

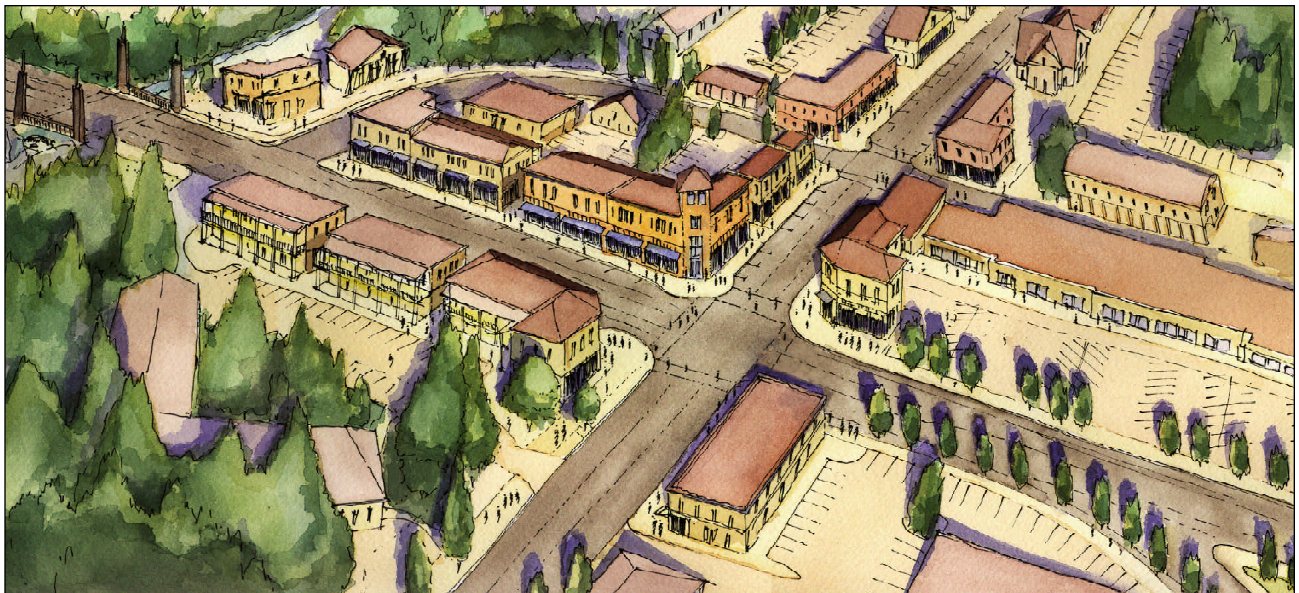
INTRODUCTION

The Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program is a joint effort of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). The purposes of the TGM Program are to strengthen the capability of local governments to effectively manage growth and comply with the Transportation Planning Rule, integrate transportation and land use planning, and encourage transportation-efficient land uses which support modal choice and the efficient performance of transportation facilities and services.

The Quick Response program is funded through TGM. It's purpose is to enhance livability and reduce the traffic impacts and automobile dependence associated with conventional developments and development patterns, and to demonstrate the feasibility of compact, pedestrian and transit friendly development patterns. This is to be achieved by working directly with property owners, developers, local governments, and other public agencies.

Property owner/developers Ron Coil, and Nicki Gustin, along with the City of Florence, applied for and received this grant under the Quick Response program. The City has recently participated in a pre-application meeting with the owners regarding a potential development application for their property located in the Downtown Plan study area. The property is a 0.62 acre parcel located on the southeast corner of Hwy. 126 and Quince Street and is currently zoned Highway District. The owners are considering constructing 10,000 to 15,000 square feet of two-story, mixed use buildings in several phases.

This property is identified by the Downtown Plan as being part of the Hwy. 126 Gateway District, which recognizes this location as an important gateway into the community from the east and is the beginning of the town center on the east side. Within this area, new development regulations which call for zero setbacks, wide sidewalks, and mid-block parking courtyards will be applied. In addition,



Gateway District viewed from the northwest. Building fronts are placed close up to the streets where on-street parking is anticipated. Where on-street parking is not proposed, closer to the Hwy. 101 intersection, buildings are set back with on-site parking up to the road.

