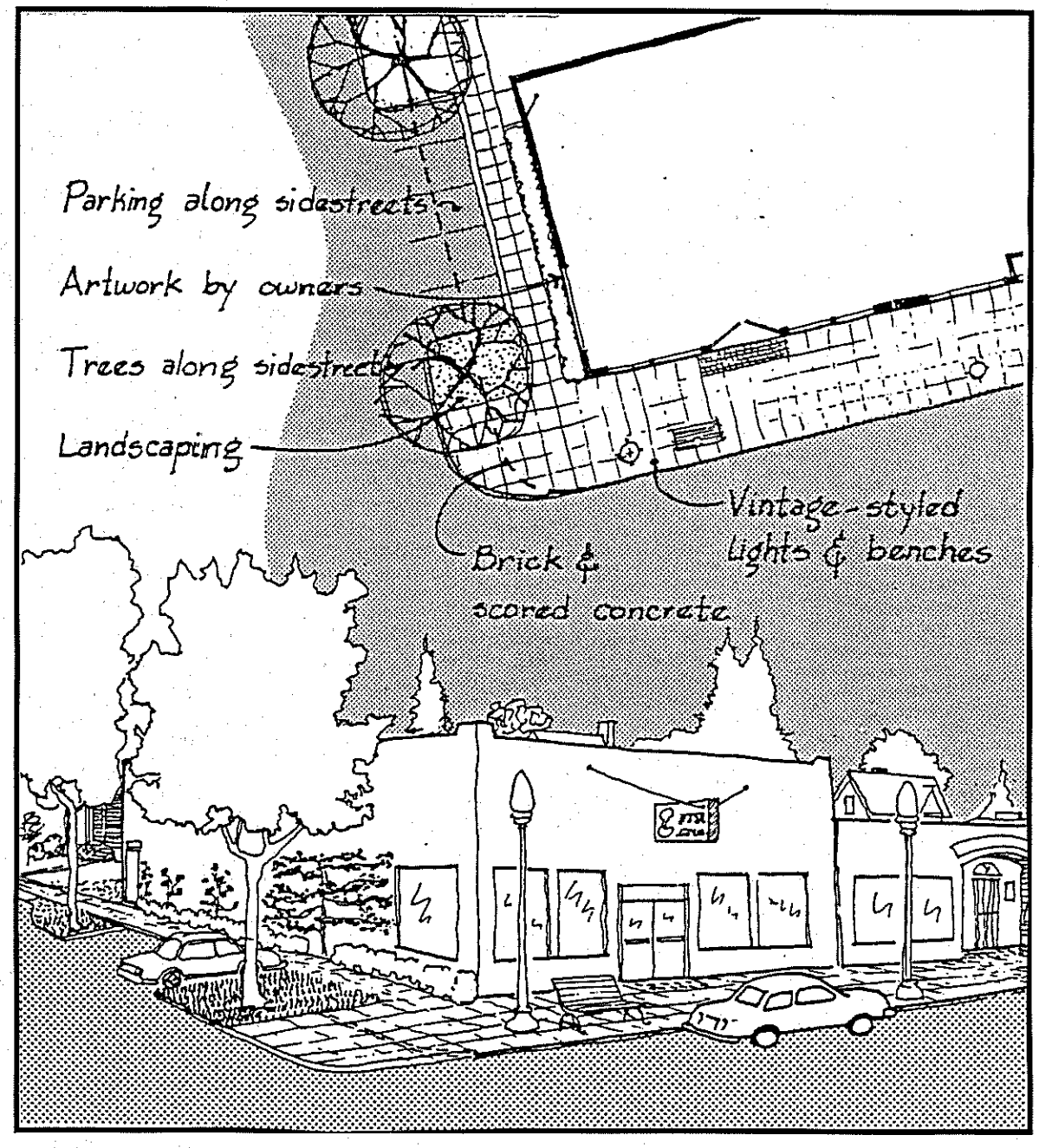
6th Avenue Design Plan

A Land Use Management Plan Element



Conducted by the Tacoma Planning Commission consistent with
Washington State Growth Managment requirements

Tacoma

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6th Avenue Design Plan

City of Tacoma, Washington

Conducted by the Tacoma Planning Commission

This plan assesses and makes recommendations for improving the design, appearance, aesthetic quality and economic vitality of 6th Avenue from "I" Street to Madison Street.

Tacoma

Tacoma Planning Department
Tacoma Municipal Building, Room 900
747 Market Street
Tacoma, Washington 98402
(206) 591-5364

April 1990

6th Avenue Design Plan

The *6th Avenue Design Plan* is an element of the City's long-range, comprehensive *Land Use Management Plan.* It is accomplished pursuant to the authority conferred by the Washington State Constitution and Title 13 of the City's Charter and General Ordinances.

Planning and Development Services Department

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Community Development Department

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The Tacoma Planning Commission wishes to acknowledge the many individuals who provided their assistance in the development of this plan.

RESOLUTION NO. 30857

Whereas the Planning Commission has, pursuant to the Official Code of the City of Tacoma, developed the draft *6th Avenue Design Plan*, and

Whereas, after careful review of the draft *6th Avenue Design Plan*, the Planning Commission, on February 21, 1990, recommended adoption of the study as an element of the *Land Use Management Plan*, and

Whereas the City Council held a duly advertised public hearing on April 3, 1990, to hear testimony on the draft *6th Avenue Design Plan*; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

That, pursuant to Chapter 13.02 of the Official Code of the City of Tacoma, the *6th Avenue Design Plan* is adopted as an element of the *Land Use Management Plan*, all in accordance with said study as recommended by the Planning Commission of the City of Tacoma, a copy of which is on file in the office of the City Clerk and by thes reference incorporated herein.

Adopted: April 24, 1990

KAREN L.R. VIALLE
Mayor, City of Tacoma

Attest: City Clerk

K/sp

February 21, 1990

Honorable Mayor Karen Vialle and

Members of the City Council :

The Tacoma Planning Commission is pleased to transmit to you the *6th Avenue Design Plan.* The document is a guide for future design, appearance, aesthetic quality and economic vitality of 6th Avenue from "I" Street to Madison Street. The Plan provides guidance for property owners and merchants to make improvements to their buildings and properties to revitalize the 6th Avenue commercial districts.

Thriving, successful neighborhood commercial districts are vital to the economy of the city. These districts provide a positive focal point for the surrounding community by providing goods, services and employment. Strengthening these districts will stabilize our neighborhoods and maintain the economic diversity of our city.

The Plan was prepared under the direction of the Planning Commission. Throughout the development of the Plan, the business owners and citizens of the 6th Avenue area had the opportunity to review and comment on various aspects of the Plan. The Commission considered all comments by the business community, citizens and organizations in developing this plan document. Improvement of our commercial districts is an important aspect of the development and improvement of the city. The Commission is pleased to have a part in providing guidance for the future revitalization of this area.

The Commision found the plan to be consistent with the expressed goals and adopted policies of the City and desires of its citizens. Therefore, it is recommended that the City Council adopt the *6th Avenue Design Plan* as an element of the City's long range, comprehensive *Land Use Management Plan.*

Sincerely,

GERALD D. VAN NOY, CHAIRMAN

Tacoma Planning Commission

GDVN/cvh

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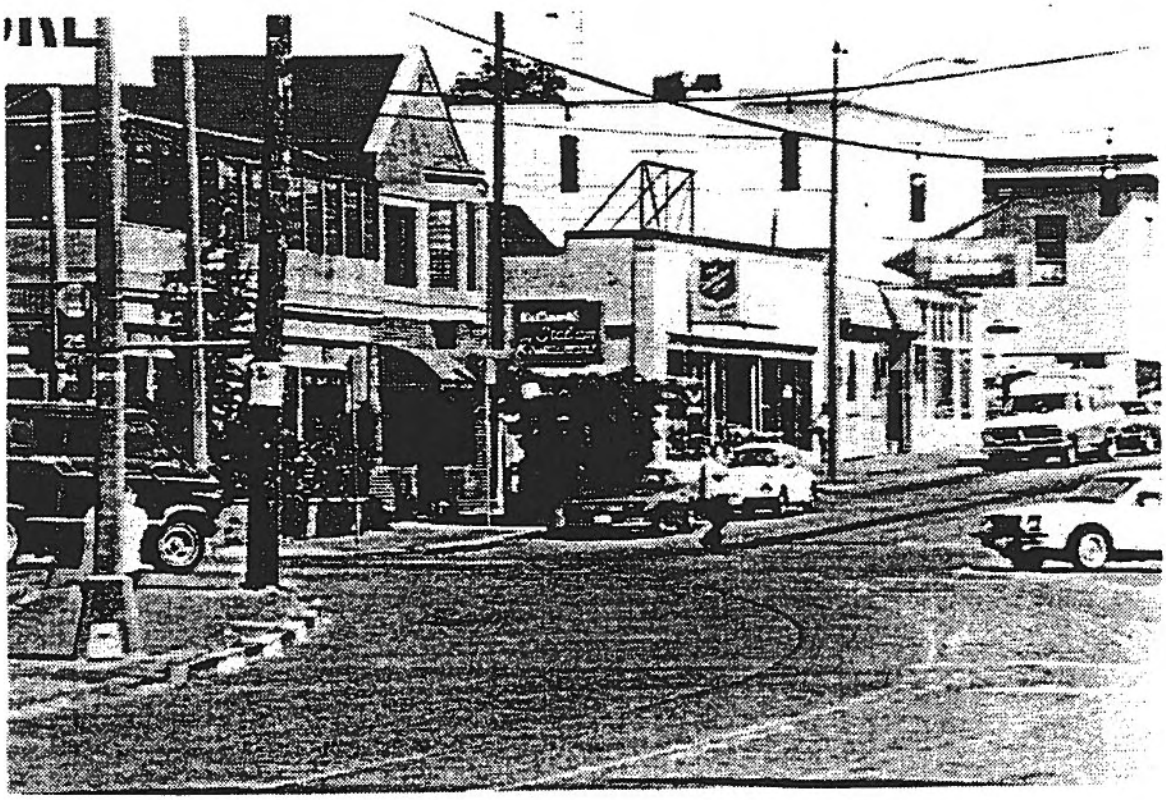
Contents

Summary



Background

City Council Resolution No. 28832 directed the Planning Commission to undertake a design plan to improve the aesthetic quality and economic vitality of commercial areas of 6th Avenue. Although the plan primarily addresses public rights-of-way, private properties are discussed. Design and development principles such as building patterns, appearance, district edge conditions, pedestrian environment, vehicular circulation and parking, landscaping and special features are discussed.

The plan focuses on the 6th Avenue corridor from "I" Street to Madison Street. Also included are the north-south intersecting streets up to one-half block in depth as may be warranted by design considerations.

Special emphasis has been given to improving the commercial areas through design, identifying parking opportunities, enhancing the common boundary between the business district and the adjacent residential community, and to accommodating pedestrians. The plan promotes improvement in design, appearance and economic vitality by making recommendations for land use, circulation, physical development, urban design and implementation.

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance for the revitalization of 6th Avenue commercial districts. The primary responsibility in carrying out the plan's recommendations will rest with the property owners and merchants. The City has not identified any funds to implement the public improvements suggested in this plan. Individual property and business owners can use this plan for guidance when making improvements to their buildings or join with other owners to make larger scale improvements in a particular area.

Design Concept

The design concept for 6th Avenue is to emphasize the linear arrangement of the street and adjacent land uses. The design concept is primarily reinforced through the use of the traditional commercial development pattern which visually strengthens the prominence of 6th Avenue as a special and distinct neighborhood business district. Variety from this development pattern will be provided by greater setbacks consistent with residential development patterns.

To unify the area, the repeated use of a vintage style ornamental street light standard is recommended. The use of the unifying street light, which by its placement and repetition, will complement the underlying circulation and land use patterns and create a continuous visual image.

Street furnishings of similar and compatible design also are recommended to unify the business districts. These amenities include benches, sidewalk paving patterns, drinking fountains and bicycle racks. Landscaping is recommended to beautify the area and screen objectionable uses such as trash receptacles. Landscaping and screening are also recommended to demarcate the edges of the commercial districts and to visually and physically distinguish business areas from the abutting residential neighborhoods.

Design Objectives

In formulating the *6th Avenue Design Plan* specific design objectives were developed which the concept and recommendations address. The design objectives listed below, concern the design, function of the street, and development potential of this street corridor.

Area Wide

- Through design, positively affect the economic viability of the commercial areas and livability of the adjacent established residential neighborhoods.
- Emphasize existing and potential assets of 6th Avenue.

Streetscape

- Emphasize maintenance of the physical infrastructure.
- Enhance the pedestrian circulation environment.
- Establish priorities for use of 6th Avenue street right-of-way.
- Identify public parking opportunities.

Development Patterns

- Increase public pedestrian spaces
- Provide variety by accommodating residential and suburban setback patterns.

Design Recommendations

Design recommendations are specifically intended for the planning, design and development of public and private improvements. The recommendations express specific actions that can be taken to achieve the above design objectives.

- Locate new buildings adjacent to the sidewalk and match adjacent bulding lines on the same block.
- Stabilize and enhance the edge between commercial and residential uses by providing landscaping and quality screening.
- Establish a Special Review District for the purpose of preserving the pedestrian character of the area between "I" Street and Madison Street.
- Design and site buildings to create a public street space that is comfortable to pedestrians in its proportions and scale.

- Use concrete and brick in a simple unifying pattern for paving sidewalk surfaces to personalize the street and add to the character of the 6th Avenue commercial areas.
- Locate off-street surface parking areas close behind buildings or between buildings so as not to disrupt the pedestrian-oriented development pattern along 6th Avenue.
- Develop on-street angle parking on Pine Street, Oakes Street, Prospect Street and Steele Street.
- Use a vintage style ornamental street light as the unifying design element for the *6th Avenue Design Plan* area.
- Use street trees and other landscaping to provide beauty and unity to soften harsh lines and to provide color and visual interest.
- Provide an open space area on the west side of Pine Street to serve as a focal point for the plan area.
- Use a distinctive sign logo that will serve as a recognizable identifier of the 6th Avenue area.

