

# SEBASTOPOLCONNECT



## SEBASTOPOL, CA SDAT

**AIA** Communities by Design   
ENVISION. CREATE. SUSTAIN.



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In November of 2012, Sebastopol, CA submitted a proposal to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) to assist the community and its citizens in addressing key issues facing the community. The issues included land use, urban design, connectivity, sustainable design, and transportation management. The AIA accepted the proposal and, after a preliminary visit by a small group in February 2013, recruited a multi-disciplinary team of volunteers to serve on the SDAT Team. In May 2013, the SDAT Team members worked closely with local officials, community leaders, technical experts, non-profit organizations and citizens to study the community and its concerns. The team used its expertise to frame a wide range of recommendations, which were presented to the community in a public

meeting. This report represents a summary of the findings and recommendations that were presented to the community.

### **The Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) Program**

The Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) program focuses on the importance of developing sustainable communities through design. The mission of the SDAT program is to provide technical assistance and process expertise to help communities develop a vision and framework for a sustainable future. The SDAT program brings together multidisciplinary teams of professionals to work with community stakeholders and decision-makers in an intensive planning process. Teams are composed of volunteer professionals representing a range of disciplines, including architects, urban design professionals, economic development experts, land use attorneys, and others. Today, communities face a host of challenges to long-term planning for sustainability,



including limited resources and technical capacity, ineffective public processes and poor participation. The SDAT approach is designed to address many of the common challenges communities face by producing long-term sustainability plans that are realistic and reflect each community's unique context. Key features of the SDAT approach include the following:

- **Customized Design Assistance.** The SDAT is designed as a customized approach to community assistance which incorporates local realities and the unique challenges and assets of each community.
- **A Systems Approach to Sustainability.** The SDAT applies a systems-based approach to community sustainability, examining cross-cutting issues and relationships between issues. The SDAT forms multi-disciplinary teams that combine a range of disciplines and professions in an integrated assessment and design process.
- **Inclusive and Participatory Processes.** Public participation is the foundation of good community design. The SDAT involves a wide range of stakeholders and utilizes short feedback loops, resulting in sustainable decision-making that has broad public support and ownership.
- **Objective Technical Expertise.** The SDAT Team is assembled to include a range of technical experts from across the country. Team Members do not accept payment for services in an SDAT. They serve in a volunteer capacity on behalf of the AIA and the partner community. As a result, the SDAT Team has enhanced credibility with local stakeholders and can provide unencumbered technical advice.
- **Cost Effectiveness.** By employing the SDAT approach, communities are able to take advantage of leveraged resources for their planning efforts. The AIA contributes up to \$15,000 in financial assistance for each project. The SDAT team members volunteer their labor and expertise, allowing communities to gain immediate access to the combined technical knowledge of top-notch professionals from varied fields.





The SDAT program is modeled on the Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) program, one of AIA's longest-running success stories. While the R/UDAT program was developed to provide communities with specific design solutions, the SDAT program provides broad assessments to help frame future policies or design solutions in the context of sustainability and help communities plan the first steps of implementation. Through the Design Assistance Team (DAT) program, over 500 professionals from 30 disciplines have provided millions of dollars in professional pro bono services to more than 200 communities across the country. The SDAT program leverages the pivotal role of the architectural community in the creation and support of sustainable livable communities.

The following report includes a narrative account of the Sebastopol SDAT project recommendations, with summary information concerning several principle areas of investigation. The recommendations are made within the broad framework of sustainability, and are designed to form an integrated approach to future sustainability efforts in the community.



# executive summary



Sebastopol is remarkable for its amenities, vitality and promise. There are few cities in the US with a population of less than 8,000 with a downtown as vibrant as Sebastopol's. Being the primary market community for 50,000 people helps, but downtown's strengths go way beyond that.

Sebastopol's downtown is strong, and will get stronger with the redevelopment of The Barlow. The pedestrian scale downtown is connected by walkable streets to most of the city, creating a walkable community with downtown as its single most important focal point. For many, if not most people in Sebastopol's service area, downtown Sebastopol is their downtown, the place they identify with regardless of whether or not they live within the Sebastopol corporate limits. The Joe Rodota Trail, Laguna de Santa Rosa, a vibrant arts scene, and soon The Barlow's businesses all create magnets drawing people downtown.

Nonetheless, Sebastopol has some very real challenges. Downtown is not nearly as vibrant as it could be, especially at night, downtown streets feel more like the congested highways that they are than the front door to the city, the city streets downtown and beyond are not bicycle-friendly nor as pedestrian friendly as they could be. The Barlow, with its rich promise for the future, is adjacent to downtown and yet it does not feel especially well connected to downtown.

In a series of stakeholder focus groups, a town hall meeting, and during the final SDAT presentation, we heard a dedicated community honest about the challenges and

working hard to develop a stronger and more sustainable city and downtown. In many communities, there is often a conflict about fundamental values. In Sebastopol we heard many different possible roadmaps to a more sustainable and vibrant downtown, but little fundamental differences in values or goals.

The SDAT identified seven strategic approaches upon which we based our subsequent recommendations:

- Emphasize downtown character. Downtown is different from a highway strip in its character, economic role, and its ability to unite and serve the community. Every policy decision effecting downtown should maintain and enhance this character.
- Downtown development should address city values. Development downtown, both private sector and public, should build on downtown's character and community values. The community should create a clear roadmap of what it needs to maintain and enhance those values.
- Develop a Pre-planning program. The City should identify what it wants for the prime development opportunities downtown to emphasize downtown character and city values. It should then aggressively market the roadmap to achieve those objectives to investors. This approach provides certainty of outcomes to both the community and investors.
- Create stronger private and public realm design guidelines. Clear actionable design guidelines that provide more certainty in approval can help both private and public investments ensure that all improvements are consistent with city goals and objectives. Predictability is important for both the community and investors, with discretion reserved for those projects where a developer requests unusual flexibility or approaches.

- Re-green the city (green infrastructure). Green infrastructure, from green space to street trees to low impact stormwater infrastructure, provides nature in the city. This enhances the urban experience and creates the most cost effective way of avoiding and mitigating adverse environmental impacts.
- Develop family-friendly connections. Most of the City of Sebastopol is within easy bicycling distance of downtown and much of it is within walking distance. Better connections, with streets designed for all modes of travel and a clear network planned for bicycle use, can make these connections real.
- Focus on livable streets, not highways. Downtown roads may carry high volumes of traffic, but they should still be optimized to be livable streets that serve as the front door to downtown, enhance pedestrian and bicycle travel, and do not compromise the character of downtown. Main Street and all numbered roads through downtown should first and foremost be city streets, not highways.





**sebastopol**  
**context**

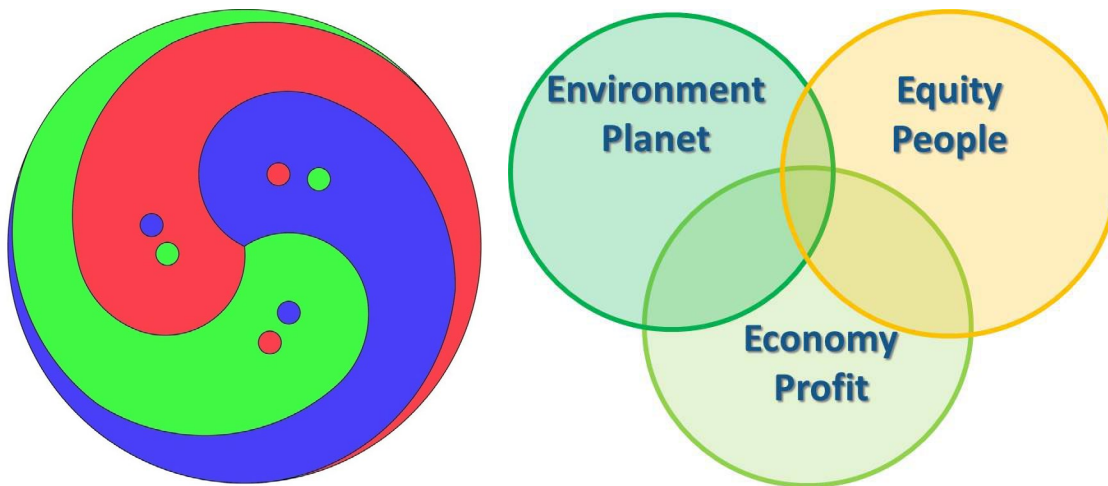
## OVERVIEW

In late 2012, The Core Project, with strong support from the City of Sebastopol, applied to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT). Sebastopol requested help in defining opportunities for its downtown. Sebastopol wanted to prepare for the upcoming General Plan revision, address changes coming as a result of the redevelopment of The Barlow, and, most importantly, strategically focus on improving downtown and the role it plays in the City and the region.

The Core Project and Sebastopol put together an exceptionally strong application and demonstrated all that the City has done already. AIA found that the SDAT process could assist Sebastopol and found that Sebastopol has the dedication and commitment to use the final report to make changes.

## SUSTAINABILITY

Sebastopol has already focused on many aspects of sustainability. The SDAT process is built on the principle that sustainability should be a lens through which we view every human settlement challenge.



*Sustainability as interconnection of Environment, Equity and Economy.*

The most commonly used definition of sustainability “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland Commission).

Sustainability involves balancing and combining three equally important goals (the three Es): Environment; Equity (social equity, community, public health, and education); and Economy. Leave out any of these three goals, and it is not sustainability.

Preserving our environment is critical, but preserving our environment without providing jobs and addressing poverty and addressing environmental justice is not sustainable. Economic development is critical, but economic activity that consumes our environment and the very things we all embrace is not sustainable. Social equity is critical, but meeting social needs without creating more wealth to build a healthy society is not sustainable.

## SEBASTOPOL SPEAKS

The Sustainable Design Assessment Team listened to Sebastopol by reviewing City planning documents, meeting with community stakeholders in a late February 2013 preliminary visit, holding a eight stakeholder focus groups, a town hall meeting, and a final



presentation to the community during the May 2013 SDAT. Feedback and findings from the community are woven into the report.

A few important and consistent themes emerged from the stakeholder meetings, the town hall meeting, and the Sustainable Design Assessment Team's observations:

1. Downtown is less vibrant and has a weaker definition than it could. Downtown is remarkably strong for a community of fewer than 8,000 people and it has great bones, with a wonderful historical core within walking distance of the population center. With a market area of 50,000 people and an additional draw from tourists and visitors, it can, however, be much stronger. Main Street, the natural epicenter for most market communities, has relatively light foot traffic, few people congregating on the streets and benches, and a lack of vibrancy. Many people see the Plaza as the heart of the city, but it lacks a strong sense of place and is separated by parking lots from commerce. Some high school students reported that Safeway provides a stronger draw to them than Main Street or the Plaza, which is a symptom of the problem. There are relatively few special events focused on downtown, such as the Apple Blossom Festival, that have either direct benefits to downtown business or help create the branding that bring customers back in the future.

2. Downtown is defined by highways instead of local-serving livable streets. Traffic overwhelms downtown and residents have given up. Wide multiple one-way roads (road couplets) make downtown roads a highway not well suited to walking or

## SEBASTOPOL STAKEHOLDERS SPEAK

- **"We are a Subaru and Prius Town."**
- **"We are deserving of our vision."**
- **"We don't suffer from low self-esteem."**
- **"Our brand is 'unique small town.'"**
- **"Want to stay a working class community."**
- **"I never let my children bicycle to school."**
- **"Downtown is a congested highway."**

## THIRD GRADERS SHARE SOME OF WHAT THEY WANT

- **A pool with an awesome waterslide that goes into a pool.**
- **A park with jungle-gym/play-structure for kids.**
- **More trees and more flowers and a nature park.**
- **An arcade.**
- **More ponds, another pool, and a swampy area.**
- **Less litter, more trash and recycle cans on sidewalks**
- **More places for kids to hang-out (with lots of details about those places)**

## HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SHARE

- **The front of Safeway is more the center of downtown than either Main Street or the Plaza.**
- **Downtown dark and dead at night.**
- **Unsafe to bicycle on most of the streets in town.**
- **We want to stay (or come back after college) and live in Sebastopol.**



### ***Where is the downtown epicenter?***

downtown circulation. For years the engineering design challenge was how to move cars fast enough to send ever more cars racing through downtown instead of defining downtown roads as the front door to the community. Drivers are always unhappy because they equate downtown with traffic congestion, pedestrians are afraid to cross the roads, and only very experienced, or foolhardy, bicyclists are willing to ride on the roads. Add to that the fact that the amazing regional multi-use Joe Rodota Trail doesn't quite make it to downtown or directly connect to the West Country Trail,

that parking is part of the problem instead of the solution, and that there is only a very limited sense of arrival upon entering downtown and Sebastopol has a downtown that is threatened by what should be its lifeblood, traffic bringing potential customers.



### ***When streets become highways.***

3. Private development should reflect community values and strengthen Sebastopol. Community visioning and approvals on private development proposals downtown and the adjacent commercial and industrial areas have inordinate delays and a lack of predictability that benefits neither the City nor investors. The rules for development are not always clear and consistent. Without changes, this will hurt the potential for good projects on underutilized lots in and adjacent to downtown. Case-by-case analysis of projects puts off some planning decisions that should be made at the start of the process.

4. Public development should reflect community values and strengthen Sebastopol. Development of public transportation and other infrastructure and public buildings suffers from the same lack of pre-planning as private development. There are not

clear guidelines for public projects that will ensure that every public dollar and project strengthens downtown.



***What is the vision to better connect downtown and The Barlow?***

Downtown has incredible potential. The Barlow redevelopment and the resulting increased vibrancy of the area can create amazing synergy, but Sebastopol needs to strike to take advantage of these opportunities.

Downtown development, both in the commercial core, in the industrial area that includes The Barlow, and in nearby neighborhoods, creates a synergy that never can exist in strip commercial development. Taking advantage of this synergy can make downtown stronger and reduce the length, and therefore congestion, caused by many kinds of trips.





land use

## HISTORY

The Sebastopol of today is owed to its history, founded as a post office and trading center at a cross roads of rail and roads within this agricultural region. As a successful center of commerce, the community attracted other businesses and construction of a mixed residential community surrounding the center. The approach suggested for city growth management is to recognize this history and continue to attract people to the center for civic discourse, commerce and leisure activity.

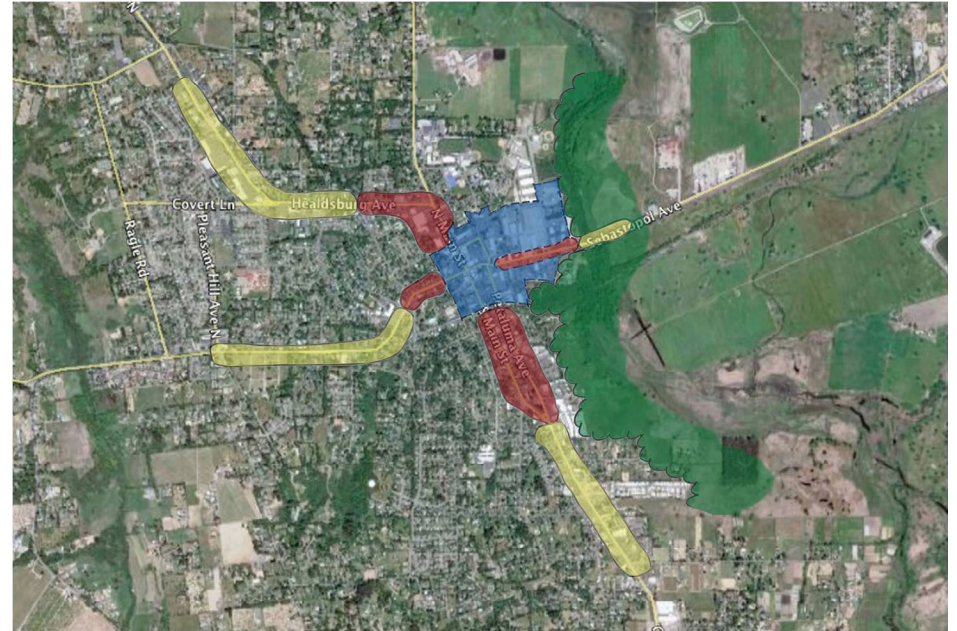
## RECENT GROWTH

Importantly, the historic layout of the center has remained while change has come to Sebastopol. People have continued to invest in the city with intentions for market-based improvements focused on the efficiencies in using the existing construct of land use and infrastructure. This has reinforced and further developed the center according to the general plan implemented through the city zoning regulations.

An important recent change has been the initiation of redevelopment of The Barlow.

This is an important project because:

- The Barlow reiterates the historic agricultural aspects of this industrial area;
- It is creating a destination location that will maintain the regional importance of Sebastopol's center;
- The design reinforces the unique character of the district and provides options to link to the surrounding commercial center, recreation areas, and open space.



This and other recent project proposals have also taught the city an important lesson in the difficulty in coming to agreement on development entitlements. What is needed is a focus on the long-term vision of the center and a process for achieving this vision. Next are some ideas on what is at issue from an urban design perspective and how these issues could be approached by the city.

## THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

The team walked the city center and viewed commercial, residential, mixed use and public properties. From this viewing came several observations about opportunities for change. There are a number of parcels of commercial land that are large enough to make a significant impact and are “susceptible to change” to varying extents. These were built during different economic climates but provide new opportunities to further refine the character of the city center.





Three of the parcels (the Safeway, Rite Aid, and Whole Foods centers) are characterized as typical suburban-style commercial centers with parking lots set forward of the buildings which separate building entrances from the adjacent sidewalks. These are not consistent with either the urban-style main street or industrial heritage of Sebastopol. Consequently, while the uses may be appropriate, the site layout and design do not reinforce the unique history and character of the City. These types of projects are typically improved by the owners when needed to 'update the shopping experience.' With improvements in the broader regional economy these may be subject to change as all similar centers try to maintain market share.

Two other large parcels in the downtown are scheduled for more certain change. These are the former car dealership and the Sebastopol Tractor Co. properties. Both properties are highly susceptible to change in that

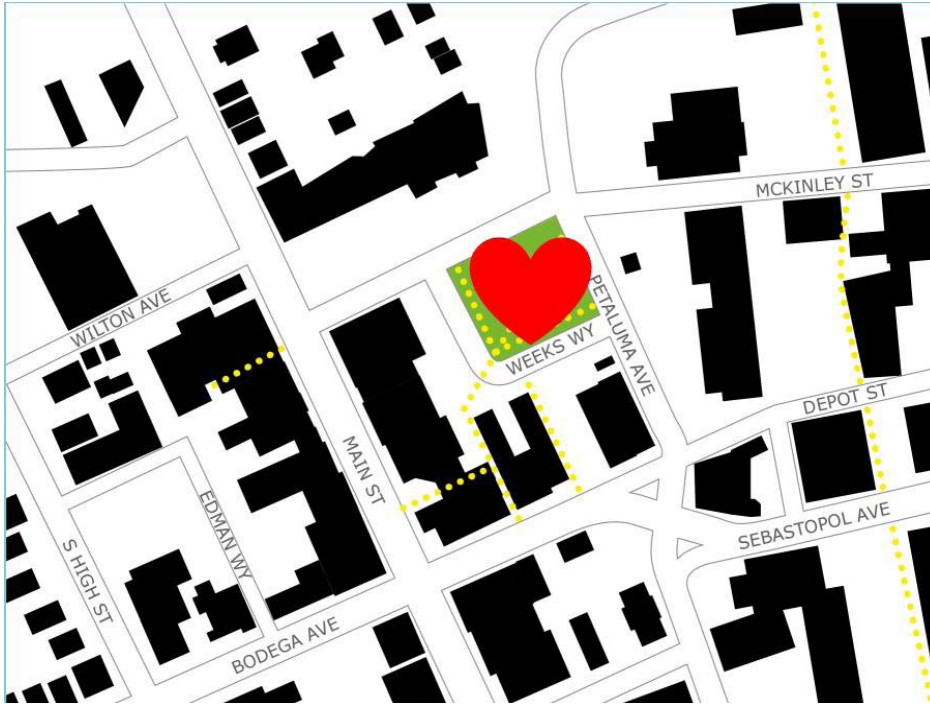
they are reportedly for sale and have significant potential for redevelopment. These are the subject of some of our design and process recommendations.

Lastly there is the parcel at the corner of South Main Street and Burnett Street, which is formed in part by the former railroad right of way. The parcel is currently used as a parking lot and is across from the terminus of the Joe Rodota Trail. It is an important gateway and transition to the city center identified for drivers, pedestrians and bikers. In this situation, the parcel provides an opportunity for temporary activities that could create a 'festival' atmosphere and advertisement for other commercial and public activities in the center.

## **CREATION OF A COMFORTABLE, ATTRACTIVE CENTER**

Because the structure of the center is basically good, the recommendation is to focus major urban design initiatives starting within the 'heart' of the city center. This was identified as the plaza surrounded by Weeks Way, McKinley Street and Petaluma Avenue. While the plaza itself has a well-thought layout, the street and parking activity surrounding it reduces the level of comfort within, and accessibility to the space.





The proportion of adjacent space committed to vehicles exceeds the capacity of the green space to create the perception of a linked connection, thereby isolating the space and reducing its functionality as an attractive activity center.

Three actions can transform the plaza into the heart of the city. First, traffic and parking around the plaza need to be redesigned so that instead of three conflicting activities (moving traffic, parked cars, and people) they are integrated into a vibrant unit where each activity supports the others. This approach is discussed in detail in the transportation section of this report.

Second, in order to create a more comfortable urban space, encourage the redevelopment of the buildings and businesses adjacent to Weeks Way. There

should be no 'back' doors—the businesses should front on Weeks Way Weeks Way in the same way they front on Main Street or Bodega Avenue. Attractive entrance doors, signage for businesses and wayfinding, and sheltered functions such as waste disposal should be standards for design and operation. These could be confirmed through the adoption of Design Guidelines discussed elsewhere in this report.

Finally, create a comfortable public urban space through private investment. This has been approached from several directions as indicated in the following precedent examples:

- Princeton, New Jersey is an historic town (George Washington really did sleep there). The town center's plaza is Palmer Square, which is located off the main street, similar to the situation of Sebastopol's plaza. Palmer Square is a small public plaza fronted directly on two sides with buildings and on the other two sides with streets. However, the streets around Palmer Square are fronted with mixed use buildings and parking is located behind the buildings and does not face the plaza.
- Another more urban example is Post Office Square in Boston. While much larger, the relationship of the public space to the surrounding buildings is proportionate. The space is actively used by those within the buildings as well as visitors. Post Office Square was actually funded through the construction of underground parking below the Square. While Sebastopol's plaza is already improved, private investment could be directly linked to public investments including other improvements to the park. Options for directly linked private investment are described next.

## CREATION OF AN URBAN SPACE

The relationship of the plaza with the buildings on Weeks Way could also be affirmed in a similar fashion on the other two sides of the plaza facing McKinley Street and Petaluma Avenue. The two parcels that could accomplish this are the Whole Foods shopping center and the Tractor Co. property. We took a look at these two sites to see how they could be redeveloped to the mutual benefit of the businesses and the public plaza. Graphic assistance in these studies was provided by Ms. Robin Stephani.

