

# FLORENCE DOWNTOWN PLAN

---

JUNE 1999

TRANSPORTATION GROWTH MANAGEMENT PROJECT  
CITY OF FLORENCE, ODOT / DLCD



LENNERTZ COYLE & ASSOCIATES - W&H PACIFIC - PACIFIC RIM RESOURCES - LELAND CONSULTING GROUP - GIBBS PLANNING GROUP - PAUL JENSEN

This project is partially funded by a grant from the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program, a joint program of the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. This TGM grant is financed by federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and local government funds. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect views or policies of the State of Oregon.

### **Participating Agencies**

City of Florence, Community Development Department  
Sandy Young, Community Development Director  
Jim Mulder, Associate Planner  
ODOT/DLCD TGM Program  
Sue Geniesse, Urban Growth Management Planner  
ODOT  
Nick Arnis, Regional Planner  
DLCD Costal Division  
David Perry, S. Coast Field Representative  
Port of Siuslaw  
Tom Kartrude, Port Manager  
Siuslaw School District  
Steve Waddell, Superintendent

### **Steering Committee Members**

Dave Braley  
Arolf Salo  
Lynnette Wikstrom-Smith  
Marteen Wick  
Joshua Greene  
Jack Butler  
David Capen  
David Jackson  
John Balcom

### **Consultant Team**

Lennertz Coyle & Associates, Architects and Town Planners, Prime Consultant  
Laurence Qamar, Project Manager  
Bill Lennertz, Charrette Manager  
Oliver Kuehne, Designer  
Jeff Thierfelder, Designer  
Ken Hutchinson, Designer  
Aarin Lutzenhiser, Report Editing  
W&H Pacific, Transportation Planners  
Laura Jackson  
Pacific Rim Resources, Land Use Planners  
Tom Armstrong  
Leland Consulting Group, Market Economists  
Ed Starkie  
Paul Dennis  
Gibbs Planning Group, Retail Planners  
Bob Gibbs  
Paul K. Jensen, Architect

### **Photo Credits**

Special thanks is due to the Siuslaw Pioneer Museum for photos of turn of the century Florence, and to Joshua Greene for aerial photos of Florence. Other photos are by Lennertz Coyle & Associates.

# Table of Contents

## I. The Downtown Plan

### A. Goals and Objectives for Florence

### B. Historic Context

### C. Existing Conditions

#### Land Use

Comprehensive Plan

Zoning Map

#### Market Conditions

#### Demographics, Income and Spending

#### Transportation

Parallel Routes to Highway 101

Crossing Highway 101

### D. The Downtown Plan Recommendations

#### Overall Vision and Strategy

#### Business Strategy

Retail Benefits of a mainstreet District

#### Transportation Strategy

Hwy. 101 Recommended Street Section

Parking Plan

#### Land Use Strategy

Recommendations by Area

*Storefront mainstreet, Hwy 101*

*Downtown Green*

*Commercial Boulevard, Hwy 101*

*Hwy 126 Gateway District*

*9th St/Kingwood Neighborhood*

*Events Center District*

*Downtown Park*

*Old Town*

#### Implementation Strategy

Strategic Approach

Action Plan

*Land Use Projects*

*Transportation Projects*

*Parking Projects*

*Public Improvement Projects*

*Community Projects*

#### Potential Funding Sources

## II. Appendix

### A. Current Market Situation & Potential Market Opportunities

### B. Florence Retail Study

### C. Transportation Technical Memorandum

### D. Qualitative Comparison of Three Options for Improvements to Highway 101 Through Downtown Florence

### F. Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments

### G. Architectural Design Guidelines

### H. Glossary of Terms

## Preface

The Florence Downtown Plan is a Transportation Growth Management project funded through a joint program of the Department of Land Conservation and Development, and the Oregon Department of Transportation. The project began in September 1998 and ended in June of 1999. A consultant team has worked directly with the City of Florence's Community Development Department, and a Steering Committee of local citizens selected by the City Council.

An essential goal of the project has been to closely involve the local citizens of Florence to determine the future outcome of their Downtown. An initial consultant team visit for four days took place in early-November, 1998. Prior to the trip the Steering Committee was selected, a list of over 20 stakeholders from throughout the City were compiled, and initial base data collection was conducted. During the initial four-day, visit the consultant team met twice with the Steering Committee, conducted one-on-one interviews with the stakeholders, and conducted a public open house at the City Hall to introduce the project and gain a greater understanding of the concerns and ideas of the public.

After the first trip a summary of issues and opportunities was presented to the Steering Committee. Further analysis of base data was conducted in preparation for the second major Consultant visit in early-February, 1999. The second visit was a four day long public design Charrette that gathered the consultant team, ODOT and DLCD representatives, City agencies, the Steering Committee, and the public. Three evening public open houses occurred during the Charrette with design work from the previous day presented. Each evening new design work reflecting changes requested by the public from the previous evening was presented. The public was able to directly discuss issues with designers, transportation planners, architects, land use planners, retail planners, and economists. The Charrette had a strong public turnout with as many as 70 attendees on the last night.

Following the Charrette visit, the consulting team produced a draft report describing the background information and recommendations developed to-date. A third consultant team visit took place in May to make a another public presentation of the recommendations developed during the Charrette and any subsequent refinements in the draft report. Agency and public commentary was gathered to make adjustments to the plan. Finally, this Downtown Plan was presented to a joint session of the Florence Planning Commission, and City Council in June, has strived to represent the many views of Florence.



*Steering Committee Meeting*



*Charrette Public Meeting*



# **I. The Downtown Plan**

## **A. Goals and Objectives for Downtown Florence**

### Goal:

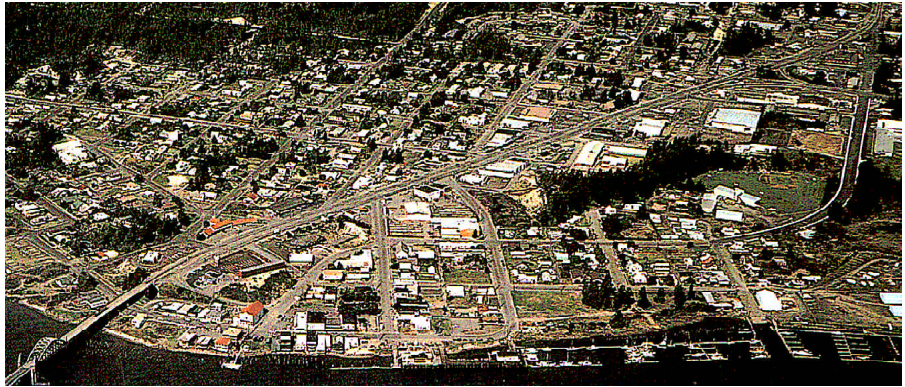
To revitalize the downtown area as the primary cultural, tourist, commercial, and community core to serve all of Florence's citizens and visitors.

### Objectives:

- 1 To develop a unified downtown consisting of the neighborhoods and commercial districts on both sides of Highway 101, south of Highway 126 and 9<sup>th</sup> Street, east of Kingwood Avenue, and west of the Port property along the Siuslaw River estuary.
- 2 To revitalize deteriorating sections of the downtown area.
- 3 To enhance the downtown through the promotion of mixed-use development, pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, provision of useful public space, and attractive site and architectural design to create one of Florence's special places.
- 4 To provide safe, convenient, and attractive choices for people to walk, bike, and drive throughout the downtown.
- 5 To facilitate public/private partnerships to carry out the plan.
- 6 To achieve a balanced transportation/land use solution for Highway 101 that maintains its historic function as both the Coast's primary transportation route, and as the center of Florence's downtown.
- 7 To develop safe, convenient and attractive public parking areas to accommodate visitors and residents accessing the downtown from Highway 101 and adjacent neighborhoods.
- 8 To ensure that the transportation objectives of the downtown plan are consistent with the transportation system plan (TSP), the Oregon Highway Plan, and ODOT's adopted plans for Highway 101 and Highway 126.
- 9 To identify suggested transportation improvements needed to facilitate redevelopment of the downtown area consistent with land use and retail market strategies.
- 10 To encourage mixed-use development that enables citizens to live, work, shop, and recreate all within easy walking distance within the downtown.
- 11 To improve access to, and visibility of Old Town from Highway 101.

## B. Historic Context

In the late-19<sup>th</sup> Century, Florence was founded much like every other settlement throughout history at the crossing of two regional trade routes. The importance for commercial development at the crossing point of “main and main” routes endures today. It is the cross roads through which the highest customer base passes, and lives nearby.



Businesses of all kinds either fail or thrive based on their location, accessibility and visibility from the greatest number of customers. The regional through route invariably became the cultural and commercial “mainstreet” of a town anchored at the original “main and main” crossing.

Florence’s historic routes were the Siuslaw River running west to the Pacific ocean and the north/south Oregon coast road. Shipping between the ocean and the river logically joined with the coastal road at a place which eventually became the port and the center of the new City of Florence. Fishing and logging remained the predominant industries of the region through much of the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

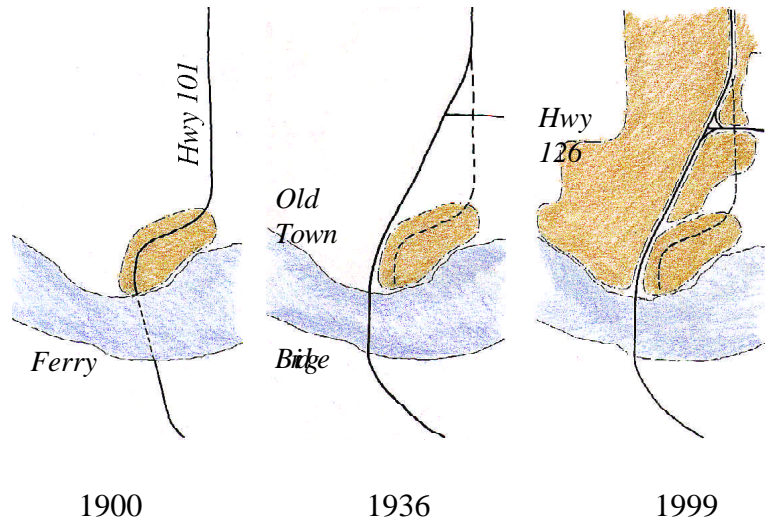
The original coastal road was the main street as it passed through Florence. Old photographs, before Highway 101 was constructed, show the coastal road where Quince Street is located today, with a ferry serving as the means to cross the Siuslaw River. This was the point of arrival for visitors either destined for Florence or just passing through. Visitors entered Florence through a grand gateway that welcomed and embraced them at the ferry landing. All who passed through were obliged to pause at the gateway to town and refuel, but not to merely speed through without hesitation. Logically the highest valued real estate was on the four corners of Bay Street and Laurel Street at the landing. Houses were constructed as close as possible to this high valued center for easy access by foot or by carriage to the goods, services, and community amenities available there. Here the Kyle Building still stands as testament of the flourishing trade and civic pride that formed Florence’s original downtown.



*The historic mainstreet welcomed visitors at the heart of the town before 1936.*

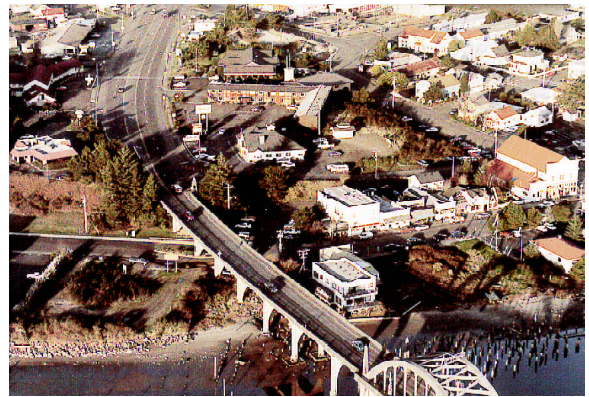
In the 1930’s, Highway 101 was located in its current location west of the old downtown, and the Siuslaw Bridge was built. Autos were becoming the predominant means of personal transportation on the coastal road, as throughout the nation. The main travel route was shifted from the community main street to a highway that was built to move vehicles at comparatively high speeds around the town. This “bypass” would have profound consequences on the commercial viability of the downtown for generations to come, as it does today. The “main and main” was effectively moved to a new location most likely at the crossing

of the new Highway 101 and the Eugene–Florence Highway (Highway 126). The Port with its associated fishing and the logging industry continued in the downtown. However, travelers now had the choice to turn off the highway into the town or just pass it by without stopping. No longer would mainstreet businesses benefit from the potential impulse purchase of travelers. Starting in the 1940's and 1950's highway oriented commercial developed along the Highway only hundreds of feet from the original mainstreet beside the bridge. This highway convenience retail further dissuaded travelers from stopping in town.