Implementation and Recommendations

Any major improvements in the area will require considerable investment. Accomplishing all of the proposed improvements is estimated to cost $1,315,000. All improvements recommended in this plan will not occur simultaneously. The plan is likely to be implemented incrementally over time and some projects or parts of projects may never occur. One important step in the implementation will be detailed analysis of the cost estimates in order to seek out possible cost savings and to accurately reflect actual development costs (estimates in the plan are stated in 1989 dollars; actual costs of projects may be affected by inflation and other factors.) This detailed cost analysis will occur as the availability of funds for the various projects becomes known. One method to finance improvements may be a Local Improvement District (LID) where each property owner could be assessed annually for a share of the costs for a certain period of time.

The plan indicates several actions that should be undertaken to accomplish the proposed improvements along 6th Avenue. These recommendations range from general to specific and from short range to long range in scope. In addition, necessary ordinance changes involving required improvements in conjunction with development will be proposed in order to achieve the objectives of the plan.

The following recommendations will assist the revitalization of 6th Avenue:

- The City should investigate methods to establish a funding source to assist neighborhood commercial district revitalization efforts.

Summary

- The City should designate funds in the annual capital budget for infrastructure improvements in neighborhood commercial districts.
- The City should initiate or support citizen petitions for formation of local improvement districts to provide streetscape improvements.
- The City should actively support Federal and State legislation which would provide funding and assistance for commercial revitalization.
- The City should review its policy regarding installation and maintenance of supplemental lighting for pedestrian safety and convenience.
- The City should establish a special review district to achieve the design objectives and recommendations of this plan.

The public sector must continue and strengthen its intent to improve the 6th Avenue corridor by actively seeking funds for improvements, providing coordination between private property owners concerning development and maintaining staff resources. It can be anticipated that as private projects are undertaken, the *6th Avenue Design Plan* will be utilized as a guide for improvements to the public street areas.

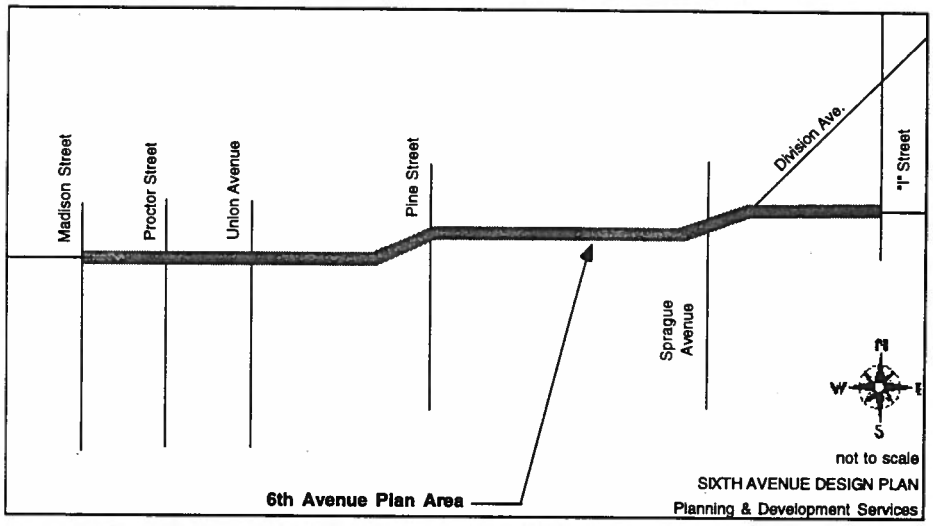
The private property owners and businesses can assist in the revitalization of 6th Avenue by forming associations to represent the interests and coordinate activities in the commercial districts. The association can support programs to enhance the appearance of buildings, streets and sidewalks, promote special events to attract shoppers and recruit new businesses and investors.

This plan is based on the premise that an attractive physical environment is desirable and necessary for a healthy business community. Sixth Avenue is deserving of the careful attention to detail as outlined in this plan. Broad based community support, strong public commitment, and cooperation between property owners and government will be necessary to accomplish the intent and recommendations contained in this Plan.

Introduction

Plan Area

The plan area runs along 6th Avenue from "I" Street to Madison Street. Also included within the plan area are the north-south intersecting streets up to one-half block in depth as may be warranted by design considerations.



Scope

City Council Resolution No. 28832 directed the Planning Commission to undertake a design plan to improve the aesthetic quality and economic vitality of commercial areas on 6th Avenue. Although the plan primarily addresses public rights-of-way, private properties are discussed. Design and development principles such as building patterns, appearance, district edge conditions, pedestrian environment, vehicular circulation and special features are discussed.

Purpose and Intent

The plan promotes improvement in design, appearance and economic vitality by making recommendations for land use, circulation, physical development, urban design and implementation. Special emphasis has been given to improving the commercial areas through design, identifying parking opportunities, enhancing the common boundary between the business district and the adjacent residential community, and to accommodating pedestrians. The plan is intended to assist in deliberations concerning land use policy and decisions and to provide a guide for public and private improvements. It also is intended to help the business community assess its strengths and weaknesses and make decisions concerning the long-term future of the 6th Avenue commercial areas. Many of the recommendations contained in the *6th Avenue Design Plan* support or affirm the policies and recommendations of the *Generalized Land Use Plan* and the *Central Plan.*

Specifically, this plan will provide:

- a schematic design concept
- unifying design elements
- design guidelines for public and private development
- recommendations for public improvements and implementation

Plan Development and Adoption Process

This plan was prepared under the direction of the Tacoma Planning Commission. It was the Commission's objective to obtain a broad range of citizen participation. Citizen involvement included a questionnaire which was mailed to selected residents, businesses, and property owners within the plan area. A public forum was held by the Commission to receive comments on general design concepts. The information received from the citizen questionnaire and public forum was used to prepare a draft plan. Additional discussions were held with the 6th Avenue community during development and review of the draft plan.

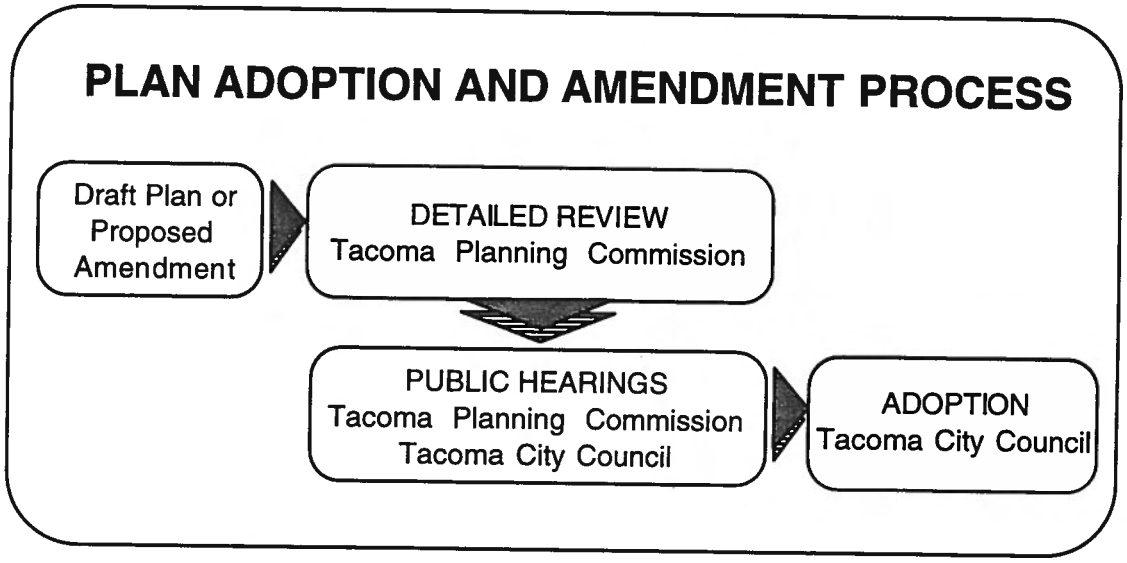
An environmental assessment was completed as part of the plan development process and is attached in the appendices to this document. The draft plan and environmental information were circulated to various agencies, organizations, groups and individuals for review and comment. Informal presentations were made to interested parties to explain the plan and answer questions. Modifications that were deemed appropriate were incorporated into the plan.

Further discussions of the plan and environmental information were held during a public hearing before the Planning Commission. Revisions, as appropriate, were made before the Planning Commission recommended adoption of the plan. The City Council further reviewed the plan and held a public hearing to obtain additional citizen comment. Adoption of the plan by the City Council formally establishes the City's position concerning the design and development of the 6th Avenue plan area.

Plan Amendment Process

In order that the plan continue as an effective policy document, the plan should be reviewed periodically concerning its content and timeliness. Changing conditions and needs may dictate amendments to the document. Proposed amendments will be subject to the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act. Amendments to the plan will receive detailed review by the Planning Commission, and public hearing(s) will be held to solicit citizen comment. After further consideration, and prior to adoption, the Commission will make formal recommendations to the City Council. The Council will then conduct a review of the proposal, hold a public hearing, make modifications if necessary, and adopt the proposed amendments.

The adoption and amendment process for the plan is shown below:



Framework of the Plan

Background

Sixth Avenue is lined with neighborhood commercial districts. It is a busy, well-traveled arterial providing a convenient east-west route to downtown Tacoma and the west end. The commercial areas provide necessary goods and services to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Newer shopping malls and neighborhood commercial districts have drawn away many of the shoppers who previously frequented the businesses along 6th Avenue which has affected the economic health of the area. It is the City's intent to maintain its older commercial areas as attractive and vital shopping districts. This design plan is intended to give direction for revitalization of the area.

History

The early development of the 6th Avenue plan area followed the pattern of typical inlying areas. Streetcar lines ran westerly on 6th Avenue to the Pearl Street area. As the City grew, development spread outward along this transportation route.

Many of the present commercial structures predate the 1940's and have considerable potential for rehabilitation. Some redevelopment has taken place. Older, residential structures have been demolished and replaced with commercial, office or medical-related uses. This transition of uses has impacted the residential neighborhoods surrounding the plan area. Many of the abutting single-family structures have been converted into rental units or commercial uses. Concerns have been expressed over the changing residential use patterns, primarily from homeowners fearing a decline in their neighborhoods.

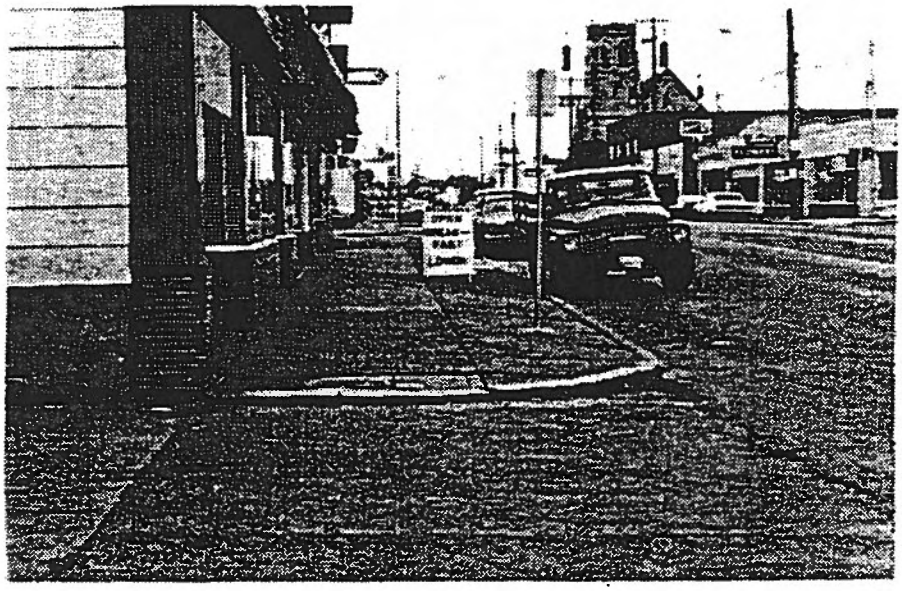
View of 6th & Pine Street, 1940

Development Pattern

Development fronting the 6th Avenue corridor occurs in a linear fashion and consists of three different patterns: traditional commercial, setback suburban, and residential.

Traditional Commercial

Traditional commercial development features buildings in a zero lot line arrangement in relation to the street. Buildings abut front and side property lines to create a continuous linear pattern to the streetscape, breaking only for alleyways and intersecting streets. This type of development pattern is highly- oriented to pedestrians, provides a sense of security, creates a concentration of many uses in a small area and allows direct and visual access into buildings. Traditional commercial development is generally prevalent in older commercial areas. Buildings tend to be smaller, of similar shape, and constructed with the same material. Parking is usually located on the street.



Zero lot-line Development Pattern

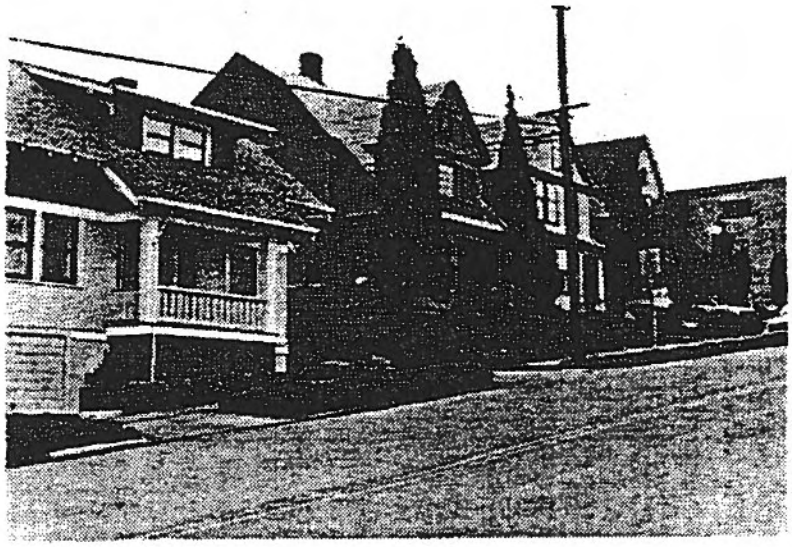
Setback Suburban

Within a setback suburban development area, buildings are built set back from the sidewalk area and parking areas abut the sidewalk. Vehicular access directly from the fronting arterial often interrupts the pedestrian pathways. This type of development is oriented to the automobile and is common in newer, commercial developments.