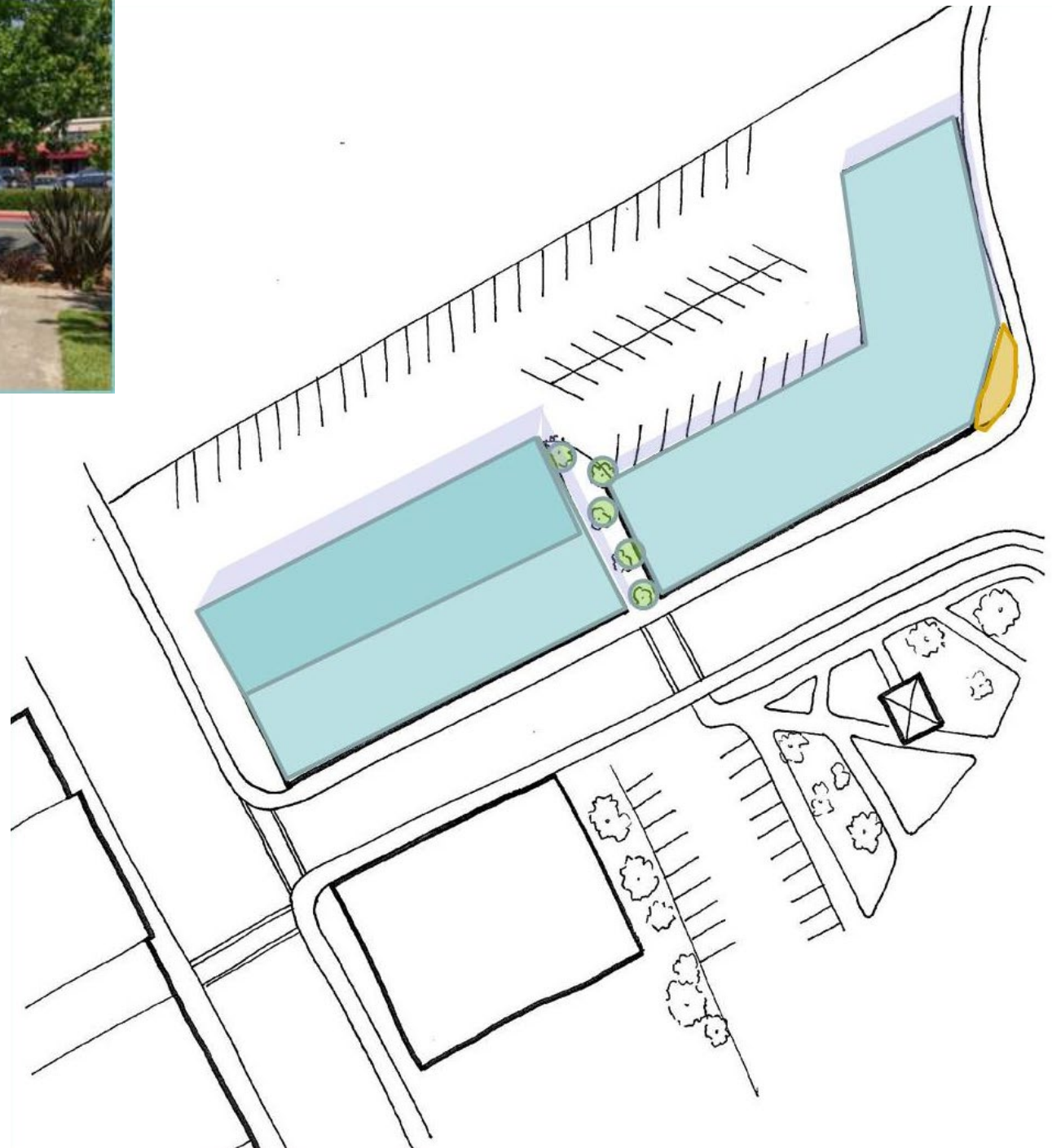


The Whole Foods center on McKinley Street is laid out as a typical suburban style center with a large parking lot that takes up half the lot and is fronting on the main travel way. As illustrated on the next page, the same amount of commercial space and parking is maintained. However, the relationship is reversed so that while the parking lot may still be accessed from the busiest travel way (Main Street) the building has a more urban relationship where the most intimate connection is to the walker instead of the car. Similar approaches could be formulated for the other major parcels identified earlier.

Our study of the Tractor Co. lot suggests that even more may be accomplished with a mixed use project on this site:

- Given a reasonable height of four stories, visually mitigated with a top-story setback that doubles as decks for top-floor residential units, the floor space could be sufficient for a market-viable project that provides public amenities.
- Under this scenario one of the public amenities would include a treed arcade along Petaluma Avenue, obtained with a substantial (10'-15') setback of the building from the front property line. Combined with the sidewalk within the right-of-way, this would provide a significant boulevard-style path framed by the building.







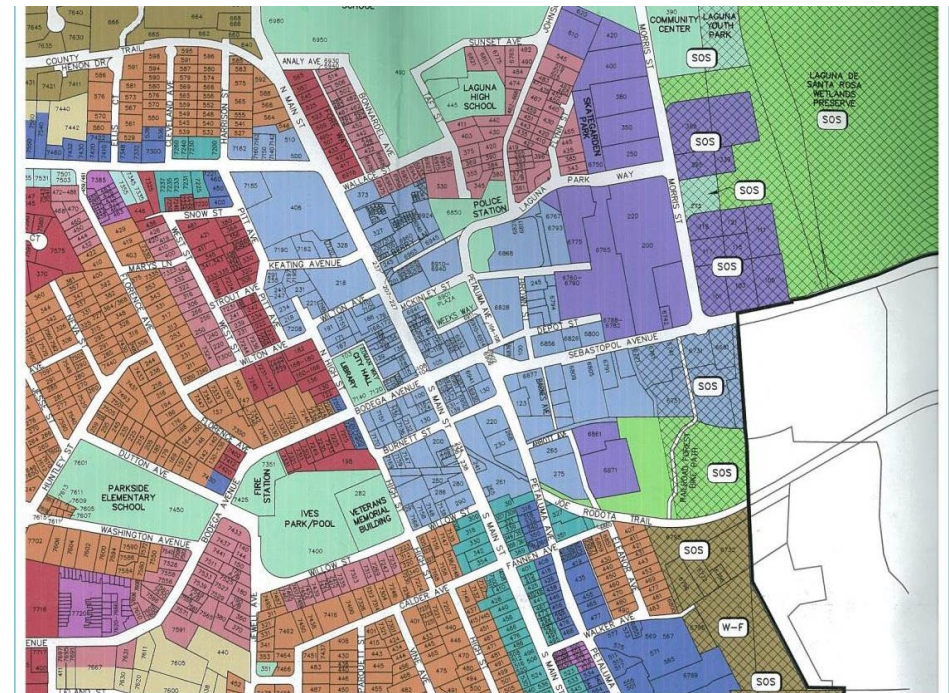
- The parking would be placed under the building and accessed from the rear of the building to maintain the character on Petaluma Avenue. Parking is reduced given the accessibility of the site to Main Street, and goods and services in the surrounding area; the indications of walkability. This also follows the general trends found elsewhere in the country.

## NATIONAL PARKING TRENDS

Typical parking requirements up to this point in the nation's car history are for two spaces per residential unit. But vehicle ownership and licenses are decreasing for the younger age groups of the U.S. population. This trend has been confirmed by development projects across the country.

The reduction in vehicle ownership, and consequent reduction in parking demand, has an important economic consideration in that the yearly cost of owning a car; payments, insurance, fuel, etc. is approximately equivalent to a mortgage value of \$100,000 meaning that property buying power increases substantially while reducing square footage required for vehicles. This is a value benefiting both the buyer and the project.

From the trends we suggest that zoning should allow a reduction to one parking space per residential unit. Developers may provide more parking if they think the market demand is there, but the city should not be encouraging more asphalt and parking than necessary



## IMPLEMENTATION

The City Zoning Map is currently acting as the future land use plan for Sebastopol. In reviewing the General Plan and the Zoning regulations and after conversing with locals about recent experiences with major project entitlement processes, we recommend these steps to define what successful development in Sebastopol would entail.

First is the need to set the legal framework for action through the land use regulations of the city. This means updating the General Plan as the long range community vision. This will include public conversations about a vision of the community in the future. Within that process we would recommend that the city:



- Define what a successful outcome to a redevelopment process and project would include; and
- Determine the level of flexibility available for developers and redevelopers to advantage their projects and still meet public goals.

Even with the recent loss of public redevelopment options by action of the state legislature, there is an opportunity to create an option for a Specific Plan, which up to this point has been the public tool used to negotiate and pre-plan major redevelopment projects. Recommended is a community-based process to define public outcomes and needs, and as quid pro quo to determine property owner/developer benefits when meeting the public requests. The result could be a planning document that clarifies the public issues and defines the successful project. Implementing this approach will help determine the public issues that could arise and the options for responding to those issues. This could reduce the risk for developers inherent in the entitlement process by identifying the most important issues to address. By reducing risk, the city can attract better developers. But there is one more step to attract the best businesses and redevelopers – marketing the city.

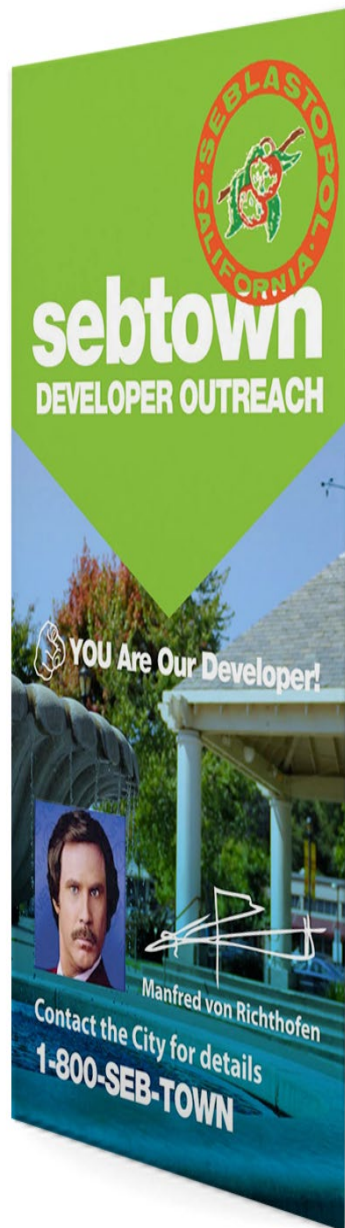
## OUTREACH AND MARKETING

Attracting the ‘right’ developers is required if the city is to achieve the kinds of development contemplated in our study. The city should take two steps in this regard. After completing the process to define success as outlined above, the city could create the marketing and outreach materials that define what the potential is in Sebastopol, and then reach out to successful businesses and developers in the region to seek their interest in committing resources to Sebastopol. The marketing materials could include:

- The context: who and what is the City of Sebastopol
- What is required: the basic requirements for a specific project in Sebastopol
- What is desired: the public amenities that would provide value to the project
- What is offered: the benefits for meeting public goals for the project
- How to proceed: summary description of the entitlement process.

The outreach should be to businesses that are successful elsewhere in the region. Importantly, this would not be to request abandoning their location and moving the business to Sebastopol. It would be to open a second or next location thereby expanding the market reach for their business.

For outreach to redevelopers, determine if the quality of an existing project shows the ability of the developer to meet city goals, and use the same approach of recognizing success elsewhere and asking for the developer’s participation in city projects.



**SEBASTOPOL WELCOMES >**

- Mix of retail, office and residential
- Live-work units
- Pedestrian friendly design
- Inviting and activated street frontage
- Street lighting
- Sustainable building; Green design (LEED)
- Public art

**TOWN OF SEBASTOPOL OFFERS >**

- Locations only yards from the City Plaza
- Adjacent recreation areas; Joe Redota Trail and Laguna de Santa Rosa.
- Easy access to major highways
- 27,000 cars passing each day
- 30 minutes to the ocean

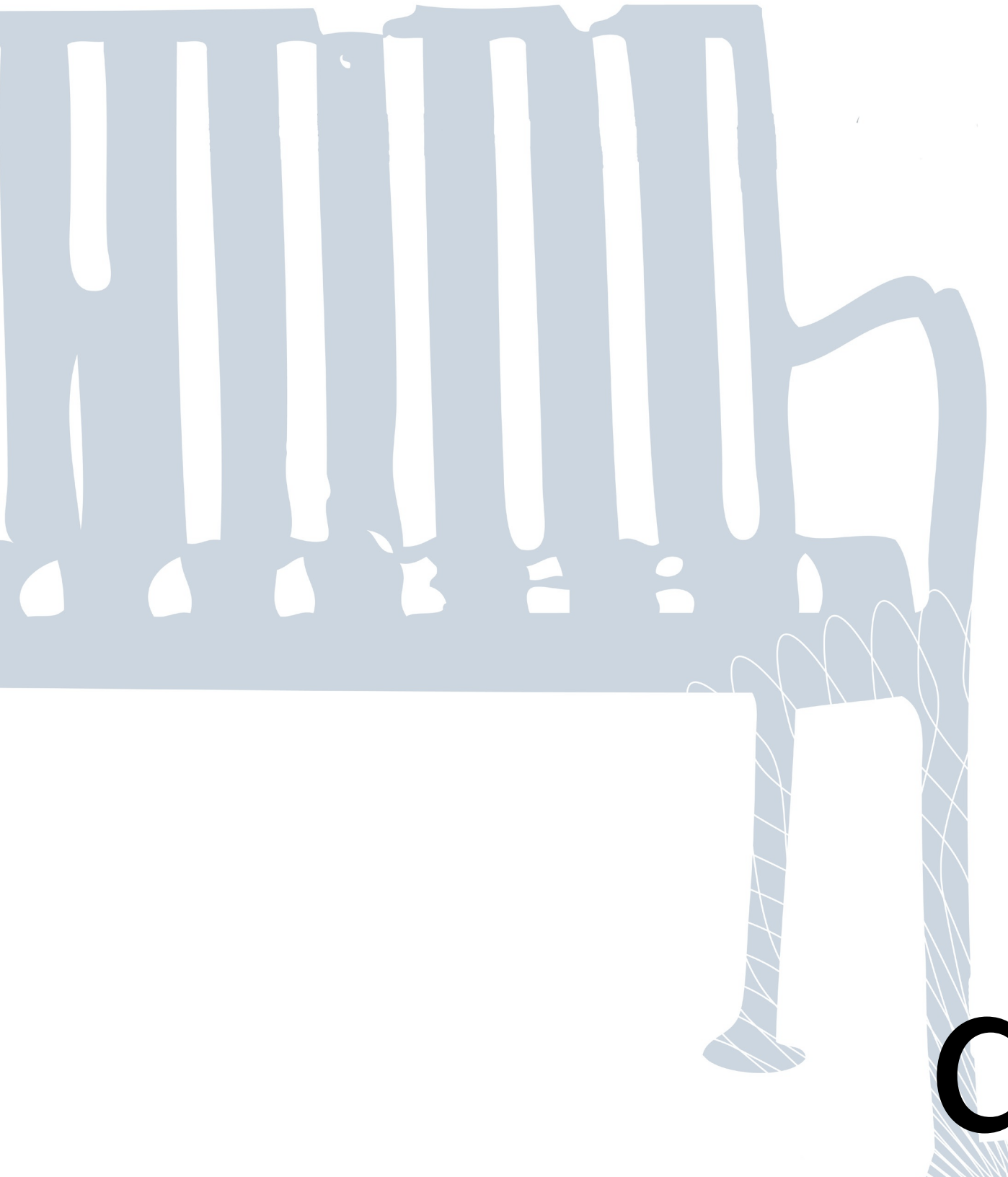
**HEALTHY COMMUNITY!**

**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL OFFERS >**

- Streamlined processes
- All entitlements
- Extra density, extra height
- Design guidelines based on community consensus
- Expedited permit process
- Clear and simple criteria used to approve developer bonuses

**MAJOR INCENTIVES!**

**FUN PEOPLE!**



urban  
design

## **RETHINKING DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Sebastopol's recent experience with contentious development projects has resulted in rethinking the City's design guidelines and the review process. The existing guidelines cover all geographic areas within the City, all zones and project types. The Design Review Board (DRB) reviews new development projects, building additions, and applications for permits including signs, lighting, and landscaping. The DRB also acts as the City's Tree Board.

Design guidelines are flexible statements that reflect the community values and expectations for development. While the zoning code includes the requirements for use, setbacks and massing, the design guidelines are the "should" statements that cover the more subjective aspects of each project. Because Sebastopol clearly values individual character and "quirkiness", Sebastopol's design guidelines should not direct developments to have a single style or character.

Design guidelines can be an important tool to frame the conversation between property owners, community members, designers and regulators about the opportunities of the site, the fit with the intended use, and the design qualities that will make the most appropriate contribution to the City. When this conversation takes place in the formulation of the guidelines themselves, project applicants can have a better idea of the type and quality of development desired by the community.

In the conversation with applicants, the City's responsibility is to create an outline of the values they wish to see enhanced, and to identify opportunity locations for new connections or other gaps that can be improved by new development. These might include missing portions of street front in the Main Street area, or pedestrian connections in need of improvement.

It is the applicant's responsibility to show that they understand the context and the opportunities, and to explain how the proposed development expresses community values and maximizes the contributions to the surrounding building fabric and public realm. Sebastopol has a wealth of character-giving elements to draw on.

## **Natural Elements and Setting**

First, Sebastopol's natural setting and its native vegetation are extraordinary. Mature oaks and redwood help define much of Sebastopol. Topography, views and proximity to creek lands are assets of some sites in the City.

## **History**

The physical form of the City stems from its history, with the legacy of the apple warehouses and trains, and the intact "main street" of the crossroads. New development can highlight the different character of each district.



## Icons

New development should not detract from the buildings or places that give the community character. There are sometimes ways that new development can emphasize the presence of these places. The church at the north end of Main Street, or the diagonal of the old railroad tracks could be highlighted as place-giving icons.

## Main Street

Sebastopol's historic Main Street district is a huge asset. Consider not only ways to keep the form and scale of this district strong, but also look for ways of creating pedestrian connections that weave the Main Street shops with the larger downtown area.

## Past and Future

The design guidelines need to both protect Sebastopol's architectural heritage, and allow for the best expressions of our time. Many communities find the discussions of design style challenging, but guidelines can help by encouraging a deeper

understanding of the sense of a place and the site opportunities, while discouraging designs that could be found anywhere.

For Sebastopol, the non-residential buildings have been quite simple in form. The interest of the Main Street buildings is largely because of their scale and the high level of interesting elements tailored to pedestrians--awnings, seating, large windows, and displays. Even for the warehouse buildings, a simple form with added human-scale elements can have a very successful result.

## Public Realm

Design guidelines can encourage developments to provide interest for people walking by and amenities to allow them to linger. Tables, chairs, landscaping, and displays not only help businesses, but offer more reasons for people to spend time Downtown. Sebastopol's long warehouse buildings create interesting elongated open spaces between the buildings.





## Sustainability

Designing for sustainability can mean fenestration and shading that responds to the path of the sun; it could mean incorporating solar panels, plentiful landscaping, rain gardens or edible plantings. One tool that other cities have found useful in bringing greenery into the urban fabric is called Green Factor. The models in Berlin, Malmo, and Seattle may be useful for Sebastopol.

## Connections

We heard that the community would like to better link the plaza with the main street stores. There are some existing conditions that could easily become pedestrian scale connections and could have their own activities. A good example is the alley on the south side of the plaza that connects through to Bodega Avenue. This alley could be a place for art pieces, planting, or small scale retail.

## NOT JUST FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

Design guidelines are not simply for private developers. Every project undertaken by the City--whether it is a civic building, policy decision, utility repair or transportation project--should be operating by the same set of values.

In thinking about what the community values, and the kind of design that will support those values, there are a number of tools that can encourage positive changes. The City can be a partner in community-based efforts to activate and improve Downtown. Actions may include public-private partnerships for simple improvements, allowing more active uses in public spaces including the right-of-way.

One major opportunity for the public sector is to reconsider the engineering standards for the right-of-way. Assuming that the current standards are visible in the Barlow, the City should reconsider requirements for road width, signage, and painted curbs. Consider more graceful solutions to meeting ADA requirements than the canary yellow truncated domes. The design "language" of the





street in Sebastopol is about cars and traffic engineering. Other jurisdictions have found much more successful approaches to narrower, sometimes curbless streets that are much more conducive to pedestrians and bicycles. An example of this is Terry Avenue North in Seattle, where a 2" curb satisfies the need to differentiate between the pedestrian zone and the space where cars are allowed. Material quality makes it feel like a place intended primarily for people rather than cars.

The same mode of thinking (people second to operations) is visible in the space adjacent to the Plaza. Dumpsters, painted stripes on asphalt, bollards and an overabundance of signage detract from the efforts of businesses to create an attractive environment.

## DESIGN FOR SEBASTOPOL'S CHARACTER

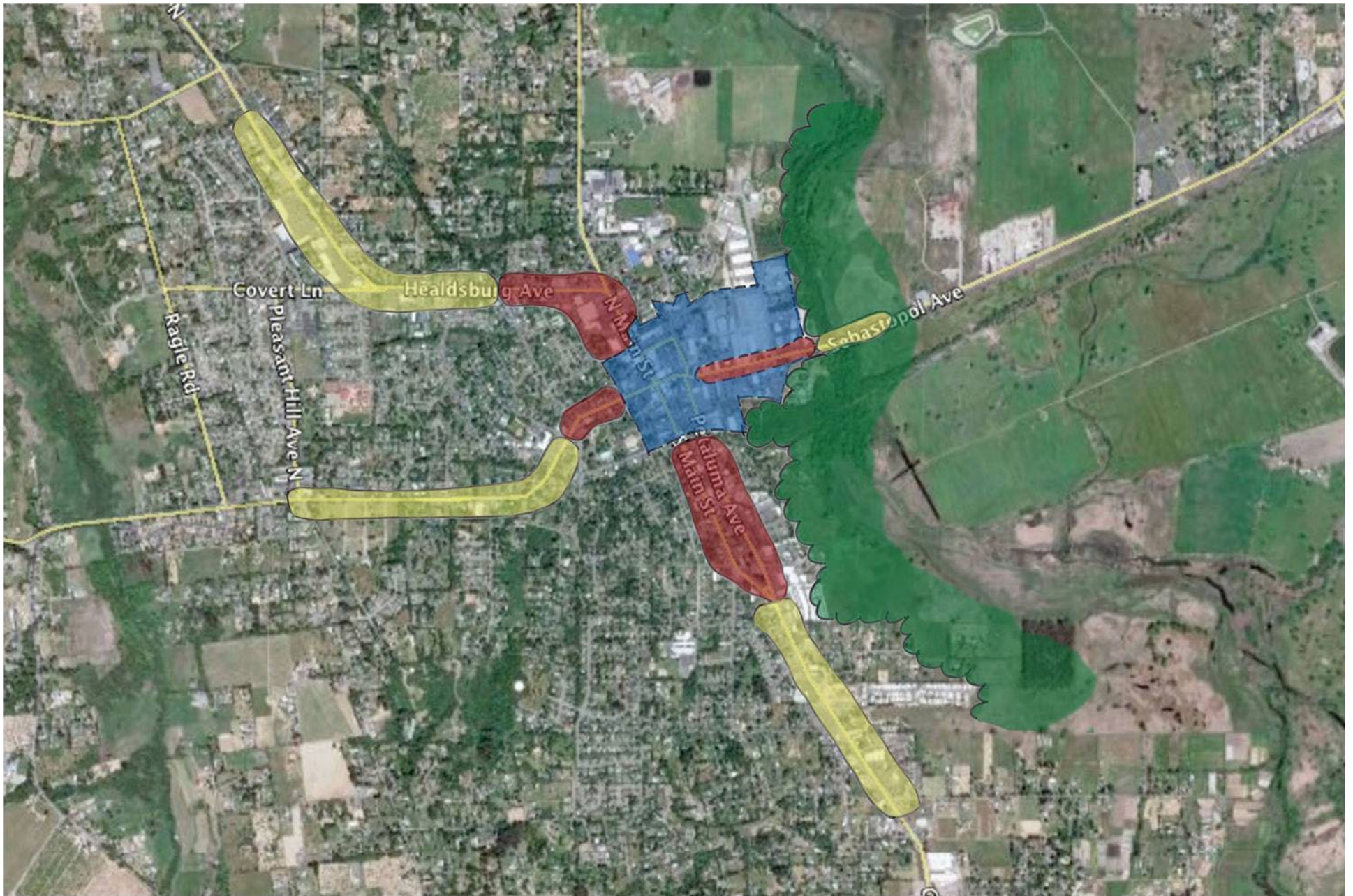
Sebastopol is extremely fortunate to have so many character-giving elements. The Barlow and efforts by Main Street merchants have built on the city's assets, but the effects could be much stronger over time. Emphasizing Sebastopol's character and

quirks will take awareness and action over time by both private property owners, businesses and the City. Some of these actions can be very simple--adding a chair or planting or piece of art in the right place can make a big difference in the use and feel of a place. While there are many places where this already happens, there are many more places to add. Encourage and challenge each other to find them.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Reorganize and expand the Design Guidelines to highlight community values.
- Tailor them to character districts: Main Street, warehouse heritage, commercial corridor, residential.
- Refine the design review process to reflect the decision-making process of design. The first meeting would be a discussion of the site potential and how the project can maximize its contribution in the design direction. The second meeting would be to confirm the direction and the execution of the design concept, including materials and details.
- Identify places of particular importance, such as gateways, icons, views, connections and other key sites. Consider the design issues that are priorities to the community for each key site.