the plan calls for a westbound Hwy. 126 to southbound Quince Street left-turn pocket on Hwy. 126 immediately adjacent to the property. The left-turn pocket is necessary to improve safety on Hwy. 126 and funnel traffic off of Hwy. 126 into the Old Town district. This turn lane is related to an ODOT safety project which is in the current Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for the Hwy. 101/Hwy. 126 intersection and will be designed in the near future by the ODOT Region 3 Projects Office.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the Quick Response project is to implement critical elements of the proposed Hwy. 126 Gateway District as envisioned in the newly adopted Downtown Plan. The work has been accomplished collaboratively with the city, property owner, and ODOT to prepare development concepts for some of the vacant and potentially under utilized properties adjacent to the Hwy.126 / Quince intersection. This includes considering the location and design of the proposed building, the long-range build-out of the entire property, a conceptual design for the Hwy. 126/Quince Street intersection and left-turn lane, and the design of Quince Street adjacent to the property to identify the appropriate locations for on-street parking. The purpose of this grant is to investigate and achieve acceptance for these conceptual development plans.

BACKGROUND

The Highway 126/Quince Street Gateway District was identified as a key area for redevelopment in Florence Downtown Plan, which was recently adopted by the City of Florence. The goal of the 126 Gateway as described in the Plan is to establish one of the primary entries to the City and the Downtown in particular.

This Quick Response study is one of the first detailed public/private implementation efforts resulting from the recommendations of the Downtown Plan. To understand how this Quick Response project



Historically Florence welcomed visitors to town with attractive gateways that makes traveler pause as they arrive and depart town.



(Left) Today Highways 126 and 101 offer no sense of gateway, enclosure or entrance into town from the north and east. Gateways have historically been places where the road narrows, and the traveler slow to an in-town speed. Instead the highways today are designed to speed travelers through town as quickly as possible.

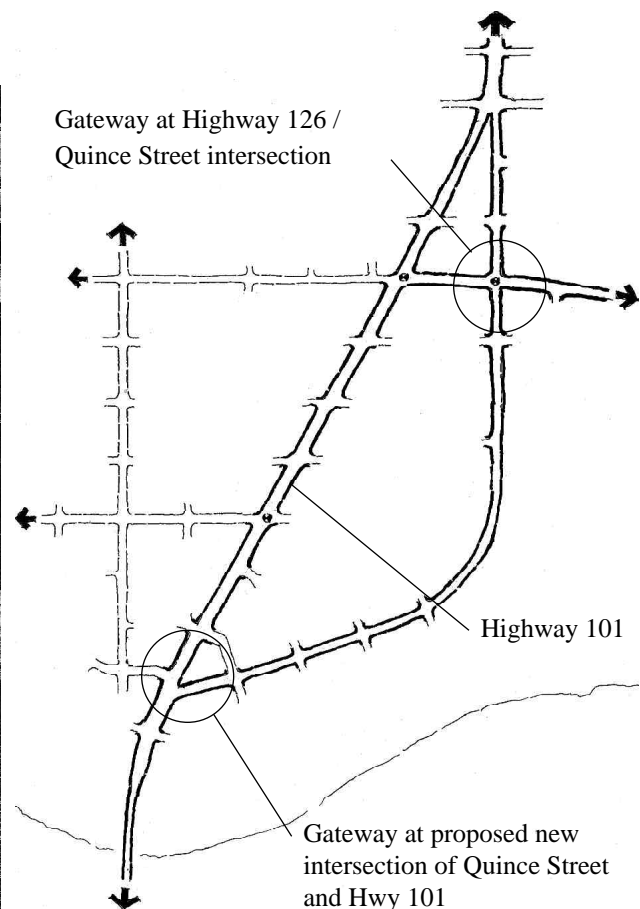
came about, it is appropriate to set some context and background of its basis in the Florence Downtown Plan.

In the later part of 1998, the City applied for and received a grant from the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Department of Land Conservation and Development to create their Downtown Plan. The overall goal of the plan is to revitalize the downtown area as the primary cultural, tourist, and commercial core for the community. This is to be accomplished through a series of actions that include adopting new zoning and design guidelines to create compact, pedestrian-friendly developments; new local street connections; signalization and pedestrian crossing improvements to Hwy. 101 and Hwy 126 and other streets; and parking improvements to create shared parking courtyards.

