

C STREET CORRIDOR PLAN CITY OF GALT, CALIFORNIA



August 2008

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SPECIAL THANKS

To the Citizens of Galt who participated in the
process to develop this plan.



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PROJECT BACKGROUND & EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This project is the result of the City of Galt aggressively moving forward with actions recommended in the recently completed Economic Development Roadmap. In this plan, Initiative 1: Building a Positive Image, discussed the importance of creating an identity and promoting the Central Business District. The recommendation was made to retain a landscape architect to develop concepts for key business nodes. The City began conversations with Bramarē Landscape Architecture to discuss this portion of work. Another impetus for this project is the upcoming CalTrans project to rebuild the Central Galt Interchange. With these two projects underway, the city felt the timing was good for developing concepts to improve the C Street corridor.

The scope of work for this project included the landscape architect working on-site for two days to conduct site reconnaissance and develop a range of concepts for the C Street corridor and adjacent areas. It also included a public meeting on the evening of the second day to present initial findings for public feedback and to guide next steps of design development.

The project area begins at the end of the central Galt interchange and extends to the railroad tracks in Old Town (it does not include any of the portions of Old Town that have already been improved). It also includes the northern portion of Lincoln Way, between C and A Streets.

EXISTING CONDITIONS / FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Prior to arriving in Galt from Highway 99, the first time traveler is immersed in a predominantly agricultural environment of vineyards, hedgerows and open fields of the Sacramento Valley. Highway 99 is divided and defined by a nearly continuous planting of colorful oleander and various trees.

At the Galt off-ramp, the landscape imagery continues with well maintained and varied plantings that create a welcoming gesture into town. Descending the ramp into central Galt, this imagery is reinforced by the large sycamore trees that serve as



a gateway into the community and the simple, but effective, signage announcing Galt.

Upon entering the commercial business district however, these initial impressions are overwhelmed by the 80' wide paved cross section of C Street stretching off into the distance. Visually, pavement, vehicles, curb cuts and signage, all compete for attention. Along this section of C Street, the buildings are setback behind large parking lots. Trees are evident but limited in number and confined to small areas. Wayfinding signage is non-existent or visually lost. As one approaches the Lincoln Way intersection, landscaping disappears and the paved areas increase forming a harsh pedestrian environment. At the intersection, the buildings are located closer to the street and the sense of a retail node emerges. However, several store fronts are currently vacant and there is little pedestrian activity. This commercial node quickly breaks down between Lincoln and Sixth until the Old Town District comes into view with its corner improvements, defined building and pedestrian zones, and human scaled streetscape elements. Fourth Street signals the end of Old

Town with its strong images of towering palm trees and irrigated lawns to the north and vast tracks of forgotten, weedy open fields of the Union Pacific right-of-way to the south.

From a designer's perspective, several opportunities for improving the visual quality of the built environment exist. Recommendations for developing a more cohesive and connected central are the focus of this plan.



FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM

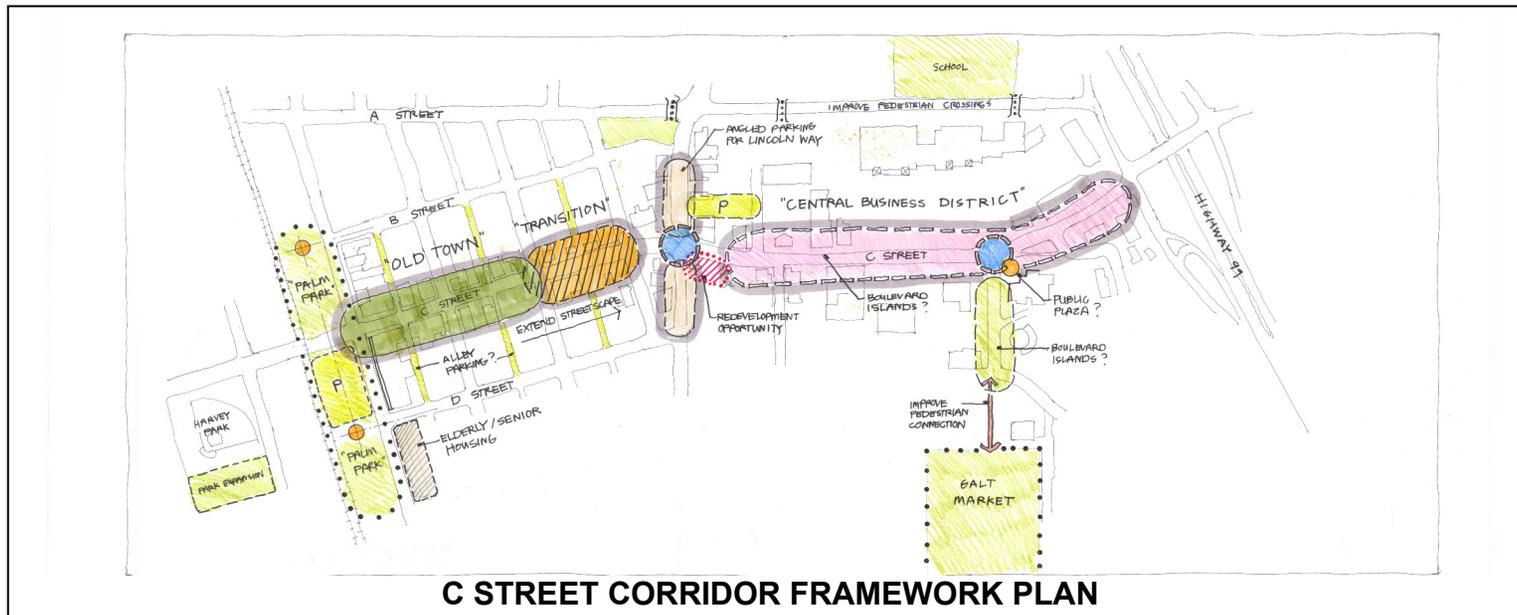
This diagram represents the area of central Galt and the immediate environment as a single composition. It graphically represents broad functional and spatial relationships. Most of the detailed studies are confined to the existing street right-of-way, however. By identifying key districts, commercial areas, civic areas, important intersections, and transition zones, the framework acts as a guide toward redevelopment and public open space opportunities. Used as a general planning tool, it can help prioritize future projects within the study area and identify areas needing further design study toward improving community identity, wayfinding, readability, and connectivity.

Redevelopment opportunities such as the transition area between Old Town and Lincoln Way can be seen as the 'missing link' needing additional investment. The intersections at Lincoln Way and C Street and at Civic Drive and C Street also merit special attention.

The former is an important gateway to both the Old Town and the Lincoln Way commercial node (once the Main Street of Galt). Lincoln Way, itself, is a vital commercial street that will increase in influence as A Street is linked to the new central Galt interchange project.

The intersection at C Street and Civic Way is another important exchange point for commerce, civic identity (City Hall), and a key access to the Galt Market. It, too, deserves special attention. Where one district ends and another begins, visual cues can be used to help develop a particular character.

This framework diagram terminates the commercial area at Fourth Street, marking the edge of Old Town and also the beginning of a potentially expanded park and public open space system.



PROPOSED PUBLIC SPACE IMPROVEMENTS – C STREET

Several improvement projects along the C Street corridor are already underway. Besides site and building improvements to the Stop-N-Shop, the City will soon introduce new banners and wayfinding signage throughout the Commercial Business District between Civic Drive and Lincoln Way. Consistent treatments of these elements, (including new streetlights), along these two streets will help identify the district and increase visual cues. Colorful banners attached to the street lights will celebrate historic structures and community values.

Since the Highway 99 interchange reconstruction project will have a significant landscape component with the potential for planted medians, two additional landscape projects are proposed:

- Extend planted median landscape boulevards (where permitted) from the interchange to Lincoln Way. All existing curb cuts into established businesses would remain as they are, but 'unused' center lane street segments would be converted to planting islands to introduce more green into the corridor. The remaining center lane can be improved by paving it with tinted concrete or special asphalt and thereby distinguishing it from the surrounding road surface. An overall planting theme can be developed in much the same way as the street lights, banners and signs were. Size, scale, growing habit, drought tolerance, and maintenance considerations all play into the median design and plant selection process. As water resources become less available, design efforts should be focused on using local landscape materials to develop low water environments with drought tolerant trees and gravel mulches.



This sketch shows C Street looking west near the Civic Drive intersection. The photo, top right, shows existing conditions. The photo, at the bottom, is an example of a planted median.



- Establish street trees to reinforce the edges of C Street wherever possible. Plant trees no more than 40' (where practical) on center throughout the corridor. Where parking lots face C Street and where space allows, establish a landscape easement 5'-6' wide for a shrub zone, 30" – 36" in height, to help soften and further define the street edge.