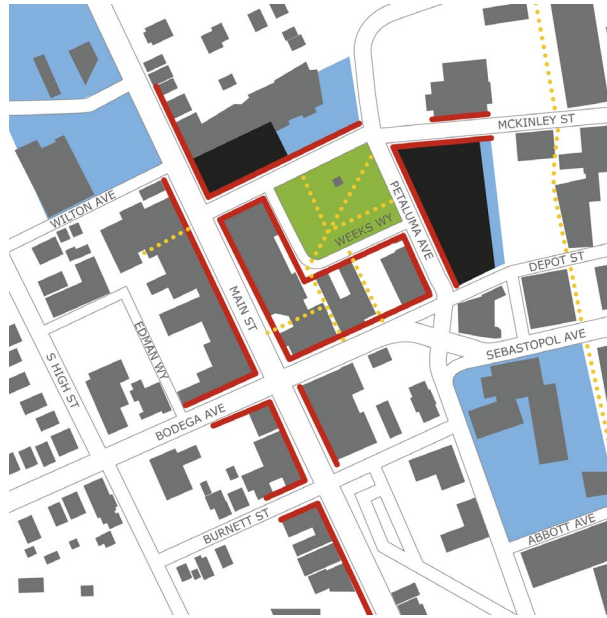


*Tailor guidelines by districts.*

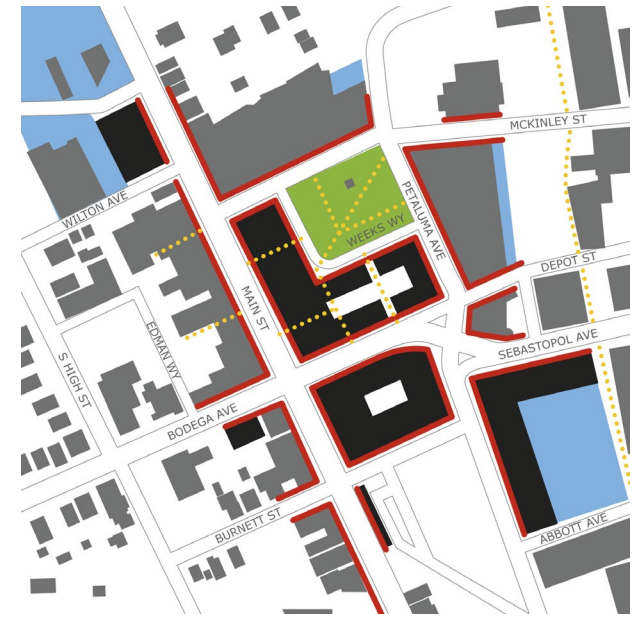




*Existing conditions.*



*Pedestrian priority in red--near term.*



*Pedestrian priority in red--longer term.*

- Identify street fronts that are high-priority pedestrian streets. Modify zoning and design guidelines to highlight walkability.
- Reconsider aspects of the zoning code that are resulting in undesired development patterns. Specifically, consider parking requirements to include maximums instead of minimums.
- Make better use of the excess asphalt between existing curbs. Many of Sebastopol's streets are wider than necessary, and there is room for either parallel or angled parking.
- Update the engineering standards for streets to reflect the priority of pedestrians and design quality.
- Pursue enforcement of long-term parking restrictions in the Downtown, with incentives for employees to park at the periphery of Downtown.
- Look for opportunities to repurpose and activate some parking areas in the heart of the Downtown by using the strategies above.
- Be very clear and unambiguous when there are minimum standards that must be met (e.g., any commercial building must have a front door facing its street frontage and, if the building is located at the intersection of two streets, the front door must face that intersection).

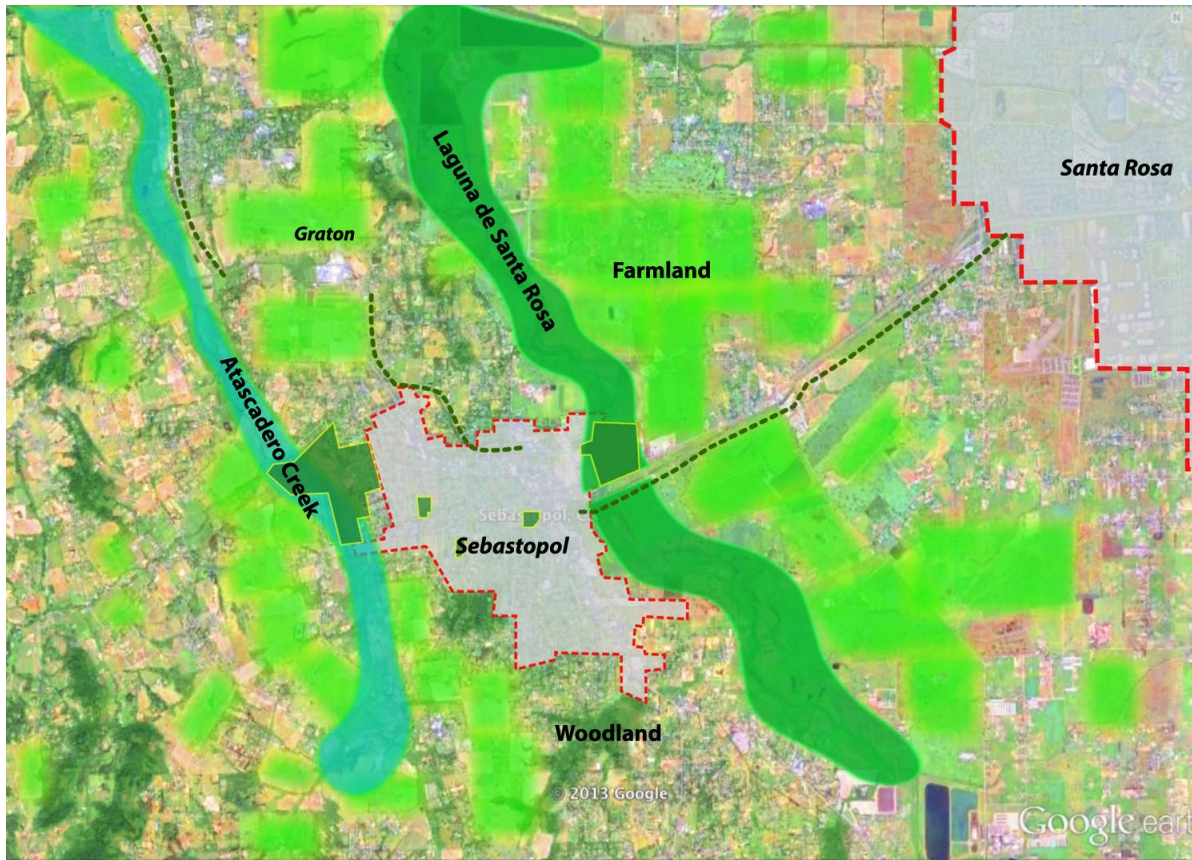


green  
infrastructure



## REGIONAL SETTING: THE CITY IN NATURE

Sebastopol is set within a natural and cultivated landscape rich in water, habitat, food, scenery, recreation, open space and agriculture – land resources that reinforce its strong ties to nature and provide important environmental services to the City (i.e. clean water, shade, etc.). The landscape also possesses a rich visual imagery that expresses the city's history and character as it moves into the future – a city in nature.



*Regional Map*

Waterways and wetlands, floodplains, (i.e. Laguna de Santa Rosa, Atascadero Creek), small woodlands and remnants of oak savanna, parks, reserves and trail corridors bound the city in every direction. Beyond this burgeoning greenbelt, fields and vineyards, historic and more modern farms and orchards, and rural roadways

cover the middle ground and foothills, setting the city in the midst of a bucolic countryside that speaks to a high quality of life. This setting reinforces the city's documented interest in developing a hardiness or resilience that emphasizes resource conservation, innovation, peace and beauty, and uniqueness in the face of change.

How can the City strengthen its sense of place? How can it bring surrounding regional resources into town in a way that connects Sebastopol with its countryside and complements its active civic and cultural life? In other words, how does Nature come into the City?

**Suggested Actions:** Continue to preserve special and critical resources that protect water, habitat and visual quality. Focus on your resource base, as opposed to economic, market or political pressures, as the framework upon which to acquire or restore lands that will bring regional resources into the City. For example:

- Restore the cement factory site on Morris to Laguna Santa Rosa habitat in order to create a continuous green edge, as much as possible, along the east end of town.

- Connect the Barlow and the Laguna via a greenway crossing.
- Develop a visually strong safe pedestrian and bike crossing from the Laguna to the Rodota Trail corridor both across and under Highway 12.
- Connect the West Side Trail into Ragle Regional Park via an off road trail corridor.
- Acquire and/or designate protected areas, riparian and other habitat corridors especially north and south of the city to strengthen the city's existing greenbelt.

### **References:**

*Urban Greenspaces Institute*

*Mike Houck, Director*

*PO. Box 6903*

*Portland, OR 97228-6903*

*503-319-7155*

*[www.urbangreenspaces.org](http://www.urbangreenspaces.org)*

## **CITY SETTING: NATURE IN THE CITY**

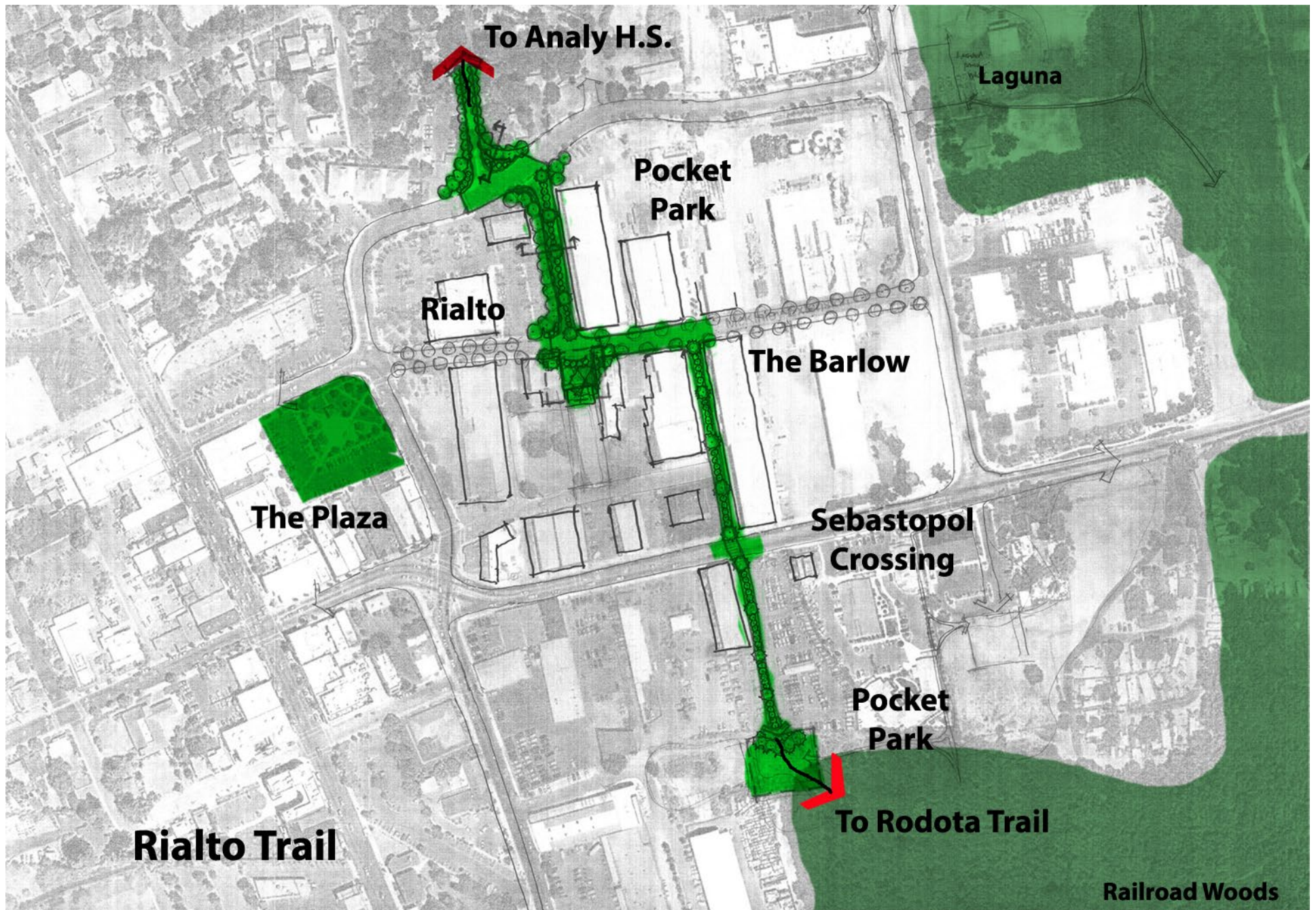
**Neighborhood Greenways:** Traffic confounds and dominates the center of Sebastopol to such an extent that it is difficult to realize that it possesses quiet lush neighborhoods. Short distances away from the noise and congestion one finds many attractive streets and alleys close to downtown where quiet walking and safe biking can take place. For example, Leland, Washington, High Street and Johnson provide pleasant pedestrian and bike experiences that could become part of a neighborhood greenway system connecting existing trails, parks, schools and churches, community centers and other civic destinations locations throughout the city. Richard Nichols



### **Street trees**

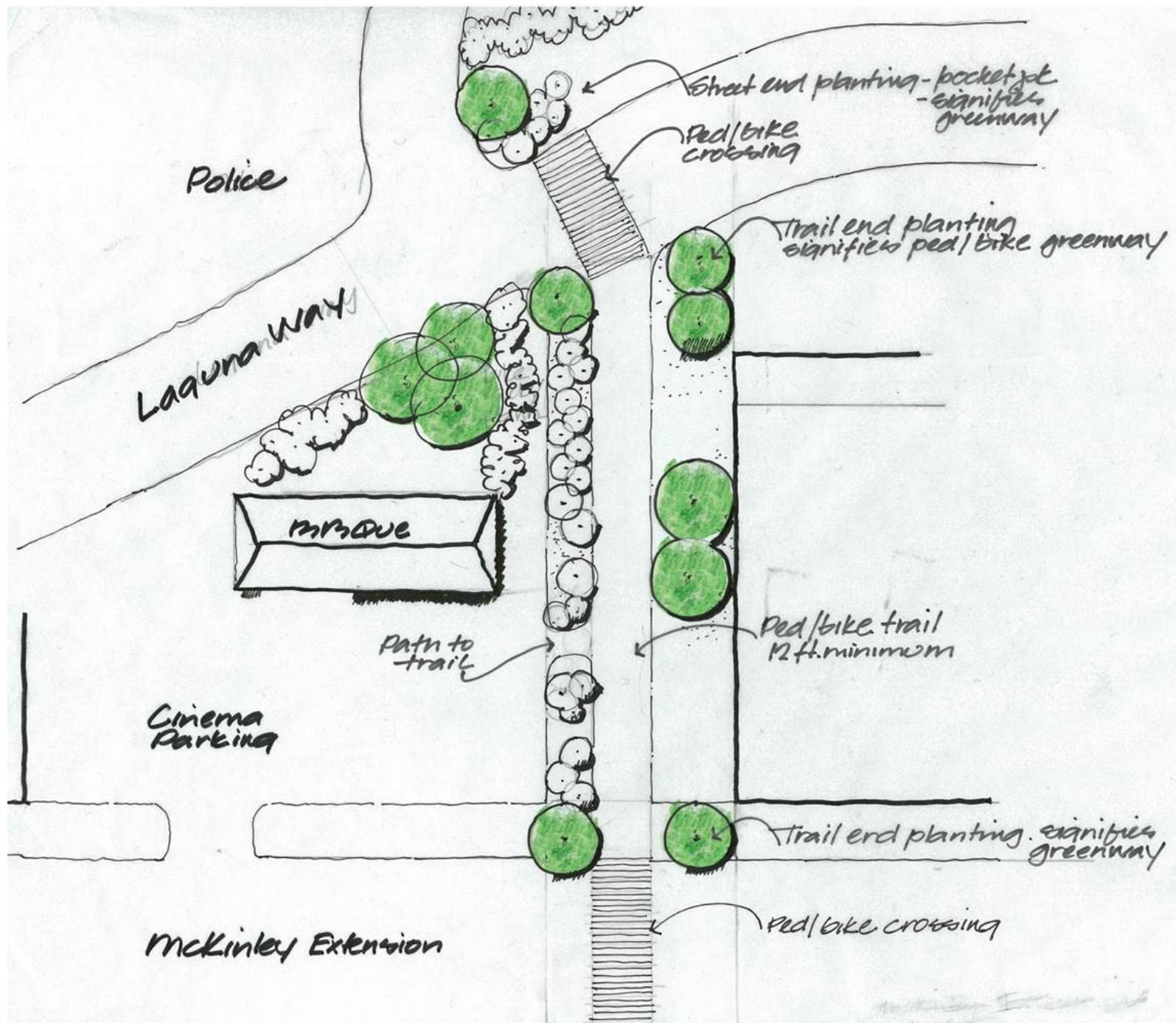
"Sebastopol Walks" also identifies potential candidates. Traffic calming devices, such as curb extensions at corners, the development of rain gardens and bioswales along street edges, the addition of street trees for shade and appearance, would signify the system as a series of green fingers through town that continue to allow residential access.



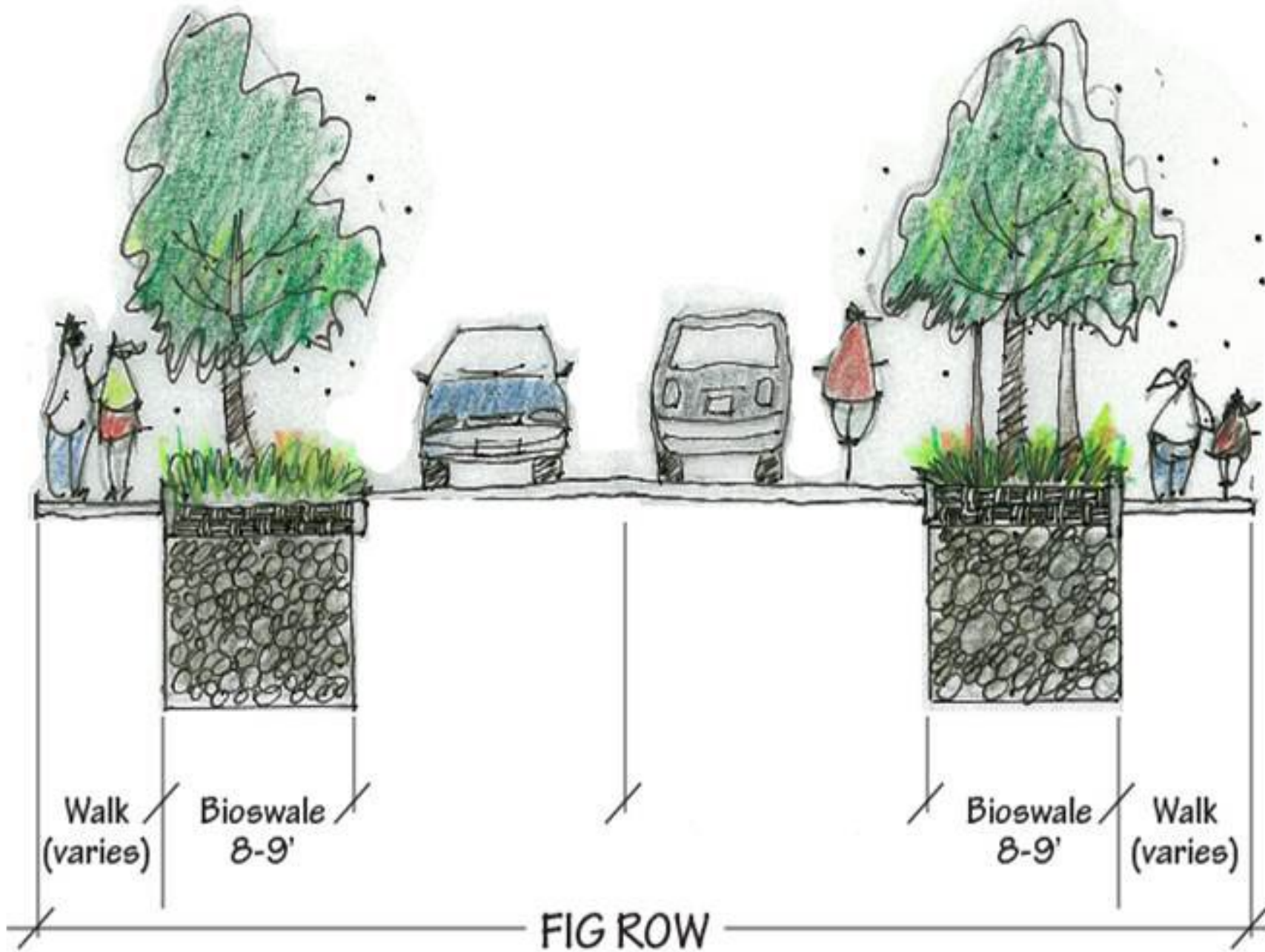


Rialto Trail Corridor Plan



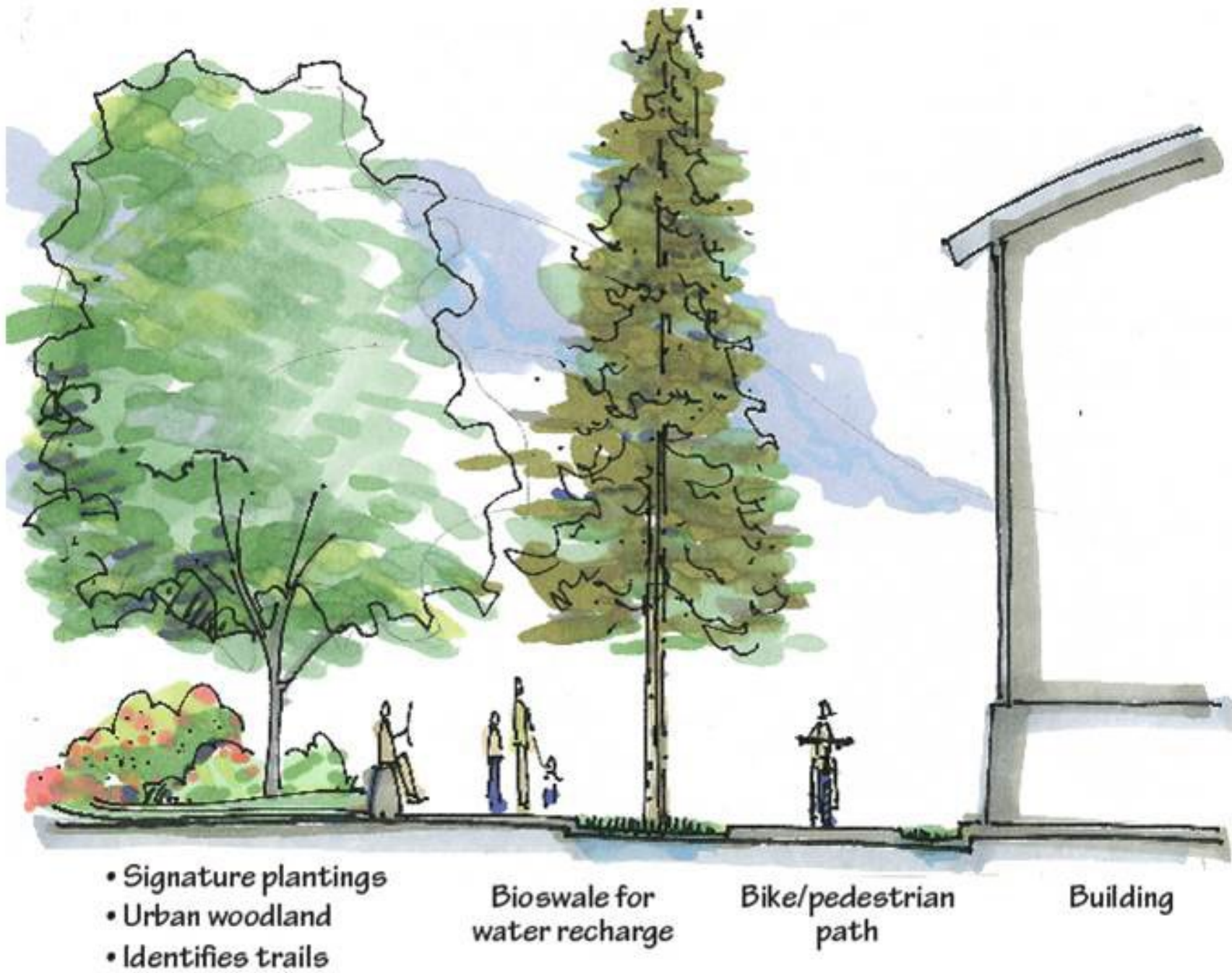


Green Streets Plan View



60' Row Section





Street Section



**‘Renature’ the cityscape.** Greening vacant lots, street ends, underused or abandoned properties (e.g. redundant parking lots, street edges, etc.) would reinforce the greenway system. Sites could be cleaned and greened with trees and ground plants to:

- Create pocket parks along trails or street ends;
- Establish neighborhood parks or community gardens in underserved areas;
- Strengthen the urban tree canopy with trees canopies, or
- Simply make attractive green islands throughout town.

