

# DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK

## SUB-AREA PLAN



TESKA ASSOCIATES, INC.

BUSINESS DISTRICTS, INC.  
YAS/FISCHEL PARTNERSHIP  
BROADACRE CONSULTING COMPANY

# **DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK**

## **SUB-AREA PLAN**

Cover Photo:  
Courtesy of City of Woodstock

May, 1996

**TESKA ASSOCIATES, INC.**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK SUB-AREA PLAN

## Introduction

Woodstock is not the ordinary community. In fact, it is the place Orson Wells once referred to as "the grand capital of mid-Victorianism in the Midwest." Once considered remote, today it lies in the path of the Chicago metropolitan area's "growth belt", in which the demand for shopping and business services is rapidly increasing.

The City's 1994 Comprehensive Plan states, "Preserving the traditional flavor of the Woodstock Square and surrounding business area, and seeking to encourage new development that is compatible with this has become a consistent goal of both public and private bodies in the community." In pursuit of this goal, the City retained a team of consultants led by Teska Associates, Inc. to prepare a Downtown Sub-area Plan to be adopted by the City Council as an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The following is a summary of the recommendations contained in that Sub-area Plan, dated May, 1996.

## Goals and Objectives

Downtown revitalization is based on four overall goals: **Economic Vitality, Sense of Place, Spirit of Community, and Neighborhood Integrity.**

Downtown is and must remain the premier mixed-use business and civic center in the city and its market area. However, the mixture of the 21st century will be different than that of the mid 20th century and that of the 19th century. It must, nevertheless, emphasize interrelationships between uses that are not only compatible, but exhibit synergism, or as others might call it, "**the power of cumulative attraction.**" Herein lies the secret of successful Downtowns.

## Transportation

The original town was designed in accordance with traditional concepts: a centrally located public square; a grid system of streets and blocks; and an array of highways leading from the square to outlying areas. The railroad was constructed at a later date, bisecting several blocks, and connecting Woodstock to Chicago's Loop. This system continues to serve the City today.

Sub-area Plan Recommendations are:

1. Downtown **approach routes** must be direct, well marked, uncongested, and attractive. Coordinated, well designed **signage** should be installed within the context of "**city-wide gateways**" along each major U.S. or Illinois highway; more modest gateways may be considered along county roads. **Signage should be located along each approach route to keep the visitor on course.** In the vicinity of Downtown, certain approach routes require additional **landscaping, control of curbcuts, and improved property appearance.** Railroad rights-of-way should also be enhanced.
2. A **new collector-distributor street** should be developed between McHenry Avenue and Washington Avenue to relieve the pressure on Church Street. It should include Newell Street, a new Bartlett Street, and an improved Wheeler Street railroad crossing.
3. **Intersection improvements**, including landscaping, are recommended for the intersections of McHenry Avenue, Madison Street, and Mewell Street, and for the intersection of Washington Street and Throop Street.
4. The City should remain alert to every opportunity to enhance **commuter rail (Metra) service** and **Pace bus service** in the Downtown.
5. Public **off-street parking facilities** in the Downtown should be expanded. Several new lots should be constructed; a two or three level parking structure should be constructed at the site of the existing lot located between Throop Street and Main Street; and future parking structures should also be considered on city lots adjacent to the City Hall and at Calhoun and Jackson Streets.
6. A limited number of **bicycle stalls** should be provided with the Woodstock Square area or in nearby parking lots.

### Land Use

Downtown Woodstock still exhibits the classic land use pattern envisioned for it by its founders at the turn of the century. The primary land use change is the voluntary relocation of industrial and warehouse uses to preferred sites elsewhere. One example of this trend is the vacant Die Cast property north of the commuter station which is awaiting redevelopment.

A key objective is to respect the classic land use pattern of Downtown, and to expand **the character of the Square** to outward encompass a larger area. The following are recommended:

1. The area bounded by Washington-Church, Throop, Calhoun, and Jefferson should remain as the **pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use business and "cultural" core** of Downtown. Although change is to be expected and planned for, this area should retain many of the characteristics of a traditional "hometown" Downtown.

2. **Ground floor space** should be occupied by retail shops of modest size--the more the better. Offices, other than those serving walk-in customers, residences, and bed and breakfast inn accommodations should be encouraged on **upper floors** looking over street level activity.
3. No single use is more critical to the Square than the **Opera House**. The City should support efforts to expand supporting activities and facilities on properties west of the principal structure, including a possible rear entrance from Calhoun Street and the City Hall parking lot.
4. A **visitor center** should be located on or adjacent to the Square.
5. Buildings around the Square should be adapted to provide **retail uses and facades** facing Washington-Church, Throop, Calhoun, Benton, and Jefferson Streets.
6. Main Street should have a **restaurant and entertainment theme**, including possible expansion of the movie theater.
7. The outer ring of blocks south of the tracks should continue to accommodate **civic uses**, such as the City Hall and several churches, financial institutions, and office uses.
8. North of the tracks, the block presently occupied by the lumber yard is recommended for a type of use that will make a **compatible transition** between the historic business core and the residential neighborhood to the east, e.g. office, country inn, furniture and furnishings, or specialty foods.
9. A **planned mixture** of business, residential, and public uses is recommended for the triangle formed by the railroad, First Street and Clay Street.
10. The **commuter station** must remain at its present location to preserve the historic relationship with the Square and to form a focal point between the Square and new development north of the tracks.
11. Downtown land uses and development should respect the integrity of adjacent **residential neighborhoods**.

### **Pedestrian Amenities**

"Downtown is for people"--a common expression especially well suited to Woodstock. Numerous improvements are recommended to enhance the ambiance of Downtown:

1. All streets intersecting the Square should be **paved with brick** similar to streets around the Square. Historic, **pedestrian-oriented lighting fixtures**, which now exist on light poles near intersections, should be provided on virtually all light poles around and near the Square. **Landscaped planter boxes** can be introduced in selected locations on sidewalks around the Square to add color and soften the harshness of concrete.

2. **Historic lighting fixtures** should also be installed along perimeter streets around the Square area, and **banners** should be hung from rear building facades. Consideration should be given to relocating **utility lines** or to placing them underground.

3. Mid-block **pedestrian ways** should be upgraded and installed where appropriate to connect blocks.

4. Several new **public open spaces** should be constructed, including small "gateway" parks at the intersections of McHenry and Madison, Church and Jefferson, Calhoun and Jefferson, and South and Lake.

5. A **public open space** should be constructed between the commuter rail station and Washington Street to enhance visibility of the station and to welcome rail visitors to Downtown.

6. All municipally owned **parking lots** should be appropriately landscaped and lighted.

#### **Building Design and Facade Design Guidelines**

Much of the charm of Downtown Woodstock is in its extraordinary legacy of historic building design. To the extent possible, this legacy should be preserved and enhanced by compatible new construction.

The Sub-area Plan contains suggested **guidelines for building and facade design** to be refined, adopted, and implemented by the newly created Historic Preservation Commission. These guidelines also form the basis for a recommended publicly financed facade assistance program, and for voluntary private investments.

The Sub-area Plan contains **architectural sketches** which illustrate how the guidelines might be applied to the rehabilitation of four groups of building facades around and near the Square.

#### **Development Potentials**

Numerous Downtown properties are vacant or underutilized, representing exciting opportunities for compatible new development, either privately or publicly initiated. The largest of these is the **Die Cast property**, which is already controlled by the City, and adjacent properties.

The following **development guidelines** are recommended for this 10-plus acre site:

1. The area should accommodate a **mixed-use development** that will be coordinated with and support the Square, including retail and service businesses, restaurants and possible cinema, residences of various types, and public open spaces.

2. Land use arrangement and density should provide a **natural transition** from the Square to adjacent residential neighborhoods, based on a grid system of streets, and a visual axis with open spaces which extends north from Main Street and focuses on the commuter station.

3. The site should be divided (a north sector and a south sector) by a **new Bartlett Street** which will connect Newell Street with a modified Wheeler Street crossing of the railroad tracks.

4. On-street and off-street **parking** to support the commuter station and new development should be distributed and designed in a manner that will minimize its visual impact.

5. Building **architecture** should reflect a traditional, but varied style compatible with Historic Preservation Commission guidelines. Buildings should face toward streets and should be generously landscaped.

### **Implementation**

Implementation of the Sub-area Plan will depend on a strategy incorporating **effective leadership, adequate resources, a coordinated program, performance evaluation, and enjoyment**. Specific recommendations include:

1. An effective **public-private partnership** be established with durable capability.

2. In the immediate future, the City of Woodstock should retain its **leadership role**, supported by a newly created Implementation Task Force of community representatives.

3. A **public information program** should be established, including public hearings, news media coverage, newsletters, videotapes, public forums, and a speakers' bureau.

4. A **business retention program** should be undertaken, including training seminars, operating and facade assistance, and affinity groups.

5. **Business and investor recruitment** is a prerequisite to facilitate development of the Die Cast and other properties, and to upgrade occupancy throughout the Downtown.

6. An aggressive and well coordinated **marketing program** is essential to the vitality of Downtown businesses. It must be oriented to niche markets and to enhancing the overall image of Woodstock as a place to do business, to visit, and to live.

7. The City's **Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance** must be amended to permit implementation of recommendations in this plan. Building codes should also be reviewed and updated where appropriate.

8. The Historic Preservation Commission should adopt **building design guidelines** for the area under its jurisdiction.

9. Public and private **financing** must be assembled. Among the many sources that could and should be utilized, **tax increment financing** (as provided for in Illinois Statutes) should be utilized to implement development of the Die Cast property, and possible other areas as well.

### **Action Plan**

A specific Action Plan, listing over 60 tasks and projects, is recommended. Many of the projects should be incorporated into the City's Capital Improvements Program.

The Action Plan identifies each project, its priority in years, the responsible party, and (in the case of municipal projects) its estimated cost.

### **Conclusion**

There is every reason to be optimistic about Downtown Woodstock's future. Yet, the Sub-area Plan is not a self-fulfilling prophecy. **It will be realized only as a result of leadership, broad based public support, and ACTION.**

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## INTRODUCTION

To most of its 17,000 residents, the City of Woodstock is the ideal "home town" in which one can know his or her neighbors, can take advantage of excellent educational and cultural activities, be supported by convenient businesses, and enjoy an intimate relationship with the countryside. It is the place Orson Welles once referred to as "the grand capital of mid-Victorianism in the Midwest."

It is the town that many visitors know of, because of its extraordinary Opera House and its year-round offering of cultural events that draws patrons from far and wide. It is the hometown of Dick Tracy's creator, Chester Gould, and, it is the town that many Americans know of by virtue of the 1992 comedic movie, "Groundhog Day", starring Bill Murray, in which historic Woodstock and its Square became the surrogate locale for the original groundhog capital, Punxsutawney, PA.

Any way one looks at it, Woodstock is not the ordinary community.

The City's 1994 Comprehensive Plan states, "The City's unique character is reinforced by the Woodstock Square and the small shops and businesses which are found on and adjacent to it... Preserving the traditional flavor of the Woodstock Square and surrounding business area, and seeking to encourage new development that is compatible with this has become a consistent goal of both public and private bodies in the community." Not to mention the influence of the Square's two most magnificent buildings--the Opera House and the former Court House.

A companion 1994 document, "Policies and Recommendations for Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan," recommends that the City "in cooperation with the Woodstock Economic Development Corporation and the Chamber of Commerce develop a downtown sub-area plan consistent with the Comprehensive Plan." This report fulfills that policy.

Once considered to be a part of Chicago's rural hinterland, McHenry County is now its fastest growing (by percentage) county. Woodstock is its county seat, and is linked to Chicago and inner suburbs by Metra commuter rail service. The market area within a three mile radius of Downtown is forecasted to grow from 15,826 residents in 1990 to 19,181 residents in 2000, or 21.2 percent. Nearby communities east of Woodstock are experiencing an even more rapid pace, and growth of the area west of Woodstock may accelerate beyond normal forecasts due to the recent construction of a major Motorola manufacturing plant in neighboring Harvard, and the search for a site in the same vicinity for a Del Webb "Sun City" retirement community. (See Appendix A for details.)

Suffice it to say that Woodstock is now in the metropolitan "growth belt," and market demand for shopping and business services is rapidly increasing. For example, the City's retail sales tax receipts have increased by 13 percent in the last two years alone. Sales in nearby communities are increasing even more rapidly due to the documented "leakage" of Woodstock's spendable income. Despite the "good" news of increased sales in Woodstock, the community is concerned with the "leakage" factor, and its implications for Downtown.

Downtown Woodstock is not what it was in the 1950s, the only mercantile center for the town and its rural hinterland. On the other hand, Downtown in the 1950s was not the intimate business district it was in 1910, when residences lined Throop Street, Jefferson Street, and Washington Street. Such is the process of a community's evolution.

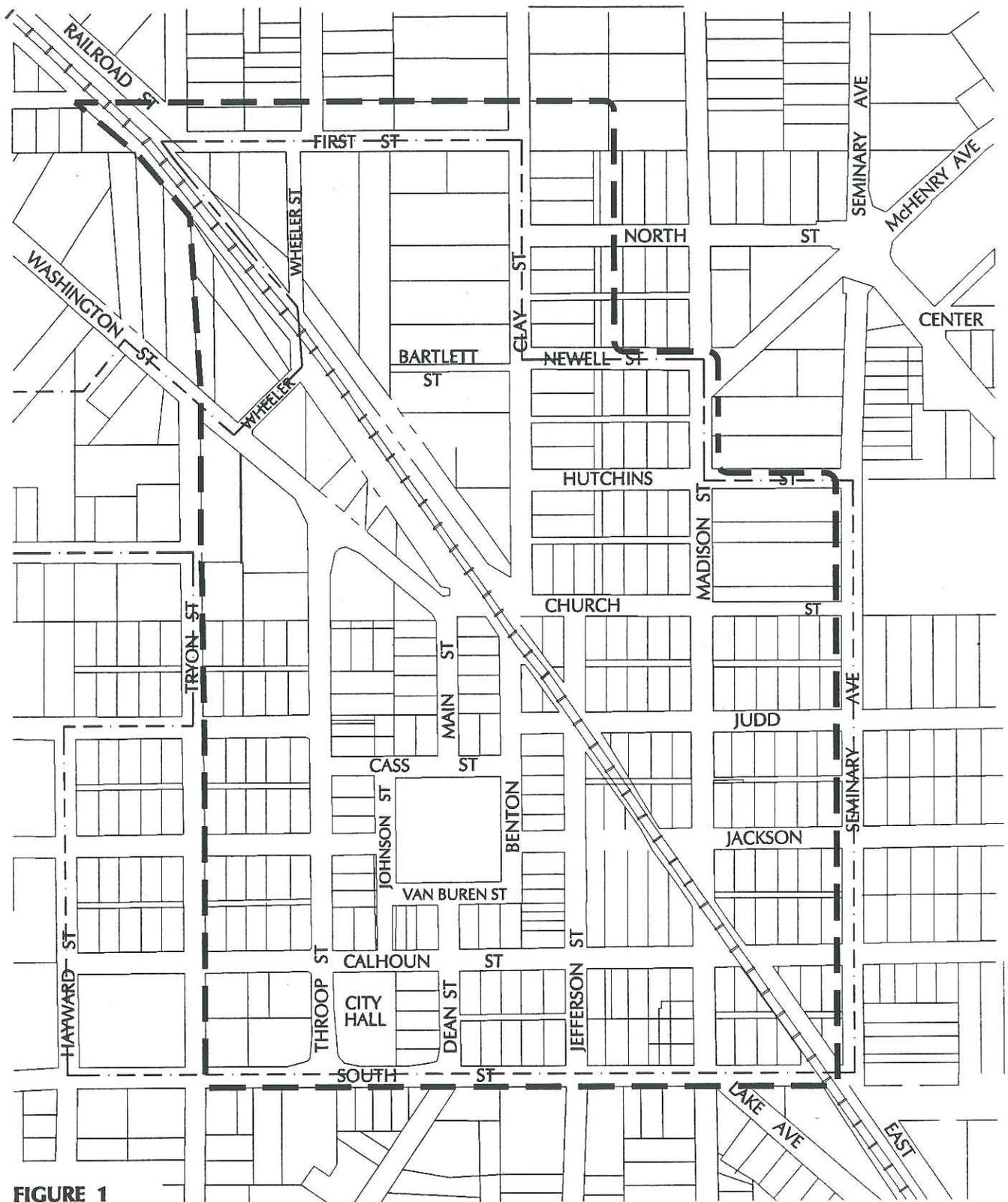
In the 1950s and 1960s, Downtown was still characterized by department stores, super markets, and the like which catered to most of the resident's shopping needs. Visitors to the community from distant towns outside the county were rare.

Today, Downtown (Figure 1) is a much more specialized business district, resulting from trends in the American domestic economy and retail industry, and from the relocation of major stores to peripheral locations such as Route 47. Patrons come from more distant origins to shop, receive a specialized service, or attend programs in the Opera House. The County of McHenry moved its judicial and office facilities to a highway oriented site on Route 47. The U.S. Post Office also moved out. And, Downtown's largest employer, (also the City's largest employer), Die Cast, vacated its obsolete manufacturing facilities along Wheeler and Clay Streets.

In 1995 Downtown Woodstock accommodated financial institutions (3), food stores (7, all small), apparel and accessory stores (7), furniture and furnishing stores (6), eating and drinking establishments (17), book stores (3), jewelers (4), miscellaneous stores (approximately 20), and services, a movie theater, professional offices, civic and fraternal organizations, churches, the City Hall, the Dick Tracy (Chester Gould Memorial) Museum, a bed and breakfast inn (6 rooms), and several residences. The diversity of uses is very much in keeping with the chemistry of a successful downtown in the 1990s. There are few vacancies. Yet, some properties are underutilized, and many entrepreneurs are not achieving desired levels of success.

Although the success of any business district is a very complex issue to evaluate, it is clear that Downtown Woodstock is reasonably healthy, but could benefit significantly from a stronger core of compatible, mixed uses tailored to the present and future needs of the market place, a revitalized physical environment to attract and hold patrons, a much better organized public and private partnership, a greatly enhanced marketing effort, and better coordinated promotional efforts.

Therefore, 1996 offers a timely opportunity to rechart the course of Downtown Woodstock--a time without crisis, and a time of great opportunity.



**FIGURE 1**  
**DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK**

- — —** STUDY AREA
- - -** HISTORIC DISTRICT

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# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## Overall Goals

Downtown revitalization in Woodstock is based on four overall goals.

- **Economic Vitality** -- financial success, high productivity and quality performance related to public and private sectors alike.
- **Sense of Place** -- an attractive and memorable physical image, based on the city's 19th century roots.
- **Spirit of Community** -- that which brings people together for a common good and to share common experiences.
- **Neighborhood Integrity** -- a complete and unimpaired (appealing) living environment within and adjacent to Downtown.

## Functional Relationships

Two words are of fundamental importance to marketing an area, whether it be residential, commercial, or industrial. The first is **compatibility**. It is defined as "the ability to exist in harmony". It is a baseline condition for any successful relationship between land uses.

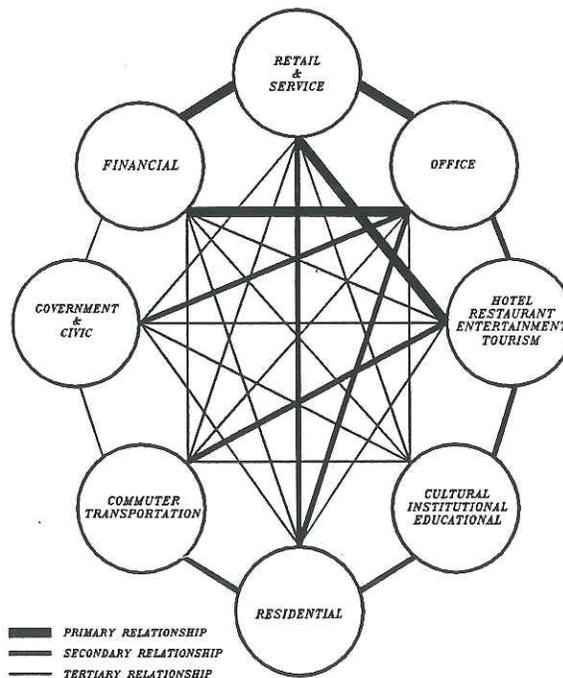
For shopping centers and traditional business districts, especially Downtowns, a second word is of even greater importance. It is **synergism**: "cooperative action of discrete agents such that the total effect is greater than the sum of the effects taken independently." In the retail industry it is referred to as "the power of cumulative attraction." Herein lies the secret of successful Downtowns.

Compatibility and synergism are more apparent in Downtown Woodstock than in many other Downtowns. However, they are not as well evidenced as they could be, nor as they need to be for Downtown to compete with other business districts in the future. The primary weakness is that functions located off the Square do not relate as well as they could to functions on the Square. A secondary weakness is that uses of properties near the Opera House do not exhibit the synergism that could and should be achieved.

## Downtown Functions

The following chart (Figure 2) illustrates virtually all of the basic social and economic functions of Downtown Woodstock. We acknowledge that one traditional economic function does not appear on the chart, that is industry. Although the few existing industries do not seriously detract from the vitality or character of the Downtown, and we need not actively seek their relocation, the community should be prepared for the eventuality that they will move to more modern facilities and sites elsewhere on their own initiative. They are not critical elements of the Downtown land use mix in the 21st century. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider options for the redevelopment or adaptive reuse of these properties.

The chart also illustrates the **level of interrelationships** between Downtown functions, with pedestrian contact being a key consideration. These interrelationships suggest how land uses should be located in proximity to each other in order to maximize **synergism**. For example, it is common for walk-in banking facilities to be near retail stores, and for business and professional offices to be located in bank buildings. Similarly, restaurants and visitor oriented businesses might best be located within walking distance of the Opera House or movie theater. Residences are particularly desirable within walking distances of the commuter station. These relationships are addressed in this Downtown Woodstock Sub-area Plan.



**FIGURE 2**  
**INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF DOWNTOWN**  
**WOODSTOCK FUNCTIONS**

## TRANSPORTATION

The City of Woodstock was neither located nor designed by happenstance. It was located in the very center of McHenry County, as its county seat, to be accessible to all parts of the rural hinterland. It was designed in accordance with traditional concepts: a centrally located public square or "green"; a grid system of streets and rectangular blocks; and an array of highways (including diagonals) leading from the square to outlying areas along each major compass direction. The railroad was constructed at a later date, bisecting several blocks. In the 20th century bypass routes were constructed around the original City. This system continues to serve the City today.

