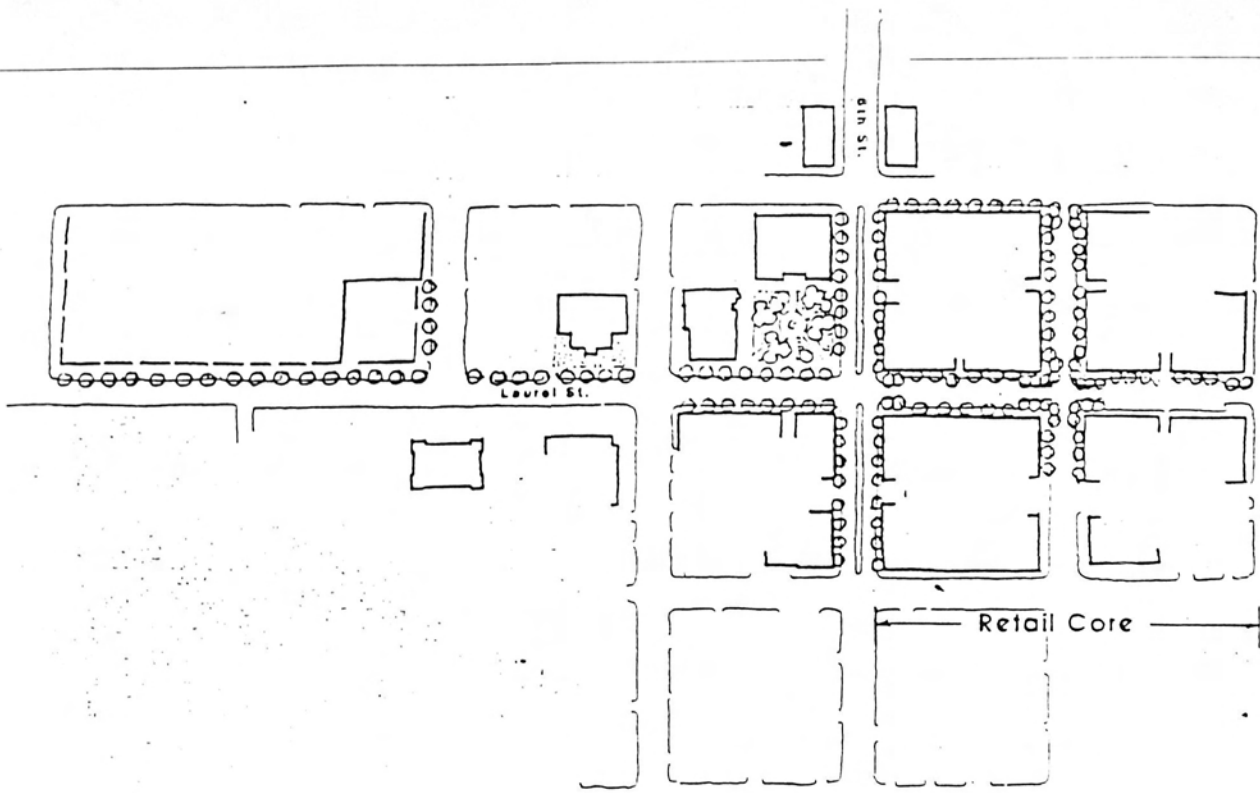
Bed and Breakfasts (Burned out site)

Tourist amusements

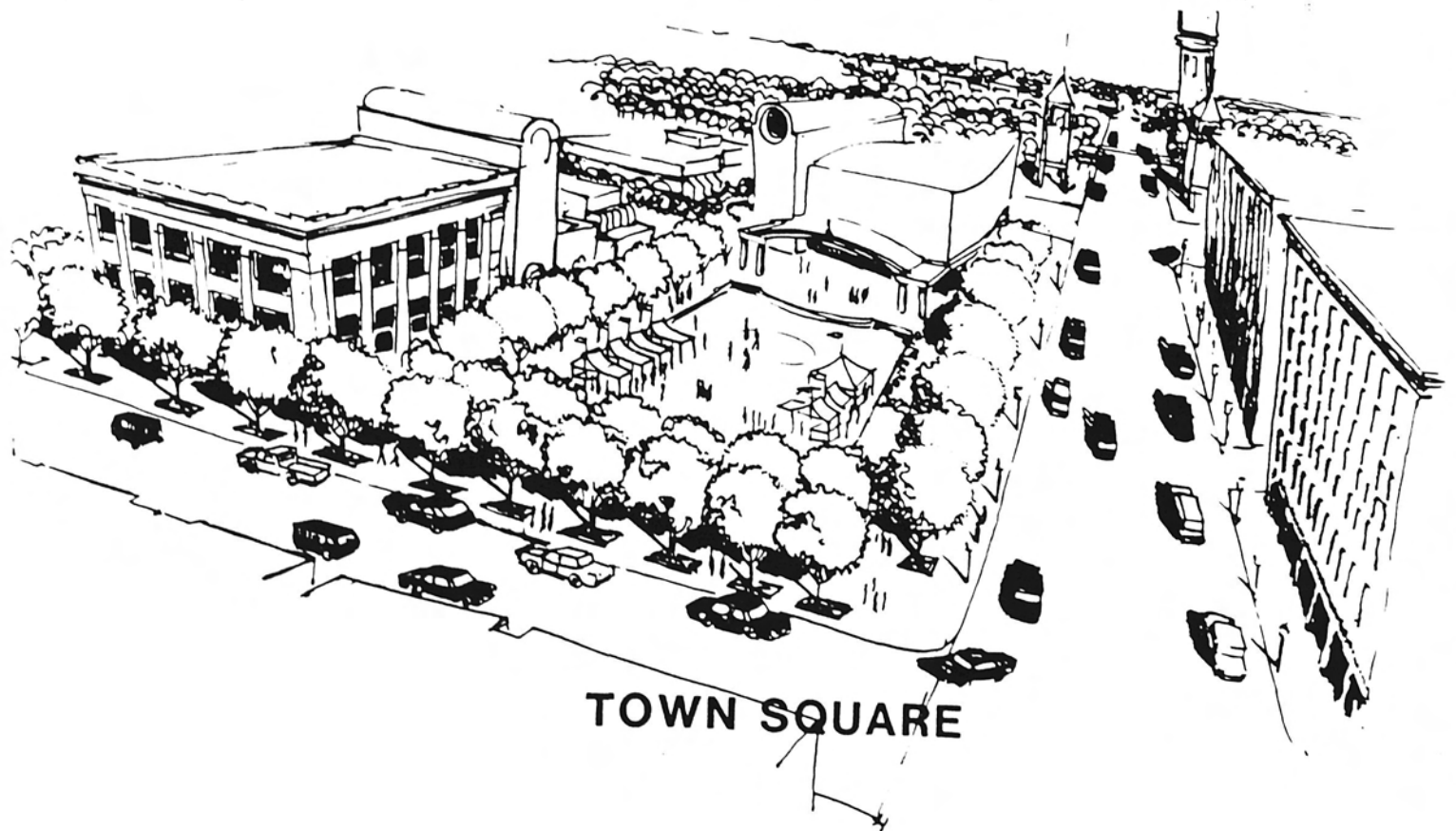
Upgraded rental housing

Additional parking in railroad right-of-way adjacent to Front Street





Downtown Building Massing



• Hotel /Expansion District

The existing District is characterized by service oriented, light industrial, and various retail uses.

A substantial change in this district is necessary to take advantage of the improved speciality shopping and the proposed tourist use of the railroad yards. The extension of Laurel Street to the Railroad yards will allow the necessary direct access from the downtown retail district. R/UDAT is recommending the following:

Brainerd Expo Hall (see Tourism section for expanded discussion)

Chamber of Commerce

Hotel

Speciality shops (available for expansion of the retail district)

Additional parking in the railroad right-of-way adjacent to Front Street.

• Tourism/Recreation/Entertainment

There is a unique opportunity in terms of the land available and the vacant, historic buildings to be utilized as the center of a major tourist attraction which will

provide the life blood for the rejuvenation of downtown Brainerd.