This community greening would help offset urban heat islands and contribute to storm water management. It would also make for a prettier city that can increase property values, emphasize Sebastopol’s small town character and serve as a strategic approach to neighborhood or street redevelopment.



**Green Islands**

## **Suggested Actions**

- Begin identifying city streets with potential for inclusion in a neighborhood greenway system. Look for streets that are adjacent to or connect into the existing park and trail system but are narrow, quiet, treed, and within a fifteen-minute walk from Main Street or the Barlow.
- Begin identifying quiet streets that could accommodate rain gardens (bioswales) additional street trees and curb bump outs for safe pedestrian crossings.
- Begin to identify empty or underused lots in the downtown area that could be planted, even temporarily.
- Identify areas in town that need park land or vacant land restoration.
- Complete the Rodota Trail connection into Ives Park.
- Develop a greenway connection into Luther Burbank Farm and Sebastopol Memorial Lawn Cemetery.

## **References:**

*Seattle Neighborhood Greenways*

<http://seattlegreenways.org>

*Portland Bureau of Environmental Services*

*Tom Liptan, Landscape Architect*

*1120 SW 5th Avenue, Suite 1000*

*Portland, OR 97204-3713 503-823-7740*

[www.portlandoregon.gov/bes](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes)



Bike/pedestrian  
trail

Pocket Park  
• Signature plantings  
• Urban woodland



*Philadelphia Green*

*Pennsylvania Horticultural Society*

*100 N. 20th Street, 5th Floor*

*Philadelphia, PA 19103*

*215-988-8810*

*[www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org](http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org)*

*City Repair*

*PO Box 42615*

*Portland, OR 97242*

*503-235-8946*

*[www.cityrepair.org](http://www.cityrepair.org)*

## **RESIDENTIAL SETTING: THE CITY AS GARDEN**

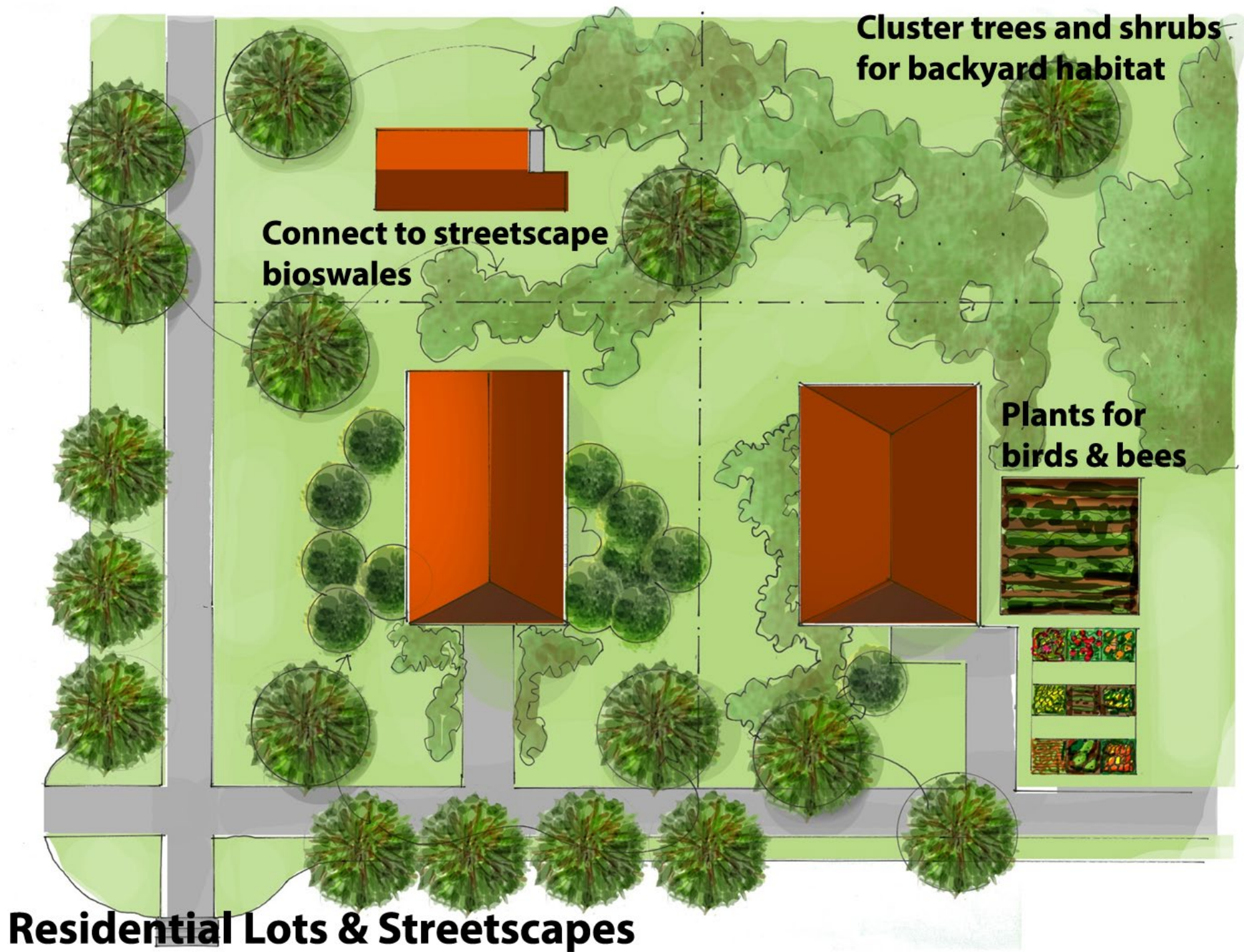
Sebastopol has a long tradition of interest in and application of horticultural science and gardening. Garden tours abound throughout the year. Private front and backyards are lush and productive with food, flowers, berries, birds, and beauty. Such places leave a strong visual impression of a city connected to its landscape setting and heritage. Continuing and strengthening this tradition expresses a commitment to civic action since individual properties have a direct effect on the public realm. This is civic horticulture and could be used to help shape the city through expanded tree-planting and food growing, care of yards belonging to individuals who are unable to tend their own gardens, or to programs that help connect youth with the natural world.

Backyard habitat development. Many neighborhoods in the city are wooded or adjacent to wooded backyards and large lots, which serve as urban habitat for birds and small mammals.. Individual property owners can expand these areas, where desired, by taking care of their trees and creating yards that attract wildlife



and connect to each other. Having a large tree canopy and properties planted with natives throughout the city contributes to storm water management and wildlife stewardship while also reinforcing the ecology systems functioning in the city.





## **Suggested Actions**

- Continue and actively celebrate the city's strong gardening tradition through newspaper articles and other media, expansion of the garden tour program and clean-up activities on local trails and in parks.
- Develop a citywide volunteer gardening program that initiates planting or community garden opportunities within neighborhoods and in the downtown area.
- Promote backyard habitat development, especially in those areas of town with strong links to existing wooded sites and corridors. Identify and distribute sources of technical and financial assistance.

## *References:*

*National Wildlife Federation, Garden for Wildlife*

*<http://www.nwf.org/certifiedwildlifehabitat>*

## **SUMMARY**

At both the cityscape and individual site scale projects that bring nature into Sebastopol would strengthen its sense of place both within the physical region and within the context of its agricultural history. It would also help translate the city's emphasis on sustainability into practical action - the development of an essential foundation of green infrastructure that interconnects its natural, cultural and ecological systems at multiple scales. The following actions will go a long way toward preparing it for long-term resilience in the face of climate change and continued growth in Sonoma County.

- Protect physical corridors and make additional connections to regional natural resources through development of a neighborhood greenway system.
- Expand the tree canopy throughout the city.
- Establish diverse plant palettes and habitats along neighborhood greenways and in individual private yards.
- Develop new green spaces throughout town for neighborhood parks, trail corridors, community gardens or simple 'renatured' places.
- Provide opportunities for individual and neighborhood action that capitalizes on local knowledge and expertise in civic horticulture, watershed management, wildlife stewardship and citizen participation.

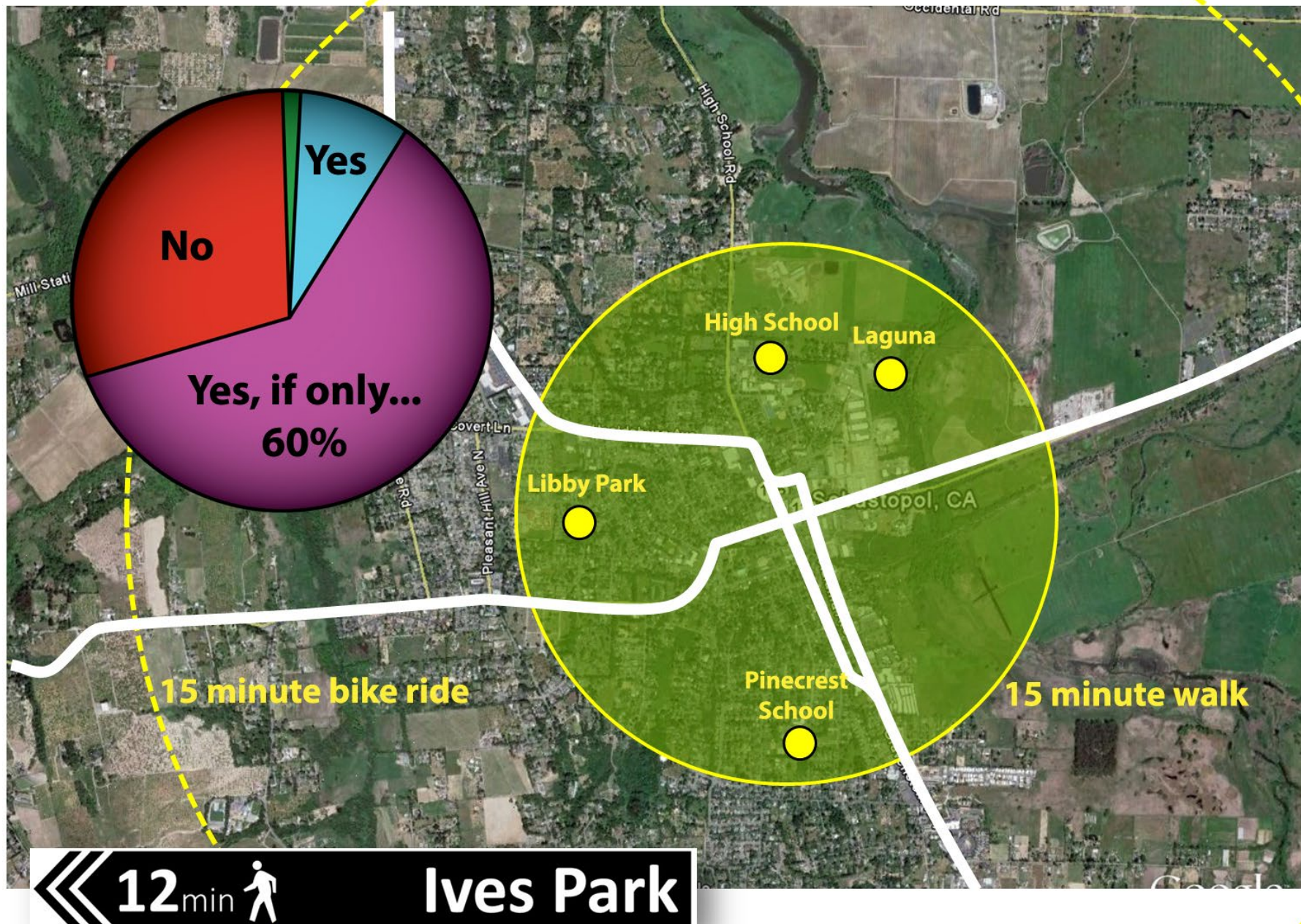


bike  
&  
pedestrian





Sebastopol is at the crossroads of trails and cycling in the region, as well as the crossroads of cars and freight.



The whole city is well within a 15 minute bike ride from the Plaza, Sebastopol's central square, and most of the city is within a 15 minute walk – if only there were safe places to walk and ride a bike. For many people, perhaps 30%, there is no interest in riding a bike. Maybe 5% will ride no matter what, or if there are minimal improvements, like the traditional bike lanes found in cities across the country.





Major destinations for walking and biking safely include the Plaza, Analy High School, Ives Park, Park Side School, the Laguna and the Joe Rodota Trail.





Major highways crosscut the center of the city, including the one-way pair.





Some trails come near the center without actually connecting.





Some extensions could make a huge difference





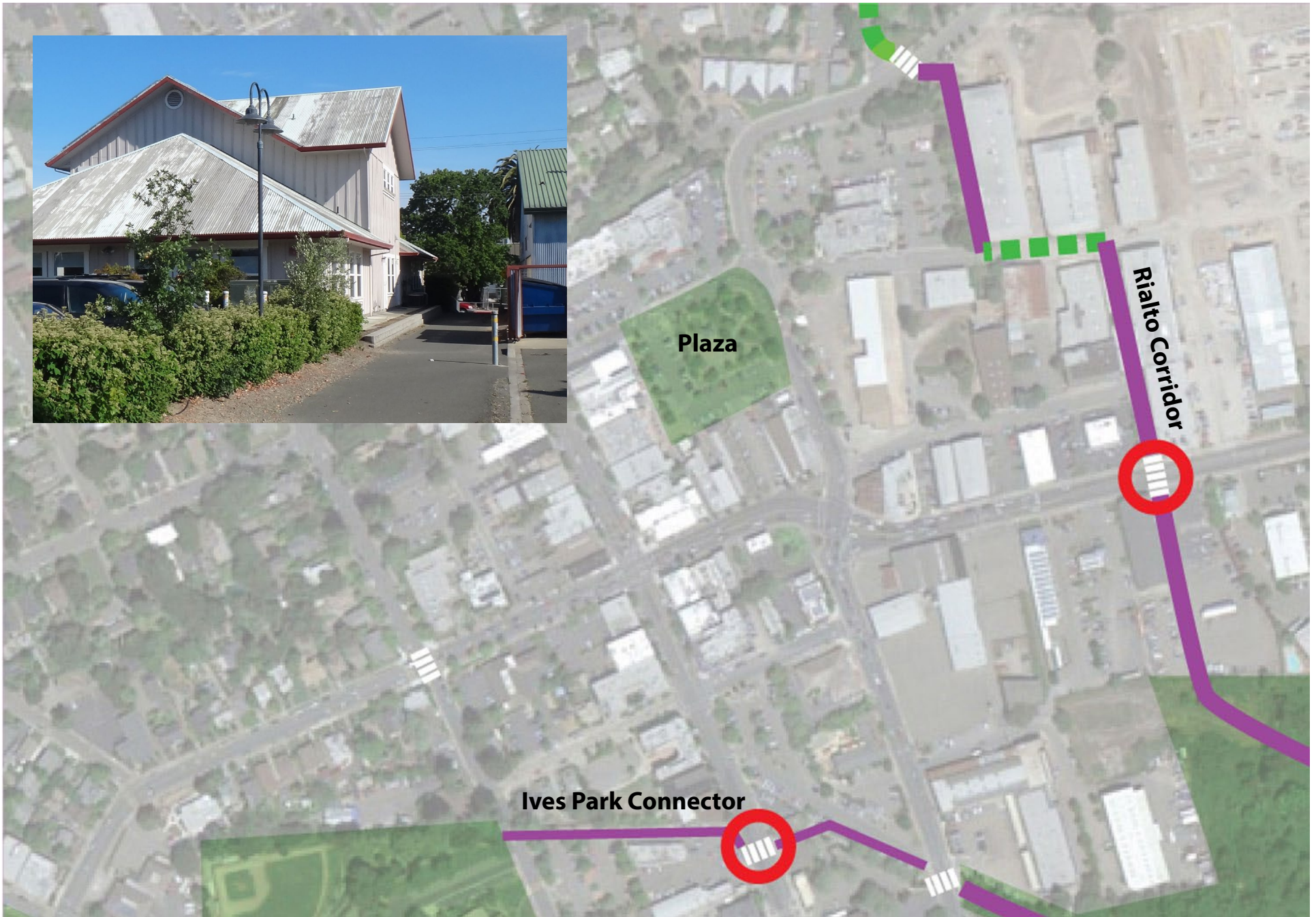
Traditional bike lanes could help connect on some of the quieter streets





And a neighborhood greenway network could bring people from every corner of the city to the Plaza and destinations in every direction





Moving in a little closer, modest improvements to a few intersections and some trail connections will make the existing trails much more functional.





A High Street neighborhood greenway with a good crossing of the highway would make a huge improvement in north-south connections from Pine Crest elementary school in the south to Analy high school up north.





### **Buffered Bike Lanes**

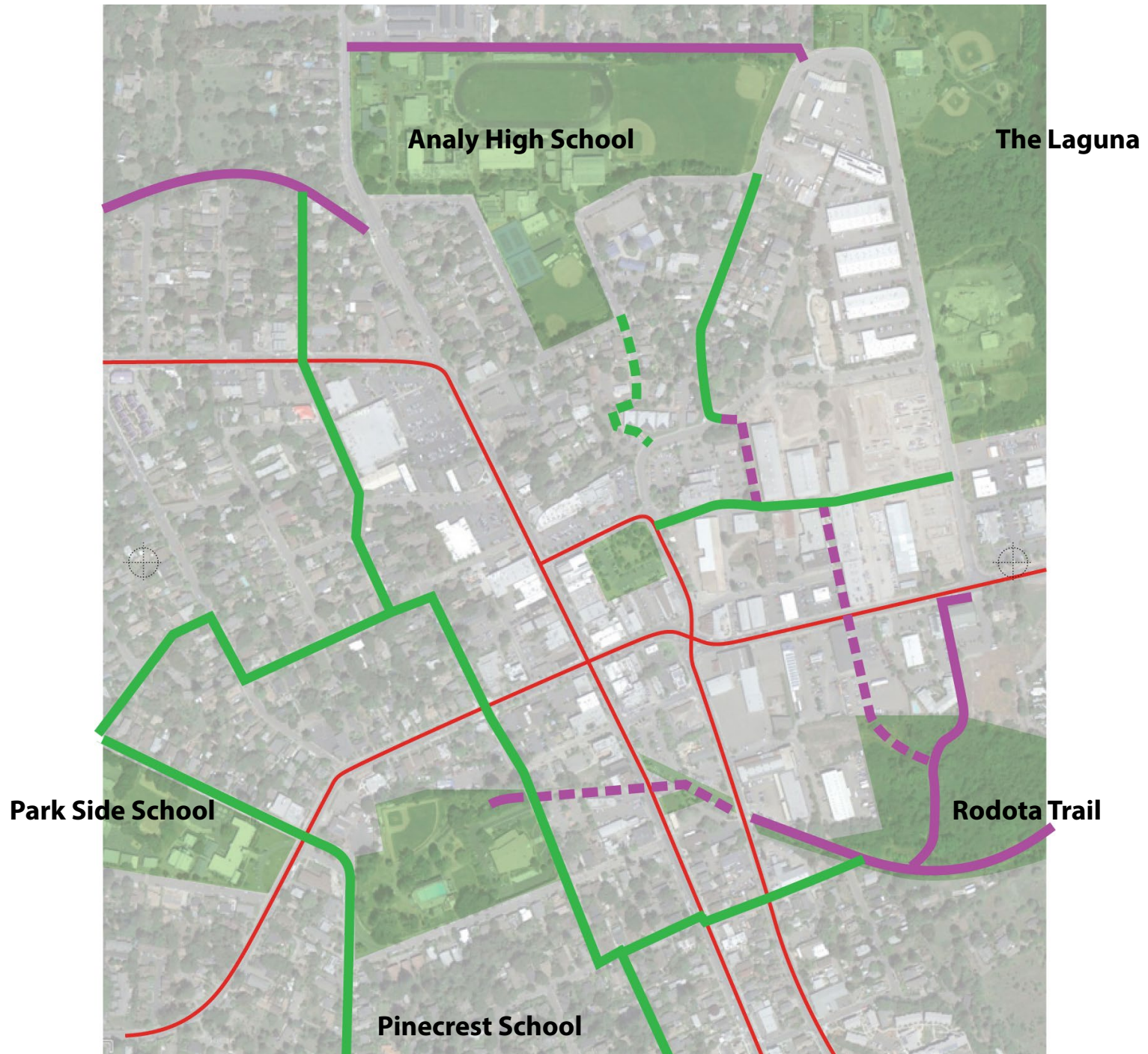
Buffered bike lanes provide slightly more security for cyclists than conventional bike lanes by adding a painted buffer that spaces cars further from the bike. These are good solutions for the highways approaching downtown, especially if there are parallel neighborhood greenway or trail alternatives.



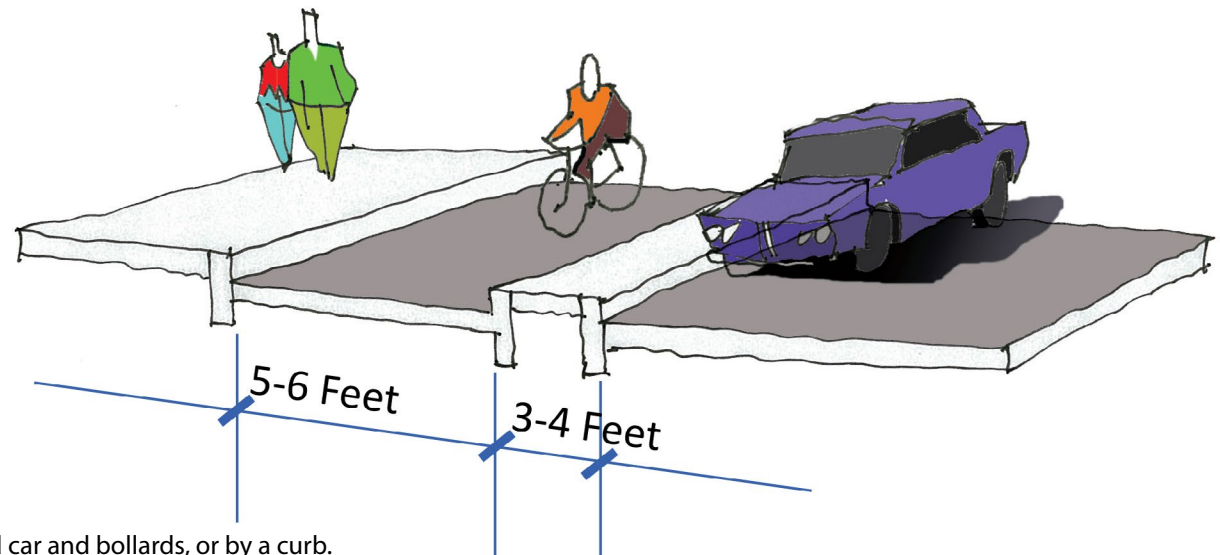
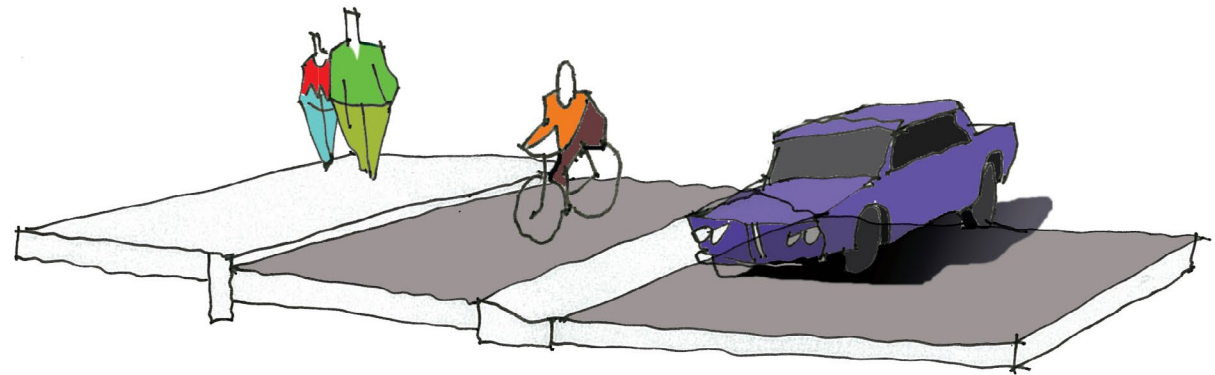
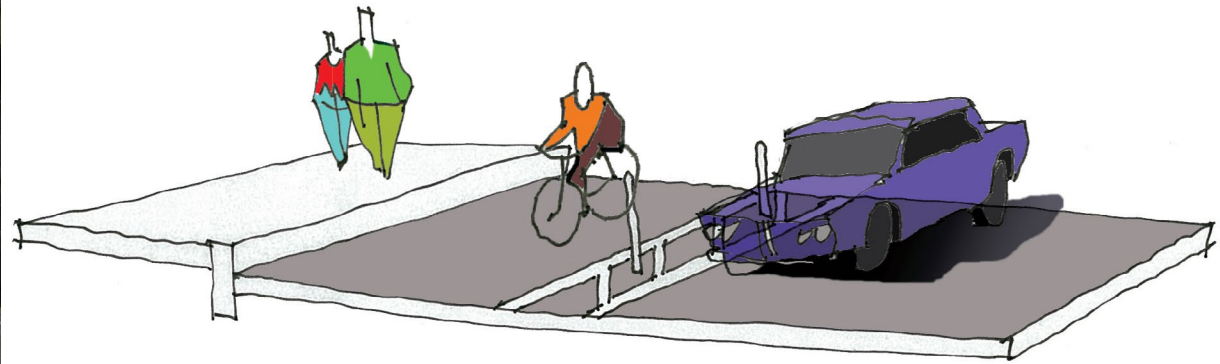


Then in the core of the city, where the most congestion occurs and parking and turning movements are the most complex, a system of cycle tracks provide opportunities for cyclists of all ages and abilities to get right to the central destinations in downtown.