*The historic movement of Highway 101 and resulting dispersement of the Downtown commercial core.*

During the later half of the 20th century as the town grew, residential, commercial, and civic development spread on both sides of Highway 101. The historic downtown around the river crossing gained the title “Old Town”. In contrast, what might be considered a new town was growing along the highway. As new grocery stores were built at the Highway 101/126 crossing, the old grocery in Old Town closed. Banks which were the financial center of the region moved to Highway 101. Hotels that offered visitors a resting place also lined the highway. The Post Office, an age old anchor of every town, was moved out of Old Town decades ago to its current location on 8<sup>th</sup> Street west of Highway 101. Recently the new Library was built on 9<sup>th</sup> Street a block from the Highway 101/126 crossing. A new medical center, and justice center has been built further west on 9<sup>th</sup> Street.



*The Siuslaw Bridge was built in 1936. It allowed travelers to bypass the Old Town.*

New businesses responded to the change in access by locating on Highway 101 with buildings and signage that responded to faster traffic flows and automobile access. A new downtown has grown beside the historic one. Following the historic pattern of the main route through a town as the focus of commercial activity, Highway 101 has grown to become the commercial center of Florence’s new downtown. While Old Town remained in place, new auto-oriented businesses of a much larger scale were built on Highway 101 allowing ease of shopping to local residents and to those passing through the city. These businesses required longer frontages and larger signs to catch the eye of passing motorists and were laid out according to typical suburban standards with large areas of parking in front of buildings. Pedestrian and auto access to Old Town became more difficult thereby encouraging residents to shop on Highway 101.

Auto oriented commercial flanking the highway has continued to develop northward. New retail which might have been built in the downtown area through infill and redevelopment has spread north in a dispersed



manner.

## C. Existing Conditions

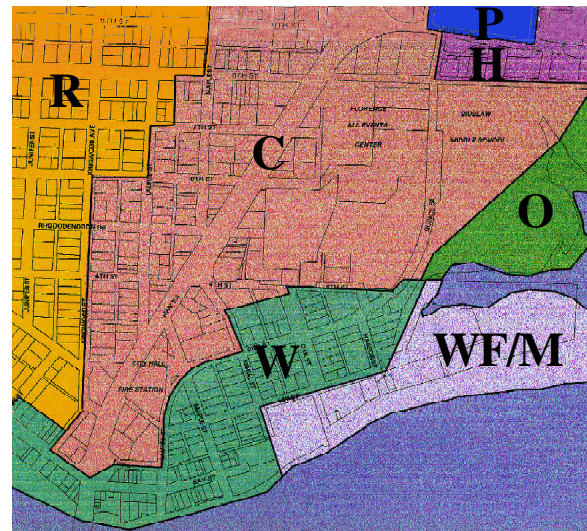
The study area for the Florence downtown Plan is defined by Highway 126 and 9<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, Kingwood Street to the west, the Munsel Creek estuary to the east, and the Siuslaw River to the south. The area has a fairly continuous street grid that is diagonally cut by the highway. Auto oriented retail lines Highway 101. Residential neighborhoods are primarily on the west side of the highway, while the mixed-use Old Town district, school properties, Events Center and Port of Siuslaw are situated on the east side.

### **Current Land Use** Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan Map designates major land use categories for the downtown area. The Highway 101 corridor (from the bridge north to 21<sup>st</sup> Street), plus an additional 1-2 blocks on either side, is designated as Commercial and the Comprehensive Plan encourages “further development of a downtown commercial area in this location.” The south side of Highway 126, east of Quince, is designated as Highway Commercial, which is intended for a mix of commercial and multifamily residential uses and to discourage strip development. The Old Town area, primarily those blocks without frontage onto Highway 101 is designated as Waterfront. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of this area as a valuable asset, especially for tourist oriented businesses. The Port of Siuslaw properties are designated as Waterfront/Marine for facilities and services related to recreational and commercial fishing and boating, seafood processing, and other industries requiring close access to the water. The northwest corner of the study, near the intersection of 9<sup>th</sup> and Kingwood is designated for residential uses.

### Zoning Map

The Zoning Map and Ordinance provides more specific regulations to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The development standards include lists of permitted and conditional uses, lot sizes and coverage, setbacks, and other site design standards to ensure new development is compatible with existing uses and is consistent with the future plans for the City.



	<i>R-Residential</i>
	<i>MR-Multi Fam. Res.</i>
	<i>C-Commercial</i>
	<i>H-Highway</i>
	<i>WF-Waterfront</i>
	<i>M-Marine</i>
	<i>O-Open Space</i>
	<i>P-Public</i>



The zoning designation generally conforms to the Comprehensive Plan designations. The Highway 101 corridor (from the bridge north to 21<sup>st</sup> Street), plus an additional 1-2 blocks on either side, is designated as Commercial. The Commercial District allows a wide range of retail and service businesses. Residential units are allowed as a conditional use provided it is part of a mixed use development with other commercial uses. The dominant development character along the Highway 101 is strip commercial typified by buildings set behind parking lots which line the highway.

The Highway Commercial District applies to the south side of Highway 126, east of Quince, and permits outright all of the uses in the Commercial District, except single-family dwellings and public buildings and facilities. Multiple-family residential and planned unit developments, except for single-family residential, also are permitted. The development standards are more stringent than the Commercial District and the City may require additional conditions.

The Old Town area, primarily those blocks without frontage onto Highway 101, is designated as the Waterfront District, which is intended to provide for a mix of land uses that are appropriate along the riverfront. A wide range of retail, service and residential uses are permitted. All new development is subject to design review to insure compatibility and integration with the character of the district. The development pattern in the Waterfront district generally takes on two characters. First, the building fronts along Bay Street are mostly built up to the street right-of-way, with little or no sideyards resulting in an unbroken street face of mainstreet shops. Second, the predominant building type found throughout the remainder of the District are detached buildings or houses, some of which have been converted into businesses or remain as residences. Most buildings have off-street parking at the rear accessed from mid-block alleyways. Mixed-use buildings with upper story offices or residences occur frequently throughout the Waterfront District.

The Waterfront/Marine District sets development standards for the Port of Siuslaw properties. The permitted uses are primarily water dependent or water related commercial, recreational and industrial. Additional development permits may be required from the Port of Siuslaw, Oregon DEQ, Division of State Lands, US Army Corps of Engineers and other state or federal agencies with an applicable interest. The existing development character here is a mix of port operations, a RV park, and surface parking lots. In contrast to the intimate urban fabric of Old Town, the Marine zone appears somewhat under-built. The proposed Boardwalk project with its two-story mixed-use buildings aligning the waterfront will greatly improve the Port's integration with the Old Town.

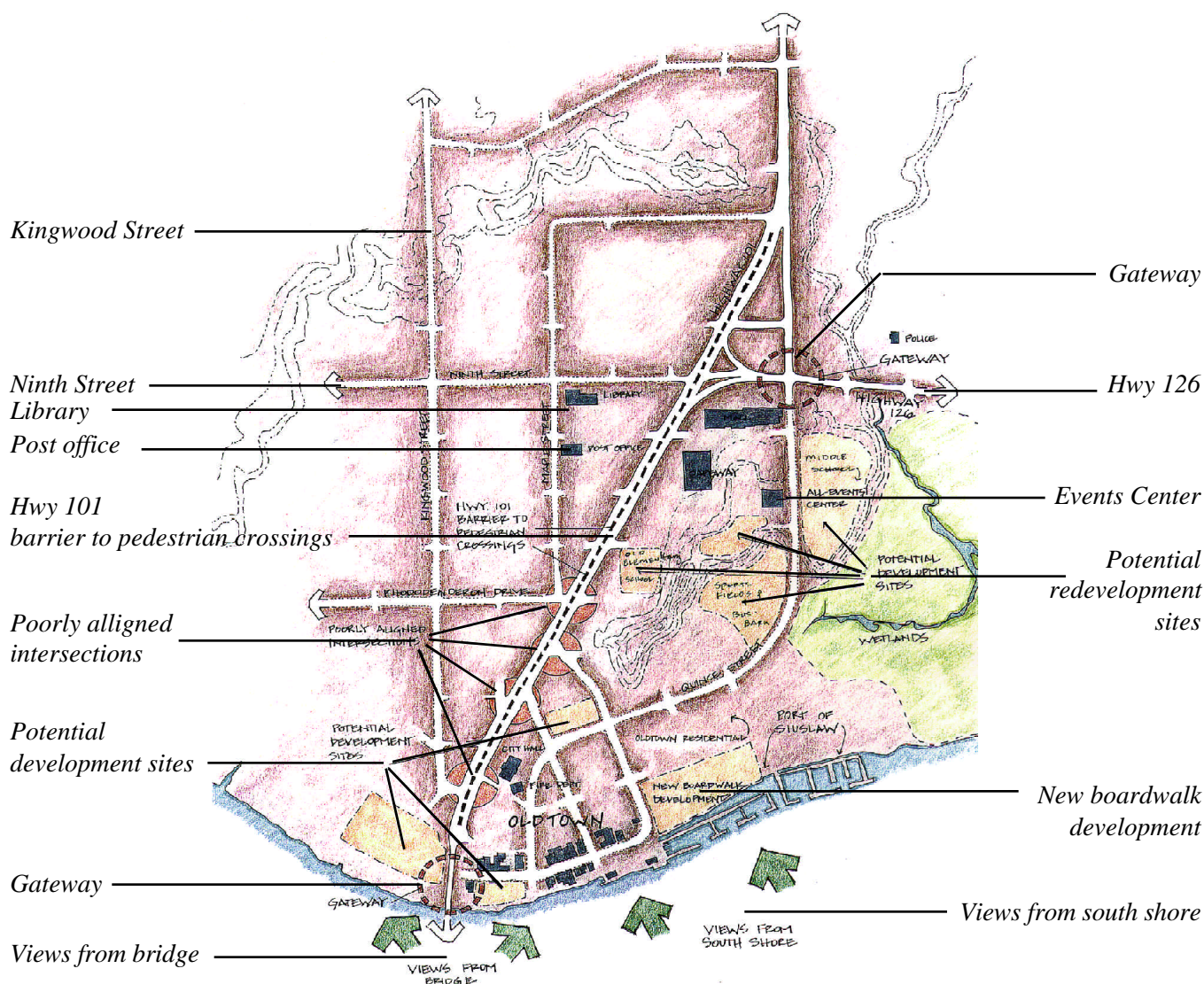
The northwest corner of the study area, near the intersection of 9<sup>th</sup> and Kingwood is zoned for Multi-Family Residential. The density is limited by a maximum building height of 28 feet. Some of the edges between the residential and commercial zones in this area fall along streets, which occasionally result in incompatible building uses and forms facing one another across streets.



*Old Town Park Overlooking the Siuslaw River*



*Old Town seen from the Siuslaw River*



*Downtown existing primary connecting streets, potential redevelopment study areas, and major landmarks.*

### Current Market Conditions

Highway 101 is now the functional business street in Florence, while Old Town, has become more of a tourist destination used only by a portion of Florence's local residents. Old Town has a significant collection of well-maintained historic buildings that form a very authentic small town. Its small town, historic quality is in itself a major tourist attraction, and a reason that many Florence residents and merchants value it so much. However, it is reported that many local citizens simply do not use Old Town for most of their needs. Highway 101 cuts-off access to Old Town from the majority of Florence in terms of its market area. Presently the intersection of Highway 101 and 126 serves as the region's primary shopping location (with the two supermarkets as its anchors). Many of the Highway 101 businesses have a dated appearance that is not representative of the City as a whole. The proposed Fred Meyer and other major commercial development will create another primary shopping location at the north end of the City.