Setback Suburban Development Pattern

Residential

In the residential development pattern, dwelling structures are generally centrally-situated on the building lot and are separated from other structures by front, back and side yards. Often the dwelling structure is above or below the level of the street.

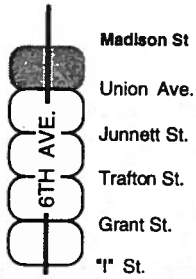


Residential Development Pattern

Existing Conditions

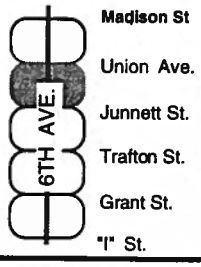
The 6th Avenue plan area has five distinct sub-areas, each with its own character and special needs. These sub-areas are graphically depicted below.

Sub Area A



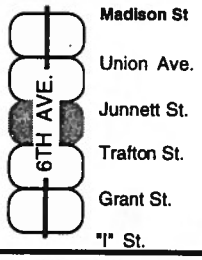
- one or two story buildings
- single family homes
- converted commercial uses from former residential uses
- street and surface parking lots
- mixture of residential, setback suburban, and zero lot line development patterns

Sub Area B



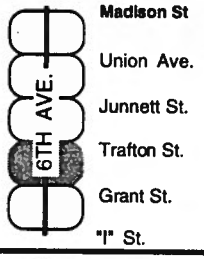
- Established single and multi-Family uses
- commercial activities
- close proximity to University of Puget Sound
- one or two story buildings
- street and surface parking lots

Sub Area C



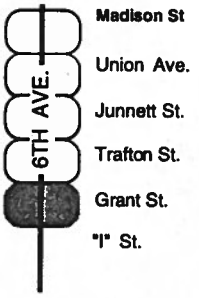
- zero lot line development pattern
- retail and personal service uses
- one or two story buildings
- street and surface parking lots

Sub Area D



- direct access to SR16 via Sprague Avenue
- commercial activities
- one or two story buildings
- street and surface parking lots

Sub Area E



- single and multi-family homes uses
- professional office uses
- close proximity to medical facilities and "K" Street district
- large surface parking lots
- street parking

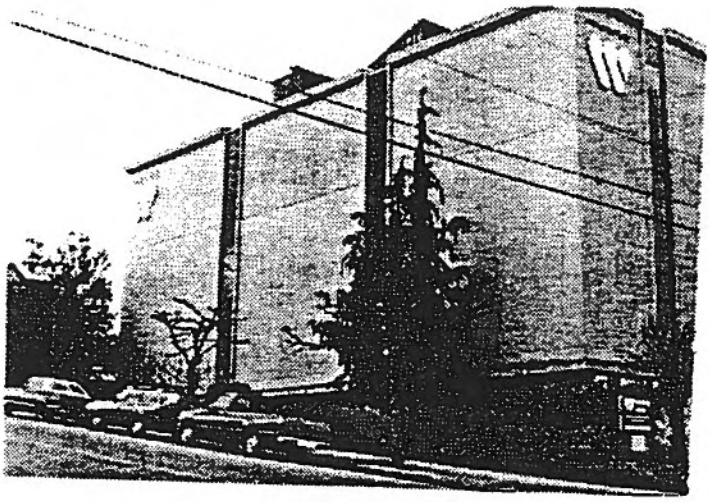
Land Use

The chart below lists the number of land uses fronting on 6th Avenue. Commercial uses, including retail, service, and eating and drinking establishments predominate followed by residential uses. Vacant structures comprise the third highest category. Quasi-public and medical uses complete the listing.

Land Uses in the 6th Avenue Design Plan Area

Uses	Number	Percent
Commercial	138	41
Retail	51	
Service	65	
Eat/Drink	22	
Residential	152	46
Vacant	19	6
Quasi-Public	13	4
Medical	12	3
Total	334	100

Source: Land Use Field Survey, December 1988, Tacoma Planning Department

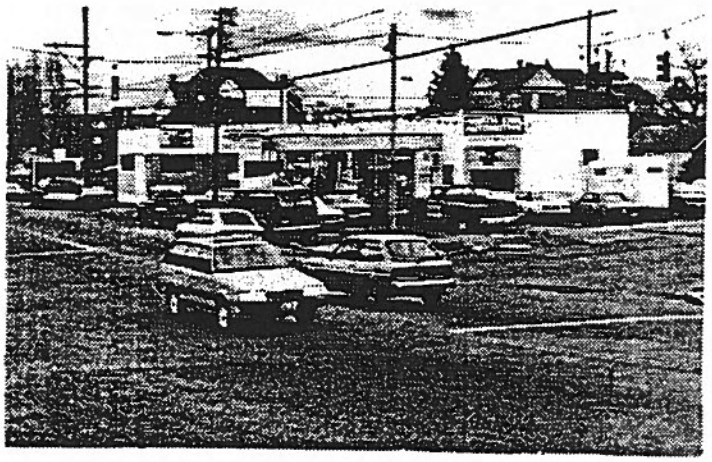


Hillside commercial buildings can take advantage of two level access

Buildings within the 6th Avenue plan area generally range from one to four stories. Commercial, residential, quasi-public and vacant uses are intermixed throughout the plan area. Medical-related facilities are located generally in the eastern portion.

A converted gas station serves as neighborhood mower and motor repair business

The 6th Avenue plan area is generally comprised of small businesses who cater to daytime shoppers. Most stores close at 6:00 p.m. and are closed on Sunday. The primary source of business customers is the surrounding residential neighborhoods and employees of public or private facilities in or near the district. Drive-by customers also are important.



Auto oriented business needs good auto access to street

Circulation

Vehicular

Sixth Avenue is one of the City's most heavily traveled principal arterial streets. The Avenue has two primary traffic functions: serving through traffic and providing access to the uses which front the street. These functions often conflict.

Within the plan area, 6th Avenue is a two-lane roadway with left turn lanes at various points. Major intersecting streets are Sprague Avenue, which provides a "City Entrance" from SR-16, Division Avenue, "K" Street, Alder Street, Union Avenue and Proctor Street. Public transportation serves the area.

Traveling west, traffic volumes range from about 5,000 - 7,000 at "I" Street and increase to 8,000 - 17,000 between Trafton Street and Junett Street. The volumes peak at 20,000 from Union Avenue to Proctor Street and drop off to about 16,000 exiting the plan area at Madison Street. The speed limit is 30 miles per hour.

The condition of the street surface is generally good. Curb conditions are fair.

Parking

Parking opportunities are found in surface parking areas and in on-street spaces, which for the most part are time-restricted zones. Concerns regarding adequate parking were expressed during the development of this plan.

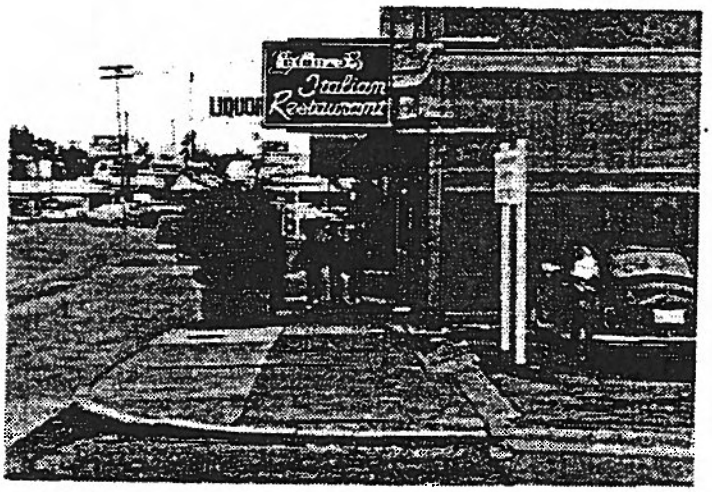
Regulations governing existing parking along 6th Avenue are complex. Required parking is determined by the square footage of the use. If the use was in existence prior to 1953 when Tacoma's zoning code was enacted, these uses have non-conforming use rights for parking which may not be as restrictive as the present code.

A survey of parking opportunities was conducted by the Planning staff. Counts for each block between Union Avenue and State Street show that there are approximately 190 public and 700 private parking spaces available for a total of 890 spaces. This information is shown in the Appendices.

Pedestrian

The enjoyment of the pedestrian experience is affected by the convenience of the route, the length of the trip, and the character of the buildings and surroundings.

The 6th Avenue plan area is approximately two miles in length, over fairly flat topography with few inclines. Sidewalk conditions vary in condition from good to poor. Cracks, uneven surfaces and broken pieces of concrete can be found in some sections. Where properties have undergone redevelopment, repair and replacement of the existing walks has improved the designated walking area.



The character of the pedestrian environment is important to this environment

Streetscape Conditions

The streetscape is composed of all the elements which together form the visual environment of the street. The elements include buildings, lighting, street activities, landscaping, paving, street furnishings as well as the street circulation elements such as parking and traffic. All of these elements are important in themselves but it is how they function and interrelate which determines the character of the street.

Landscaping

Plants with their natural beauty provide a pleasing contrast to the built environment. Plants can define edges and visually link diverse elements and areas. Continuous rows of trees visually soften unrelated structures by filtering light reaching the sidewalk. Properly chosen and located, plants serve as a backdrop for other street amenities and unify the streetscape.

Lighting

Different types of lighting serve different purposes. High, overhead lighting is generally used to light roadways. This type of lighting produces an even distribution of light and provides for the safe movement of cars. However, it can be a harsh light. Lighting to serve the pedestrian is generally of lower height and lighting intensity. Flood lighting the exteriors of buildings and landscaping can create striking effects. Such accent lighting increases the public's enjoyment of these features at night.

Throughout the plan area, overhead street lights between 70 and 1000 watts are found on steel, concrete, aluminum and wooden standards. Several buildings along the 6th Avenue corridor have their exteriors lighted at night.

Street Furniture

Street furniture encompasses all objects placed in and about the street including benches, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, telephone booths, planters, etc. Most street furnishings serve a useful function and because of their high visibility, they also serve an aesthetic function.

With the exception of a few telephone booths, a bus shelter and planters, the plan area lacks street furnishings.

Buildings

Obviously, buildings have the most visual impact on the street. Their height, bulk, materials, color, design, proportion, scale and type are the primary determinants of the character of the street. Structures on 6th Avenue appear in a myriad of colors, materials, styles and designs.

Pedestrian Environment

One aspect to creating a pleasant environment for pedestrians is the ability of the business district to attract and encourage patrons to spend time browsing and to visit several of the stores and restaurants. The success of this aspect is primarily dependent on the appeal of the business, how merchandise is displayed in store- front windows and the appearance of the overall building. Facilities such as parking and access are secondary to this overall success.

The plan area overall lacks a sense of unity and identity as a distinct and special district in which to enjoy walking and, more importantly, to shop. Elements are present which detract from the overall pedestrian experience. Iron bars are found in the window displays of several businesses, creating a physical, visual and mental barrier between the shopper and the merchandise. Vacant or boarded-up buildings create "dead spots" along the street. Long, blank facades have the same effect. Interruptions in the building line by parking lots also affect the pedestrian experience. The lack of amenities such as landscaping and street furniture lessens the attractiveness and appeal of the shopping areas.

Development Controls

Controls or lack of controls on private development greatly affect the appearance of the streetscape. It is important to understand the potential effect of such regulations on future development and redevelopment along 6th Avenue.

Zoning

The zoning in the 6th Avenue plan area consists of "C-2" Commercial District except between Proctor and Madison Streets and between Steele and Trafton Streets where the zoning is "C-1," Commercial District. Some "R-5" Residential zoning exists near "I" Street and "M-1" Light Industrial zoning is found in the vicinity of 6th Avenue and Adams Street.

The "C-2" Commercial District zone allows the building to be built to the front and side property lines, except where the district or development is adjacent to a residential zoning district. Heights up to 45 feet are allowed. Parking requirements for the "C-2" zone are based on the particular type of use. Other than the addition of more intense commercial uses, the development regulations of the "C-1" District allow as much flexibility in use, building design and site layout as the "C-2" District.

Commercial Sign Ordinance

In 1985, the City adopted a new sign ordinance for commercial districts which regulates the type, size, and location of signs. Much of the signage found along 6th Avenue predates the commercial sign ordinance. The City recently amended the billboard regulations in the commercial, business, mixed commercial and industrial zoning districts of Tacoma. The new regulations are more restrictive in terms of spacing and height limitations.

Commercial Special Review District

In 1987, an ordinance for creating commercial special review districts was adopted. The purpose of such districts is to enhance, stabilize and preserve the unique character and scale of established business districts. Commercial special review districts are intended to improve land use compatibilities between anticipated new commercial development or redevelopment and adjacent residential development. Continuous retail frontages, uninterrupted by vehicular accessways and parking facilities, are encouraged as are greater pedestrian orientation and access to the sidewalk and street.

Previous Plans and Studies

The plan area has been previously analyzed in the *Generalized Land Use Plan* and in the *Central Plan*. In developing the *6th Avenue Design Plan*, these documents were reviewed. The *Generalized Land Use Plan* addresses the physical utilization of land and the distribution of different types of land use intensities for the entire city.

The *Central Plan* addresses physical land use, the vehicular and pedestrian circulation and design and amenities. It is a statement of intent about the future growth and development for the Central Planning area which encompasses the south side of 6th Avenue.