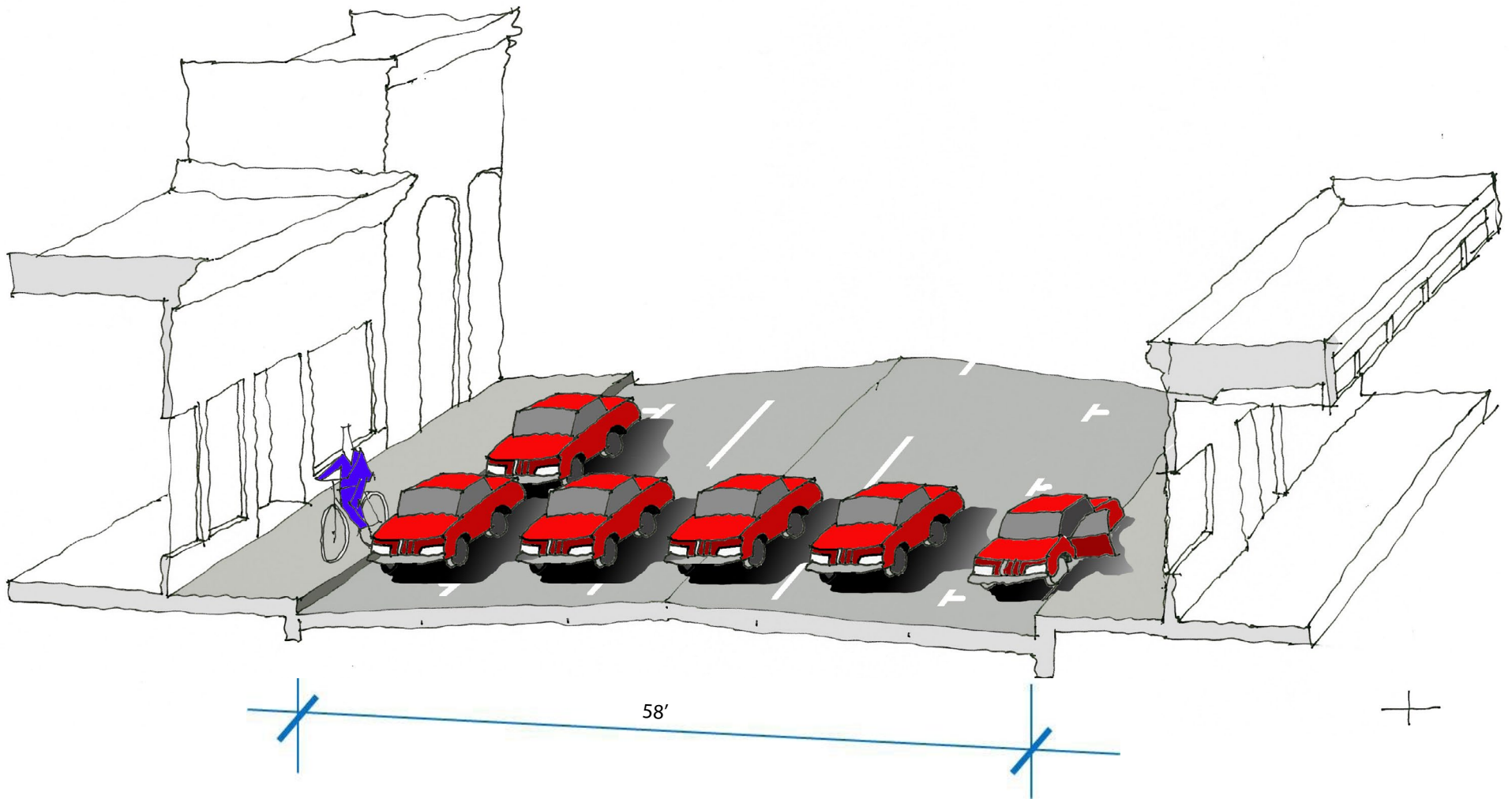


The overall network serves the whole central part of the city with a network of bikeways that are safe and accessible for everyday trips by everyday people.

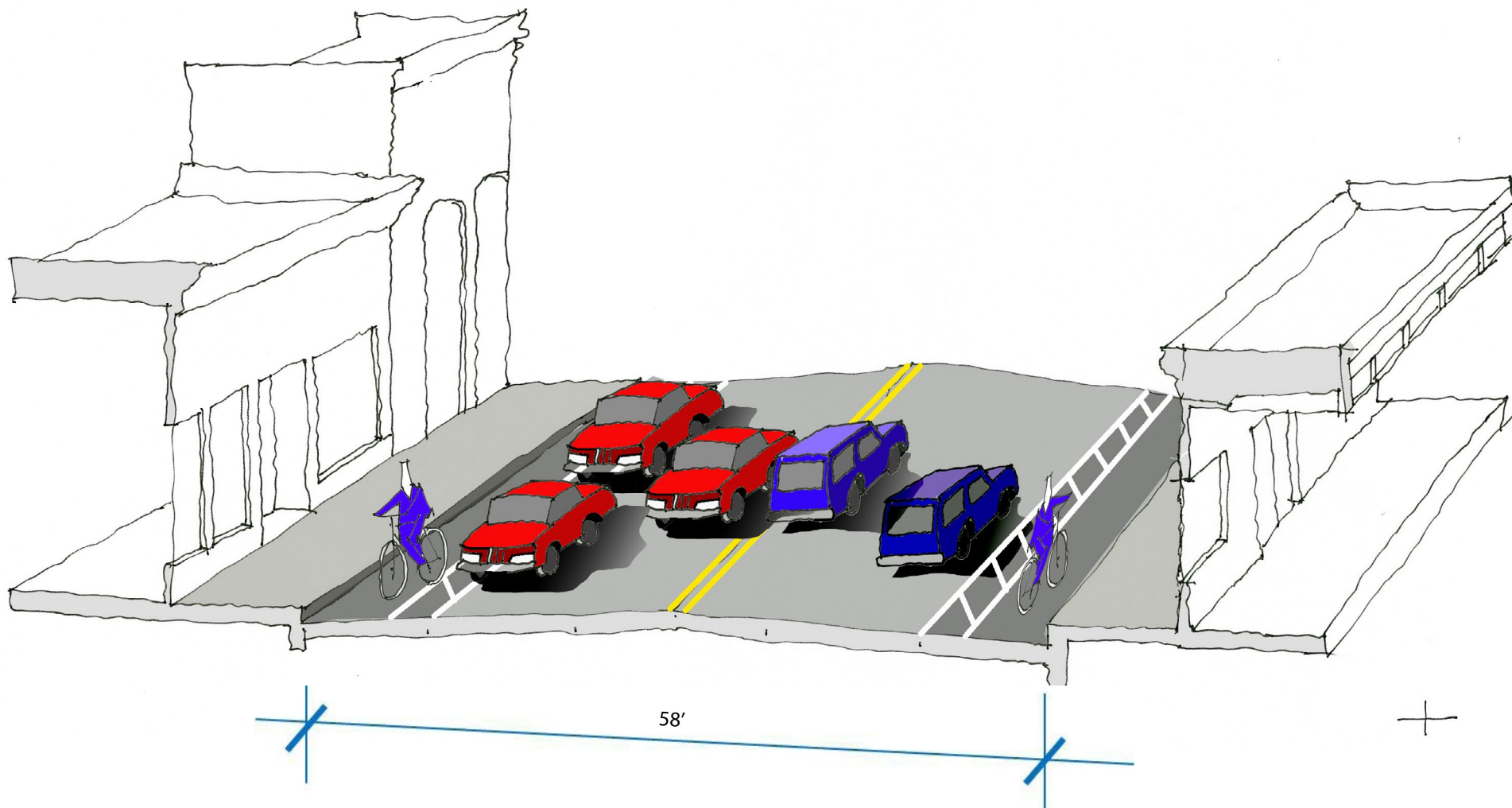


A cycle track can be separated from traffic by a parked car and bollards, or by a curb.



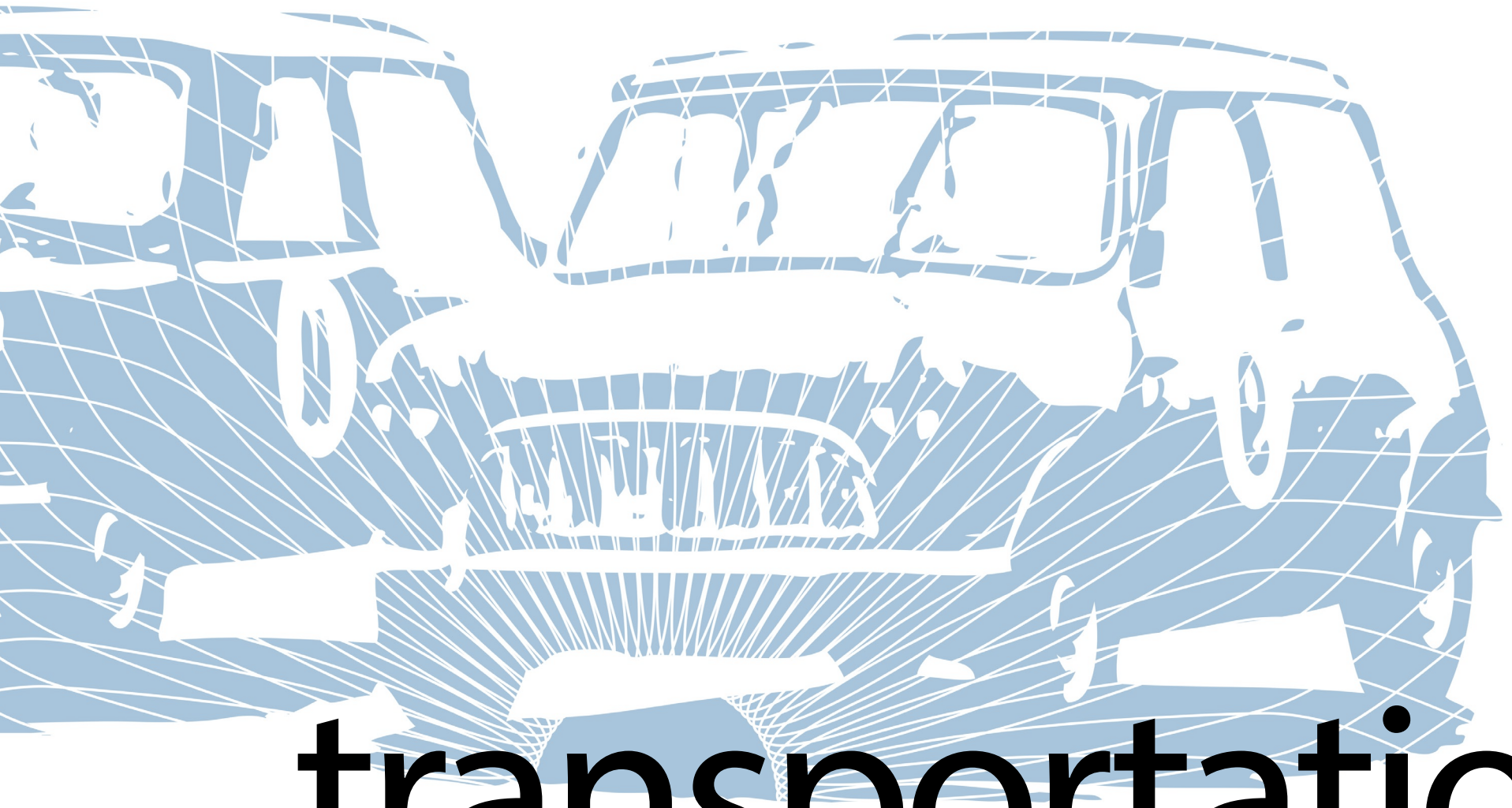


Currently, the few people that do ride through downtown often ride on the sidewalk.



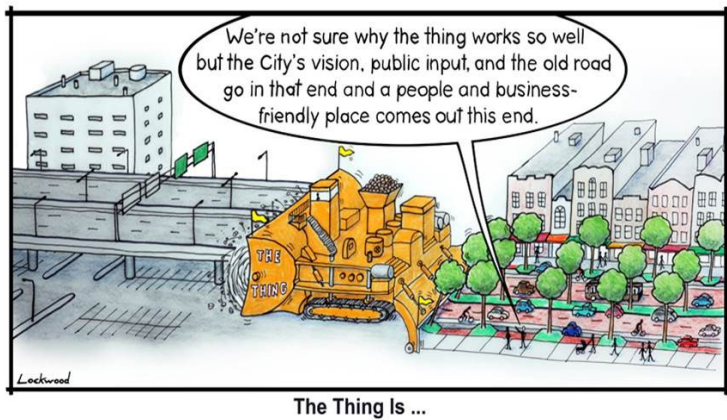
But Sebastopol's downtown streets have plenty of room for a calmer form of transportation that allows people a more relaxed access to businesses and other destinations.



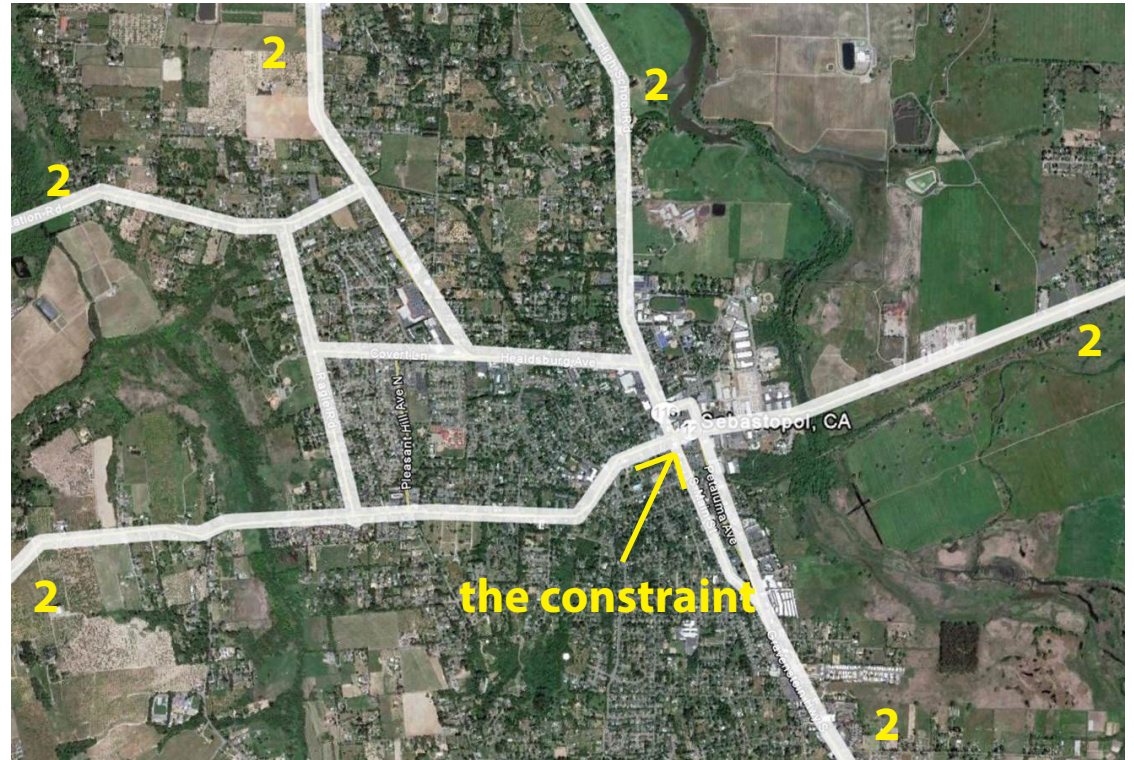


**transportation**

The overarching recommendation to the community is to envision Sebastopol as it ought to be in the long term (i.e., the “vision”), recognize the context as it is today (e.g., the limited transportation funds, the desire for a better downtown, and the insatiable ability for through traffic to use up any newly created car-carrying capacity), recognize the traditional values that the City was built on and pertain to the vision, and develop a plan to build that vision.



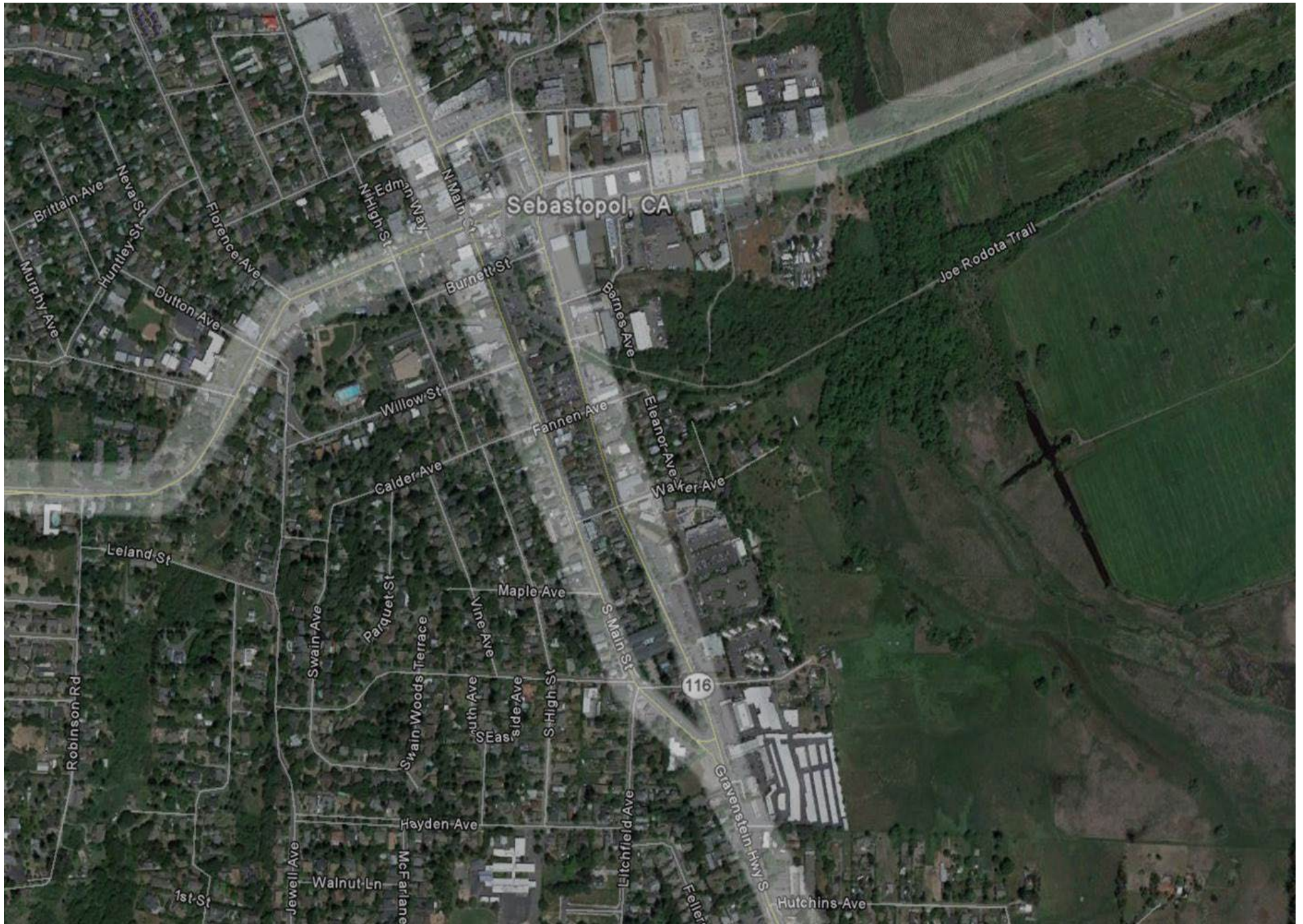
There are numerous old “farm to market” roads that lead to Sebastopol from the surrounding countryside which connect the City with the countryside and to the towns and cities beyond. They are all two-lane roads that originally came together at the confluence, in downtown Sebastopol, for the original purpose of social and economic exchange. They still serve their original purpose but have been slowly and significantly repurposed to promote and accommodate long-distance, commuter, through traffic. Because the confluence



(i.e., the intersection of Main Street and Bodega Avenue) is constrained by buildings, it could not be widened for its more modern role. Consequently, two-way streets were changed into one-way streets to accommodate faster and more voluminous through traffic. This was at the expense of the traditional qualities of the downtown (i.e., comfort, aesthetic, walkability, economic success...). Because there are at least ten lanes leading to the confluence from the sprawling areas beyond, the confluence cannot be relieved of the commuter traffic pressure through conventional means (i.e., widenings, turn prohibitions, etc.)

In both the north-south and in the east-west direction, in the vicinity of the confluence there is only one-lane in each direction. This indicates that a two-way network of street may be feasible to restore the vibrancy of the downtown.