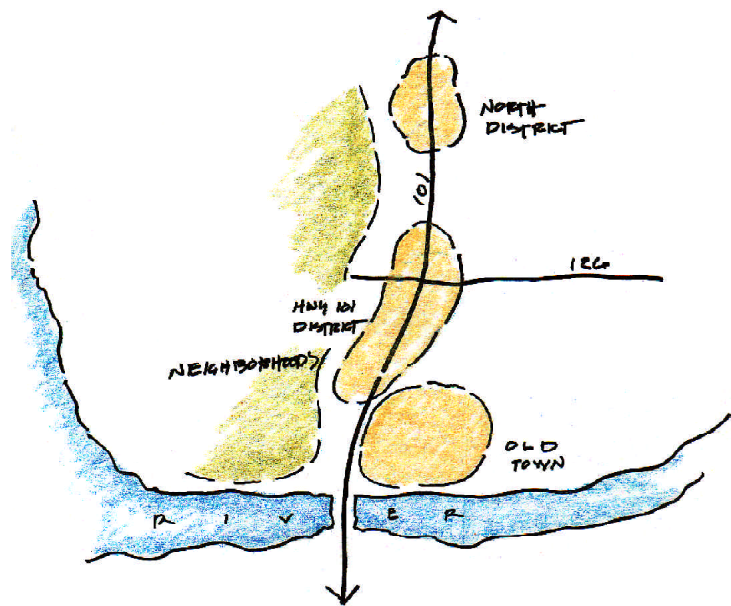
On the average, there are approximately 21,000 trips per day on Highway 101 in the vicinity of Highway 126, offering a good market location for retailers and businesses. In the vicinity of Rhododendron, the average daily traffic volume is closer to 17,000 vehicles per day. Only a proportion of these trips detour through Old Town. Business requires pass-by traffic to capture customers and a typical main street with



a healthy economy will have around 20,000 cars pass by daily.

Florence has sufficient traffic to support a more intensive level of retail development, and yet this has not occurred. There are several possible causes for this inability to develop a more concentrated retail market.

First, the current business pattern along the highway is oriented to the speed of passing traffic. In other words the Highway promotes an auto oriented retail pattern that by its very nature is dispersed and low intensity. While the posted limit is 30 miles per hour, the road five lane roadway encourages much higher speeds. Businesses have responded with development that is visible to higher speed traffic and is typical of other highway-oriented development: large signs, long frontages, and large areas of parking visible from the highway.



#### *Existing Commercial Districts*

*The retail market core is around the crossing of Highway 101 and Highway 126. Highway 101 bypasses Old Town and cuts its market area off from the neighborhood to its west.*

A second cause of this low intensity of retail development can be attributed to past land use decisions that may have undermined the viability of retail development. High parking ratio requirements have mandated large on-site parking lots which tends to disperse buildings. The overall area of Florence's commercial zones has also outpaced the retail market resulting in a tendency to build new instead of more intensively infilling existing retail areas.

The third major factor influencing the retail market is that Florence residents tend to go to Eugene, located one hour east, for many of their purchases. This is a habit gained from years when the Florence market was unable to sustain levels of retail that would give them the selection and prices available in the Eugene area. This tendency has been supported by reasonably good highway access to Eugene. Due to recent influx and growth in the Florence market, greater potential now exists for infill, redevelopment and intensification of the retail market in Florence.



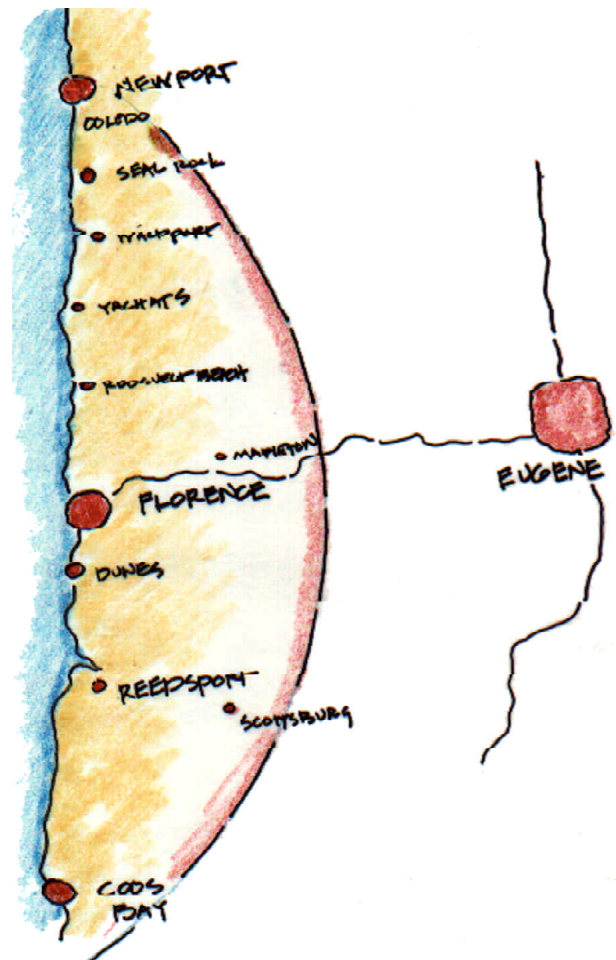
*Highway 101 divides Downtown, cutting diagonally across the original street grid.*

### Current Demographics, Income and Spending

Florence has changed from a resource-based economy to a retail and services economy. The age and income of residents is rising with the influx of retirees and second home buyers who have income and assets but do not need steady employment. The result of this change is that aggregate consumer spending by residents in the Florence area has risen to \$149 million on consumer goods and services in 1998. A rough analysis indicates potential leakage (the spending of citizen dollars outside the City of Florence) in the range of \$39 million annually. This is sufficient to support about 250,000 square feet of new retail space over existing and planned projects, including Fred Meyer. At a capture rate of 25 percent for this increment, approximately 75,000 square feet of new retail and service space could be planned for the downtown area.

### Current Transportation

Current traffic volumes show that Highway 101, just south of the intersection with Rhododendron, carries an average of 17,000 vehicles per day. In the summer peak, this volume climbs to over 22,000 vehicles per day, and in the winter the volume is closer to 12,000 vehicles per day. About 40% of this traffic is estimated to be through traffic; that is, traffic with neither beginning, nor end in Florence, but has a significant influence on its retail trade. With the link to Highway 126 and Eugene, this section of Highway 101 is seen as a major link in the goods distribution network for the central Oregon coast.



*Regional Market Area between Eugene, Newport and Coos Bay*

Highway 101 is a federal highway spanning three states. Oregon classifies it as a Statewide Highway/National Highway System. This designation carries with it a set of design standards and operational expectations from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA has also designated Highway 101 as a Scenic Byway.

### Parallel Routes to Highway 101

Within the City, there are several parallel routes to Highway 101. Rhododendron, Oak, Kingwood and Munsel Lake Road provide parallel routes north of Highway 126. In the study area, Kingwood and Quince provide full-length, parallel facilities. One objective of highway management is to identify local parallel streets as options to carry local traffic. Through development of these routes to create safe, well identified facilities, local residents can be given an option to using Highway 101 to access the downtown area.

### Crossing Highway 101

In its current condition, Highway 101 presents a perceived danger and thus a real barrier to pedestrians. This perceived danger is due in part to the highway's crossing width, travel speed, infrequency of signalized cross walks, and lack of spacial enclosure resulting from deep building setbacks. Sidewalks are provided along the entire length from Highway 126 to the Siuslaw Bridge, although walking along the road may not



feel very safe or attractive. The sidewalks are relatively narrow, and numerous driveways cut into front parking lots creating conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

There are two signalized crosswalks, at Highway 126, and Rhododendron. Other striped crosswalks exist by City Hall, 8<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets. Pedestrians can quickly cross between waves of highway traffic at unsignalized crosswalks north of Rhododendron. Some traffic breaks occur because of the Highway 126 and Rhododendron signals. Crossing the highway south of Rhododendron is even more challenging, because there is no signage to remind drivers that pedestrians may be crossing, and there are no signals to cause gaps in the traffic to allow pedestrians to cross. The Rhododendron crossing does not provide access into the Old Town. Thus, walking between Old Town and the neighborhoods west of Highway 101 is difficult, inconvenient, unattractive, and mostly avoided.

Crossing Highway 101 is also reported to be difficult for drivers. Currently there are no signalized intersections to provide direct street access into the heart of Old Town for south bound Highway 101 drivers. Instead a circuitous, out-of-direction, right-turn leads drivers under the bridge to find their way to Old Town. Also, since all of the east/west local streets intersecting Highway 101 are skewed and misaligned, there is no direct street crossing available between Old Town and the neighborhoods to the west.



### **The Downtown Plan Recommendations**

The following downtown Plan recommendations consist of a central Business Strategy supported by Transportation, Land Use, and Implementation Strategies. The approach of beginning with the Business Plan is based on the presumption that a

*Highway 101's current street section of 5 lanes, 2 parallel parking lanes, and narrow sidewalks is a barrier to pedestrian circulation.*

strong downtown invariably must have a strong commercial core. In order to function as a strong downtown there also must be more than just strong retail. Downtowns have a mix of residences, businesses, public buildings and parks in close walking distance. Thus the Transportation, and Land Use Strategies are critical elements to making a successful downtown. Finally the Implementation Strategy proposes ways to achieve the recommendations outlined in the downtown Plan.

### **Overall Vision and Strategy**

If the downtown is intended to be a vital and authentic heart to the Florence community, it must have a vital retail core attractive to pedestrians. Unifying the downtown around a mainstreet on a short section of Highway 101 could both revitalize the retail market and transform this portion of the Highway into the core of the downtown. The City of Florence could undertake the following actions aimed at improving the Downtown's retail sales and property values, particularly on Highway 101, and to expand its trade area.

1. Recognize the portion of Highway 101 between the Siuslaw Bridge and Highway 126 as the City's retail core, and "mainstreet" of the new downtown Florence.
2. Design streetscapes and buildings to support the pedestrian-oriented mainstreet character by implementing transportation and land use changes.
3. Encourage drivers to easily view merchandise displays in storefronts by slowing traffic speeds on Highway 101.

## D. The Florence Downtown Plan - Recommended Improvements



*Illustrative plan of potential redevelopment  
1" = 400'*



4. Improve access to, and visibility of Old Town from the new mainstreet on Highway 101.
5. Provide a parallel alternate route to Highway 101 on 2nd & Quince Street to relieve overflow summer peak traffic.
6. Consider implementing Retail and Merchandizing Guidelines to coordinate downtown business management on a voluntary basis. (see appendix)
7. Implement Architectural Guidelines aimed at improving storefront facades and retail viability on Highway 101 and Old Town. (see appendix)
8. Develop a unified retail theme that can help establish Florence's leadership position and identity in the region. (see appendix)
9. Create a downtown Green as the gateway and center of a new mainstreet on Highway 101.

### **Business Strategy**

The focus of the business strategy is to further enhance the usefulness of the downtown as a year-round place to serve residents, that will also be attractive to tourists. This goal can best be achieved by transforming a portion of Hwy 101 into a mainstreet with a downtown Green to anchor the retail core at a place shared by townspeople and visitors alike.

### Retail Benefits of a mainstreet District

Although no two mainstreets are identical they all adhere to certain basic physical design criteria in order to be successful retail environments. Mainstreets typically have

- wide sidewalks,
- storefronts up to the sidewalk,
- on-street parallel or diagonal parking,
- short pedestrian street crossings - 50 feet maximum,
- high traffic volumes,
- slow traffic speeds,
- narrow building face-to-face distance,
- extra parking behind storefronts with pedestrian paths between buildings,
- pedestrian scaled street lamps, and furniture.