Assumptions

Land use, circulation and other physical characteristics were analyzed as well as trends, anticipated developments and community desires. From this analysis, certain assumptions can be made which form the basis for the design concept and recommendations in this plan. These assumptions are:

Land Use

The 6th Avenue plan area has a high potential for redevelopment. It can be expected that existing uses will be more intensly developed. The conversion of residential to commercial uses will continue to occur. Some commercial expansion will take place north and south of the corridor adjacent to the residential areas. Increased commercial expansion is expected to extend onto Sprague Avenue to the south. Medical facilities will continue to impact the 6th Avenue and "I" Street area and some transitioning of these uses will occur spreading west to the "K" Street vicinity. The large variety of businesses will continue to exist and is expected to increase. The plan area will not become a single area with the same character but will be comprised of several sub-areas. The main commercial sub-area or core will continue to be located between Junett and Trafton Streets and other large nodes of commercial activity will remain at Union Avenue and at Proctor Street. Any new residential development that occurs along 6th Avenue will be of a medium intensity nature.

Circulation

Sixth Avenue will continue to be a principal arterial. Although recent developments have broken down the pedestrian environment by placing parking lots adjacent to the sidewalk, pedestrian orientation will continue to be important and will need to be protected, particularly between Trafton Street and Junett Street. Pedestrian centers of activity can also be expected in the "K" Street and Proctor Street areas. Public transit will continue to provide service along 6th Avenue. Traffic volumes most likely will increase as the business district develops and the City continues to grow. Street widths will remain the same for the majority of 6th Avenue. Some widening at certain locations may be necessary to accommodate increased levels of traffic and consideration will be given to peak hour parking restrictions.

Parking

Parking opportunities will continue to be a vital concern to the 6th Avenue business community. On-street parking will remain on 6th Avenue although increased traffic volumes will bring pressure to convert parking lanes into traveling lanes in order to relieve congestion.

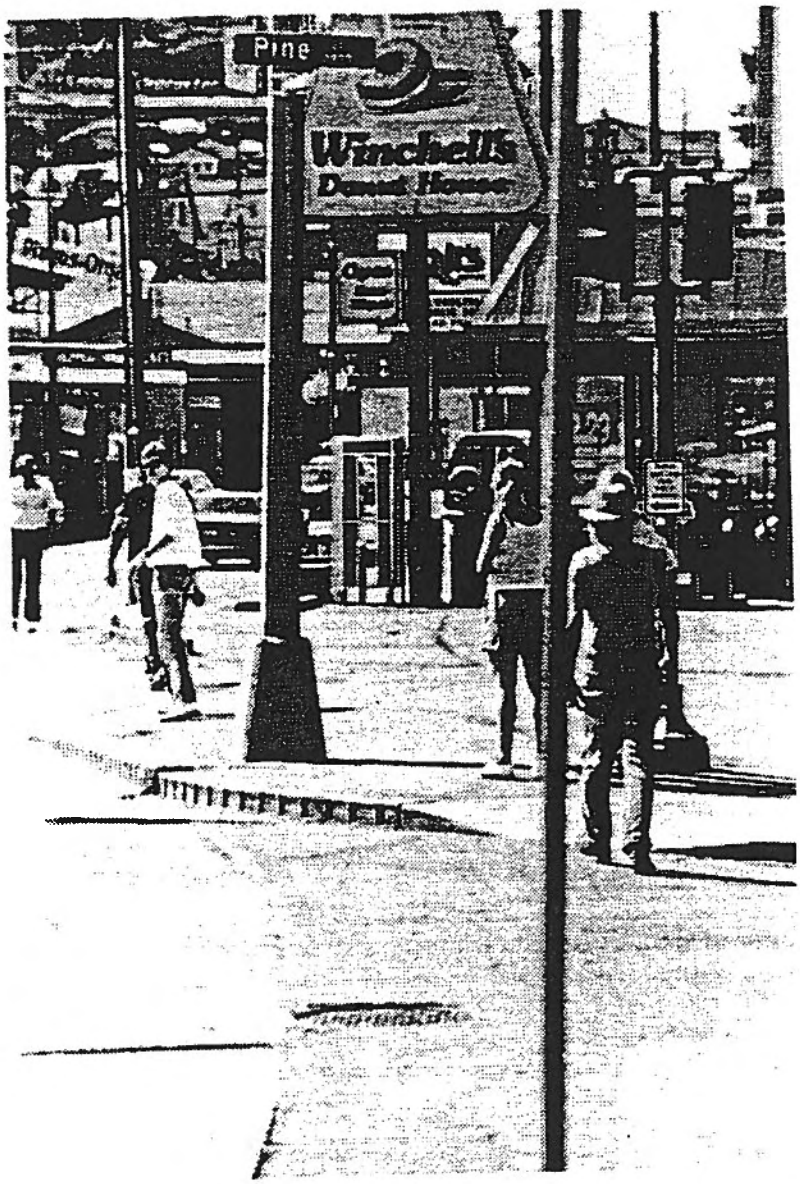
Streetscape

The success of the plan area's economic climate will continue to be dependent, in large part, upon the streetscape appearance of the 6th Avenue corridor. Amenities such as street furnishings, landscaping and lights will be important unifying elements in creating a prosperous business district along 6th Avenue.

Public/Private Cooperation

Public sector participation in private redevelopment projects is essential. Public participation may range from support and coordination to financial assistance. Private sector involvement will be necessary to the success of major public capital projects. Support from private property owners and businesses, including financial, will be necessary for any major public improvements of the streetscape.

Design Guidelines and Recommendations



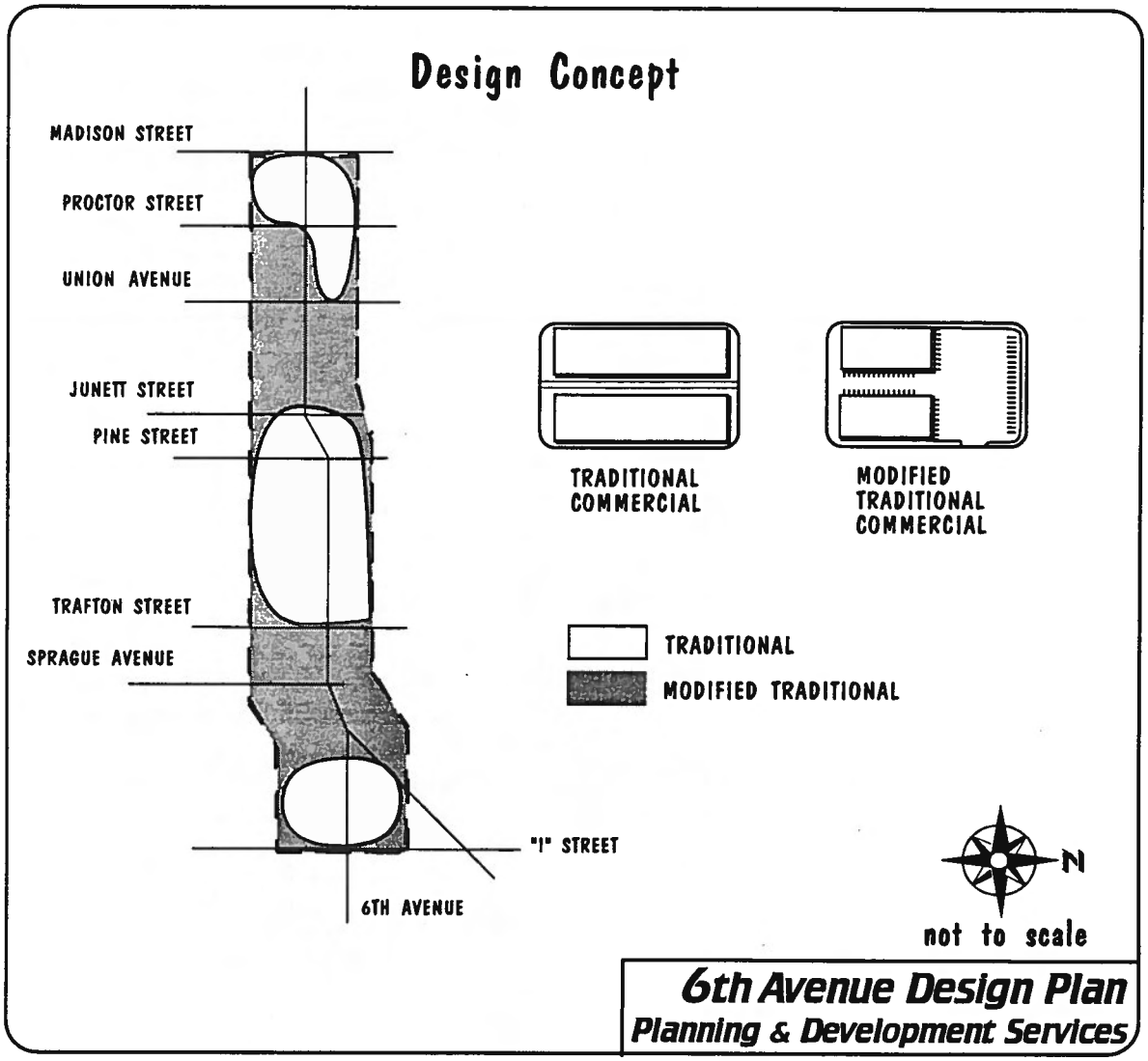
Design Concept

The design concept for 6th Avenue is to emphasize the linear arrangement of the street and adjacent land uses. The linear corridor concept will visually strengthen 6th Avenue as a special and distinct neighborhood business district in providing convenience goods and services to the surrounding residential uses. The design concept is primarily reinforced by commercial developments built adjacent or near the property line fronting 6th Avenue reflecting a zero lot line development pattern. Variety is provided by existing residential development which are interspersed with and newer commercial uses which are set back from the street, reflecting the modified zero lot line development pattern. In the long-term, as residential uses are replaced by commercial development, the traditional commercial development pattern is to be encouraged. This approach will carry out the concept and strengthen the pedestrian character of the area.

In areas of 6th Avenue where newer commerial uses have been developed which are set back from the property line, a modified street -oriented traditional development pattern would be appropriate as redevelopment occurs. In these areas, developing parking adjacent to buildings may be acceptable. The design concept illustrated on the following page depicts traditional commercial and modifed traditional commercial areas.

To unify the area, the repeated use of a selected street light standard is recommended. Use of a unifying street light, which by its placement and repetition, will complement the underlying circulation and land use patterns and create a continuous visual image. The street light chosen for the district is a replica of historic lighting once found in the area. The streetscape treatment may vary within different areas of 6th Avenue but will be tied together by the use of the unifying street lights.

Street furnishings of similar and compatible design also are recommended to unify the business districts. These amenities include sidewalk paving patterns, drinking fountains, bicycle racks and benches. Landscaping is recommended to beautify the area and screen objectionalble uses such as refuse containers. Landscaping and screening are also recommended to identify the edges of the commercial districts and to visually and physically distinguish business areas from the abutting residential neighborhoods.


Design Concept
MADISON STREET
PROCTOR STREET
UNION AVENUE
JUNETT STREET
PINE STREET
TRAFTON STREET
SPRAGUE AVENUE
"I" STREET
6TH AVENUE
TRADITIONAL COMMERCIAL
MODIFIED TRADITIONAL COMMERCIAL
TRADITIONAL
MODIFIED TRADITIONAL
N
not to scale
6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Design Objectives

Specific objectives were developed to address design concerns and to guide the formulation of recommendations and guidelines for development activities. The design objectives concern the aesthetic enhancement of the 6th Avenue corridor and the development potential of the plan area.

Area Wide

- Through design, positively affect the economic viability of the commercial areas and livability of the adjacent established residential neighborhoods.
- Emphasize existing and potential assets of 6th Avenue.

Streetscape

- Emphasize maintenance of the physical infrastructure.
- Enhance the pedestrian circulation environment.
- Establish priorities for use of 6th Avenue street public areas.
- Identify public parking opportunities.

Development Patterns

- Emphasize zero lot line development pattern. Increase public pedestrian spaces.
- Provide variety by accommodating existing residential and suburban setback development patterns.

Design Guidelines and Recommendations

The following section provides design guidelines and recommendations specifically intended for the planning, design and development of public and private improvements. The guidance is expressed in both illustrations and text. Design recommendations express specific actions that can be taken to achieve the design objectives. The design guidelines provide further clarification by expressing or illustrating desired characteristics and allow for flexibility and creativity.

Building Character and Land Use

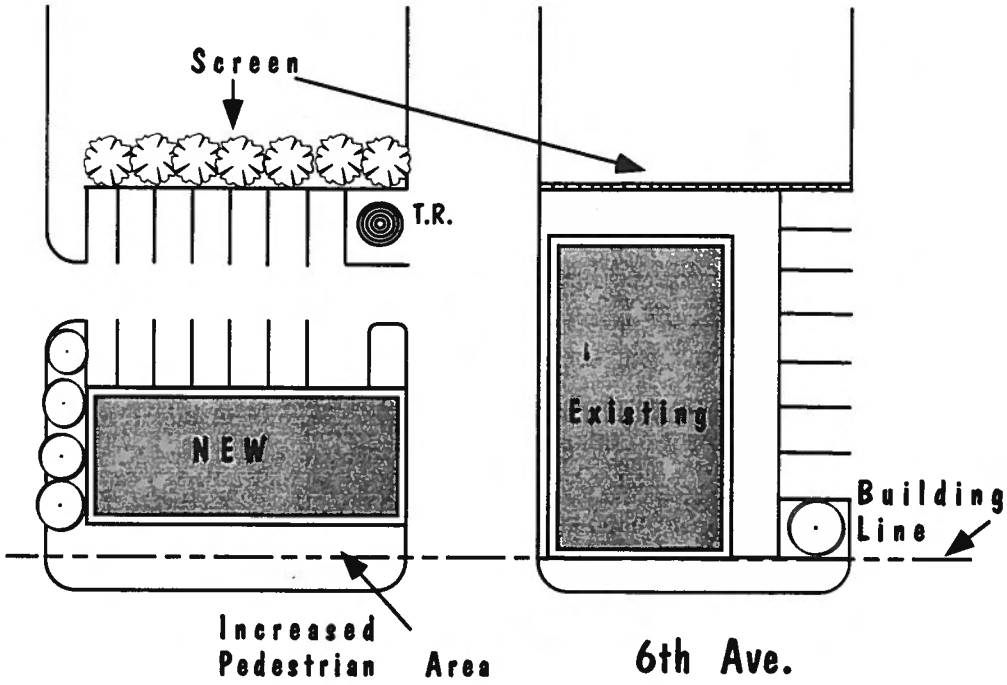
Development Patterns

The traditional commercial development pattern is the most conducive to encouraging pedestrian activity and is the desired method of development. Buildings should be built to the front and side property lines. In some instances buildings may be set back up to 10 feet; however, the space created by this setback should be dedicated for pedestrian use or landscaping. Buildings should enclose 6th Avenue and incorporate features that emphasize pedestrian use. Large undefined spaces and parking areas along the street are

to be avoided. The existing newer commercial uses which are set back from the street and residential developments will continue to provide variety to the predominant development pattern on 6th Avenue. Over the long term, as residential uses are replaced by commercial development, the zero lot line development pattern is to be encouraged.