The year-long public process resulted in a set of agreed upon Goals and Objectives, and an Implementation Strategy with Priority Action Items. The plan represents countless hours of public work and input through the Downtown Citizen's Advisory Committee, public questionnaires, two public meetings, a four-day public Charrette (a design workshop with daily public feedback meetings), and a final presentation to the City Council and Planning Commission. Following are the Goals and Objectives for the Florence Downtown, which were recently adopted by the City Council. They are meant to provide a basis for some of the detailed proposals for the Gateway within this report.



Aerial of Florence Downtown



Goal 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 9th 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.



View from the northeast of Florence's downtown.

The Five Principles of Smart Development

While the solutions described in the report are illustrative (rather than literal or an absolute solution for a particular property) they do demonstrate a variety of important principles. These principles, assembled under the classification “Smart Development” provide guidance to the public and the private sectors as they work through site designs, planning for specific properties and implementation. Hence, this Quick Response program illustrates a number of those principles which are applicable to most, if not all of the properties located in Florence Downtown.

The Quick Response Program supports the concept of “Smart Development”. First outlined by Livable Oregon, Inc., Smart Development embodies “smart” ways of building a community, providing numerous benefits to all citizens. Smart development represents a wise use of resources and facilities, and promotes the building of community. Furthermore, smart development is both financially successful and publicly responsible. Smart development improves on conventional development patterns because it conserves valuable land, energy, and facilities resources; offers people multiple convenient transportation options; relieves traffic congestion and air pollution; offers residents a variety of dwelling choices; and creates attractive community-oriented neighborhoods.

There are five principles underlying Smart Development:

1. Efficient use of land and energy resources
2. Full utilization of urban services
3. Mix of uses
4. Transportation options
5. Detailed, human-scale design

Toward the end of this report will be an evaluation of this project’s transportation and development proposal based on these five Smart Development Principles.

PROJECT PROCESS

This Quick Response Project was conducted during October and November of 1999. The process included a preliminary base data collection period, a two day site visit in Florence by the Planning Team, a design development phase by the consultants, a subsequent Planning Team meeting in Springfield at ODOT, completion of the design phase, and production of this final report. The following tasks were completed as part of this process.

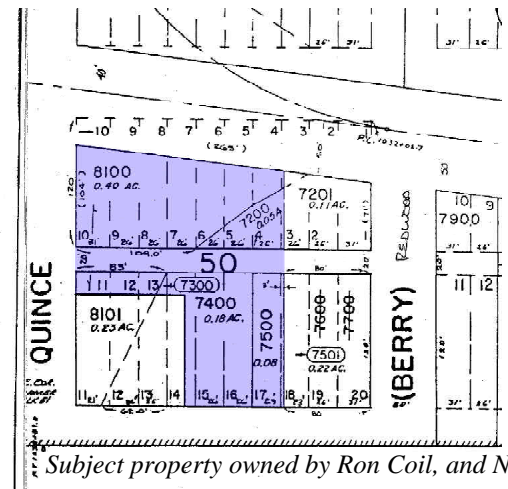
Project Reconnaissance and Stakeholder Meetings

After preliminary collection of ODOT data pertaining to the site area, and conceptual plans prepared by the property owner’s designer, the two day design site trip to Florence was set for October 28 and 29. On the first day, the Planning Team met in an office beside the site to kickoff the design process. Those attending were Laurence Qamar (LCA), Jim West (KHA), Eric Jacobson (DLCD), Karl Wieseke (ODOT), Sandy Young, (City), Ron Coil, Nicki Gustin (Owners), Dale Saari (Broker), Neil Dougherty (Designer). The Team visited the site. The purpose of the site visit and meeting was to gain an understanding of the applicant’s development program and the planning and design opportunities and constraints for the site, and to review the site plans and related drawings already prepared by the applicant’s designer. The consultants collected relevant information relating to the design of the Hwy. 126/Quince

Street intersection from ODOT Projects Office staff. Data included the existing built drawings with right-of-way and pavement width, existing and projected traffic volumes and turning movements, and the prior design for the Hwy. 101/126 project. The concept of developing a “main street” retail/office development on Hwy 126 and Quince, and the need for on-street parking on the highway was discussed at this time.

Traffic Generation and Assignment

During the site visit, the traffic engineer estimated the existing and projected traffic volumes and turning movements for the Hwy. 126/Quince Street intersection. This was accomplished by estimating the traffic generation for the parcel on the SE corner of Hwy. 126/Quince Street; estimating the traffic that may be generated by redevelopment of the middle school site; and assigning this traffic to the street network. The contractor conducted limited operational analysis of the Hwy. 126/Quince Street intersection. See supplemental memo by Kimley-Horn & Associates describing these findings.



