

North Main Area Master Plan

SHERIDAN, WYOMING



JULY 2009

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A special thank you to the Trails End Motel for donating meeting space
and making staff available during the various project meetings.

And finally, thank you to the hundreds of North Main residents, property owners,
and businesses who have taken time to help prepare and comment on this plan.

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Introduction

Over the past ten years, Sheridan has undertaken multiple planning and community visioning processes that have helped identify what people in Sheridan want to see for the future of our community.

Time and time again, people in Sheridan have said that they want vibrant neighborhoods & business districts to promote job creation and commercial expansion. They've said that they want to promote residential and commercial development in the City as a way of keeping our downtown healthy and reducing needless sprawl and loss of agricultural lands. And they've said they want to promote the character of our community through maintenance of our historic buildings, expansion of bike paths, and restoration of Big & Little Goose Creeks within the City.

In late 2008, Mayor Dave Kinskey launched the North Main Revitalization Initiative (NMRI), a community-based effort to spur revitalization of the entire North Main area of Sheridan including North Main Street and the adjacent neighborhoods. While the City of Sheridan helped organize and launch the NMRI process, the vision and success of this initiative has been driven by the people with the most at stake – those that live, work, and own businesses in this area.

The North Main Revitalization Initiative is a plan to engage residents and business owners in the North Main area in a neighborhood-scale effort to spur revitalization of the entire North Main district. The City of Sheridan helped organize this process and has provided financial and staffing resources to promote plans developed by residents and business owners in this area. But at the end of the day, the vision and success of this initiative must be driven by the people with the most at stake in this area – those that live, work, and own businesses in the north part of Sheridan.

This is our chance to restore North Main to the beauty that it had when we were kids. Working together, we can bring new businesses, stores, and restaurants to this part of town and help keep it a great place to live and raise a family.

- Mayor Dave Kinskey

Plan Overview

PLANNING AREA

The North Main area extends to the city boundary to the north, Interstate 90 to the east, 5th Street to the south, and Highland Avenue to the west.

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to provide an overall coordinated concept for the North Main area, within which private and public investment decisions can be made over time. In 2010, the Wyoming Department of Transportation is planning to spend millions of dollars to rebuild North Main Street. Using the WYDOT process as a catalyst, and with a concerted community effort, we can revitalize North Main, create new housing, enhance existing neighborhoods, and create new job opportunities. The concepts and ideas contained in the NMRI Strategy report provided the needed direction for the preparation of this Master Plan for the North Main Area.

PLANNING PROCESS

During the summer of 2008, North Main residents and business owners hosted eleven community gatherings including neighborhood block parties and business open house events. At these events, over 200 North Main residents and business owners met to talk about the strengths and weaknesses of the North Main area and to begin to articulate a vision for revitalization.

Participants in the process came together for community gatherings and a North Main Summit to develop vision statements and action plans for North Main revitalization. These were documented in a report entitled *A Strategy for Revitalization of the North Main Area of Sheridan*, released in October 2008.

Out of the NMRI, North Main business owners and residents formed the North Main Neighborhood Association (NMNA) to ensure the communication and implementation of the vision and goals expressed during the Initiative. NMNA was incorporated in March 2009. Its Board of Directors is made up of volunteers

who participated throughout the NMRI process and who live, work, and own businesses in the North Main area.

In the fall of 2008, the NMRI Steering Committee, assisted by a team of consultants, began work on this Master Plan, as one of its four priorities identified in its Revitalization Strategy. Initial concepts for this plan were developed in a series of workshops held in December 2008 and April 2009, with active participation by area residents, business owners, and other stakeholders.



Photos above: North Main residents and business owners gathered to develop vision statements and action plans for the area's revitalization.

Goals and Guiding Principles

OCTOBER 2008 NMRI STRATEGY REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

The NMRI Strategy identified four priorities, considered to be the cornerstones on which a larger revitalization effort must be based. They are:

#1: Shape the WYDOT North Main Reconstruction Project

In 2010, WYDOT will begin reconstruction of North Main Street from Dow Road to Fort Road. This project will include reconstruction of the roadway, replacement of water and sewer lines, and installation of enhancements such as street trees, lighting, and signage. This is seen as a tremendous opportunity to shape the look and feel of the North Main corridor and to help jump-start its revitalization.

#2: Create a Master Plan, Develop New Zoning, and Adjust City Boundaries

In December 2008, NMRI initiated the preparation of a new master plan for the North Main area to address the first step in this priority. Additional steps to follow include creation of new or revised zoning classifications to promote mixed-use developments, and potential adjustments of City/County boundaries to resolve jurisdictional issues and streamline revitalization efforts.

#3: Create a North Main Association

NMRI participants have organized a formal organization to carry out the work needed to implement the North Main Initiative, through establishment of the North Main Neighborhood Association (NMNA) in March 2009.

#4: Develop Tools to Encourage Harmonization of Uses

The NMRI strategy identifies the need to address land use compatibilities and possible need for voluntary relocation of industrial businesses to more appropriate locations, to allow for redevelopment and new businesses.



Top: Existing conditions along Main Street.

Bottom: The first phase of north Main Reconstruction will be underway in 2010.

GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Five primary goals have been identified to help Sheridan implement its Vision for the North Main Area. The goals reflect the desires of the community at a broad policy level and are intended to function hand in hand. Each goal is accompanied by a set of guiding principles that provide specific direction for the Master Plan that follows.

Goal #1—Vibrant Neighborhoods and Business Areas

North Main will be a vibrant area of mixed-use development, with safe neighborhoods and thriving businesses.

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Increase housing options
- ✓ Establish predictability for residents and property owners regarding the status of land uses within neighborhoods and business areas
- ✓ Promote compatible infill and redevelopment
- ✓ Stabilize and enhance existing neighborhoods

Goal #2—Welcoming and Connected Green Space

Open space and recreational neighborhood parks will be located and connected throughout the North Main area that provide safe and accessible play and relaxation areas for families and children.

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Build on the city's network of parks and open space
- ✓ Extend the trail system along Goose Creek to improve connections between North Main and the rest of the city
- ✓ Improve connections between North Main's neighborhoods and its parks and open space areas

Goal #3—A Unique and Identifiable Image

North Main is the frame of the Bighorns. We will create an authentic western aesthetic, with green space and park-like settings – an oasis to draw and welcome travelers and a signal they are somewhere special. Reflect the pride and character of North Main Street by giving North Main an equal character and small-town treatment to that of downtown.

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Clearly identify North Main gateways
- ✓ Establish a standard of high quality design for new buildings and parking
- ✓ Continue and reinforce design treatments along North Main Street

Goal #4—An Enhanced Transportation Network

North Main residents recognize that a vibrant environment must offer its visitors and residents a variety of transportation options. We will develop an appealing, consistently maintained North Gateway Corridor into Sheridan, accommodating safe multi-modal travel.

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Improve multi-modal access to North Main from other parts of the community (auto/pedestrian/bicycle)
- ✓ Safe and attractive pedestrian environment along Main Street and secondary corridors

Goal #5—A Strong Retail/Mixed-Use Core

North Main residents recognize that creating a strong retail/mixed-use core within the downtown will be an incremental process that relies heavily on the goals and guiding principles above to create an environment that projects a positive image and attracts future investment.

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Retain existing businesses
- ✓ Attract new and complementary businesses
- ✓ Use public investment to leverage private investment
- ✓ Enhance private employment opportunities
- ✓ Strengthen linkages between North Main and the downtown and other activity centers.

