Urban Design for the West End

Meadow & Fulton Street Corridors and East West Connecting Blocks

Prepared by:
City of Ithaca
Department of Planning & Development
THE WEST END URBAN DESIGN PLAN
1998

THE MEADOW AND FULTON STREET CORRIDORS
AND
EAST WEST CONNECTING BLOCKS

Prepared by:
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November 1998
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City of Ithaca
West End Urban Design Plan

Plotted by Planning & Development
November 1998
C hanging transportation systems have long had a great influence on the type, timing and scale of local property development. This fact is certainly demonstrated in the City’s West End. Over the past 100 years, transportation infrastructure -- first the Barge Canal system, then the railroad system, then the Flood Control Channel, and finally Route 13 -- have shaped and re-shaped the area’s land use. The area between Meadow and Fulton Streets, in fact all the area from the Flood Control Channel east to Meadow Street, underwent significant transformation after the construction of the Flood Control Channel, (1967-70), again after the widening of Meadow Street from two to four lanes, 1963-64 and has now been substantially altered again by the Route 96 reconstruction.

During the past 20 or 25 years, uncertainty over the Route 96 project slowed and reduced investment in the area. In wasn’t until 1991, after the final decision by the Common Council and New York State Department of Transportation on the design of the street realignment, that interest in redevelopment along the Meadow and Fulton Street corridors was rekindled. With the project now finally completed, there are already signs that major reinvestment in the area is likely. In addition to opportunity for redevelopment, the new road patterns strengthen the area’s importance as a gateway into the City for travelers from the west and from the north and south on Route 13. New development accompanying this long awaited economic revitalization will present opportunities to create a vital and attractive mixed-use neighborhood, urban in character and friendly to all travelers, whether on foot, on bikes or in cars. The West End Urban Design Plan is intended to provide
guidelines for creating and protecting a distinct visual identity for the West End as redevelopment occurs.

In 1994 the Common Council directed the Planning and Development Department to undertake an urban design study of the area between and including the Meadow and Fulton Street corridors, recommending guidelines to shape the physical form of this area's redevelopment. Around the same time, several area property owners expressed interest in extending the commercial zone into the residential zone on the east side of Meadow Street, to better accommodate adjacent commercial development. This proposal drew a strong negative response from the residents in the neighborhoods east of Meadow and Fulton Street, who opposed any encroachment of the commercial zone because of their desire to preserve their residential neighborhoods.

In early 1995, Mayor Ben Nichols appointed a client committee to work with the Planning and Development Department on the proposed design plan for the area. The committee included members of the Planning and Development Board, business people from the area and residents from the neighborhoods east of the commercial corridor and was staffed by Planning Department members Thys Van Cort, Linda Tsang, and Leslie Chatterton. During 1995 and 1996, the members of this committee met regularly. Goals and objectives were adopted and a draft plan was completed toward the end of that year. Staffing changes in the Planning and Development Department delayed completion of the final draft until early 1998.

The principal aims of the study include:

- redevelopment that results in a visually appealing urban mixed-use district, including retail, office and residential uses.
- protection of the traditional residential neighborhoods east of Meadow Street
- easing the impacts of the anticipated transition west of Meadow Street from single-family houses to denser mixed uses, which may include
- residential uses without diminishing the overall potential for redevelopment.
- creation of an attractive and safe pedestrian environment coexisting with high volume traffic.

Once adopted, it is the committee's intention that the plan be used by the following groups:

- Planning and Development Board as a guideline for Site Development Plan Reviews
- Common Council as it considers the rezoning proposals included in this report
- Board of Public Works and its staff as it implements capital projects and tree planting programs
- Planning and Economic Development staff members when they are approached by interested developers or businesses

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DESIGN PLAN

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<tr>
<th>GOAL #1</th>
<th>IMPROVE THE VISUAL CHARACTER OF THE PAVED ROAD</th>
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<td>Objectives</td>
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- encourage redevelopment that is attractively planned in the visual environment  
- emphasize the area's importance as a gateway to the City  
- improve visual continuity as one drives into and through the area |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>GOAL #2</th>
<th>PROTECT EXISTING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS</th>
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<td>Objectives</td>
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- protect the residential character of neighborhoods east of Meadow Street while maintaining the potential for development or re-development of existing commercial parcels adjacent to Meadow Street  
- ease the transition from single-family houses in the commercial zone west of Meadow Street as the area undergoes anticipated mixed-use development |

<table>
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<th>GOAL #3</th>
<th>PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHEN THE EXISTING BUSINESS CLIMATE THROUGH MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT</th>
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<td>Objectives</td>
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- strengthen visual character to enhance the area's potential as a commercial and tourist destination and as an upper-story residential neighborhood  
- provide a visual link to downtown and the Commons along the West State Street corridor |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>GOAL #4</th>
<th>CREATE A SAFE AND PLEASANT ENVIRONMENT FOR PEDESTRIANS IN THE MEADOW STREET CORRIDOR</th>
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<td>Objectives</td>
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- provide an effective separation between vehicular and pedestrian traffic  
- provide amenities and visual interest for the pedestrian visitor to the area |
Characteristics of the Study Area

The West End study area is bounded on the south by Six Mile Creek, on the west by the Cayuga Inlet, on the east by the east line of the commercial zone on the east side of Meadow Street and on the north at the place where Route 13 splits into Meadow and Fulton Streets. The area is approximately 11 blocks and 177 parcels.¹ The population of the study area is 179, which is 0.6% of Ithaca’s total population.

**LAND USE**

**Residential**

Of the 177 parcels in the study area, 54, or approximately 1/3rd, are residential. By comparison, approximately 2/3rds of all properties in the City are residential. The 54 residential properties have a combined total of 94 dwelling units and 222 bedrooms. The majority, 39 or 72%, is single family homes, only slightly higher than the City’s average of 70%. The average value of a single family home in the study area is $60,135 compared to $96,400 citywide.