Prepare Draft Conceptual Plan Alternatives

During the evening of October 28 and morning of the 29th the design team created conceptual site development options for the Hwy. 126 Gateway District property and the Hwy. 126/Quince Street intersection illustrating various ways to develop the property and intersection. A larger context plan was developed showing the entire Gateway district and potential development schemes for surrounding properties. The site plan proposed locations of buildings, building entrances, accesses and parking areas, sidewalks, on-street parking, and the Hwy. 126/Quince Street intersection, and other streetscape features to implement the Downtown Plan.

Review Conceptual Plans

On October 29th, the owner/developers and their representatives reconvened with the design team to review the concept proposals prepared up to that point. There was a general agreement to proceed with the proposal, and set another meeting at the ODOT offices to review with them the on-street parking issues on Hwy. 126.

Prepare Final Plans and Summary Report

Based upon the input received from the stakeholders, LCA revised and further developed an illustrative conceptual plan for the SE corner property, Hwy. 126/Quince Street intersection, street sections for Hwy. 126 and Quince Street and color axonometric drawings illustrating the development of the SE corner property and its relation to the Florence Downtown.

Final Project Meeting

A final team meeting was held at the ODOT offices in Springfield to review the transportation/development proposals. The meeting included the consultants, the owners, and ODOT and DLCD team members. Much of the discussion was about on-street parking on Hwy 126. ODOT representatives were not positive about the concept based on ODOT standards for maintaining access management, a high

level of service, and general discouragement of on-street parking on state highways. Please see the traffic memo by Kimley-Horn regarding the outcome of this meeting.

THE TRANSPORTATION/DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

A Main Street on Highway 126 and Quince Street

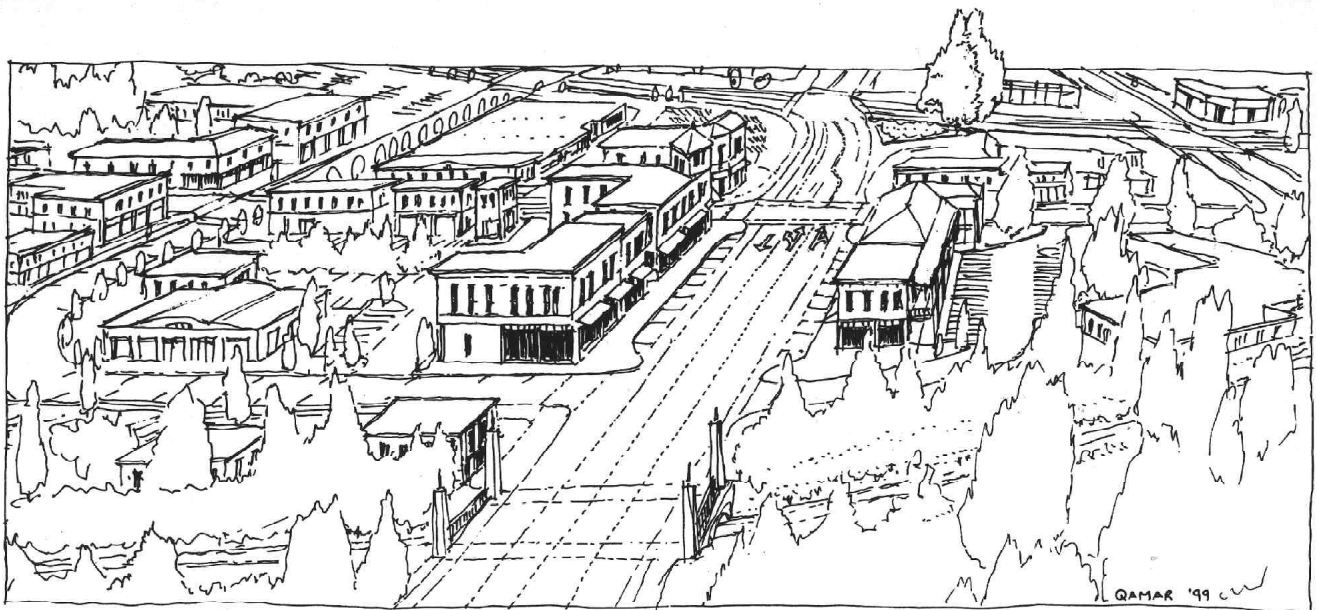
The vision for the Gateway as described in the Downtown Plan is a clearly identifiable “main street” marking the entrance to the city, at large, and to the Downtown, in particular. First, it is important to clarify precisely what is meant by a “main street”. The following is an excerpt from the Downtown Plan:

Although no two main streets are identical they all adhere to certain basic physical design criteria in order to be successful retail environments. Main streets 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 main streets 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.