The retail benefits of mainstreets over conventional strip commercial are that:

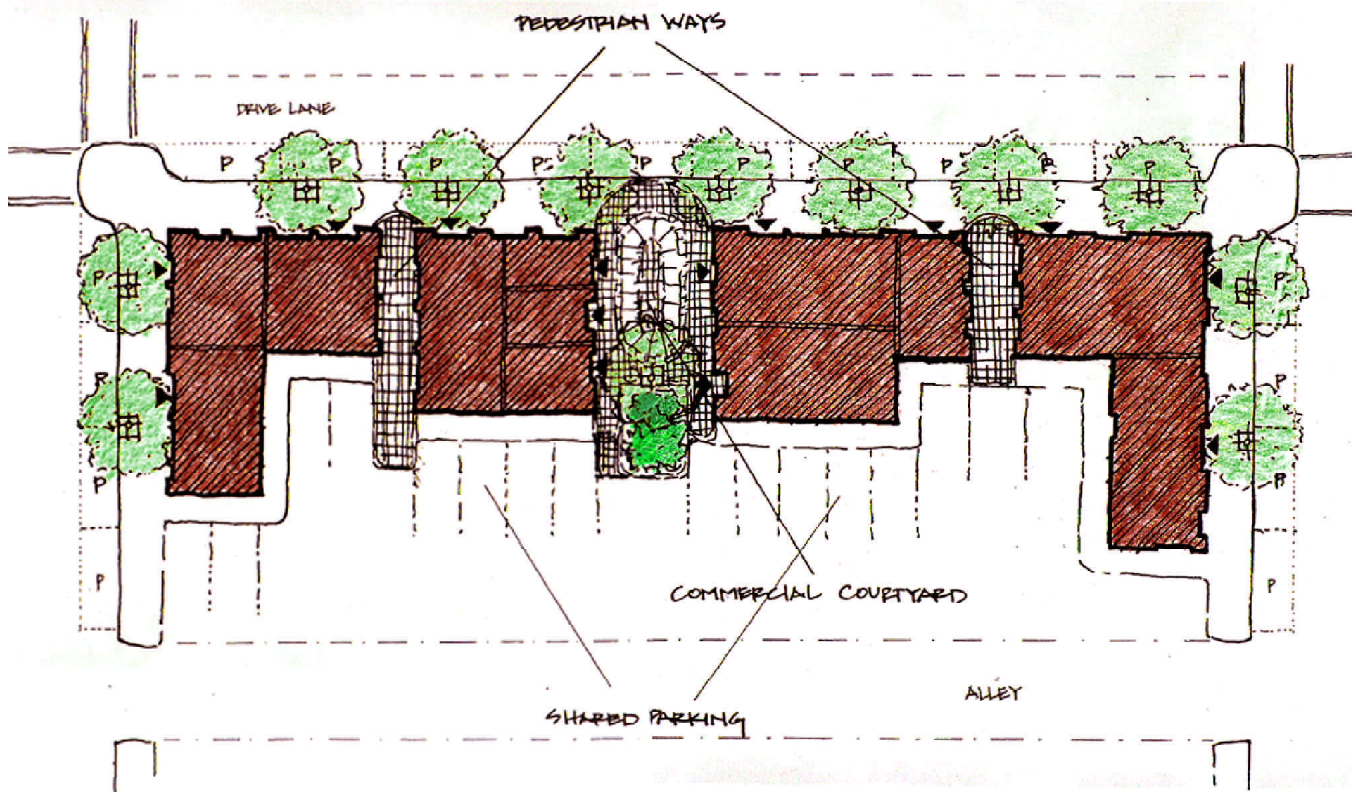
- Closely concentrated stores encourages impulse buying between a variety of shops.
- Store windows up to the street are easily visible to drivers and pedestrians.
- On-street and shared parking saves land by reducing on-site parking needs.
- On-street parking protects pedestrians on sidewalks from vehicles in driving lane.
- Mainstreets are attractive environments for strolling, window shopping, and people watching.
- Mainstreets accommodate a variety of retail types from large anchors to small shops.



*Existing Highway 101 with parking lots in front of stores*



*On-street parking, curbside zone, walking lane and storefront zone are essential elements of a mainstreet.*



*A block face of mainstreet retail buildings with on-street parking, rear parking lots accessed by side streets, and pedestrian passages linking the front and back.*

For any retail to be successful it must meet the minimum criteria of good access, clear visibility, and parking close to the door. The highest commercial values throughout the country in addition to providing these basics, offer attractive, well designed pedestrian environments. Highway strip shopping centers typically offer the driving customer only the basic access, visibility and parking, but little more. Thriving mainstreets are enjoyable and attractive places to be, as well as offer close-up views of display windows from the drivers seat, and direct access to upfront, on-street parking.

#### Retail Walking Loops and Cross Street Shopping

On a mainstreet short pedestrian street crossing distances encourage cross shopping and retail loops. Shoppers tend to shop longer when they can walk along an uninterrupted line of shop fronts from one side of a street to another. Known as a retail loop, shoppers are likely to walk in a counterclockwise direction with shop fronts on their right. A pedestrian cross walk should be 50 feet maximum for shoppers to comfortably shop on both sides of a street. Mainstreet districts are destinations that attract shoppers. People strolling along a street simply attracts more people. They enjoy walking on a shopping street that has a lot of sidewalk activity. However pedestrian malls without cars are not the answer. On Mainstreets slow moving traffic volume provides added activity and customer access to stores without the danger of higher speeds.

#### Affect of Driver's Speed and Visibility on Mainstreet Viability

A high volume of slow moving traffic is critical to a successful retail mainstreet. A lowered design speed will allow smaller mainstreet style businesses to capture traffic without having long frontages or large signs. Drive-by speed is critical to retail success because a driver passing at a high speed has less time to be attracted by a storefront. A car at 40 miles per hour travels by businesses at 58 feet per second. This



allows a motorist less than half of a second to see a 25-foot sign on a building front. A car passing by at 20 M.P.H. travels 29 feet per second. If storefronts are 25 feet wide (a pedestrian-oriented distance for storefronts) a car at 20 miles per hour will have almost a whole second to see the storefront. A recent study in Portland recommended the maximum speed for mainstreets at 25 miles per hour. At higher speeds, signs and shop-fronts move by too rapidly for recognition by motorists.

Allowing some Highway 101 traffic, especially local trips, to divert to Quince Street could relieve peak-season traffic jams, and reinforce the retail environment of Old Town by simply providing more pass-through traffic. In combination with a speed reduction on Highway 101, this would allow a re-connection of the residential areas, the mainstreet on Highway 101, and the Old Town. Without pass-by trips through Old Town, it will be difficult to encourage a wider range of businesses with greater potential to serve locals and tourists alike.

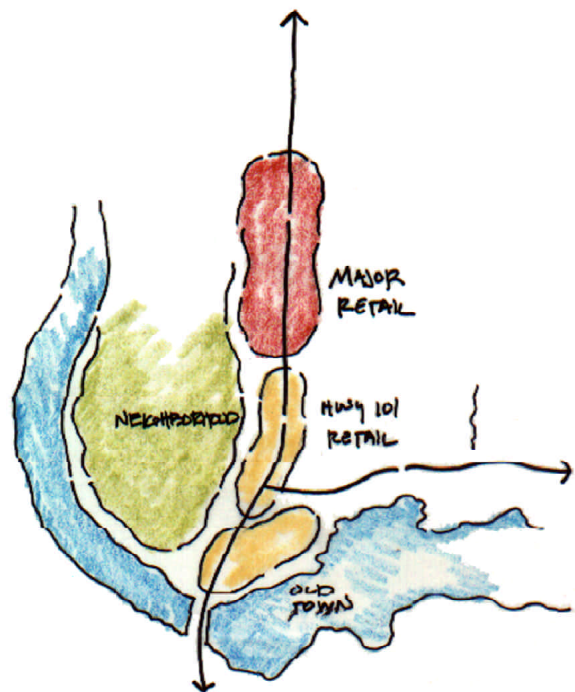
#### General Market Recommendations-Retail Mix

Florence citizens have described three primary images of the City's future commercial development. A unified strategy that will direct future decision making should be defined. Attempt to establish a position for Florence as one of the following three alternative retail strategies:

1. Prime Tourist Destination: Improve and expand on Florence as one of the most desirable and unique coastal tourist locations; this would require upgrading the storefront and visual merchandising of both the Old Town and Highway 101 businesses. In addition, strategic business recruitment of new restaurants, specialty stores, and national theme retailers should be implemented.

2. Core Retail Expansion: Redirect Florence's present emphasis as a tourist destination towards a small town core shopping district that offers a wide range of goods and services. This option would include the re-merchandising of many of the Old Town retailers from gift and restaurants to general merchandise, hardware, sporting goods, apparel, housewares, electronics, etc. As a part of this effort, parking, store hours, access, store designs, etc. would need to be improved to make it convenient and practical for residents to shop on a regular basis. As a result of this make over, the Old Town and Highway 101 shopping districts may actually become a more appealing tourist destination for today's vacationer who often avoids "tourist locations".

3. Major Business Expansion: A long range option to improve Florence's existing trade area would be to complete a detailed overlay master plan that allows for a significant amount of retail and commercial expansion. By carefully planning for this growth with detailed architectural and site planning codes, Florence might be able to attract a number of major retailers that could be unique to the coastal area. These unique businesses could help to expand the trade area and to stop the existing "leakage" of expenditures to Eugene and other major destinations.



*Proposed commercial districts*

4. Retail and Merchandizing Guidelines: The downtown Business Association might consider implementing Retail and Merchandizing Guidelines to coordinate downtown business management on a voluntary basis (see appendix). These guidelines are based on tried and true principles that are used by major retailers in shopping malls across the country.

## Transportation Strategy

### Objectives

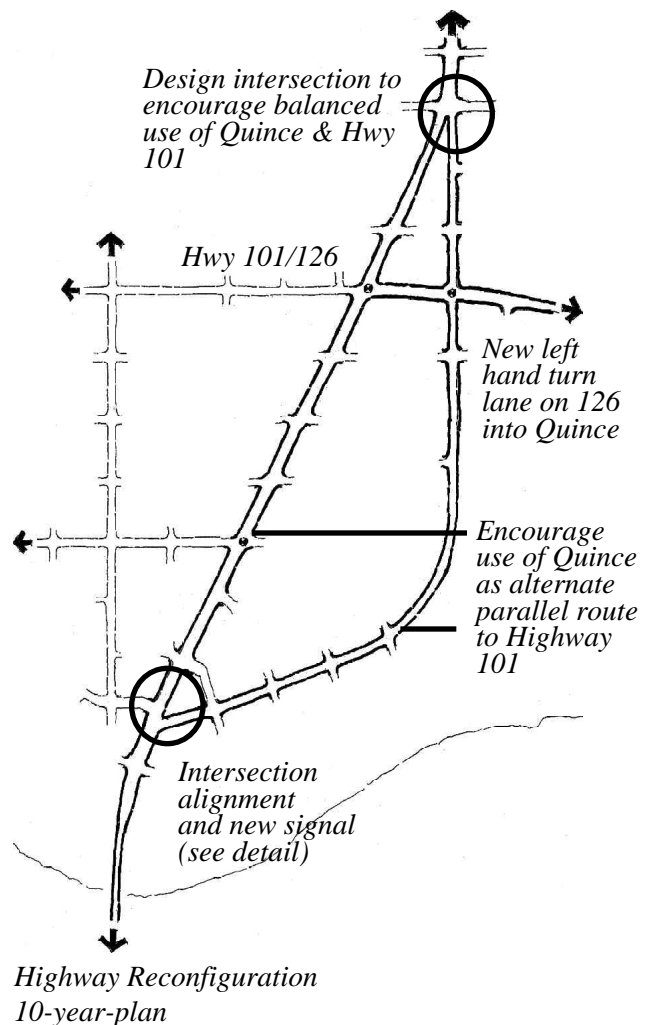
The Downtown Plan's transportation objectives are to make a safe, convenient, and attractive pedestrian environment on all streets throughout the downtown, and especially on Highway 101 where those qualities are most lacking. An additional objective of the transportation strategy is to help establish and support the revitalized retail mainstreet on a short section of Highway 101 between the Siuslaw Bridge and Rhododendron.

A balance must be achieved between these local downtown goals, and the regional transportation goals of moving traffic efficiently through town on the highway. An over riding objective is to eventually reduce the overall vehicle trips taken on the highway by giving local residents the qualitative choice to walk or cycle to meet their daily needs opposed to using their car for every trip. To this end the downtown Business Strategy recommends enhancing a short portion of Highway 101 into a pedestrian-oriented retail mainstreet. Other objectives include creating more visible vehicular and pedestrian access to Old Town, enhance the business environment on Highway 101 and Old Town, developing a unified downtown image for all of downtown, and ensuring that the Highway will function at an acceptable level of service.

### Recommendations

To achieve the objectives of the downtown Plan, the following transportation related recommendations are made:

1. Identify a 1,500 foot mainstreet portion of Highway 101 between the Siuslaw Bridge and Rhododendron Street as a retail pedestrian zone in which,
  - A. crossing distances are reduced,
  - B. traffic is slowed (at least to posted speeds if not less),
  - C. sidewalks are widened.
2. Add capacity along parallel routes (Quince, Kingwood) to balance any lost on the highway.
3. Provide access management along the mainstreet on Highway 101, which would permit all left turns into public streets while eliminating as many private driveway curb cuts as possible.
4. Facilitate access to Highway 101 properties from side streets and a system of rear alleys.
5. Realign 2nd Street/Maple Street with a signalized intersection for more direct and visible access to Old Town and Quince (as a parallel route).





6. Provide pedestrian street design elements such as curb extensions, widened sidewalks, and crosswalks on Highway 101.
7. Conduct engineering level transportation analysis of the planning level recommendations.