The combined effect of wayfinding signage, banners, center lane planted boulevards, street trees and evergreen shrubs along parking lots will create a much more attractive environment and design continuity from Civic Drive to Lincoln Way. It will also begin to build a stronger and more cohesive commercial district identity.



This sketch shows how median and streetscape improvements could help soften the harsh edges of C Street as it nears the Lincoln Way intersection. The photo, upper right, shows the existing condition.

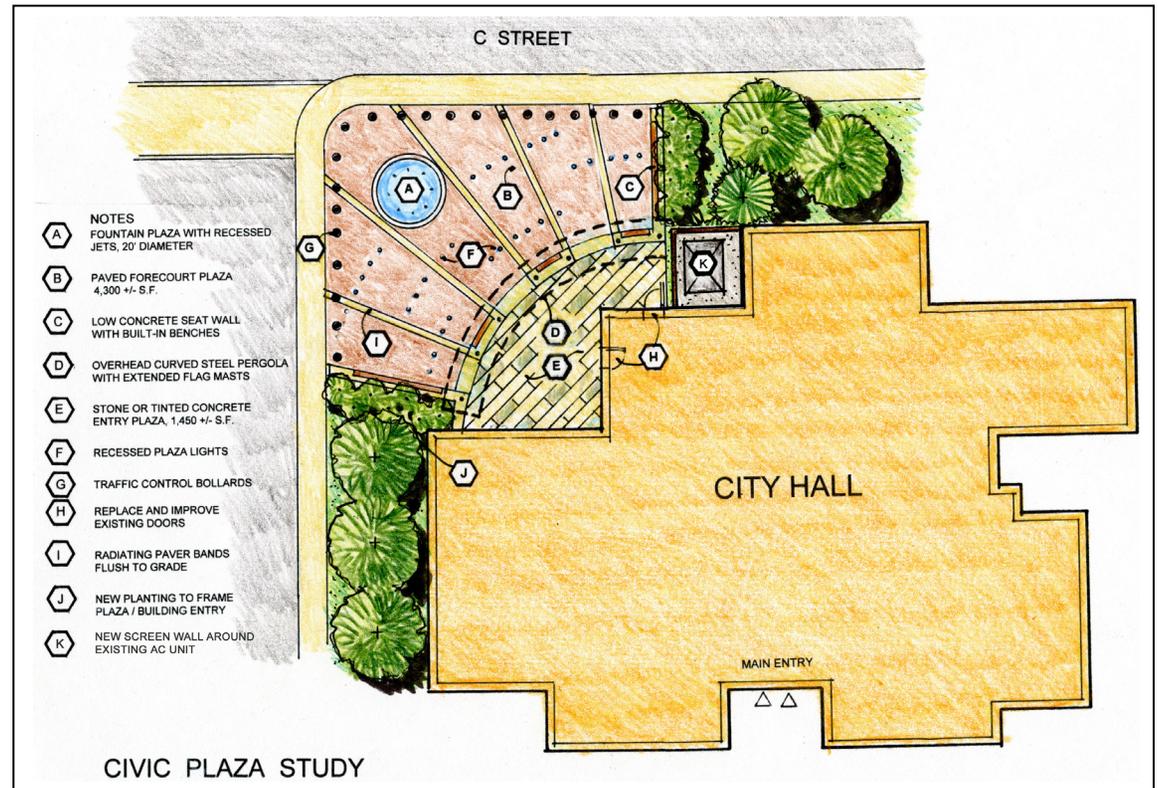
The photo, bottom, right, shows an example of a median landscaped with drought tolerant plants



CIVIC PLAZA

Currently, the first time visitor to Galt has a very difficult time finding City Hall as it is hidden behind tall evergreen trees and has its 'back' turned to C Street. Galt needs an inviting and attractive civic presence for activities and events open to all. The site of the proposed plaza site also provides an important link to the Galt Market, which needs a stronger connection to Galt's emerging 'Main Street'.