View of proposed Gateway District entering town from Hwy.126. Munsil Creek is shown as a protected environmental greenway. The bridge pylons over the creek, the greenway, and the retail mainstreet all come together to create the sense of entry into town.

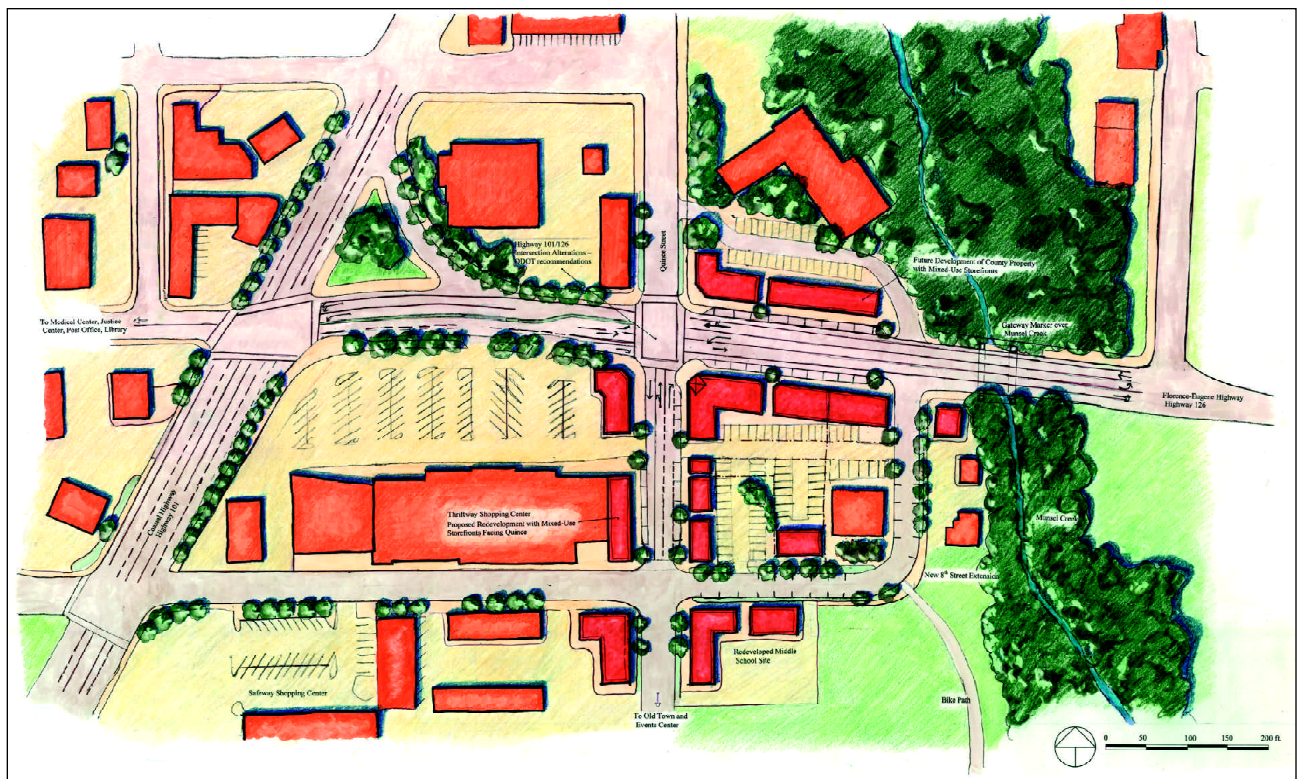
- Main streets are attractive environments for strolling, window shopping, and people watching.
- Main streets accommodate a variety of retail types from large anchors to small shops.

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 main streets 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 up front, on-street parking.