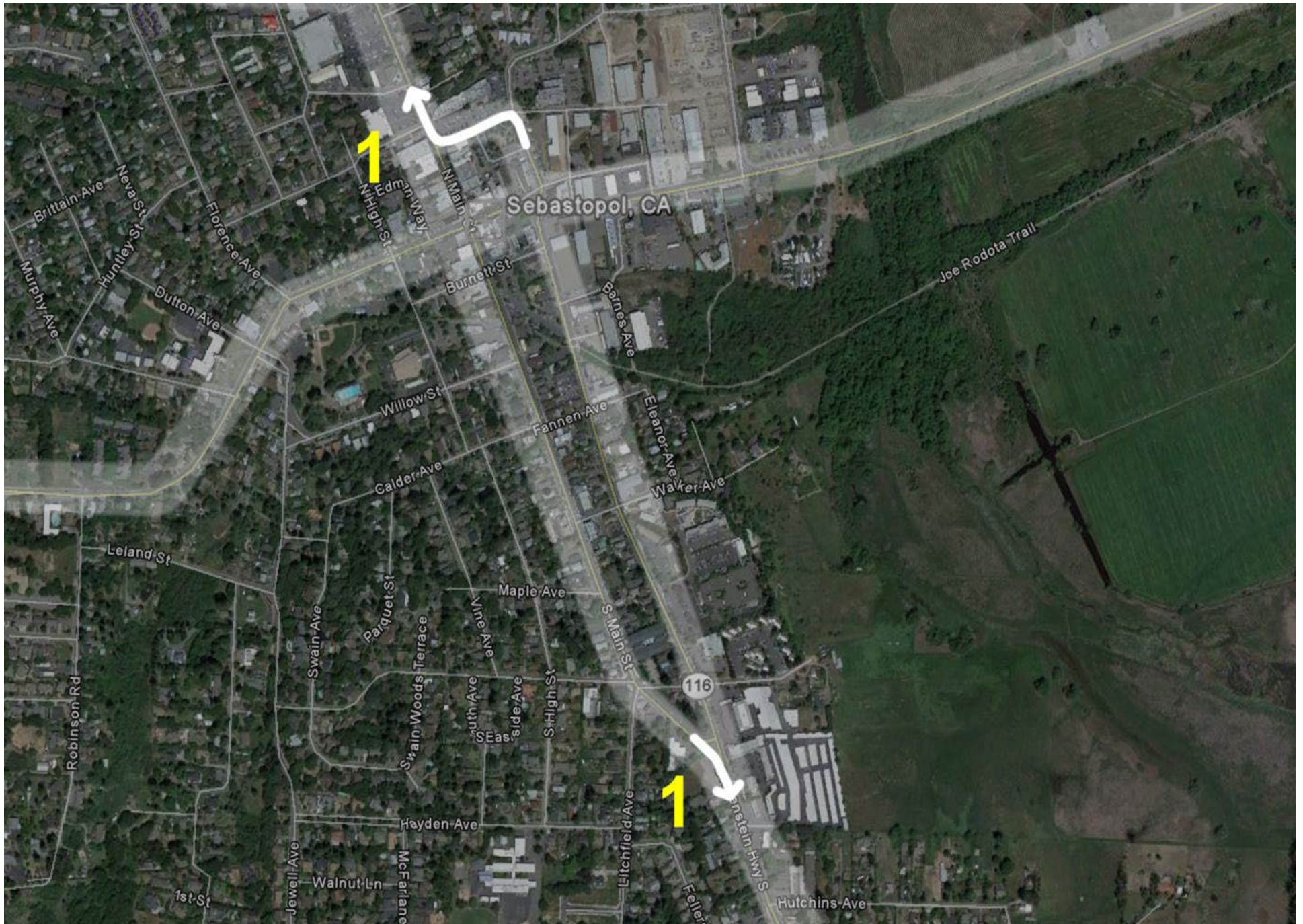








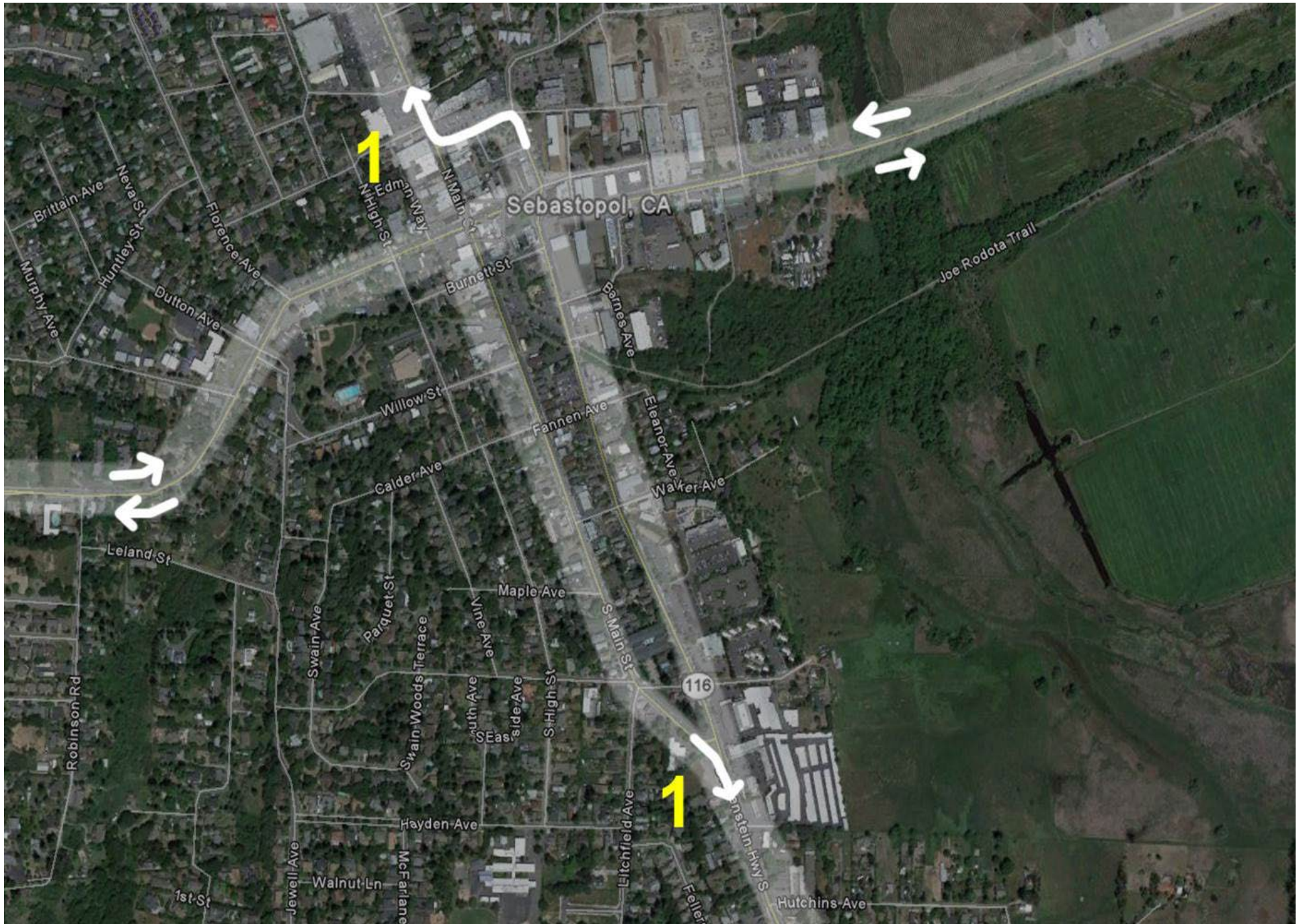




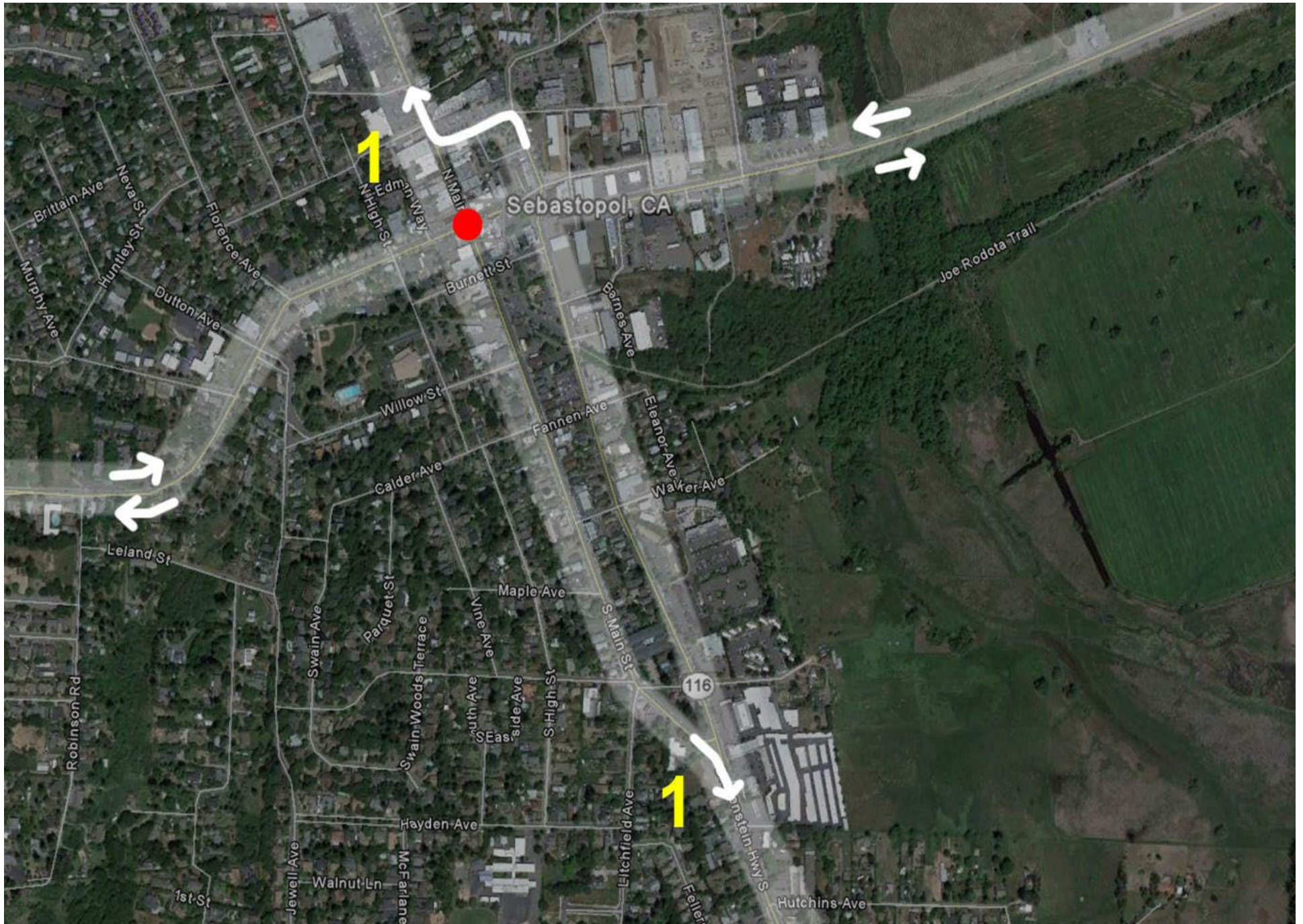














During the stakeholder meetings we heard that there was neither any money for bypasses nor any good location for bypasses. Even if there were both money and a route, a bypass is not necessarily a desirable idea; though this will not be discussed further due to it being infeasible. No possibility of a bypass is important because it impresses on all people concerned (e.g., the community, the California DOT, the business community...) that some tough conclusions and choices will have to be made, making the best use of what already exists. The option of throwing money at congestion is no longer an option.

The biggest conclusion is that congestion is no longer the choice. Downtown Sebastopol will be congested, especially in the vicinity of the constraint. The only choice is how Sebastopol deals with the congestion in terms of policy and physical change while doing what is in the City's best interests.

There are two approaches available. The first is a "Traffic First Approach" which has been the approach over the last several decades in which the motor vehicle throughput was maximized and damage occurred to the City's walkability, businesses, and character. The one-way streets, excessively wide travel lanes, excessively tall street lights, lack of street trees, etc. contributed to harming the City. Considering the sprawl that is occurring beyond the borders of the City, beating congestion is an unwinnable approach and will only harm the City further. The second approach is a "City First Approach" in which the community's vision is advanced while being cognizant of the challenge posed by the constraint at the crossroads. The latter is the recommended; to

repair much of the physical and social damage caused by the Traffic First Approach's barriers, damage to the City's identity, and its creation of uncomfortable environments for the residents, people walking, cyclists, and the customers of businesses.

From a policy perspective, Sebastopol's policy of an adopted level of service during peak hours of automobile use is a good example of a conventional Traffic First Approach. The naive idea behind the policy was that Sebastopol had the ability and desire to beat congestion at the expense of the City. That is, continue to widen the roads and alter the street network to achieve the adopted levels of service. What happens in reality is that the policy's anti-congestion intent backfires and results in worse car dependency in the region, longer average automobile trips, and more congestion. The adopted level of service suppresses both density and mix of uses in the downtown because the adopted level of service for motor vehicles cannot be met for any substantial development. Thus, the only place that development can occur is far away from the downtown, where there is less congestion. These car-dependant far-away places, known as sprawl, then generate long automobile trips that further clog up downtown Sebastopol.

A City First Approach would adopt a policy that does not require a minimum level of service for motorists during the peak hours. This rewards short trips and numerous trips in downtown. A City First Approach would allow denser development where it should be, in the downtown, not spread out over the countryside. The policy would encourage more density and more mix of land uses. It would result in shorter average

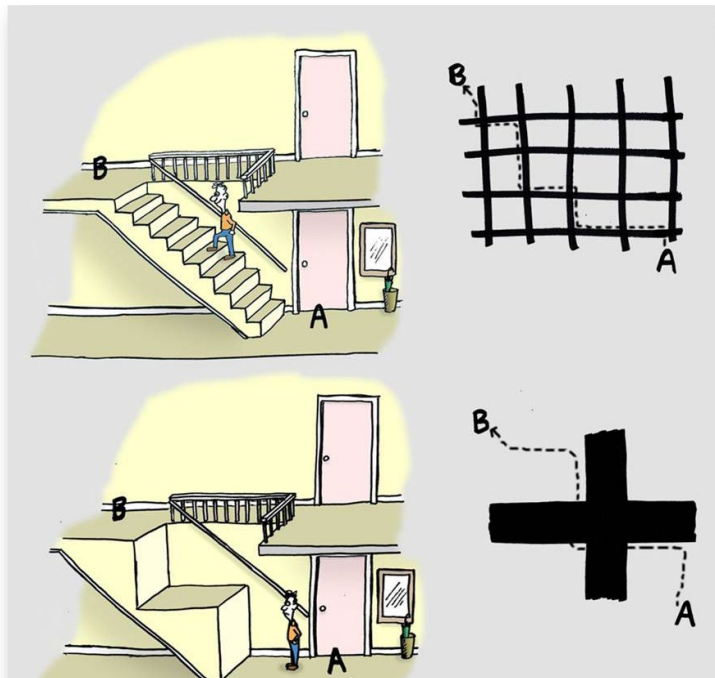
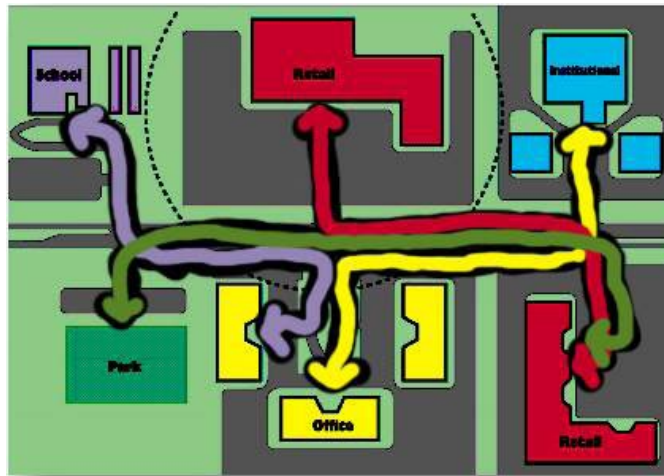
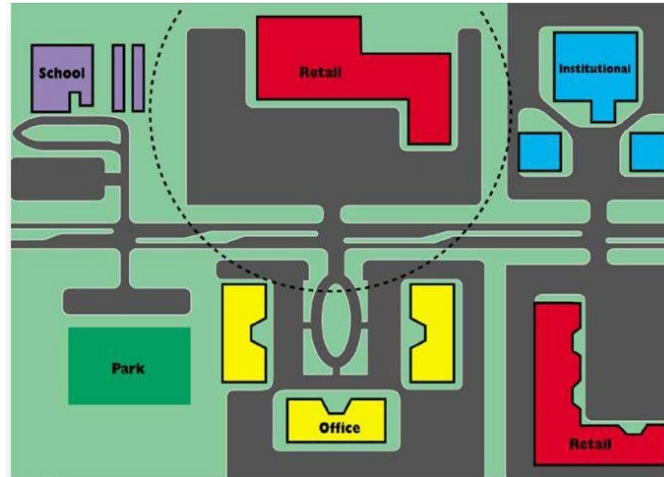
trip lengths. As the average trip length shortens, more trips can be made by walking and by bike. Transit services become increasingly feasible and effective. A concentration of many short trips in a place is also known as “vibrancy”, a key objective within the City’s vision. Walking and cycling requires comfortable and barrier-free environments, also key objectives within the vision.

Roundabouts are a type of intersection control that is not being used in the area that would likely help on several fronts. Aesthetically, roundabouts do not have the control boxes, poles, and overhead clutter as traffic signals do. So, in many contexts, roundabouts can provide aesthetic benefits. They also do not require electricity and timing. They make nice entrance features and can be used to signify a transition for one context to another (e.g., rural context to an urban context). Roundabouts have a superior safety record than traffic signals; nobody speeds up for roundabouts unlike signals when driver speed up to make it through stale green and yellow lights. Drivers’ focusing on the signals and speeding up contributes to the safety and discomfort issues at signalized intersections. Roundabouts are pedestrian-friendly, bicycle-friendly, and can easily accommodate fire trucks, school buses, and tractor trailers. Roundabout can also process a lot of traffic and reduce delays to motorists and the amount of pollution generated by idling.





When the regional road system was originally developed around Sebastopol, they were farm-to market roads with light traffic volumes. As sprawl and long distance commuting increased, traffic loads rose on the most direct routes and created traffic issues downtown. At a couple of locations, where there are routing choices that do not require through traffic to travel through downtown, the intersection control and geometries bias the traffic to go through downtown. Roundabouts could be helpful in distributing the regional traffic more evenly on the existing regional road system.



A connected street network helps land uses to be built at a human scale, like in Sebastopol, while sparse networks result in automobile-scaled development like in suburban locations outside of Sebastopol. When trips are assigned to the street network, a connected two-way street network provides routing choices, spreads traffic loads, and rewards short trips over long trips. The sparse network provides few routing choices and rewards long trips over short trips. A connected network of smaller streets is more walkable than a sparse network which results in barriers. There was some talk about removing parts of the street network. That idea is not recommended because it will reduce routing choices.

When one steps back for a minute and thinks about the traditional purpose of cities, they exist to foster efficient and effective social and economic exchange. The traditional “transportation purpose” of cities is to encourage short trip-making (i.e. bring people, goods, services, labor, entertainment, close together for the purposes of exchange). This contrasts the conventional ideas about transportation which tend to reward long trips that spread development all over the countryside, which hampers efficient and effective exchange.

Mixing land uses and density brings trip ends closer together, resulting in shorter trips. Shorter trips result in less traffic and lower infrastructure costs. For example, assume that a street has a traffic volume of 30,000 automobiles per day with an average trip length of 6 miles. Assume that the average trip length became 3 miles due to better land use mixing. Consequently, the average driver would travel through half as many intersections. The traffic volume would change to 15,000 automobiles per day. Half the traffic would exist with the exact same number of trips and same amount of social and economic exchange. Extrapolated over a city or a region, reducing average trip lengths would have a huge effect on infrastructure needs and costs.

Again stepping back for a minute, the traditional “land use purpose” of cities is to bring the components of civic life close together for

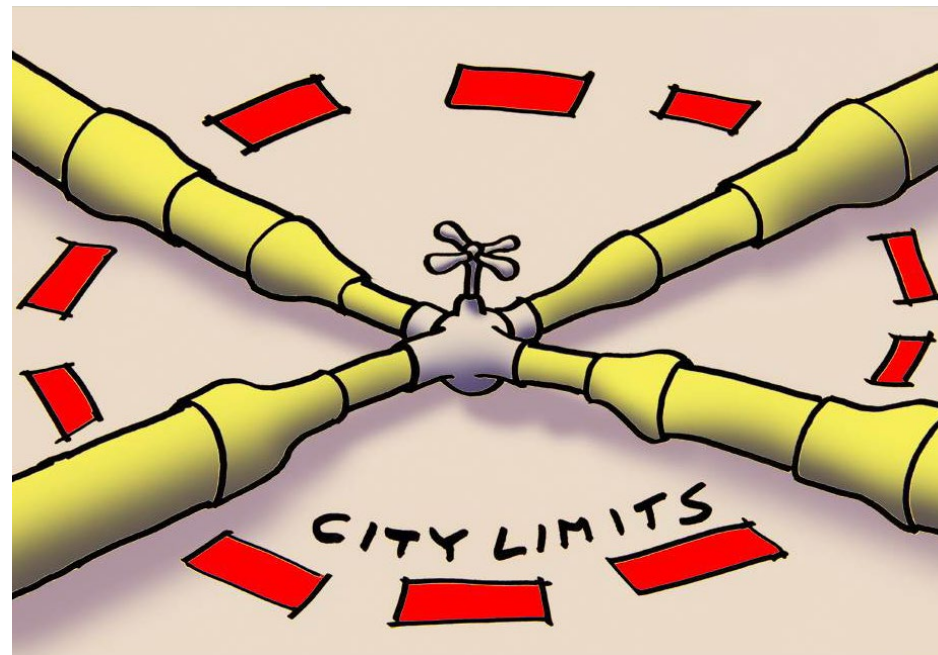
the purpose of efficient and effective exchange. Density and mixing land uses, especially in the downtown, aligns with the “land use purpose” of cities.

Richmond, Virginia, is a good example of a city that had lots of short trips and transit trips. Consequently, it had vibrancy. It historically followed the litmus test for good city planning, “Does the change reward the short trip and/or the transit trip?” The change could be a change in policy, street design, or land use. If the answer was “yes”, then the change was a good idea; if not, it was a bad idea. In 1949, Richmond changed from rewarding the short trip and the transit trip to modernist ideas about transportation which rewarded long trips. Consequently, city’s vibrancy was lost over time and replaced by lots of long-distance commuting. As a result, the downtown declined in many ways. Even being a capital city with two university campuses downtown was not enough to save the downtown from losing its value and its traditional role of providing identity, pride, and economic and social exchange. The trend of rewarding the long trip over the short trip is present in Sebastopol. If it continues, the downtown will diminish further, let alone reach its potential. To enhance the downtown and city, traditional values will need to be the priority.



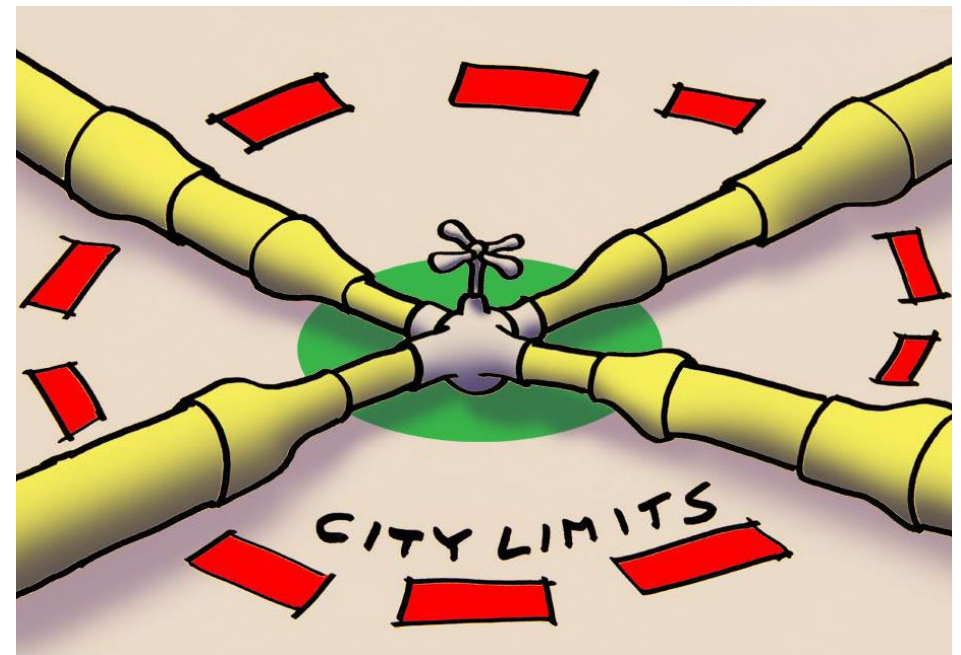


The cartoon represents Sebastopol, with the constraint (the tap) in the middle and a representation of the network of the framework streets (the pipes), bringing more traffic to the constraint than can ever be reasonably handled. Because the constraint is not going away, the streets approaching the constraint should be “right-sized” and otherwise altered so that each contributing street has a car-carrying capacity consistent to what can be processed at the constraint. Rushing high volumes of traffic up to the constraint where it sits in long queues is not nice for the nearby residences and businesses nor is it pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists. It doesn’t even make for a high quality driver experience. It does, however, place an unpleasant and ongoing focus on the constraint along the naïve lines that if it could be removed, then all would be well. In sum, it is not health of the City.



As motorists enter the City limits, there should be an entrance feature to indicate that they are now in a City with its own identity. A change, in the cross-section of the street (e.g., narrow lane widths, edge treatments, on-street parking, bulbouts, etc.), should follow the entrance feature to reinforce the expected driver behaviors (e.g., slower speeds, watch for pedestrians, etc.). Where feasible, the car-carrying capacity of the streets should be lowered at the edges of the City as to not exceed the constraint within the City (i.e. don't have big pipes leading to small pipes). There would be no difference to the volumes but the qualities along the street would be enhanced as would the City.