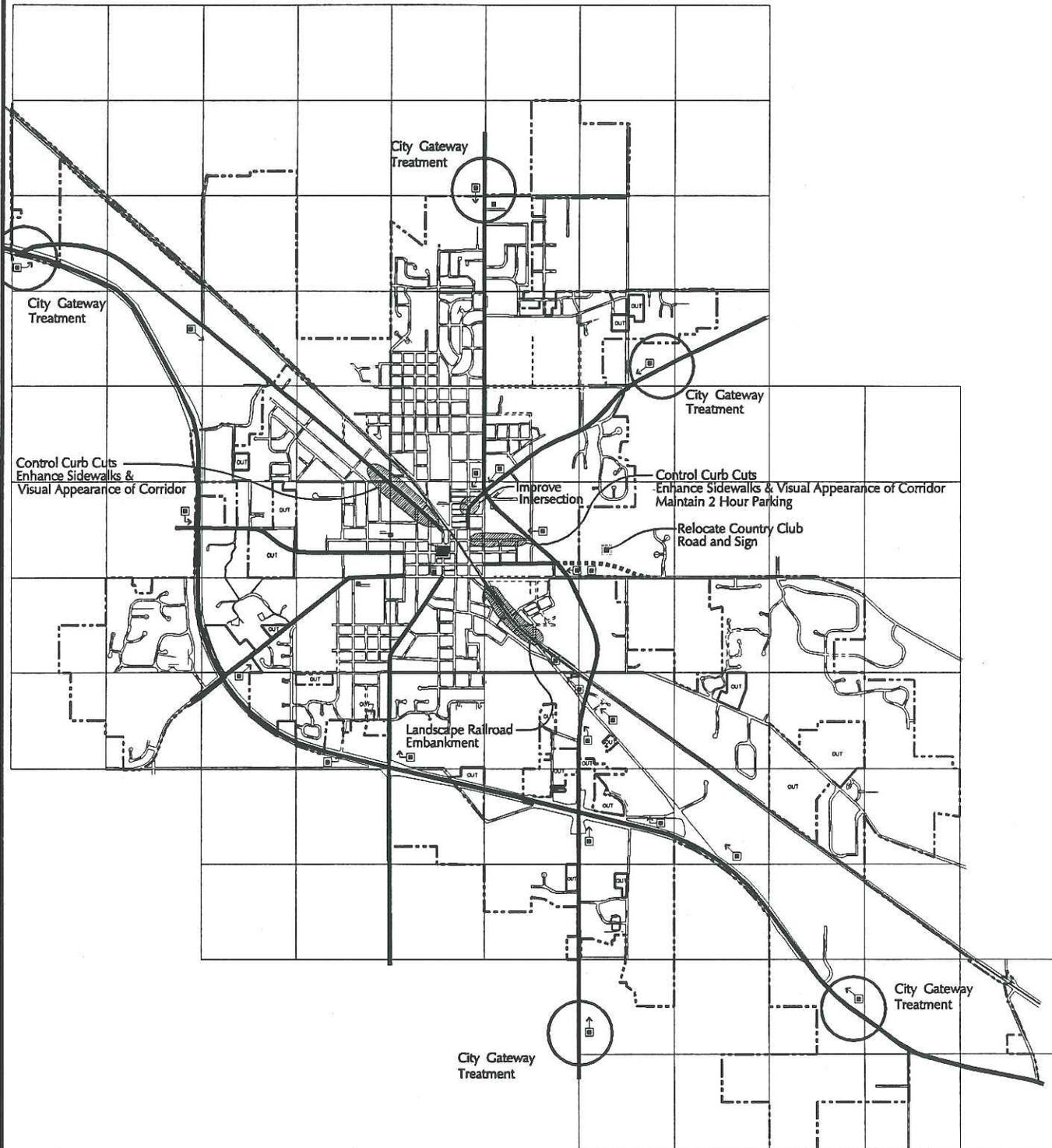
### Approach Routes and City Gateways

Prior to World War II all routes led to Downtown Woodstock. In fact it was virtually impossible to crisscross the county without passing through the Downtown. Subsequent to World War II, as dependence on the automotive travel increased and suburbanization overtook the U.S., Route 14 and Route 47 bypass highways were constructed to enhance areawide travel and to reduce the traffic burden on Downtown streets. As a result, Downtown became less congested, but also became more remote in the minds of many travelers--despite its inherent centrality.

Long-time area residents are quite familiar with routes leading to Downtown Woodstock. However, new "suburban" residents and visitors from afar need and deserve assistance, if they are to arrive at their Downtown destinations without delay and confusion, or discover Downtown for the first time--a discovery well worth the trip.

**Downtown approach routes must be direct, well marked, uncongested, and attractive. It is recommended that coordinated, well designed signage be installed within the context of "city-wide gateways" along each major U.S. or Illinois highway approaching the City to welcome residents and visitors alike, and to direct them to the Downtown. More modest gateways may also be considered along county roads (Figure 3). Additional signage of coordinated design and modest size should be located along each approach route to keep the visitor on course.**

**In the immediate vicinity of the Downtown, certain approach routes need additional improvement. For example, it is recommended that landscaping of the railroad embankment between Lake Avenue and the Union Pacific tracks be enhanced south of South Street in a predominantly residential corridor.**



**FIGURE 3**  
**DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK**  
**APPROACH ROUTES AND GATEWAYS**

▣ WOODSTOCK SQUARE DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

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By contrast, one approaches Downtown from the northwest along Washington Street through what has become a commercial corridor. Here, **it is recommended that curb cuts and signage deserve more control; sidewalks and parkway landscaping should be enhanced (including additional street trees), and overall appearance of commercial properties should be improved.**

Judd Street traverses a corridor which is predominantly residential on the south side of Judd east of Seminary Avenue, but is predominantly non-residential on the north side. Businesses, industries, and a new municipal fire station occupy this side. Curb cuts are numerous, and parkway landscaping has been obliterated. **It is recommended that street trees be added where possible on the north side, and that property owners be requested and encouraged to improve the appearance of their buildings and sites.**

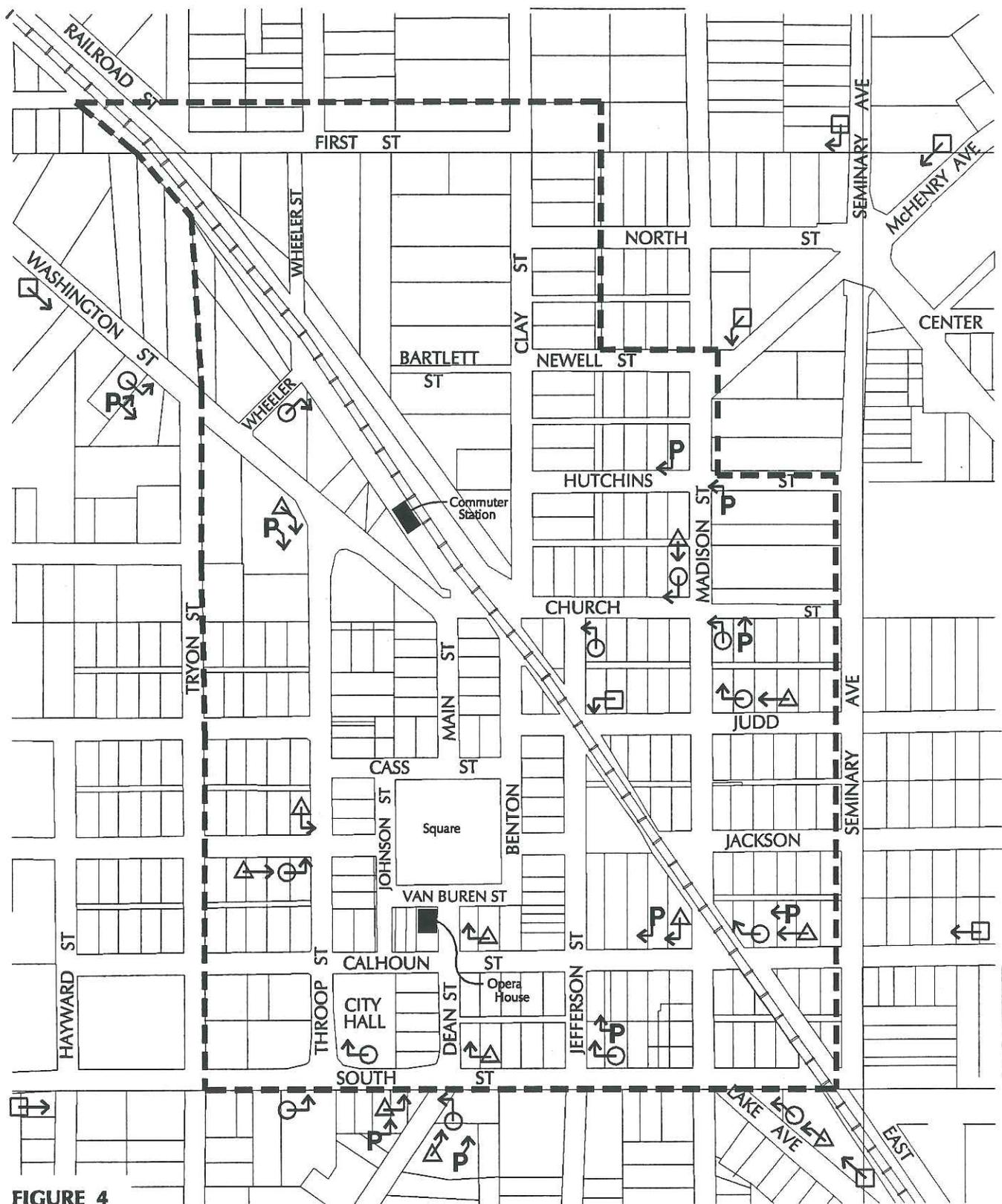
**As one enters the Downtown, a coordinated signage system should guide drivers to their final destinations, including parking (Figure 4).**

Approaching Downtown by railroad also deserves consideration. Views from the train are generally unsightly. **It is recommended that railroad rights-of-way be well maintained and landscaped where possible, and that facades of nearby buildings be enhanced.**

### **Circulation Plan**

Each street within the Downtown must effectively perform a specific function as an integral part of an access and circulation system. **Arterial streets** are those which accommodate the highest volumes of traffic traveling to or through the Downtown (Figure 5). **Collector-distributor streets** are those which direct traffic from arterials to and from local (minor) streets.

**Of particular importance is the recommendation for a new collector-distributor street between McHenry Avenue and Washington Avenue to relieve the pressure on Church Street to accommodate all forms of east-west travel north of the Square and in the vicinity of the Metra station.** This new collector-distributor street would be composed of Newell Street, a new Bartlett Street through the Die Cast property, and a portion of Wheeler Street, with a modified railroad crossing. Wheeler Street north of the railroad tracks would become a minor street, and may even be truncated or realigned.



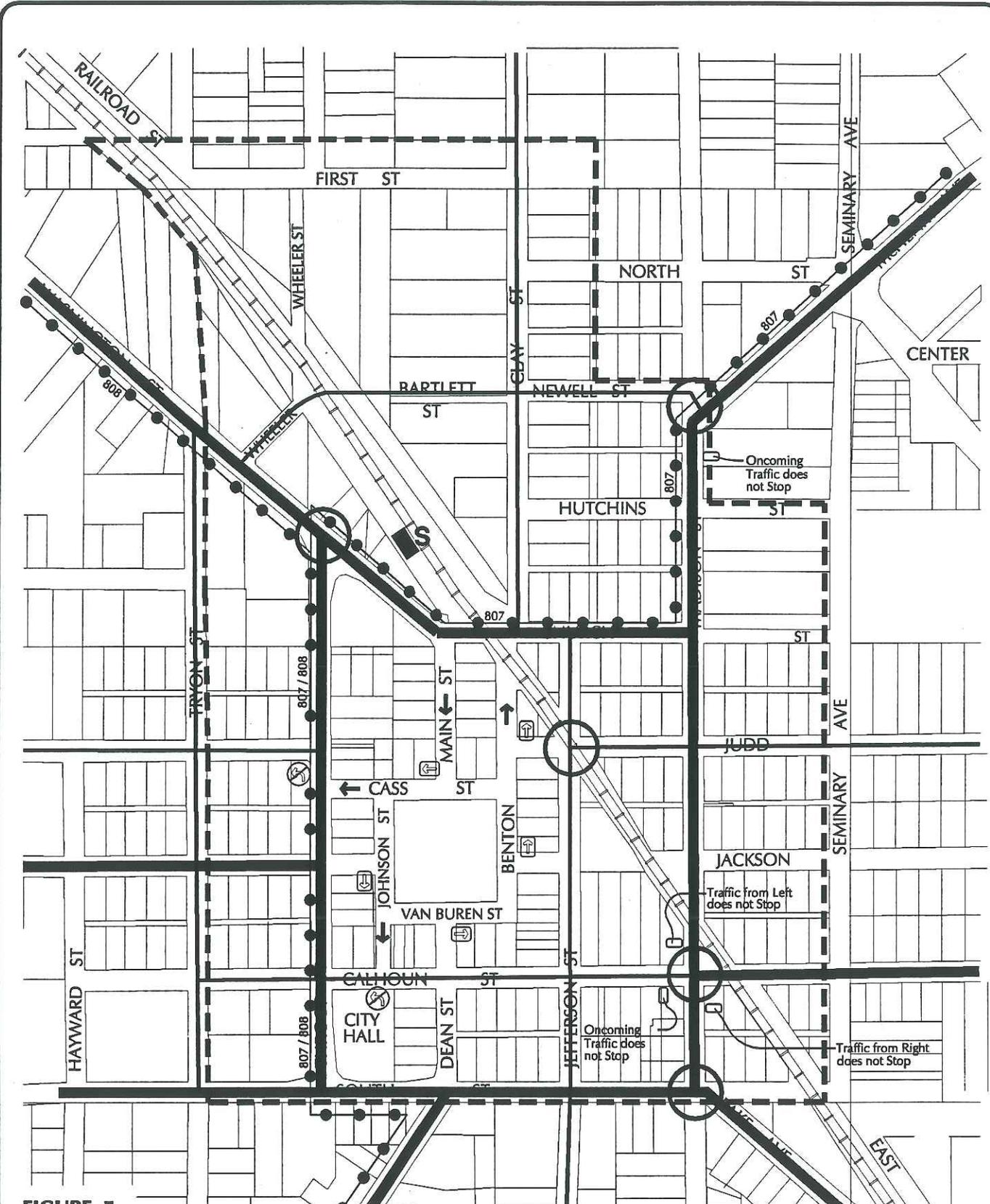
**FIGURE 4**  
**DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK**  
**DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE**

- TO WOODSTOCK SQUARE
- △ TO OPERA HOUSE
- TO COMMUTER STATION
- P TO PUBLIC PARKING

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**FIGURE 5**  
**DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK**  
**CIRCULATION PLAN**

-  ARTERIAL STREETS
-  COLLECTOR - DISTRIBUTOR STREETS
-  INTERSECTIONS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT
-  PACE BUS ROUTES
-  ONE WAY STREETS
-  ONE WAY SIGN
-  NO LEFT TURN SIGN
-  COMMUTER STATION

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All other streets would remain **local (minor) streets**. The one-way system of circulation around the Square would be retained.

At the northeast corner of the Downtown is the intersection of McHenry Avenue, Madison Street, and Newell Street. This multi-legged intersection is difficult for the driver to comprehend, and is hazardous. **It is recommended that this intersection be redesigned, reconstructed, and resigned (or signalized) to more effectively and safely accommodate increased traffic. Appropriate landscaping of parkways will enhance the approach route (Figure 6).**

Throop Street at its intersection with Washington Street is extraordinarily wide. Vehicular lanes are not clearly marked and pedestrians are at risk crossing the street. **An opportunity exists here to improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and to enhance this gateway to Downtown by construction of a landscaped median (Figure 7).**

### **Public Transportation**

Woodstock and its Downtown are generally well served by Metra (commuter rail) and Pace (suburban bus) systems. No significant service changes are recommended as a result of this Sub-Area Plan. However, additional service would be welcomed and may be necessary to serve an increasing population. **The City should remain alert to every opportunity to enhance such service and to every threat to reduce such service, and react accordingly.**

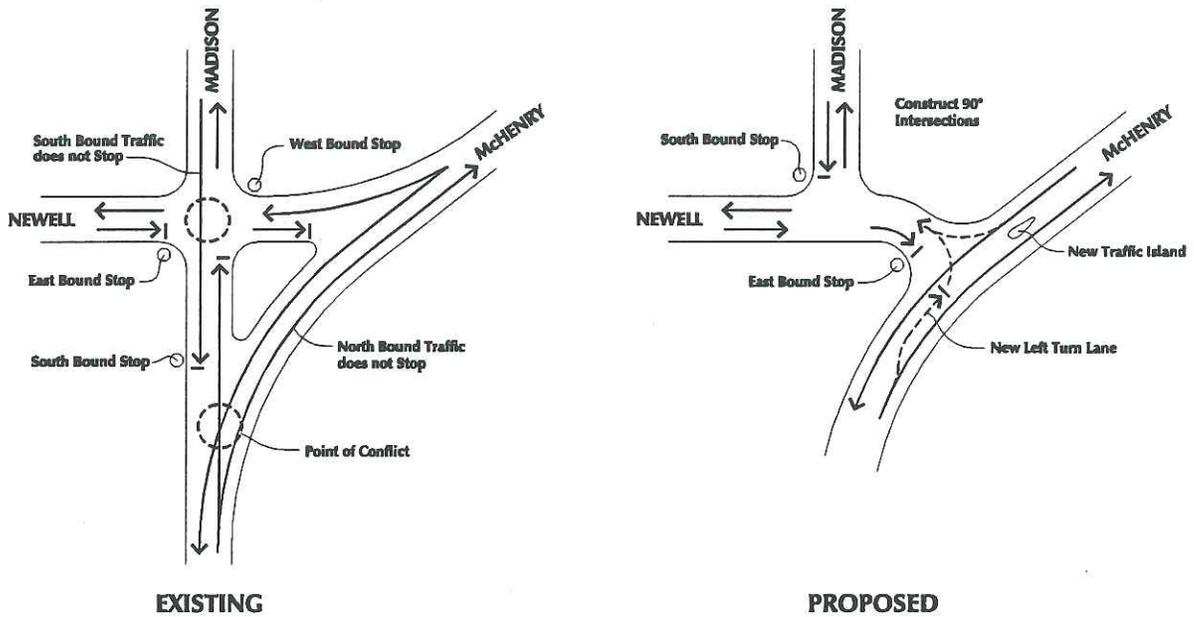
### **Parking**

Downtown Woodstock is served by eight public parking lots providing almost 600 offstreet parking spaces, several hundred onstreet parking spaces, and numerous private parking lots, many of which are available to the public doing business on the premises.

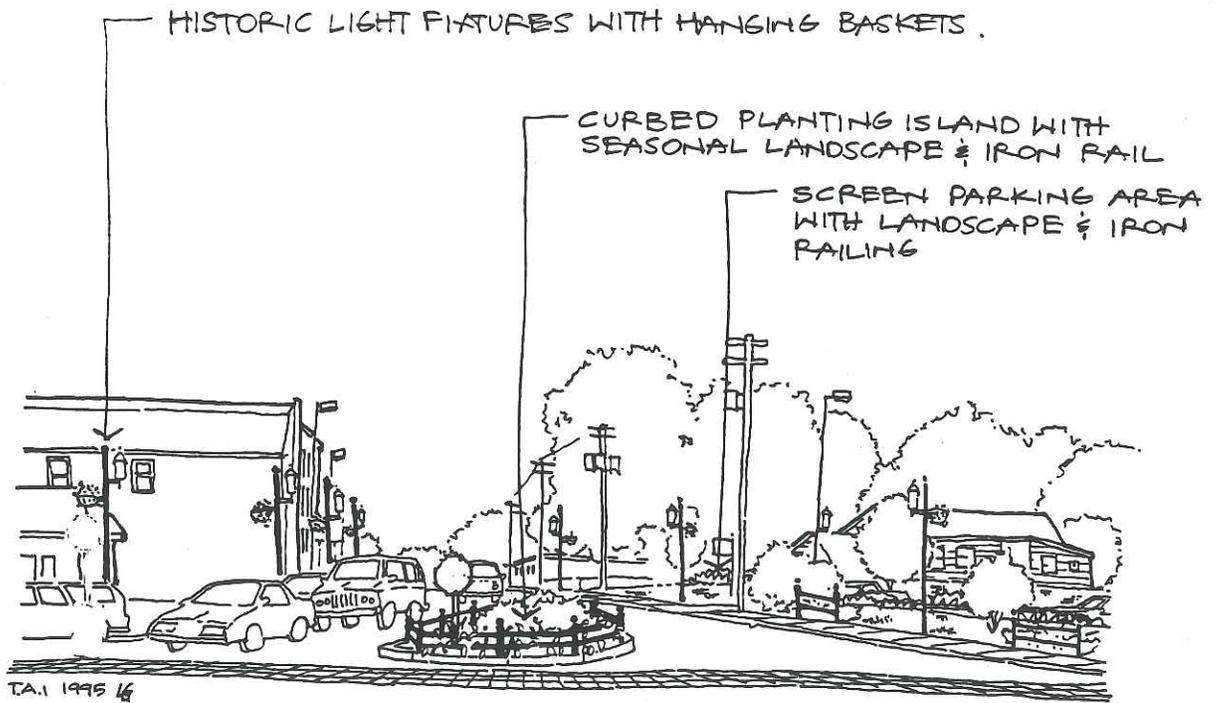
Onstreet parking around and near the Square is limited to 2 hours between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. Four hour onstreet parking is in more remote locations along Judd, Jackson, Jefferson, and Calhoun Streets.

Offstreet parking lots offer varied parking restrictions. However, three lots in the vicinity of the Metra commuter station specifically provide for long term parking throughout the day.

Generally, total parking capacity exceeds total demand. The key exceptions are the occasions when events at the Opera House coincide with the peak or near peak demands of the Woodstock Theater (movies), restaurants, and shopping.