Possible Tourist attractions include:

Aquarium and fish museum

Theme park

Minnesota folklore museum

Native American art and crafts

Burlington and Northern Railroad Museum

Regional Foods and Concessions

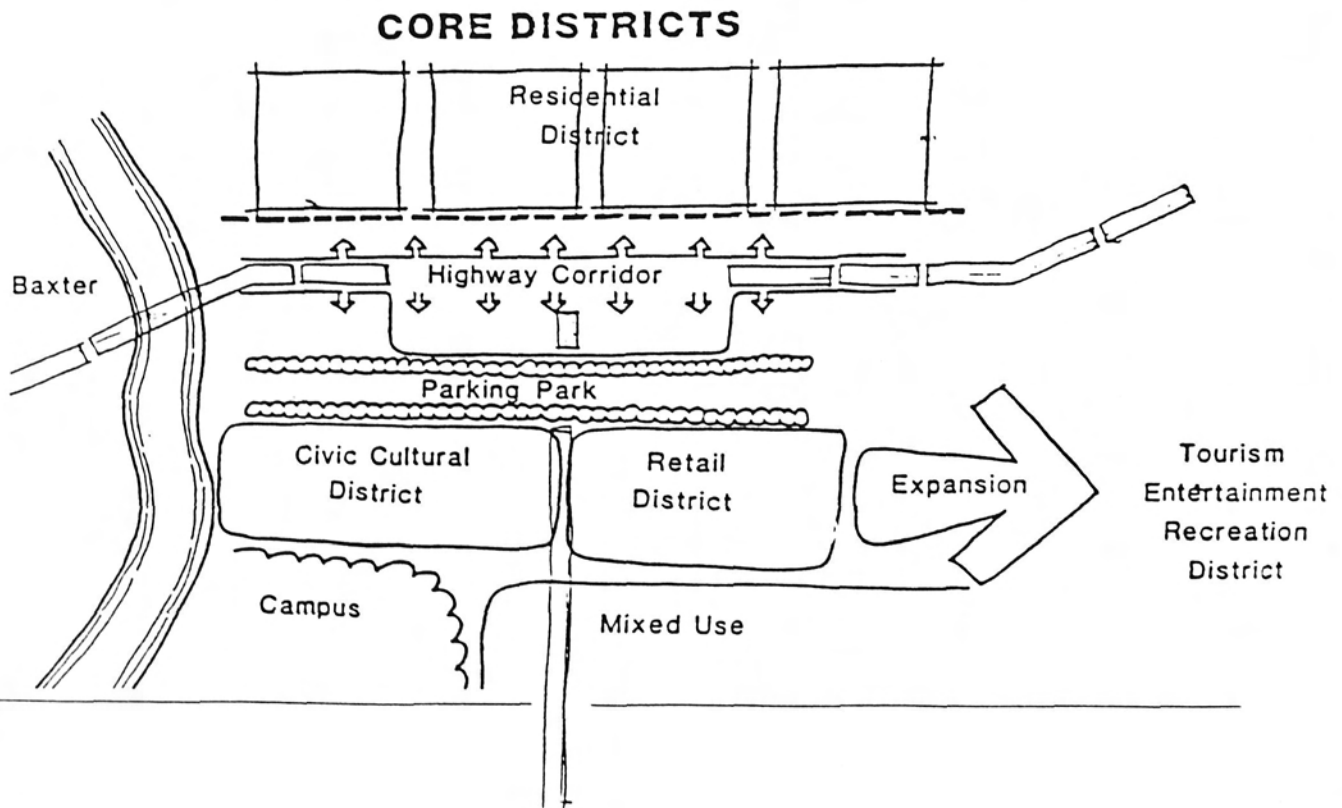
Retail related to the above uses

A trolley will provide quick, easy access between this area and downtown.

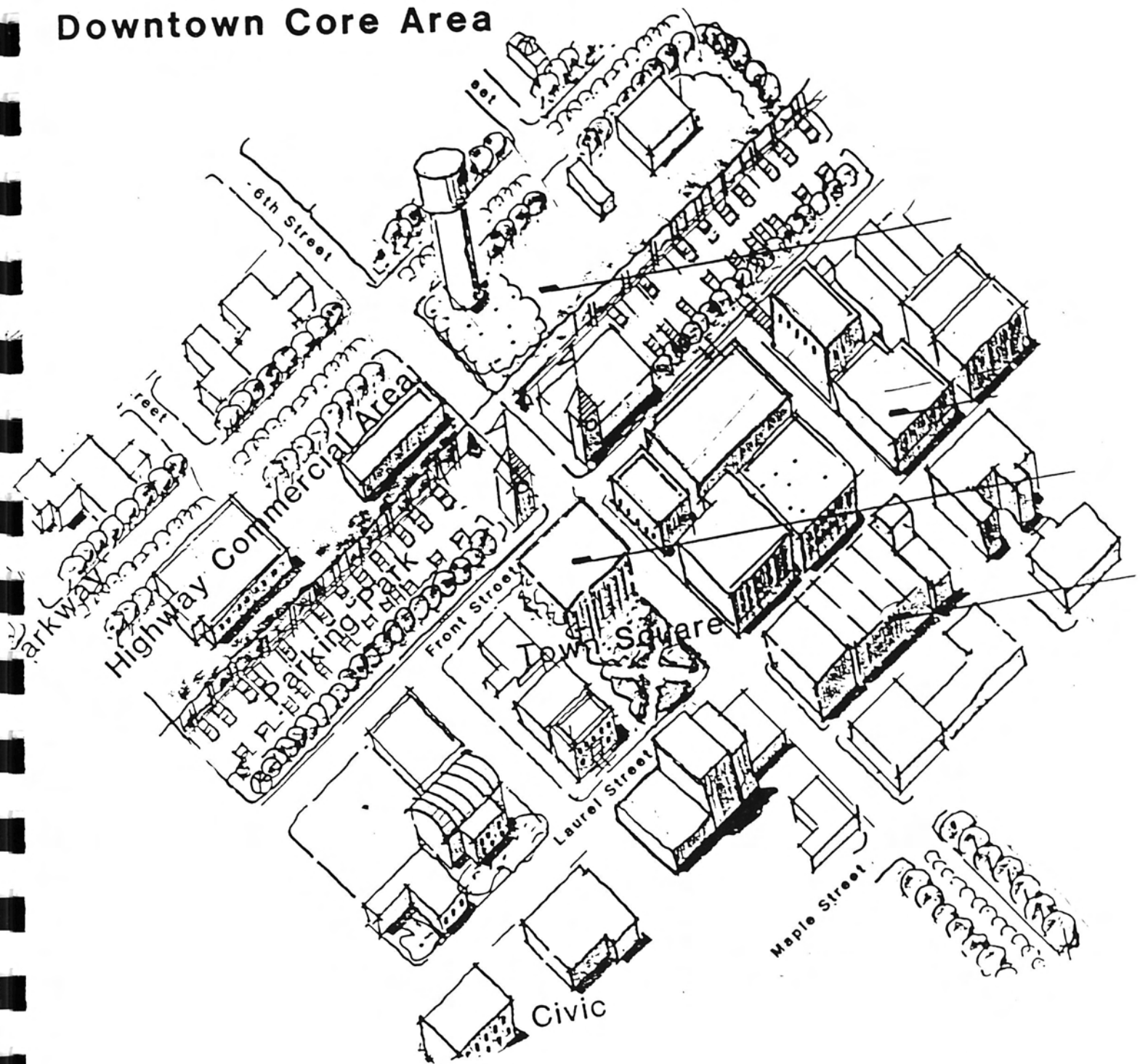
• Mixed Use District

This district is characterized by a wide assortment of service oriented businesses, churches, single family homes and some professional offices. It separates the intense uses of the speciality shopping district and the predominantly single family homes three blocks away.

These and similar uses should be maintained in this district. In addition, new residential development should be encouraged.



Downtown Core Area



C. Open Space

Brainerd is blessed by the Mississippi River to the west and north and substantial Wetlands approaching and in some cases penetrating into downtown. Civic leaders have consistently established large and small parks, boulevards, and landmarks over the years.