The City Hall plaza would comprise two spaces, separated by a seating wall and overhead arbor, of approximately 5,800 total square feet. The plaza closest to the street corner would be defined by traffic control bollards and feature a 20' diameter fountain with recessed jets that could be programmed for different effects. Radiating bands of concrete or stone would direct visitors to a new entry to city hall. The plaza could be distinguished with special paving effects, patterns, or even lights recessed into the pavers. This plaza could terminate in a curved overhead steel pergola that marks the seating area, transitioning to the inner plaza and building entry. Low concrete walls, perhaps embellished with art tiles, would double as seating areas and provide the structural masts needed to support the pergola canopy. The masts could also be extended upward to provide space for flagpoles or downlights. A different paving design might be used for the inner plaza where new doors and interior spaces would be created to improve visibility and access to City Hall.



LANDMARK INTERSECTION

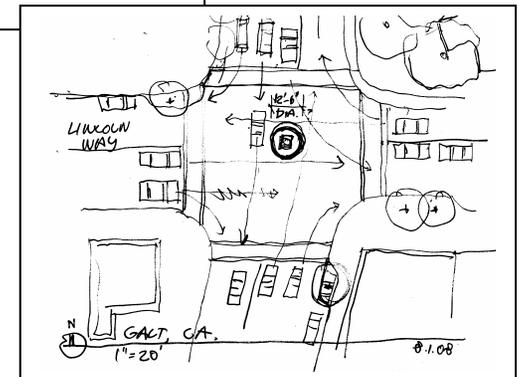
Earlier reports have recognized the C Street / Lincoln Way intersection as an important gateway and transition point from the commercial business district to Old Town. While the earlier plan suggested planting and paving improvements to help distinguish this area, a stronger vertical element is also needed to provide a visual cue that there is more to explore beyond this point. To further strengthen this concept, the parcels on both the southeast and southwest corners should be targeted for more dense and diverse uses with future buildings up close to the sidewalk.

Throughout history, architectural elements have marked significant spaces at significant junctures and cross roads. Oftentimes they are used to signify entry points or focus attention to special use areas, like churches, public squares, or government buildings. One such element that has been successfully used in this way is the obelisk, or literally, 'pointed column'. The feature recommended as a gateway into Old Town and the transition element to the Commercial District is a 15' tall stone or concrete obelisk. This element would be situated near the centerline of C Street and Lincoln Way within an area of unused roadway. Existing traffic patterns would continue normally, with all left-hand turns controlled by the existing traffic signal and occurring in front of the obelisk. Each of the four faces of the obelisk could be initiated with a different destination, 'Old Town', 'Lincoln Way', or 'Commercial District'. Additional design details could include an illuminated globe at the apex and circular traffic control bollards and plantings similar to those in Old Town.



The photo, top, shows the existing conditions at the intersection of C Street and Lincoln Way. The sketch, above, shows how an obelisk in the un-used portion of the street can provide a landmark and transition. The photos, right, top and middle, are examples of obelisks used in gateway and transition situations.

The sketch, right, indicates how vehicle movements would work with an obelisk.