The owner occupancy rate is higher in the West End than in City neighborhoods with high student occupancy rates, but lower than the County’s rate or that of other City neighborhoods with few student residents, such as West Hill. Of the 54 residential properties in the study area, 22 or 41% are

¹ The 1990 Census identifies the study area as a portion tract 8, block group 2 (which includes the West End and Northside Neighborhoods). This larger area is also described as Neighborhood 13 in the 1990 Neighborhood Statistics Program (NSP90) prepared by the Planning and Development Department.
owner occupied. By comparison, the 1990 census shows the following owner occupancy rates:

27.6% -- City of Ithaca
52.1% -- Tompkins County
32.5% -- Neighborhood 13 (Northside and West End)
69.8% -- Neighborhood 19 (West Hill)

(See Map #2 - Residential Properties)

Commercial and Commercially Zoned Properties

The entire study area is zoned commercial (see Map#7 - Zoning Districts) and 123 or about 2/3rds of all the properties are commercial by use. 2 This represents about 8% of all commercial properties in the City.

Although there is no specific information about the number of vacant buildings, 36 of the 123 commercial properties in the study area, or 29%, are vacant parcels zoned for commercial use. The total assessed value of the vacant commercial land in the study area is $1,900,400.

(See Map#3 Commercial Properties, Map #4 Vacant Parcels)

ASSEMBLED PROPERTIES

Many of the parcels in the study area are next to parcels that are owned by the same person or corporation. In most if not all cases, site planning according to the concepts and guidelines set forth in this plan will be much easier if adjoining properties are assembled into a single parcel for development. Map #5 Assembled Properties shows those sites in the study area that consists of at least three adjoining tax parcels with the same owner.

PARKING

Map #6 Study Area Parking shows the number and approximate location of existing on-street and off-street parking in the West End. Based on the current development trend of three parking spaces per every 1,000 square feet of

2 Commercial uses in this case include all uses that are not residential.
retail, the study area suffers from a deficit of parking compared to the parking demand generated. There are no more opportunities for the creation of municipal lots beyond the three existing lots on Buffalo Street, at the corner of Fulton and Court Streets and on Taughannock Boulevard, unless the City were to purchase additional land. Opportunity for additional on-street parking has been exhausted as well. As a result, parking will be a real consideration for future development. This study makes recommendations on the placement and development of parking for new development. These recommendations should be followed where possible to gain necessary parking spaces while contributing to the creation of a cohesive visual character in the West End.

ZONING

The study area is zoned for four different use categories, based in great measure on its historical uses. Since many of the uses in the area have changed and are continuing to change, the existing zoning in many ways is no longer appropriate, particularly in light of this report's goals and objectives. The properties on Meadow Street are zoned for retail/commercial (B2) or heavy commercial (B4). Several blocks north of the study area and a small strip on the south are zoned industrial (I1). A relatively narrow strip on the west is zoned marine (M1). (See Map#7 Zoning Districts). This report calls for the creation of a new zoning classification intended to encourage the development of a reasonably dense urban mixed-use center to an anchor the City's west end and compliment downtown and the Commons.

3 Source: West End Parking Study conducted the summer of 1997.
4 Although just outside the study area, the Taughannock Boulevard parking lot is close enough to serve some West End uses.
West End Urban Design Plan

Commercial Property Uses

Map 3

August 1997
Produced by City of Ithaca Planning & Development
West End Urban Design Study
Vacant Parcels

August 1997
Produced by City of Ithaca Planning & Development
West End Urban Design Study

Assembled Properties (Same owner for 3 or more parcels)

August 1997

Produced by City of Ithaca Planning & Development
West End Urban Design Plan
Study Area Parking

Map 6

Produced by City of Ithaca Planning and Development
August 1997
Existing Arrangement of Buildings on Site

Before presenting a vision for the future, it may be useful to look at existing site development patterns on Meadow and Fulton Streets and the advantages and disadvantages they present. Four common configurations of buildings on sites are identified in this section. In looking at the different patterns it becomes clear that a feature perceived as undesirable by one group, such as residents, may be perceived as desirable by another, such as business owners or motorists.

1. BUILDINGS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LOT, WITH OPEN AREA ON ALL FOUR SIDES

Advantages
- Presents easiest vehicle access with parking in front of the building
- Allows for a generous sidewalk with a wide planting strip between the sidewalk and the street to provide optimum separation between vehicular and pedestrian traffic
- Allows for the creation of a substantial buffer between the residential and commercial uses

Drawbacks
- Weak visual character with no street wall or corner anchor to define or enclose the space; parking areas blend together with no edge between the commercial lot and the public sidewalk
- Vehicle circulation and parking in front of the building can be a public eyesore as well as a hazard to the pedestrian if curb cuts are excessive
- Creates a disincentive for business owners who are interested in high visibility from the street, to provide landscaping that will effectively define the street wall or street corner
- Noise, fumes and glare from traffic within the parking area, particularly that related to loading and deliveries, can be intrusive for resident neighbors
- Inefficient parking layout can result in wasted area

1. These two parcels, on Meadow St. between Green St. and Cleveland Ave., show buildings in the middle of the lot with surface parking on all four sides.

2. BUILDINGS AGAINST THE BACK LOT-LINE, WITH THE MAJORITY OF PARKING AREA IN THE FRONT

Advantages
- The building serves as buffer between commercial traffic and residential uses
- Allows for easiest vehicle access

Drawbacks
- Weak visual character with no street wall or corner anchor to define or enclose the space; parking areas blend together and there is no edge between the private space of the commercial lot and the public space of the sidewalk
- Vehicle circulation and parking in front of the building can create a public eyesore as well as a hazard to the pedestrian if curb cuts are excessive
- Increases the perceived width of the frontage road encouraging speeding and reducing the pedestrian's sense of security
- Limits provision of screening other than the building between commercial and residential uses
- May block sunlight to, and views from residential properties

2. This parcel, located on the corner of Meadow St. and Seneca St., shows the building against the back lot-line with the majority of the parking area in the front.