Master Plan Framework

The Master Plan Framework identifies the most basic – but in some ways most important – elements of the community’s vision for North Main. These elements serve as the physical framework within which the many uses and activities desired for North Main are organized and rely upon to function and be successful. The Master Plan Framework includes the following elements: Land Use; Open Space; Transportation; Gateways; and Viewsheds.

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The Land Use Framework identifies appropriate locations for land uses within the planning area. This includes locations where uses are likely to change (or where a change of use should be encouraged) and areas where land uses are generally stable. The Framework is intended to provide a general statement of planned stability or anticipated change, to inform residents and property owners and to guide the city in making future land use decisions.

Areas of Stability and Change

The Land Use Framework Map is built upon the idea that the degree of change that is appropriate —or amount of new development and redevelopment likely to occur in different areas of North Main—varies dramatically depending on the characteristics of each area. Some areas, such as the section along North Main Street north of Fort Road, may see substantial infill and redevelopment over the coming years, while many existing single-family neighborhoods are stable and unlikely to see much development activity at all. In areas where change is likely, it will generally occur through a combination of:

- New Development—Development occurring on vacant sites or undeveloped land;
- Infill Development—Development on a vacant or substantially vacant tract of land surrounded by existing development; and

- Redevelopment—Development on a tract of land with existing structures where all or most of the existing structures would be razed and a new structure or structures built.

Areas that are considered stable are the neighborhoods located on both sides of Main Street; areas that are suitable for change include properties along the North Main Enhancement Corridor, the Fort Road Corridor, and pockets of commercial and industrial uses east of Main Street, adjacent to the railroad tracks. This does not imply that all uses in these areas should change or require improvements; there are many attractive and viable businesses in these areas.

General Land Use Patterns

The Framework Plan (shown in Figure 1) features five different types of places as designated on the map; North Main Enhancement Corridor, Open Space/Parks, Neighborhood Residential areas, Service Commercial/Light Industrial areas, and Viewshed areas. Each is described on the next page.

Land Use Framework

North Main Enhancement Corridor

This designation identifies the portion of North Main Street that is at the core of the area, where most of the development activity and enhancements are expected to take place. Specific features to enhance this area of North Main Street include:

- Roadway reconstruction (as part of WYDOT's Main Street project), and upgraded streetscape improvements;
- A broad mix of commercial and employment uses;
- Targeted opportunities for redevelopment of individual properties; and
- North Main Beautification Program to encourage landscape and other enhancements to private property

New development along the North Main Corridor should be planned to encourage pedestrian activity. Key considerations include:

- Incorporating wider sidewalks and outdoor gathering spaces with seating and other amenities;
- Locating surface parking behind buildings and away from street frontages;
- Providing direct connections between buildings; parking areas, and sidewalks.

Service Commercial/Light Industrial

This designation identifies areas that are appropriate for employment-oriented uses, such as light industrial or service commercial businesses that do not require high-profile locations with high visibility. Generally, such uses should locate in areas not highly visible from North Main Street or from I-90, in order to protect and enhance the overall appearance and character of the North Main area. Specific features include:

- Create additional opportunities for non-retail commercial services and trades, in appropriate locations.
- Encourage light industrial and manufacturing uses, to enhance employment opportunities.
- Limit outdoor storage or require screening in visible areas.

Open Space/Parks

This designation identifies a long-term network of open space, parks, and trails that connect all of the North Main area internally and to other areas of the city. Specific features include:

- A continuous trail system along Goose Creek, with connections to neighborhoods and major streets
- Opportunities for a new open space system at the northern end of Main Street, to establish a new city gateway with an open space theme

More information on the open space/parks concepts can be found in the Open Space Framework section of this plan.

Neighborhood Residential Areas

This designation identifies existing residential neighborhoods that are vital to the future of the North Main area as a great place to live, work, and play. Specific features include:

- Identify and maintain stable neighborhood areas
- Improve connections to trails, parks, and open space
- Encourage development of multi-family residential housing appropriately integrated with existing land uses.
- Implement strategies for improving traffic safety in residential areas.

Gateway Node

The Framework Plan identifies an enhanced commercial gateway node, located along Main Street at the location of the current entry to K-Mart (Canfield Street). The potential realignment of Main Street with Decker Road creates an opportunity to enhance access to commercial properties in this location, creating new opportunities for commercial development along North Main frontage as shown in Figure 2. This configuration will form a new, enhanced "gateway" into the North Main commercial area, attracting visitors from the Interstate and new investment with improved access and appearance.

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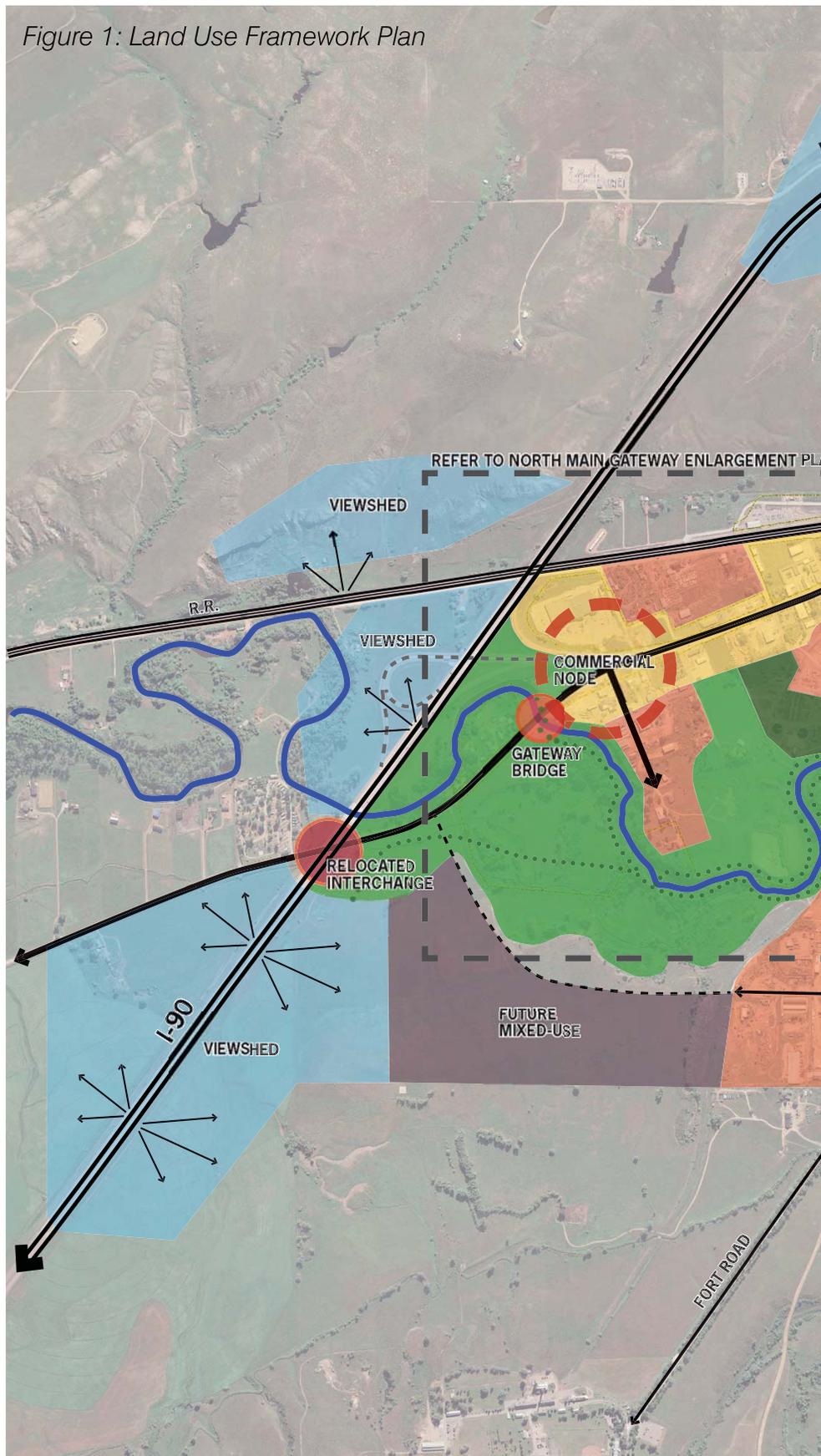