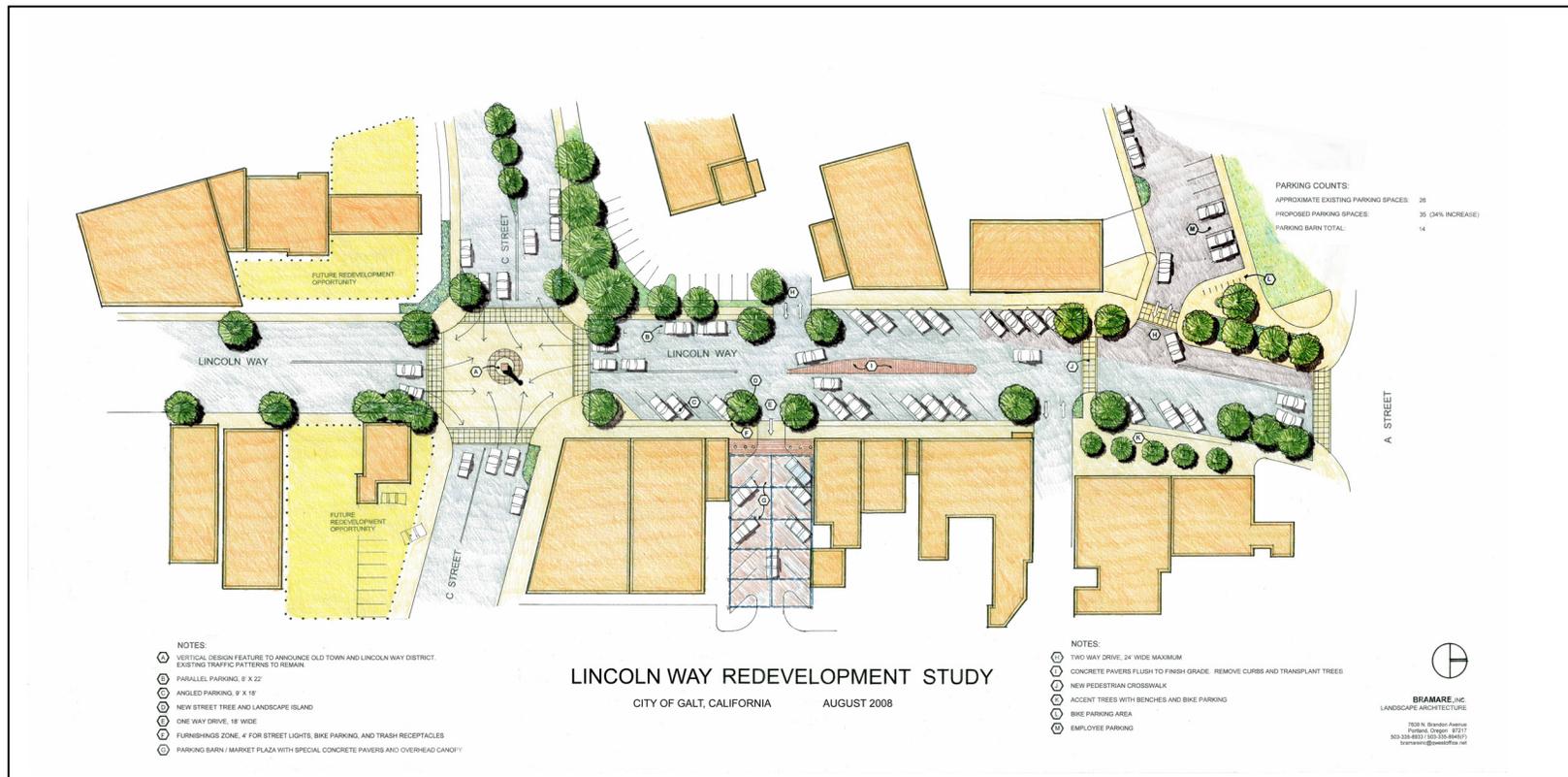


LINCOLN WAY

The business owners along Lincoln Way were very supportive of the idea to return the current parallel parking back to an angled parking situation. Doing this would increase on street parking by 34%. Increased on-street parking would allow for more shoppers and may encourage more investment for small specialty-type retail outlets. This concept, however, would require extensive street reconstruction, including the removal of the raised center plant island and the reduction in the width of sidewalks from 14' -16' to 12'. Existing street lights would need to be relocated, and repainted blue to match those proposed for C Street. Their placement should be coordinated with new street trees and banners.

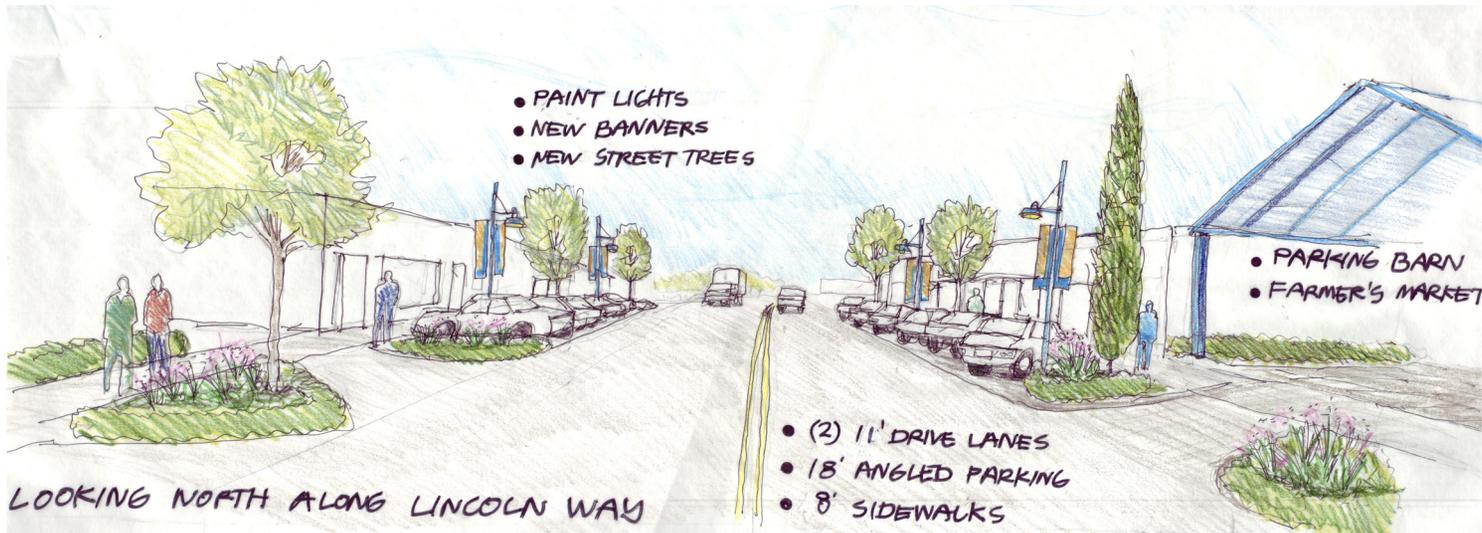
Off-street parking could be increased by providing for an employee parking lot where B Street meets Lincoln Way. Access to the lot can be improved by providing a two way entry drive, but still allowing right turns only out onto Lincoln Way for traffic safety considerations. A mid-block crossing for pedestrians would improve safety and access.

