

# Kechi Arts & Business District



REDEVELOPMENT DESIGN CONCEPT



**Prepared for the  
City of Kechi  
220 Kechi Rd.  
Kechi, Kansas 67067**

**Prepared by**



PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS, P.A.

303 South Topeka  
Wichita, Kansas 67202  
(316) 262-2691

**With assistance from**



130 East Ross, Suite 105  
Clearwater, Kansas 67026  
(316) 304-2865

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# City Council Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 15-641

**A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE CITY OF KECHI ARTS & BUSINESS DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT DESIGN CONCEPT**

WHEREAS, the City of Kechi has responsibility to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the community; and

WHEREAS, maintaining a productive local economy and a vibrant core business district is essential to fulfilling these community responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive planning is integral to guiding community development in a manner that helps maintain a productive local economy; and

WHEREAS, Kansas municipalities are statutorily authorized by K.S.A. 12-741, et seq. to create and adopt comprehensive plans for the protection of public health, safety, and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the City of Kechi has adopted the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, which establishes the Arts & Business District as the community’s core business district; and

WHEREAS, Kechi citizens desire to implement the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and provide enhancements to the Arts & Business District; and

WHEREAS, the Kechi Arts & Business District Redevelopment Design Concept document provides design guidance and implementation strategies for making desired enhancements and redeveloping the Arts & Business District.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF KECHI, KANSAS:**

**Section 1.** The City Council of the City of Kechi endorses the Kechi Arts & Business Redevelopment Design Concept.

**Section 2.** The City of Kechi will consider and generally adhere to the design guidance contained in the Kechi Arts & Business Redevelopment Design Concept when reviewing and approving zoning and subdivision applications within the Arts & Business District.

**Section 3.** The City of Kechi will consider the implementation strategies contained in the Kechi Arts & Business Redevelopment Design Concept and enact the appropriate codes, ordinances, and regulations at the discretion of the City Council.

ADOPTED by the governing body of the City of Kechi, Kansas, this 23rd day of April, 2015.

CITY OF KECHI, KANSAS

*Ed Parker*  
Ed Parker, Mayor

ATTEST:

*Laura Hill*  
Laura Hill, City Clerk



# District Design Vision

## Design Guidance

This document is intended to guide design, not dictate it. This approach serves to complement the District Design Vision. A great degree of flexibility will be required to address a variety of conditions in the Arts & Business District.

The individual design concepts described and illustrated in this document provide alternative design solutions for the various situations. These alternatives are “plug-and-play” options. With each redevelopment project, the options used should be consistent with the site conditions, surrounding environment and design objectives of the property owner. Selecting the appropriate design options according to these considerations will encourage aesthetic diversity and provide effective solutions to site design issues.

## Foundational Inspiration

Kechi’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan envisions the Arts & Business District as the future hub local economic activity. It will be a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood that supports a flourishing artistic community. Structures will be allowed flexibility in their purpose, providing artisans homes with space to create, display and sell their works. Performing artists will have venues where others

may enjoy their talents. Entrepreneurs will recognize the business potential of patrons with expendable income. Restaurants, shops and offices will open within the District to serve visitors and residents alike.

## Opportunities

The Arts & Business District is well situated to realize these aspirations. The District is already home to several successful artisan businesses, which will provide momentum. For example, Rollin Karg is renowned for his artistry in blown glass. He has built a thriving business in Karg Art Glass, where he creates, displays and sells his colorful works.

Plus, Kechi has multiple direct connections to the state’s excellent highway system. This offers quick, convenient access to the District from metropolitan Wichita and beyond.

## Barriers

Despite these advantages, there are several challenges to overcome. Much of the District was originally a residential neighborhood. As such, most existing structures are homes located on lots developed for housing purposes. Business owners who are using these houses for commercial use can attest to the difficulties in making the conversion.

Streets and utilities were not built for business. They were designed to residential standards that are now outdated. Infrastructure condition and capacity are insufficient to support modern commercial development.

Kechi’s development codes do not support transition of the Arts & Business District from current reality to envisioned future. The zoning code has no classification that allows the range of residential and commercial development. And, site development standards in the subdivision regulations do not accommodate the type of incremental redevelopment required.

## Crafting the Vision

Community aspirations were tempered with the redevelopment barriers to form the foundational inspiration of the Arts & Business District Design Vision. Solutions for achieving the desired outcome were identified to craft the guiding principles behind this redevelopment concept.