3. **BUILDINGS PLACED AT THE FRONT CORNER, WITH PARKING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BLOCK**

**Advantages**
- Creates a well-defined street corner and provides a partial street wall
- Allows for a buffer between commercial and residential uses
- Does not block sunlight to residential properties

**Drawbacks**
- Creates a partial break in the street wall
- Noise, fumes and glare from traffic within the parking area, particularly that related to loading and deliveries, can be intrusive for resident neighbors

4. **BUILDINGS PLACED CLOSE TO STREET FRONTAGE WITH PARKING BEHIND**

**Advantages**
- Creates a well-defined street corner and street wall
- Allows for a wide buffer between commercial and residential uses
- Does not block sunlight to residential properties

**Drawbacks**

- Noise, fumes and glare from traffic within the parking area, particularly traffic related to loading and deliveries, can be intrusive for resident neighbors

3. This parcel, located on the corner of Meadow St. and State St., shows the building placed at the front corner with parking in the middle of the block.

4. This parcel, located on the corner of Meadow St. and Buffalo St., shows the building placed close to the street frontage with parking behind it.
Alternative Arrangement of Building Sites

1. PREFERENCES OF RESIDENTS IN NEIGHBORHOODS EAST OF MEADOW STREET

Protection from noise and other nuisances caused by commercial traffic and activities of the adjacent commercial establishments is necessary to protect the residential neighborhoods to the east. Residents feel that a solid fence or wall between commercial and residential uses, including landscaping, and perhaps other architectural elements is crucial to maintaining the viability and desirability of these neighborhoods.

2. PREFERENCES OF COMMERCIAL DEVELOPERS

The accessibility and visibility of retail and service businesses are important to the commercial viability of the Meadow Street corridor. Business owners feel that vehicular access at the front of commercial establishments, even if limited, should be made available. Some also feel that street trees are undesirable because visibility to passing motorists is obscured and that this space would be better used for parking.

3. THE MOTORIST’S PERCEPTION

Characteristics that enhance the motorist’s driving experience include:
- uninterrupted flow of traffic
- sites and streetscapes of scenic or architectural interest
- large street trees with broad canopy
- limited number and width of curb cuts
- ease in locating and identifying business establishments
- clear and appropriate traffic signs

4. **THE PEDESTRIAN’S EXPERIENCE**

Areas perceived by the pedestrian as pleasant and inviting usually possess some or all of the following characteristics:

- buildings of architectural interest, scaled and detailed to draw the pedestrian’s attention with elements such as porticos and awnings
- continuous storefronts
- *street walls* to define and enclose the space
- street edge definition
- large street trees with and overarching canopy
- wide sidewalks and tree lawns between pedestrians and moving traffic
- sidewalks located far enough from roads so they are not inundated by plowed snow
- safe cross walks
- regularly spaced street lights

"Residents feel that physical barriers between commercial and residential uses are crucial to maintaining the viability and desirability of these neighborhoods."

General Design Principles and Guidelines

Route 13 south of Six Mile Creek can be described as suburban-style strip and big box development with ample parking prominently located in front of businesses to attract and accommodate people in cars. While the convenience of this type of commercial development, and its benefit to the City tax rolls may be viewed as positive aspects, it does not serve the goal of promoting an attractive urban visual character. The following concepts and recommendations are offered as an alternative to create a distinctive aesthetic character unique to Ithaca's West End that can be recognized by both area residents and visitors.

1. PROMOTE A CONTINUOUS STREET EDGE IN THE MEADOW AND FULTON STREET CORRIDORS

Meadow Street Corridor

The street wall
The appealing visual character of urban spaces is in large part created by the continuous street edge or wall, providing a strong "edge" that helps define space and orient the viewer. Building facades create the most effective wall. To the extent practical, a continuous wall of multi-story buildings should line both sides of Meadow Street. On the east side of Meadow Street, adjacent to the residential zone, building heights will be limited to two stories to establish a transition zone between the residential neighborhood and anticipated dense development. On the west side a minimum three story, (maximum five story) height will create a strong edge and a desirably dense urban character. Corners of the block are important spaces, marking
the end of the street edge or wall. Wherever possible buildings should be located to serve as visual anchors at block corners.

**Parking behind and between buildings**
To reduce breaks in the street wall, where lot depth allows, parking lots should be located behind buildings. Shared parking and development of shared rear service alleys will also reduce breaks for parking lots and driveways, enhancing streetscape aesthetics. Where lot depth does not allow for rear parking, parking could be provided between buildings. In such cases, however, the street wall should be continued either architecturally with a low wall or fence or with substantial landscaping at the same set back as adjoining buildings. This same concept of continuing the street wall with a low wall or plantings is also a good alternative when building close to the street line is not feasible.

**Curb, tree lawn sidewalk, building**
A uniform set back from the street curb should consistently incorporate a substantial tree lawn between the sidewalk and the curb and a wide sidewalk. The tree lawn would add to visual interest, provide snow storage and allow pedestrians to walk in a splash free zone away from the curb. An additional two-foot shy distance between the sidewalk and the building will, if paved, provide additional area for pedestrians to walk and look in shop windows, and, if not paved, provide additional area for plantings.

Some setbacks on the west side of Meadow Street are already established. The Route 96 reconstruction included construction of a paved "tree lawn" with tree grates and a five foot sidewalk on the west side of Meadow Street except on the two blocks between State Street and Buffalo Street. The new set back as described in the paragraph above should be applied to these two blocks that did not receive a tree lawn during the Route 96 reconstruction.