Neighborhood Residential Areas

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Figure 1: Land Use Framework Plan



Open Space Framework

Existing Facilities

The North Main area is fortunate to have access to parks and recreation facilities that serve not only area neighborhoods, but residents from around the city. Most prominent of these is Thorne-Rider Park, which is owned by the City of Sheridan and maintained by the Recreation District. Thorne-Rider Park provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities and sport facilities. Home of the Recreation District offices, the park contains a variety of sports courts, fields, and other park facilities. A master planning process for Thorne-Rider Park is underway to address the long-term needs of the community and most appropriate uses for the park. Long-term needs for the North Main area include improved neighborhood access to the park, and completion of pathway connections to provide continuous access along Goose Creek. Other considerations include long-term plans for areas to the west along Goose Creek, including the horse riding area and riparian open areas along the creek.

Open Space Gateway/Greenway System

One of the primary features of this Master Plan for the North Main area is an extension of the city's open space framework to the north along Goose Creek, to serve as a major defining feature of the northern gateway. An extension of open space to the north, as shown on Figure 2, Gateway Enlargement Plan, would accomplish several objectives of the NMRI. First, it establishes a new image for the North Main area as experienced from the north – an image of open space and riparian environment, with visual and physical access to Goose Creek and surrounding open lands. Second, it would provide enhanced recreational opportunities through access to the creek and a continuous trail system, connecting the North Main area to the rest of the city.

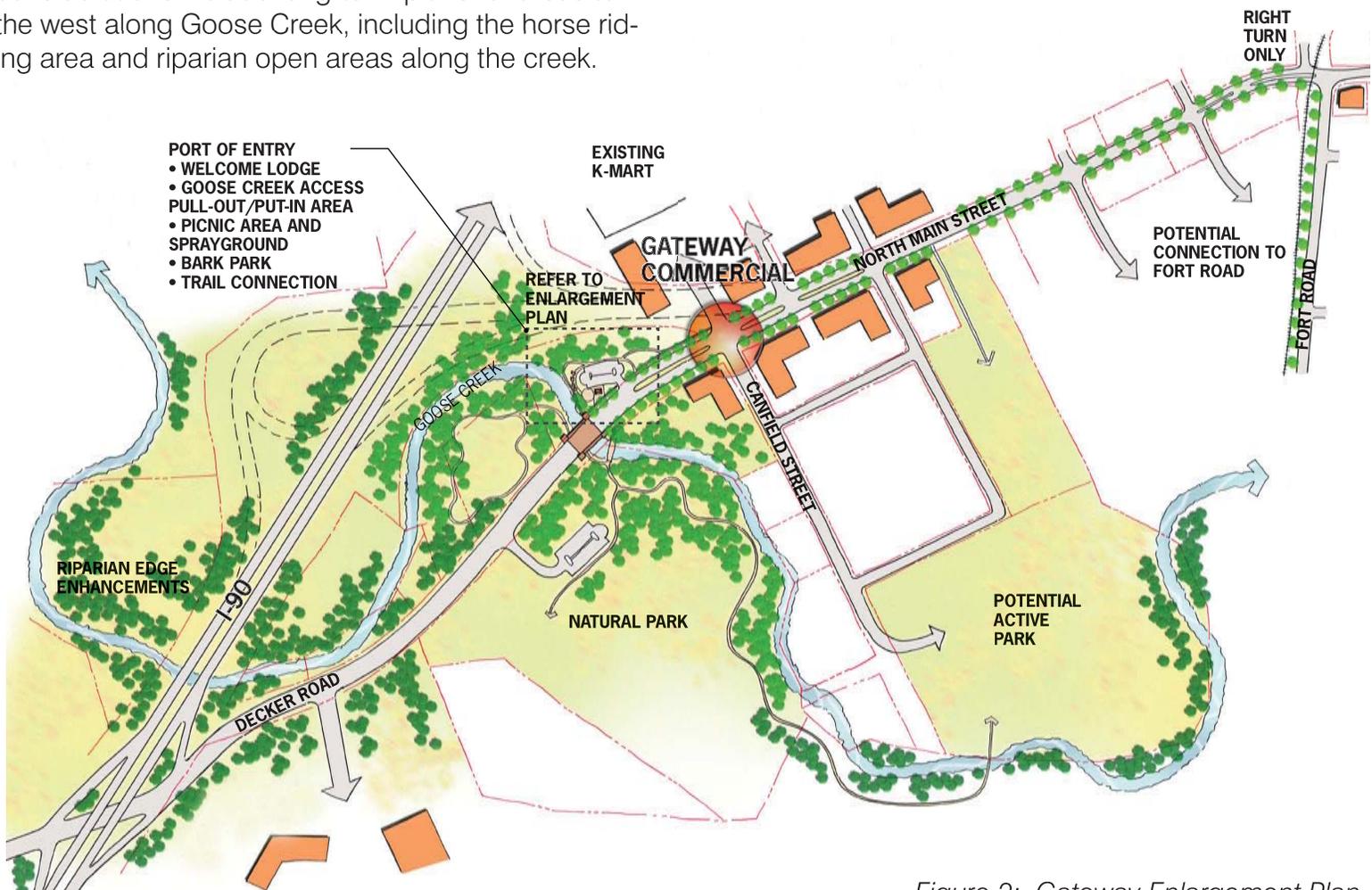


Figure 2: Gateway Enlargement Plan

Open Space Framework

In order to accomplish this objective, the city will need to work with property owners over time to acquire lands as needed to extend the open space and trail system to the north, from its current terminus just south of Fort Road.

Former Port of Entry Site Opportunities

The former WYDOT Port of Entry (POE) sits adjacent to the North Main interchange and presents a unique opportunity for a welcoming, landscaped area to present a positive first impression of Sheridan and the North Main area. As the open space gateway and greenway system described above is developed over the longer term, this site can be incorporated and become a signature element. In the near term, the city should work with the NMRA to identify enhancements that can improve its appearance and begin to establish a new image for the area.