An open lot between All Purpose Thrift and Super Torta's could be developed for additional parking. One concept for this space is to design it so it would appear as a pedestrian plaza that can double as a public parking lot when needed. Special pavers could be used instead of asphalt; vines could be grown on the adjacent brick walls; bollards could control vehicles on event days; and even a space frame with a glass or canvas roof could be built over it to help protect it during hot weather.





The top photo shows existing conditions along Lincoln Way between C and A Streets. The sketch, below, shows in perspective view how the street could be redesigned to accommodate more parking, both on- and off-street, while maintaining an attractive, pedestrian friendly environment.



SIXTH STREET TRANSITION

Previous streetscape work in Old Town is well done and should be extended to Lincoln Way. This would greatly improve this 'missing link' transition area while reducing the street width and activating this area to help attract new businesses. Improvements would include sidewalks where none currently exist or are undersized; bringing needed color and uniformity to the street corners and cross walks; and encouraging the transition from ground floor residential to commercial uses. New street lights, banners, signage, and landscaping will help create a more unified district.



Completing the streetscape along this section includes improving undersized sidewalks, creating new sidewalks, and implementing streetscape improvements that match those in Old Town.



These photoshop images show how streetscape improvements should be extended from Old Town to Lincoln Way; creating a cohesive transition between the two distinct districts.