By providing good parallel routes while restricting the level of service on only a 1,500 foot section of Highway 101, the highway's overall function from end to end of the City will remain the same if not actually be improved. However the primary way through town will certainly remain to be Highway 101 with parallel routes functioning only as secondary relief valves at the highest peak seasons.

#### Design Speed vs. Posted Speed

Often, roads are designed for operation at a speed higher than the posted speed limit in order to provide a margin for driver error. Typically, within urban areas and downtowns where speeds need to be lower for pedestrians, the difference between design speed and posted speed is far less than the difference on rural highways.

When Highway 101 was constructed in its present configuration, it was built to a high design speed, likely 50 miles per hour or more. Within the City, the posted speed limit on Highway 101 is 30 miles per hour. As drivers enter the downtown area from either the north or south, they are confronted with a wide 5-lane road, with most of the buildings set back from the sidewalk, and other visual cues that this is a place where it is safe and appropriate to drive fast. The driver is presented with a mixed message of a facility built to a high design speed with a low posted speed limit, but more often than not travels at a higher speed.

#### Highway 101 Street Sections

A primary recommendation of the downtown Plan is to redesign a portion of the highway cross section in order to widen the sidewalks, and match the desired speed and pedestrian crossing distance for a safe, and convenient pedestrian-friendly mainstreet. Further traffic engineering analysis is required to study the implementation of these transportation proposals.

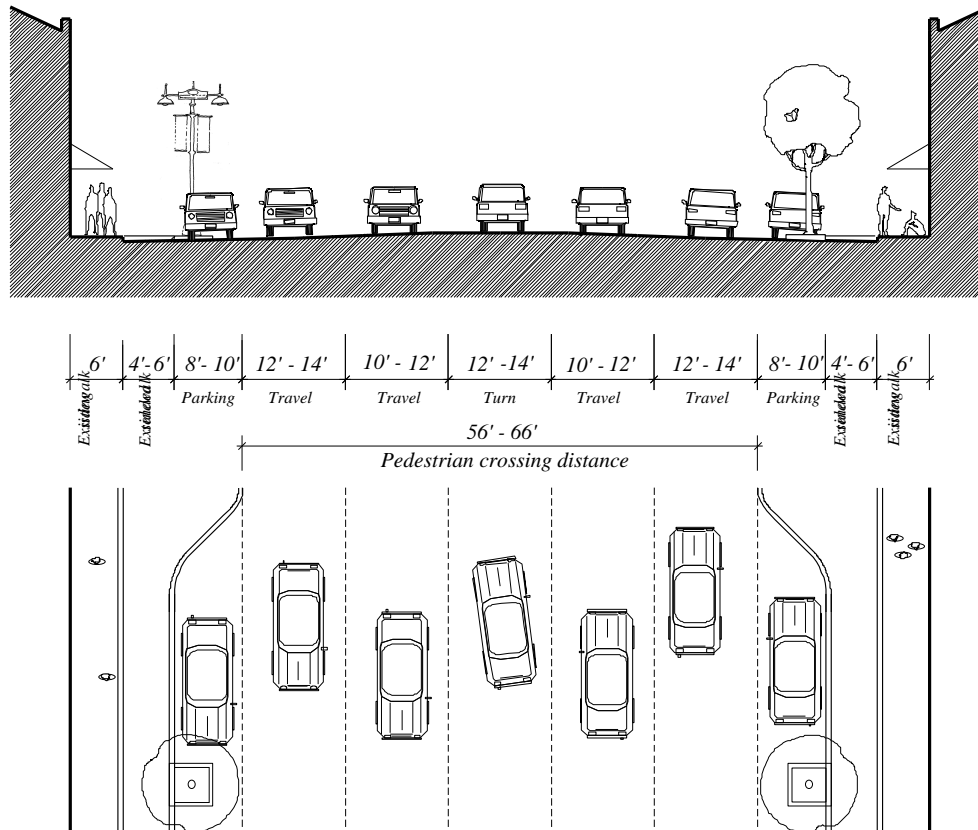
Two options with phasing implications are recommended for further study (see street sections):

- Option A - Incremental pedestrian improvements to existing 5-lane section. Immediate interim improvements can be made to the existing cross section while study of other options are conducted. Improvements would entail leaving the curbs intact, building curb extensions at intersections, adding pedestrian actuated in-street lights at crosswalks, reducing lane widths using painted lines, placing street trees and/or pedestrian streets lights in tree wells in the parking lanes, and expanding sidewalks with low cost temporary materials (such as asphalt with white pea-gravel topping to resemble concrete). Implement an access management plan that removes all mid block access but maintains all street crossings (except a few street closures shown in diagram.) Do not restrict left turns into side street (they are essential to retail access).

- Phase II - Widen sidewalks and further reduce highway pavement width.

Contingent on determining the affects on traffic performance, new curbs would be built to widen the existing narrow sidewalks. Previously placed street trees and/or streets lights would end up in position behind curb when the curb is moved inward. Wide sidewalks with street furniture would be safe, convenient and attractive to pedestrians and be a catalyst to mainstreet retail development. Parallel on-street parking, which is allowed today, should be maintained and defined with curb extensions and line painting.

Bike lanes are not recommended on the mainstreet portion of Highway 101. However it must be acknowledged that State law requires bike lanes on all arterials, where feasible. A sufficient reason must



Street section of Highway 101 - 5-lane option with preserved on-street parking

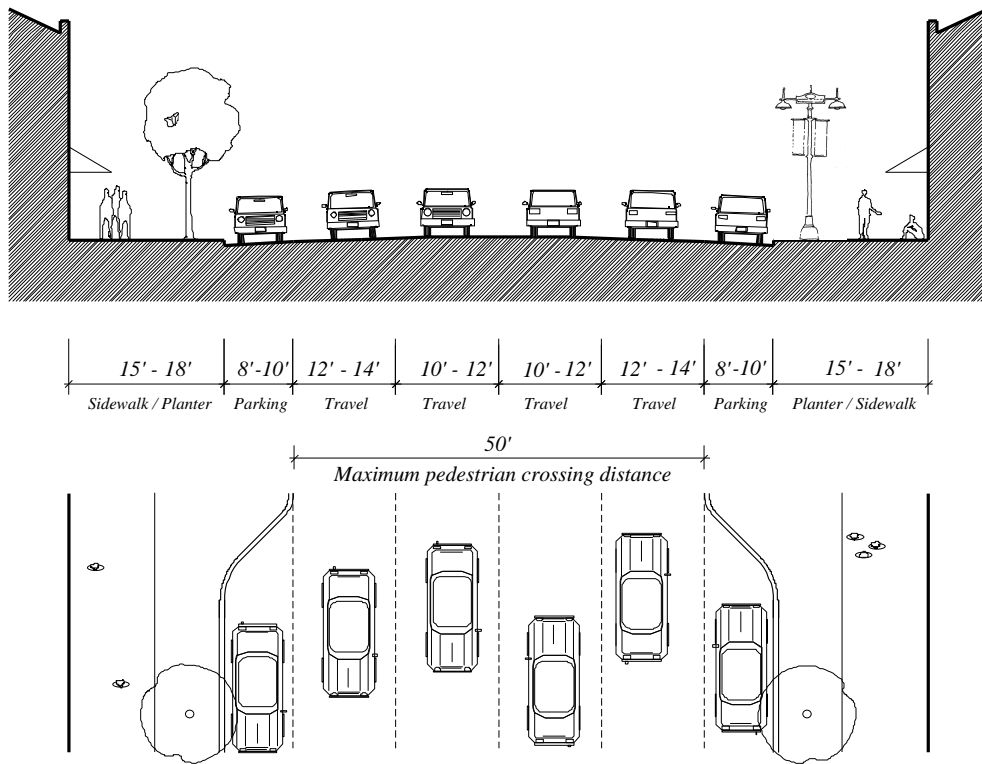
be provided to justify not including bike lanes on a portion of the Highway especially since it serves as a regional cycling route. Within the 100ft R.O.W. either bike lanes or wider sidewalks can fit in addition to 5 travel lanes, but not both. Probably the most essential element to achieve an attractive mainstreet (and encourage developers to build new storefronts up to the sidewalk) is to widen the sidewalks plus retain the on-street parking. If the sidewalk width were less than 12 feet, it will not give a comfortable enough space between pedestrian and travel lanes considering highway width, speed and volume. While sidewalk widening could be achieved by expanding onto private property, this plan advises against such action. It may come down to either bike lanes, or wider sidewalks on a new mainstreet. Even bikes have alternative routes on either Quince or Kingwood- the recommendation is to use this R.O.W. for wider sidewalks.

A qualitative comparison of two street section alternatives for the proposed mainstreet can be found in a matrix in the appendix. It is recommended that any cross section for Highway 101 with a pedestrian crossing distance wider than 50 feet would not meet the functional criteria of a viable retail mainstreet. While the 5-lane option would better *enable* pedestrians to cross the highway, it would not as effectively provide an environment that would *encourage and attract* pedestrians. Even with a high level of pedestrian amenities, a five lane highway would at best be only a partial improvement to the existing retail strip.

#### Highway 101 Crossings, and the Local Circulation Network

The existing street grid provides a good network of routes to circulate throughout the downtown. Several breaks in this network occur along Highway 101, and around the wooded sand hill east of the highway. Other local connections can be made with both new streets and pathways to further improve street connectivity. This network is an advantage that Florence has over other coastal communities, which could





*Street section of Highway 101 - 4-lane option with preserved on-street parking*

provide alternatives to the highway on parallel streets.

Currently none of the streets south of Rhododendron Street align across Highway 101. This makes circulation between Old Town and the neighborhood west of the highway difficult. The downtown Plan recommends realigning existing offsets and skewed intersections along Highway 101 into right angle crossings for more direct street circulation. Intersections should be reconstructed to include curb extensions and painted crosswalks to establish clear pedestrian crossing points, and to help alert highway drivers they are in a pedestrian-friendly area. The Maple/Second/Highway 101 intersection could be reconstructed to create a southern gateway into Florence, along with providing a signalized pedestrian crossing.

Pedestrian activated, in-pavement, lighted crosswalks should be further researched for use here. They are reportedly a less costly, and more aesthetically pleasing means than full signals to provide frequent pedestrian crossing. These have not been used yet in Oregon, however since they have been used with some success in California and Washington, and are standard issue in New Zealand, we recommended they be further considered for use in the proposed Highway 101 mainstreet. Pedestrian crossings at all streets could also be achieved as gaps in traffic flow create pedestrian crossing opportunities at unsignalized intersections.

Driveways accessing Highway 101 should be limited (consistent with ODOT policy), with access to rear parking lots from side streets. By limiting curb cuts off the highway, allowing left turns onto all the streets, safe access into retail businesses shall be maintained.

A significant new street connection is recommended between Highway 101 and Quince. By extending Rhododendron through the forested sand hill east of the highway, the Port and Old Town would gain access to a current lighted intersection on Highway 101.

Another suggested street addition is from Quince Street to Highway 126 east of Quince. This would provide access to potential development sites and provide another ingress/egress to Quince. Non-vehicular pathways are recommended along the Munsel Creek, east of the Siuslaw Middle School fields, down to the Port and Old Town. The Port's Boardwalk project could connect to this pathway.

### Sidewalks, Street Trees and Lights

One of the most essential components of an attractive pedestrian mainstreet is the sidewalk space itself. Street trees provide an enclosure of the street space which helps to make drivers more aware of their travel speed. A closely spaced rhythm of trees, street lamps, parked cars, and buildings all help to slow down drivers by alerting them that they are entering a pedestrian zone.

Most street trees are difficult to grow along the Highway 101 in Florence because of the constant wind in the summer. They tend to become distorted and don't grow well. However, some trees such as the indigenous 'shore pine' and some varieties of cherry do reasonably well. Coniferous trees are usually not appropriate as street trees. Appropriate street trees should be chosen by local landscapers who knows what will best survive in these conditions. Also, landscaping in the mainstreet portion of the highway should be kept to a minimum in order not to block retail signage and storefronts. However any parking lots fronting along a street should be buffered at a minimum by low hedges.

Decorative pedestrian-scaled street lamps also provide the sense of enclosure of the street space that contributes to the pedestrian environment. The closer that street lamps can be placed to the travel lanes, the greater affect they can have on alerting drivers of the presence of pedestrians. Well designed street lamps can also incorporate banner signs or panels for community announcements.