**Parking lane**
An on-street parking lane on the west side of Meadow Street, built during the Route 96 reconstruction, provides an additional buffer between automobile traffic and the pedestrian. However no such on-street parking lane exists between State and Buffalo Streets.
Fulton Street Corridor

Redevelopment on the east side of Fulton Street should follow the same design principles as on the Meadow Street corridor: the establishment of a street wall with multi-story buildings, parking in the rear and a consistent set back with wide sidewalk and tree lawn to provide comfortable distance between pedestrians and traffic.

Familiar views
The west side of Fulton Street calls for a different approach. Toward the north end of Fulton, between Cascadilla Avenue and Court Street, there are a number of open spaces providing views of West Hill as one drives, bikes or walks southbound on Fulton Street. Leaving such areas open would also enhance pedestrian access to the waterfront. Development should be planned to maintain some of these “windows” as open view corridors, to provide a sense of location, identity and continuity. Farther south, where the railroad tracks abut Fulton Street, recent landscaping work on the west side of the railroad tracks could be augmented to further soften the visual character.

2. PHYSICALLY SEPARATE THE COMMERCIAL ZONE ON THE EAST SIDE OF MEADOW STREET AND THE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD ADJACENT ON THE EAST

Solid wall buffer
Protection of the residential neighborhood located east of Meadow Street from impacts of commercial uses and high volume traffic is of primary importance to area residents. The optimum buffer is provided by the construction of a solid fence or wall at the rear lot lines of properties on the east side of Meadow Street, to separate the residential district from the commercial corridor. Such a solid fence or wall must create a continuous barrier without openings. Because the depth of the commercial lots here varies, this barrier will not be an equal distance from Meadow Street, but it should be continuous so as to provide effective protection for neighborhoods to the east. The solid fence or wall should be augmented by a five-foot wide planting strip on the commercial side of the lot line.
3. STRENGTHEN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WEST STATE STREET CORRIDOR AS A LINK BETWEEN THE WEST END AND DOWNTOWN

Streetlights
The higher volume of fast moving traffic along Meadow and Fulton Streets increases the possibility that motorists will pass through the area unaware of the presence or location of Ithaca’s downtown. In addition to signs, enhancement of the West State Street corridor, with a gateway treatment continued with the installation of pedestrian-scaled street lighting, would draw attention and encourage visitors to come to the downtown area.

4. IMPROVE THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Curb, tree lawn, sidewalk
Improvement of conditions for the pedestrian in the West End is an integral element of the plan. Plans for redevelopment should generally include sidewalks at least five feet wide and a minimum two foot shy distance, (which may be incorporated into the sidewalk), located adjacent to buildings, well separated from traffic by a minimum eight foot wide tree lawn. Pedestrian-scaled streetlights could be provided at regular and close intervals, particularly where space for tree planting is insufficient. Shared parking among neighboring properties is encouraged to minimize the number of parking areas and curb cuts.

5. INCREASE PLANTING OF STREET TREES

Street canopy
Street trees create great visual interest for the pedestrian and motorist alike and provide visual continuity as one drives into and through the study area, (particularly from the east). Street trees should be planted wherever there is adequate growing area, along the Meadow and Fulton Street corridors and the east/west cross streets. When planted in a row, spacing should be no more that 30 feet on center. Species should be selected in consultation with the City Forester, with a focus on achieving significant height and a broad canopy.
6. EASE THE TRANSITION FROM SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL USES TO MIXED USES ON THE EAST/WEST BLOCKS BETWEEN MEADOW AND FULTON STREETS

Commercial and residential mix
There are no explicit recommendations to preserve remaining single family houses on the blocks west of Meadow Street. This area has long been zoned for commercial uses. Mixing of residential and commercial uses, in new buildings, however, could ease the transition of this neighborhood and any negative impacts on current residents. The proposed three-story minimum building height between Fulton and Meadow Streets will encourage developers to consider inclusion of new upper-story housing in redevelopment projects, thereby helping to continue the area's residential tradition in a new way. It is possible that some of the significant older residential buildings will be retained -- possibly converted to commercial use or rental housing -- which, in addition to potential new housing, could also strengthen the consumer base for surrounding businesses. Two parking lots were constructed to provide parking for area residents after existing on-street parking was removed by the Route 96 reconstruction.

Efforts should be made to retain visual continuity as one travels from the residential area east of Meadow Street into the commercially zoned district between Meadow and Fulton Streets. Maximum and minimum front yard set backs with a consistent tree lawn and sidewalk pattern would promote such continuity. A sense of continuity can also be accomplished with tall, overarching street trees. Tree planting should be routinely incorporated as a condition of site plan development.
Site Specific Opportunities for Visual Improvement

Existing development, the completed Route 96 project, new urban design goals, and the needs of motorists and pedestrians will all affect the form and appearance of redevelopment in the study area. Presented here are specific block by block recommendations for redevelopment of the Meadow Street and Fulton Street corridors for reference when redevelopment is proposed. This plan is not intended to require any changes to existing buildings or their placement on existing sites but instead to provide one model for redevelopment as it occurs. Given the opportunities and constraints of each block, the drawings show how redevelopment could look as shaped by the principles and guidelines of this plan.

The suggested plans have been drawn to include a realistic number of on site parking spaces, even though it is proposed that no on-site parking spaces be required by zoning in the study area west of Meadow Street. The sequence begins at the intersection of Meadow, Clinton, and Fulton Streets, and moves north, block by block to where Meadow and Fulton Streets split, then south on Fulton back to the intersection of Meadow, Clinton and Fulton Streets. As a result, the north arrow on the accompanying figures will not always point to the top of the page.