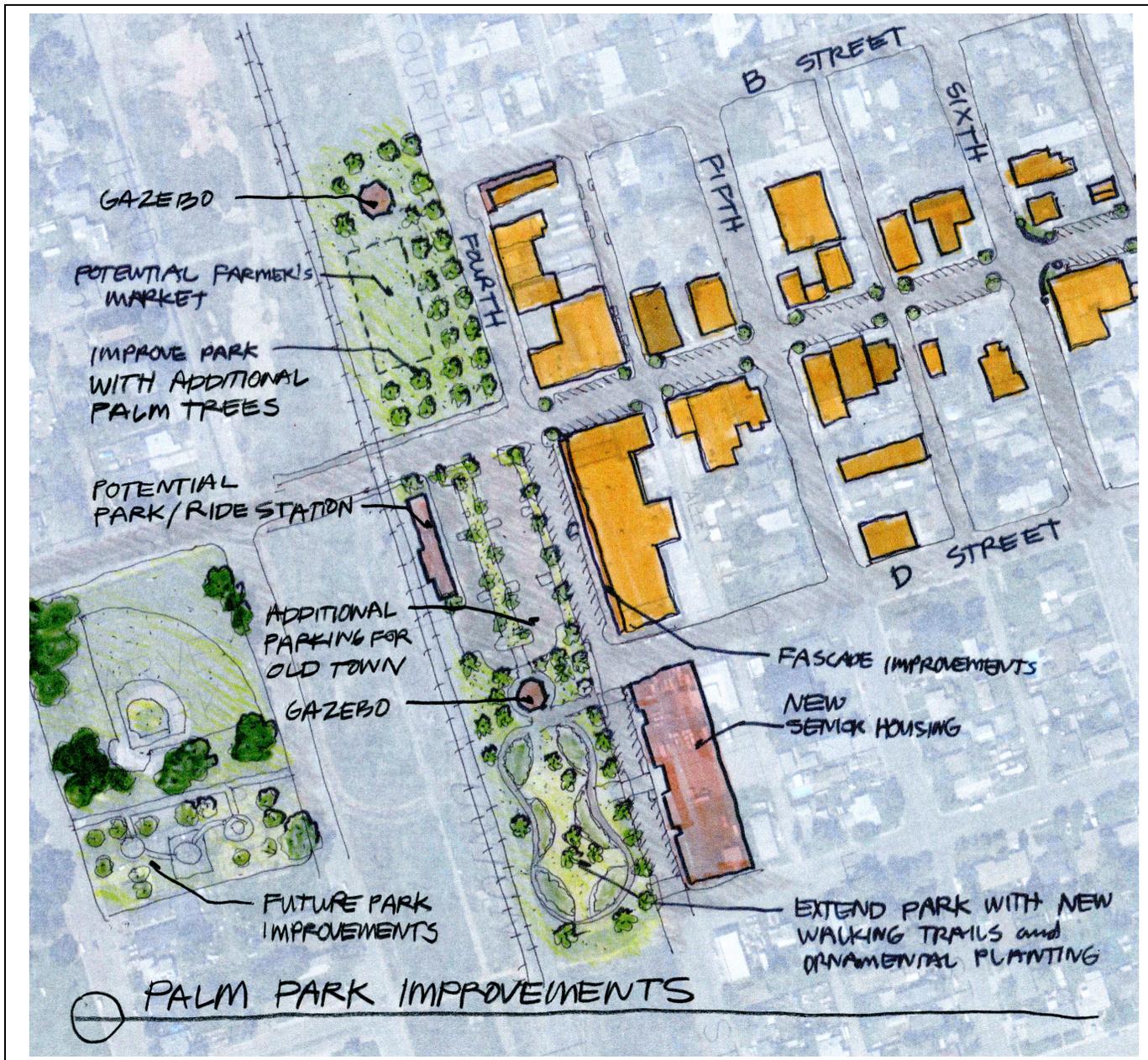
PALM PARK

The concept for Palm Park is an opportunity to extend urban green space by transforming a brown and forgotten field. Although currently limited in scope, this public open space can be expanded to serve other recreational needs, and perhaps one day even rail commuters. With the activation of the Spaans' building along Fourth Street and the building of the Galt Place senior housing project, extension and development of the park is essential.

The plan calls for improvements of the three block area between B and E streets. While each block would serve a different purpose, they would be unified by palm trees, garden elements and lawn areas. While the block between C and D Streets would be geared primarily to a future Park and Ride lot to support a commuter train stop and additional parking for Old Town businesses, greenways would connect back to Fourth Street and the adjacent park blocks. Two park pavilions are proposed at the termination of B and D Streets. These buildings could be used for a variety of park activities, including music and dance events, art shows, picnics, etc. A large Saturday market is proposed for the park block between C and B Streets, while a more ornamental garden can occur for the park block between D and E Streets. This garden site could be an attractive complement to the Galt Place project and provide for a series of year round displays.



Improving the existing park and extending it will help anchor the terminus of Old Town while providing a lush transition to the residential area to the west. In addition, improvements will increase the aesthetic qualities of Old Town and improve its 'quality of life.' On the following page, a detail from the Concept Plan shows how Palm Park could be developed to its fullest potential.



CONCEPTS FOR FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

During the on-site portion of this project, it became clear that implementing simple façade improvements would do much to improve the aesthetics of the transition area between Lincoln Way and Old Town. Façade improvements to this area will complement and assist the proposed street and streetscape improvements in visually linking one commercial area to another.

This particular section of C Street is a mix of residential, service and commercial uses, making the casual visitor wonder about the focus of this section of the street. There are ground floor residential uses that should, over time, convert to commercial uses. By doing this, a stronger business district synergy will help strengthen this part of C Street and create a stronger pedestrian connection between Lincoln Way and Old Town.