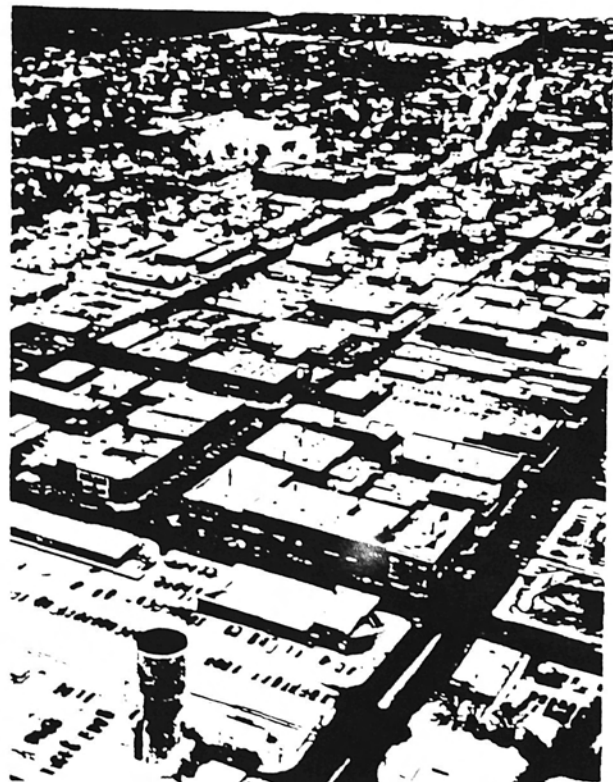
Building upon this heritage of land stewardship, R/UDAT proposes the following areas of expansion:

1. Town Square - Located at the corner of Laurel and Sixth Streets and facing the City Hall, this landscaped park will be both the heart of downtown and a symbol of the City's commitment to the preservation of Minnesota's environment.
2. New Boulevards
3. Mississippi River Access - There is an expressed public desire for both a stronger orientation to the river and additional access for its enjoyment. R/

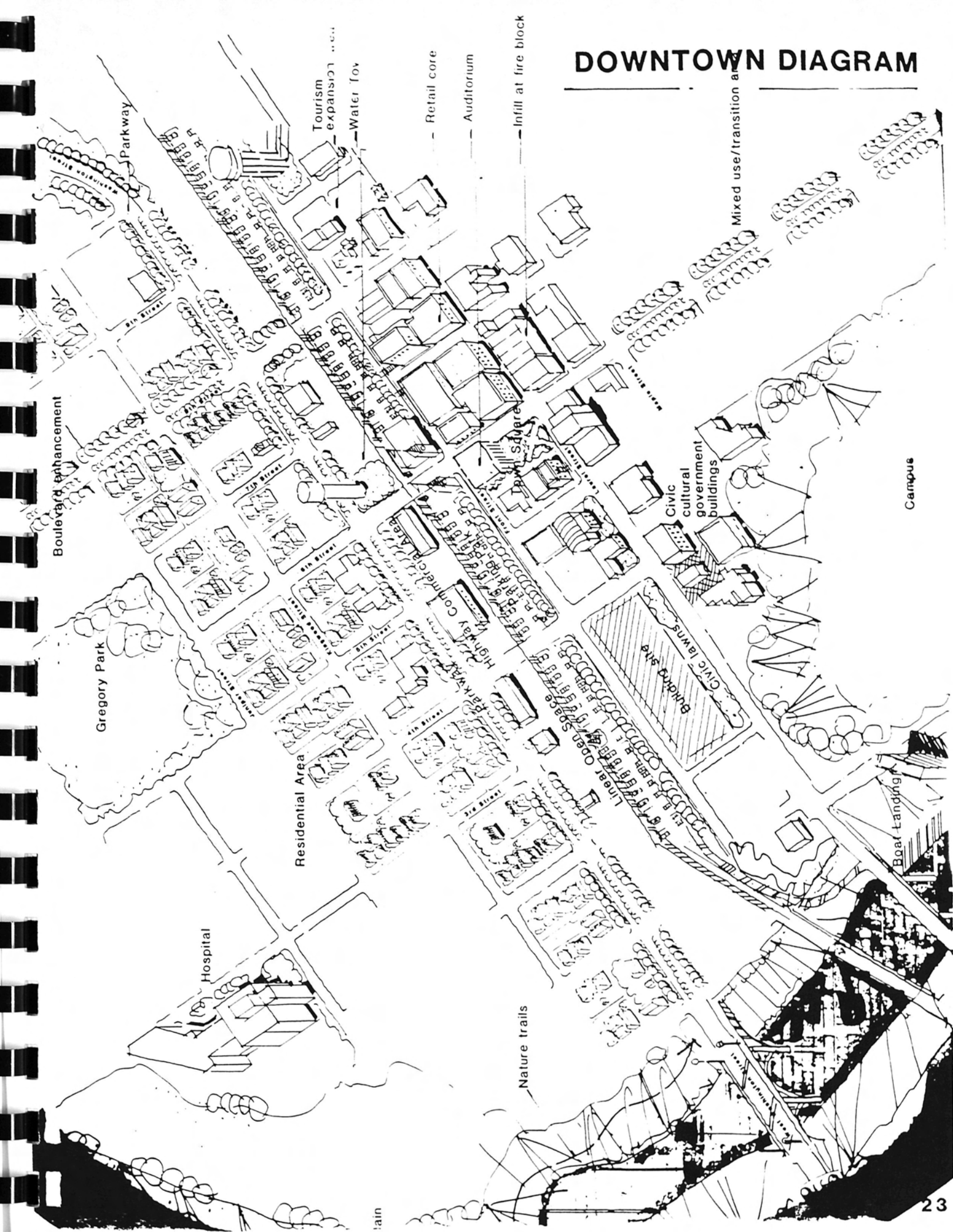
UDAT is proposing a boardwalk and dock linked to other parks downstream with a trail.