MEADOW STREET CORRIDOR

The "main street" model is appropriate for future development on Meadow Street, given the existing condition of high traffic commercial development there immediately adjacent to thriving residential neighborhoods to the east. This model
strives for a pedestrian-friendly mix of residential and commercial uses characterized by ample street trees, pedestrian scaled and architecturally interesting buildings and other amenities that will promote visual appeal, comfort and security. With this in mind, future site development should, to the degree possible, be guided by standards that create a continuous street wall with buildings close to the street, buildings at corners to anchor the block and parking in the rear. Where lot depth is not sufficient for rear parking, parking should be located mid-block. In this case, the edges of the lot, especially those adjacent to the sidewalk should be well defined with a wall, vegetation or a combination of the two. The City, in consultation with the Shade Tree Advisory Committee and the City Forester, should consider planting large shade trees on the east side of Meadow, where there will be no overhead wires.

The development pattern described above, with parking and service alleys at the rear of commercial buildings could - without an effective barrier - be a nuisance to adjacent residents east of Meadow Street. Offensive intrusions such as noise, fumes and glare caused by commercial and businesses uses and by traffic could - without separation - pose a serious threat to the quality of life in these neighborhoods. Sustaining a strong residential character in adjacent neighborhoods depends on the establishment and maintenance of a hard line, in the form of a solid physical barrier, between these conflicting uses.
Between Clinton and Cleveland Avenue (figure 1)

The widening of Clinton Street at the intersection with Meadow Street required the purchase of two parcels on the north side of Clinton Street. Because of its configuration, it is unlikely that any building will be constructed without further site assembly. As an alternative, a grove of large deciduous trees planted here would provide a comparable mass to better define the street edge. Because of their awkward configurations and dimensions, the other three corners at this intersection are similarly unsuitable for development. The placement of trees in all these locations will give distinctive character to this important intersection and help identify entrance to the residential neighborhood east of Meadow Street. The structure at the southwest corner of Meadow and Fulton Streets, (the former lighting store) has been demolished. Redevelopment and landscaping should attempt to strengthen the visual and physical connection with the adjacent waterway.

East Side of Meadow Street

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Buffer adjacent residential properties with a solid wall or fence. The hard appearance can be softened with plantings, enhancing the buffering effect.
- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.

West Side of Meadow Street

- Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.
Between Cleveland Avenue and Green Street (figure 2)

East Side of Meadow Street

☐ A consistent 15-20 foot set back will allow for a minimum 8' tree lawn, a minimum 5' sidewalk with 2' additional between sidewalk and building.

☐ Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.

☐ Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.

☐ Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.

☐ Buffer adjacent residential properties with a solid wall or fence. The hard appearance can be softened with plantings, enhancing the buffering effect.

West Side of Meadow Street

☐ Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.

☐ Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.

☐ Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.

☐ Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
**Between Green Street and State Street (figure 3)**

The building at the northeast corner shows an alternate arrangement, eliminating the tree lawn and substituting a wide sidewalk from the curb to the building. This alternative is suggested only in cases where the 13-15 foot set back is not feasible. In such cases the sidewalk should be no less than 11 feet wide so as to provide sufficient protection and security for the pedestrian.

**Gas Station:** For now, a combination of tree and shrub planting would soften the appearance of the existing configuration and circulation in the north corner.

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**East Side of Meadow Street**

- A consistent 15-20 foot set back will allow for a minimum 8' tree lawn, a minimum 5' sidewalk with 2' additional between sidewalk and building.
- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.

**West Side of Meadow Street**

- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.
- Relocate the building to the corner and, if circulation allows, gas pumps under a single cover.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.
**Between State Street and Seneca Street (figure 4)**

**Gas Station:** For now, a combination of tree and shrub planting would soften the appearance of the existing configuration and circulation in the south corner on the east side of Meadow Street.

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**East Side of Meadow Street**

- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.

- A consistent 15-20 foot setback will allow for a minimum 8’ tee lawn, a minimum 5’ sidewalk with 2’ additional between sidewalk and building.

- Locate parking between buildings (given the shallow lot depth, it is unlikely that parking can be placed behind.)

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.

- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.

- Relocate the building to the corner and, if circulation allows, gas pumps under a single cover.

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**West Side of Meadow Street**

- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.

- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.

- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.
Between Seneca Street and Buffalo Street (figure 5)

Given the current absence of a building at the north corner, on the east side of Meadow Street, definition of the parking area with plantings at the edges would serve to continue the street wall. Additional trees and shrub plantings at the north corner will also help anchor this end of the block.

Gas Station (west side of Meadow): For now, a combination of tree and shrub planting would soften the appearance of the existing configuration and circulation in the north corner.

East Side of Meadow Street

- A consistent 15-20 foot set back will allow for a minimum 8' tree lawn, a minimum 5' sidewalk with 2' additional between sidewalk and building.
- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Buffer adjacent residential properties with a solid wall or fence. The hard appearance can be softened with plantings, enhancing the buffering effect.

West Side of Meadow Street

- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.
- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.
- Relocate the building to the corner and, if circulation allows, gas pumps under a single cover.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
Between Buffalo Street and Court Street (figure 6)

Joe's Restaurant, on the west side of Meadow, exemplifies many of the desirable characteristics discussed earlier — the placement of the building at the block corner, pulled up to the sidewalk edge, with parking behind the building. Plans for new development or redevelopment on this block should echo this pattern.
Between Court Street and Esty Street (figure 7)

Recent development on the east side of Meadow Street consists of a bank with remote tellers. This development, with the building adjacent to the sidewalk, incorporating an adequate set back, corners anchored with street trees and parking edges defined with plantings, meets many of the plan guidelines.

Existing parking for the Ithaca Bakery, west side of Meadow Street, is inadequate, difficult to access and, in its present location, weakens the visual character of the block. One solution is to acquire parcels to the west and redevelop to create outdoor dining opportunities and parking at the rear of the building.

East Side of Meadow Street

- Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.
- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.
- Buffer adjacent residential properties with a solid wall or fence. The hard appearance can be softened with plantings, enhancing the buffering effect.