Some people advocate a strategy of low density development in the downtown in an effort to ameliorate congestion. This is exactly the wrong strategy as was discussed



earlier. A dense and mixed-use downtown is a far more sustainable, valuable, and responsible form of development that will have far more beneficial effects on increased vibrancy, reduced automobile dependency, reduced congestion, and lower infrastructure costs. No city has ever successfully battled congestion in a sprawling regional with a low density strategy in its downtown.

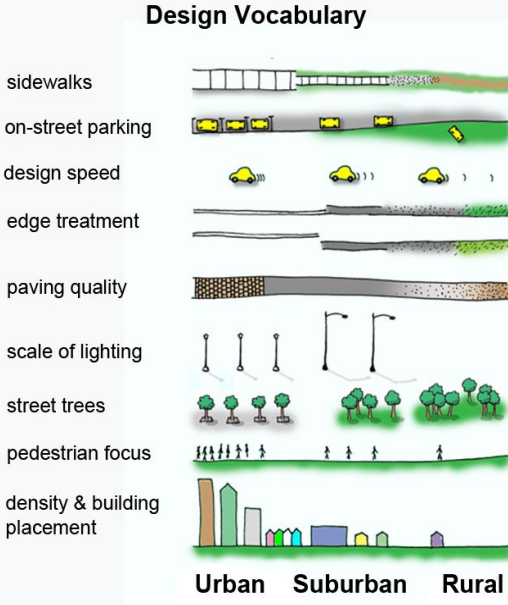
The design of Petaluma Avenue and Main Street promote excessive and unsafe speeds and aggressive driver behavior such as weaving. The lanes are too wide and too numerous and their scale is extreme. The streets should be rebuilt to a more intimate, urban, walkable scale. The desired speed for motorists should be self-enforced by the design of the streets as opposed to ineffective speed limit signs with threatening messages such as “radar enforced.”

The design of the streets should respect the context. In this case, the streets should be designed with an urban design vocabulary as is indicated on the left side of the opposite diagram.



In the past, the constraint of the intersection of Main Street and Bodega Avenue was used to justify the one-way pairing of Main Street and Petaluma Avenue. The idea was to split the through traffic over two intersections to get more traffic volume through the City. The one-way street system then harmed the business environment, walkability, and cycling environment of the City. The streets should be restored to two-way operation for the social

and economic health of the City. However, this will lower the volume of automobiles that will be able to cut-through the City. Though reducing cut-through traffic would be appealing for the City, long distance commuters would object, at least in the short term until their behaviors could adapt.







Another problem with conventional strategies of rewarding long trips is that it results in higher traffic volumes and promotes unsustainable trends in markets, behaviors, and expectations. Doing the opposite is more difficult because the dependencies on long trip-making have to be managed. This has been done by forward-thinking cities such as Vancouver, Copenhagen, and Melbourne. These cities advance their priorities based on their values. They do not compromise their futures by submitting to unsustainable trends. Consequently, they have been able to grow their populations and economies while reducing their traffic and becoming nicer places to live.

To begin the restoration from the current one-way condition to the more City-friendly, two-way situation, the first stage could be two-waying the streets and only restricting





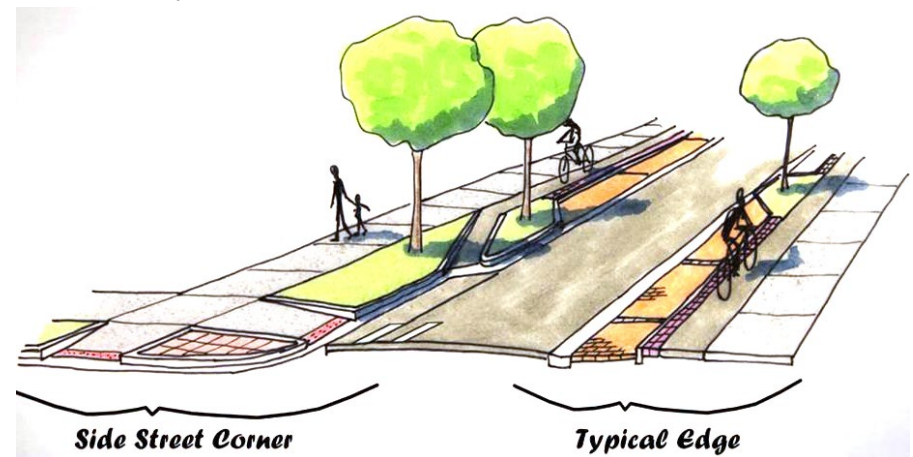
left turns at the constraint. Short signal cycles should be considered as well. Managing the restoration will require more work to figure out the best steps to restore two-way operations in the City.

The downside to a two-way system is increased congestion, at least for a while, and the fear of increased congestion. What will likely happen, in order to restore two-way operations, is that a study will be required. The study will likely employ a traffic model or simulation that will predict what will happen with different scenarios. The goal of conventional/automobile-oriented modelers will be for the traffic to “work”, which is short way of saying to provide a “reasonable” (in their minds) level of service for motorists (in other words continue with a Car First Approach). The City will need to be vigilant in pressing for a City First Approach. The key is advancing the City’s values and priorities; walkability and access (i.e., short pedestrian crossings, on-street parking, slow travel speeds, and two-way operations). Constraints on motor vehicle throughput are actually the friend of the City; the best cities and places in the world are constrained. Five desirable design policies that Sebastopol should adopt include:

- i) mandatory two-way operation of streets with two or more travel lanes; ii) two travel lanes cannot travel in the same direction on the same street within the City limits;
- iii) bulbouts are required at the ends of every on-street parking row and provide a landscaped space with a street trees them; iv) right turn lanes are prohibited; and v)
- no street of any category will be designed nor posted at a speed of greater than 30 mph.

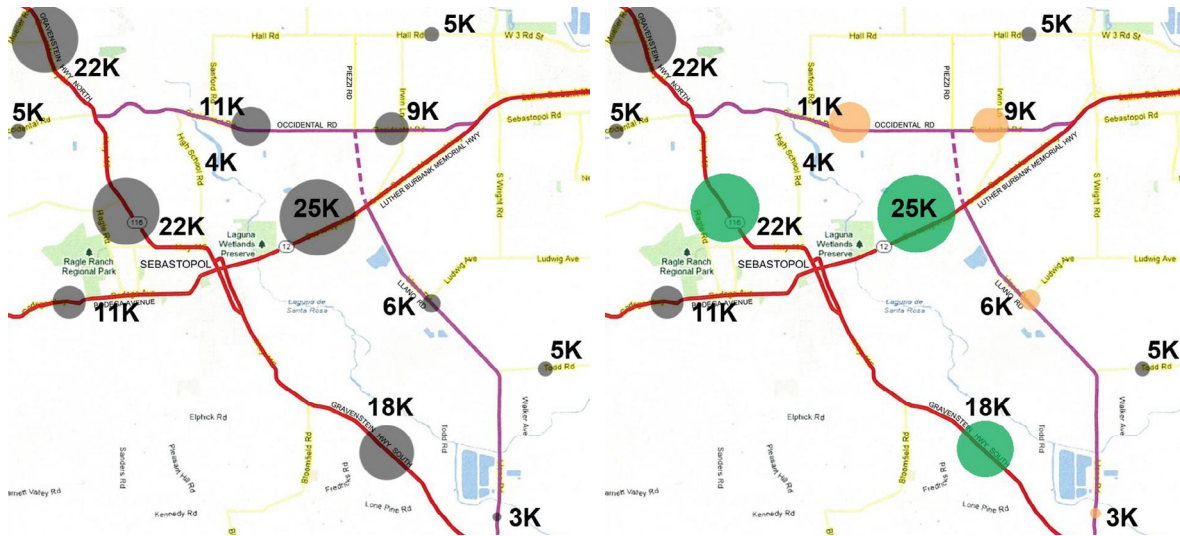
The conventional models may predict more congestion but the City real model should be other real cities that have developed successfully as constrained places. Just as behaviors and markets shifted when long trip-making was promoted, behaviors and markets will shift again when short trip-making is promoted. Though we often talk about traffic as an incompressible fluid that has to go somewhere, the truth is that it is more like a gas that will fill the vessel that it is provided. The good news is that the latter approach is consistent with the purpose of cities and is far more likely to result in a more valuable and successful city than the conventional approach. The conventional approach has been played out over and over again in cities all over California and will most likely harm Sebastopol even further.

Recommended practice for the framework streets would be to: i) employ valley gutters between parking rows and the adjacent lane to narrow the optical width; ii) use a contrasting paving material between the curb and the valley gutter to further narrow the optical width; iii) use rain gardens in the bulbouts along with the street tree; and iv) use protected bike lanes.





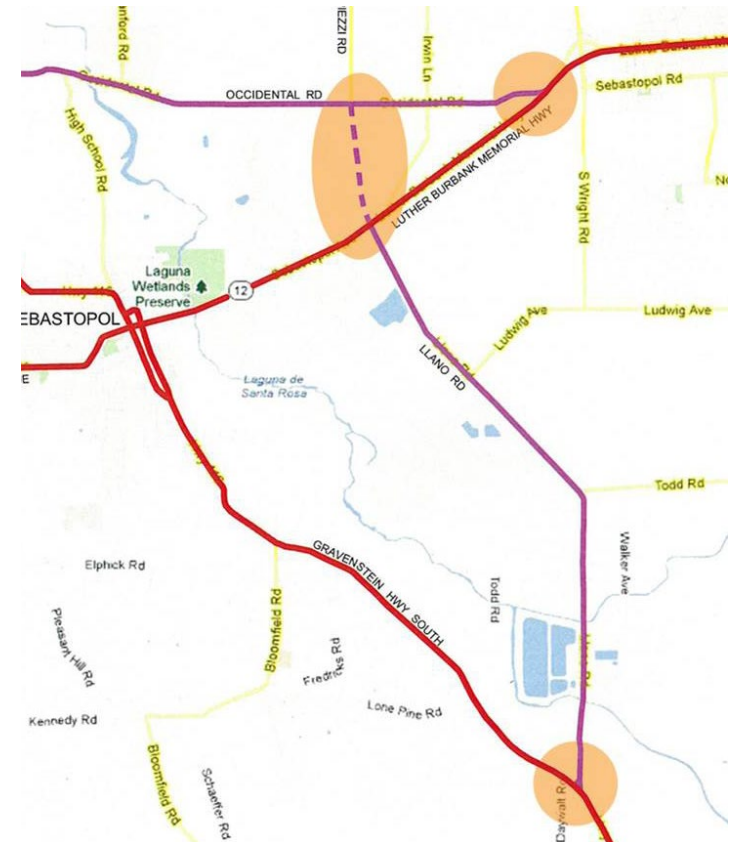
Some of the traffic challenges in downtown Sebastopol are related to not utilizing the existing regional road network effectively in the area. This is particularly acute in connecting areas in the north, east, and south directions, without routing the brunt of the regional traffic through downtown Sebastopol. With some minor modifications to regional network, the potential is to distribute some of the long distant traffic volumes shown by the green dots onto the roads with the traffic volumes shown with orange dots.



The orange highlighted areas in the opposite image show the locations of the minor modifications to the regional road network.

Though there are potential numerous routing options on the regional road network, two will be discussed in detail which will be more effective after the minor modifications are made.

The first routing option is the north-to-south routing option. It involves two modifications: i) the extension of Llano Road to Piessi Road; and ii) replacing the T-intersection with a roundabout at the intersection for Gravenstein Road (Highway 116) with Llano Road. The roundabout will better distribute north-south



regional traffic between the two routing options (i.e. the route through downtown Sebastopol and the rural route). Though the rural route is slightly longer in terms of distance it will be shorter in terms of travel time due to the higher speed limits and lack of constraints.



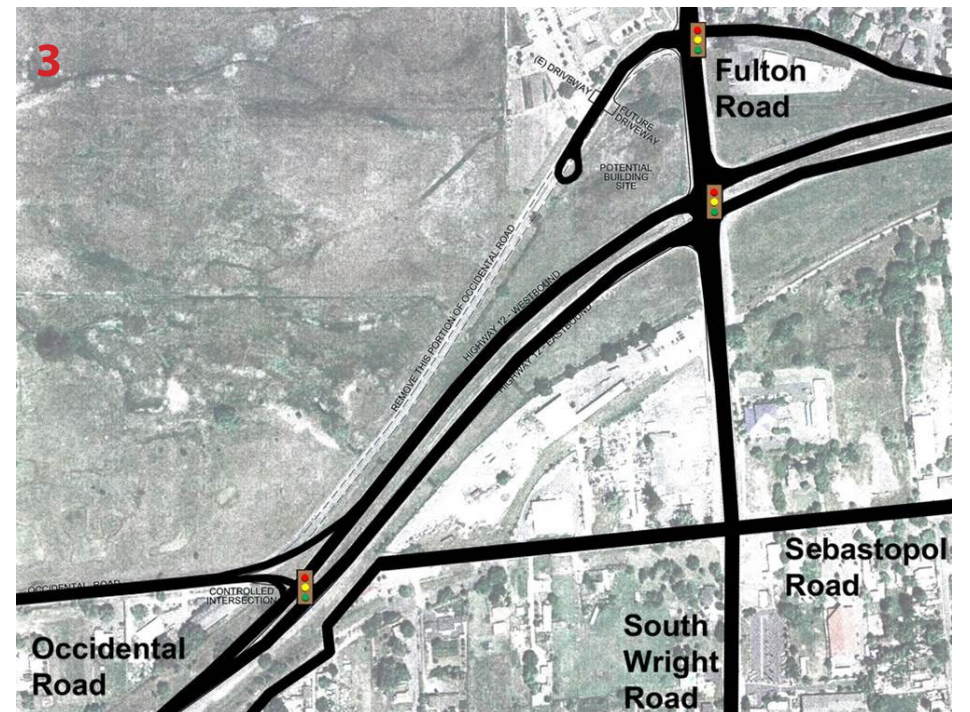
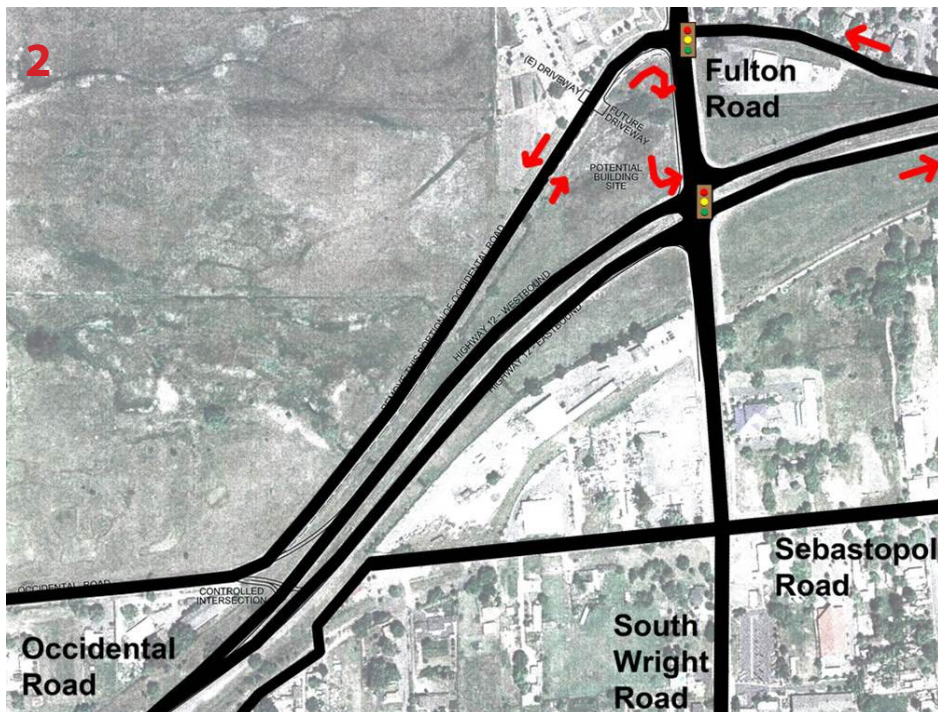
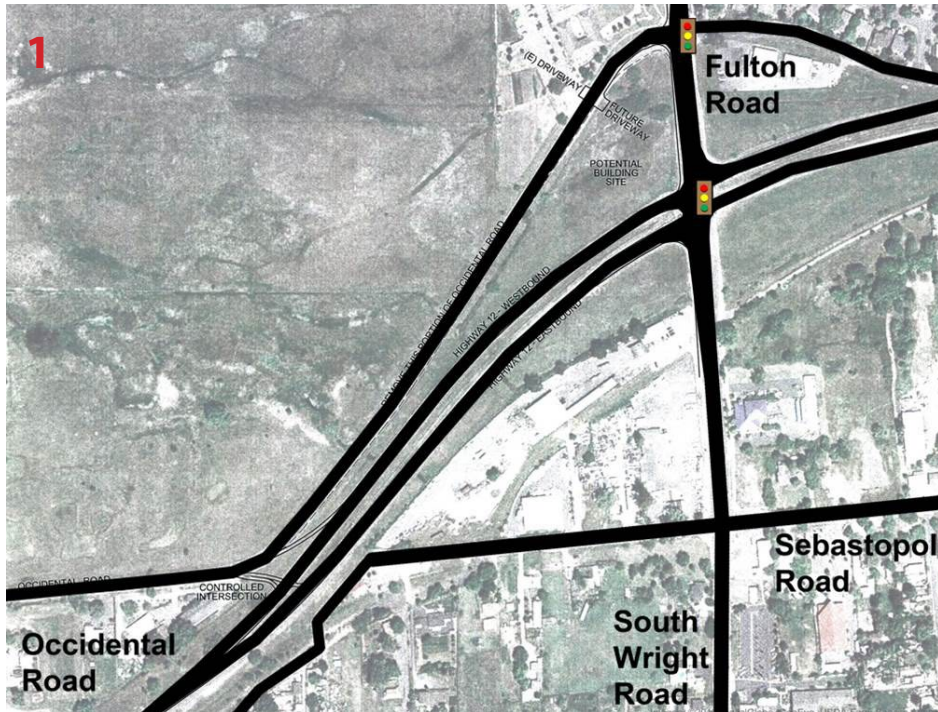


The second routing option is the north-to-east option. It involves modifying the connection between Occidental Road and Highway 12. Currently, the connection is circuitous and, thus, the regional traffic is routed through the downtown. By simplifying the connection, motorists have a rural option as well. In this case, the rural option is shorter and has higher posted speeds. The connection can be made with a signalized intersection or a roundabout, with the latter being better suited to distributing the traffic volumes. Furthermore, the roundabout makes a better transition between the divided highway environment and the rural road environment (see diagrams on the next page).



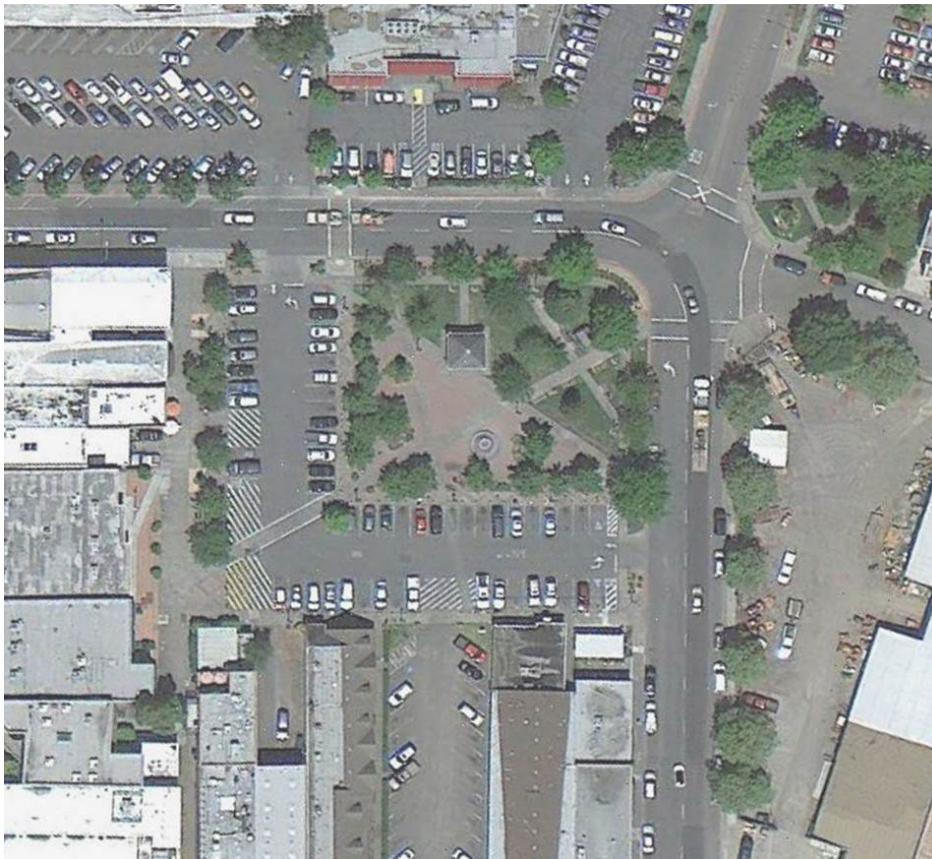
Transitioning between different environments is currently not practiced in and around Sebastopol. Transitions can be very effective in providing identity, establishing “territory”, and informing motorists of their environment and expected behaviors/speeds. Entrance features can be used alone or in conjunction with transitions. Entrance features should be considered for every portal into the city, as was mentioned earlier. However, entrance features can also be placed on the edges of neighborhoods, the downtown, and other districts. Transitions should also be used, especially when changing from rural to urban environments. They can happen quickly at a roundabout; that is the cross-section and motorists’ expectations, on the approach to roundabout, are different than those on leaving the roundabout. Transitions can also be achieved over a length. The cross-section literally evolves along the transition from a rural section to an urban one. The rural road becomes a city street. Drivers have time (about 5 to 10 seconds) to adapt to the change in context over the transition’s length and slow down naturally.

The square is a key open space in the downtown. It has several nice qualities but is floating on its own with little relation to its surroundings. It lacks enclosure, natural surveillance, and flexibility. Consequently, with a few changes it can contribute more.



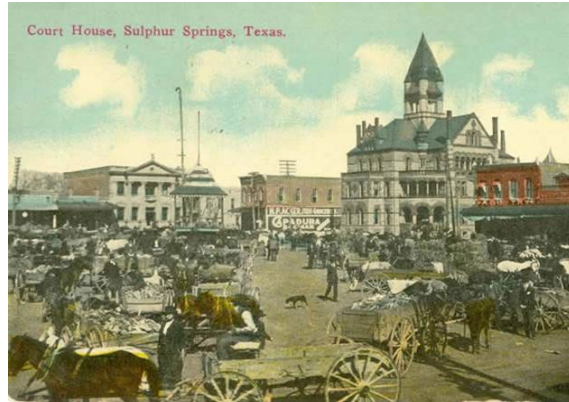


Some inspirations for the square were adapted from other places. The University of Central Florida, with a student population of about 50,000 students, has a busy shopping street near its sports stadiums. The street was designed to be barrier-free (i.e., curbless) so that students with mobility impairments can have a more equitable experience while using the area. It also makes the area easier to use for everyone else too. Making the streets around the square curbless would make the square more inclusive and inviting to a greater number of people. Furthermore, when major public events take place, some or all of the streets around the square can be closed to motorists, making the square expandable in a barrier-free manner.





The design of the square in Sulphur Springs, Texas, has some precedent value for the square in Sebastopol. The parking was placed all around the square. The square was fronted on all sides by buildings. The streets were all curbless (except around some planted areas). The streets were paved with red, concrete, paving bricks to provide texture to help slow motorists. The valley gutter, between the parking rows and travel lanes, helped to narrow the optical width of the streets. Lastly, street trees were added on the edge of the streets and in the parking rows to create shade and reinforce the narrow optical widths.



As a result of the changes, the square in Sulphur Springs changed from a desolate and unused space to an attractive and vibrant place. Kids were attracted, picnics happened, a farmers market came and expanded, events and shows were attracted, and the square became an integral and valuable part of the downtown and City. The square attracted people, investment, residential development, and new businesses.