As part of this planning effort, a concept was developed for the POE that incorporates a range of uses that would benefit the North Main area as well as the city as a whole. These are illustrated on Figure 3. Some of the possible concepts that have been identified for the POE site include:

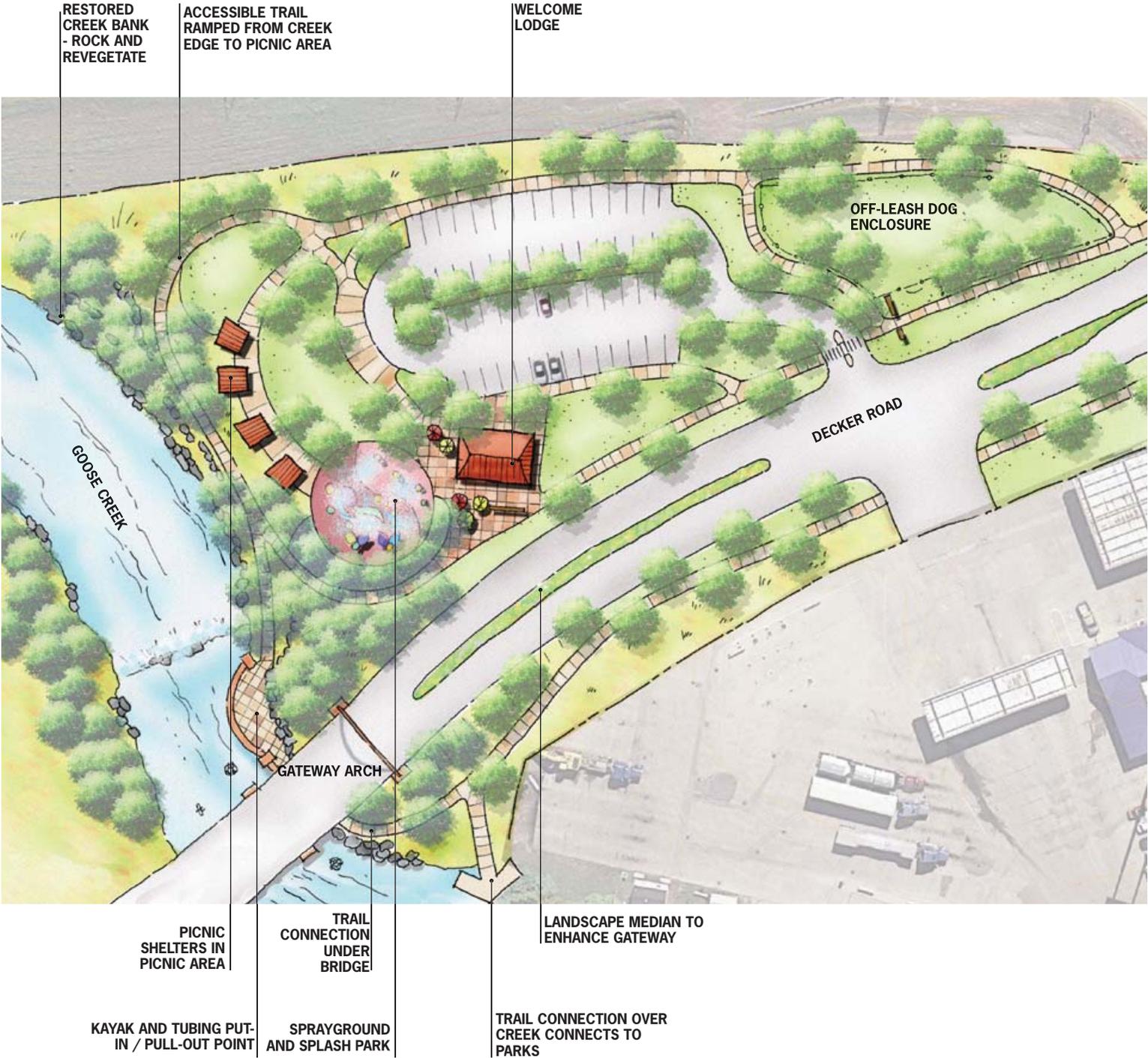
- Welcome Center for the city and North Main area, with visitor information, parking, and picnic facilities
- Trail connections with access to Goose Creek trails system
- Water recreation access area for put-in and take-out of canoes and kayaks, on a restored Goose Creek
- Dog park area
- Splash park/water play area ("Sprayground") for children

At Right: The Port of Entry concept supports a range of recreational uses.



Open Space Framework

Figure 3: Port of Entry Concept Plan



Transportation Framework

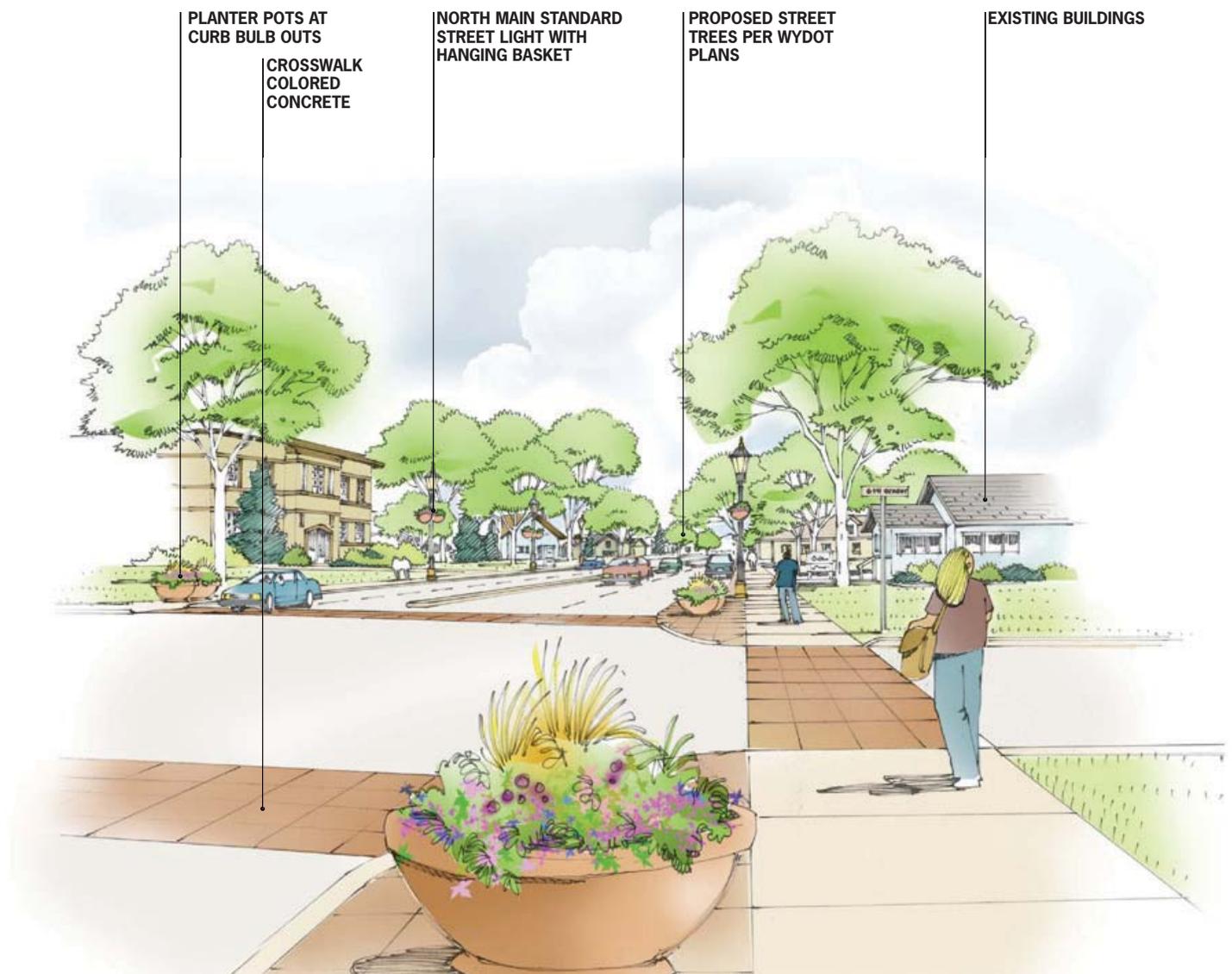
The North Main area today is served by a broad transportation system: an interstate highway (I-90), that provides direct connections for visitors and travelers through the region; a state highway (Main Street) that serves the entire city and connects North Main area to downtown; and a network of local streets that provide access to businesses and its neighborhoods. Pedestrians and bicyclists are partially served by sidewalks (not always continuous) and a partial system of pathways.