West Side of Meadow Street

- Lots appear deep enough to place some parking in the rear.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
Between Esty Street and Cascadilla Street (figure 8)

There are few opportunities to mitigate the negative visual impact of the block’s existing configuration on the east side of Meadow Street.

**East Side of Meadow Street**

- A consistent 15-20 foot set back will allow for a minimum 8' tree lawn, a minimum 5' sidewalk with 2' additional between sidewalk and building.

- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.

- Locate parking between buildings. (Lots do not appear deep enough to place parking behind buildings.)

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.

- Buffer adjacent residential properties with a solid wall or fence. The hard appearance can be softened with plantings, enhancing the buffering effect.

**West Side of Meadow Street**

- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.

- Locate shared parking and open storage on the block’s interior if circulation allows.

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
Between Cascadilla Street and Hancock Street (figure 9)

The Route 96 realignment included several site improvements, such as a new pedestrian walk on the east side of Meadow Street. The new configuration of the north end of Fulton Street creates a triangular area north of the Purity Ice Cream parking lot. Site improvements accompanying the Route 96 realignment and additional plantings on the north tip of the island will better define the edge of the parking lot. The placement of the sidewalk and tree lawn on the east side of Meadow Street are reversed. The opportunity to comfortably separate the pedestrian and vehicular traffic here is lost.

**East Side of Meadow Street**

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow parking can be located between buildings.

**West Side of Meadow Street**

- Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
Between Hancock Street and Cascadilla Street (figure 10.4)

New street frontage on the north side of Fulton Street was created in an area previously used for service access for several businesses. The street curvature will require greater building setbacks and increased open area between buildings for visibility entering and exiting.

West Side of Fulton Street

P Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.

O Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
Between Cascadilla Street and Esty Street (Figure 11)

Although new street frontage has been created, development on the west side of Fulton Street is constrained by the street curvature and the railroad tracks to the west. Redevelopment plans should include retention of open areas to preserve the view to West Hill and hint at the water view beyond the rail tracks.

East Side of Fulton Street

- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.
- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.
- Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.

West Side of Fulton Street

- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.
- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.
- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
Between Esty Street and Court Street (figure 12)

Although new street frontage has been created, development on the west side of Fulton is constrained by the location of the railroad tracks to the west. The recommended design treatment, therefore, includes retention of the green open area that hints at the waterway beyond, and the preservation of the view to West Hill. A new municipal parking lot was constructed on the east side of Fulton Street in conjunction with the Route 96 realignment.

East Side of Fulton Street

- A consistent 15-20 foot setback will allow for a minimum 8' tree lawn, a minimum 5' sidewalk with 2' additional between sidewalk and building.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.

West Side of Fulton Street

- Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.
- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edge of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
Between Court Street and Buffalo Street (figure 13)

It is likely that the block between Buffalo and Court Street on the east side of Fulton Street will be redeveloped for commercial use. Following a relatively open landscape on the previous blocks, the shift to a more urbanized form of development could signal the return to the original Fulton Street. The form of development here could follow the form suggested for Meadow Street.

Because the rail tracks impede access to sites on the west side of Fulton Street, even new buildings are likely to be constructed with their backs to the street. Although some landscaping has been added, location of the railroad tracks close to the existing buildings makes it difficult to adequately soften conditions with a planting scheme. Special attention should therefore be given to the treatment of the east facade, such as architectural detailing, or possibly a mural, to provide visual interest.

East Side of Fulton Street

- A consistent 16-20 foot set back will allow for a minimum 6’ tree lawn, a minimum 5’ sidewalk with 2’ additional between sidewalk and building.

- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.

- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.

- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.

- Buffer adjacent residential properties with a solid wall or fence. The hard appearance can be softened with plantings, enhancing the buffering effect.

West Side of Fulton Street

- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.

- Shared parking could be located between development on Fulton Street and the waterfront.
Between Buffalo Street and Seneca Street (figure 14)

(East side of Fulton): The absence of a tree lawn, the narrow width of the sidewalk (less than 5 feet), and signs intruding on the sidewalk on the east side of Fulton Street make walking this block an uncomfortable, unappealing and possibly unsafe experience that cannot be mitigated as long as the existing buildings remain. Although some landscaping has been added on the west side of Fulton Street, more is needed to define the edge and soften the expense of parking.

East Side of Fulton Street

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.
- Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.

West Side of Fulton Street

- Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
Between Seneca Street and State Street *(figure 15)*

The existing arrangement on the est side of Fulton Stret, with the sidewalk against the curb and the tree lawn between sidewalk and building leaves the pedestrian closer to fast moving traffic and creates a less comfortable, less appealing and possibly unsafe experience. When opportunity is presented it would be worthwhile to reverse the placement of the sidewalk and tree lawn.

**East Side of Fulton Street**

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.

**West Side of Fulton Street**

- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.
- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.
Between State Street and Green Street (figure 16)

The existing arrangement on the west side of Fulton Street, with the sidewalk against the curb and the tree lawn between sidewalk and building leaves the pedestrian closer to fast moving traffic and creates a less comfortable, less appealing and possibly unsafe experience. When opportunity is presented it would be worthwhile to reverse the placement of the sidewalk and tree lawn.

East Side of Fulton Street

- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.
- A consistent 15-20 foot set back will allow for a minimum 8’ tree lawn, a minimum 5’ sidewalk with 2’ additional between sidewalk and building.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.
- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.

West Side of Fulton Street

- An additional grove of large shade trees would better define and improve the visual character of the unused triangular area between the rail tracks and the road. (Because of its unusual configuration, it is unlikely that this site will be developed.)
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
Between Green Street and Meadow Street (figure 17)

(East side of Fulton): Redevelopment is planned for part of the block. The current plan includes store frontage on Fulton and parking in the lot’s interior.