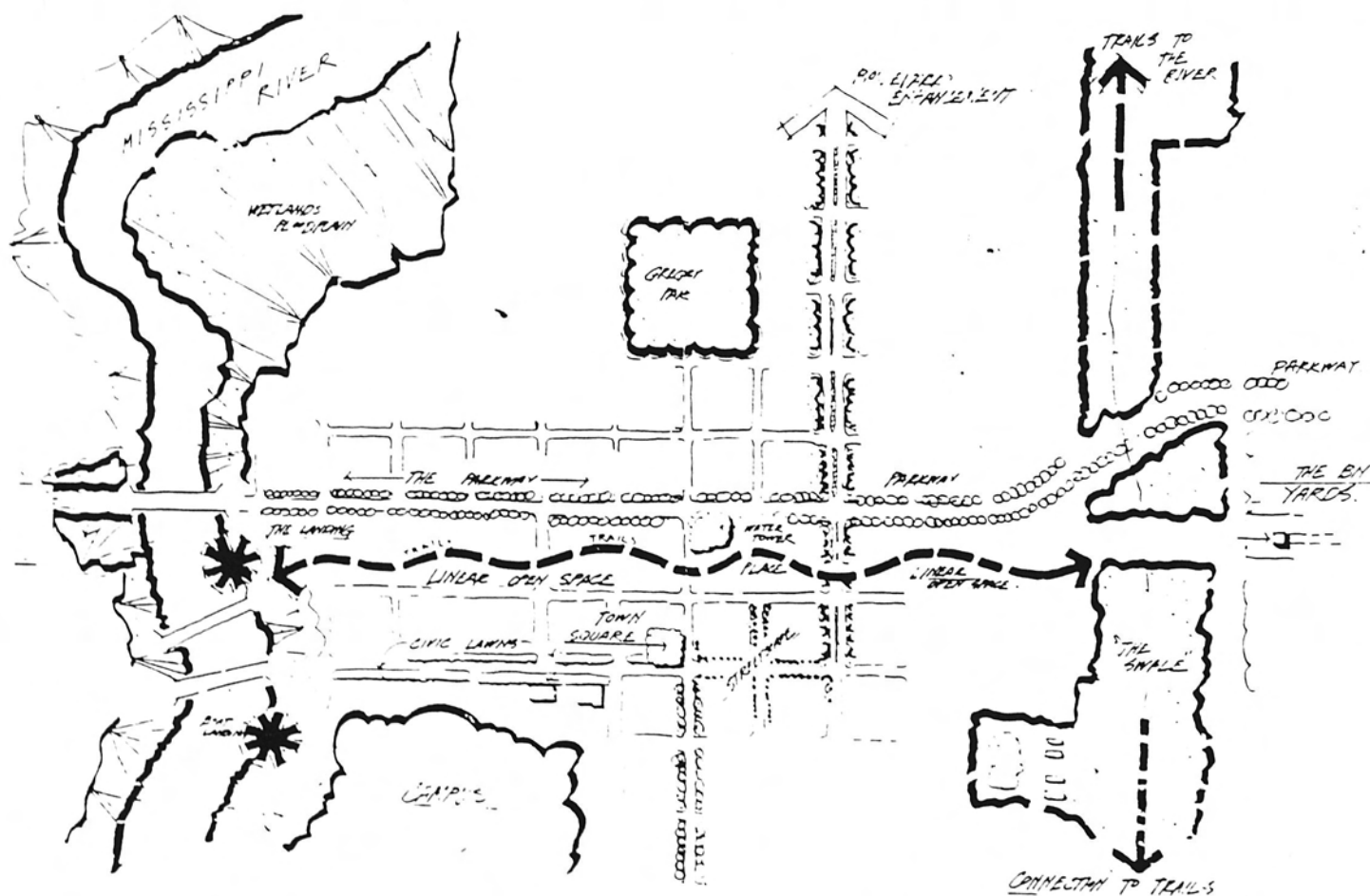
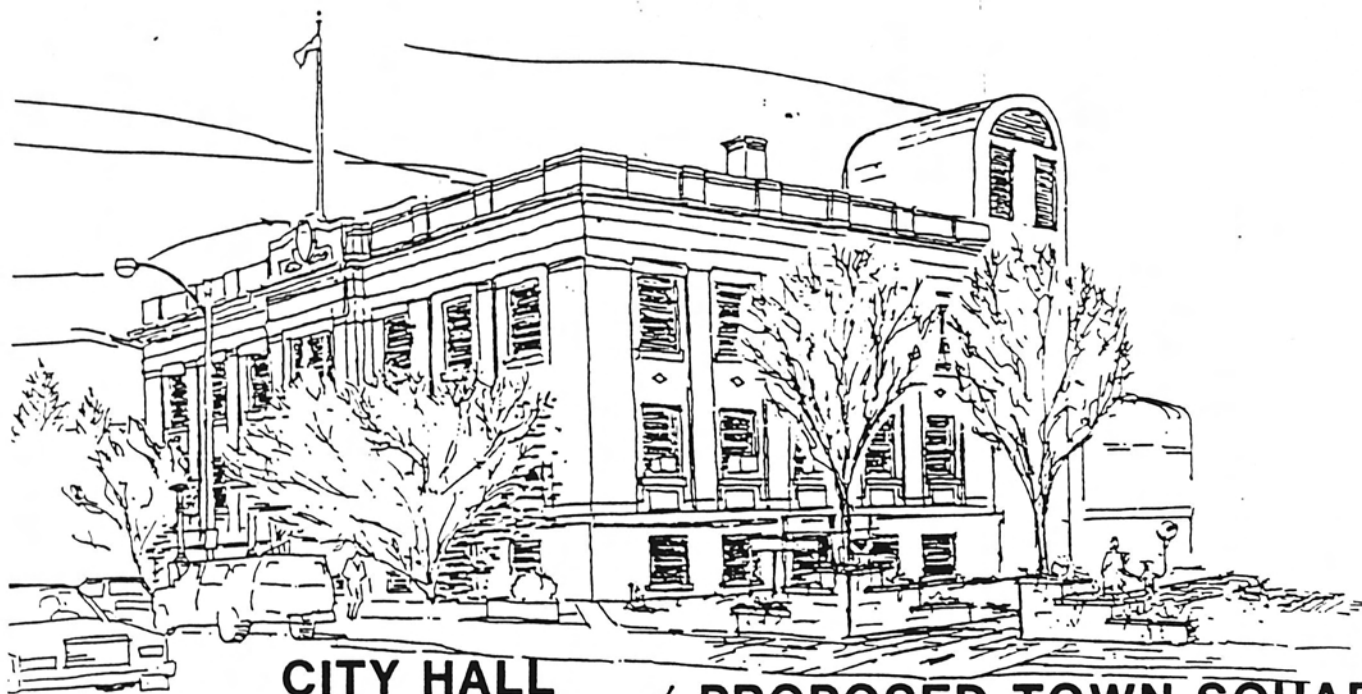
4. Water Tower Park - This long time landmark should stand on its own surrounded by landscaping. In addition, R/UDAT suggests that a competition of local artists, architects and other interested citizens be commissioned to recommend lighting, landscaping and paint treatment of the Tower.

5. The Burlington Northern Park - R/UDAT recommends that a substantial program of tree planting be undertaken in all inactive areas of the Burlington Northern right-of-way from the Mississippi River to the northeastern boundary of the City. Within this new treed park, a trail system should be included for the enjoyment of both tourist and townspeople to provide another way of getting to the proposed tourist center at the Railyards.