This element of the plan outlines improvements and enhancements to the transportation system serving the North Main area.

Main Street Enhancements

In 2010, the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) will begin reconstruction of North Main Street from Dow Street to Fort Road. This project will include replacement of water and sewer lines and installation of enhancements such as light posts and trees. This project presents a tremendous opportunity to shape the look and feel of North Main and to jump-start revitalization of the entire North Main area. From the start of the NMRI process, WYDOT has worked with the community to seek a design vision for the reconstruction project.

Figure 4: View Looking North at Main Street and 6th Street



Transportation Framework

Main Street Enhancements (continued)

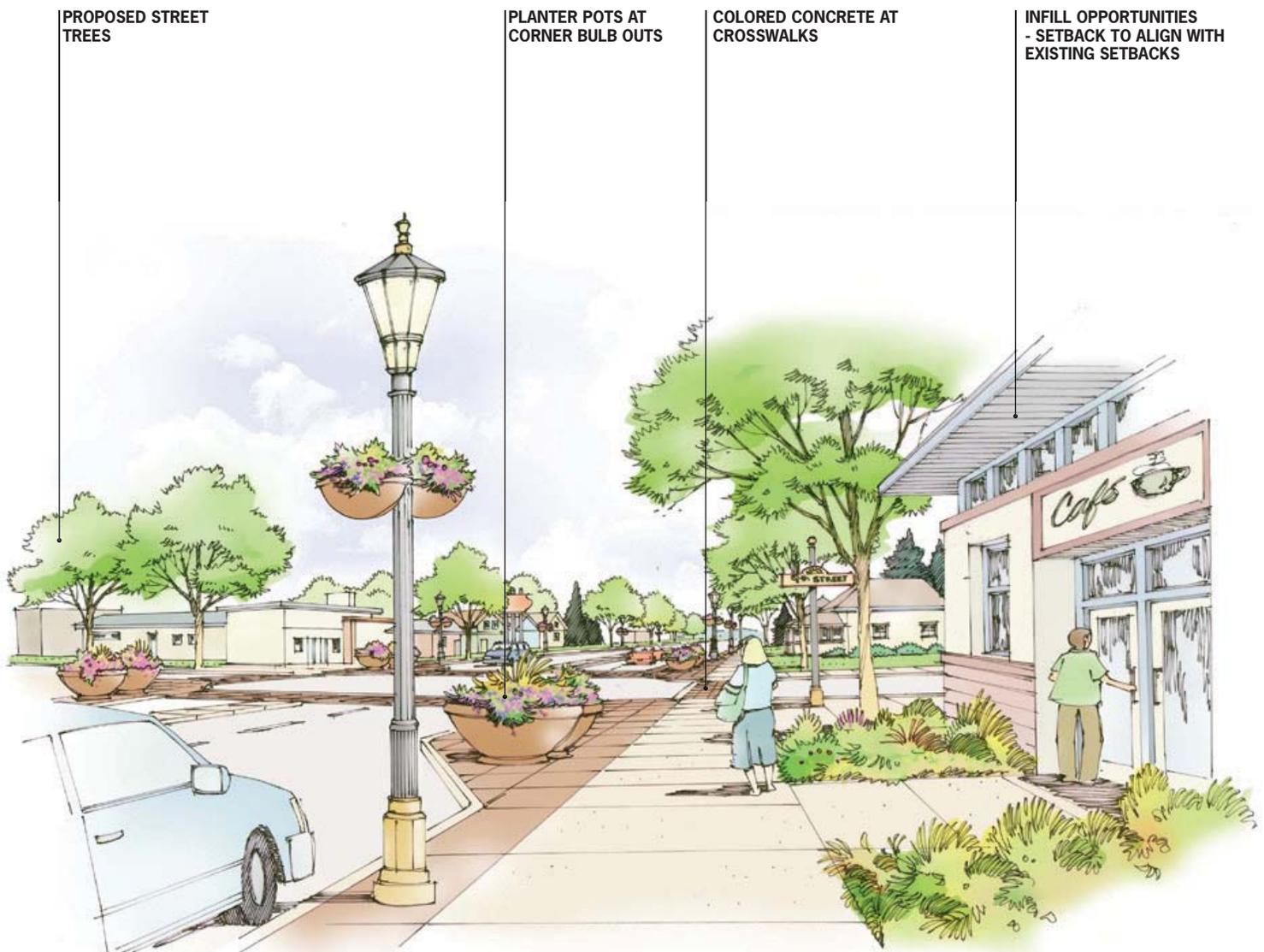
The concepts reflected in this Master Plan are being incorporated into WYDOT's plans for the reconstruction project, as described below.

Main Street Enhancements from Dow to Fort Road include pedestrian walk improvements such as bulb-outs at intersections to reduce the scale from a pedestrian view point, planter pots at intersections, and street lights with hanging baskets. Infill and redevelopment opportunities exist throughout and should be encouraged to be designed with setbacks consistent with adjacent properties.

North Main Street Enhancements north of Fort Road include similar overall treatments plus raised planted medians in key locations to enhance the entryway aesthetics. Actual details of this section of Main Street will be determined during the phase II design process.

The North Main Neighborhood Association will continue to work with WYDOT as plans move forward for the second phase of North Main Street reconstruction, extending improvements and enhancements north to I-90.

Figure 5: View Looking North at North Main and 9th Street



Transportation Framework

I-90 Interchange Configuration Process

The Wyoming Department of Transportation is currently evaluating options for relocating and/or redesigning the North Main Interchange to make it safer. Over the course of the next few years, WYDOT will be evaluating a series of alternatives; taking into consideration a range of factors such as cost, safety, environmental impacts, community impacts (including potential impacts on North Main area businesses), and other considerations.

In the course of preparing this Master Plan, North Main business owners expressed concerns that moving the interchange could have negative impacts on existing businesses or hinder our chances to bring new business to North Main. The NMNA believes that if the interchange must be moved, it should be kept as close to North Main as possible.

The Gateway Area concept contained in this Master Plan (see Figure 2) shows one possible option for relocating the interchange just north of its current location. In designing this option, we have attempted to 1) keep the interchange as close to North Main as possible (no further north than Decker Road); and 2) provide a pleasing entryway to greet visitors to the North Main area. This concept also envisions the realignment of North Main and Decker Road to provide continuity and easy access to the North Main area.

The city and NMNA members will continue to work closely with WYDOT as the I-90 process moves forward, to ensure that the concerns and objectives of our plan for the area are incorporated into WYDOT's final design for the interchange.

Neighborhood Traffic Calming

Many participants in the NMRI process expressed concerns about the excessive speed of vehicles in neighborhoods adjacent to North Main. Efforts should be made to explore opportunities for traffic calming on major roadways (including 8th Street, 11th Street, and Val Vista) through the following possible strategies:

- Reduce speed limits
- Intersection traffic controls (such as stop signs and pedestrian safety signs)
- Raised/marked crosswalks for pedestrian safety
- Curb bulb outs/extensions
- Increased enforcement of speed limits

A number of residents have suggested construction of one or more landscaped roundabouts in neighborhoods adjacent to North Main as a demonstration of a traffic calming feature that could be implemented more broadly in neighborhoods in the North Main area.



Above: A landscaped roundabout is one approach for neighborhood traffic calming.