There is a proven psychology to how pedestrians use, and move through a traditional downtown commercial district. They are drawn to contiguous storefronts set close to the sidewalk with large transparent shop windows and attractive displays. Conversely, browsing shoppers are repelled by blank walls, mirrored windows, lackluster shop display windows and drive-thrus that break the pedestrian rhythm.

To assist Galt property owners in better understanding how simple façade improvements can not only enhance their business but the district, as well, two photoshop examples have been created for this report. They follow.

THE MOWER SHOP



A rich red paint job and opening up this simple metal building with energy efficient glass garage doors is a good way to give this building more curb appeal. A simple metal canopy highlights the entrance, along with an attractive sign and welcoming flower pots.



POTENTIAL SHOP OR CAFE

This simple, non-descript residence is almost begging to become part of the commercial district. And in the future, it should transition to a commercial use to help strengthen this part of C Street.

Like the previous example, installing large storefront windows help make this building say 'welcome, come on in. The clerestory windows over the metal awning allow natural light to the back of the space. A more interesting paint scheme that uses different colors for the details also gives this building much more curb appeal as do the colorful crepe myrtle plantings. To help give a this low slung building a vertical 'boost' and help alleviate visual clutter created by power lines and poles, palm trees have been planted.



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PROJECT PRIORITIES & COST CONSIDERATIONS

When putting together a plan that contains a number of public improvement projects, it is often difficult to prioritize what should happen first, and in what order. That said, a real effort has been made to work with the City in developing a prioritized list for implementation. The list that follows is a recommendation that will ultimately be finalized by the Galt City Council.

Projects that are identified in the C Street Corridor Plan are of different scales, types and costs. It will be important to implement projects that have a high level of community and business district support, that help connect disparate components of Galt's commercial areas, that help create a more positive civic image and that serve as catalysts for further redevelopment.

The proposed prioritized list and cost estimates for the C Street Corridor Plan follow. The cost estimates are ball-park based upon typical square foot material costs. Design and engineering fees are not included. Detailed costs will need to be provided through a Design Development and Construction Documentation phase of work.

- **C Street between Civic Drive and Lincoln Way:** center lane median improvements (where appropriate) and complementary streetscape improvements that include lighting and landscaping.
Estimated cost: \$435,000 - \$600,000
- **Civic plaza:** open up City Hall to C Street through the creation of a public plaza/gathering space that includes paving with design bands and recessed lighting, an interactive fountain, seat walls, a curved entry pergola and landscaping.
Estimated cost: \$350,000 - \$500,000

- **Palm Park:** extending the park two blocks south and including stately plantings of palm trees, walking trails, gazebos, lawn, parking for Old Town businesses and potential location for a rail station.
Estimated cost: \$475,000 - \$675,000
- **Transition area between Sixth Street and Lincoln Way:** continue streetscape improvements to Lincoln Way from Old Town, including upgrading undersized sidewalks and installing sidewalks where none exist, streetscape treatments, pedestrian-scaled lighting and landscaping.
Estimated cost: \$115,000 - \$250,000
- **Landmark feature at the intersection of C Street and Lincoln Way:** installation of an attractive stone or concrete obelisk, with landscaping, as a gateway and wayfinding feature.
Estimated cost: \$40,000 - \$75,000
- **Lincoln Way improvements:** reconfigure sidewalks and parking on Lincoln Way to accommodate 34% more on-street parking, provide a new public parking lot that doubles as an event space, provide a new mid-block crossing, new street trees and landscaping, relocation of existing street lights and reconfigure the existing off-street parking lot so that it is more accessible.
Estimated cost: \$225,000 - \$400,000

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The City of Galt is working on many different fronts to improve this growing, dynamic community by implementing projects identified in the 2008 Economic Development Roadmap. The City's energy, leadership and forward movement are a testament to its ability to step up to the plate with strategic actions. This plan is a result of the City focusing on Initiative 1: Building a Positive Image.

The goal of the C Street Corridor Plan is to provide a range of projects to help improve visual and physical connectivity, civic presence and gathering, district identify and overall image of Galt's commercial areas - - ultimately leading to a more vital and inviting community. The projects outlined in the plan are primarily public in nature to help leverage private investment, improve community image and increase local pride.

By strategically implementing the slate of projects outlined in the plan, Galt stands to become what it envisions: *a city defined by a vibrant Old Town, an old fashioned Market, thriving new neighborhoods, rich multi-cultural history, welcoming attitudes and supporting new small niche businesses and growth industries.*

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