**East Side of Fulton Street**
- Locate new buildings at the corner to anchor the block and adjacent to sidewalk to strengthen the street wall.
- Locate parking behind buildings. Where lot depth is too shallow, parking can be located between buildings.
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Shared parking, curb cuts, and service areas will minimize negative visual effects and increase safety entering and exiting.
- Use street trees or dense plantings to anchor block corners where necessary, while maintaining visibility for vehicles and pedestrian traffic.
- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.

**West Side of Fulton Street**
- Use a hedge, a low wall or plantings to define edges of paved areas and continue street walls where interrupted by parking.
- Increase the number of street trees to 25-30 feet on center.
FULTON STREET CORRIDOR

The Route 96 project has created many opportunities for urban design improvements on Fulton Street. For example, there is now an entirely new section of the street and street frontage between Hancock and Court Streets. While development here is not constrained by the desire to protect existing residential uses as with the east side of Meadow Street, development will be restricted by the railroad tracks on much of the west side of the street. The tracks hamper access to adjacent parcels and limit planting space for street trees. Another characteristic of Fulton Street is the coarse texture of the existing development pattern, with its many large-scale structures and large parking lots. The area as it exists is not very interesting visually, especially for the pedestrian. At the same time, the traditional “main street” type of development with attractive storefronts and street activities does not seem appropriate here. As an alternative, a vigorous planting program may be the most practical way to strengthen the visual character of the west side of Fulton Street. Large street trees will allow for building visibility, impart a sense of scale and provide a street canopy.

Note: Because the illustrations are drawn in the direction of travel, as we move in a southerly direction along Fulton Street the north arrow will no longer point to the top of the page.
EAST WEST STREETS

East/west streets in the study area include, from south to north, Green Street, State Street, Seneca Street, Buffalo Street, Court Street, Esty Street and Cascadilla Street. The north/south streets, Meadow and Fulton, constitute a major arterial one-way pair designed to service a higher percentage of regional traffic. In contrast, it is anticipated that some of the east/west streets between Meadow and Fulton will retain their local function. The difference in function should be reflected in the character of buildings and streetscape. Although this entire area is zoned commercial, there are a considerable number of occupied residential buildings in the blocks bounded by Seneca and Court Streets. While no specific measures are recommended to protect the existing single family residences west of Meadow Street, (as there are on the east side of Meadow Street), the design study has been prepared assuming a gradual rather than a radical change in the character of this neighborhood. With this in mind, the following general recommendations are set forth:

- Maintain and replenish street trees with the aim of creating an arching canopy over the street. The existing corridor of large trees experienced as one travels west through the city from downtown to Meadow Street creates a strong visual impression familiar to many. Large trees on the east/west streets would provide a visual connection as one continues to travel west.
- Include a minimum and maximum front yard set back to provide continuity.

- Encourage off-street parking to serve both commercial and residential property owners.

* Although no block by block annotated drawings were prepared for the east/west streets, drawings in Appendix I show site-specific opportunities for visual improvement.
SCREENING AND SEPARATION

Between Commercial and Residential Zones on the East Side of Meadow Street

- A minimum six foot tall solid wall or fence shall be required to separate the commercial and residential zones on the east side of Meadow Street.
- The solid barrier shall be augmented by a minimum five foot wide landscaping strip, to be located on the commercial side of the barrier.
- Wheel stops, bollards or other similar devices shall be required to protect the buffering elements from damage by vehicular traffic.
- Where there is adequate width, tree planting combined with the solid barrier is encouraged.

Between Parking Areas and Pedestrian Ways

- Visual screening at a minimum three foot height and a maximum four and one half foot height, in the form of either planting or a solid fence or wall, is recommended where feasible and within the limits of traffic and pedestrian safety.
- The planting strip should be at least four feet wide. Where there is not enough space, a low masonry wall or raised planter can be substituted.
- Where there is adequate width, tree planting combined with a wall or a hedge is preferred.
Minimum Requirement for Separation between Commercial and Residential Uses

A solid visual barrier of at least 6' in height shall be provided. Bollards or other devices must also be provided to protect the barrier.

Where there is at least 5' of buffer, a planting hedge (to become at least a 6' high solid visual screen in 3 years) may be substituted for a fence or wall.

A fence or wall may be semi-solid in character if it is combined with planting.
Minimum Requirement for Separation between Commercial Parking and Public Ways

A low wall must be installed if there is not adequate planting space

Looking from street into a parking area

A planting hedge may be installed instead of a low wall if there is at least a 4' wide area
• Where the area of separation is less than 18 inches between the sidewalk and the street, use of decorative bollards shall be required.

PLANTINGS

• Tree lawns should be at least eight feet wide to adequately separate the pedestrian from traffic and to allow for substantial plantings and large street trees.
• Where there is adequate tree lawn, planting of deciduous trees with a potential height of at least 50 feet at maturity is encouraged. Street trees should be planted no more than 30 feet on center.

PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALK

• Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide with an additional two feet shy distance adjacent to the building where possible. The shy distance provides a comfort zone for the pedestrian and an area for window-shopping.
• If there is not enough space for a sidewalk and tree lawn, a minimum 11 foot sidewalk can be constructed between the curb and the front building edge. The minimum eight foot curb law, five foot sidewalk and two foot shy distance is preferred.
• Sidewalks shall continue across driveways.

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

• Multi-story construction strengthens the visual character of the urban environment in general and could be intensified along the Meadow and Fulton Street corridors to reinforce the perception of a continuous street wall. Multi-story construction is also appropriate on the east/west streets where most older buildings are two or three stories in height. (Building height requirements are specified elsewhere.)
• The size and scale of new buildings should enhance the pedestrian experience in addition to drawing the attention of passing motorists.
• Facades with street level display windows, a variety of recessed or projecting surfaces, and architectural detailing are encouraged.
• The roof form should be designed to maximize building height, add architectural interest and discourage visibility of roof top mechanical structures such as air conditioning units, ventilators, etc.
• Masonry or wood exterior materials are preferred.
• Awnings shall be encouraged to provide protection for pedestrians and visually strengthen the street wall.