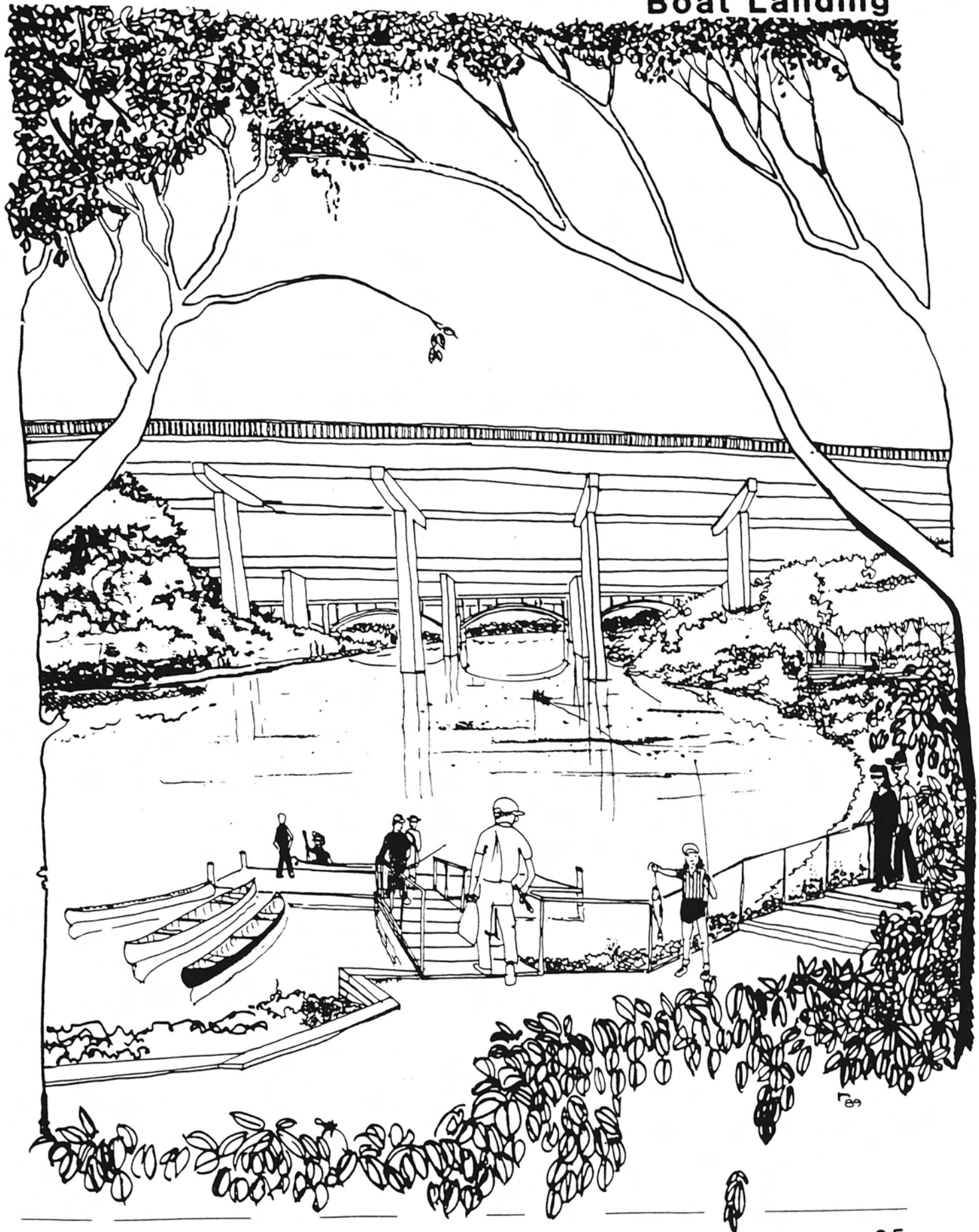


DOWNTOWN DIAGRAM





Mississippi Boat Landing



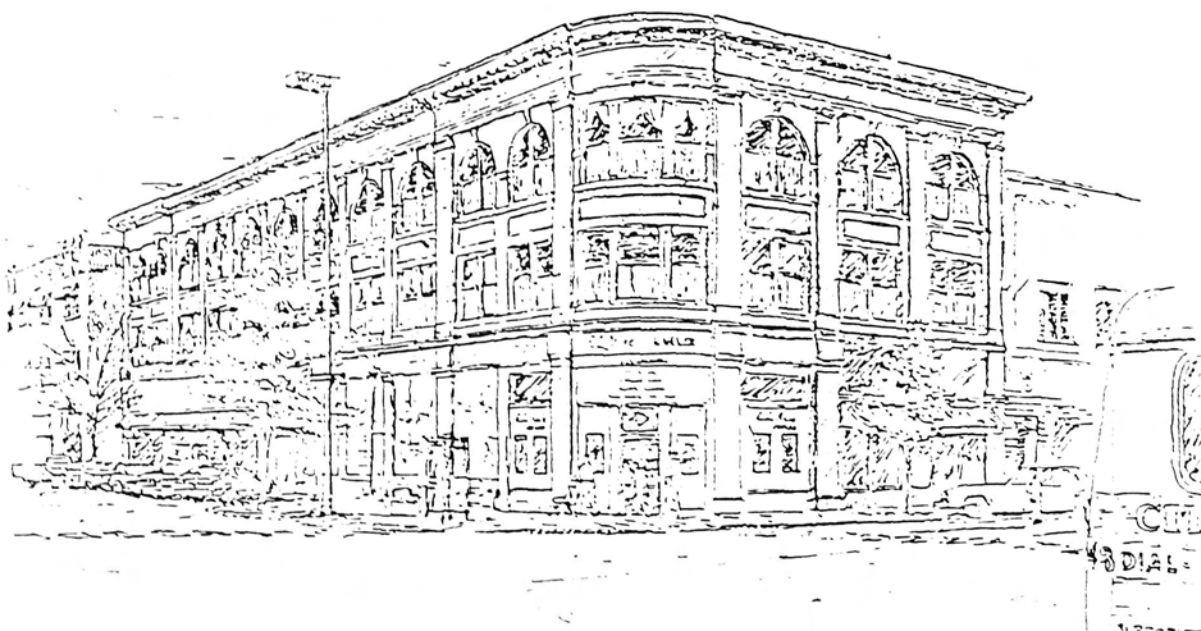
DOWNTOWN HOUSING

Brainerd has a need to create more subsidized housing units despite the admirable job done by the Brainerd Housing and Redevelopment Authority to increase the number of subsidized units in the City by 421 additional units over the last three years. The waiting list for these units numbers 300. Some units serve the elderly and the low and moderate income members of the population. This group receives a housing subsidy. Another group depends upon welfare payments as a source of income. A heavy concentration of this group is residing in the second story units in Brainerd's downtown area. Even though most Brainerd residents are negative about this situation, the dependence of the building owners on these rents can not be summarily dismissed.

Steps should be taken to improve not only deficiencies that may exist in these units, but also ease the heavy concentration of this special needs population in the downtown area.

First, the housing code should be strictly enforced. Units should be inspected to determine compliance with minimum standards. Violations should be corrected.

The owners of the buildings should be encouraged to create a more varied tenant mix than currently exists in the buildings. The Housing Authority should work with the landlords of these buildings to identify other types of subsidy that might be available for these units, such as Section 8 certificate holders. This



IMPLEMENTATION

At the R/UDAT public hearing, citizens stood and stated that coming up with ideas was not the problem, but rather getting ideas implemented was. The following recommendations suggest a list of important tasks which may occur over different time periods, but each is a significant component of the overall plan and cannot be ignored.

- Create a Comprehensive Plan for Downtown Brainerd, and a concomitant land use plan, and draft a zoning ordinance and development guidelines.
- Institute an aggressive promotional program to educate business leaders and citizens of the Downtown Plan, the reasons for it, and benefits derived from it.
- Seek agreement with property owners for the sale or condemnation of selected key sites. It is anticipated that other underutilized land will be sold on the open market as values increase and make other, more appropriate uses feasible.
- Secure the involvement and support of the Community College to locate its planned performing arts center in to Downtown.
- Secure the substantial commitment to lease or build office space for State, County, Local governments in the downtown.
- Strengthen Downtown Retail Merchants Association.
- Initiate negotiations to secure use of portions of railroad right-of-way, rail yards and potential involvement of Burlington Northern.
- Expand role of EDA in stimulating capital investment in Downtown. EDA should recommend to the Mayor and City Council sites for purchase or condemnation of selected Downtown sites. Also, EDA and BLADC should work closely in cooperation to attract new businesses to the downtown.
- Create an investment package to attract private capital in to Downtown, including the rail yards.
- Upgrade existing downtown housing stock and stimulate the construction of new units through financial incentives and financing subsidies.
- Enlist support of Parks and Recreation Department to develop R/UDAT ideas into workable parks and open space plan.
- Enlist support of Engineering Department to develop plans and standards for Boulevards.
- Relocate Chamber of Commerce to new location as early as possible.
- Establish a design competition for lighting, landscaping and painting of the water tower.
- Streamline process by:
 - Establish definition of roles for Policymakers and Implementers.
 - Take advantage of familiarization session (Humphrey Center) for newly elected and appointed officials to clarify roles and responsibilities.
 - Formalize review of and input to Downtown Plan by Mayor, Council, and City Administrator.
 - Encourage citizen involvement through participation at "Town Meetings" or similar.
 - Without delay, hire a City Planner to coordinate development and implementation of the Downtown Plan. Prior to hiring this staff member, write and approve (by Mayor, Council, Administrators) a clear job description.





TOURISM

I. TOURISM OVERVIEW FOR THE BRAINERD LAKES AREA

A. PRESENT STATUS

There is an old saying that if something is working well don't fix it. Brainerd-Lakes as a tourism destination is doing extremely well! Brainerd-Lakes located at the geographic center of North America, accounts for 48% of the resort trade in Minnesota. Crow Wing County is annually ranked third or fourth in the State in county revenue for tourism expenditures. The Brainerd-Lakes area has the largest concentration of second home owners in Minnesota.

These statistics make a very strong statement that the tourism economic impact in the Brainerd-Lakes area is very strong and that the process used in the past to attain this track record has a successful plan that all concerned with can be justifiable proud. The R/UDAT team has studied the base that exists in tourism business and has developed a direction to take the Brainerd-Lakes Area into the 90's and 21st Century with an objective of expanding the present excellent tourism business by focusing on these areas:

1. Downtown Revitalization
2. Facilities
3. Marketing
4. Funding

In our fact finding pursuits to discover the community needs and complaints, the above were the four topics that were the major concerns of the tourism industry leaders and governmental officials.

B. FUTURE

The future growth of the Brainerd-Lakes Area will be linked to the aggressiveness of the community leadership to accomplish a new direction for downtown growth and the cooperation of various levels of governmental and business leaders. It is very clear that County and City leadership is necessary to join with the private sector in forming a government-business partnership to accomplish the objectives of the R/UDAT report on tourism.