Commercial Strip versus Main Street

At the risk of oversimplification, there are two fundamental categories of commercial development in America today: *Commercial Strip or the Main Street*. The main street is described above. The commercial strip is typified by parking lots in front of commercial buildings, limited on-street parking, low quality pedestrian amenities, and an emphasis on auto use at the expense of walking between shops, businesses and homes.

The costs and benefits of each have been broadly evaluated throughout Oregon and nationally. The Governor’s Livability Initiative, Executive Order 97-22, the Transportation Planning Rule, the Smart Development Principles, and the recently published Oregon Highway Plan, to name a few, all to varying degrees aim to encourage main street type development, and discourage commercial strip development. Many efforts are being put forth throughout the State not only to redevelop old main streets, but to encourage the transformation of commercial strips into new main streets. These initia-



Florence East Gateway District Plan

tives are based on the understanding that commercial strips along highways and arterials often function as main streets in towns. Specifically the Oregon Highway Plan addresses these issues clearly in Action 1B.6:

“Develop design guidelines for highways that describe a range of automobile, pedestrian, bicycle or transit travel alternatives. The guidelines should include appropriate design features such as lighted, safe and accessible bus stops, on-street parking, ample sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, pedestrian scale lighting, street trees and related features.”

Appropriate Locations for Main Streets

Much of the commercial strip development throughout Oregon, and the nation is here to stay. It is however in key locations that efforts are being made to transform portions of strip into more pedestrian oriented, mixed-use main streets. The most important locations are around the historic cores of towns where commercial strips can deteriorate the original core. Florence is one of those places.

Florence, like most cities in Oregon, has its share of main streets and commercial strips existing today. The City has decided through its Downtown Plan to redevelop certain portions of its commercial strip into main streets. This will take a concerted public/private partnership involving transportation, land use, and market components. In order to accomplish this, a clear agreement must be reached with ODOT on the locations and amount of main street development on the state highways that can be acceptable.

The area recommended for study of the main street concept is roughly between the Siuslaw Bridge and the Hwy. 126 intersection, and on Hwy. 126 between Quince Street and the Munsil Creek green way. This Gateway study is only addressing the Hwy 126 Gateway location.

As portions of Hwys.126 and 101 are considered for redevelopment into main streets, maintaining overall levels of service (LOS) and access management through the City is necessary. The assumption is that main streets reduce LOS due to on-street parking and narrower street sections. However there can be trade offs. For instance, main streets prioritize public street accesses over private curb cuts by placing parking access ways off of side streets. This can



Commercial Strip - Highway 101 with parking lots in front of stores due to lack of on-street parking.



Main Street - On-street parking, curbside zone, walking lane and storefront zone.



A typical storefront building has a tall ground floor height with a large percentage of window. Upper stories often contain offices or residences with smaller windows. Note that all windows and doors are vertically proportioned.



make access management more predictable. The length of a main street can be set with restrictions for future commercial expansion in non-main street areas. Finally, if one portion of the highway has reduced LOS, then other portions of the Highways can be designed for increased LOS to compensate.

The Causes Behind Commercial Strips and Main Streets

Main streets and commercial strips are the result of many factors including transportation, land use and development conventions. On-street parking is by far the most pivotal element that determines the potential for a street to develop as a main street versus a commercial strip. In order for developers to build storefronts close up to a street, they must first be provided a streetscape that is safe, convenient and attractive for pedestrians to walk on.

On-street parking not only provides drive-by shoppers with easily accessible spaces in front of stores, but it gives a greater sense of safety to pedestrians on the sidewalks. If shoppers on main streets find all on-street spaces filled, they can proceed to clearly signed, off-street parking courts in the mid-blocks, behind the retail buildings.

Thus, the cause of commercial strip development begins with transportation planning. But the responsibility does not end there. When land use planning designates commercial zoning along inappropriate portions of transportation corridors (highways, and arterials) where on-street parking is not intended, the ingredients of commercial strip are set.

Additional Transportation Connections

Accommodating other connections and modes of transportation are proposed in this project. Bicyclists are provided with bike lanes on Hwy 126, and on an off-road bike trail behind the Siuslaw Middle School site. Walking is promoted by providing an interconnected network of sidewalks along all streets in the Gateway area. Pedestrian connections to the Old Town down Quince Street is a primary goal of the proposal. A new street connection is proposed as a continuation of 8th Street west of Quince, and intersecting with Hwy 126. This street would occur on currently platted “paper streets”. It would provide rear circulation around the developed block, and additional access for future redevelopment of the Middle School site. The proposal also maintains the mid-block



Gateway District viewed from the northeast in relation to the greater Downtown. Hwy. 126 Gateway enters town from the east through the Munsil Creek green way. Quince Street has the potential to be used as a parallel route to Hwy. 101, bringing travelers and locals more into the Old Town.

alley which aligns with the Thriftway driveway.