Gateways

GATEWAYS

The North Main area is served by three important gateways; a north gateway at I-90; an east gateway at 5th Street (serving both downtown and North Main); and a west gateway providing access to the Veteran's Administration Hospital at Fort Road. Each serves an important role of conveying visitors and residents into and through the North Main area and the city as a whole. Accordingly, it is important that they reflect a positive, vibrant image.

Gateways can take on many forms and incorporate a variety of design features. They are often defined by structural elements, such as masonry posts, archways, walls, or other similar features. Today, the corridors leading to each of the gateways contain a large amount of visual clutter created by development

of mixed quality, pole signs, lack of landscaping, and unscreened parking areas.

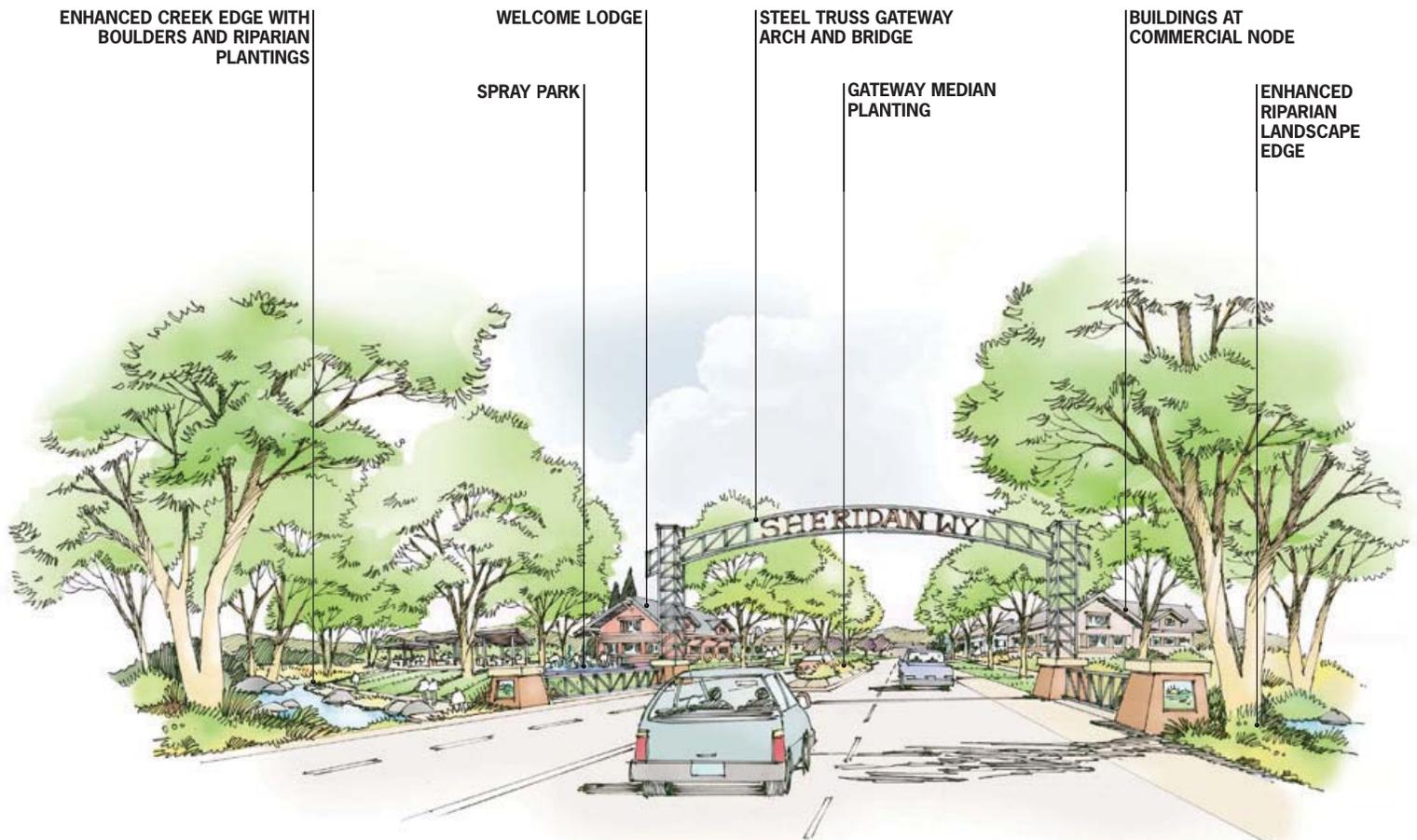
In response to these existing conditions, recommendations for the gateways are intended to provide visual relief from the hodge-podge of adjacent development and to draw attention instead to their simple, clean design.

This plan recommends improvements to each of these gateways, as described on the next page.

North Gateway (Main Street/I-90)

The North Gateway to Sheridan from I-90 builds on the large open spaces surrounding the town that have become part of Sheridan's identity over time. From the re-aligned I-90 interchange, the arrival sequence follows the Goose Creek riparian zone, creating a

Figure 6: North Gateway View Looking South at Gateway Bridge



Gateways

scenic first impression of Sheridan from Decker Road, realigned with Main Street. Undeveloped areas adjacent to Decker Road are designated as open space to maintain consistency of the open feel and to prevent strip development north of the North Main commercial core. An improved bridge across Goose Creek terminates in a gateway arch announcing the arrival to Sheridan and creating a welcoming impression.

The Welcome Lodge at the former Port of Entry Site functions as a gateway structure on the north side of Decker Road, while various amenities planned for the former WYDOT Port of Entry site activate the area (see description of Port of Entry concept on page 14). Commercial buildings on the east side of the road help complete the gateway effect and capitalize on the desirable interchange location for commercial land uses. Decker Road transitions into North Main

Street at the Gateway Node at Canfield Street. Raised planted medians along North Main help provide consistency of an open space/landscaped fill continuing south toward Fort Road.

East Gateway (Main Street/5th Street)

The East Gateway from I-90 along 5th street capitalizes on the spirit of the Railroad Historic District and existing Depot. The historic Sheridan Inn, Depot and locomotive engine form the foundations of an effective gateway at present, but require streetscape enhancements and complementary structures on the opposite side of the railroad tracks. The streetscape enhancements consist of an improved railroad noise control structure that complements the railroad and industrial theme of the gateway, forming a 'median' landscape element that forms the spine of the roadway.