Traditional Commercial Development Concept

Recommendation: Locate new buildings adjacent to the sidewalk and match adjacent lines on the same block.



Guidelines:

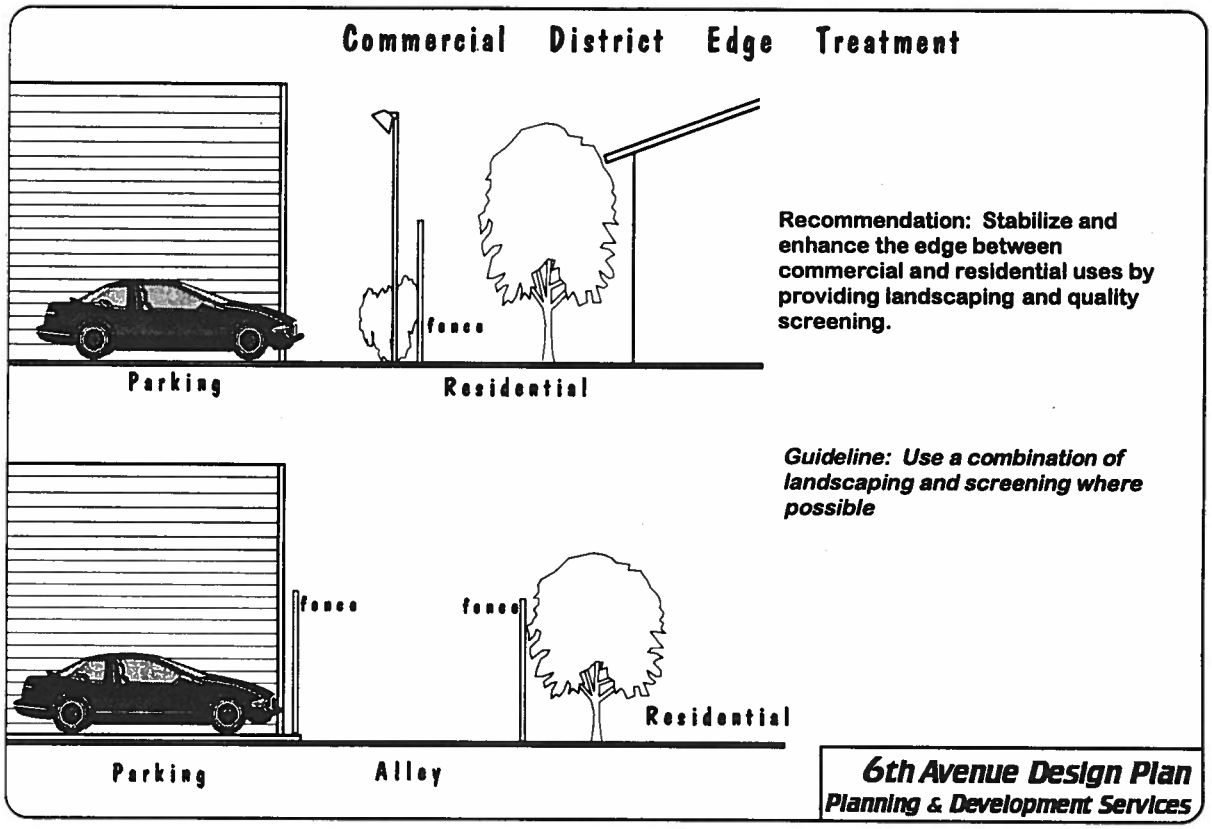
* ***Allow up to 10 feet setbacks so to create additional pedestrian sidewalk areas***
* ***Provide a continuous edge along the street to visually enclose and define the public street***
* ***Maintain buildings at or near sidewalk***
* ***The area between the walk and the building should be a pedestrian area or landscaping or both***
* ***Locate parking on the street, side streets and behind buildings***

6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Commercial District Edge Treatment

Edges refer to a line or zone where areas of different land uses meet and a transition is made from one to another. Both land uses are equally important.

Edge quality is determined by the compatibility of the adjacent uses, by type of development, by its design configuration and by related impact conditions such as parking, traffic circulation and noise pollution. A desirable edge is well-designed and well-developed on both sides.



Land Use and Pedestrian Environment

Providing an attractive, inviting environment for the pedestrian is a primary objective of the *6th Avenue Design Plan*. With its diversity of shops and restaurants and close-in residential market, 6th Avenue has the potential to be a major pedestrian area. The potential can be realized through careful attention to detail, placement of street furnishings and the strong relationship between the buildings and the sidewalk.

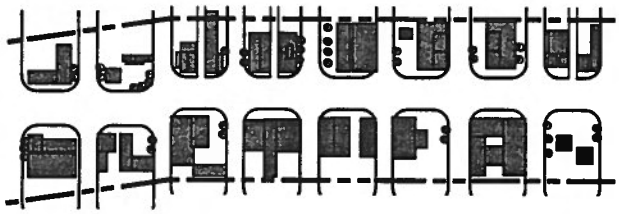
New development should feature retail uses on the ground floor with residential, office and commercial uses located above. Windows which allow visual access to the activities and merchandise within buildings and create a close relationship with the outside street and sidewalk environment are encouraged. Clean, well-maintained and well-designed buildings with attractive window displays will invite people to shop in the area. The demand for additional business space should be met through a more intense use of available commercial areas rather than by expansion of the business district into the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Upper floors of commercial buildings should be used to fill the demand for additional business space. Mixed use development, combining offices with residential uses may be desirable. Such development is an efficient use of land and can result in increased density and vitality for the 6th Avenue area.

The manner of development is important to the pedestrian environment. Blank facades, solid walls, large parking lots and driveway entrances disrupt this environment by providing dull and uninviting places. Visual clutter from signs and billboards can detract from the attractiveness of the area. Refuse containers, overgrown landscaping, and deteriorating facades will deter people from shopping in the area.

The use of a special review district provides a mechanism to permit more restrictive standards for a designated area than those required by the existing zoning. A Special Review District is an effective means to guide property development and redevelopment. It can be used to restrict land use, and to require streetscape improvements and conformance with specific design elements.

Zoning

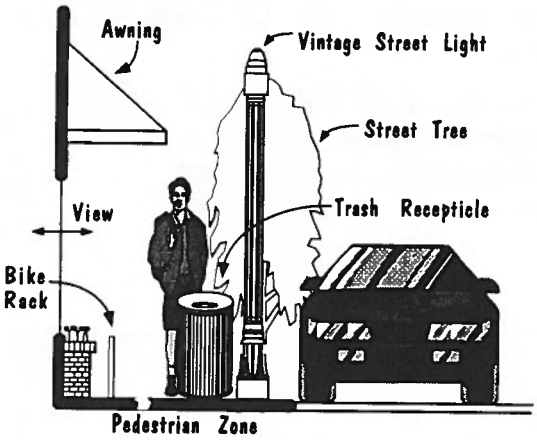
Recommendation: Establish a Special Review District for the purpose of preserving the pedestrian character of the area between "I" Street and Madison Street.



6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

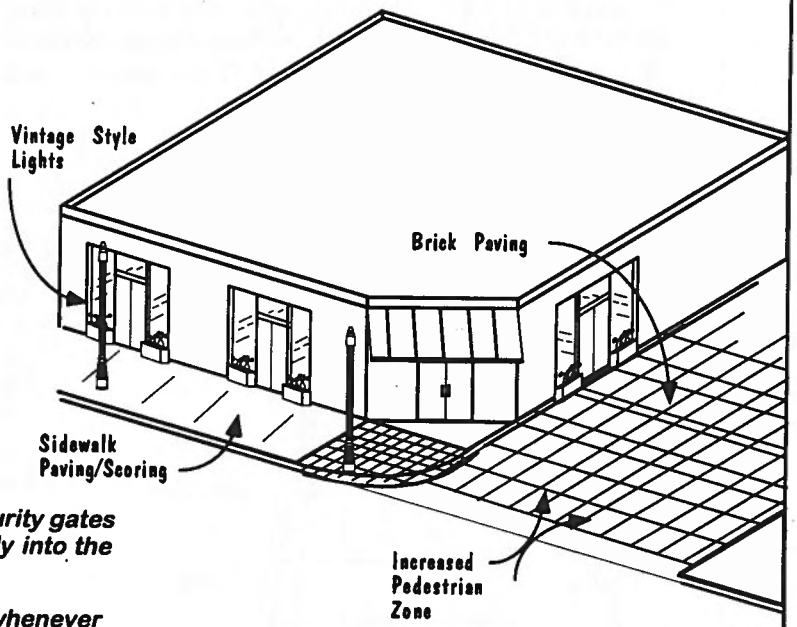
Pedestrian Environment

Recommendation: Design and site buildings to create a public street space that is comfortable to pedestrians in its proportions and scale



Guidelines:

* *Promote pedestrian safety and comfort at street level.*
* *Avoid blank facades, solid walls.*
* *Develop the public space between buildings and the street curb as a safe convenient pedestrian area with attractive amenities such as paving, lighting, seating and landscaping.*



* *Incorporate iron security gates and bars aesthetically into the design of buildings*
* *Eliminate billboards whenever possible. Advertising on billboards should be used by businesses within the district*
* *Screen shipping and loading areas and refuse bins. Reduce trash volume through compaction and reduce the number of dumpsters by sharing.*

6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Circulation

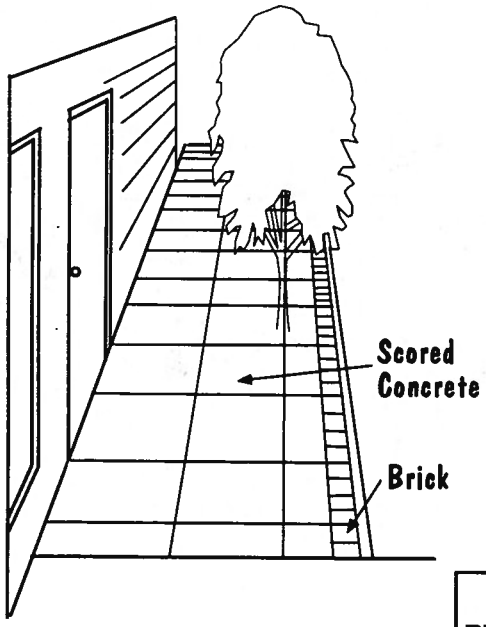
Pedestrian

Pedestrians react to the immediate environment based upon their comfort level which is dependent upon ease of access, variety, safety and convenience. Pedestrians view things at close range and notice details that automobile drivers can not because of distance, speed and the necessity to move on. Attention to safety, lighting and general comfort, such as protection from the weather needs to be emphasized.

Attractive shops and pedestrian walkways through the district increase the acceptance of walking distances. Attention to cleanliness and quality is also important. A fresh coat of paint, attractive window displays and swept sidewalks express quality and maintenance.

Pedestrian Circulation Paving

Recommendation: Use concrete and brick in a simple unifying pattern for paving sidewalk surfaces to personalize the street and add to the character of the 6th Avenue commercial areas



Guidelines:

- *Use brick in various patterns, textures, colors, that are compatible with adjacent buildings.*
- *Score concrete in a unifying grid pattern at approximate two foot intervals.*
- *Allow for handicapped accessibility.*

6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Vehicular

Sixth Avenue accommodates through and destination-oriented traffic. As a busy street, 6th Avenue will continue to support substantial volumes of traffic. Adjacent residential streets should be used only for local and not through traffic. Traffic patterns need to be periodically evaluated and measures taken if necessary to prevent commuters from travelling unnecessarily on residential streets.

Parking

The number and type of parking spaces needed are dependent on land uses within and nearby the plan area. As new development and redevelopment occurs, the demand for parking will increase. Parking needs will compete with traffic and pedestrian needs.

Alternatives for providing additional parking opportunities include off-street surface lots and the provision of additional on-street spaces by reconfiguring certain side streets. Parking may also occur at the edge between the business district and the adjacent residential neighborhoods and will have to be developed to the satisfaction of both parties.

Private employers and nearby residential property owners need to work together to develop a coordinated parking program that would accommodate employee, visitor, and residential needs.

Streetscape

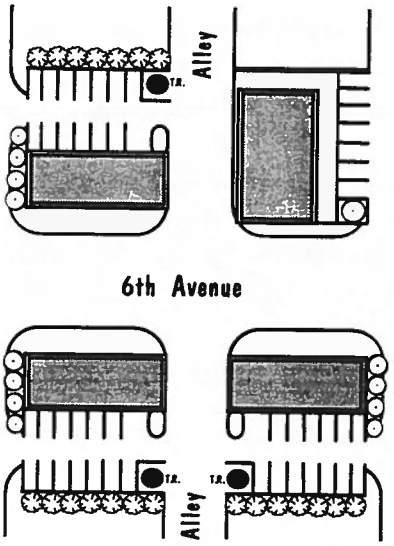
Street Furnishings

The street furnishings proposed for 6th Avenue are drinking fountains, benches, bicycle racks, pedestrian scale street lights, landscaping and trash receptacles. The repetition of these street furnishings and the use of compatible materials will create a continuous physical and visible image. Location of street furniture must be where it is convenient, accessible and where it relates to the surroundings. Lack of space for furnishings along some sidewalks make location very important so as not to interfere with pedestrian movement.