**FIGURE 6**  
**McHENRY, MADISON, NEWELL INTERSECTION**



**FIGURE 7**  
**WASHINGTON AND THROOP MEDIAN LOOKING SOUTH**

As in most downtowns, however, parking convenience is another matter. Not everyone can park within 100 feet of their destination all of the time. This is often the case at most shopping centers today as well. For this reason, and to provide for future "growth" in the Downtown, **alternative sites for additional parking facilities are recommended (Figure 8)**. Of key importance is the reconstruction of the former Die Cast employee parking lot north of Wheeler Street, expansion of the existing lot on the west side of Throop Street, and provision of a new lot on the south side of Hutchins to provide for commuters and other all-day parkers. **Maps of available parking facilities should be widely distributed throughout the community.**

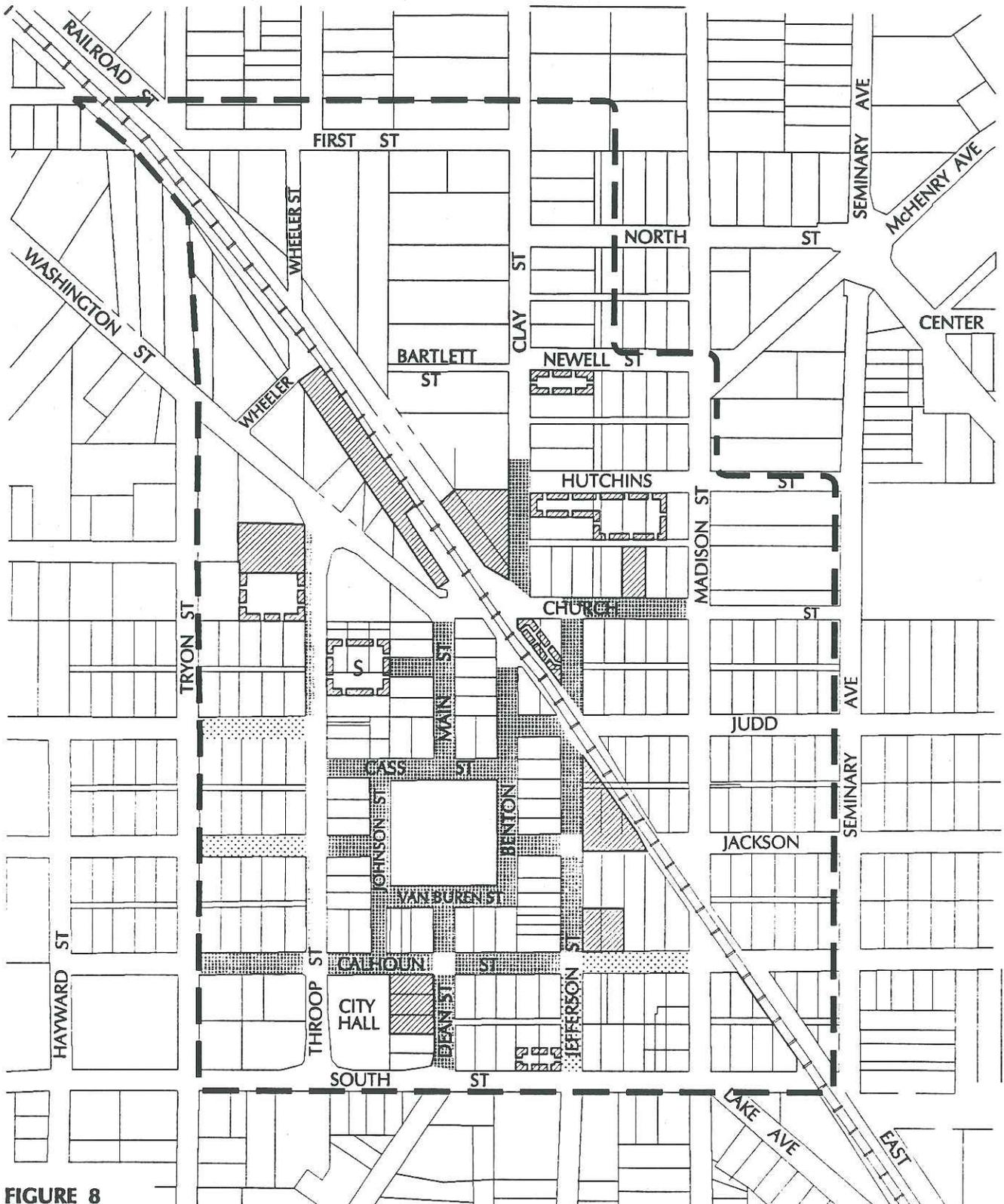
**A two-level (possibly three-level) parking structure is recommended to replace the public lot on the east side of Throop Street, which also has access from Main Street.** The change of grade within this block will permit this facility to be carefully designed in harmony with surrounding uses and buildings. It may even be possible to design this facility in the context of a mixed-use development involving a private partner. Its primary purpose is to satisfy the peak demand generated by the movie theater, restaurants and other businesses located along Main Street and on the north side of the Square. It can also support new private development on the west side of Throop Street.

As demand increases, parking structures should be considered on city lots at two other locations: adjacent to the City Hall, and at Calhoun and Jackson.

Peak parking demand, particularly for Opera House activities, on the south side of the Downtown, may be accommodated most effectively in other ways, since the availability of land is very limited. For example, the Opera House may enter into mutual agreements with local banks for the managed use of their parking lots west of Throop Street and south of Calhoun Street. These facilities are well within reasonable walking distance of the theater-goers destination, even when compared with comparable facilities in Chicago and at multi-screen cineplexes.

### **Bicycle Facilities**

More Americans are riding bicycles each year, although most riding is for leisure or fitness. Nevertheless, Downtown Woodstock should be hospitable to those who also wish to ride their bicycle to the Metra station, to work or shop, to go to the movies, etc. Although the numbers of such riders is not sufficient to require a dedicated bike path system on or off city streets, dedicated parking or storage facilities are desirable. **A limited number of bicycle stalls (attractively designed) should be provided within Woodstock Square or the street abutting the Square, in nearby public parking lots, and adjacent to the commuter rail station.**



**FIGURE 8**  
**DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK**  
**PARKING PLAN**

-  EXISTING PARKING LOTS, 24 HOUR.
-  2 HOUR PARKING
-  4 HOUR PARKING
-  POSSIBLE NEW PARKING LOTS
-  RECOMMENDED PARKING STRUCTURE

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## LAND USE

Even today, Downtown Woodstock still exhibits the classic land use pattern envisioned for it by its founders and evident at the turn of the century (1900). Almost a century ago the business core of the Downtown was clustered around the Square and along Main Street, with an extraordinary visual and pedestrian connection between the railroad station and the Square.

Civic uses, including City Hall, a school, and numerous churches fanned out south of the Square along Calhoun and South Streets. Fine residential areas nestled against the Downtown on the west and south.

Warehousing occupied a corridor adjacent to the railroad tracks, still evidenced by the lumber yard between Judd and Jackson Streets.

The Oliver Typewriter Company occupied property along Wheeler Street, which was expanded for manufacturing use by Die Cast. Residential corridors along Clay Street and Judd Street (1900) eventually gave way to expanding industrial and heavy commercial uses.

However, today the Die Cast property has been vacated and is available for redevelopment. This represents a major opportunity for the City and Downtown in particular.

Clearly, the business world of the 21st century will be considerably different from that of the 19th century, even the 20th century. It is within this context that a recommended Land Use Plan (Figure 9) has emerged that accommodates, even takes advantage of, present and future realities of the market place, while respecting and building on the historic character of Downtown. Interestingly, economic and cultural forces shaping the future of downtowns throughout the U.S. strongly suggest that the past and the future can be blended in an extraordinary way to pleasantly accommodate the needs and desires of the present.

### The Square and its Immediate Vicinity

**The area bounded by Washington-Church, Throop, Calhoun, and Jefferson will and should remain as the pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use business core of the Downtown.** In many respects it is also the "cultural" core of the Downtown, by virtue of its historic architecture, the Opera House, and many civic events that are held throughout the year in and around the Square.

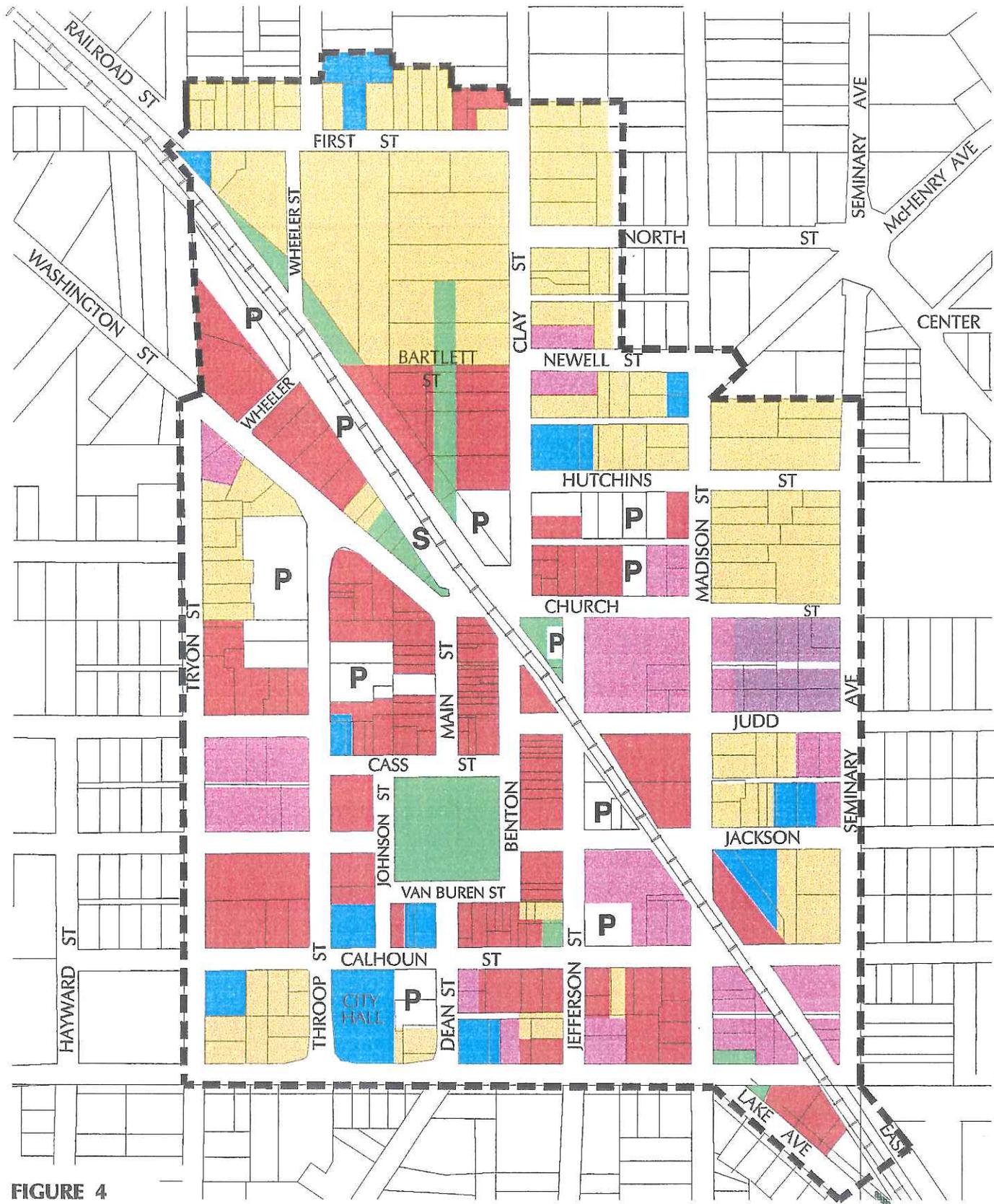


FIGURE 4

## DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK LAND USE PLAN

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: red; border: 1px solid black;"></span> PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED BUSINESS    | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> RESIDENTIAL |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: pink; border: 1px solid black;"></span> OFFICE                         | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: green; border: 1px solid black;"></span> OPEN SPACE   |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: blue; border: 1px solid black;"></span> GOVERNMENTAL AND INSTITUTIONAL | <b>P</b> PUBLIC PARKING  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: purple; border: 1px solid black;"></span> INDUSTRIAL                   | <b>S</b> COMMUTER STATION  |

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By contrast with the period prior to 1960, however, when this business core provided for most day-to-day and season-to-season shopping needs of area residents, this core in the future will provide for the specialized "nitch" shopping, service, dining, and entertainment desires of local and more distant customers. **It should retain many of the characteristics of a traditional "hometown" Downtown,** and at the same time respond to other market potentials as do Downtown Geneva, Galena, Lake Forest, and even Naperville--all historic districts of unique character.

**Ground floor space should be occupied primarily by retail shops of modest size--the more the better.** This is no longer an area for large scale, big box mass retailers, which are better accommodated nearby along Route 47. However, retail shops should be encouraged, where appropriate, to expand vertically into the basement level or the second level--some already have. This is successfully achieved by several quality retail shops in Galena. Restaurants can also do the same.

**Offices, other than those serving walk-in customers, residences, and bed and breakfast inn accommodations should be encouraged on upper floors looking over street level activity.**

"Entertainment" and "experiences" are the key to business district and shopping center success in America today. Downtown Woodstock already is an entertainment center, of which the community can be proud. The Opera House offers an extraordinary array of high quality programs. It is complemented by the Woodstock Theater for movies, live musical entertainment in several restaurants, and the Dick Tracy Museum in the Court House.

It has been said that "all the world is a stage". This is especially true of Downtown Woodstock, where the real life of real people is being played out each day and evening. Downtown is not a fantasyland, nor should it be. Nevertheless, the business and cultural lives of Woodstock, which are intertwined, can be enhanced significantly by keying on the concept of a theatrical production, wherein every actor or musician has a vital part to play, and the audience (customer) is awed by the magic of the performance. That is what brings people back over and over again.

**No single use is more critical to the Square than the Opera House. It is recommended that the City support efforts to expand supporting activities and facilities on properties west of the principal structure, including a possible rear entrance from Calhoun Street and the City Hall parking lot.** In effect, the Opera House is to Downtown in coming decades what the department store was in decades past--the anchor. Creative programming can generate Downtown patronage day and night, seven days a week, with some limitations of course. It is also an

extraordinary image-maker, potentially attractive to virtually all age, income, and ethnic groups.

Complementing the Opera House somewhere on the Square should be a **Visitor Center**, where local citizens and out-of-town visitors can obtain maps, directories, historical publications, things-to-do information, and places to stay information.

The balance of the Square should be thought of as a coordinated shopping, entertainment, and employment center. Among the types of business that might be added to this area are:

<u>Type of Business</u>	<u>Examples</u>
Outdoor/casual apparel	Active Endeavors/Evanston Uncle Dan's/Skokie Winona Knits/Galena Overland Sheepskin Co/Lake Geneva
Nature/environment	Earth Dweller/Evanston American Eagle Galleries/Galena
Native American/Ethnic	Squash Blossom/Lake Forest
Crafts	Peggy Robinson Silversmith/Evanston Off the Hoof Leather Goods/Evanston
Kitchen	Williams Sonoma/Lake Forest Adrienne's Gourmet/Galena Le Cookery/Lake Geneva
Postal	Mail Boxes, etc.
Specialities	Galena Teddy Bear Company
Bed & Breakfast Inns	Concorde Inn/Woodstock
Coffee Houses	Verde & Pucini/Evanston Mozart/Evanston
Restaurants	Ovens of Brittany/Madison
Offices	Design professionals, including interior decoration Marketing and communications professionals

Consideration should also be given to expanding the Woodstock Theater, to outdoor cafes, and to sidewalk vending carts. The latter should be strictly regulated, but could be an excellent addition to Downtown retailing and cross-merchandising for businesses already on the Square.

### **Supporting Areas South of the Tracks**

**Of strategic importance to all of Downtown is the need for the business character of the Square itself to permeate outward to the surrounding streets--Throop, Calhoun, Jefferson, and Washington-Church.** For over a century the buildings around the Square have turned their backs on these streets. To be successful in the future, the business core must be more outwardly hospitable; to grow it must use the limited space available more ingeniously.

**The outer ring of blocks south of the tracks should continue to accommodate civic uses, such as the City Hall and several churches, financial institutions, and office uses.** Residences are welcomed in selected locations, especially in landmark houses and on the upper floors of commercial buildings. This is also an appropriate area for bed and breakfast homes and "country" inns. Excellent examples are the Wheaton Inn in Wheaton, IL, The Herrington in Geneva, and the Deerpath Inn in Lake Forest.

**As in the past, development in this area should be sensitive to adjacent residential neighborhoods.** The character of these neighborhoods is very much a part of the ambiance of Downtown and the entire City. Yet, it is not beyond one's imagination to consider that they, too, would benefit from a 21st century vision which might accommodate modest change. This is especially true west of the core, along Tryon Street and Judd Street leading to the Woodstock Library.

The area along Washington Street west of Main Street is more characteristic of late 20th century commercial development than of the 19th century Square. Businesses in this area are needed by and supported by the community. They may remain, but should be encouraged to enhance their appearance by voluntarily restricting signage, reducing curb cuts, improving facades, and landscaping.

### **Supporting Area North of the Tracks**

The area south of Judd Street has been in transition for several years. Additional commercial development east of Madison Street should be discouraged; this area should be reserved for single and multi-family residences, and office or compatible institutional uses.

**The block presently occupied by the lumber yard is designated for commercial use of a type that will make a compatible transition between**

**the historic business core and the residential neighborhood to the east.**

One example is an office building; another would be a "country" inn. This might also be a desirable location for furniture and furnishings, such as the Amish Furniture Shoppe, in Deerfield, or specialty foods, such as the Oak Street Market (healthy foods), Great Harvest Breads, or Foodstuffs (prepared foods)--all in Evanston.

The area north of Judd, east of Clay and south of Newell will continue to accommodate a disparity of uses that need to strive for greater harmony over time. A modern office headquarters now occupies a former super market site in the block bounded by Church on the north and Madison on the east. The block east of it is occupied by a mixture of building types for office and industrial uses, many of which are no longer best suited to this location. However, this can be tolerated if appearance and property maintenance are improved, keeping in mind that Judd Street is one of the entrances to Downtown from Route 47.

Existing office and commercial uses should be perpetuated in the block bounded by Church, Clay, Hutchins, and Madison. In addition, certain sites should be designated for public parking to support nearby businesses and the commuter station.

The block north of Hutchins and the block east of Madison should be predominantly residential to preserve and strengthen the relationship between Downtown and its residential neighbors.

Properties on the east side of Clay Street, north of Newell, and on the north side of First Street should remain residential. They are integral parts of their neighborhoods and enjoy proximity to the nearby elementary school on Clay Street.

**A planned mixture of business, residential, and public uses is recommended for the triangle formed by the railroad, First Street and Clay Street, in accordance with land use policies established in the City's 1994**

**Comprehensive Plan.** Business uses should be clustered in proximity to the commuter station and the Square. Although this triangle is subject to redevelopment in whole or in part, it is located within the Historic District. All new development must be compatible with the historic legacy of Downtown Woodstock. More recommendations on this area are found in a subsequent chapter of this report.

Finally, the commuter rail station itself is a land use of substantial importance to Downtown. Although the boarding platform location may or may not be adjusted in future years, **the station itself must remain at its present location to preserve the historic relationship with the Square and to form a focal point between the Square and new development north of the tracks.** Existing use of the station by a quality coffee house with entertainment is very appropriate.

## PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

"Downtown is for people", a trite but true (and absolutely fundamental) premise for most downtowns in the U.S.--especially Woodstock. This is not the precinct of the automobile, as is the shopping center. In fact, this distinction is why more and more people (customers) are returning to traditional downtowns to conduct their business.

Downtown Woodstock is the quintessential example of a 19th century pedestrian-oriented downtown. It must remain so. It was originally designed not as a "crossroads", like many midwest business districts (in which through traffic dominates the core), nor as a modern shopping center (in which traffic is prohibited). Historic Downtown Woodstock offered a compatible synergy between the carriage/wagon and the pedestrian. Today, the automobile is treated much like the carriage, with circulation around the Square to maximize access and visibility, and with parking in front of stores, to maximize convenience. Still, the pedestrian is treated to a special park-like environment within the Square and an amenable system of sidewalks linking all blocks around the Square. Slow moving, one-way traffic enhances pedestrian safety. All of these assets are to be preserved and enhanced (Figure 10).

### Townsquare Streetscape

The existing streetscape around the Square is basically sound and incorporates many desirable features (Figure 11). However, the treatment is not consistently applied to intersecting streets leading to the perimeter.

**It is recommended that all intersecting streets be paved with brick similar to streets around the Square, and that this paving treatment extend out into the major intersections with perimeter streets (north, south, east, and west). Historic, pedestrian oriented lighting fixtures, which now exist on street light poles near intersections, should be provided on virtually all light poles in this area.** Concrete sidewalks are appropriate, not only historically, but as a contrast to the brick street paving. However, at selected locations where the sidewalk is sufficiently wide, **landscaped planter boxes are recommended to add color and soften the harshness of concrete** (Figure 12). In addition, planters hanging from street light poles at frequent intervals can also enhance the charm and beauty of the Square. However, they should contain real plant material, be well maintained, and be removed in the winter--to be replaced by a winter treatment, if desired.