*Proposed Streets and Paths, additions and deletions*

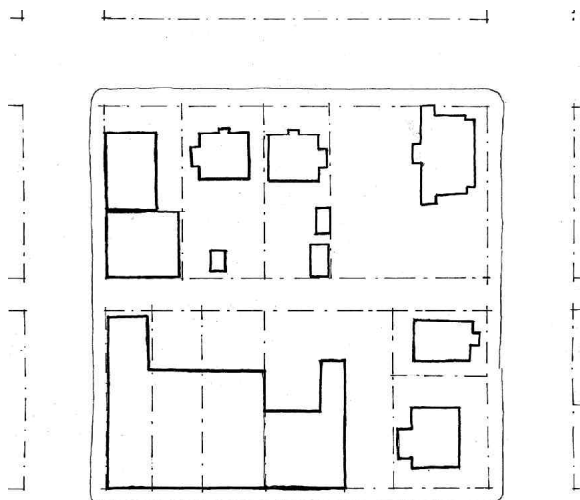
### Parking Strategy

Recommendations for parking in the downtown area include:

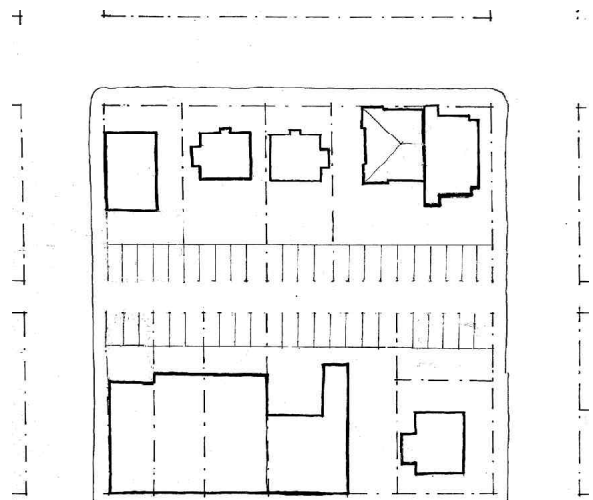
1. Create parking districts for Highway 101 mainstreet, and Old Town districts.
2. Formalize the on-street parallel parking on Highway 101, with curb extensions, signage, delineation of spaces, curb painting for parking limitations (red zones, loading zones, fire hydrant space, et cetera).
3. Formalize on-street parallel parking on side streets, outside of Old Town, with curb extensions as warranted, painted curbs, space delineation.
4. Locate off-street parking along the Highway 101 corridor in parking areas behind the storefronts, with access from side streets or roads that parallel the highway.
5. Implement a way-finding parking signage system.
6. Pave existing and proposed downtown alleys through a Local Improvement District or other appropriate public funding mechanism.
7. Reduce on-site parking requirements to encourage infill development. Eliminate on-site employee parking requirement, at minimum. Research shows that this change will bring ratios more in-line with other communities.
8. Bay Street should continue to include parallel parking. The marginal increase in number of parking spaces, in trying to convert to diagonal, does not outweigh increased concerns for pedestrian and vehicular safety, sight distance and larger vehicle (delivery trucks and motor homes) circulation.
9. The City should consider adopting a 30 or 35 degree standard for angle parking on streets in Old Town, other than Bay Street.
10. Locate off-street parking within Old Town inside blocks, similar to the concept for Highway 101.
11. Identify and acquire vacant land near the Bridge for development as public parking for Old Town.  
This would also be consistent with one of the Scenic Byway Plan recommendations.

### Parking Courts

An opportunity for greatly increasing the parking supply in Old Town is to transform the centers of the blocks into Parking Courts. Currently alleyways access each individual property from the rear. There is a



*Existing limited on-site parking off of alley.*



*Phase 1- One lane of shared mid-block parking.*

*Conceptual transformation of a block in Old Town in two phases of infill and redevelopment. Subsequent Phases of redevelopment could double the parking supply with two parking lanes instead of the single lane shown in phase 1.*



great deal of redundant space left over between these separate lots. By working together, the owners of each block can combine their individual rear parking spaces into much more efficient shared Parking Courts. These can be implemented block by block, or at a parking district level. A way-finding parking signage system calls out the entry points to the parking lots. Existing aligned alleyways would create a very clear circulation network between each Parking Court.

### Land Use Strategy

Creating a unified downtown can be achieved in part by unifying the uses, massing, proportions, and orientation of the buildings. Finding a compatibility between varying uses and building types is necessary to insure an authentic and revitalized downtown. (See Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments in the Appendix)

The purposes of the downtown Land Use Strategy are to:

1. Support the safety, convenience, and attractiveness of the pedestrian experience,
2. Reinforce the historic urban fabric of building scale, mass, site layout, and orientation to the public realm. (See Architectural Guidelines in the Appendix)
3. Orient building front entries close to the street sidewalk with off-street parking to the side, or preferably, the rear.
4. Encourage mixed-use development that offers convenient proximity between people's destinations.
5. Adopt Comp Plan goals, objectives, and policies in support of these recommendations. (See recommends language in Appendix)
6. Remove code related obstacles to development practices that meet the objectives of the downtown Plan. (See appendix.)



*Florence Downtown Districts*

The downtown is the mainstreet, Highway 101 commercial boulevard, the 9<sup>th</sup> Street/Kingwood Neighborhood, the Events Center District, the downtown Park, and the Old Town . Urban design guidelines and development code recommendations are described for each of these areas. The primary objective of these recommendations is to encourage new building development that enlivens, not detracts from, the public street space. These design recommendations will be implemented through changes to development

standards and suggested architectural guidelines.

### Recommendations by District

#### *Highway 101 Mainstreet*

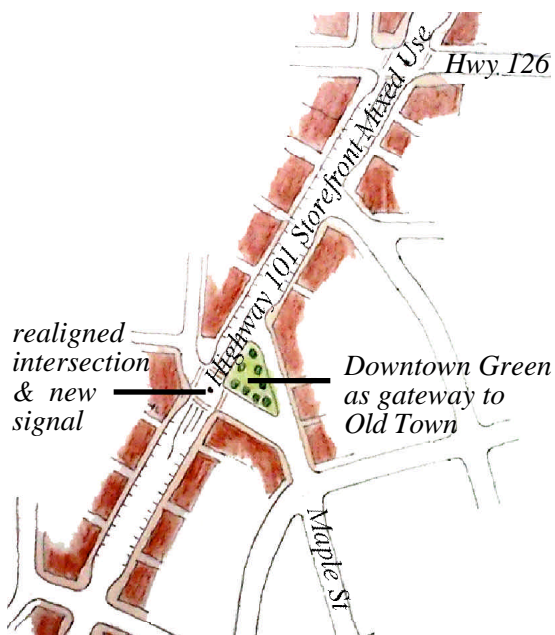
The downtown Plan recommends transforming the strip commercial along Highway 101 into a pedestrian friendly mainstreet district. A mainstreet is defined by continuous storefronts lining the sidewalks with off-street parking behind buildings, and the opportunity for upper story offices or residences. While upper story residences here may not currently appear to be suited to the highway, they should be permitted in order to provide future opportunities to develop housing. Building facades should occupy at least 90% of the primary building frontage line with remaining frontage dedicated to pedestrian accessway(s) to rear parking areas. Auto access to on-site parking will be from side streets. Direct driveway access from Highway 101 will be discouraged.

Building ground floors shall align at the street right-of-way with no front setback, except one setback court per block with a maximum area of 200 square feet. This court should be used for upper story bay windows, balconies, and awnings may encroach over the public sidewalk above the first story. Building fronts shall have a minimum height of 20feet measured to the eave or top of parapet.

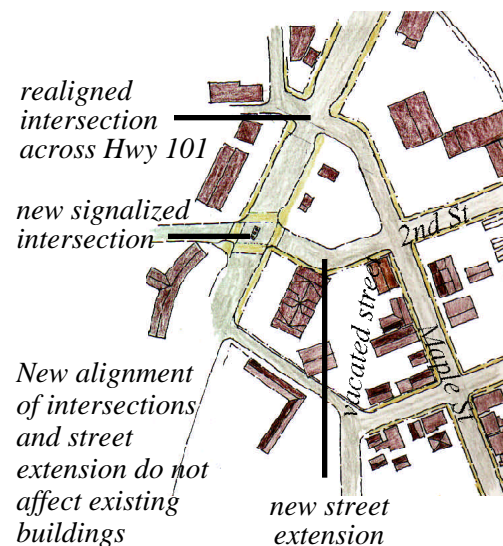
downtown  
Green



*Highway 101 Storefront Mainstreet and downtown Green- 1" = 400'*

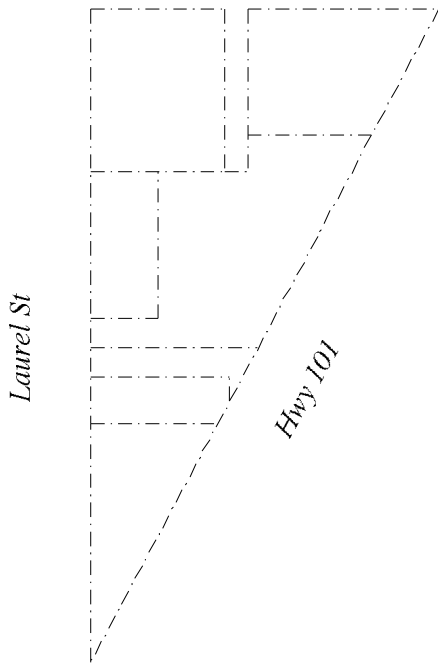


*Hwy101 & Maple St. intersection realignment Phase I, 1" = 400'*



*Hwy 101 & 2nd St. intersection realignment - Phase II, 1" = 400'*

*Rhododendron*



*Existing Conditions*

*Rhododendron*



*Phase 1*



*Phase 2*

*Illustration showing a possible transformation of a block on Highway 101 to meet the goals of a retail Mainstreet. This represents four phases of infill and redevelopment over time.*



### *The Downtown Green*

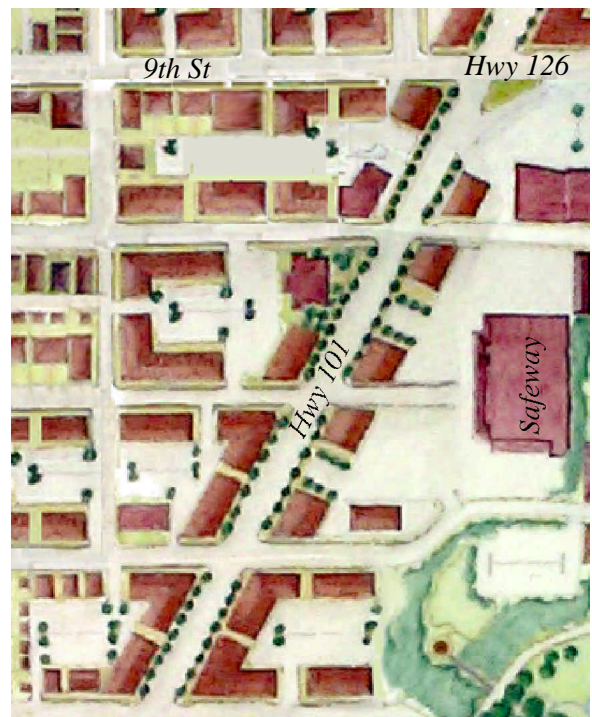
It is recommended that a downtown green be created between Highway 101, Second Street, and Maple Street as the gateway and center of the new mainstreet, and the downtown. A several phased process to implement the Green could begin with realignments of Maple and Second Street to be perpendicular with the Highway. Second Street would need to be extended through the north edge of the City Hall property. A signalized intersection at the Highway 101/Second Street intersection would provide much needed access into Old Town businesses, and to Quince Street. The remaining properties between the three streets would consist of the current muffler shop and an adjacent sand dune. Future redevelopment of the surrounding lumber yard and City Hall would enjoy excellent visibility and access for retail uses.



*The Downtown Green at Maple Street will be a new gateway to Old Town and Center of Highway 101 Mainstreet*

### *Highway 101 Commercial Boulevard*

The downtown plan recommends redeveloping the portion of Highway 101 between Rhododendron Drive and Highway 126 into a commercial boulevard. A Commercial Boulevard would function as a transition between the more auto-oriented commercial strip north of Highway 126 and the proposed pedestrian-oriented mainstreet between Rhododendron and the Siuslaw Bridge. The Boulevard could have a five-lane street section (reduced curb to curb width from the existing section) with on-street parking, curb extensions and a planted median in center turn lane. Since the five-lane street would generally enable greater traffic speeds compared with the mainstreet section, the retail development pattern along the Boulevard could be somewhat more auto-oriented as well. A 50% building frontage minimum would allow more building orientation to side streets with parking lots between buildings. This layout would be clearly contrasted with the Mainstreet's 90% minimum frontage which would place all parking to the back of buildings. Openings between stores on the



*Highway 101 Commercial Boulevard - 1" = 400'*

Boulevard would offer views to the existing setback 'big boxes' such as Safeway.