Unifying design elements tie an area together into a recognizable and distinct district. The unifying design element for the *6th Avenue Design Plan* area is the vintage style ornamental street light. Its repeated appearance throughout the district will create a continuous visual image and enhance the existing lighting system thereby adding to the general visibility and safety of the area.

Parking

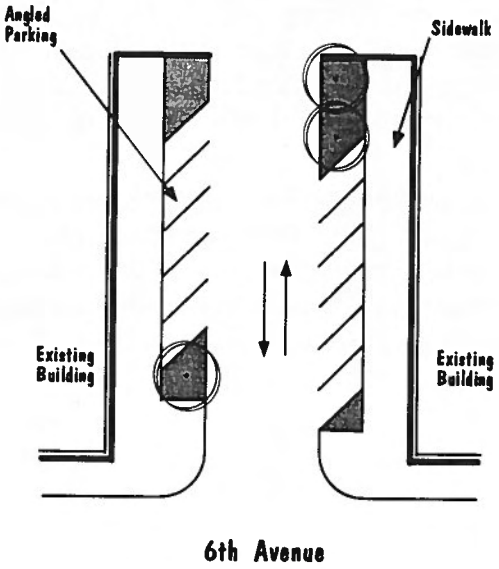
Recommendation: Locate off-street surface parking areas close behind buildings, or between buildings so as not to disrupt pedestrian-oriented development pattern along 6th Avenue.



Guidelines:

* *Place driveways on sidestreets.*
* *Change driveway scoring pattern or surface material to differentiate it from the sidewalk.*
* *Limit total number of driveways.*
* *Allow width driveways opening to be less than 30ft.*
* *Keep all obstacles at least 5 feet from driveway opening.*

Recommendation: Develop on-street angle parking on Pine Street, Oaks Street, Prospect Street and Steele Street.

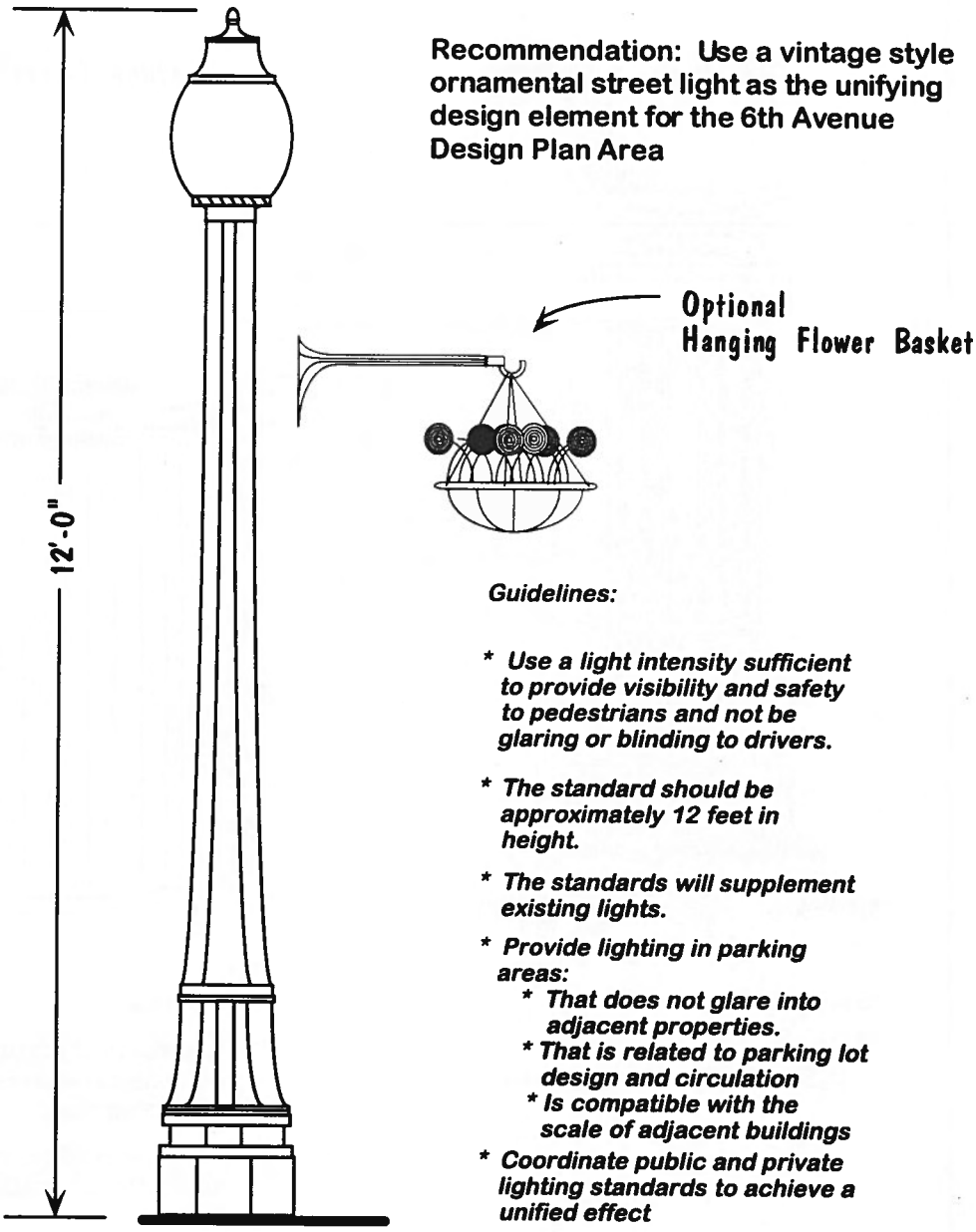


Guidelines:

* *Integrate sidewalk and parking paving materials*
* *Install landscaping*

6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Street Furniture
Lighting



Recommendation: Use a vintage style ornamental street light as the unifying design element for the 6th Avenue Design Plan Area

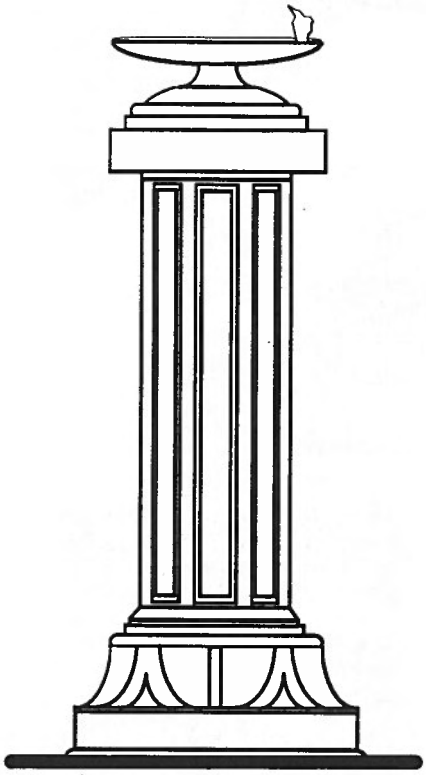
Guidelines:

- ***Use a light intensity sufficient to provide visibility and safety to pedestrians and not be glaring or blinding to drivers.***
- ***The standard should be approximately 12 feet in height.***
- ***The standards will supplement existing lights.***
- ***Provide lighting in parking areas:***
  - ***That does not glare into adjacent properties.***
  - ***That is related to parking lot design and circulation***
  - ***Is compatible with the scale of adjacent buildings***
- ***Coordinate public and private lighting standards to achieve a unified effect***

6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Street Furniture

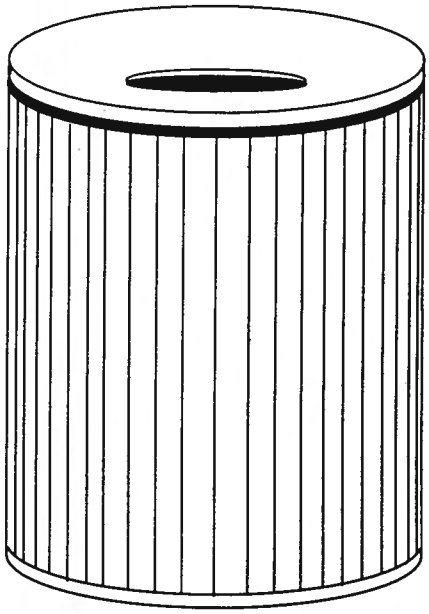
Drinking Fountain



Guideline:

* ***Locate in areas of high pedestrian activity areas.***

Refuse Containers

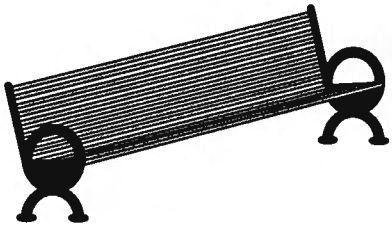


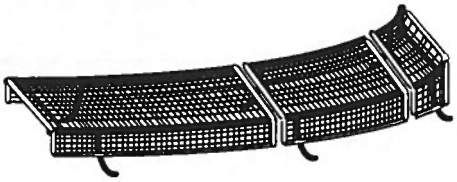
Guidelines:

* ***Locate and place for ease of access for collection of refuse and cleaning.***
* ***Provide optimum number of units for expected use of an area***

6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Street Furniture





Benches (Optional)

Traditional commercial areas

Guidelines:

* *Use a vintage style wooden bench with iron arm rests and legs.*
* *Use along pedestrian routes and near bus stops.*
* *place in the sun and where sheltered from the wind.*

Modified commercial areas

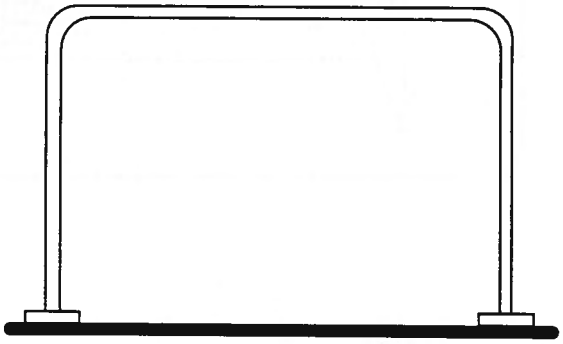
Guidelines:

* *Use a contemporary style wire bench painted in bright colors.*

Bicycle Rack

Guidelines:

* *Incorporate bicycle racks in existing establishments and planning for new developments.*
* *Provide adequate space in pedestrian activity areas.*



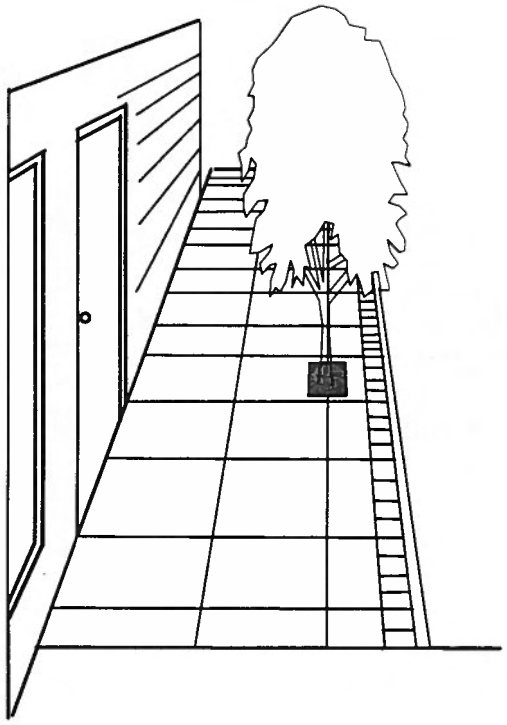
6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Landscaping/Street Trees

Street trees provide beauty and unity. Landscaping can define edges. Landscaping softens harsh building lines and provides color and visual interest. For 6th Avenue, street trees and other types of landscaping need to be selected based on specific site conditions and space allowances.

Landscaping/Street trees

Recommendation: Use Photina Glabra as the predominate street tree.



Guidelines:

- ***Where space is available plant large canopied trees - Acer plantanoides, Red Sunset Maple.***
- ***Where space is limited, plant columnar trees (side streets).***
- ***Mass trees for effect.***
- ***Install small planting beds where space for trees are limited.***
- ***Plant in the ground without tree grates.***

6th Avenue Design Plan
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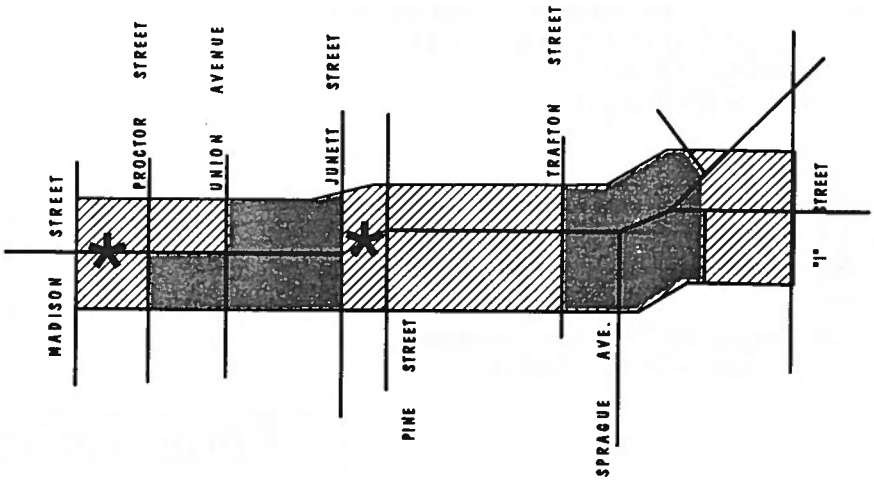
Special Features

Identifiable landmarks or features serve as focal points for an area. They are instantly recognizable and are associated with the district. A focal point can be a park, a building or a unique element such as a fountain, clock or a sign. An artwork such as a sculpture or painting on a blank wall can also make an area stand out from other similar districts. Enhanced public and private amenities to create a more pleasant area are needed.