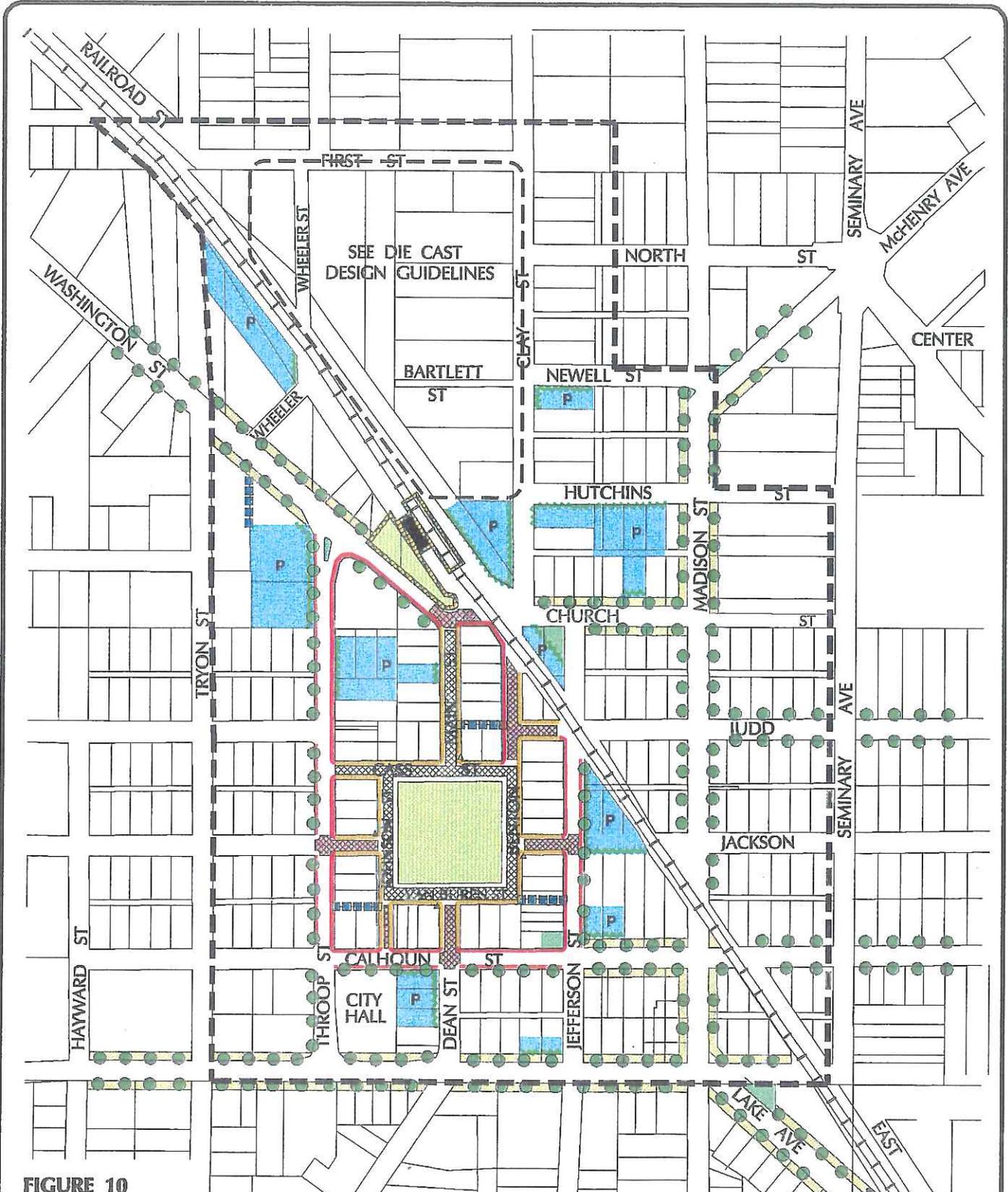


FIGURE 10

### DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK GATEWAYS AND STREETScape AMENITIES

- |  |                        |  |                              |
|--|------------------------|--|------------------------------|
|  | GATEWAY ROUTES         |  | TOWNSQUARE PERIMETER         |
|  | PEDESTRIAN ROUTES      |  | PROPOSED BRICK STREET PAVING |
|  | TOWNSQUARE STREETScape |  | PUBLIC PARKING               |
|  | PRIMARY GATEWAY PARKS  |  | DEPOT LANDSCAPE              |
|  | DIRECTORIES            |  | EMBANKMENT PLANTINGS         |

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Iron railings are a unique feature of the Woodstock Square and can be increased in number, and a historic, cast iron clock might be a handsome addition. Furthermore, the business directory located in the sidewalk at the intersection of Cass and Main should be replicated at the three other cardinal intersections, or at least at Van Buren and Dean.

Street trees are not appropriate around the Square. The Park-in-the-Square provides ample shade and a fine wooded contrast to the business facades and sidewalks around the Square.

### **Townsquare Perimeter**

Sidewalks around the perimeter of blocks adjacent to the Square are presently associated with the rear of buildings. They are narrow, interrupted frequently by curb cuts and driveways providing access to loading areas, and are punctuated by utility poles and overhead lines.

These sidewalks deserve a new treatment commensurate with the concept of expanding the business core outward. Sidewalks may remain concrete, but could be accented with a brick border adjacent to the curb. However, **it is recommended that additional historic lighting fixtures be installed, similar to those on the Square, that banners be hung from building facades** (existing wooden utility poles are not conducive to this), **and that efforts be initiated that will ultimately result in utility lines being relocated or placed underground** (Figure 12).

Throughout the balance of Downtown, streets should be tree lined, and major approach routes should also receive parkway improvements. A landscaped median should be installed at the intersection of Throop and Washington Streets.

### **Pedestrian Passageways**

**Three or more pedestrian passageways are recommended in the plan.** One already exists between Jefferson Street and the southeast corner of the Square. This passageway can be enhanced by modest improvement, such as lighting, planter boxes, and overhanging banners. A second should be constructed at the north edge of the former Post Office site between Throop Street and the southwest corner of the Square. A third can be created by enhancing the existing alley between Benton and Main Streets north of the Square. This alley can provide a natural extension of Judd Street sidewalks if appropriately enhanced, and still provide for service vehicles.

Benton Street



Church Street at Jefferson Street



Calhoun Street at Johnson Street



Lake Avenue at South Street



Calhoun Street



**FIGURE 11**  
**EXISTING STREETSCAPES**

### Open Spaces

The Park-in-the-Square is to be preserved, except for nominal improvements and appropriate maintenance that may be appropriate from time to time.

In addition to the Park-in-the-Square, **several new public open spaces are recommended, including small "gateway" parks at the intersections of McHenry and Madison, Church and Jefferson, Calhoun and Jefferson, and South and Lake (Figure 13).**

**An even more dramatic and historically correct open space is recommended between the commuter rail station and Washington Street.** This landscaped open space will restore the visual connection between the rail station and the Square which existed at the turn of the century. It will also provide a hospitable setting for visitors who will arrive by train to shop, be entertained, and/or stay overnight in Downtown.

Additional open spaces are recommended as essential elements of the Die Cast property redevelopment plan. They are described in a subsequent chapter.

### Parking Lot Landscaping

**Finally, it is recommended that all municipally owned public parking lots be appropriately landscaped and lighted to enhance the pedestrian's total experience in Downtown, and to buffer unsightly views of parked vehicles.** Each public parking lot should be appropriately signed, and should contain a map and directory of key destinations. Landscape buffering of private parking lots should also be required.

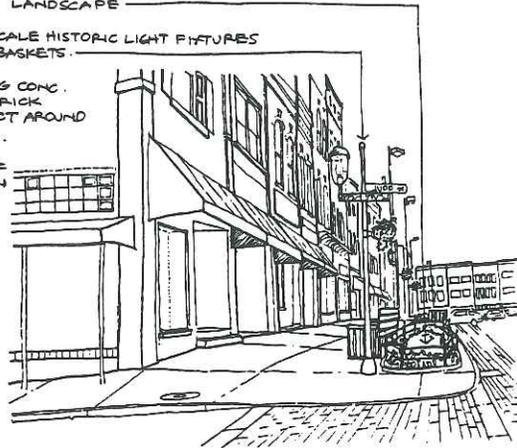
## Benton Street

LOW CURBED PLANTER WITH LOW IRON RAIL AND SEASONAL LANDSCAPE

PEDESTRIAN SCALE HISTORIC LIGHT FIXTURES WITH HANGING BASKETS

KEEP EXISTING CONC. PAVING AND BRICK STREETS INTACT AROUND TOWNSQUARE.

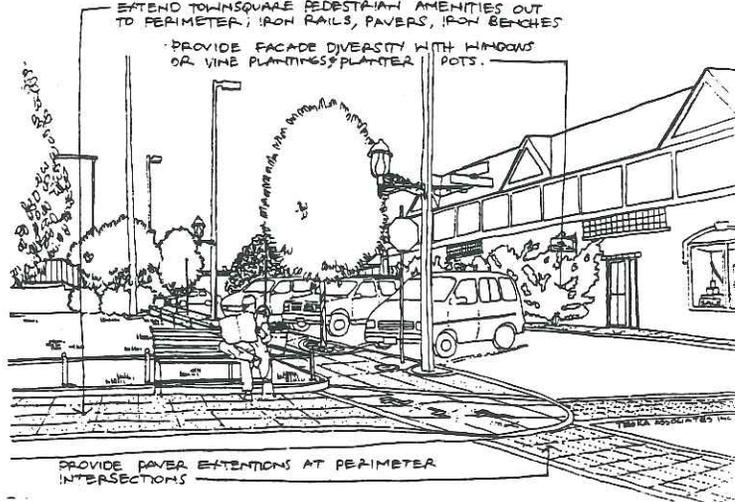
PROMOTE USE OF WOOD AND IRON BENCHES AT PLANTERS.



## Calhoun Street at Johnson Street

EXTEND TOWNSQUARE PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES OUT TO PERIMETER; IRON RAILS, PAVERS, IRON BENCHES

PROVIDE FACADE DIVERSITY WITH WINDOWS OR VINE PLANTINGS, PLANTER, POTS.



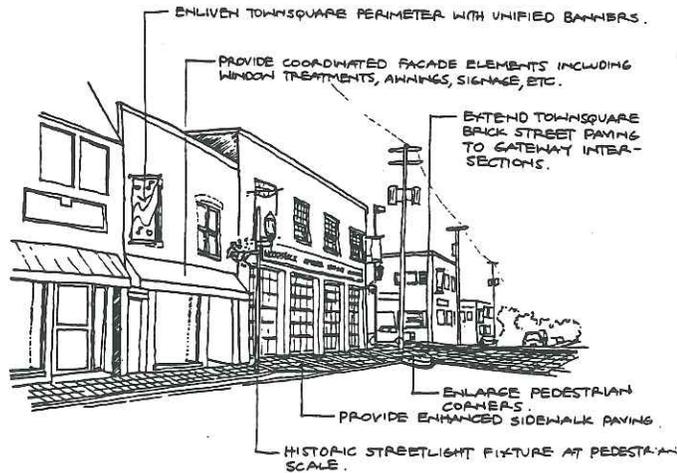
PROVIDE PAVEMENT EXTENSIONS AT PERIMETER INTERSECTIONS

## Calhoun Street

ENLIVEN TOWNSQUARE PERIMETER WITH UNIFIED BANNERS.

PROVIDE COORDINATED FACADE ELEMENTS INCLUDING WINDOW TREATMENTS, AWNINGS, SIGNAGE, ETC.

EXTEND TOWNSQUARE BRICK STREET PAVING TO GATEWAY INTERSECTIONS.



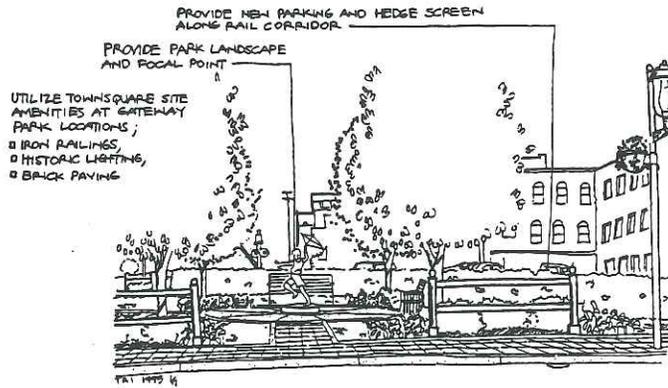
ENLARGE PEDESTRIAN CORNERS.

PROVIDE ENHANCED SIDEWALK PAVING.

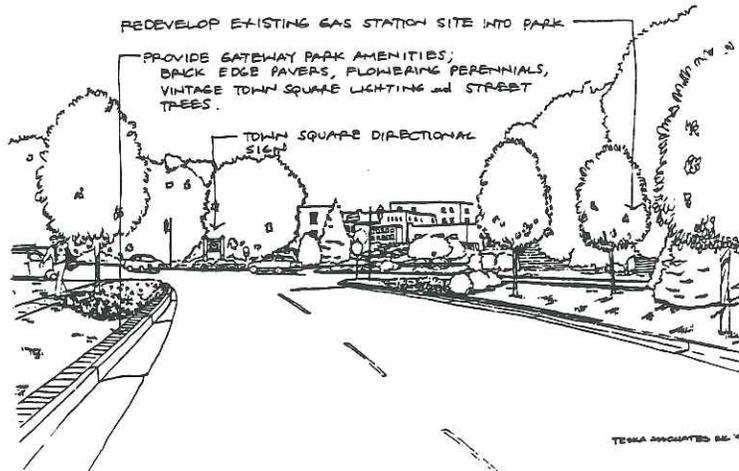
HISTORIC STREETLIGHT FIXTURE AT PEDESTRIAN SCALE.

FIGURE 12  
POSSIBLE STREETSCAPES

## Church Street at Jefferson Street



## Lake Avenue at South Street



**FIGURE 13**  
**POSSIBLE STREETSCAPES**

## BUILDING DESIGN AND FACADE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Much of the charm of Downtown Woodstock is in its extraordinary legacy of 19th century and early 20th century building design, especially facade details. Everything from building scale and orientation to construction materials and trim contributes to the composite that people find so appealing. Given the American public's thirst for experiences, this ambiance will be even more important to the economic vitality of Downtown in coming decades than it has been in recent decades.

This chapter introduces an approach to the formulation of building design and facade design guidelines as a basis for sensitive private investment and public improvements, provision of assistance for building rehabilitation or facade improvements, and implementation of the Historic Preservation Commission Ordinance.

Three styles of architecture are among those recognized as appropriate to the conservation, development, and/or redevelopment of Downtown Woodstock. These are:

- a. Greek Revival, as exemplified by the Old McHenry County Courthouse, City Hall and many residential structures.
- b. Modified Gothic, as exemplified by the Woodstock Opera House.
- c. Victorian, as exemplified by many of the commercial and residential buildings.

Because of numerous fires around the Square, and other influences over time, additional styles of architecture have been introduced--some more compatible than others. Fortunately, it is not too late to preserve the historic integrity of Downtown, yet provide for desirable change.

Early in 1996 the City Council enacted an ordinance providing for an Historic Preservation Commission with jurisdiction over designated historic district boundaries. (Figure 1). The Commission supersedes the Central Business District Commission and the Environmental Enhancement Commission. Among its many responsibilities is "to develop specific criteria and guidelines for the proper alteration, construction, demolition, or removal of landmarks, or of property within a historic preservation district," and "to review applications for construction, alteration, removal, or demolition affecting landmarks or property

within historic districts and issue or deny certificates of appropriateness for such actions."

### **The Approach**

There are at least four different perspectives to be considered when drafting such guidelines.

1. Buildings can be categorized according to their historic merit:

- Historically significant
- Contributing
- Non-contributing
- Intrusions

Proposed improvements to buildings in different categories may be judged on the basis of different criteria.

2. The Downtown Sub-area Plan distinguishes three sub-areas of the downtown, based on overall historic significance:

- The Square--all properties or parts thereof facing the Square.
- The Perimeter--all properties or parts thereof surrounding the Square and along Main Street and Benton Street.
- The Balance--all other properties in the Downtown Sub-area.

3. Design guidelines can also be categorized in accordance with the various components of design:

- Blocks and street corridors
- Building groups
- Buildings
- Facade details (front, rear, side)
- Site improvements
- Maintenance and repair

4. Guidelines may also be associated with the level of improvement:

- Minimal rehabilitation
- Major rehabilitation
- Restoration
- New construction

## Guidelines

The guidelines recommended in the Appendix of this Downtown Sub-area Plan represent an initial concept of that which might ultimately be prepared by the Commission itself. These guidelines might be utilized by the Commission until such time as the Commission has conducted a more complete inventory, evaluation, and designation of historic landmarks, resulting in a final set of design guidelines.

## Applied Examples

Four case studies were carried out to illustrate how these guidelines might influence improvements to existing buildings and the design of new buildings. Two cases are located on the Square; one is on Main Street; and one addresses the rear facades of buildings facing a perimeter street (Figure 14). Each case deals not only with individual buildings, but with the composite of abutting buildings.

1. Benton Street Facades: These Victorian commercial buildings are located in the northeast corner of the Square. They are highly visible and can be enhanced with modest improvements at modest cost (Figure 15).
2. Johnson Street Buildings: This case involves design and construction of a new building (infill) on a vacant site at the southwest corner of the Square. It is essential that the new building be compatible with two different types of architecture on each side of it, and relate to a pedestrian passageway to be constructed between Throop and Johnson Street (Figure 15).
3. Main Street Facades: A cluster of buildings on the east side of Main Street is the subject of this case study. Recommendations may have applicability to other buildings along the same street (Figure 16).
4. Jefferson Street Rear Facades: This case illustrates how rear facades can become front facades. Although these recommendations depart from pure architectural preservation, they are sensitive to the original design and implement important public policy to expand businesses around the Square's perimeter (Figure 16).

The spirit of these recommendations can be applied throughout the balance of the Historic District and Downtown.

Benton Street



Main Street



Johnson Street

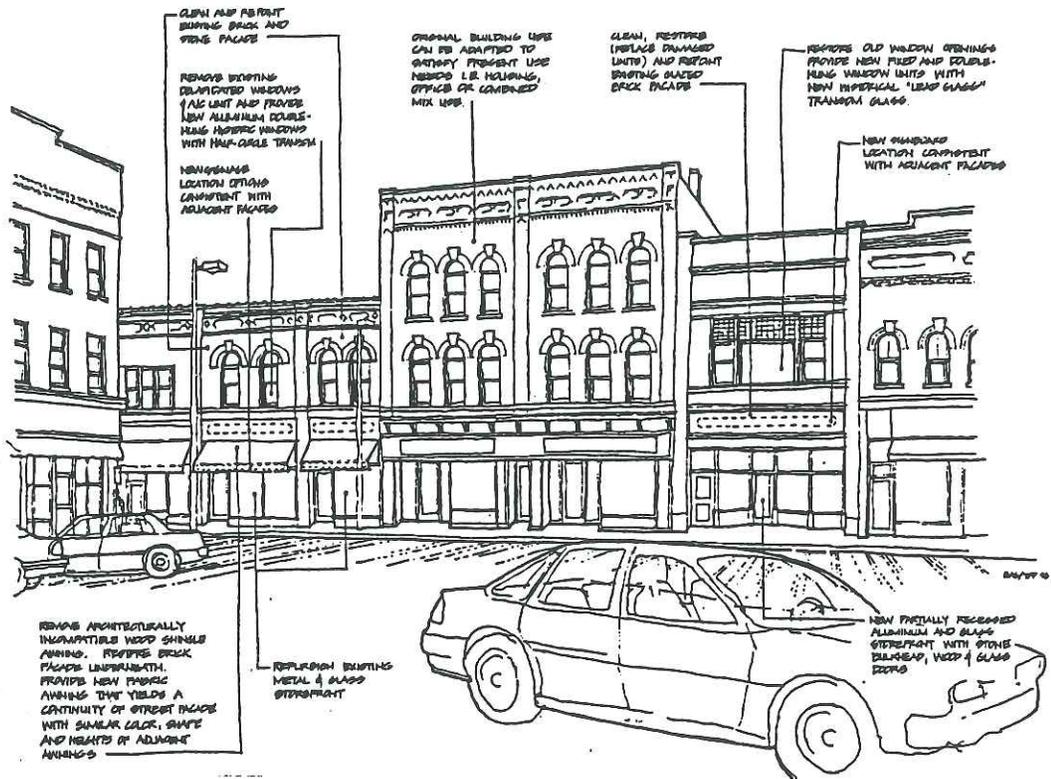


Jefferson Street



FIGURE 14  
SELECTED EXAMPLES

## Benton Street Facades



## Johnson Street Facades

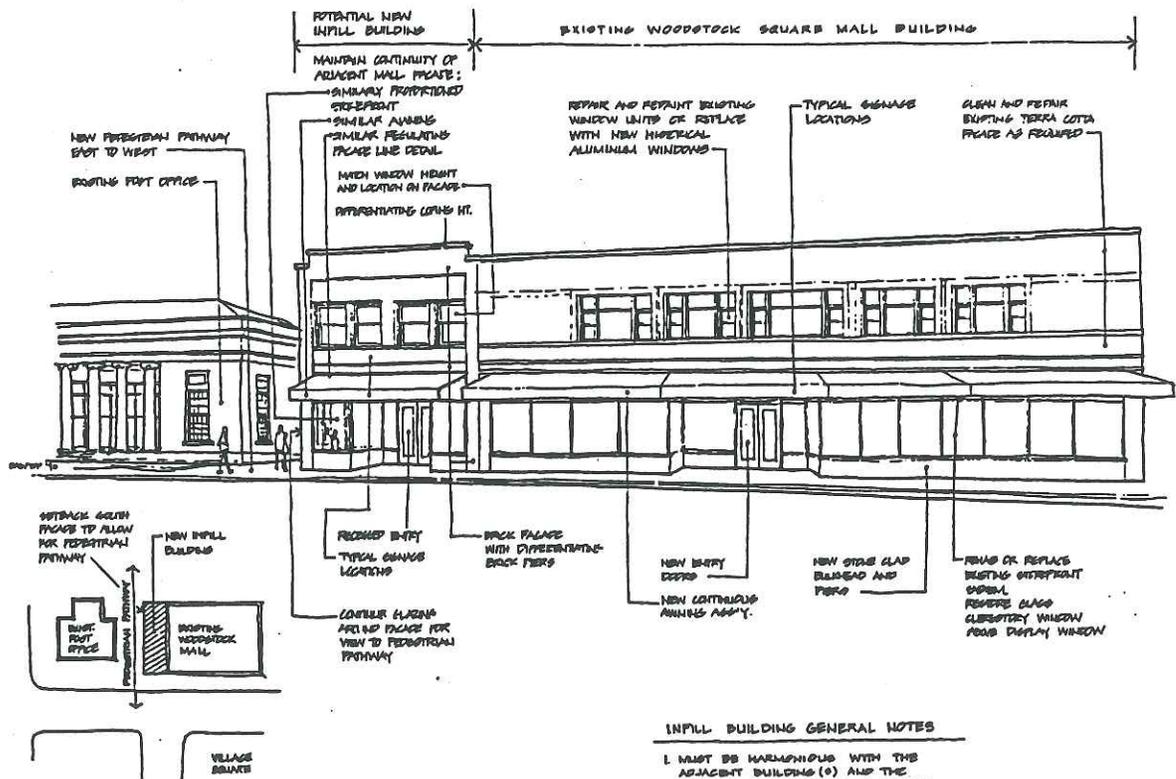


FIGURE 15  
BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES



## DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS

Development potentials in Downtown Woodstock are substantial and exciting. They are driven by three key factors: population growth in the immediate market area and increasing recognition by more distant niche customer groups; increasing desire by many Americans and American businesses to "rediscover" and invest in traditional business districts (especially historic business districts); and availability of buildings and sites in Downtown Woodstock. The following are among the most obvious development potentials. (Figure 17).