SETBACKS

Minimum 15 foot and maximum 20 foot building setbacks from street curbs shall be required to allow for a five foot wide sidewalk and a minimum eight foot wide tree lawn and a two foot shy distance between the building and the sidewalk. Preferably, setbacks greater than 15 feet should be incorporated into the area of the tree lawn, not foundation plantings, so that sidewalks can be located adjacent to buildings. Where it is not feasible to provide a setback of at least 15 feet, the two foot shy distance can be reduced. Where it is not feasible to provide a setback of at least 13 feet, elimination of the tree lawn and construction of a minimum 11 foot wide sidewalk from the street curb to the building foundation shall be required. In such cases the use of “hardscape” amenities, such as benches, planters and paving materials are encouraged.

CURB CUTS

• Curb cuts serving one-way traffic should be limited to 16 feet wide or less. In no case should a curb cut exceed 24 feet.
• Sidewalks should continue across curb cuts.

PARKING DIMENSION

• The total width of a double-bay parking lot should not exceed 60 feet.
• In places where there is excess width, preference will be shown to plans dedicating the excess for additional planting or pedestrian areas.
• (Add requirement for trees in large parking lots)
Implementation

The recommendations of this plan can be implemented in a variety of ways, including the construction of public capital projects, the passage and enforcement of amended zoning regulations, required site plan review for all redevelopment and finally, through persuasion.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

The City’s capital improvement budget funds projects ranging from large public buildings to the routine replacement of curbs, sidewalks, etc. Every effort should be made to design capital projects in the Meadow and Fulton Street area to conform with recommendations of the plan.

CITY TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

It is anticipated that the Shade Tree Advisory Committee and the City Forester will take into consideration the landscaping recommendations of the report when planning annual tree planting programs.

ZONING

Zoning is the City’s primary tool for controlling land use and lot layout. These regulations will play an important part in influencing the redevelopment of the corridor to create an appealing, pedestrian friendly, urban mixed-use district as an alternative to typical highway strip commercial development. After careful examination of both the existing uses and the
probable changes in uses resulting from the new transportation patterns, a new zoning category is recommended. The proposed new zoning district would permit most activities allowing in the existing B-4 and B-2a districts, such as retail, service, restaurant, office and residential uses. The new district, however, should stipulate somewhat different area dimension and parking regulations in order to conform to the design guidelines and standards of the plan. The following is a brief list of recommendations for area regulations in the Fulton/Meadow zone:

- To achieve development of a dense urban environment, minimum building height is three stories, (35 feet), excluding the east side of Meadow Street where taller buildings can block light to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Maximum building height is five stories (60 feet), excluding the east side of Meadow Street
- Maximum building height on the east side of Meadow street is two stories, (25 feet)
- Minimum front yard set back from the street curb to accommodate an eight foot wide curb lawn, a five foot minimum sidewalk, and a two foot distance between the sidewalk and the building. Since curb lawns and sidewalks are typically located within the street right-of-way, no additional front yard will be necessary on most properties.
- Maximum building set back from the street curb is 20 feet to discourage parking in front of buildings.
- No side yards required.
- Back yard minimum ten feet.
- Required construction of a continuous six foot high solid fence or wall along the lot line where the back yard in a commercial zone abuts a residential zone on the east side of Meadow Street. A foot wide landscaped buffer strip must also be established on the commercial side of this solid barrier.
- Maximum percent coverage 100 percent except as required for rear or front yards.
- Minimum lot size 3,000 feet, the same as the existing B-2a and B-4 zones.
- Minimum lot width at the street line 40 feet, the same as the existing B-2a and B-4 zones.
- Parking requirement the same as the existing B-2a for properties east of Meadow Street.
• No off-street parking requirement for properties west of Meadow Street as is the case for the City's downtown area.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Zoning is a relatively rigid means for regulating growth and its physical form. Site plan review gives the Planning and Development Board greater latitude in working toward implementation of the recommendations of this report. It is therefore recommended that site plan review be made mandatory for virtually all permits in the zone for work that will change the exterior appearance of a building or modify the site layout. This report is intended in part to serve as the guidelines for conducting site plan reviews on building proposals in the study area.

The Site Plan Review Ordinance is currently being revised to allow for an expedited administrative site plan review by Planning and Development Department staff. Most building permits could be reviewed through this expedited process, leaving only larger development projects to full review by the Planning Board. Nonetheless, some level of aesthetic review should be applied to all properties in the area, so that the recommendations of this report are adequately implemented.

Special site plan review criteria should be adopted to guide the layout of new development to conform to the design standards of this plan. In addition to guidelines and standards already noted in this report's guidelines, standards and site maps, such criteria should include, but not be limited to, the following items not always addressed in development plans:

• Impact on adjacent properties of the following
  - location, design and screening of refuse and recycling containers
  - outdoor lighting, including security lighting
  - mechanical systems such as air handler units, exhaust fans and HVAC mechanical systems such as compressors and fans
  - drive-thru lane speakers
PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

Finally, there is confidence that the recommendations in this report will be seen as having merit enough that private owners will assist the City in implementing the report’s recommendations. The plan will be widely disseminated and explained to property owners both through public presentations and as individuals come to the City for building permits. Achievement of the plan’s goals—visual improvement, protection of residential neighborhoods, increased economic development, and improvement of the pedestrian environment—will bring the City one step closer to shaping a vibrant urban West End neighborhood while protecting the cohesive, long-standing traditional residential neighborhoods east of Meadow Street.
APPENDIX

SITE MAPS FOR EAST WEST CROSS STREETS