Building Program

The proposed building program for the Coil/Gustin property is ground floor retail/office and second story office. The buildings are placed on the property lines fronting the two streets; Hwy. 126 and Quince. Shop fronts open onto the street sidewalks. Rear parking lots are access by car along the existing public alley, and by foot through one or two pedestrian passages between the buildings. These passages also contain stairs accessing upper stories. A tower announcing the entry down Quince to the Old Town sits atop the corner building.



Similar proposed buildings are shown on adjacent undeveloped or redeveloped properties across Hwy 126 and Quince on the County property and the Thriftway shopping center corners.

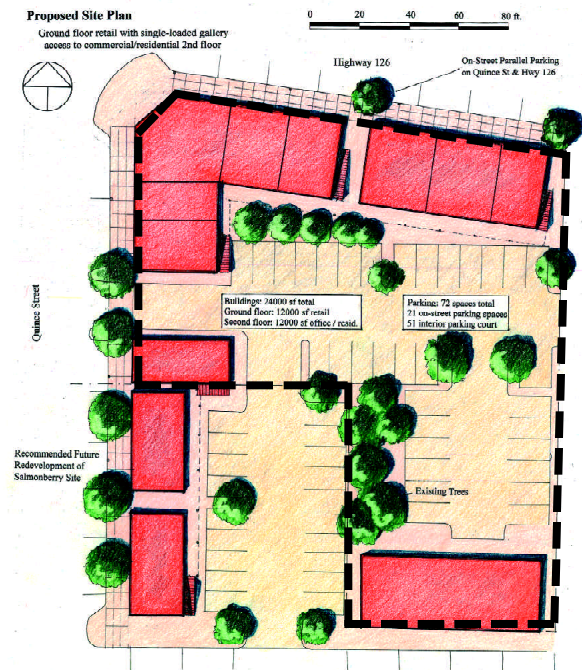
A gateway over the Munsel Creek is illustrated by four pylons similar to those found on the historic Siuslaw River Bridge, the southern Gateway to town. This Munsel gateway could be built around a standard ODOT bridge. The City would likely be responsible for building this element.

(Above) The Siuslaw Bridge with its decorative pylons acts as a gateway into Florence from the south.

Alternative Proposals

Other options for developing the property were considered early in the process, but eliminated for the following reasons.

1. Use an on-site frontage lane for up front parking to separate Hwy 126 travel from parking maneuvers. Insufficient lot depth eliminates this option. Also this would increase pedestrian crossing between building fronts to an inappropriate distance.
2. Create a green Gateway into town with no on-street parking and landscaped berms in front of properties. This would in effect be a greener commercial strip, or office park with parking lots up front and buildings set back. This could be appropriate only if the properties were residential uses.
3. Develop a conventional shopping center with no on street parking, on-site parking lot up front, and building to rear of lot. This would be the easiest development option considering current ODOT standards for Hwy 126. However, this is in opposition to the Florence Downtown Plan, and contrary to the desires of the owners, Ron Coil and Nicki Gustin.



Building fronts are close up to the sidewalk, and a shared mid-block parking court is accessed from the public alley. Pedestrian passages between buildings connect rear parking with front doors.



Proposed building facades emphasize ground floor storefront windows, smaller vertical second story windows and a gateway tower marking the Quince Street corner.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSAL BASED ON SMART DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

As mentioned earlier, concepts of smart development are supported by this project proposal. Following is an evaluation of the project's transportation and development proposal based on the five principles of smart development.