Special Features
Open Space

Recommendation: Provide a park/open space area on the north side between Madison and Proctor Streets to encourage pedestrian use and serve as a residential uses west of Madison Street.



Recommendation: provide an open space area on the west side of Pine Street to serve as a focal point for the plan area.

* Open Space

Zero Lot Line

Modified Zero Lot Line

N

not to scale

6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Special Features: District Logo

District Logo
(example)

6th Avenue

Recommendation: Use a distinctive sign logo that will serve as a recognizable identifier of the 6th Avenue area.

Recommendation: Develop items or facilities which can become community focal points. Focal points can include:

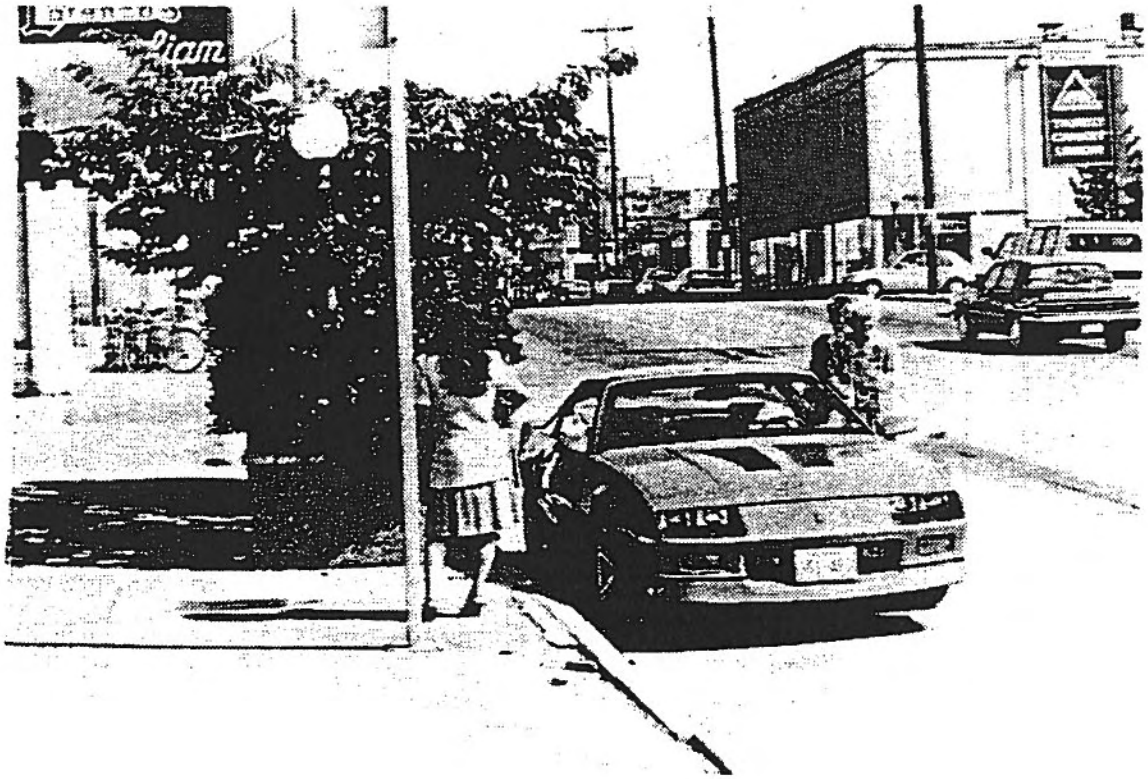
- **a small mini-park for community activities**
- **a free standing vintage style street clock**
- **a sculpture or fountain**
- **a public or private art**

Guidelines:

* ***Locate in park/open space areas***
* ***Consider sculptural elements relating to the history of the character of 6th Avenue.***
* ***Use blank walls which front on public spaces to paint or mount murals.***

6th Avenue Design Plan
Planning & Development Services

Implementation



The guidelines and recommendations contained in this plan are intended to facilitate 6th Avenue's development into an unique pedestrian-oriented business district. From the point of view of the 6th Avenue business community, the benefits from these improvements can best be expressed in terms of potential for increases in sales and property values. From the point of view of the surrounding residential community, the improvements would help make the 6th Avenue business district a more pleasant place for shopping as well as contributing to a better community environment.

The successful implementation of these recommended improvements is dependent upon development timing and funding constraints. Public and private sectors working together in a partnership manner will also be required. The private sector must be willing to actively support the revitalization of the area, make capital investments, and share the cost of public improvements. The public sector must continue and strengthen its intent to implement the plan by actively seeking and identifying funds for improvements and providing coordination between private property owners and public officials.

Recommendations

The previous section of this plan indicated several actions that should be undertaken to accomplish the proposed improvements along 6th Avenue. These recommendations are suggested in the text and illustrated on design drawings. The recommendations range from the general to the specific and from the short range to those that are long range in scope. It is expected that some of the recommendations may need to be modified before being carrried out, and some may never be carried out due to changing conditions, further analysis and other constraints.

In addition, other actions are necessary to carry out the objectives of this plan. The economic health of neighborhood commercial districts is important in the preservation of neighborhood character and livability. Neighborhood commercial districts need to be competitive with outlying commercial developments. Successful and vital commercial areas will help to stablize and maintain the quality of life in the city's residential areas. Therefore, it is important that the City provide assistance in revitalization efforts in the 6th Avenue area and within other neighborhood commercial districts. The following recommendations will assist the revitalization of 6th Avenue.

- The City should investigate methods to establish a funding source to assist neighborhood commercial district revitalization efforts.
- The City should designate funds in the annual capital budget for infrastructure improvements in neighborhood commercial districts.
- The City should initiate or support citizen petitions for formation of a local improvement district to provide streetscape improvements.
- The City should actively support Federal and State legislation which would provide funding and assistance for commercial revitalization.

- The City should review its policy regarding installation and maintenance of supplemental lighting for pedestrian safety and convenience.
- The City should establish a special review district to achieve the design objectives and recommendations of this plan.

Implementation Methods

Translating the intents and recommendations into action requires the application of a wide variety of implementing methods. Each method approaches plan implementation from a slightly different perspective. Each, however, may be appropriate from time to time to carry out the plan.

Application of Development Controls

The *6th Avenue Design Plan* can be further implemented through a variety of development controls. This may include several variations of and innovations in zoning such as special or overlay districts.

Control techniques vary by degree of specificity and administrative requirements. When review of individual projects is not required, regulatory mechanisms take the form of traditional zoning. Where project reviews are desired to ensure more sensitive compliance with the goals of the plan area, the regulatory mechanism may involve special controls or zoning for specific areas, i.e., 6th Avenue.

Uniform Zoning Districts

Zoning regulations generally specify permitted use, building height, setbacks and required parking. Taken together, these constraints define the maximum size and type of development that may occur in a given district.

The 6th Avenue Planning area is comprised primarily of zoned"C-2" Commercial District. Between Proctor and Madison Streets and Steele and Trafton Streets, "C-1" Commercial District zoning exists. In the "I" Street vicinity, "R-5" Residential zoning is in place. "M-1" Industrial zoning is found between Adams and Proctor Streets. No changes in this existing zoning are recommended by this plan; however, the overlay district described below is envisioned.

Special or Overlay Districts

The use of special or overlay zoning districts provides a technique for imposing more appropriate standards for a certain designated area than those specified under basic zoning. Special districts may preserve and direct special or unique features in specified areas such as land use, landscaping, building location, parking, size and facade treatment. Special or overlay districts may also require mandatory design review of all proposed development.

Because the 6th Avenue corridor is not unlike many older neighborhood business districts in Tacoma, which are deserving of special attention; the *6th Avenue Design Plan* recommends special zoning controls to help achieve the design objectives in certain areas within the plan area. This district would be

in addition to existing zoning regulations. Such an overlay district may include:

- requirements for consistent street improvements and design elements
- special access requirements
- special sign controls
- facade improvement guidelines
- pedestrian improvement guidelines (as related to sidewalks, street lights, street trees and other street furniture)
- creation of a fund to which developers could contribute in lieu of certain other requirements of development. The fund would be used for improvements recommended in this plan.

Annual Capital Improvement (CIP) Budget

The City Council can appropriate money to a special "set aside" fund for capital improvement projects. The primary source of Capital Improvement Program funds has been the City's General Fund and is limited by the amount of money the City is able to commit to capital improvements in any given year. Projects are submitted on a city-wide basis by City departments and agencies, citizen committees and the public. Requests for funds far exceed the amount of money available and competition is keen. Projects are evaluated on need, benefits and cost.

Capital improvement funds may be used for public improvements such as parks, sewers, street beautification, and public buildings.

Other Funding Sources

Other funding sources may become available from time to time, such as federal monies through Community Development Block Grants and from State resources. Local Improvement Districts, bond monies, City government general fund monies, or even private foundation monies can also be sources. Funding sources change frequently and, thus, this is not to be considered a complete list of sources. It should be noted; however, that funding criteria usually limit the use of money to specific types of projects. Moreover, public and private funds are limited and competition for these monies when available, is great.

Improving Business Districts

Neighborhood business districts have suffered in competition from shopping centers, shopping malls and centers which offer convenient location, adequate parking and a wide range of goods and services. These newer retail developments have attracted customers away from traditional neighborhood shopping areas. The challenge for the neighborhood shopping districts is to build upon what the area is and what it has to offer, to provide the convenience and the amenities and to broaden the range of goods and services available.

One approach for neighborhood commercial district revitalization that has had considerable success in communities across the country is the Main

Street program. This approach evolved from a pilot commercial revitalization project initiated in 1977 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The Main Street approach is a comprehensive management program addressing four areas of concern: organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring. Organization involves building consensus and cooperation between business and property owners, residents, customers, government and others who have an interest and part to play in the revitalization process. Design encompasses the physical appearance and character of buildings, infrastructure and open spaces. Promotion means marketing the neighborhood district's assets to potential investors, customers and residents. Economic restructuring involves strengthening the district's existing economic base by identifying new market opportunities, helping existing businesses grow, finding new uses for vacant or underutilized buildings and recruiting new businesses.

Planning and organizing activities are the first steps for successful revitalization. Forming an organization that represents the interests and coordinates the activities of its various members is a very effective way to guide revitalization efforts. A careful assessment of the needs of the district can include the following activities.

- Establishment of an overall goal or mission statement for the business district.
- Creation of a non-profit organization to act on behalf of the business district.
- Establishment of a neighborhood or community policy approach to stabilize and reduce fear of crime and drugs.
- Development of strategies to address district needs.

Various types of projects can benefit the revitalization of a business area. The most effective and feasible projects are determined by the organization's planning efforts and can include:

- A district program to improve safety, security and litter clean-up.
- An organized marketing, advertising and promotions program for the district.
- Sponsorship of special district events.
- A coordinated program for the improvement and maintenance of buildings in the district.
- A parking management program that could include providing appropriate signs, lighting, clean-up and landscaping for the

district's parking areas. Identifying opportunities for the development of additional parking could also be included.

- A program to improve the district's pedestrian environment that could include the provision of street tree plantings, coordinated landscaping and other improvements.
- A survey to determine customer shopping habits and demographics (ages, incomes, occupations, household size)
- Undertaking special promotions to target special populations such as "U.P.S. Student Recognition Week."

After resources of the district and the organization have been identified and put to work for the revitalization of the district, the organization may require additional resources to fulfill the need areas in their revitalization efforts. Some of these outside resources include the following:

- Technical assistance and other expertise (including marketing, accounting and bookkeeping, tax planning, financing, personnel and training) for business operators.
- Establishment of a Local Improvement District to finance any needed street, curb and street light improvements and maintenance.
- Establishment of a Parking and Business Improvement Area to finance marketing and parking opportunities on behalf of the business district.

Cost Estimates

Preliminary estimates for accomplishing the improvements in this plan is $1,315,000. All improvements and developments identified in this plan will not occur simultaneously. Smaller elements of larger projects may occur over a period of time and some projects may never occur. Certain elements, while highly desirable, are very costly. Acceptance by City Council of projects is necessary prior to implementation through the contract award process. Costs are affected by an annual inflation rate and are dependent upon which alternative development proposals are selected. More detailed analysis and cost estimates will be required to accurately reflect project costs.