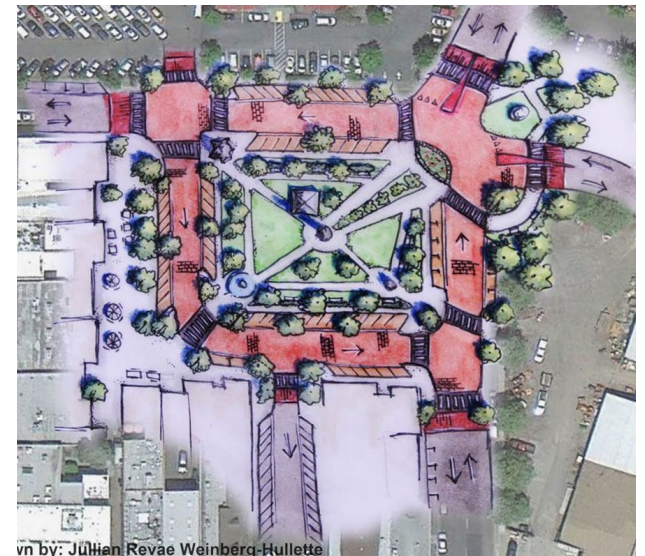


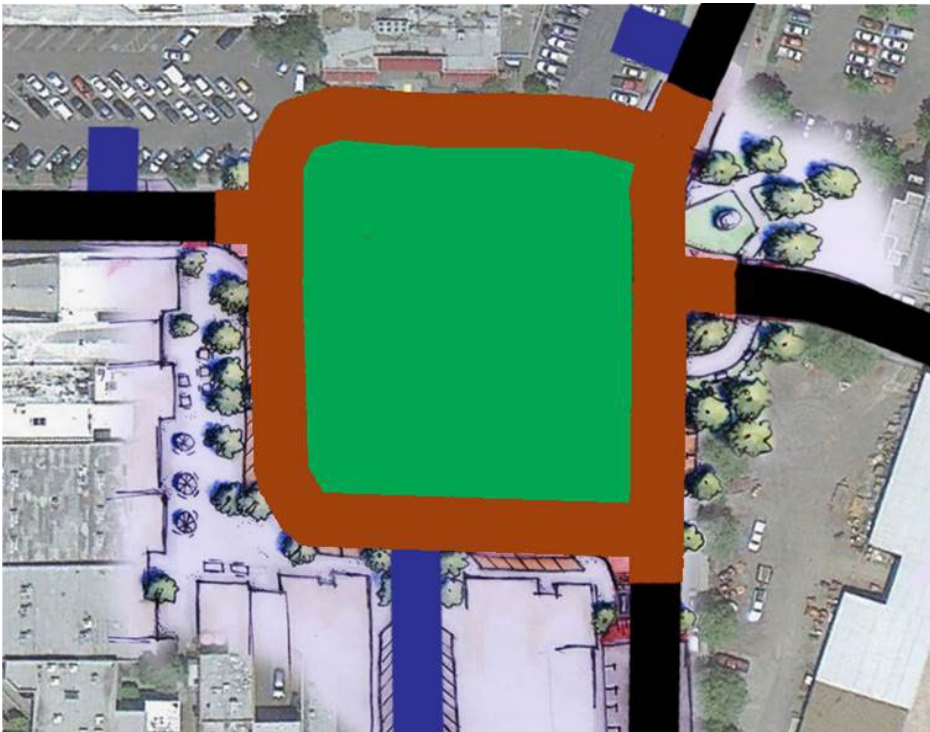


The idea for the square was a “squareabout”. It operates a little bit like a roundabout with a counterclockwise direction for motorists, providing an easy way to circulate and turn around if desired. The streets, to the north and east of the square, intersect the square like a roundabout, while the remainder of the streets intersects conventionally. The streets are paved in concrete block to add texture and reduce excessive speeds. The entire square is curbsless. There are gentle ramps connecting the conventional streets that lead to the square to the streets around the square. There are plenty of art installation locations on the square as well as places to sit. The buildings to the west and south of the square are encouraged to better embrace the square with outdoor dining, windows, and access. It is recommended that the future buildings, on the east and north, address the square. The facades should change regularly along the block’s lengths to provide interest and be engaging for pedestrians. There should be no new driveways accessing the streets around the square because they interrupt the sidewalks and on-street parking.

The on-street parking is shown in the concept drawing as head-in angled parking. However, the City should also consider “safety parking” around the square, which is also known as head-out angled parking. It uses the same dimensions as head-in angled parking but drivers do not have to back-into a moving lane of traffic. Thus, it is somewhat safer.

Unfortunately, the building to the north, the Whole Foods Market, is separated from the square by a parking module. It will likely be a long while before that building changes. As an option, the square could be expanded northward by about 60 feet so that it is fronted by the Whole Foods Market.





## CONCLUSION

There are two basic paradigms that exist in the transportation world. The first and oldest paradigm (a couple of thousand years) is what is called the “traditional” paradigm. Its fundamentals have been around since people began living together in hamlets, villages, towns, and cities. It revolves around the ideas of proximity, access, exchange, identity, network, convenient, connectedness, scale, etc. Walkability is fundamental. These are the ideas that Sebastopol were founded on. The second paradigm dates back to around 1910/1920 and is part of the modernist movement. The modernist movement effected painting, dance, music, architecture, etc. In most applications, modernism added new dimensions, new possibilities, and additional enjoyment to people. However, it failed in terms of planning and community design. It rejected the inherent complexity in the planning and design of the built environment, especially those complexities regarding transportation and streets. Modernism rejected old ideas and celebrated simplicity to a fault. The fundamental common denominator changed from the pedestrian (the traditional common denominator) to the automobile. Pro-automobile measures of effectiveness, funding, projects, and development followed. Ideas around connectedness, network, place, and exchange were replaced with a simple, dendritic, hierarchy of streets (i.e., local, collector, arterial, and freeway). The purpose of streets was changed to a binary idea of “mobility” and “access” for motorists. The bigger streets and newly invented “freeways” revolved around the ideas of speed, high levels of service for motorists, reduced delays, and fighting congestion with widenings, one-way streets, and bypasses. The negative



land use response was considered a land use problem that was independent of transportation.

The purpose of describing the two paradigms is that, if the City and downtown are to succeed, then an understanding of both paradigms is needed so that support can be given to the traditional paradigm and so that the modernist paradigm can be recognized and resisted. The two lists help to determine which of the two competing paradigms the idea belongs. The list on the right (traditional) is normally a little longer because the modernists rejected complexity and, thus, their list is naturally shorter than the traditionalists' list. Many more items can be added to the lists but what is important to Sebastopol is the pattern. Consequently, if an idea that is not on either list comes up, then the pattern will help determine the root of the idea. It is recommended that the City adopt a paradigm of traditional values to help guide its future for planning and transportation plans and decisions.

	<b>Modernist/Conventional</b>	<b>Traditional</b>
Higher Calling	Transportation demand model Expert direction	Community vision City's health
Focus	Reward long trips Accommodates automobiles	Reward short trips Accommodate many users
Problem Definition	Fight congestion Increase speed Move traffic	Advance priorities Make places Increase proximities
Land Use Relationship	Indifferent	Integrated
Complexity	Simple	Multi-Layered
Key Strategies	Add lanes Speed up streets Raise LOS One-Way Streets Traffic= fn (trip generation)	Shorten trips Safe speeds Increase access Two-way Streets = fn (multiple strategies)
Typical Outcomes	Lack of identity Poor health Limited options More energy use Car dependency/congestion	Strong identity Better health More options Less energy use Choices
Capacity of Streets	To move traffic	Nurture businesses Increase social interaction Add character



parking



## PARKING

Parking, if correctly managed, can be an extremely powerful economic development tool to enhance downtown Sebastopol. Today, however, there is often a mismatch of parking resources and parking demand. In some areas, there are not enough available parking spaces to serve customers, especially on-street spaces immediately adjacent to businesses. At the same time, only a short distance away parking spaces sit empty. In some areas, instead of advancing economic development parking is creating dead spaces in the urban fabric and creating a moat that separates some businesses and customers from downtown.

This mismatch is most acute adjacent to retail, service and restaurants. On-street parking spots immediately adjacent to a business can provide an enormous benefit to that business, generating up to \$300,000 of sales per spot in large cities IF the spot is used for customer parking, less in a smaller city like Sebastopol and nothing if that spot is used by employees. All too often, however, these incredible resource is not available to customers because employees or others are parking, or because the space is dedicated to unnecessarily wide travel lanes.



***Manage parking so that the available spots are where your customers need them.***

Sebastopol does not need a parking structure or additional parking. It does need improved parking management. Improved parking management, however, should not mean more limits on where people can park, which only serves to frustrate customers and visitors.

The City should target having 15±% of parking spaces open and available at peak times and 85±% of the spaces occupied at the same time. Having 15% of parking spaces available ensures that customers will find spaces when they are looking and not add to congestion by driving around looking for places to park. The need to increase parking vacancies is primarily, if not exclusively, on Main Street, adjacent to the Plaza, and possibly in the parking lot behind the Library. These are the most valuable parking spaces in the city for supporting local businesses.

If there is not the demand to fill 85% of parking spaces in some parking lots then valuable real estate is being wasted on unnecessary parking. The need to relax regulations to allow greater parking utilization is

most acute on on-street parking a couple of blocks from Main Street. There may be opportunity for potentially converting parking spaces to other needs at the so-called Chamber of Commerce parking lot, although that lot appears to be heavily utilized on Friday and Saturday evenings.

1. In areas where peak hour vacancy rates are significantly below 15%, the City should take action to free up those spaces, especially on North and South Main Streets, adjacent to the Plaza (Plaza parking lot and Petaluma Avenue), and possibly the parking lot behind the library:

- Get businesses to agree not to park or allow their employees to park in the most valuable parking spaces in the City.
- Meter those parking spaces. Although merchants' initial reaction to metering may be negative, the economic benefit of creating available spaces for customers is huge and will pay off to all businesses.
- Create a clear policy that all revenue from parking should first go to cover the cost of managing parking and any excess should go to benefit downtown streetscape and park improvements. Charging for parking should be done exclusively to manage the resource and not to raise municipal revenue.
- Parking can remain free, or if revenue is charged only charge nominal fees to control warehousing of vehicles, in parking lots and streets one or two blocks away, so that local customers and employees will be able to find easy parking. Controlling parking by charging for parking is much better than limiting the length of time. If a customer wants to park and spend money downtown the goal is not to limit that customer, but to limit the downtown residents, employees, and non-spending visitor who are extremely price sensitive in where they park.

- Explore opportunities to add more on-street parking spots downtown, the most valuable spots in the system, by converting road real estate to parking.

2. In areas where occupancy is significantly below 85%, the City should take action to fill those spaces:

- Removing time limits for parking.
- If the entire parking system has surplus capacity during peak times after better managing the system, there may be opportunities for some less critical parking lots to be developed for incoming producing (private sector development) or other visitor generating uses (parks and civic buildings).
- Reduce parking requirements for new development in industrial areas near downtown and reduce or even eliminate parking requirements downtown. This would in essence privatize parking development where parking would be provided when market and tenant demand warrants it but avoid unnecessary parking areas.

3. Measures to calm streets, improve bicycle and pedestrian connections, and improve wayfinding (see sections above) will shorten effective distances in the city making more parking available to users in the same length of time.



## RE-THINK PARKING

A single parking spot consumes approximately 200 square feet of downtown real estate and generates no economic activity. The same use as a store, office building, downtown residence (hopefully above the first floor), outdoor café, or park can generate tens of thousands of dollars a year in economic activity revenue.

If a traffic signal with a two minute cycle is changed to a traffic signal with a one minute cycle, a user can reach a parking stall 210 feet beyond the crosswalk in the time they can currently reach a parking stall immediately on the opposite side of the crosswalk, shrinking the size of downtown and making it more walkable.



*Manage parking so that the available spots are where your customers need them.*





get  
it  
done



## GET IT DONE SEBASTOPOL

Sebastopol is a great city. Now is the time to make it better. Momentum is critical to success:

- City Council should identify what can move forward now as part of their goal setting.
- The City Manager, Planning Director, and City Engineer should all be tasked with specific projects and their performance evaluations should specifically identify assignments.
- The Core Project should accept the task of being a Friends-of group, leading advocacy for projects that further making downtown more vibrant and livable.

Some changes to strengthen downtown will need to be included in the upcoming Sebastopol General Plan update. Most of the activities recommended in this report, however, are more strategic in nature and the work on those can start today. Since Sebastopol has already begun community listening sessions and data analysis for the General Plan update, the timing is perfect for those activities that require the plan update to give them more oomph.

During the SDAT preliminary and full visit, we met with representatives of The Core Project, Sebastopol Citizens, Cittaslow Sebastopol, Occupy Sebastopol, Sebastopol Tomorrow, Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce, and downtown merchants. All of these groups are potential partners in moving forward and should be tapped for their help. The recommendations in the report provide ideas and details for moving forward. The SDAT identified some of these actions to illustrate immediate actions.



WHAT	WHY	WHEN
Wayfinding: bicycle trail and downtown	Ease connections and shorten effective distances	NOW: Within one year
Better design guidelines for private development and public streets	Standards that achieve community goals. Predictability for community and investors	
Zoning conditional uses by-right, e.g., offices above 1st floor The Barlow		
Pre-Plan: opportunity sites for development & greening		
Revise bicycle and pedestrian plans	Better facilities consistent with converting highways to livable streets	
Allow four story buildings downtown when 4th story is setback from road	Allow density that can add vibrancy while retaining downtown’s scale.	
Reduce zoning parking requirements downtown, e.g. CB parking one per residential unit	Don’t require asphalt not needed by tenants	
Paint narrower lanes- repurpose asphalt	Excessive asphalt (travel lanes over 10.5’ or 11’) should be returned to other uses.	
Remove minimum LOS as a criteria for development approval purposes in the downtown.	Downtowns are about density, mix of uses, access, and walkability; not throughput for motorists. LOS criteria are a barrier to sensible and sustainable development in the downtown. LOS criteria in the downtown depress the value of the downtown and City.	
Manage parking	Create right mix of vacancies for customers and full utilization of resources	
Identify greenways and smaller scale connections	Shorten effective distances, encourage healthier transportation alternatives.	
Identify site for housing to replace trailer park	Eventually allow city-owned trailer park to be converted to park while providing alternative for current residents	Keep the momentum: Within two years
Marketing: opportunity sites	Reach out to investors to develop opportunity sites consistent with city vision.	
Reposition asphalt: parking, sidewalks, parks	Permanently convert excess road width to more productive uses while calming traffic.	
Programmatic: empower partners to coordinate more downtown events	Create events which support businesses and add to the Sebastopol brand.	
Build neighborhood greenways	Provide safer bicycle access	
Connect Joe Rotoda trail to Main St		
Improve more and improved crosswalks	Provider safer pedestrian access	



Restore two-way livable streets downtown	Make Sebastopol a downtown, not a highway intersection	<b>Keep your eye on the prize: 3-10 years</b>
Embed findings in General Plan	Create clear blueprint for goals and longer term policies	
Cycle Tracks on major streets	Provide safer bicycle and non-motorized access	
Buffered bikeways on collectors		
Make trail connections (Laguna and Rodota Trail, West County Trail and Ragle Park)		
Restore the Laguna edge along Morris St.	Enhance environment and absorb flooding	



team  
&  
thanks



## SDAT TEAM MEMBERS



### **Wayne Feiden, FAICP, Hon. WMAIA**

Wayne Feiden is Northampton's Director of Planning and Sustainability. He led that city to earn the highest "Commonwealth Capital" score, the former Massachusetts scoring of municipal sustainability efforts, and "Bicycle-Friendly," "Pedestrian-Friendly", and "Great Streets" designations. His focus includes downtown revitalization, sustainability, transportation, open space preservation, and streamlined regulatory efforts.

Wayne has served on 16 AIA design assessment teams. He also maintains a small planning consulting practice serving municipal and NGO clients. His more recent publication was *Assessing Sustainability: A Guide for Local Governments* (American Planning Association). In addition, Wayne serves as adjunct faculty at the University of Massachusetts and Westfield State University. Wayne's Eisenhower Fellowship to Hungary, and Fulbrights to South Africa and New Zealand all focused on sustainability.



### **Lesley Bain, AIA, LEED AP**

As principal at Weinstein AU, Lesley's passion is designing for the future of Seattle and the Northwest. Lesley's work is often complex, with multi-disciplinary teams. She thinks strategically and is able to help bring diverse

groups to a consensus. Clients rely on her to help solve their most challenging issues.

Since joining Weinstein AU in 1996, she has worked on a wide variety of architectural projects and some of the major urban design projects in Seattle; the Piston & Ring Building, Agnes Lofts, and multiple projects with Seattle Center- including all three major capital projects on campus- represent just a few. In addition to architecture, Lesley works on urban design projects that extend the reach of good design. She also works regularly with the City of Seattle, influencing and writing policies that impact the city's future. She is currently rewriting the City's Design Guidelines to be based on sustainability and conceptual thinking.

Lesley is very active in the community. She has served on the Board of ARCADE magazine for eight years, and is a committed members of AIA's urban design committee. She has served on numerous committees for the Downtown Seattle Association, led charrettes for Allied Arts, and regularly participates as a juror, ranging from graduate studio critiques to professional awards for the AIA, including selection of finalists for national Firm of the Year and Gold Medalists. She has traveled to Europe and Asia with the International Sustainability Institute to look at cutting-edge sustainable practices around the world.



### **Kenneth J. Buckland, AICP, LEED AP**

Mr. Buckland is a Principal and Senior Planner with The Cecil Group. He brings to his teams a vast amount of experience in land planning, including environmental planning and zoning regulations. Mr. Buckland has

practical experience having been a public sector planner ‘working in the trenches’ in three communities in Connecticut and Massachusetts. He is very knowledgeable on a wide variety of regulatory and land management approaches including incentive zoning, green design, form-based codes, design guidelines, community centers, brownfields, tax increment financing, and transit-oriented development. His work includes projects throughout the Eastern U.S., applying creative approaches in planning, zoning, and development for projects that cover town-wide plans, neighborhood plans, coastal management, downtowns, military campuses, civic facilities, mill reuse and industrial development.



### **Christine Carlson, ASLA**

Christine is Senior Fellow and Adjunct Assistant Professor in the University of Minnesota’s Department of Landscape Architecture. She has over 25 years of experience at in the design of greenways and ecological corridors, natural and cultural resources, regional and federally designated rivers, scenic byways, land conservation and restoration strategies, and community participation and Charrette processes. She has taught professional, graduate and undergraduate courses in regional landscape design and planning, conservation practices, urban design, landscape and garden history, and mine land reclamation. Her current focus is management of the Department’s role in the Laurentian Vision Partnership, a regional initiative she helped launch on Minnesota’s Mesabi Iron Range over ten years ago. The Partnership reshapes taconite mine sites into productive community landscapes and

habitat, and builds the coalitions necessary to implement such plans. Her most recent related case study is featured in the latest issue of Landscape Journal (30:1).

Christine is a former Branch Chief of the National Park Service’s Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program, Pacific Northwest Region, and a former Planning Manager of Portland Metro’s Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Program. She has served on the board of the Minnesota Land Trust and currently on the board of the National Waterfront Center. Christine holds a BLA and MLA in Landscape Architecture from the University of Washington and an MA in medieval studies from the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto.



### **Steve Durrant, RLA**

Steve Durrant, ASLA, is a principal and the senior landscape architect at Alta Planning + Design and Alta Bicycle Sharing in Seattle, Washington, USA, the national authority specializing in non-motorized transportation solutions. He is a registered landscape architect and planner with over 30 years experience helping communities become better places to live. His career has focused on urban non-motorized transportation, urban trails, waterfront redevelopment, open space planning, community revitalization, greenways and long range planning for National Parks. His recent work in Portland, Minneapolis, St Louis, Kansas City, Seattle, Dallas, Louisville and other cities includes planning and design for regional open space systems, non-motorized transportation corridors, light rail and streetcar transit,



urban waterfront redevelopment and bicycle transportation programs and facilities. Mr. Durrant has contributed to projects internationally, including a repatriation plan for a portion of the Demilitarized Zone in Korea and scenic area planning in Taiwan. He brings a sensitivity to community values, the local environment, and vernacular design sensibilities. He is a certified League of American Bicyclists Cycling Instructor, and a member of the League's Board of Directors. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of The Waterfront Center, an international non-profit that advocates public access and good design at the urban waterfront, and a board member of the Mississippi River Trail, a non-profit advocating the establishment of a 10 state, 3000+ mile bikeway from the headwaters to the gulf. He has been recognized by national and international organizations for his contributions to high quality design solutions for transit, waterfront regeneration, national parks, scenic and natural areas, greenways and trails. He speaks regularly at conferences, workshops and training sessions and lectures in the Initiative for Bicycle and Pedestrian Innovation at Portland State University.



### **Ian Lockwood, P.E**

Ian Lockwood is a principal with AECOM, a large multi-disciplinary design firm. Ian's work is dedicated to evolving the conventional transportation engineering paradigm into a more sustainable one. One of Ian's current

pursuits is helping design a 160-acre, mixed use, transit-oriented redevelopment project in Alexandria, Virginia.

Ian is recognized for his work on Smart Growth, context-sensitive design, historic preservation, and traffic calming. His passion is improving places socially, economically, and environmentally. He is well published and enjoys speaking at professional conferences, seminars, and occasionally on NPR. Ian has helped reform movements at several state departments of transportation through policy work, training, guideline preparation, and leading projects. In recent years, Ian has helped various public health organizations make stronger connections between the built form and community health. One of Ian's projects was awarded the Institute of Transportation Engineers' 2009 Project of the Year. The project was an integrated transportation and land use plan, in New Jersey, that stopped a major freeway from being built through a developing area near a small town. By working with myriad stakeholders and developers and by planning a network of two-lane, context-sensitively designed streets, the project was well received by the public, the development community, and the NJDOT. The project saved the State money, avoided damaging wetlands and historic farms, and resulted in a walkable place with a connected open space system.

**Joel Mills- Director, AIA Center for Communities by Design**

Joel Mills is Director of the American Institute for Architects' Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community sustainability. Through its design assistance programs, the Center has worked in over 200 communities across 47 states. Its processes have been modeled successfully in the United States and across Europe. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

Joel's 18-year career has been focused on strengthening civic capacity and civic institutions around the world. This work has helped millions of people participate in democratic processes, visioning efforts, and community planning initiatives. In the United States, Joel has worked with dozens of communities in over 25 states, leading participatory initiatives and collaborative processes that have facilitated public-private partnerships and led to hundreds of millions of dollars in new investment. His work has been featured on ABC World News Tonight, Nightline, CNN, The Next American City, Smart City Radio, The National Civic Review, Ecostructure Magazine, The Washington Post, and dozens of other media sources. In December 2010, he was elected to the Board of Directors for the IAP2-USA. He is also a member of the International Association of Facilitators (IAF), the American Planning Association, the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation (NCDD), and the Mid-Atlantic Facilitators Network.

**Erin Simmons- Director, AIA Design Assistance**

Erin Simmons is the Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. Her primary role at the AIA is to provide process expertise, facilitation and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT ) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT ) programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community members to provide technical design assistance to communities across the country. Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in 200 communities across 47 states. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

Erin is a leading practitioner of the design assistance process. Her portfolio includes work in over 60 communities across the United States. A frequent lecturer on the subject of creating livable communities and sustainability, Erin contributed to the recent publication "Assessing Sustainability: A guide for Local Governments". Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm in Georgia, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, conducted historic resource surveys, and wrote property nominations for the National Register of Historic Places. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project would never have been possible without two amazing local sponsors, the Core Project and the City of Sebastopol, and the volunteers that they recruited.

### The SDAT Steering Committee:

- Paul Fritz
- Cary Bush
- Lars Langberg
- Holly Hansen
- Eric Spillman
- Tina Grob
- Amy Bush
- Charles Marr
- Mitch Conner
- Lynn Deedler
- Sarah Gurney

The Core Project is a group of citizens, primarily but not exclusively in the design and creative fields, who live, work or play in Sebastopol and are dedicated to making it better.

### The Core Project Steering Committee:

- Lars Langberg
- Cary Bush
- Paul Fritz
- Holly Hansen
- Corey Hitchcock
- Eric Spillman
- Tina Grob
- Amy Bush
- Simon Turkalj
- Charles Marr

The City of Sebastopol, both at the legislative level and at the staff level, is a progressive community dedicated to improving the community and the lives of its citizens.

### City of Sebastopol key SDAT partners:

- Michael Kyes, Mayor
- Robert Jacob, Vice Mayor
- John Eder, City Councilor
- Sarah Glade Gurney, City Councilor
- Patrick Slayter, City Councilor
- Susan E. Kelly, City Engineer
- Kenyon Webster, Planning Director



### Volunteers (in addition to the Core Project):

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