### Former Post Office Building

Situated at the southwest corner of the Square, this classic public building is well suited to certain public uses, including an arts center related to the Opera House, or a home for the City's Recreation Department, which could also include facilities for active use, such as the arts, fitness, etc.

If possible, an appropriate private business use would be welcomed, not only to enhance the mix around the Square, but to improve the community's tax base.

**In either case, the building itself should not be substantially altered on the exterior, and the site should retain its landscaped character. In fact, landscaping should be enhanced consistent with this visible location at the intersection of Throop and Calhoun and across from the City Hall.**

**A pedestrian passageway should be constructed along the northerly edge of the property.**

### Vacant City Owned Site

North of the former Post Office is a vacant parcel owned by the City which abuts the Woodstock Mall building. This property is suitable as open space and could be utilized in conjunction with the Post Office building, or it **could be sold and developed with a new commercial building of Victorian style in accordance with the design guidelines recommended in the previous chapter.**

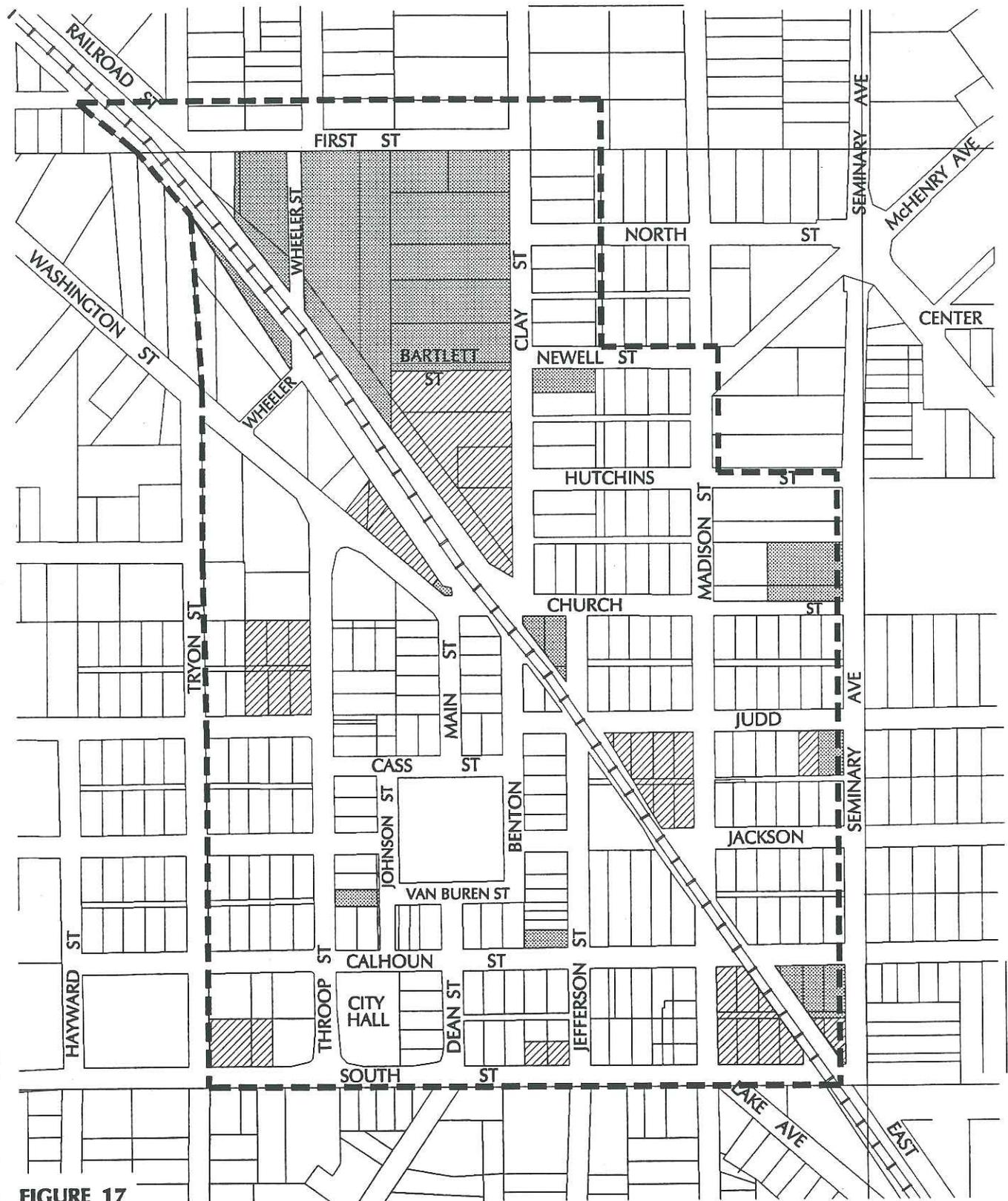


FIGURE 17

## DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK POSSIBLE PUBLIC OR PRIVATE REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS

-  READILY AVAILABLE / WITH OF WITHOUT BUILDINGS
-  AVAILABILITY UNDETERMINED / WITH BUILDINGS

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### Throop and Judd

A series of parcels at the northwest corner of Throop and Judd Streets are presently underutilized. They could be assembled as one site for redevelopment. **Appropriate uses might be retail shops, offices, or a bed and breakfast inn with or without an accessory restaurant.** Future development can take advantage of the proposed parking structure on the east side of Throop, but must be architecturally compatible with the Square to the east and the residential neighborhood to the west.

### Calhoun and Jefferson

At the northwest corner of this intersection is one parcel large enough to accommodate **a public open space at the corner and a new two story building for business** on the westerly part of the site. The building should be designed to accentuate this gateway to the Square.

### South and Madison

This block west of the railroad tracks is currently occupied by several small residences. Its gateway location suggests that it would be a very attractive location for a **new office development** facing the intersection with a landscaped front yard and parking adjacent to the railroad tracks.

### Lumber Yard

The lumber yard east of the railroad tracks, between Judd and Jackson, will eventually be redeveloped as a result of market forces. Its prime location suggests that it would be an excellent location for **a bed and breakfast inn, with or without an accessory restaurant, or for office development with a landscaped perimeter.** Subject to strict use and design regulations, the site might also be developed for retailing, or a mixed use project.

### Church and Seminary

A vacant parcel at the northwest corner of this intersection offers potentials for **single family attached or multi-family residential development** to stabilize the entire block for residential use.

### Calhoun and Seminary

This small triangular parcel at the southwest corner of this intersection offers an opportunity for **small scale office development.** Because Calhoun is a major arterial and its crossing of the railroad tracks is vulnerable to traffic hazards, access to this site should be provided only on Seminary Avenue.

## Die Cast, et. al.

The properties bounded by Clay, First and the railroad offer Downtown Woodstock its most dramatic development opportunity. Most of this 10+ acre area is occupied by the former Die Cast manufacturing plant. However, the City owns a water treatment facility in the northwest corner of the area and a commuter parking lot in the southeast corner of the area. There are also three other business properties located north of the commuter parking lot which should be consolidated with the balance of the area to foster planned development of the entire area.

**The following guidelines are recommended for the Die Cast property.**

### 1. FUNCTION

Support the Woodstock Square business district with **coordinated, mixed-use development**, exhibiting the following characteristics:

- Transit oriented development incorporating the commuter station.
- Varied housing types (100-150 D.U.s) and a diverse residential population (customers and employees).
- Businesses (up to 100,000 sq. ft.) which support the community, but do not compete directly with the Square, e.g. food, pharmacy, specialty shops, services, offices, eating and drinking places, entertainment, etc.
- Pedestrian open spaces.
- Will blend into and directly enhance the surrounding neighborhood.

### 2. PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENT

Arrange land uses and densities to **reflect key features of the Square and to respect adjacent residential neighborhoods**:

- A grid system of streets and blocks consistent with the original plat of Woodstock.
- Businesses in the vicinity of the commuter railroad station.
- Graduated residential density: 10-20 D.U.s/acre near Newell Street, and 8-10 D.U.s/acre near First Street.
- Public plaza and park on an axis with Main Street to enhance visual connections with the Square and commuter station.
- Open space along Washington Street to highlight the commuter station.
- Permits development in phases by one or more developers.

### 3. ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Provide efficient **vehicular access and pedestrian circulation:**

- Extend the grid system of streets, including a Newell/Bartlett Street "by-pass" between Clay Street and Washington Street.
- Emphasize pedestrian circulation and character, including traditional sidewalks.
- Distribute on-street and off-street parking and minimize visual impact of parked vehicles.

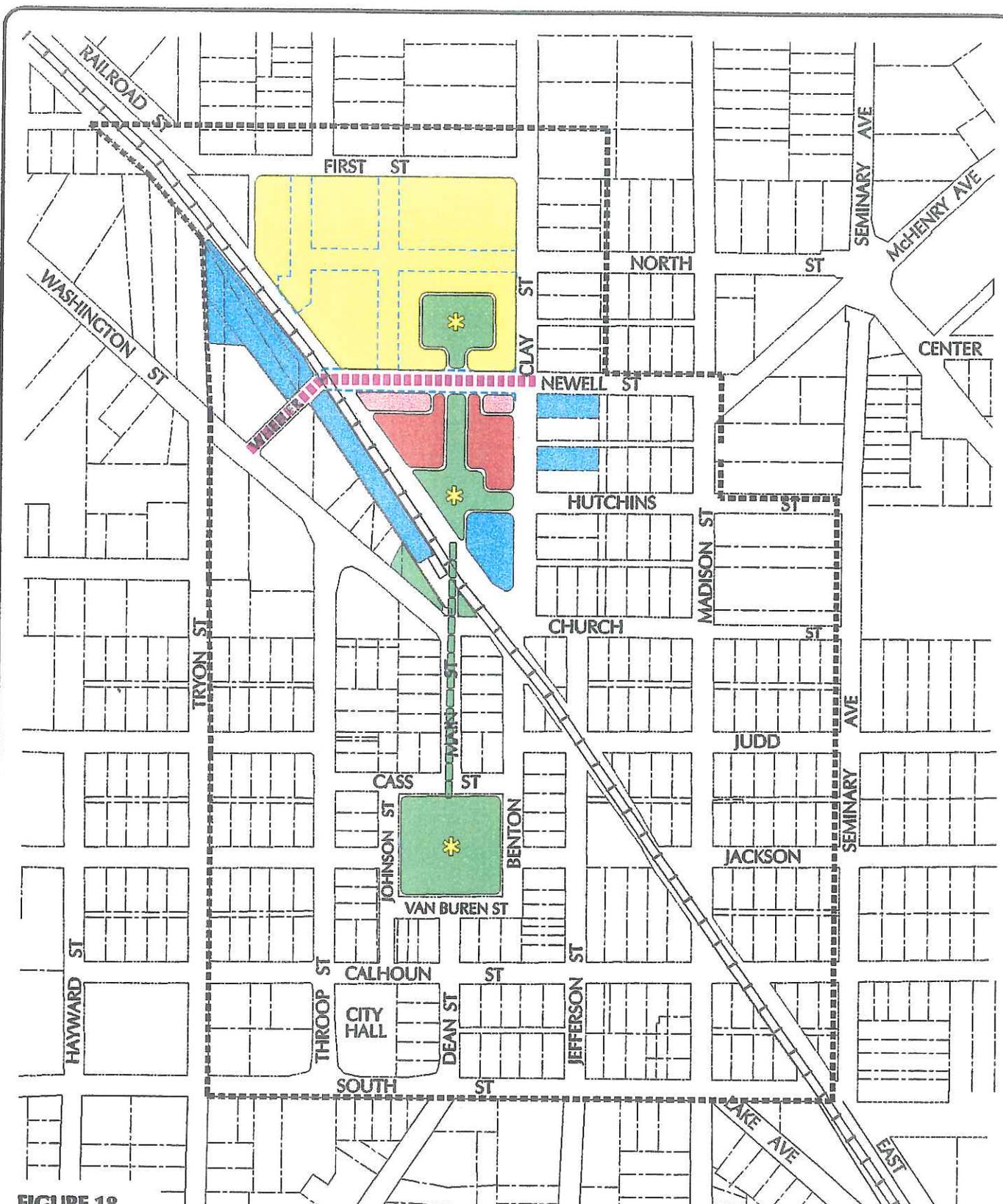
### 4. VISUAL DESIGN

**Stress design excellence:**

- Traditional but varied architectural character compatible with the neighborhood and Square.
- Front yards and facades oriented toward the street.
- Attention to sight lines and focal points.
- Generous landscaping, including fountain in the plaza, street trees, and year round color.
- Appropriate orientation and business signage.
- Exterior rehabilitation of the City's Water Treatment Plant.

Redevelopment of the Die Cast property will undoubtedly be the single largest project in the foreseeable future. It should be planned and designed as a whole. However, if market or other conditions dictate that it be constructed in phases, steps should be taken to mitigate the impacts of construction on the neighborhood. Portions of the site which are scheduled for later stages of construction should be cleared and temporarily landscaped.

The fundamental concept expressed by the foregoing planning and design guidelines is illustrated in Figure 18. This is the basis for evaluating future developer proposals. On the other hand, Figure 19 illustrates one alternative for achieving the development potentials of this area consistent with the desired guidelines. Other alternatives may also be worthy of consideration.



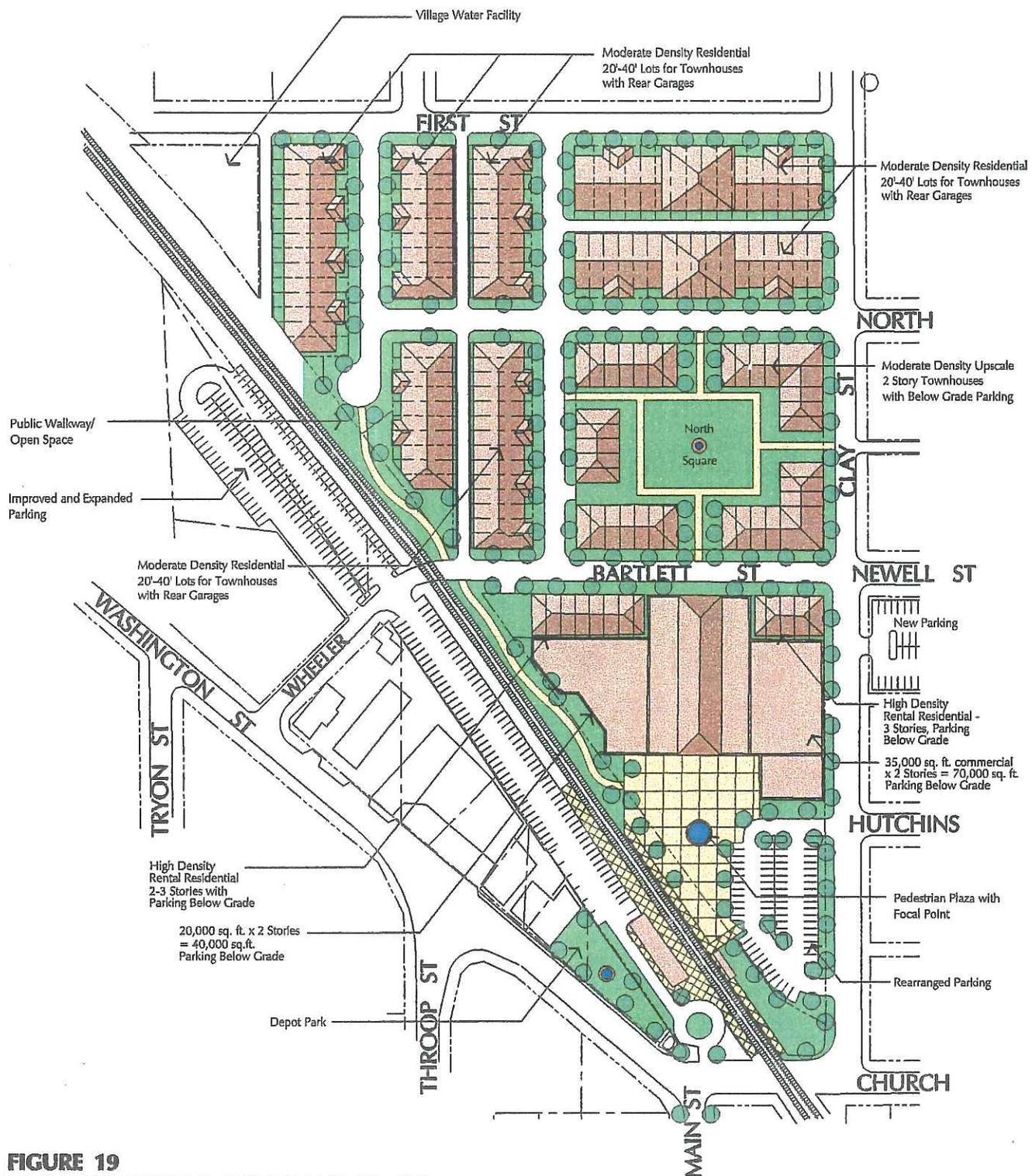
**FIGURE 18**  
**DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK**  
**PLANNING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE DIECAST PROPERTY**

- MODERATE DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL USE
- PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
- PARKING
- PEDESTRIAN LINKS
- EXTENDED EXISTING STREET NETWORK
- VEHICULAR THOROUGHFARE
- \* FOCAL POINT

APRIL 29, 1996  
 0 100 200 300  
 SCALE IN FEET

**TESKA ASSOCIATES INC.**  
 1000 Peachtree Street, N.E.  
 Atlanta, Georgia 30309  
 404.525.8800





**FIGURE 19**  
**DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK**  
**DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS FOR THE DIECAST PROPERTY**

**TESKA ASSOCIATES INC.**  
 Community Planning, Architecture, Management  
 2100 North 1st Street, Suite 100  
 Minneapolis, MN 55412  
 612-338-1111

APRIL 29, 1996  
 0 50 100 150  
 SCALE IN FEET



W201025V/2110

# IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

## Overall Strategies

Overall strategies required to guide implementation of this Downtown Woodstock Sub-Area Plan are:

- **Effective leadership** -- competent, respected, and enthusiastic individuals and organizations prepared to motivate others and get the job done well.
- **Adequate resources** -- the technical and financial where-with-all, enabled by the support of interest groups throughout the community.
- **A coordinated program** -- a prioritized list of actions with commensurate budgets, schedules, and responsibilities, linked together by a communications network.
- **Performance evaluation** -- a method of regularly evaluating progress and accountability.
- **Enjoyment** -- the joy of working together and the celebration of accomplishment.

## Organization and Management

Key to all Downtown revitalization programs is an effective organization (or organizations) and management team. There is no single model for this; each community is different, and each era of history within a community may need a different model. However, nation-wide experience does strongly suggest that there are ten important **principles** that apply.

- Public-private partnership
- Inclusion of all major stakeholders
- Strong representation of property owners
- Effective leadership nucleus
- Available expertise
- Dependable funding
- Commitment to a mission (strategic plan)
- Centralized management/coordination
- Accountability and performance evaluation
- Customer orientation

Based on these principles, several alternative models were identified and evaluated for Woodstock, all of which took into account the many excellent contributions of existing organizations over the years.

For the immediate future, it is recommended that the City of Woodstock retain its leadership role with support from other public and private organizations. The nucleus of the City leadership team should include: the Mayor, the City Manager, and the Community Development Director. The Director of the Woodstock Economic Development Corporation should also become a member of the leadership team as a key link to the private sector and area-wide economic development.

It is also recommended that an Implementation Advisory Task Force be formed, similar to the group that advised the City and its consultant throughout the planning phase. Membership on this Task Force should be representative of the public, private and non-profit (civic) sectors, and should be composed of those who can share unique insight and resources oriented specifically to implementation.

As soon as it is feasible, the private sector should be called upon to assume a greater leadership responsibility for revitalization, to become a full partner with the City. Ultimately, as in most other successful Downtown revitalization programs, the private sector (especially property owners) should lead the effort, supported by the public sector.

This organizational structure will evolve over time, and will serve the community well for many years to come.

### **Public Information**

Public information is the link between the Downtown revitalization program and the community. It is the catalyst for community support over time. Therefore, it is critical to success.

Among the components of a public information program are:

- Public hearings
- News media coverage
- Reports and newsletters
- Videotapes
- Public forums
- Speakers bureau

From time to time certain actions, primarily certain municipal actions, will legally require a public hearing. The public should be well advised of these public hearings in advance, often above and beyond the minimum requirements of state statutes. Related informational materials should be readily available for public review in advance of such hearings, perhaps at a specified location in the Public Library or City Hall.

Local **news media**, especially newspapers, have done an excellent job to keep the public informed about this project. It is important that reporters be provided with accurate information and not need to rely on hearsay. From time to time it may be advisable for the City, to prepare news releases or cooperate in the preparation of feature stories to highlight newsworthy topics. A key objective is to **keep the Downtown in the news**, preferably the result of positive events, such as a completed project or a new business opening.

It is recommended that the City issue an **annual report** to the public in printed form, but also perhaps as a special public event with news coverage. Throughout the year, consideration should be given to issuing **newsletters** to the general public or to target groups, such as Downtown merchants and employees. These newsletters can combine public information with marketing materials.

**Videotapes** are an excellent way to document key events and to tell the story(ies) of Downtown revitalization. Most communities have talented "amateur" video buffs or community colleges with video program capabilities. Some have professional resources. The advantage of video documentation is that it can capture the reality and human dynamics of a story or topic more effectively than other media for target audiences. Videotapes can also be an excellent orientation or training device for new members of responsible organizations.

Consideration should also be given to at least one **public forum** each year dealing with Downtown revitalization progress throughout the U.S., northeastern Illinois, and Woodstock. It is important that the general public have some knowledge of trends around the country so that they can be inspired and be able to compare Woodstock's progress with that of similar communities. The Opera House would be an excellent venue for such a forum.