#### *9<sup>th</sup> Street/Kingwood Neighborhood*

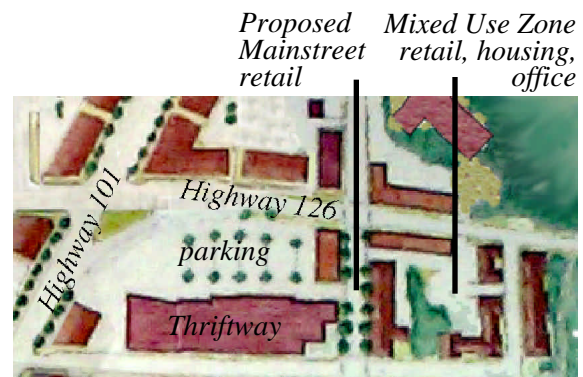
The downtown plan recommends maintaining the development pattern of mixed-use, detached buildings currently in the neighborhood. Off-street parking shall continue to be located behind buildings, and upper story offices or residences shall be allowed. Building facades shall occupy at least 70% of the primary building frontage line with remaining frontage dedicated to pedestrian accessway(s) to rear parking areas. Buildings are oriented primarily to Kingwood and east-west streets with direct connections to Highway 101. Building front setbacks shall range from 5 to 10 feet. Building fronts shall have a minimum height of 15 feet measured to the eave or top of parapet.

The commercial zone along Highway 101 extends several blocks west of the highway. There is very little market for commercial development away from the highway. Multifamily housing is a more likely development pattern. It is recommended that a multifamily zone be implemented between the commercial and single family residential zones. This would enable infill and redevelopment of properties nearby, but not visible from the highway. As residential populations increase over time, more residents will be in close walking distance of stores and services on Highway 101.

#### *Gateway District - Highway 126*

The downtown plan recommends identifying the intersection of Highway 126 and Quince Street as an important gateway to Florence. The intersection of Quince and Highway 101, which is outside the predetermined study area boundary, also plays an important role in the future of the downtown. It is recommended that the Quince / Highway 101 intersection be redesigned to allow a more balanced traffic flow between these two parallel roads through the downtown. Thus Quince Street could develop into a strong location for mixed-use storefront retail with a

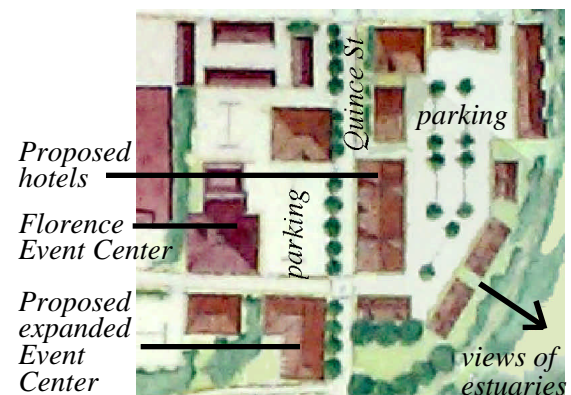
90% building frontage minimum, on-street parking and building fronts close to the sidewalks. In contrast the highway 126 and 101 frontages would have a more relaxed frontage requirement of 50% where on-street parking would not be possible. The sense of a gateway would be experienced along Highway 126 at the intersection of Quince where future buildings would be built up to the corners marking Quince as an entry into the Events Center and Old Town districts. However the northeast corner of the intersection could remain in its wooded state where the County Annex building currently resides.



*Highway 126 Gateway District, 1" = 400'*

#### *Events Center District*

The downtown plan recommends mixed use infill and redevelopment of sites around the Florence Events Center. With eventual redevelopment of the Siuslaw Middle School, the bus barn, play fields, and storage buildings this area offers redevelopment potential that can help to revitalize the downtown. If recommended transportation changes are implemented, additional traffic flow on Quince Street could improve retail potential. Hotel development (associated with the Events Center) should be strongly encouraged. Building facades shall occupy at least 80% of the primary building



*Event Center District - 1" = 400'*



frontage line with remaining frontage dedicated to pedestrian accessway(s) to rear parking areas. Building front setbacks shall vary from 10 to 15 feet from the street right-of-way. Building fronts shall have a minimum height of 15 feet measured to the eave or top of parapet. The redevelopment of the Middle School site shall require new buildings to line Quince Street and to line a proposed bicycle trail along the eastern edge overlooking the estuaries below.

### *Downtown Parks and Community Buildings*

The downtown Plan recommends maintaining the community recreational opportunities and amenities currently provided by the play fields, and possibly providing a development opportunity for a civic building at this site. Such an opportunity may arise by converting the bus barns, play fields and the large tree covered sand hill east of Highway 101 into a downtown Park with an associated Community Building. It is important to locate as many community type buildings as possible in the downtown. Along with parks, these institutions draw local residents together, and generally activate the downtown. Such Community Buildings can act as anchors to the retail businesses in the town's historic core. They have historically been associated with public open spaces such as parks. Community Buildings in general should remain in the downtown, particularly in the areas east of Highway 101, in order to attract Florence citizens back to the historic core. It may be prudent to locate essential civic buildings on high ground above the Tsunami zone, so that citizens have a safe, central gathering place in times of hardship.



*Downtown Park District - 1" = 400'*

If the City Hall is eventually relocated from its current location, it should remain in the Old Town Area, where it could continue to serve as a symbol of civic pride in the heart of Florence's downtown. An ideal location could be in the proposed downtown Park. The City Hall does not need the prime retail visibility of its current location. This proposal may not be consistent with previous plans to consolidate government functions at a single location east of the downtown on 9th Street (where land values are lower). None the less, authentic downtowns invariably contain the seat of a town's government and civic institutions. City Hall is the possibly the most essential public institution to anchor a downtown.

Off-street parking lots should be minimized in the park. Instead, parking for civic buildings and recreational facilities should be provided on-street diagonally, or parallel.

If the playfield properties on further consideration cannot be transformed into a park and civic building site, a second option would be to develop the property in a mixed-use residential manner in keeping with the character of Old Town. It is recommended that the play fields be developed into medium density residential such as duplexes, rowhouses, and garden apartments. Mixed use commercial development could be allowed in this area, however due to the limited access and visibility from Highway 101, retail would likely not be a viable use in the short term.

### *Old Town*

The downtown Plan recommends maintaining and reinforcing the existing mixed-use, small-town character of Old Town. Two distinct building/site types exist in the Old Town which should be reinforced by future



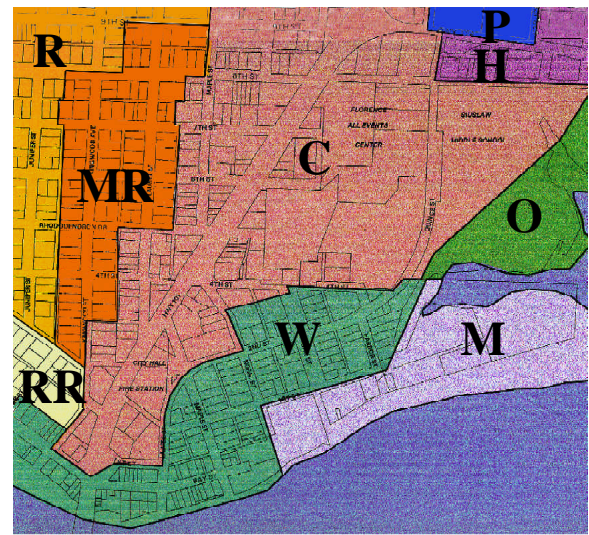
infill. First, Bay Street has a retail mainstreet character defined by continuous storefronts lining the sidewalks with off-street parking behind buildings on the north side, and the opportunity for upper story offices or residences. Residences and offices above retail already exist in the Old Town and should be further encouraged. Building facades shall occupy at least 90% of the primary building frontage line with remaining frontage dedicated to pedestrian accessway(s) to rear parking areas. Building ground



*Old Town - 1" = 400'*

floors shall align at the street right-of-way with no front setback. Upper story bay windows, balconies, and awnings may encroach over the public sidewalk above the first story. Building fronts shall have a minimum height of 20 feet measured to the eave or top of parapet. The 20 foot minimum height does not need to be a full two stories. Particularly on the wider streets this minimum height creates a strong vertical proportion to the street space.

The second building/site type found through Old Town is the detached building or house turned into a commercial business. New detached mixed-use storefronts have recently been built that follow this building type. Building side setbacks shall be a minimum 5 feet and rowhouses may have no side setbacks. Buildings throughout this area shall have a variable front setback from 5 to 15 feet with allowable porch encroachments into the setback to match the historic conditions. The maximum length of an uninterrupted building front shall be 40 feet. Building fronts longer than 40 feet shall have a variation of 5 foot depth and 10 foot width. This variation will allow buildings to be longer than the typical historic house, but still maintain the historic building massing facing the street. Off-street parking shall be allowed only to the rear of buildings with access from rear alleys. For any lots that are not accessed by alleys a maximum 14 foot wide curb cut shall be allowed to access parking to the rear of buildings. An overall parking district plan for Old Town shall be implemented with the intent of providing the essential parking needed without deteriorating the historic character of buildings closely lining the streets with parking enclosed in the mid-blocks.



*Proposed Comprehensive Plan*

- RR-Restricted Residential*
- R-Residential*
- MR-Multi Family Residential*
- C-Commercial*
- H-Highway*
- W-Waterfront*
- M-Marine*
- O-Open Space*
- P-Public*

The Port of Siuslaw's proposed Boardwalk project will be a significant addition to the Old Town , and a welcome revitalization of the waterfront. If this develops into a successful retail destination, it should help attract more visitors to Old Town, and further benefit the existing retail community. The illustrative plan shows development along the western edge of the Boardwalk parking lot, as an addition to the currently proposed plan by the Port. The boardwalk project would fit more compatibly into the Old Town context of parking lots behind buildings by transferring some of its building program to close off that side of the parking lot from the street. The parking lot would also be a good location for a parking deck lined with the proposed retail buildings. When this project is built out, it may put some stress on the parking capacity in Old Town. It will be the responsibility of all of Old Town to contribute to a coordinated parking district as described in the Transportation Strategy.

## **Implementation Strategy**

### Introduction

The downtown Plan recommendations present an opportunity to transform the commercial area into a main street that serves as community center. Natural business cycles and reinvestment in building improvements will carry the major burden in realizing the vision for downtown. However, implementation of the downtown Plan will need to overcome two major barriers to redevelopment: 1) the limited public financial resources that are available at this time; and 2) existing development, primarily along Highway 101, provides little in the way of a point of reference for the future vision for downtown Florence. The Implementation Strategy is framework for overcoming these barriers.

### Strategic Approach

As an overall guideline, this plan recognizes the inherent limitations on traditional approaches associated with redevelopment and revitalization efforts that tend to rely solely on regulations. This implementation strategy presents a different approach that seeks to establish the framework for public and private actions that will be needed for successful implementation of the downtown Plan.

The responsibility for implementing a plan and the many public projects that contribute to the success of a community have been historically borne predominantly by the public sector. The most significant barrier to implementation of community plans is the lack of money, especially the financial constraints that most local governments face today. Some communities consider the adoption of regulations (comprehensive plan policies, zoning ordinances, development standards, etc.) as implementation. While these regulations are necessary, they are only the beginning of the implementation process. Implementation, as discussed in this report, is much more broadly defined and includes more than just establishing a regulatory framework.

In many cases of downtown revitalization, private actions have followed public investment. This public investment has been in infrastructure, streetscape amenities, and other demonstration projects. One implementation tool that is available to help fund this public investment is the creation of an urban renewal district or other types of local improvement or business improvement districts. An urban renewal district could provide public funding for key projects, such as the green, through the use of bonds backed by tax increment financing. A study will be needed to determine the feasibility and fiscal impact of creating an urban renewal district to see if it can provide public funding for some key projects.