If there is a high percentage of completion of objectives in the report, the Brainerd-Lakes Area will experience a stabilization of the present excellent tourism business and sharp growth in off season business. A marked increase in individual tourist expenditures will

swell the total dollars spent by those tourists that are "the regulars" to the area each year. Finally, the new marketing effort will attract a significant number of new first time tourists to the Brainerd area from the Twin Cities and a regional traveling public.

Many of those persons interviewed told us that when it rained during the summer season, the people vacationing at the resorts would use this as an opportunity to visit downtown Brainerd and shop. With the decline of the central business district detailing this past practice is not now available and, therefore, most of these "off activity" hours are spent at the resort. The resort owners expressed a desire that a strong downtown shopping experience be a part of any new development. With shopping, dining, attractions and convention facilities geared to attract the resort vacationer and



to stop the drive-through tourist, a new generation of downtown spenders will be created.

II FACILITIES: TOURISM FACILITIES TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN PLANNING THE DOWNTOWN FUTURE

1 BRAINERD EXPO-HALL

Throughout our interviews, the need for a convention-trade show-community center facility was brought to the attention of R/UDAT team. After a complete inventory of meeting room-trade show facilities, the team concluded that such a facility was needed to serve the tourism-convention trade as well as the resident population of the Brainerd-Lakes Area.

Exposition Hall - Our recommendations are to construct a new facility built around a core of a 20,000-25,000 square foot hall. This hall would serve as a marketing asset for attracting state and regional conventions, local trade shows, such as sport shows, boat shows, camping shows, snow-sport shows, home shows, career expositions and similar trade show opportunities. It would also be a center for community activities such as wedding, banquets, graduations, pet shows, special retailing opportunities and various community celebrations. The hall should divide in half to accommodate more than one activity at a time.

Meeting Rooms - The Hall should contain approximately ten meeting rooms ranging in capacity (theatre

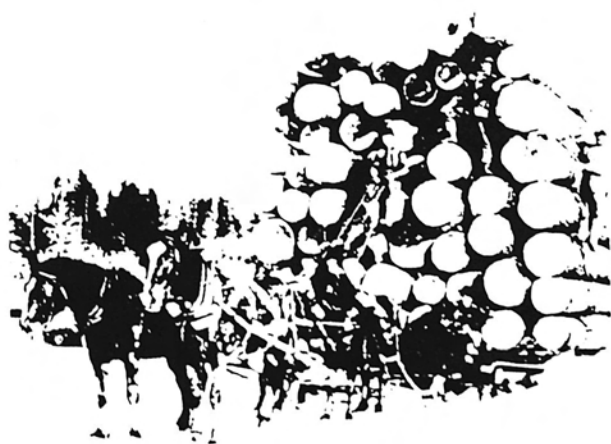
style) 50-200 (Larger meeting to be accommodated in main hall.) These rooms to be used as breakout rooms for conventions, small dining functions, activity rooms for local organizations office space for groups using main hall.

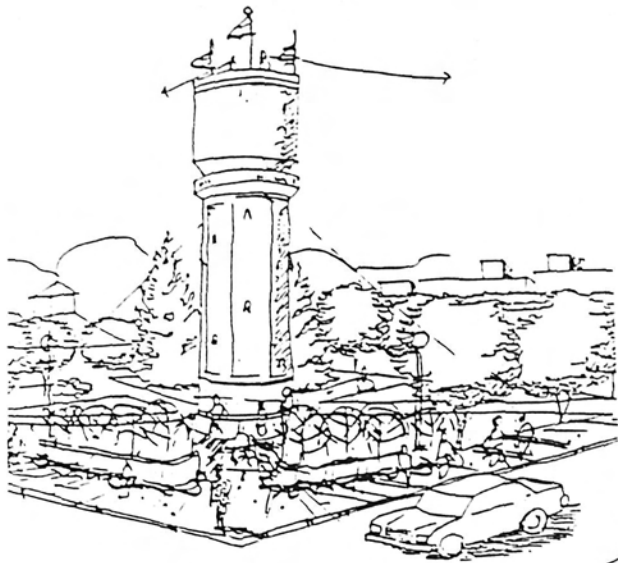
Food Facilities - The Hall should contain a cafeteria kitchen so that local suppliers would have a base to serve banquets and convention needs. Concession stands equipped for fast foods and beverages should also be constructed in a permanent location.

Brainerd-Lakes Chamber of Commerce Offices - The down time or desk time in an exposition hall is the hardest problem to explain to the general public who paid their tax dollars to build such a facility so every effort should be made to create a year-a-round open door policy. The anchor of this objective should be the location of the Brainerd-Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce office within the Expo-Hall. This feature would give the building an on-site management team and also serve the community by furnishing a tourism information-service area for the pedestrian tourist in the downtown business area. (See tourism information centers for additional information.) This activity will keep the building ALIVE during the entire year.

The Brainerd Expo-Hall will be a community focal point for many years to come and should develop new tourism dollars and create a new civic pride.

2. HOTEL AND BED & BREAKFAST





With the revitalization of the central business district geared to attracting tourism trade, the construction of lodging facilities should be placed in relationship to 1. Brainerd Expo-Hall, 2. dining facilities, 3. attractions, 4. shopping. These facilities would not be replacing any existing properties, but would fulfill a new need created by the stoppage of drive through tourist that previously would not have considered staying in downtown Brainerd and the increase convention and meeting business. There will also be a new tourism customer created by an intensive marketing program target packaging downtown. Downtown lodging facilities will also bring new customers for the retailers in the central business district.

3. TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

Tourism in downtown will be enhanced by creating activities for all sectors of the tourism customers, i.e. youngsters, teenagers, young adults, adults, and senior citizens. The suggestions to fulfill these needs have been varied and some spectacular. All have been reasonable and attainable.

The most feasible and probable is the In-Fisherman Fishing World. This local firm has proposed an attraction that would immediately be a major regional attraction and be responsible for creating a destination market for downtown Brainerd. The proposal has all the earmarks of an instant success and should be used as the anchor for tourism promotion in downtown.

Another attraction that is a natural for the new downtown is the life story of Paul Bunyan portrayed on various street corners in the new downtown business district. These portrayals would be done as sculptures by chainsaw artists. A self guided tour of sculptures would take the visitor through the various districts of the downtown.

A water park with pool and multi-configuration of water slides would take advantage of the Brainerd-Lakes Area's most famous natural resource, WATER! Such parks have been very successful in other resort areas around the country and not only provide the tourist with another option to enjoy his stay, but give a recreation opportunity to local resident to enjoy a facility that is much needed as an option for their recreation time.

The creation of the new downtown will bring with it many investors with their own attraction proposals. It is suggested that a citizens' or governmental board of review be appointed to accept only those proposed attractions that will enhance the objectives of new downtown area.

4. RESTAURANT FACILITIES:

The addition of restaurant facilities to the downtown project seems to be a universal suggestion. The area is blessed with a multitude of fast food operations, resort fine dining and cafe operations. There is a definite need for dining facilities that would offer an alternative to the above. The R/UDAT team would encourage the development of two series of ethnic food establishments that would offer the visitors and locals a choice in their selection of their dining experiences. For instance, a Swedish smorgasbord restaurant would be welcome sight in Minnesota! An Italian Pasta Restaurant or a German "Black Forest" Dining Hall should succeed. Food service such as the above located throughout the new downtown will be patronized and a benefit to the entire community.

5. TOURISM INFORMATION AND SERVICE CENTERS

A central INFO center located within the confines of the Brainerd-Lakes Chamber Office at the Brainerd Expo-Hall will be the central office for the dispersal of literature on attractions, housing information, resort availability, events and a service center for the tourist with special needs such as medical facilities directions and assistance in such things as baby sitting services.

To accommodate the visitor that is approaching the

Brainerd-Lakes Area by car, the R/UDAT Team is suggesting satellite info centers located at the south bypass entrance and one located at the completion of the bypass on the north end. A location for an additional center for those arriving from the east (Highway 18) should also be studied to determine need. We also recommend that temporary (mobile home) type facility be used until such time the bypass is completed and permanent building can be constructed. These satellites should relieve the need for motorists to stop in a busy downtown when going to a resort area and also give the City a chance to attract "the passing through traveler" to stop and enjoy the new downtown Brainerd.