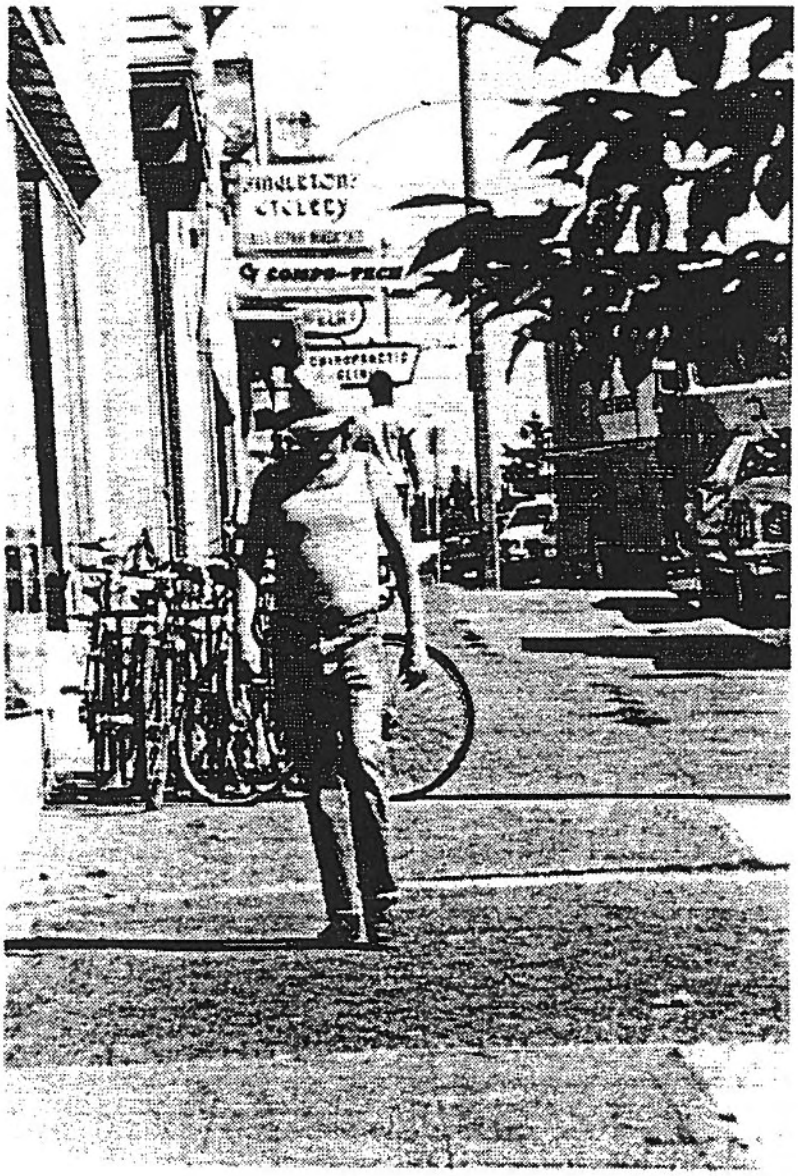
The availability of funds as well as the source will impact the type of future projects; therefore, priorities have not been established. It is anticipated that funding preference will be given to improvements planned in areas where development or rehabilitation of private properties is imminent. Property owner willingness and ability to participate in the funding of public improvements will affect the timing of the improvements.

The attached cost estimate reflects a complete array of public improvements recommended for the *6th Avenue Design Plan* area. This is not to preclude the phasing of improvements within each area.

Cost Estimate

	cost each	Maximum per block	# of blocks	Maximum total	cost
Light Fixtures	$4,566	6	28	168	$767,088
Trash Recepticle UL3106	$827	4	28	112	$92,624
Trees	$200	8	28	224	$44,800
Benches(optional)					
UF5103	$825	4	14	56	$46,200
UF1902/1943	$506	4	14	56	$28,336
Bike racks	$114	4	28	112	$12,768
Taxes @ .078					$77,362
Subtotal					$1,069,178
Installation @15%					$26,989
Engineering/Inspection @ 20%					$219,233
Grand total					$1,315,400

Appendices



Public parking spaces are those located on the street while private parking spaces are found in parking areas for individual businesses. Spaces were counted on 6th Avenue and intersecting side streets to a depth of one block. The parking areas range from those that are fully-developed with paving, striping, landscaping and lighting to those that are virtually undeveloped. The undeveloped lots are not paved, or well-marked.

Parking Opportunities

6th Avenue Design Plan Area

(Union Avenue to Sprague Avenue)

Block	Public	Private
Union Avenue to Puget Sound Avenue	8	49
Puget Sound Avenue to Warner Street	16	73
Warner Street to Lawrence Street	37	22
Lawrence Street to Alder Street	12	49
Alder Street to Cedar Street	14	53
Cedar Street to Junett Street	36	76
Junett Street to Pine Street	6	58
Pine Street to Anderson Street	13	76
Anderson Street to Oakes Street	11	60
Oakes Street to Fife Street	25	23
Fife Street to Prospect Street	8	53
Prospect Street to Steele Street	5	12
Steele Street to Trafton Street	8	50
Trafton Street to State Street	8	43

Source: Tacoma Planning Department, 1988

Addendum to the
Generalized Land Use Plan EIS
and to the
Addendum to the Generalized Land Use Plan EIS Prepared
for the Adoption of the Central Plan
for the Adoption of the 6th Avenue Design Plan

Introduction

This addendum to the Generalized Land Use Plan Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the addendum to the Generalized Land Use Plan EIS for the adoption of the Central Plan is for the purpose of adopting the 6th Avenue Design Plan in compliance with the policies set forth in the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and its implementing rules (Chapter 197-11 WAC) applicable to the action described below. From a SEPA Rules perspective, the Generalized Land Use Plan is a non-project action for which an EIS was prepared in 1980, and the Central Plan is a non-project action for which an addendum to the 1980 Generalized Land Use Plan EIS was prepared in 1988.

Proposed Action

The proposed action is the adoption of the 6th Avenue Design Plan as an element of the City's long-range comprehensive Land Use Management Plan. This plan assesses and makes recommendations for improving the design, appearance, aesthetic quality and economic vitality of 6th Avenue from "I" Street to Madison Street." The 6th Avenue Design Plan is a non-project action as defined by SEPA Rules.

Location

The location of the 6th Avenue Design Plan is the 6th Avenue corridor from "I" Street to Madison Street. The north south intersecting streets up to one half block in depth as may be warranted by design considerations are also included within the plan area.

Responsible Official: George A. Hoivik
Director of Planning

Contact Person: Donna Stenger/Karie Hayashi
Tacoma Planning Department
747 Market Street
Tacoma, WA 98402
Telephone: 591-5363

Background:

The City of Tacoma adopted a citywide land use document known as the Generalized Land Use Plan (GLUP) in 1980. When the GLUP was developed, it was purposefully generalized to provide flexibility so as to increase its usefulness in making long-range, land use decisions. Its emphasis is on land use intents and policies, which were based on an analysis of existing land use and zoning, development trends, anticipated land use needs and desirable growth and development goals.

The policies provide a rational basis for an additional element of the plan, known as the GLUP Map. The GLUP Map depicts the City's intended future land use patterns through the geographic distribution of three levels of land use intensities. This map and related policies serve as a base for more detailed neighborhood planning efforts, such as the 6th Avenue Design Plan.

In February 1989, the City adopted a neighborhood land use plan known as the Central Plan. It provides a guide for the development and redevelopment of the Central planning area which is bounded by Yakima Avenue on the east, Center Street on the south, Orchard Street on the west and 6th Avenue/Division Avenue on the north.

The Central Plan complements and clarifies the GLUP by eliminating a certain degree of generalization and, consequently, some of the flexibility of the GLUP. Its higher level of detail provides, where appropriate, more precise and defensible edge locations for the land use intensity areas as well as more specific land use policies and recommendations.

The 6th Avenue Design Plan proposes a further refinement to the level of planning provided by the Generalized Land Use Plan and the Central Plan. Like the GLUP and the Central Plan, this plan is also a non-project action. The purpose of the plan is to address specifically improvement in the design, appearance and economic vitality of 6th Avenue. Design and development principles such as building patterns, appearance, district edge conditions, pedestrian environment, vehicular circulation and special features are addressed.

The purpose of all three of these documents, however, remains the same, i.e., promoting desirable growth, development and redevelopment and providing direction in the land use decision-making process. The design concept of the 6th Avenue Design Plan recognizes that major land use patterns already exist and the basic intensity areas were previously established by the GLUP. Further, many of the recommendations contained in the 6th Avenue Design Plan support or affirm recommendations of the Central Plan. Since these past planning efforts in the 6th Avenue planning area were specifically considered in developing the 6th Avenue Design Plan, the Final EIS for the GLUP and the Addendum to the GLUP EIS for the adoption of the Central Plan are applicable to the proposed action at hand and is hereby adopted as such.

Discussion

Since the specific recommendations contained in the draft 6th Avenue Design Plan were not included, nor were they intended to be a part of the GLUP and Central Plan, it is appropriate that additional analysis regarding those recommendations be contained in this addendum.

The 6th Avenue Design Plan emphasizes the linear arrangement of the street and adjacent land uses. The linear corridor will strengthen visually the prominence of 6th Avenue as a special and distinct neighborhood business district. The design concept is primarily reinforced through the use of the zero lot line development pattern. Variety will be provided by the existing setback suburban and residential development patterns. It is preferred that,

in the long term, as residential uses are replaced by commercial development, the zero lot line development pattern be encouraged. This development pattern will carry out the concept and strengthen the pedestrian character of the area.

To unify the area, the repeated use of a selected street light standard is recommended. The use of an unifying street light, which by its placement and repetition will complement the underlying circulation and land use patterns, will create a continuous visual image. The street light chosen for the 6th Avenue area is a replica of historic lighting once found in the area. The streetscape treatment may vary within different areas of 6th Avenue but will be tied together by the use of the unifying street light.

The design concept emphasizes strengthening the linear vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, maintaining/restoring the integrity of identified districts, development patterns, and land uses, and using the street lights as a design element which will provide visual continuity and tie diverse land uses together. Street furnishings of similar and compatible design also are recommended to unify the business districts. These amenities could include benches, sidewalk paving patterns, drinking fountains and bicycle racks. Landscaping is recommended to beautify the area and screen objectional uses such as trash receptacles. Landscaping and screening are also recommended to demarcate the edges of the commercial districts to visually and physically distinguish business areas from the abutting residential neighborhoods.

Analysis

The recommendations contained in the 6th Avenue Design Plan propose a further refinement to the recommendations for land use growth, development and redevelopment along 6th Avenue, set forth and analyzed in the Final EIS for the GLUP and the Addendum to the GLUP for the adoption of the Central Plan. This further refinement includes special emphasis given to improving the commercial areas through design, identifying parking opportunities, enhancing the common boundary between the business district and the adjacent residential community, and to accommodating pedestrians. In addition to assisting in deliberations concerning land use policy and decisions, the plan also is intended to help the business community assess its strengths and weaknesses and make decisions concerning the long term future of the 6th Avenue commercial areas.

The recommendations contained within the proposed document clarify the attainment of the purpose and intent for the 6th Avenue Design Plan and those reflected in the GLUP and Central Plan. The recommendations range from general in nature to specific, some may require capital expenditures, while others require administrative or legislative changes, or both. It is recognized that further environmental analysis, either in the form of a checklist or EIS development, may be necessary at the time of implementation for a recommendation with community-wide significance. This addendum and its supporting elements serve to fulfill the SEPA requirements for public sector actions with regard to implementing the 6th Avenue Design Plan recommendations. Private projects within the 6th Avenue planning area will be subject to SEPA on an individual project basis as it relates to the area, adjacent projects, and mitigating measures.

Pursuant to WAC 197-11-635, the following studies, plans and environmental documents are herein incorporated by reference.

1. Land Use Management Plan: Goals and Policies for Physical Development (1983). This plan replaces the 1975 document and reflects the adoption of several plan elements developed by the Planning Commission. It is a description and reference document containing an overview of the City's planning process and a collection of summaries of adopted plan elements.

2. Generalized Land Use Plan (1980). This plan sets forth goals, policies, and guidelines to assist in orderly and desirable residential, commercial and industrial development. An element of the City's Land Use Management Plan, it sets forth a basic development concept for Tacoma and outlines general areas of high, medium, and low intensity development. It also sets forth policies to guide the various types of development within these intensity areas.

3. Central Plan (1989). This land use plan for the Central planning area is one of a series of plans for neighborhoods within the City of Tacoma. The plan addresses physical land use, the vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and design and amenities. It augments and is to be used in harmony with other elements of the City's comprehensive Land Use Management Plan.

All of the above documents are available for public inspection at the City of Tacoma Planning Department, 9th Floor, Municipal Building, Tacoma, WA 98402.

SEPA Rules

6/7/89

ADOPTION OF EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

Adoption for (check appropriate box) DNS X EIS X other Addendum

Description of current proposal: Adoption of 6th Avenue Design Plan as an element of the City's long range, comprehensive Land Use Management Plan.

Proponent: Tacoma Planning Commission

Location of current proposal: 6th Avenue from "I" Street to Madison Street. Also included are the north and south intersecting streets up to one-half block as warranted by design considerations.

Title of document being adopted: 1. Generalized Land Use Plan EIS

2. Addendum to the Generalized Land Use Plan EIS for the adoption of the Central Plan.

Agency that prepared document being adopted: City of Tacoma, Planning Department

Date adopted document was prepared: Generalized Land Use Plan EIS - January 1980, Addendum to the Generalized Land Use Plan for the adoption of the Central Plan - October, 1988.

Description of document (or portion) being adopted: The Final EIS for the Generalized Land Use Plan sets forth the anticipated impacts on the environment and mitigating measures associated with the adoption of the plan which is a non-project action. The scope of the Generalized Land Use Plan is citywide. This plan is used to guide future land use development by providing goals and policies that are designed to promote desirable growth and development in Tacoma. The Addendum to the Generalized Land Use Plan EIS for the adoption of the Central Plan sets forth the anticipated impacts on the environment and mitigating measures associated with the adoption of the plan which is a non-project action. The Central Plan is specifically bounded by Yakima Avenue on the east, Center Street and SR-16 on the south, SR-16 and Orchard Street on the west and 6th Avenue and Division Avenue on the north. The plan addresses physical land use, the vehicular and pedestrian circulation and design and amenities for the Central Planning area.

If the document being adopted has been challenged (WAC 197-11-630), please describe on an attached sheet. N/A

The document is available to be read at: SEPA Public Information Center, Tacoma Planning Department, 9th Floor, Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

We have identified and adopted this document as being appropriate for this proposal after independent review. The document meets our environmental review needs for the current proposal and will accompany the proposal to the decision-maker.

Name of agency adopting document: City of Tacoma - Planning Department

Contact person, if other than responsible official: Donna Stenger Phone: 591-5363

Responsible official: George A. Hoivik

Position/title: Director of Planning Phone: 591-5363

Address: Room 900, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

Date: 10-12-89 Signature: George A. Hoivik

Approved as to form:

SEPA PIC Officer Kathleen C. Mills Date 11/17/89

SEPA PIC File No. E15-095-89 Department File No. NA