Principle 1: Efficient use of Land and Energy Resources - Strategies:

- Promote compact building forms and infill development
- Develop moderate street and parking standards
- Preserve land for neighborhood parks
- Preserve local woods, wetlands, coastal bluffs and steep slopes

The Florence proposal promotes Principle 1 by:

- No development on Munsel Creek watershed or steep slopes
- Minimum number of trees removed
- Compact building forms
- Efficient shared parking in mid-block court, and on-street

Principle 2: Full Utilization of Urban Services - Strategies:

- Use public and private infrastructure efficiently
- Build compactly
- Size streets for their use
- Reduce impervious surfaces

The Florence proposal promotes Principle 2 by:

- Use of compact building forms: two story, stacked office, retail
- Infilling buildings around the downtown uses infrastructure efficiently
- On-street parking (versus on-site) reduces impervious surface
- 8th street connection can be narrow for local use

Principle 3: Mix of Uses - Strategies:

- Locate stores, offices, residences, schools and recreation within walking distance of each other
- Create compact neighborhoods with pedestrian-oriented streets
- Create a wide variety of housing choices so that young and old, singles and families, and

those of varying economic ability may find places to live

The Florence proposal promotes Principle 3 by:

- Infilling existing Downtown with compactly designed buildings
- Providing mixed offices and retail in walking distance of housing and downtown services

Principle 4: Transportation Options - Strategies:

- Provide interesting, safe and convenient transportation options
- Create a connected network of streets
- Provide reasonable walking distances between destinations
- Orient windows and doorways to the sidewalk to increase safety and create interesting walking environment

The Florence proposal promotes Principle 4:

- Proximity to employment and commercial core makes walking or biking to work and to shop a viable option
- New 8th Street, and redeveloped alley extends street network
- Left turn pocket onto Quince promotes a parallel route to Hwy 101
- Main street retail emphasizes friendly entries windows and orientation to the streets
- Placement of parking behind buildings leaves the streetscape available for the most attractive face of the building

Principle 5: Detailed, Human-Scaled Design

- The massing and detail of the new development is compatible with nearby buildings
- Buildings are sited to ensure privacy, safety and visual coherence with adjacent existing development
- Building doors, windows, porches and other architectural elements are oriented to the street, which adds to the attractiveness of the pedestrian environment
- Landscaping is used to smooth the transition between new and existing development

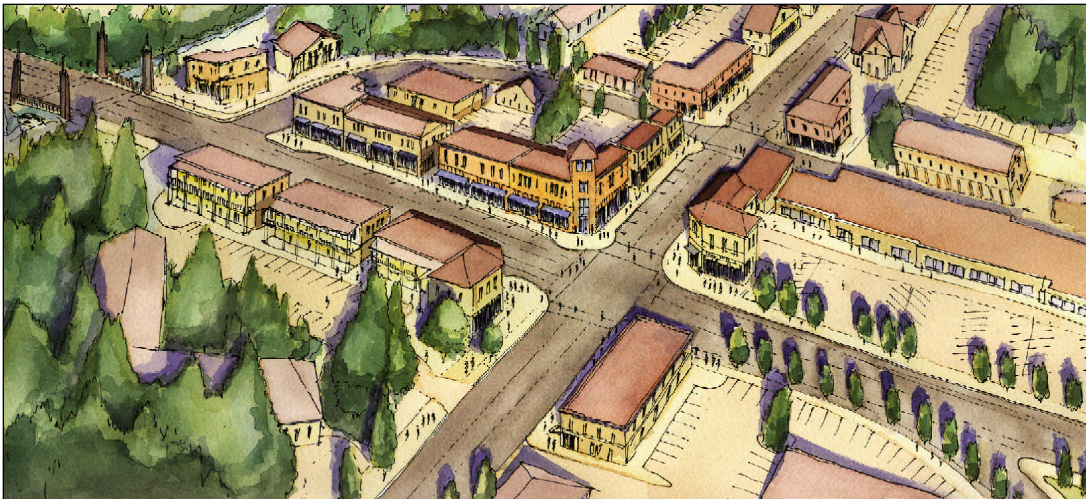
The Florence proposal promotes Principle 5 by:

- Buildings are similar in bulk, height and massing to those in Old Town
- Building design emulates the character of traditional Florence development
- Main street type landscaping such as street trees and planter boxes

THE GATEWAY DISTRICT HIGHWAY 126 & QUINCE STREET

FLORENCE, OREGON

JUNE 1999



A QUICK RESPONSE PROJECT
TRANSPORTATION AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT
CITY OF FLORENCE, ODOT / DLCD

LENNERTZ COYLE & ASSOCIATES, ARCHITECTURE & TOWN PLANNING - KIMLEY - HORN & ASSOCIATES, TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING

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 Quick Response 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.

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