III. MARKETING

One uniting voice among chamber officials, Governmental officials, Resorters, and private sector members has shouted loud and clear that the Brainerd-Lakes Area must have a professional marketing arm to maintain old business and create new business. The fact that the area has been successful in the past does not provide an automatic formula for success in the future. This, plus the fact that you do not want the rebuilding of Brainerd Lakes area to be one of the world's best kept secrets dictates an aggressive marketing program which must be put in place.

The Brainerd Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce should be the organization to "carry the ball" on this project. The R/UDAT team is suggesting that a marketing division be included in its organizational structure. A Director of Marketing be hired that is experienced in Destination Marketing. We further suggest that a volunteer Marketing Council be formed consisting of sales persons in the resort industry, local tourism related businessmen, and local city and county officials. A president, elected annually by the council should be represented on the Chambers board of Directors. To start the marketing council rolling, we suggest that chamber officials enlist or hire an advertising agency to produce a profile on the Brainerd Lakes Visitor and a survey of acceptance of the Brainerd Lakes Area as a vacation destination. From this profile the Director of Marketing and the Marketing Council will formulate a marketing plan to service the Brainerd Lakes area. The marketing plan should be presented to city and county officials for informational and discus-sional purposes.

IV. FUNDING:

To put in place the marketing program, the area must provide a funding source on an annual basis that will allow the Marketing Council to accomplish this goal. In

the past there has been opposition to a lodging tax for several reasons. For one, the resorters have felt their industry was being singled out to support programs that benefit the community as a whole. The rationale of another tax of any kind is distasteful to most everyone but the community must realize that some form of funding on a permanent basis must be in place or the program will just not get off the ground. Private sector funding in the amount that is needed is not feasible and the Chamber dues are the highest in the area without room in the chamber budget to carry such a program. Around the country most convention and tourism programs are supported by a combination of lodging tax, sales tax, and/or state grants. It is to these sources we are looking to support the Brainerd Lakes Marketing Council.



A. State Funding: We propose the Brainerd Lakes Chamber of Commerce apply to the State of Minnesota for a grant of \$25,000.00 to do the necessary studies of the Brainerd Lakes Area market potential, and to put in place a second financial program for the future.

When permanent financing is put in place and the marketing dollars are committed, the State will match those funds with a program already in place for communities with a convention and visitors program.

B. 1 % SALES TAX

To even mention a new tax of any kind is like waving a red flag in front of a charging bull. It's probably the least palatable of funding sources available, but when all other sources of funding are exhausted it becomes the only viable means to make the Marketing Program work. Our proposal is to collect a Crow Wing County wide 1% sales tax on all present taxable sales. There should be exemptions to the taxes such as Auto, building materials or sales of the magnitude that an additional 1 % tax puts the retailer in a non-competitive position with others outside of the county boundaries. The fairness of this type of tax comes with each segment of the business community that shares in the benefit of the county's #1 industry, tourism, will be paying a fair share with no one segment such as the lodging industry carrying the whole load. The beautiful part of the One percent sales tax is that it is not a tax the local resident will be paying alone. The vacationer and the summer resident will be paying the lion's share of the tax.

The Crow Wing County border leaves the major resort operators out of the taxing district outlined above. In the past the major resorters in Cass County have resisted any efforts to include them in the program. They have their own marketing programs that have carried them successfully in the past and have looked at a very small marketing effort by the Brainerd Chamber. With a well planned marketing program in place and a professional staff to carry out the program we hope the resorters in Cass County will petition their Township governments to pass a 1% lodging tax and become a full partner in the Brainerd - Lake Marketing Council. Their input and participation will be needed and would benefit all.

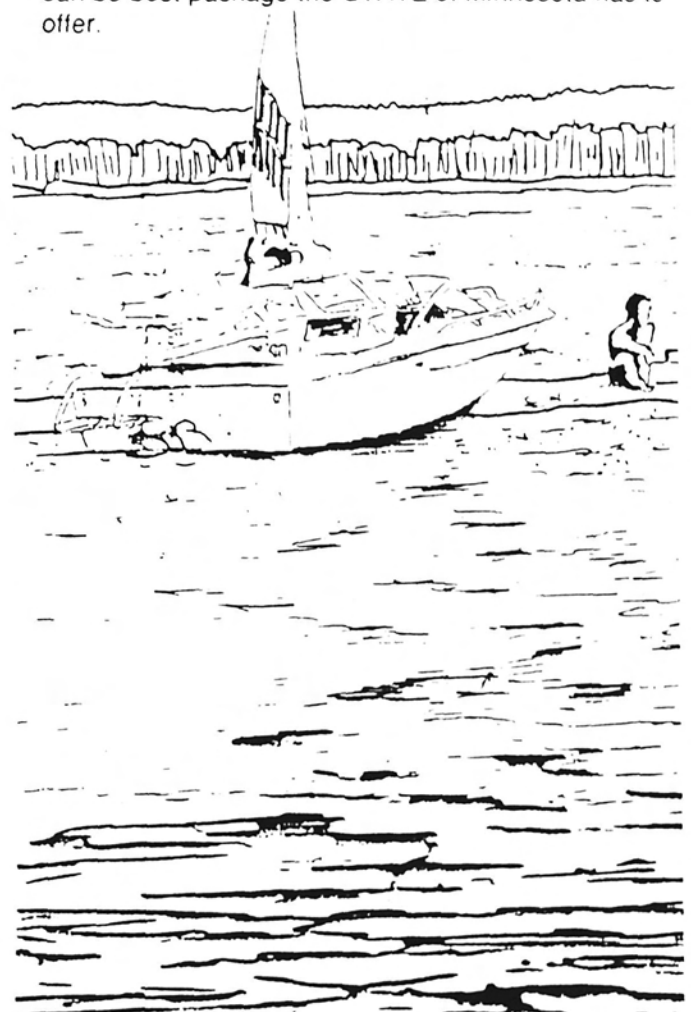
F. IMPLEMENTATION OF FUNDING

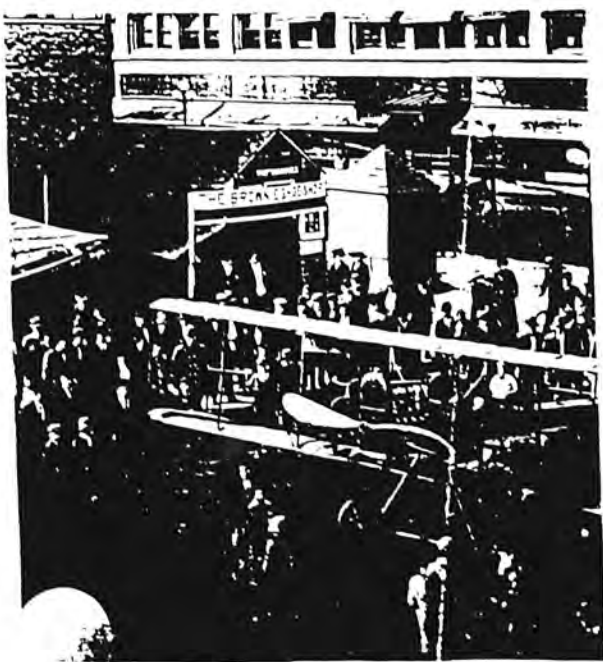
We would like to see the Marketing Council appoint a Funding Task Force of Community leaders that would hire a lobbyist and a short term staff person to guide the

task force through the mazes of state, county & local government procedures. A well planned presentation by professionals will do more to sell the program than the local business person but the locals must be there to show the support needed to pass the necessary legislation.

G. MARKETING WRAP-UP

There are many cities, counties and resort areas in the State of Minnesota competing for the Minnesota Vacationer and the Five State Regional Vacationer. Brainerd will be the freshest product to sell. The new downtown Brainerd combined with all ready solid base of resort business will combine to offer a most desirable package that should extend existing vacationing seasons and open new doors in new territories. Marketing a tourism destination includes all facets of the Area including Lodging, Restaurants, Attractions, Transportation modes including Airport, Retailers, Suppliers, Entertainment Centers and Bars. Marketing the whole makes an attractive package and Brainerd now can be the best package the STATE of Minnesota has to offer.