A **speakers bureau** is another way to share progress with civic organizations and the general public. Having available several articulate persons who have accurate knowledge of the program and can speak to community groups is another excellent means of communication. Woodstock has several excellent speakers.

It is important to acknowledge that public information is not to be undertaken as an afterthought. It deserves preparation, expertise, time, and sometimes funding to be effective. Casual attention to public information can be risky.

#### **Business Retention Assistance**

The retention and improved performance of existing, compatible businesses should be high on the priority scale of every Downtown revitalization program. Among the many effective activities to be considered are: training seminars and tutorial programs, operating assistance, affinity groups, and financial or building improvement assistance.

The first of these, **training seminars and tutorial programs**, involves utilizing experts to teach groups or provide one-on-one tutoring on such diverse topics as business plans, bookkeeping, advertising and marketing, merchandise display, customer relations, personnel management, property maintenance, etc. These topics are taken very seriously by national retail chains and other major businesses, but are often overlooked by the small, independent, and first-time business owner. Yet they are essential to survival of each business and to the competitive positioning of downtown as a whole.

The second, **operating assistance**, is also diverse. It may involve helping an existing business to expand or to relocate in the Downtown, so that it does not move away just when it becomes successful. Assistance might also be provided to solve specific problems associated with access, parking, loading, landlord-tenant relations, code enforcement, etc.

Encouraging the organization of informal **affinity groups** may be very beneficial. Such groups of businesses may be clusters of diverse neighboring businesses in a particular block or groups of similar businesses focusing on their common interests. Working together will not only improve their "pulling power" and achieve shared goals, but will enhance the spirit of community within the Downtown.

**Financial assistance** should be available to Downtown businesses through a Commercial Revolving Loan Fund created by local financial institutions. Another recommendation is a **building facade improvement** program (loans or grants) administered by the City. These programs, especially grant programs, have been highly successful in other communities. Because there are so many historic buildings in Woodstock, such a program could be very effective, especially if it emphasizes entire blocks in addition to single buildings.

Consideration should also be given to providing financial assistance for **interior improvements** that implement Downtown objectives. For example, bringing older buildings up to contemporary standards with sprinkler systems or facilities for handicapped access can be expensive, often financially unfeasible for the property owner. Financial assistance can help to accomplish these public purposes without unreasonable burden on the property owner.

### **Business and Investor Recruitment**

Several types of desirable businesses are lacking or under represented in Downtown Woodstock. Conversely, vacant space can sometimes attract the wrong type of business. Although normal market trends and sometimes fate can make good things happen over time, most Downtowns will not prosper without a more aggressive strategy. Simply consider the effort the shopping center developer or manager puts forth to identify and recruit the most appropriate mix of tenants willing to pay the desired rent and contribute to the center's overall success.

An active **recruitment program** should be established for the Downtown, focused on specific businesses, developers, and financial investors. These may already be waiting in the wings in Woodstock, or it may be necessary to locate them elsewhere.

Before undertaking such an effort, several **key questions** must be answered: What type of business, developer, or investor do we want and why? Where do we want them located (options)? What do we have to offer them? What are our terms? How do we recruit them?

One positive step forward would be to invite all local **commercial real estate brokers** to a work session to enlist their support in pursuit of desired businesses. Financial incentives might be considered to motivate brokers. It may also be desirable to establish an independent, highly focused effort to attract key businesses, or a compatible real estate developer who can produce a project with a desired tenant mix. This could be one of the most important new initiatives to be undertaken in the next five years.

Woodstock has several opportunities for developer/investor recruitment, including:

- o the former U.S. Post Office and adjacent parcel;
- o development of the Die Cast property

This initiative also requires two other ingredients: **a data base and an effective team of recruiters**. The data base includes basic socio-economic information on the market area, available sites and building space in the Downtown typical rental rates or real estate values, performance experience of Downtown businesses by category, and other information that can make a compelling argument for investing. The WEDC has already assembled much of this information.

When a prospect is contacted, one or more experienced recruiters with authority to facilitate negotiations will be needed to expedite the relationship leading to a win-win decision. **Records** should be maintained for all formal and informal contacts. These records should be analyzed to determine why businesses are or are not interested in Downtown Woodstock, and why they decided to locate there, or why not.

A word of caution, however: do not expect instant results; this process will take time, as well as energy, to achieve its goals.

### **Marketing**

Marketing is a broadly based concept. It begins with a sound market place evaluation to determine what Downtown Woodstock needs, what it wants, what is lacking, and what can be provided in the Downtown. The Downtown must provide products and services responsive to that evaluation. Then its task is to make the public aware of their availability. This is accomplished through advertising, promotions, events, and image building.

**Advertising** begins with appropriate orientation and directional signage along approach routes and culminates with newspaper ads, TV and radio ads, direct mail, handouts, etc. Every B&B, hotel and motel room in Woodstock should advertise the Downtown in some way. This could also be extended to resort hotels in southern Wisconsin. To be effective, advertising should be well conceived and coordinated, often utilizing a common logo or theme.

**Promotions**, focus on sidewalk sales and other activities directly associated with increasing customer traffic and purchases. The Farmers' Market fits into this category.

**Special events**, such as the Fair in the Square, and Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, are important because they draw attention to the Downtown and attract persons who may not otherwise have occasion to visit there. Perhaps Groundhog Day will also become a tradition. This leads to the important objective of increasing tourism. In all cases, however, the strategy is to leverage these attractions into directly supporting Downtown businesses.

**Image building** is the icing on the cake. Another way to put it is "getting credit where credit is due". Positive stories in the local news media are a first step. However, Woodstock's image should also be enhanced in nearby towns and cities, (especially Chicago and the North Shore), throughout the midwest, and even nationally. Complementary articles in major magazines should be a specific target. Also to be considered are awards of recognition from creditable civic, business, and professional organizations. Woodstock deserves to be more than a "well kept secret."

Marketing the Downtown is a **combination of mass marketing and niche marketing**. On the one hand, the Downtown should be every local citizen's central place or destination for one reason or another. On the other hand, this is the era of niche marketing -- targeting goods, services, and events to specific consumers. When considering both, do not overlook **children and youths**. It is essential to build a community culture that incorporates the Downtown into the lives of young people as a positive alternative to the shopping center or highway strip.

### **Codes and Ordinances**

Woodstock's Zoning Ordinance, Historic Preservation Ordinance, and Building Codes are generally up-to-date and suitable for Downtown. However, several recommendations have merit. **First, the Zoning Map should be amended to reflect land use recommendations in the Downtown Sub-area Plan. Second, the Zoning Ordinance itself merits detailed review.** It can be improved with amendments to the permitted and special use lists in each relevant zoning district, and by amendments to parking requirements. It may also be desirable to create a new zoning district (or districts) for the Die Cast property.

Recommended design guidelines for Downtown buildings and their facades are contained in this sub-area plan. **However, the Historic Preservation Commission now needs to review, refine, and adopt those guidelines. It also needs to conduct a detailed inventory of and officially designate historic buildings.**

**Building codes should be reviewed** to determine their applicability to the maintenance and rehabilitation of older buildings. A delicate balance must be achieved between enforcing such codes and preserving Downtown's historic legacy.

### **Municipal Capital Improvements**

Recommendations in this report add up to an ambitious and expensive menu of capital investments to be made by the City, and possibly other governmental units. This far exceeds anything in the history of Woodstock, admittedly. A prerequisite for sound investment is a multi-year capital improvements program and budget, identifying priorities, costs, and sources of financing. The City of Woodstock already has a city-wide capital improvements program. This report provides a basis for amending that capital improvements program to include recommended Downtown Projects (See Action Plan).

### **Financing**

Where there is a will, there is a way! This familiar adage has been proven frequently. Financial resources are available from a variety of sources, including:

- Federal and State Grants or Loans
- Tax Increment Financing
- Special Service Areas
- County and Municipal General Funds
- Motor Fuel Tax Rebates
- ISTEPA Enhancement Funds
- Dedicated Hotel/Motel Taxes
- Corporate Contributions
- Foundation and Institutional Contributions
- Public Contributions
- In-kind Contributions

Locally, the first alternative is the city's **general fund**, supported by property taxes, sales taxes and other income generated by the city as a whole. The Downtown is every citizen's asset and responsibility, so this is reasonable up to a point. Then one might ask, "How can the Downtown pay for itself to a greater degree?" The answer is not limited to, but certainly focuses, on Tax Increment Financing and Special Service Areas.

**Tax Increment Financing** offers the most substantial and readily achieved alternative, especially because of the Die Cast property. It is the best technique available under Illinois Statutes for financing eligible redevelopment projects especially in the Downtown. **We strongly recommend that Tax Increment Financing be seriously considered as the method of redeveloping the Die Cast property.** It might also be applicable elsewhere in the Downtown where it can support and be supported by significant private investments.

Much of the work required to prepare a TIF redevelopment plan has already been accomplished in this Sub-area Plan. No new or additional property, sales, or utility taxes are imposed on real estate by this technique. However, those local taxes which are generated by new investment as a result of normal city-wide tax rates are utilized in whole or in part to pay for public investments. In this way, the project helps to pay for itself.

**Special Service Area** financing, which does involve an additional property tax imposed on a designated area, was the technique utilized in Woodstock to support existing streetscaping around the square. Municipal bonds issued for this project will be paid off in the year 2000. The additional taxes raised by this method are utilized solely to serve the area which generates the taxes in ways that exceed what the area can expect from the city's normal services. In addition to the financing of public infrastructure and streetscapes, SSA financing can be utilized for economic development, marketing, maintenance, and special events. Although no one likes additional taxes, most taxpayers are willing to pay them if they have confidence that the revenue is being effectively utilized to serve their common interests.

**Private corporations, charitable foundations, and institutions** have much to gain from Downtown revitalization, and have a responsibility to financially support this effort. However, they too must have confidence that their money is effectively utilized. It is recommended that such fund raising be directly related to specific objectives that can demonstrate success.

In addition, a strategy for **volunteerism and in-kind contributions** should also be formulated. For example, members of local and area-wide visual and performing arts organizations could be very instrumental. Volunteers could also lead walking tours and assist other activities focused on extending hospitality to visitors and tourists. In some communities, business persons volunteer to wash the sidewalks in front of their buildings at least weekly. Service clubs might adopt a park, plaza, or other public place to keep it clean and enhance its appearance. The more people who become involved, the better.

Financing Downtown revitalization is as much an art as it is a science. Where there is a will, there is a way!

## ACTION PLAN

The City of Woodstock is committed to **implementation** of a Downtown revitalization plan and program. Therefore, the foregoing recommendations have been organized and summarized into an **ACTION PLAN** with scheduled priorities and responsibilities.

Cost estimates have been prepared for physical improvements with the potential to be constructed by the City of Woodstock within the first five years. If the City chooses, some or all of these improvements may be incorporated into the City's Capital Improvement Program.

**Priorities** for capital improvement projects coincide with their **construction**. Therefore, planning and design tasks may need to be scheduled earlier. For example, design work may need to proceed in the first year on a project that has a construction priority of years 2-5.

Although this **Action Plan** focuses on the City of Woodstock, it is important to reemphasize the need for cooperation from and leadership within the private sector as well.

## DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK

### ACTION PLAN

<u>Action</u>	<u>Year</u>			<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
	<u>1</u>	<u>2-5</u>	<u>6+</u>		
<b>ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT</b>					
Adopt Sub-area Plan	✓			City	
Prepare Operations Plan for City Leadership	✓			City	
Establish Public-Private Implementation Task Force	✓			City	
Activate Historic Preservation Commission	✓			City	
<b>PUBLIC INFORMATION</b>					
Enhance Media Relations	✓	✓	✓	City	
Initiate Public Forums	✓	✓	✓	City	
Publish Newsletter	✓	✓	✓	City	
Speakers Bureau	✓	✓	✓	City	
<b>MARKETING</b>					
Promotions	✓	✓	✓	Chamber/Others	
Special Events	✓	✓	✓	City/Others	
Implement Marketing Program	✓	✓	✓	City/WEDC	
Enhance Tourism	✓	✓	✓	Chamber/City	
Implement Signage Program		✓		City	

Action	Year			Responsibility	Remarks
	1	2-5	6+		
BUSINESS RETENTION					
Business Visitation	✓	✓	✓	WEDC	
Provide Retention Assistance	✓	✓	✓	City/WEDC	
Provide Training Seminars	✓	✓	✓	WEDC/Chamber	
BUSINESS RECRUITMENT					
Formulate Recruitment Program	✓			City/WEDC	
Implement Recruitment Program		✓	✓	City/WEDC	
DEVELOPER RECRUITMENT					
Formulate Recruitment Program	✓			City	
Implement Recruitment Program	✓	✓	✓	City	
CODES AND ORDINANCES					
Amend Zoning Map	✓			City	
Amend Zoning Ordinance		✓		City	
Tailor Code Enforcement		✓	✓	City	
FACADE PROGRAM					
Establish Facade Program	✓			City	
Implement Facade Program		✓		City	
REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE					
Establish Rehab Assistance Program	✓			City/Banks	
Implement Rehab Assistance Program		✓		Banks	
TIF PROJECT (S)					
Eligibility Study	✓			City	
Plan and Program	✓			City	
Implementation		✓	✓	City	

Action	Year			Responsibility	Estimated Cost Years 1-5 Only
	1	2-5	6+		
<b>STREETS</b>					
Brick Paving on Dean, Judd, Jackson, Benton, Church, Johnson		✓		City	\$400,000
Newell-Madison Intersection		✓		City	\$50,000
New Bartlett and Wheeler Street Bypass		✓		City	\$750,000
Die Cast Minor Streets		✓		Developer	----
Throop/Washington Median	✓			City	\$8,000
<b>STREETSCAPE</b>					
Approach Routes, Outside Downtown		✓		City	\$60,000
Town Square		✓		City	\$110,000
Town Square Perimeter		✓		City	\$250,000
Passageways (3)	✓			City	\$10,000
Gateway Routes within Downtown		✓		City	\$60,000
North Area Clay, Bartlett, Wheeler		✓		City	\$12,000
North Area, Other		✓		Developer	---
<b>OPEN SPACES</b>					
McHenry & Newell		✓		City	\$6,000
Calhoun & Jefferson		✓		City	\$25,000 & land
Church & Jefferson	✓			City	\$25,000 & land
South & Lake			✓	City	----
Commuter Station		✓		City	\$50,000 & land
Die Cast Park & Plaza		✓		Developer	----

Action	Year			Responsibility	Estimated Cost Years 1-5 Only
	1	2-5	6+		
<b>PARKING</b>					
Parking Structure off Main Street, 150 + spaces		✓		City	\$800,000
New Lots, South of Church Street	✓	✓		City	\$600,000
New Lots, North of Church Street	✓	✓		City	\$800,000
Enhance Existing Lots		✓		City	\$100,000
<b>PUBLIC BUILDINGS</b>					
Rehab of Post Office for Recreation Department		✓		City	----
Rehab Fire Station for Police Department		✓		City	----
Rehab Water Plant Facade		✓		City	----
Expand Opera House		✓		City	----
Visitor Center	✓			Chamber	----
<b>SIGNAGE</b>					
City Gateway Signage		✓		City	\$40,000
Approach Route Signage		✓		City	\$10,000
Downtown Traffic Signage	✓			City	\$10,000
<b>UTILITIES</b>					
Sewer and Water			✓	City	----
Power and Telephone			✓	Utility Co.s	---

## CONCLUSION

There is every reason to be optimistic about Woodstock's future. National and regional economies are strong, the "wave" of metropolitan development has reached well into McHenry County. The question is not whether Woodstock will grow and change; it is **how** will Woodstock grow and change?

The City's Comprehensive Plan and the Economic Development Corporation's Strategic Plan both recognize the importance of the Woodstock Square and have called for a Downtown Sub-area Plan. That plan has now been prepared and published, with substantial citizen-input. However, it does not represent a self-fulfilling prophecy. It will be realized only as a result of **LEADERSHIP, BROAD BASED PUBLIC SUPPORT, AND ACTION.**

If this opportunity is seized, the extraordinary legacy of Woodstock's Square will be preserved and enhanced for future generations; Downtown will be a vital force in the life and culture of the community; citizens will be proud of the Downtown's image; and future generations will thank those who have been responsible for this effort.

# APPENDIX A

## POPULATION TRENDS

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>Change</u>
McHenry County*	111,555	147,897	32.6%	183,241	23.9%	---	---	235,781	28.7%
Woodstock*	10,226	11,725	14.7%	14,353	22.4%	---	---	19,379	35.0%
3-Mile Radius Around Woodstock**	----	13,473	---	15,826	17.5%	19,181	21.2%	----	----

\* Source: McHenry County Department of Planning and Development

\*\*Source: Claritas, Inc. Marketview Comparison Report

## MUNICIPAL SALES TAX RECEIPTS State Fiscal Year Totals (July 1 - June 30)

	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Crystal Lake	\$5,399,048	\$ 5,484,745	1.5	\$5,628,294	2.6
Huntley	333,675	399,132	19.6	471,289	18.0
McHenry	2,468,476	2,714,619	9.9	3,051,110	12.3
Woodstock	1,685,656	1,842,917	9.3	1,929,185	4.6
McHenry County	12,803,710	13,872,641	8.3	15,073,866	8.6
State of Illinois	864,909,855	924,233,918	6.8	986,059,208	6.6

Source: State of Illinois Department of Revenue

**CITY OF WOODSTOCK, ILLINOIS  
MUNICIPAL SALES TAXES REVENUES BY KIND OF BUSINESS**

	<u>1970-71</u>	<u>1975-76</u>	<u>1980-81</u>	<u>1985-86</u>	<u>1989-90</u>	<u>1991-92</u>	<u>1992-93</u>	<u>1993-94</u>	<u>70-71 to 93-94 % Change</u>
General Merchandise	\$28,473	\$ 57,823	\$103,798	\$137,495	\$143,625	\$319,230	\$327,612	\$335,235	1,077.4
Food	84,396	134,750	116,556	313,762	373,112	313,027	307,109	312,989	270.9
Drinking /Eating Places	15,065	45,788	66,077	102,356	105,284	129,668	126,301	130,038	763.2
Apparel	17,394	18,921	19,313	17,571	18,555	11,332	10,798	11,935	-31.4
Furniture/ H.H./Radio	24,466	38,053	35,546	36,074	49,483	55,549	47,332	49,422	102.0
Lumber/Bldg /Hardware	22,562	47,936	65,130	127,281	166,655	221,447	218,516	281,477	1,147.6
Auto/ Fill. Stations	78,491	184,951	319,694	447,743	518,776	347,954	371,644	423,481	439.5
Drugs and Other Retail	44,647	54,290	86,922	136,713	185,730	169,218	190,022	216,508	384.9
Agriculture/ Extractive	6,491	13,051	12,332	19,612	46,445	67,486	70,964	67,991	947.5
Manufacturers	7,790	9,010	10,197	7,817	8,524	15,683	15,352	13,837	77.6
Total	330,278	604,595	835,570	\$1,346,428	\$1,614,193	\$1,649,598	\$1,685,656	\$1,842,917	458.01

Kind of Business Reports are prepared by the State Department of Revenue on a quarterly and annual basis. Note that all collection periods are for a twelve month period, coinciding with the State fiscal year of July to June. These figures will vary from those below due to collection period. McHenry County is taxed at 6.5%: 6.25% State Tax, .25% Regional Transit Authority Tax; 1% tax is returned to municipal government.

M.T. = Municipal tax (dollars returned to the municipality) is equal to 1% of taxable sales made at businesses located within the corporate limits of a municipality.

**1995 WOODSTOCK AREA (3-MILE RADIUS)  
EXPENDITURES BY SELECTED PRODUCT**

	<u>(\$000s)</u>	<u>U.S. Index</u>
Food at Home	\$ 23,442	99
Food Away from Home	15,397	102
Alcoholic Beverages at Home	1,388	96
Alcoholic Beverages away from Home	1,292	116
Personal Care Products	2,062	101
Personal Care Services	1,797	98
Nonprescription Drugs	776	95
Women's Apparel	4,663	104
Men's Apparel	2,592	102
Girls' Apparel	501	105
Boys' Apparel	724	105
Infants' Apparel	557	100
Footwear (Excl. Infants)	2,166	99
Housekeeping Supplies	2,888	105
Lawn/Garden Supplies (Incl. Plants)	423	101
Domestic Services	2,932	92
Household Textiles	887	98
Furniture	3,103	107
Floor Coverings	920	111
Major Appliances	1,250	99
Small Appliances & Houseware	594	101
TV, Radio & Sound Equipment	4,339	104
Other Entertainment Equip./Services	4,443	101
Transportation	39,921	102

Source: Claritas, Inc. Marketview Comparison Report

## APPENDIX B

# DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

### Introduction

The purpose of this document is to recommend building and facade design guidelines for historic Downtown Woodstock as a basis for sensitive private investment and public improvements, provision of assistance for building rehabilitation or facade improvements, and implementation of the Historic Preservation Commission Ordinance.