Figure 7: East Gateway Looking West Along 5th Street



Gateways

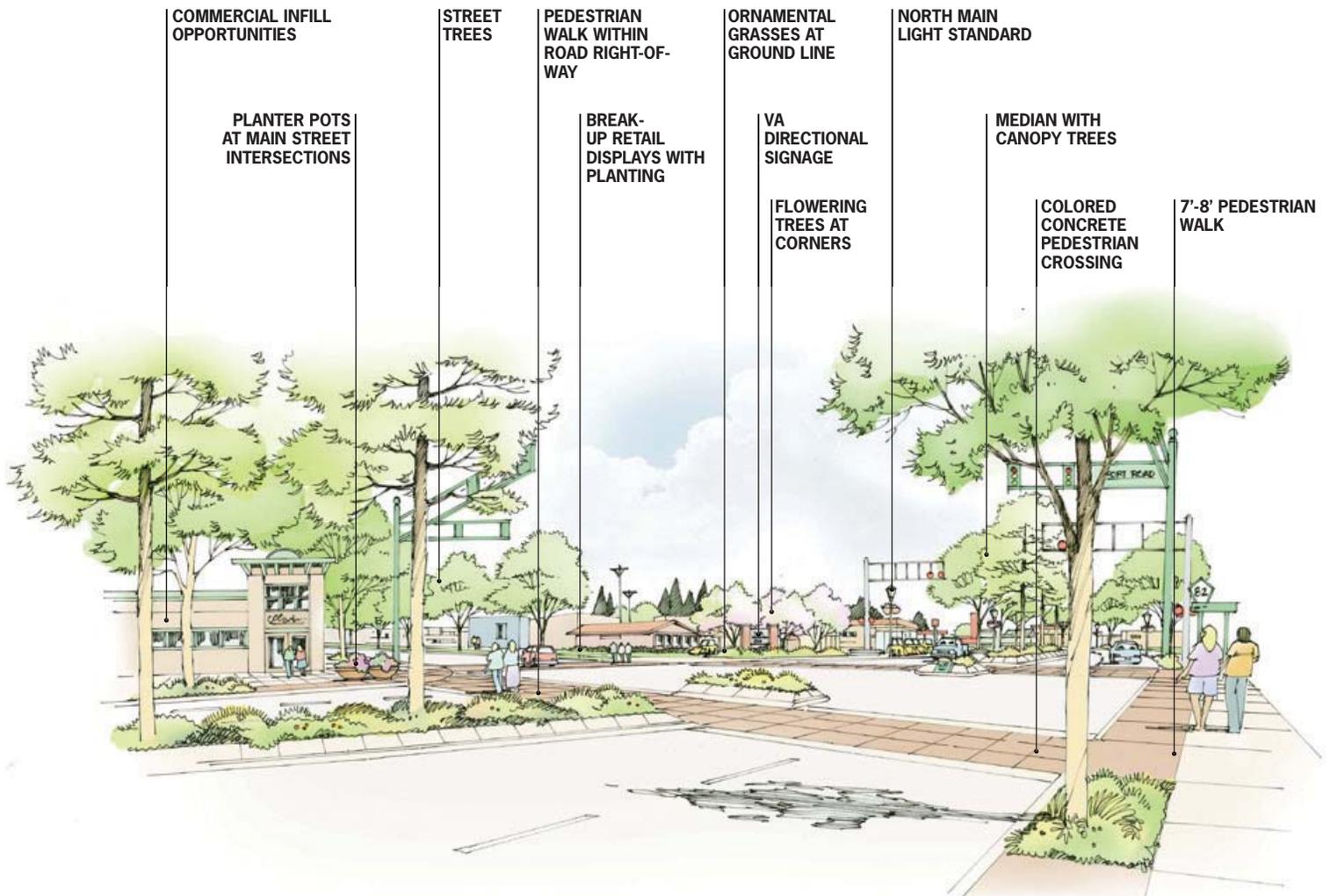
East Gateway (continued)

Improved pedestrian walks consistent with the North Main corridor form the edges of the road with canopy street trees and pedestrian lights. A steel truss gateway arch identical to the North Gateway arch celebrates the railroad theme and is located just east of the railroad tracks. Opportunities for infill development are present to the east of the railroad tracks as well and should be constructed with railroad depot-type architectural detailing to further enhance the gateway effect.

West Gateway (Fort Road/Main Street)

A primary interchange at Fort Road and Main Street serves as the West Gateway to North Main Street. The interchange will allow a right turn where the east side of Canfield Street meets North Main, as the street is not aligned across Main. Streetscape enhancements are consistent with those along North Main including street trees, planter pots at corners, pedestrian walk enhancements, colored concrete at crosswalks and pedestrian lights. Planted medians located only at the immediate intersection accentuate the gateway effect. Narrow trees in the medians help further define the corridor. Infill and redevelopment at this intersection should be encouraged, especially to the south of Fort Road. Planting to help screen industrial uses should be encouraged at corners including grasses, shrubs and flowering trees.

Figure 8: West Gateway Looking North at Main Street and Fort Road



Viewsheds

VIEWSHEDS

One of the most striking features of the North Main area is its views and vistas. Participants in the NMRI process identified North Main as the “Frame of the Bighorns”, in recognition of the priceless scenic resources of North Sheridan. As part of subsequent master planning and subdivision of viewshed areas, require plans to maintain long-range and short-range views including plans to limit density, maintain sight-lines, and maintain sufficient open space in viewshed areas. As development of the area progresses, it will be important to identify, preserve, and protect the area’s visual resources. As part of the planning process, the view sheds that define the north Main area were identified. They include:

- Long-range views to the west (to the VA hospital and the Bighorn Mountains)
- Close-in views of Goose Creek and other riparian areas
- Tree stands and other vegetated areas along gateway corridors
- Agricultural fields and open vistas

Key principles for protection of these resources include the following:

1. Substantially maintain the visual character of the northern gateway area by limiting development on sites that are highly visible from I-90 when traveling into Sheridan from the north.
2. Maintain long-range views by limiting building heights in highly visible areas prohibiting ridge-top development, and maintaining open views to the VA Hospital and to Bighorn Mountains, to the west. Maintain short-range views by designating open space in viewsheds, clustering development, and limiting overall development densities.
3. Retain natural vegetation character along gateway areas and roadways; avoid removing stands of trees and other vegetation along major roadways and corridors.
4. Maintain views to Goose Creek along I-90 and Decker Road, and enhance the riparian character through rehabilitation and revegetation as part of the open space strategy for this plan.



Photos above:

(Top) Retain stands of existing vegetation to retain character.

(Center) Mid-range views to the VA Hospital and foothills define the city’s northern gateway.

(Bottom) Long-range views to the Bighorns.

Plan Implementation

Successful plans are driven by a number of factors, including:

***Vision** – what image does the community have and how widely is that vision shared? Key to successful implementation for an area like North Main is a shared vision held by political leaders, property owners and businesses and the residents of neighborhoods.*

***Resources** – what financial and personnel resources are available? Resources that are available to implement the plan will vary depending on the vision, confidence in the plan and potential return on public or private funds. It will be important to monitor and seek opportunities as they arise to harness funding to implement portions of this plan whenever possible.*

***Urgencies & Opportunities** – what are the critical issues and needs in North Main, both opportunities and challenges? In Sheridan, business growth and revitalization is an immediate opportunity, as is the potential to upgrade its image.*

***Feasibility** – Although market feasibility is often considered the primary determinant of downtown potential, in reality feasibility encompasses market potential, financial feasibility, political (including zoning, neighborhood interests, etc.) and physical issues (such as the stock of buildings and/or properties available for revitalization). All of the above factors need to be considered in successful implementation of this plan.*

This Implementation/Action Plan focuses on four key elements that address these factors: Land Use, Transportation, Open Space, and Incentive Programs. The following is a set of recommended actions and strategies for each of these key elements.

LAND USE

LU1: Adopt North Main Master Plan as Element of Sheridan City and County Comprehensive Plan

Adopt the Master Plan as an element of the city and county's Comprehensive Plan, and monitor and ensure that future land use actions are consistent with the recommendations of this Master Plan.

LU2: Develop and Adopt Design Standards for the North Main Area

Design Standards should be adopted to ensure that infill and redevelopment is compatible with the desired scale and character of development for the North Main area. Design Standards can be applied to the renovation of existing buildings as well as for new development and redevelopment. The following section of this plan provides general guidance for the preparation of Design Standards for infill and redevelopment.

LU3: Develop and Adopt Zoning Revisions for the North Main Area

The city's Zoning Regulations should be reviewed and updated to ensure that they provide for development patterns that are consistent with the principles of this plan.

Zoning changes could take one of two possible forms:

1. A new zone district that would apply to targeted areas, with a specified set of uses and design criteria and standards, or
2. A North Main Enhancement Corridor Overlay District that would keep existing, underlying district regulations intact, adding additional standards and possible uses as an "overlay" to existing regulations.