BIOGRAPHIES

LARRY MELILLO

Melillo, an architect from Louisville, Kentucky, is the R/UDAT leader.

Brainerd will be Melillo's sixth project as a R/UDAT leader. Others included Phoenix, Fairfax County, VA, and Baton Rouge, LA. He's been doing R/UDAT projects since 1972 and brings with him a background in urban design and architecture. He is a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a Bachelor of Architecture and a Master of Architecture degree.



DAVID AMES

Ames, a resort planner, has been president of Amesco Inc., on Hilton Head Island, S.C., since 1976 and was a partner in Development Associates Inc., also at Hilton Head, from 1976 to 1988. Through the two companies, Ames has planned, developed and managed property throughout the Southeast, Mexico, and the Bahamas.

He has experience with major resort developments, small projects and property development, ranging in size from 50 to 5,000 acres.

Ames earned a master's degree in architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1969 and a bachelor of arts in architecture from Princeton University in 1966.



KIM BAUR

Baur works for Sasaki Associates Inc., in Watertown, MA, where she is senior landscape architect and urban designer. She has 10 years of experience in large-scale land planning, park and open space design and urban design.

Before joining Sasaki, Baur was an assistant professor in the Colorado State University college of forestry and natural resources. She also worked as a landscape architect for consulting firms in Ann Arbor, MI, and Fort Collins, CO.

Baur earned a Bachelor of Science degree in landscape architecture from Pennsylvania State University in 1978 and a Master's degree in that same field in 1982 from the University of Michigan.



ALICE GRAY

Gray is an economic developer for the Massachusetts Port Authority in Boston, where she manages the development of a \$20 million lobster terminal and waterfront park.

Gray has been with the port authority since 1986. Before that, she was the Boston regional coordinator for the Massachusetts governor's office of economic development.

She has been working in economic development and planning since 1972. She earned a Master's degree in business administration from Boston University Graduate School of Management in 1986 and completed all requirements - except her thesis - for a Master of Urban Planning from the New York University Graduate School of Public Administration. She earned a Master's degree in geography from the Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences in 1971 and her Bachelor of Arts degree in history from Boston University.



BOB THOMAS

Thomas, of New Hope, was chief executive officer of the Minneapolis Convention and Visitors Commission for 15 years and promoted construction of the convention center in Minneapolis. He is retired from the Minnesota Office of Tourism, where he was marketing director. He now works as a private consultant for the convention industry.

His former positions include general manager of the Des Moines, Iowa, Convention and Visitors Bureau, director of sales for the convention bureau in Columbus, Ohio, and convention department manager in Springfield, Ohio.

Thomas' parents owned and operated a hotel in Xenia, Ohio, where Thomas was raised. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Denver School of Hotel and Restaurant Management in 1952.



CHESTER KROPIDLOWSKI

Kropidowski is the City Traffic Engineer of Operations for the Chicago Department of Public Work. Kropidowski has a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois (1968), a Master's degree in Public Administration from DePaul University (1982), and is a Registered Professional Engineer in the State of Illinois.

Kropidowski's responsibilities have included the design of street improvements for Chicago Urban Street System, and the ongoing interagency coordination for traffic operations at major special events and at major activity centers.

Included in accomplishments are the development of an operational traffic and parking plan for Chicago Cubs night baseball games at Wrigley Field, a major league baseball stadium located in an urban residential community.



PAUL SEHNERT

Sehnert, an architect and senior development associate at Halcyon's Ltd. of Hartford, Connecticut, has a broad background in planning, urban design and economic revitalization in the public sector, plus experience in a private architectural practice.

Sehnert manages public sector planning, economic revitalization, urban design and development feasibility studies. Before joining Halcyon, he worked with the Denver City Planning Office as an architect and urban designer and for the Office of Architecture and Urban Design of the City of Cincinnati.

He has a Master's of Science degree in real estate development from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and graduated with honors from the College of Design, Architecture, and Art at the University of Cincinnati.



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 Gant, Jim
 Gilbert, Mabel
 Given, John
 Gmeinder, Al
 Goble, Theresa
 Goedker, Gene
 Grams, Leon
 Gross, Bob
 Gunsberry, Alan
 Gunsbury, Jane
 Haanersen, Bill
 Haaversen, Bll
 Halle, Jim
 Halverson, Bill
 Hance, Bob
 Hauck, Shirley
 Haugen, Wayne
 Hellen, Alice
 Henderson, Oscar
 Hendrickson, Marion
 Hennessy, Cindy

Hitchens, Ralph
 Holle, Jim
 Holsether, Frank
 Hubert, Don
 Huff, Ed
 Ihne, Sally
 Imgrund, John
 Johnson, Buford
 Johnson, Dennis
 Johnson, Gary
 Johnson, Irene M.
 Johnson, Kay
 Johnson, Tom
 Kavanaugh, S.
 Kelleler, Cornelious
 Klein, Bill
 Klein, James
 Klein, Lorna
 Knudsen, Jim
 Knudsen, Libby
 Koch, Larry
 Koch, Larry
 Koep, Mary
 Koep, Walt
 Koerper, Jim
 Kristofferson, Ron
 Kummet, Rick
 Larson, Marlene
 Larson, Marlene
 Larson, Terry
 Hilda, Lee
 Leblan, Gary
 LeDuc, Paul
 Lichty, Alan
 Lindner, Ron
 Ludenia, Kathy
 Martin, Denny
 McAndrews, Bill
 McCollough, Terry
 McFarland, Ida
 McGuire, Ione
 McPherson, Donnie
 McQuaid, Yvonne
 Menk, Ed
 Moilanen, Barb
 Molin, Helen
 Morgan, Ed
 Muhich, Peter
 Murry, Connie
 Nesheim, Lucy
 Nelson, Marjorie
 Nielson, Curt

Nieman, Dave
 Niemeyer, Lyle
 Nysather, Harry
 O'Hara, Bill
 Olson, Bob
 Olson, Cathy
 Olson, Cathy
 Owens, Darold
 Person, Howie
 Person, John
 Phelps, Brian
 Phelps, Brian
 Potvin, Bill
 Puchropp, John
 Puckropp, Helen
 Pueringer, David
 Rabehl, Jim
 Radunz, Kristy
 Rathke, Steve
 Ring, Jerry
 Rowen, Bill
 Russel, Carol
 Safgren, Mary
 Samuelson, Don
 Schmitt, Sylvia
 Schuler, Bob
 Silvernail, Brooke
 Simon, Jay
 Sjollund, Walt
 Smith, Judi
 Smith, Pam
 Smith, Zane
 Smith, Stan
 Smith, Mark
 Soper, Harold
 Stewart, Jane
 Sura, Dan
 Therres, Bob
 Thompson, Todd
 Thuringer, Brian
 Tiplady, Margaret
 Travis, Al
 Turnbull, Ann
 Tyler, Russ
 Veit, Angie
 Vogt, Dan
 Wallin, James
 Walsh, Gail
 Wasnie, Sheila
 Williams, Warren
 Williams, Warren
 Winzenburg, Gordon

Widmark, Charles
 Wozniak, Ernie
TOWN MEETING:

Anderson, Jack
 Asplund, Frank
 Bedard, George
 Chesley, Tom
 Dano, Howie
 Dens, Kevin
 Engel, Steve
 Erickson, Carl
 Erickson, Ervin
 Erickson, Jan
 Erickson, John
 Finch, Berniece
 Goble, Mildred
 Hennessy, Cindy
 Holtan, Sheila
 Holtan, Bert
 Koep, Mary
 Kohls, Steve
 Lee, Hilda
 Madison, Ray
 Martinson, Jim
 McAndrews, Bill
 McPherson, D.
 Meyer, Bob
 Morquin, Ed
 Nelson, Terry
 Olander, Kevin
 Osell, Charlotte
 Puckropp, John
 Ring, Pat
 Smith, Vivian E.
 Stadem, Mark
 Stensrud, John
 Walsh, Gail
 Wenson, D.
 Willmark, Jean
 Wilmark, Chuck
 Wolf, Brad
 Wolf, Ken

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