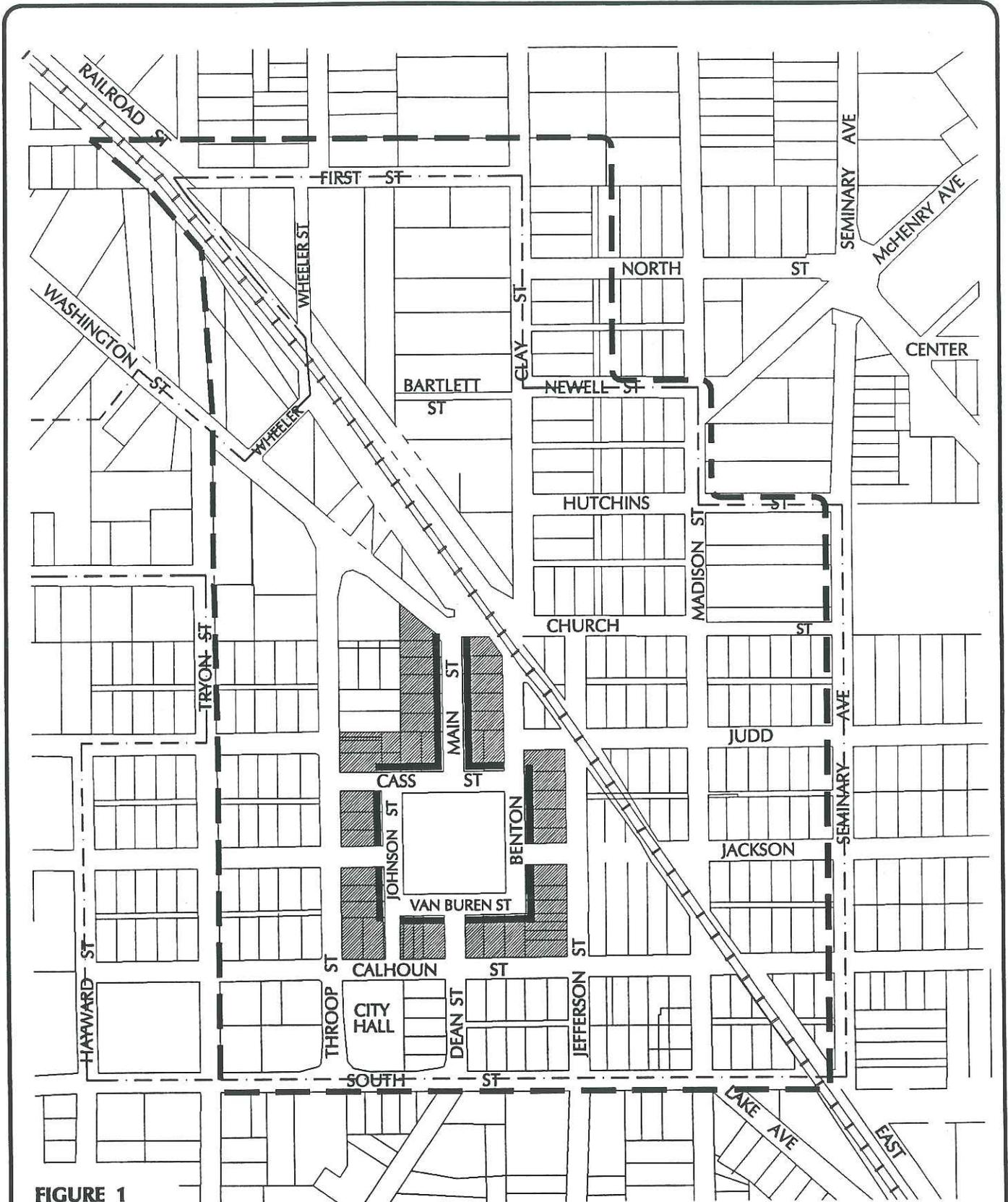
Early in 1996 the City Council enacted an ordinance providing for an Historic Preservation Commission with jurisdiction over designated historic district boundaries (Figure 1). The Commission supersedes the Central Business District Commission and the Environmental Enhancement Commission. Among its many responsibilities is "to develop specific criteria and guidelines for the proper alteration, construction, demolition, or removal of landmarks, or of property within a historic preservation district," and "to review applications for construction, alteration, removal, or demolition affecting landmarks or property within historic districts and issue or deny certificates of appropriateness for such actions."

The guidelines recommended herein were prepared as an Appendix to the Downtown Sub-area Plan and represent an initial concept of that which might ultimately be prepared by the Commission itself. These guidelines might be utilized by the Commission until such time as the Commission has conducted a more complete inventory, evaluation, and designation of historic landmarks, resulting in a final set of design guidelines.

The Downtown Sub-Area Plan distinguishes three sub-areas of the downtown, based on overall historic significance:

- The Square--all properties or parts thereof facing the Square and Main Street.
- The Perimeter--all properties or parts thereof surrounding the Square and Main Street.
- The Balance--all other properties in the Downtown Sub-Area.

The following design guidelines respond to each of these distinct areas.



**FIGURE 1**  
**DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK**  
**DESIGN GUIDELINES SUB-AREAS**

- |           |                   |         |                   |
|-----------|-------------------|---------|-------------------|
| — — — —   | STUDY AREA        | —————   | STUDY AREA        |
| - - - - - | HISTORIC DISTRICT | ▨ ▨ ▨ ▨ | HISTORIC DISTRICT |

**TESKA ASSOCIATES INC.**  
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 Site Planning, Landmarks Administration  
 4000 Park Road, Suite 200  
 Woodstock, VA 22604

APRIL 23, 1996  
 0 100 200 300  
 SCALE IN FEET



## Overall Historic District Guidelines (All Areas)

### 1. Blocks and Street Corridors

- With the exception of McHenry Avenue and Washington Street, Downtown Woodstock is characterized by a rectangular grid system of blocks and streets; this system should be preserved and extended into the Die Cast property.
- Buildings should be oriented with their front facades facing a public street and their rear facades facing away from public streets.
- The design of buildings and streets should be coordinated to create compatible visual corridors.

### 2. Mass and Scale

- With the exception of unique buildings, such as the Opera House, Court House, and commuter railroad station, most commercial buildings are and should continue to be two or three stories in height and of moderate scale. Extraordinarily large or tall buildings and one story buildings should be discouraged.
- The scale of individual buildings and groups of buildings should be moderate and maintain a "friendly" relationship with the pedestrian.

### 3. Styles

- Preferred styles are Greek Revival or Modified Gothic for public and civic buildings and Victorian for commercial (Figure 2) and residential buildings.
- More contemporary styles will be considered only in appropriate locations if their components are compatible with or reflect the scale, rhythm, articulation, and materials of preferred classic styles.

4. Maintenance

- All buildings and sites should be maintained in a sound and attractive condition.
- All vacant sites should be cleared of debris; should be level in grade; and should be planted with grass, to be mowed regularly, until they are developed.
- All offstreet parking lots, service vehicle facilities, and open storage areas should be screened from view by landscaping or other appropriate means.

## **Facade Standards - Town Square and Main Street**

Properties facing Woodstock Square and Main Street are those of greatest historic significance as a group -- those which establish the character of a quintessential 19th and early 20th century small town downtown. This character is worthy of preservation wherever and whenever possible.

### **A. Composition:**

The general composition of any facade, whether existing to be rehabilitated, restored or new infill construction should reflect and be sensitive to the character of neighboring buildings. Some aspects of composition that should be observed are:

1. **Setback of Facade**  
The overall building facade should align with its neighbors unless special overriding circumstances or needs require otherwise. If there is a precedent for recessed entries and floor storefronts this is acceptable as long as the recessed area does not encompass the entire width of storefront, just an area at the entry.
2. **Size**  
The overall size and physical presence of the facade should be respectful of its neighbors. It should not overpower them or be dwarfed by them. In the case of infill buildings the facade should fill the entire space between any neighbors.
3. **Scale**  
The size and proportion and arrangement of window and door openings should be appropriate to the style of the building and similar to those on surrounding facades. Likewise, architectural details and facade treatments should be of appropriate proportions.

III. Roof and  
Cornice

II. Upper Facade

I. Storefront

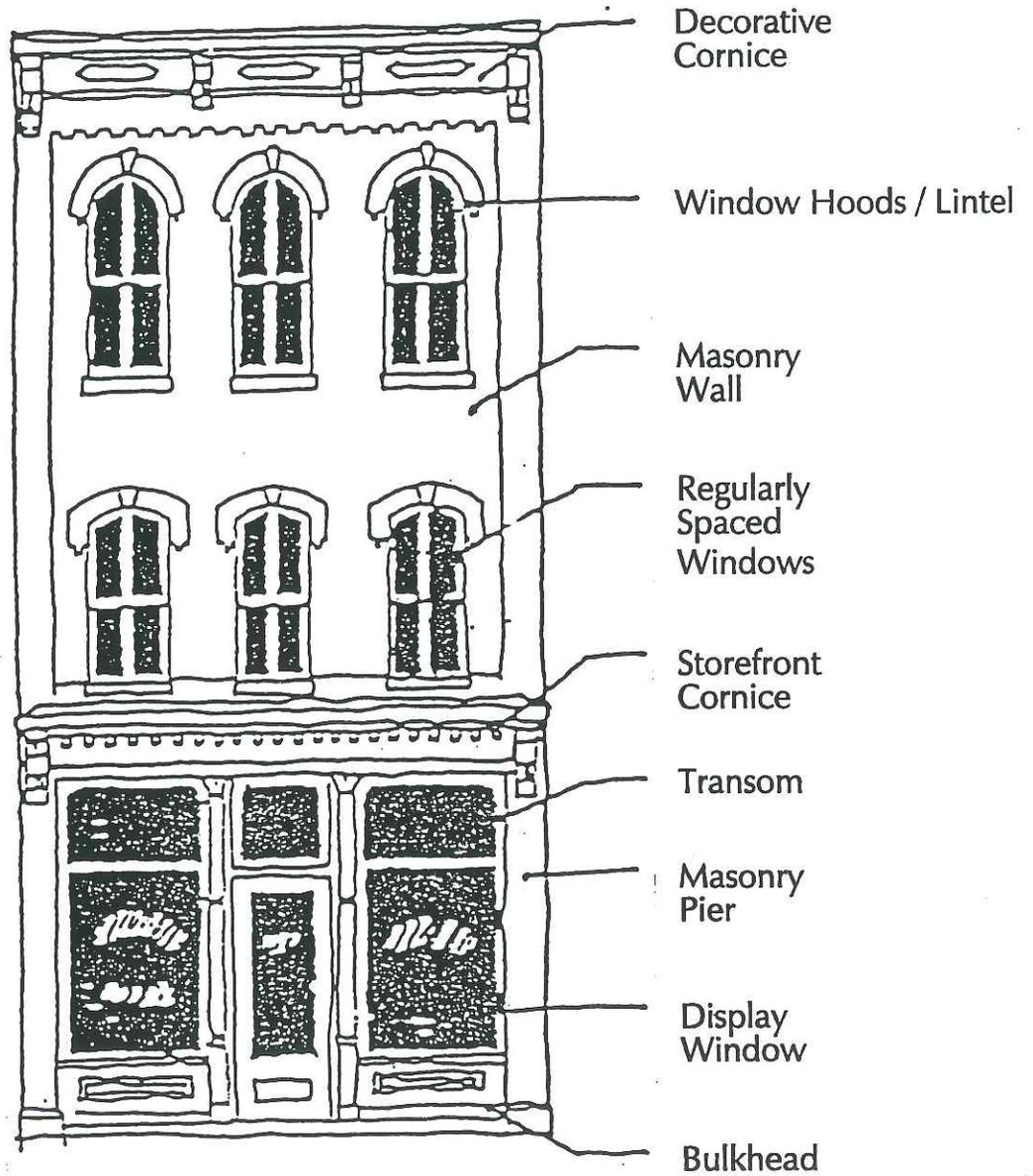


FIGURE 2  
EXAMPLE OF VICTORIAN COMMERCIAL DESIGN

4. Rhythm

The massive expanse of large facades may be reduced by applying a rhythm of smaller bays across the facade or a rhythm of details provided they are characteristic of or respectful of neighboring buildings. In addition, the organization and location of major elements that make up the facade, e.g. window openings, should reflect the characteristic rhythm of adjacent or surrounding facades. (Figure 3).

**B. Materials and Finish:**

The type, texture and pattern of the building materials used and their finish are extremely important for all types of renovation or construction in commercial areas in and around the square and along Main Street. Historic commercial buildings originally utilized durable natural materials in their construction; brick, stone, terra cotta, steel, metal, wood and glass. These materials convey a sense of quality, permanence and having been derived from natural resources. Any rehab or new construction should continue with these traditional and time-proven materials.

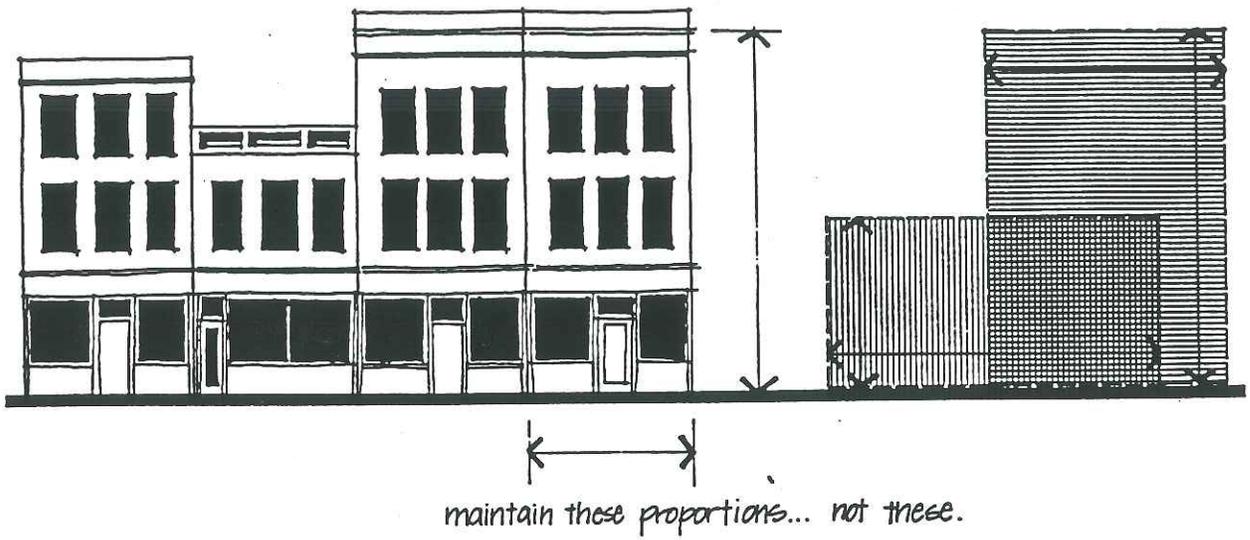
Where these materials are badly weathered, soiled or damaged, they should be cleaned and repaired if at all possible. In the event they are beyond salvaging they should be replaced with matching or "in-kind" materials.

Cleaning of soiled materials should be done with the least intrusive and destructive means necessary so that the essential material is not damaged.

Further information on the specific cleaning of brick and other masonry materials or the restoration of damaged wood, storefronts, etc. can be found in the U.S. Department of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. These Standards should be observed for all work on the square and along Main Street, unless circumstances prove these to be unfeasible.

Materials or types of construction to be avoided in any historic commercial area include:

- Vinyl siding or trim, vinyl windows
- Aluminum siding
- Wood siding consistent with residential construction
- Rustic wood shakes, barn wood
- Corrugated metal
- Corrugated fiberglass
- Imitation rock work, stone or brick veneers
- Metalized reflective glass
- Plywood
- Wood shingle facade coverings or canopies
- Contemporary metal canopies or awnings



"The overall size and physical presence of the facade should be respectful of its neighbors."



"The organization and location of major elements that make up the facade should reflect the characteristic rhythm of adjacent or surrounding facades."

**FIGURE 3**  
**SELECTED FACADE STANDARDS**

## C. **Painting and Color Palette:**

### 1. Surface preparation

- a. Wall surfaces, e.g. brick masonry, that have not been painted should remain unpainted. Generally, tile, brick or terra cotta features should not be painted.
- b. If a brick facade was originally painted, a soft brick was probably used in its construction. If so, then these surfaces should remain painted and be refurbished accordingly.
- c. Sandblasting, high pressure water washes, and other abrasive cleaning methods should not be undertaken because of the potential for irreversible damage to the building material and possible damage to the building envelope.
- d. Peeling or blistering paint should be carefully removed. The surface to be painted should be clean and dry. If a painted surface has cracks or fissures, the old paint should be removed before new paint is applied. Caulk joints between wood trim and masonry before painting. All bare or exposed surfaces should be thoroughly primed before finish paint is applied.
- e. Severely damaged wood details can be restored with epoxy wood restoration products.

### 2. Painting

- a. When repainting, consider using the original painting scheme and color palette or "historical" colors. Avoid the use of bright primary colors, which are usually incompatible with the buildings downtown. Bright colors are also highly susceptible to fading.
- b. The color palette should be consistent throughout the upper and lower portions of the buildings front facade. Storefront and upper window frame colors should be the same.
- c. Color palettes should generally be lighter on the south side of the street, which is normally in shadow, than on the north, which is normally in sun.
- d. The color palettes and paint schemes on surrounding and adjacent buildings should be compatible.

- e. Color should be used to tie building elements such as details, decorations, cornices, signs and storefronts, together. This is usually most successful when a maximum of three colors is used. Also, elaborate color changes within decorative surfaces is neither historically accurate nor aesthetically desirable.
- f. Normally, the previous paint type (oil or latex abase) should be used. If possible, use oil base paint for wood or metal and latex base paint for masonry. If oil base is not available, then an acrylic base paint may be used.

Oftentimes quite old and worn painted surfaces and features can be significantly restored with less expense than replacement with new. In the case where the old materials or features are authentic and/or in character with the style of the building this is far preferable to replacement with new, or removal altogether.

Paint analysis can reveal a surfaces historic paint colors and may be worth undertaking if a careful restoration is desired. If not, the paint color selected should be appropriate to the style, historic period, setting and natural materials (brick, stone, etc) of the building. Colors that are "historic" are available from numerous paint manufacturers. Any color selection should complement the individual building as well as its neighbors.

#### **D. Roofs:**

Roofs of buildings, where visible, should be of a style and composed of materials appropriate to the historical period of the building. No new visible roofs or decorative representations of roofs should be added to historic facades unless there is a historic precedent and proof of a pre-existing condition. In that case, construction would match the previous condition as close as possible.

#### **E. Cornices:**

Cornices of commercial buildings are an important element in the facade composition. They demarcate the end of the facade and the beginning of the sky or background. They are oftentimes a very visually appealing and detailed feature of a building and should be treated with respect. Even relatively humble cornices of clay tile or stone should be cleaned or repaired so that they offer a contrasting "cap" to the building facade. Restoration of historic cornices is highly encouraged.

## **F. Window Fenestrations and Doors:**

### **1. Storefront Assemblies**

The open quality of continuous tall glazed storefronts on the commercial street is desirable and conducive to an inviting, pleasurable and productive shopping experience. It is also in keeping with the historic traditions of storefront design and merchandising. Consequently, when the continuity of the street facade is interrupted by "closed" storefronts, then the window shopping mood is disturbed along with the aesthetics and character of the building ensemble. Therefore, continuous glazed storefronts are strongly encouraged even in the event where offices and restaurants occupy first floor spaces. In those instances any privacy or light control issues should be addressed with interior blinds, curtains, etc. rather than filling original storefront openings with opaque material.

In many instances existing historic storefronts can be refurbished if they have been well maintained and not adversely altered or remodeled. In the event that a new storefront is required it should be initiated with materials similar to historic storefronts, i.e., metal or wood frames and glass. The proportions and heights of any assembly and the profile of the framing members should be appropriate to prevailing existing storefronts.

It is also encouraged that the clerestory windows above the display windows of many historic storefronts be restored to glass. In some instances these areas were filled with lovely leaded glass. The area can also be used for signage, especially backlit painted signage.

Some additional guidelines relating to storefronts include:

- a. The storefront should be designed to fit inside the original framed opening and not extend beyond it.
- b. To emphasize this feeling of containment, a storefront might be set back slightly (6 to 12 inches) from the front, or the entrance area may be further recessed also increasing the window display area and providing a semi protected vestibule. (Reference A.1)

c. The color and texture of the storefront materials should be simple and unobtrusive and appropriate to the style of the building, e.g.

- the storefront frame can be wood, cast iron or anodized aluminum;
- the display windows should be clear glass;
- transom windows can be clear, tinted, stained, beveled, lead or etched glass;
- the entrance door should have a large glass panel and can be made of wood, steel or aluminum;
- the bulkheads can be wood panels, polished stone, glass, tile or stone;
- the storefront cornice is often made of wood, or sheet metal and sometimes the horizontal supporting steel beam serves as the storefront cap;
- the side piers are usually the same material as the upper facade, or occasionally a contrasting masonry material.

2. Storefront Entry Doors:

Presenting an attractive storefront entrance is essential for every business. For many existing structures, the most attractive and visually appropriate door will be the door that is original to the storefront. Original entrance doors should be retained or repaired and refinished whenever possible. If the entrance door is still intact, often it will only require refinishing or repainting. Wood panel doors with their graciously proportioned glass openings were typical of many older storefronts. Attractive durable hardware including brass door pulls and kick plates add to the functional, visual and tactile value of the front entrance. Over the years, many original wood doors have been replaced during storefront alterations. If a replacement door is needed, select a new hardwood door similar in size and proportion to the original.

3. Upper-Story Windows

Upper-story windows give buildings an appearance of vitality and use, even if the upper floors are vacant. They also create a repeated pattern that helps tie together the facades. Typically, upper-story windows are positioned to occur at regular intervals across the building facade and establish visual rhythms in the exterior design of the building. The size, proportion, placement and style of windows combine with the solid masses of the exterior facade to establish balance and create visual harmony in the building's exterior appearance. Often, deteriorated upper-story windows have been inappropriately replaced, simply neglected or removed and the openings blocked in totally or partially with smaller inappropriately sized window. This treatment cheapens not only the character of the building but the streetscape as well - a negative image that can be avoided through proper maintenance or rehabilitation.

4. Window Replacement

If a window is missing or has deteriorated beyond repair, the replacement should match the original window. Replacement windows should always fill the entire opening and duplicate the original type of sash and pattern of lite divisions. For example, a double hung sash window should not be replaced by a single fixed pane of glass, nor should a sash that had multiple glass lites be replaced with a single glazed lite and visa versa. Also, avoid the use of windows and shutters that are not in keeping with the style of the building.

If possible, match the materials as well as the design of the original windows. However, in some instances double-glazed aluminum frame windows may be used as replacements. If aluminum is used, it should duplicate the design of the original window. It should be in a dark anodized or baked enamel finish rather than a light metallic. (See section C. F - Painting and Color Palette)

5. Window Dressing

Simple curtains can enhance the visual effect of upper story windows, whether or not the space is occupied. Window shades or blinds may also be used, but old units that are damaged or discolored should be replaced. Upper windows may also be used as places for creative merchandising. Whatever treatment is chosen, the appearance should be uniform throughout the facade.

**G. Awnings:**

Awnings were commonly used in the past to provide shelter to passersby, reduce glare and conserve energy by controlling the amount of sunlight that can penetrate the window plane. They were also an appropriate location for signage and helped define an intimate commercial pedestrian space separate from the other portions of the facade. All these uses are valid today.

Recommendations for use include:

1. Awnings should be of a material and form appropriate to the historic style and period of the building. For example canvas or vinyl awnings are fine, aluminum wood or plastic are not. Barrel vault, semi-circular or umbrella forms are not appropriate while traditional shed type awnings with or without a valence are appropriate.
2. Signage on awning valences or surfaces should comply with signage guidelines.
3. Installations should not damage or obscure significant existing building features.