Plan Implementation

Some of the provisions to be considered for zoning revisions include the following:

- Define appropriate locations for more intensive industrial and service commercial uses;
- Establish build-to lines and reduce setbacks along Main Street, to create a more pedestrian-oriented environment;
- Include provisions for mixed-use development as a use by right in appropriate locations; and
- Standards and provisions to protect residential neighborhoods from incompatible development.

TRANSPORTATION

T1: Monitor and Participate in I-90 Interchange EIS process

Over the next 1-2 years, WYDOT will be undertaking a preliminary design and environmental review process for the I-90/Main Street interchange. It is vital that NMNA leadership and members as well as city staff and officials remain fully engaged in this process, to ensure that the outcome of the WYDOT process fully considers and incorporates the concepts for the North Main Gateway Area contained in this plan.

T2: Continued Coordination with WYDOT for North Main Reconstruction

NMNA will need to remain closely involved with WYDOT during the phase I reconstruction process, as well as during the design process for Phase II (north of Fort Road), once that process is underway, to ensure that the design concepts contained in this plan are fully incorporated.

T3: Traffic Calming Measures for Neighborhoods

As of the date of this plan (June 2009), the city is involved in an update to the Citywide Transportation Plan. As part of the Transportation Planning process, the city should work with the NMNA to evaluate options for reducing impacts of traffic on area neighborhoods.

OPEN SPACE

OS1: Port of Entry Site Design

NMNA and the city will need to continue to work with WYDOT to develop concepts for improvements to the former Port of Entry (POE) site. More detailed design work will need to be completed, as well as determining funding sources for construction. It will be important to coordinate design efforts with WYDOT's I-90 interchange design process, as the timing and design of POE enhancements will likely depend on various aspects of the I-90 project implementation.

OS2: Trail Extensions

The city should continue to investigate opportunities for determining the routing and alignment of trail extensions along Goose Creek, with particular emphasis on connections from Thorne-Rider Park to the north and connections from the neighborhoods to the Goose Creek corridor.

OS3: Land Acquisition for Open Space System

As opportunities arise, the city should work with property owners along the Goose Creek corridor to acquire property needed to complete the northern area open space system.

Plan Implementation

INCENTIVE PROGRAMS: ECONOMIC/MARKET INCENTIVES AND TOOLS

IP1: Economic/Market Incentives

The city should work with NMNA to explore opportunities for market incentives and other tools that could help broaden the existing economic base of the North Main Area, including helping existing businesses to expand, recruiting more businesses, converting underutilized space into productive property and enhancing the competitiveness of North Main merchants.

IP2: Funding Tools for North Main Area Improvements

The city should work with the NMNA to identify funding sources and tools to help implement aspects of this plan. Possible tools to be explored include a development authority (this could possibly consist of a geographic extension of the city's Downtown Development Authority); tax increment financing; Wyoming Business Council Community Enhancement Grants; Community Development Block Grants; or portions of the city's General Purpose Tax funding.

IP3: Private Property Landscape Enhancements

In addition to street trees and other landscaping improvements that are completed as part of the Main Street Reconstruction Program, the NMNA should work with property owners to create incentives for landscape improvements to individual properties, particularly businesses along Main Street and other major roadway corridors. The city or the NMNA could provide plant materials and irrigation improvements, with property owners assuming responsibility for maintenance. Landscape improvements should include street trees outside of the street right-of-way to supplement trees located within the right-of-way, and foundation plantings to enhance existing buildings. The images at right show an example of how landscape improvements can enhance the street appearance of existing buildings.



Above: Existing conditions.

Below: Landscape improvements can enhance the street appearance of existing buildings.

Infill and Redevelopment Principles and Guidelines

This section includes a discussion of key issues and design considerations that have been identified specific to the North Main Area, Residential Neighborhoods, and the Downtown Perimeter to address issues of design character and overall compatibility with adjacent uses and with the North Main Area vision. A set of design standards should be developed and adopted as part of the city's Zoning Code to implement the principles of this plan.

Transitions to Adjacent Neighborhoods

Higher-intensity development is generally appropriate along the Main Street corridor, but should transition along edges shared with established neighborhoods, by

- Concentrating tallest buildings along corridor frontages away from adjacent neighborhoods;
- Providing gradual decreases in building height and mass so that new structures have a comparable scale as adjacent homes along the shared lot line or street frontage; and
- Buffering or transitioning parking lots, delivery, storage areas and other noise generating activities away from existing adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Transitions



Streetscape Character

An enhanced streetscape character is desired for the city's gateways that extend from the roadway right-of-way to private development areas on either side. Character enhancing features include: street trees, sidewalk furniture such as benches and planter, special paving, public art, shade structures, pedestrian connections, monument signage, and a range of landscape treatments. A consistent design theme and/or landscape design character is desired for the North Main area, reflecting the unique qualities of each gateway. Infill and redevelopment should reinforce established streetscape characteristics through the use of complementary setbacks, sidewalk widths, and street trees.

Signage

- Development signage in gateway areas should be limited to low profile monument signs designed as part of a larger development scheme and should be consolidated for larger developments to minimize visual clutter.
- Billboards or tall signs are strongly discouraged along freeway frontages and scenic corridors (i.e., I-90, Main Street, Fort Road).
- A consistent and well-designed program of public informational signage should be developed to reinforce the character of North Main's gateways.

Building Design and Orientation

Architectural elements should be used to clearly define primary building entrances. Blank walls or walls with limited architectural detailing on the side or rear of structures should be avoided. Visual interest should be provided for pedestrians through the incorporation of display windows and/or other architectural elements at the street level and the concentration of active uses such as shops and restaurants in areas where pedestrian activity is desirable.

Infill and Redevelopment Principles and Guidelines

Variety of Building Types and Designs

The variety of architectural eras and styles present in the North Main area makes it difficult—and unnecessary—to require all new development to adhere to a particular architectural style or theme (i.e., Victorian, Craftsman). While this approach can sometimes be successful in an area that has a large stock of structures built during a particular period that feature a common set of architectural elements, it can also backfire—resulting in a forced character that feels sterile. Instead of dictating a single architectural style, the diversity of architectural styles found in the North Main area should instead be viewed as an asset. This does not mean that there would be no guidelines/standards for infill or redevelopment or that “anything goes”. It does mean that infill/redevelopment will be guided more by the form, scale, and basic composition of existing structures, than by a particular architectural style.

Using this approach, infill and redevelopment would be required to conform to key character-defining features of the existing framework, such as:

- The relationship of existing buildings to the sidewalk and street (i.e., limited or no front setback, no parking between the building and the street);
- The use of materials similar to those traditionally found in North Main or in downtown (brick, masonry); and
- The use of wall-to-window ratios typical of “storefront” buildings (i.e., more windows and glass at the street level than on upper stories to create interest for pedestrians).

Parking Location and Screening

- Parking should be located to the side or rear of buildings and away from primary street frontages.
- Landscaping and/or low masonry walls should be used to screen surface parking from the street, soften the appearance of surface parking lots, and enhance the overall character of the development.

Parking Lot Screening



Infill and Redevelopment Principles and Guidelines

Site Planning for Pedestrians

New development and redevelopment should be planned to encourage pedestrian activity. Key considerations include:

- Incorporating wider sidewalks and outdoor gathering spaces with seating and other amenities;
- Locating surface parking behind buildings and away from street frontages;
- Providing direct connections between buildings; parking areas, and surrounding neighborhoods.

Pedestrian Connections

THIS



NOT THIS



North Main Area Master Plan

SHERIDAN, WYOMING

C L A R I O N