Another key to successful implementation will be to create a continuous stream of projects, either public, private, or public-private joint ventures, that contribute to the vision of the downtown Plan. The goal is to create a strategy based on multiple projects that are moving forward simultaneously so that the success of the plan never becomes dependent on, or vulnerable to, any one project. There will be a few projects that

will have a high priority to establish a significant direction for the plan. The key point to consider is there are other projects that should be on-going while awaiting the outcome of the major projects. The success of these smaller projects can help build momentum for the plan. What is most important is to maintain a wide variety of programs that are constantly being introduced and moving forward. This approach to implementation:

- Builds community goodwill.
- Enhances the quality of life.
- Emphasizes public participation.
- Allows people with special interests to play a role.
- Sends a message to the outside world that the area is successful and is making progress towards the community's vision.
- Creates an increasingly attractive environment for development.

### Key Components

A few key components should be in effect for an implementation program to succeed. These key components include:

- **Committed On-Going Leadership.** Successful downtowns usually are dependent on leadership. A few individuals that are focused and committed to seeing the project or the program through are critical to success.
- **Multiple Projects.** A wide variety of on-going projects should always be moving forward to ensure a continuous stream of success stories, even if one project slows down or fails.
- **Many Stakeholders.** Stakeholders should be broadly defined to include any individual or organization that can possibly have an interest in and a desire to play a role in the successful implementation of projects that contribute to the success of the downtown.
- **Communications.** An on-going communications program should tell what is happening and being accomplished.

### Action Plan

The action plan begins to describe implementation projects and the important relationships between individual projects. The Action Plan matrix is a way of organizing these projects and to show the sequencing that must take place. This list is by no means definitive, but rather is flexible and continually changing as projects are completed and new opportunities or ideas are added to the list.

Short-term projects are the initial efforts for the next 1-3 years that lay a foundation for future success. These projects form a base from which specific projects and program can be implemented. Mid-term actions take place in 4-10 years and begin to establish a momentum for redevelopment and reinvestment in downtown Florence. Long-term actions take place more than 10 years into the future, but are identified to help inform earlier decisions.

The Action Plan matrix is separated into five groups:

*Land use projects* identify on-going policy and planning efforts needed to support other projects. The first step is to adopt comprehensive plan amendments and zoning ordinances consistent with the downtown Plan recommendations. Other planning projects include:



### *Short Term*

1. The City needs to adopt the necessary Comprehensive Plan amendments, zoning ordinance changes, and design guidelines to support implementation of the downtown Plan.
2. The City should consider conducting a feasibility study to explore the creation of an urban renewal district as a means to finance public improvements necessary to implement the downtown Plan.
3. The City should research options available to increase building heights without jeopardizing public safety.
4. When the school district receives approval to relocate the middle school, bus barn, and playing field, the City should cooperatively prepare a master plan to guide future development, as a hotel facility to support the Events Center, and/or downtown Park and Community Building.

### *Medium Term*

5. It is expected that the current Post Office facility will outgrow its current site, especially as the community continues to grow. The City should work with U.S. Postal Service officials to find an appropriate site in the downtown area.
6. When the City Hall needs a larger facility, a study should be conducted to find an appropriate site in the downtown Area.

**Transportation projects** identify additional planning and improvements needed to support the land use/design recommendations of the downtown Plan.

### *Short Term*

1. The City should work with ODOT to obtain funding for a Highway 101 Corridor Refinement Plan to prepare the detailed traffic operations analyses necessary to support a decision on the future lane configuration of Highway 101 to support implementation of the downtown Plan.
2. The City should seek grant funding for a Pedestrian Crossing demonstration project to improve pedestrian safety on Highway 101 between Rhododendron Drive and the bridge.
3. The downtown Plan recommendations should be incorporated into the City's Transportation System Plan.
4. The City should request that ODOT install a permanent traffic count station on Highway 101, between Highway 126 and the bridge, to provide more accurate traffic volume data.
5. The City should negotiate an intergovernmental agreement with ODOT to implement the recommendations of the Highway 101 Corridor Refinement Plan.

### *Medium Term*

6. A new traffic signal and intersection realignment should be placed at the Highway 101/2<sup>nd</sup> Street intersection to provide improved pedestrian safety and a better connection to Quince Street.
7. After a decision has been made on the future configuration of Highway 101, a streetscape design study should take place to provide wider sidewalks, street trees, and other amenities to make Highway 101 more attractive for pedestrians and businesses.
8. The City should encourage ODOT to proceed with plans to redesign the Highway 101/Highway 126/Quince Street intersections.
9. The City should conduct a streetscape design study for improving the sidewalks and crosswalks in Old Town.

**Parking projects** are based on the efforts of the Old Town Parking Committee recommendations.

### *Short Term*

1. The City should create an Old Town Parking District as a means to finance off-site, off-street parking lots.

2. The City should adopt revised parking ratio standards to ensure a sufficient, but not excessive, supply of parking is available for customers and employees.
3. After creation of the Old Town Parking District, the City should locate, acquire, and build new parking lots as funding becomes available, and create a paved alley network.

***Medium Term***

4. The City should locate appropriate places for RV Parking in the downtown area and provide adequate signage for visitors.

***Public improvement projects*** identify public projects other than transportation improvements that are needed to support the downtown Plan.

***Short Term***

1. The City should encourage the development of the Port of Siuslaw's Boardwalk project.

***Medium Term***

2. In conjunction with the Highway 101/2<sup>nd</sup> Street signal and intersection realignment, the City should create a town square or green as the southern gateway to the downtown.
3. The City should explore the acquisition of Sand Hill, the bus barns, and playing field as a new City park.
4. The City should support the eventual redevelopment of the school district properties within the downtown area, consistent with the downtown Plan.
5. As part of the Highway 101/Highway 126/Quince Street intersection redesign, the City should create a new gateway project to Florence.
6. The City should find an appropriate place in the downtown area for a Sister City Japanese Garden.

***Community projects*** identify additional efforts that private groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, should undertake.

***Short Term***

1. downtown business associations should be created to organize local business and property owners to provide support for implementation of the downtown Plan.
2. The Chamber of Commerce or other business associations should work on refinement and implementation of the mainstreet retail business strategy for downtown Florence.

**Preliminary Cost Estimates**

Preliminary or planning level cost estimates are provided for discussion purposes and to enable relative comparisons between different project. Cost estimates are provided for major capital improvement projects. All estimates are based on 1999 costs and do not include an escalation factor. All estimates have been rounded off to the nearest \$10,000. These estimates do not include design fees, permit fees, City staff time, or other soft costs.

**Transportation Projects**

- Highway 101 pedestrian crossing demonstration project – Assumes one location (to be determined) with in-pavement strobe lights. Includes pedestrian refuge/median, curb extension, stormwater basin relocation, disabled ramps, new street lights. \$30,000
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Street/Quince Street Traffic Signal and Realignment – Assumes 300-feet of 3-lane section of roadway, new signal plus new signals at Rhododendron and Highway 126 to allow interconnection. \$550,000 plus ROW acquisition

YEAR	LAND USE	TRANSPORTATION	PARKING	PUBLIC PROJECTS	COMMUNITY
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt Downtown Plan recommendations (zoning and design guidelines)</li> <li>• Urban renewal district feasibility study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HWY 101 Refinement Plan (TGM Grant)</li> <li>• Pedestrian Crossing Demonstration Project</li> <li>• Adopt TSP with DP recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision on creating a parking district</li> <li>• Parking project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Port Boardwalk project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create HWY 101 Business Association</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middle school/bus barn master plan</li> <li>• Post office relocation study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ODOT install permanent HWY 101 traffic count station</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking project</li> <li>• RV Parking project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create City Development Coordinator position</li> <li>• Sand Hill park acquisition</li> <li>• Bridge walk, scenic byway project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail Strategy refinement</li> </ul>
3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old Town Boardwalk extension study</li> <li>• City Hall relocation study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Florence/ODOT STA Intergovernmental Agreement</li> <li>• 2nd St/Quince St Traffic Signal Intersection Realignment</li> <li>• HWY 101 streetscape design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middle school/bus barn site redevelopment</li> <li>• HWY 101 Gateway/City Hall 2nd Street Green project</li> <li>• HWY 126 Gateway project</li> <li>• Post Office relocation</li> <li>• Sister City Japanese Garden</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail Strategy implementation and recruitment</li> </ul>
5-10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HWY 101/126/Quince intersection reconstruction</li> <li>• HWY 101 streetscape construction</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Hall relocation</li> <li>• Old Town Boardwalk extension construction</li> </ul>	
10-20		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HWY 101/Quince St couplet creation</li> </ul>			
20+		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridge alternatives</li> </ul>			

*Florence Downtown Plan Implementation Strategy*



- Highway 101 Streetscape Improvements – Assumes 4-lane section (no pavement) with 18-foot sidewalks, street trees (every 25-feet), benches and trash receptacles (every 100-feet), stormwater relocation, underground utilities, new street lights. \$1.1 million
- Quince Street Improvements – Assumes full 3-lane section with 6-ft sidewalks and street trees and street lights. \$760,000
- Highway 101/126 intersection – the old STIP estimate was \$1.2 million.

#### Parking Projects

- Parking lot – average cost per space (including land) is \$2-3,000.

#### Public Projects

- Town Square/Green – At about one half acre with land acquisition cost of \$15/sf is \$300,000, and improvement cost of \$15/sf is \$650,000.
- Downtown Park – At about 8 acres, (including portions of the hill, bus barn, playing field), with land acquisition cost of \$15/sf is \$5,000,000, and improvement cost of \$15/sf is \$5,000,000.

### **Potential Funding Sources**

#### Capital Improvement Program

Some of the transportation projects, especially the local system improvements, should be included on the list of improvement projects in the TSP. Presumably, these projects would be included as part of the City's 5-year, Capital Improvement Program, competing against other city priorities for limited funding.

#### ODOT's State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

ODOT identifies and ranks all state highway improvement projects. Again, the Florence projects would be added to the list and compete against other state highway projects for limited funding.

#### Local Improvement District

Property owners for a defined area, which could cover the entire downtown area or a smaller area such as Old Town, could elect to impose a special property tax upon themselves to pay for improvements that will benefit the area. Streetscape improvements are an example of an appropriate project.

#### Revenue Bond Issue

The proposed Parking District could issue bonds backed by an expected revenue stream, such as parking fees from business owners. The bonds would allow the fees to be used upfront to construct parking facilities that would benefit the businesses that pay into the district. This mechanism would expedite the construction of such facilities, rather than waiting for sufficient funds to accumulate.

#### General Obligation Bonds

The city could place a ballot measure for voter approval for bonds to fund a major project, such as the town square or parks projects.

#### Development Exactions

Typically, developers are required to build half-street improvements at the time of development. Streetscape

improvements for Highway 101 or Quince Street could be included in these improvements. Sometimes there is a timing issue. It may not make sense to construct less than a full block of streetscape improvements if adjacent properties are not making the same improvements. An alternative is to pay into fund that will be used to construct larger blocks of streetscape improvements when sufficient funds are available. Another option, is for property owners to remonstrate or agree to pay future charges at the time all of the improvements are constructed.

#### Urban Renewal District

An urban renewal district can be a powerful implementation tool, but complex to administer. The district's funding is based on tax increment financing, which freezes the current tax base and any increases in tax revenue from increasing property values (presumably through redevelopment) can be used to fund projects within the district. Bonds can be issued against future revenue so improvements can be constructed to leverage private development. The renewal district also could undertake other activities to assemble land for private development or participate in joint, public-private development projects. The downtown green and other park improvement projects could be funded through the renewal district, as well as the other streetscape and transportation projects. The renewal district also could help finance or develop demonstration projects, such as a mixed use, retail/office or retail/residential development along Highway 101.

#### Economic Development Grants

The city could pursue economic development grants from state and federal sources, such as lottery funds. The Port of Siuslaw has received grants to fund the Boardwalk project. These grants are oversubscribed and face stiff competition from other cities.

## **II. Appendix**

**A. Current Market Situation & Potential Market Opportunities**

**B. Florence Retail Study**

**C. Transportation Technical Memorandum**

**D. Qualitative Comparison of Two Options for Improvements to Highway 101 Through  
Downtown Florence**

**E. Development Code Recommendations**

**F. Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

**G. Architectural Design Guidelines**

**H. Glossary of Terms**



## **A. Current Market Situation & Potential Market Opportunities**

## **B. Florence Retail Study**

## **C. Transportation Technical Memorandum**



## **D. Qualitative Comparison of Two Options for Improvements to Highway 101 Through Downtown Florence**

## **E. Development Code Recommendations**

## **F. Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments**



## **G. Architectural Design Guidelines**

## **H. Glossary of Terms**