4. Prior to proposing any new solution the existing building should be investigated for clues of prior installations.
5. Colors should be sensitive to the colors of the building - see Paint and Colors section. The level of sheen of the awning fabric should be relatively low. The lighting of awnings should follow similar guidelines to that for signage. The entire awning surface should never be backlit so that the full surface is illuminated.
6. Awnings can be used to add a sense of visual continuity between neighboring buildings whose facades have awkward, unattractive or distractingly inconsistent height storefronts.
7. Awnings should locate within the pier confines of a building facade over the display windows or entrances.
8. Long expanses of single awnings should be avoided. Breaking awnings up into appropriately proportioned, separate, but contiguous units is desirable.

#### **H. Signs:**

Signs have been and will remain an important element in the design makeup of a building's facade and in defining the character of an historic business district. In order for signs to effectively serve their informative and marketing function the general rule of less is best applies. All too often, in an attempt to compete for attention, designs of signage become over proportioned, complicated, and garish, creating a visual sea of pollution while also destroying or obscuring an historic building's fine details and a districts unique character. To avoid this we recommend the following:

1. Signs should be of a size and style compatible with the building they are to locate on and should not cover or obscure significant details or architectural features.
2. Signs should be located in appropriate and typically indicated places on a building facade allowing for easy viewing. Consistency of sign location assists people in finding the signs as well as adding visual cohesion to a group of buildings in a district.
3. A storefront should not have more than two signs; e.g. - one primary sign for distant impact basic communication, and one secondary one - for closer viewing and further detailed.
4. For ease of legibility there should be a contrast between the sign message and the background. A very successful combination is light-toned lettering or graphics on a dark background.

5. Signs should use the minimum number of colors for most impact and legibility.
6. Internally illuminated signs should only light the letters or graphics of the sign and not the background.
7. Externally illuminated signs may be used as long as the light fixtures are in scale and character with the building and the lighting length is not distracting.
8. Neon letters can be effective and attractive when used with restraint.
9. Surface mounted lettering may be utilized with great historic effect.
10. Signboard signage should be proportionally sensitive ... no more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the length of the building, and be no more than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet high.
11. Lettering should be 8 to 18 inches in height and occupy no more than 65% of the sign board.
12. All signage should comply with the signage ordinance.

## **Facade Standards - Perimeter of the Town Square**

This area includes these properties or portions of properties which face away from the square and Main Street, and are visible from Throop, Washington, Benton, Jefferson and Calhoun Streets. In many cases, this area incorporates the rear facades of historic buildings.

### **A. Composition:**

The general composition of any facade, whether existing to be rehabilitated, restored or new infill construction should reflect and be sensitive to the character of neighboring buildings. Some aspects of composition that should be observed are:

1. **Setback of Facade**  
The overall building facade should align with its neighbors or in the event of staggered neighboring facades, it may be setback in a manner consistent with them. If there is a precedent for recessed entries at the ground floor storefronts this is acceptable as long as the recessed area does not encompass the entire storefront, just an area at the entry door.
2. **Size**  
The overall size and physical presence of the facade should be respectful of its neighbors. It should not overpower them or be dwarfed by them. In the case of infill buildings the facade should fill the entire space between any neighbors unless pedestrian ways or access ways are intentionally desirable to interior parts of the building or the Town Square.
3. **Scale**  
The size and proportion of window and door openings should be similar to those on surrounding facades. Filled in window openings should, whenever feasible, be opened up and restored with new windows (See D.3). Likewise, architectural details and facade treatments should be of appropriate proportions.

4. Rhythm

The organization and location of major visual elements that make up the facade, e.g. window and door openings, signs, awnings etc. should be respectful of the scale of the building and characteristics of adjacent facades.

**B. Materials and Finishes:**

The type, texture and pattern of the building materials originally used convey a sense of quality, history, permanence and having been derived from natural resources. Any rehab or new construction should continue with these traditional and proven materials.

Where these materials are badly weathered, soiled or damaged, they should be cleaned and repaired if at all possible.

Cleaning of soiled materials should be done with the least intrusive and destructive means necessary so that the essential material is not damaged.

Further information on the specific cleaning of brick and other masonry materials the restoration of damaged wood, storefronts, etc. can be found in the U.S. Department of the Interior, Standards for Rehabilitation.

In the event that some brick masonry facades are either: i) so badly damaged to economically preclude repair or replacement, ii) already painted, or iii) constructed of a soft porous brick that requires a protective coating to prevent deterioration, they may be painted (See C.2).

Materials or types of construction to be avoided.

- Vinyl siding or trim, vinyl windows
- Aluminum siding
- Wood siding consistent with residential construction
- Rustic wood shakes, barn wood
- Corrugated metal
- Corrugated fiberglass
- Imitation rock work, stone or brick veneers
- Metalized reflective glass
- Plywood
- Wood shingle facade coverings or canopies
- Contemporary metal canopies or awnings that are of scale or character

**C. Painting and Color Palette:**

1. Surface Preparation

- a. Wall surfaces, e.g. brick masonry, that are in good condition and have not been painted should remain unpainted. Generally, tile, brick or terra cotta features should not be painted.

- b. If a brick facade was originally painted, a soft brick was probably used in its construction. If so, then these surfaces should remain painted and be refurbished accordingly.
- c. Sandblasting, high pressure water washes, and other abrasive cleaning methods should not be undertaken because of the potential for irreversible damage to the building material and possible damage to the building envelope.
- d. Peeling or blistering paint should be carefully removed. The surface to be painted should be clean and dry. If a painted surface has cracks or fissures, the old paint should be removed before new paint is applied. Caulk joints between wood trim and masonry before painting. All bare or exposed surfaces should be thoroughly primed before finish paint is applied.
- e. Severely damaged wood details can be restored with epoxy wood restoration products.

## 2. Painting

- a. When painting or repainting, consider using "historical" colors. Avoid the use of bright primary colors, which are usually incompatible with the buildings downtown. Bright colors are also highly susceptible to fading.
- b. The color palette should be consistent throughout the upper and lower portions of the buildings front facade.
- c. Color palettes should generally be lighter on the south side of the street, which is normally in shadow, than on the north, which is normally in sun.
- d. The color palettes and paint schemes on surrounding and adjacent buildings should be compatible.
- e. Color should be used to tie building elements such as details, decorations, cornices, signs and storefronts, together. This is usually most successful when a maximum of three colors is used. Also, elaborate color changes within decorative surfaces is neither historically accurate nor aesthetically desirable.
- f. Normally, the previous paint type (oil or latex abase) should be used. If possible, use oil base paint for wood or metal and latex base paint for masonry. If oil base is not available, then an acrylic base paint may be used.

**D. Roof:**

Roofs of buildings, where visible, should be of a style and composed of materials appropriate to the historical period of the building. No new visible roofs or decorative representations of roofs should be added to historic facades unless there is a historic precedent and proof of a pre-existing condition. In that case, construction should match the previous condition as close as possible.

**E. Cornices:**

Cornices of commercial buildings are an important element in the facade composition. They demarcate the end of the facade and the beginning of the sky or background. They are oftentimes a very visually appealing and detailed feature of a building and should be treated with respect. Even relatively humble cornices of clay tile or stone should be cleaned or repaired so that they offer a contrasting "cap" to the building facade.

**F. Window Fenestrations:**

1. Storefronts at Grade

- a. should make use of existing openings or original filled-in openings in the facade whenever possible.
- b. may make new openings when existing openings are inappropriate for a new merchandising use.
- c. should be in sensitive proportions to the size of the facade and the configuration of neighboring facades.

2. Storefront Entry Doors:

Wood panel doors with their graciously proportioned glass openings were typical of many older storefronts. Attractive durable hardware including brass door pulls and kick plates add to both the functional, visual and tactile value of entrances.

3. Upper-Story Windows

Upper-story windows give buildings an appearance of vitality and use. They also create a repeated pattern that helps tie together the facades. Typically, upper-story windows are positioned to occur at regular intervals across the building facade and establish visual rhythms in the exterior design of the building. The size, proportion, placement and style of windows combine with the solid masses of the exterior facade to establish balance and create visual harmony in the building's exterior appearance. Often, upper-story windows have been neglected, removed and their openings blocked in totally or partially with smaller inappropriately sized windows. This treatment cheapens not only the character of the building but the streetscape as well - a negative image that can be avoided

through proper maintenance or rehabilitation. These openings and their windows should be restored whenever possible.

4. Window Replacement

If a window is missing or has deteriorated beyond repair, the replacement should match the original window. Replacement windows should always fill the entire opening and duplicate the original type of sash and pattern of lite divisions. Also, avoid the use of windows and shutters that are not in keeping with the style of the building.

5. Window Dressing

Simple curtains can enhance the visual effect of upper story windows, whether or not the space is occupied. Window shades or blinds may also be used. In addition, upper windows may also be used as places for additional creative merchandising. Whatever treatment is used, it should be consistent within the facade.

**G. Awnings:**

Awnings were commonly used in the past to provide shelter to passersby, reduce glare and conserve energy by controlling the amount of sunlight that can penetrate the window plane. They were also an appropriate location for signage and helped define an intimate commercial pedestrian space separate from the other portions of the facade. All these uses are valid today.

Recommendations for use include:

1. Awnings should be of a material and form appropriate to the historic style and period of the building. For example; canvas or vinyl awnings are fine, aluminum wood or plastic are not. Barrel vault, semi-circular or umbrella forms are not appropriate while traditional shed type awnings with or without a valence are appropriate.
2. Signage on awning valences or surfaces should comply with signage guidelines.
3. Installations should not damage or obscure significant existing building features.
4. Colors should be sensitive to the colors of the building - see Paint and Colors section. The level of sheen of the awning fabric should be relatively low. The lighting of awnings should follow similar guidelines to that for signage. The entire awning surface should never be backlit so that the full surface is illuminated.
5. Awnings can be used to add a sense of visual continuity between neighboring buildings whose facades have awkward, unattractive or distractingly inconsistent height storefronts.

6. Awnings should locate within the pier confines of a building facade or over the display windows or entrances.
7. Long expanses of single awnings should be avoided. Breaking awnings up into appropriately proportioned, separate, but contiguous units is desirable.

#### **H. Signs:**

Signs have been and will remain an important element in the design makeup of a building's facade and in defining the character of an historic business district. In order for signs to effectively serve their informative and marketing function the general rule of less is best applies. All too often, in an attempt to compete for attention, designs of signage become over proportioned, complicated, and garish, creating a visual sea of pollution while also destroying or obscuring an historic building's fine details and a districts unique character. To avoid this we recommend the following:

1. Signs should be of a size and style compatible with the building they are to locate on and should not cover or obscure significant details or architectural features.
2. Signs should be located in appropriate and typically indicated places on a building facade allowing for easy viewing. Consistency of sign location assists people in finding the signs as well as adding visual cohesion to a group of buildings in a district.
3. A storefront should not have more than two signs; e.g. - one primary sign for distant impact basic communication, and one secondary one - for closer viewing and further details.
4. For ease of legibility there should be a contrast between the sign message and the background. A very successful combination is light-toned lettering or graphics on a dark background.
5. Signs should use the minimum number of colors for most impact and legibility.
6. Internally illuminated signs should only light the letters or graphics of the sign and not the background.
7. Externally illuminated signs may be used as long as the light fixtures are in scale and character with the building and the lighting length is not distracting.
8. Neon letters can be effective and attractive when used with restraint.
9. Surface mounted lettering may be utilized with great historic effect.

10. Signboard signage should be proportionally sensitive ... no more than 3/4 of the length of the building, and be no more than 2 1/2 feet high.
11. Lettering should be 8 to 18 inches in height and occupy no more than 65% of the sign board.
12. A consistent theme of overhanging, projecting signs or banners may be an attractive and effective way of identifying the buildings at the perimeter of the Town Square.
13. All signage should conform to the signage ordinance.

## **Facade Standards - Buildings Outside of the Square Perimeter**

This area includes the balance of Downtown in the Historic District. In this area existing buildings and land uses are much more varied, and may range from historic to modern. The key objective herein is to preserve historic architectural landmarks, permit greater design freedom, yet achieve overall harmony with the Town Square, its perimeter, and nearby historic residential neighborhoods.

### **A. Composition:**

The general composition of any facade, whether existing to be rehabilitated, restored or new infill construction should reflect and be sensitive to the character of adjacent buildings. Some aspects of composition that should be observed are:

1. **Setback of Facade**  
The overall building facade should align with its adjacent neighbors unless special overriding circumstances or needs require otherwise, or if there is a precedent for staggered facades.
2. **Size**  
The overall size and physical presence of the facade should be respectful of its neighbors. It should not overpower them or be dwarfed by them.
3. **Scale**  
The size and proportion of window and door openings should be similar to those on surrounding facades of similar style. Likewise, architectural details and facade treatments should be of appropriate proportions.
3. **Rhythm**  
The organization and location of major elements that make up the facade, e.g. window and door openings, signage, awnings, etc. should reflect the characteristic rhythm of adjacent or surrounding facades of similar styles.

### **B. Materials and Finishes:**

Where materials are badly weathered, soiled or damaged, they should be cleaned and repaired if at all possible. In the event they are beyond salvaging they should be replaced with matching or "in-kind" materials.

Cleaning of soiled materials should be done with the least intrusive and destructive means necessary so that the essential material is not damaged.

Materials or types of construction to be avoided in any historic commercial area include:

- Vinyl siding or trim, vinyl windows
- Aluminum siding
- Wood siding consistent with residential construction
- Rustic wood shakes, barn wood
- Corrugated metal
- Corrugated fiberglass
- Imitation rock work, stone or brick veneers
- Metalized reflective glass
- Plywood
- Wood shingle facade coverings or canopies

**C. Painting and Color Palette:**

**1. Surface Preparation**

- a. Wall surfaces, e.g. brick masonry, that have not been painted should remain unpainted. Generally, tile, brick or terra cotta features should not be painted.
- b. If a brick facade was originally painted, a soft brick was probably used in its construction. If so, then these surfaces should remain painted and be refurbished accordingly.
- c. Sandblasting, high pressure water washes, and other abrasive cleaning methods should not be undertaken because of the potential for irreversible damage to the building material and possible damage to the building envelope.
- d. Peeling or blistering paint should be carefully removed. The surface to be painted should be clean and dry. If a painted surface has cracks or fissures, the old paint should be removed before new paint is applied. Caulk joints between wood trim and masonry before painting. All bare or exposed surfaces should be thoroughly primed before finish paint is applied.
- e. Severely damaged wood details can be restored with epoxy wood restoration products.

**2. Painting**

- a. When repainting, consider using a painting scheme and color palette sensitive to the "historical" colors used in and around the Town Square.
- b. The color palette should be consistent throughout the upper and lower portions of the buildings front facade.

- c. Color palettes should generally be lighter on the south side of the street, which is normally in shadow, than on the north, which is normally in sun.
- d. The color palettes and paint schemes on surrounding and adjacent buildings should not be distractingly incompatible.
- e. Color should be used to tie building elements such as details, decorations, cornices, signs and storefronts, together. This is usually most successful when a maximum of three colors is used. Also, elaborate color changes within decorative surfaces is neither historically accurate or aesthetically desirable.

**D. Roof:**

Roofs of buildings, where visible, should be of a style and composed of materials appropriate to the historical period of the building. No new visible roofs or decorative representations of roofs should be added to historic facades unless there is a historic precedent and proof of a pre-existing condition. In that case, construction should match the previous condition as close as possible.

**E. Cornices:**

Cornices of commercial buildings are an important element in the facade composition. They demarcate the end of the facade and the beginning of the sky or background. They are oftentimes a very visually appealing and detailed feature of a building and should be treated with respect. Even relatively humble cornices of clay tile or stone should be cleaned or repaired so that they offer a contrasting "cap" to the building facade.

**F. Window Fenestrations and Doors:**

1. Storefront Assemblies

Where existing, the open quality of continuous tall glazed storefronts on the commercial street is desirable and conducive to an inviting, pleasurable and productive shopping experience. It is also in keeping with the historic traditions of storefront design and merchandising. Consequently, when the continuity of the street facade is interrupted by "closed" storefronts, then the window shopping mood is disturbed along with the aesthetics and character of the building ensemble. Therefore, continuous glazed storefronts are strongly encouraged even in the event where offices and restaurants occupy first floor spaces. In those instances any privacy or light control issues should be addressed with interior blinds, curtains, etc. rather than filling original storefront openings with opaque material.

In many instances existing historic storefronts can be refurbished if they have been well maintained and not adversely altered or remodeled. In the event that a new storefront is required it should be initiated with materials similar to historic storefronts, i.e., aluminum (or other metals) and glass or wood and glass. The proportions and heights of any assembly and the profile of the framing members should be appropriate to prevailing existing storefronts.

Some additional guidelines relating to storefronts include:

- a. The storefront should be designed to fit inside the original framed opening and not extend beyond it.
- b. The color and texture of the storefront materials should be simple and unobtrusive:
  - the storefront frame can be wood, cast iron or anodized aluminum;
  - the display windows should be clear glass;
  - transom windows can be clear, tinted, stained, beveled, lead or etched glass;
  - the entrance door should have a large glass panel and can be made of wood, steel or aluminum;
  - the bulkheads can be wood panels, polished stone, glass, tile or stone;
  - the storefront cornice is often made of wood, or sheet metal and sometimes the horizontal supporting steel beam serves as the storefront cap;
  - the side piers can be the same material as the upper facade, or stone or stucco.

2. Storefront Entry Doors:

Presenting an attractive storefront entrance is essential for every business. For many existing structures, the most attractive and visually appropriate door will be the door that is original to the storefront. Original entrance doors should be retained or repaired and refinished whenever possible. If the entrance door is still intact, often it will only require refinishing or repainting. Wood panel doors with their graciously proportioned glass openings were typical of many older storefronts. Attractive durable hardware including brass door pulls and kick plates add to both the functional, visual and tactile value of the front entrance. Over the years, many original wood doors have been replaced during storefront alterations. If a replacement door is needed select a new hardwood door similar in size and proportion to the original.

3. **Upper-Story Windows (where applicable)**  
Upper-story windows give buildings an appearance of vitality and use, even if the upper floors are vacant. They also create a repeated pattern that helps tie together the facades. Typically, upper-story windows are positioned to occur at regular intervals across the building facade and establish visual rhythms in the exterior design of the building. The size, proportion, placement and style of windows combine with the solid masses of the exterior facade to establish balance and create visual harmony in the building's exterior appearance. Often, deteriorated upper-story windows have been inappropriately replaced, simply neglected or removed and the openings blocked in totally or partially with smaller inappropriately sized window. This treatment cheapens not only the character of the building but the streetscape as well - a negative image that can be avoided through proper maintenance or rehabilitation.

4. **Window Replacement**  
If a window is missing or has deteriorated beyond repair, the replacement should match the original window. Replacement windows should always fill the entire opening. Also, avoid the use of windows and shutters that are not in keeping with the style of the building.

If possible, match the materials as well as the design of the original windows. However, in some instances double-glazed aluminum frame windows may be used as replacements. If aluminum is used, it should duplicate the design of the original window.

#### **G. Awnings:**

Awnings were commonly used in the past to provide shelter to passersby, reduce glare and conserve energy by controlling the amount of sunlight that can penetrate the window plane. They were also an appropriate location for signage and helped define an intimate commercial pedestrian space separate from the other portions of the facade. All these uses are valid today.

Recommendations for use include:

1. Awnings should be of a material and form appropriate to the historic style and period of the building. For example; canvas or vinyl awnings are fine, aluminum wood or plastic are not. Barrel vault, semi-circular or umbrella forms are not appropriate while traditional shed type awnings with or without a valence are appropriate.
2. Signage on awning valences or surfaces should comply with signage guidelines.

3. Installations should not damage or obscure significant existing building features.
4. Prior to proposing any new solution the existing building should be investigated for clues of prior installations.
5. Colors should be sensitive to the colors of the building - see Paint and Colors section. The level of sheen of the awning fabric should be relatively low. The lighting of awnings should follow similar guidelines to that for signage. The entire awning surface should never be backlit so that the full surface is illuminated.
6. Awnings can be used to add a sense of visual continuity between neighboring buildings whose facades have awkward unattractive or distractingly inconsistent height storefronts.
7. Awnings should locate within the pier confines of a building facade over the display windows or entrances.
8. Long expanses of single awnings should be avoided. Breaking awnings up into appropriately proportioned, separate, but contiguous units is desirable.

#### **H. Signs:**

Signs have been and will remain an important element in the design makeup of a building's facade and in defining the character of an historic business district. In order for signs to effectively serve their informative and marketing function the general rule of less is best applies. All too often, in an attempt to compete for attention, designs of signage become over proportioned, complicated, and garish, creating a visual sea of pollution while also destroying or obscuring an historic building's fine details and a districts unique character. To avoid this we recommend the following:

1. Signs should be of a size and style compatible with the building they are to locate on and should not cover or obscure significant details or architectural features.
2. Signs should be located in appropriate and typically indicated places on a building facade allowing for easy viewing. Consistency of sign location assists people in finding the signs as well as adding visual cohesion to a group of buildings in a district.
3. A storefront may have more than two signs; e.g. - one primary sign for distant impact basic communication, and one secondary one - for closer viewing and further detailed.

4. For ease of legibility there should be a contrast between the sign message and the background. A very successful combination is light-toned lettering or graphics on a dark background.
5. Signs should use the minimum number of colors for most impact and legibility.
6. Internally illuminated signs should only light the letters or graphics of the sign and not the background.
7. Externally illuminated signs may be used as long as the light fixtures are in scale and character with the building and the lighting length is not distracting.
8. Neon letters can be effective and attractive when used with restraint.
9. Surface mounted lettering may be utilized with great historic effect.
10. Signboard signage should be proportionally sensitive ... no more than 3/4 of the length of the building, and be no more than 2 1/2 feet high.
11. Lettering should be 8 to 18 inches in height and occupy no more than 65% of the sign board.
12. All signage should comply with the signage ordinance.

## APPENDIX C

### DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK ADVISORY GROUP

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Tim Clifton  
Kathy Comella  
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Barb Gray  
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Pam Hockemeyer  
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Peggy Palmquist  
Jim Pearson  
Robert Pierce  
Mary Roberts  
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