## Kechi Arts & Business District Design Vision

*“Creativity is the driving force behind artistic expression. The Arts & Business District is envisioned as vibrant mixed-use neighborhood that fosters artisan creativity while supporting the needs of arts-based and complementary businesses. The ‘sense of place’ that defines the District will convey a modern twist on the traditional artisan village. Building designs may reflect the creativity of the artist-owners when designed in harmony with surrounding architecture. Walkable streets will allow patrons to park and shop anywhere in the District without driving. An attractive streetscape will help create an environment where businesses can thrive - one with functional amenities, ample on-street parking and plaza space for cultural activities.”*



# District Location & Features

## Synergy at the Crossroads

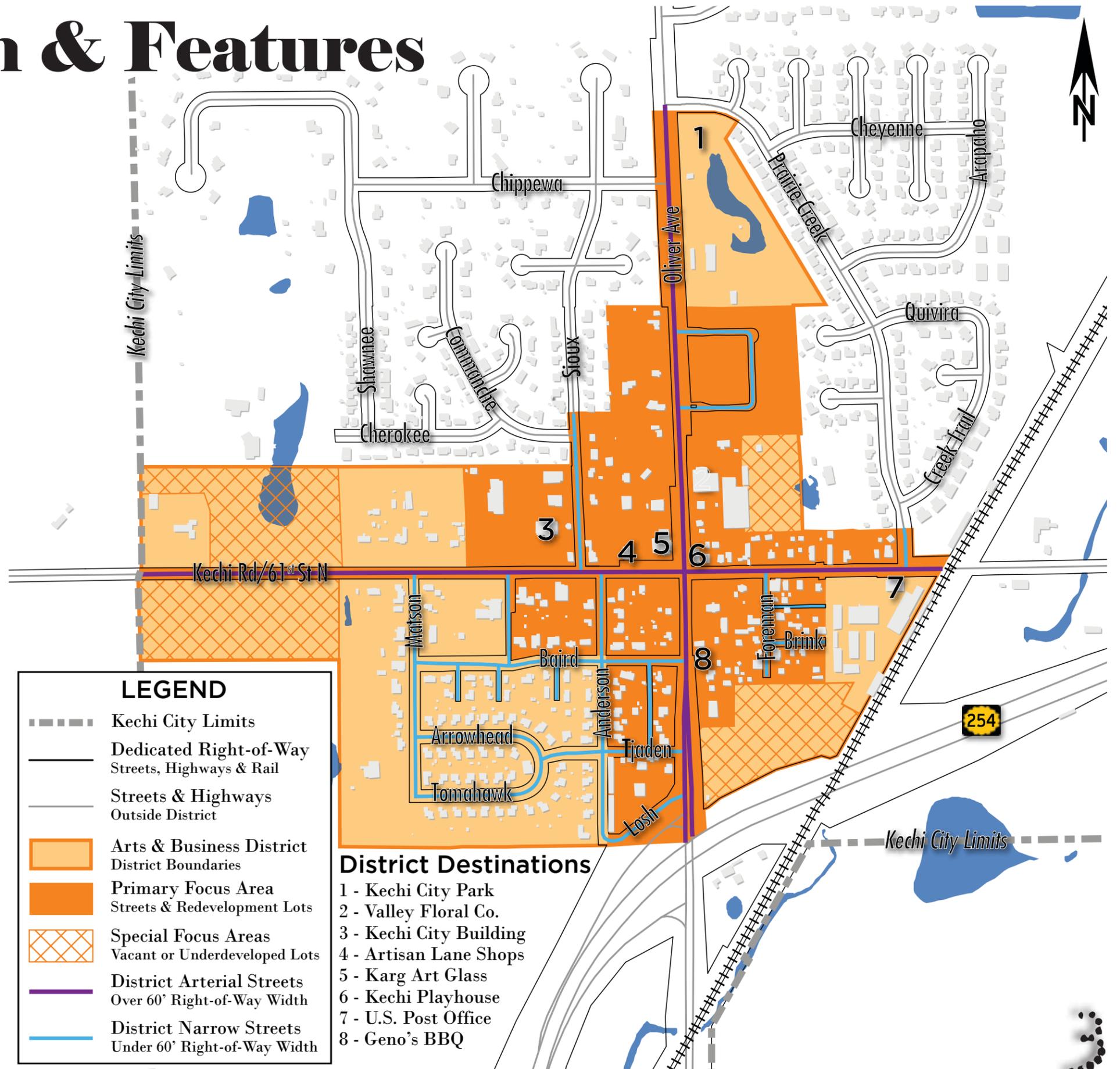
The intersection of Kechi Rd. and Oliver Ave. is the heart of the Arts & Business District. These two arterial streets connect Kechi with Bel Aire and Wichita to the south and Park City to the west. The bulk of daily traffic in and out of the community passes through this “Crossroads of Kechi.”

Many of Kechi’s key destinations are in close proximity to this intersection. This central location offers convenient access to the City Building, City Park and U.S. Post Office. In addition, several of Kechi’s most successful creative businesses form a cluster of economic activity providing synergy to grow the Arts & Business District.

## Design Framework

The framework of the design concept is structured to accommodate the incremental redevelopment pattern likely to occur as momentum builds. The concept is corridor-based, with separate design guidance provided for development on arterial streets and narrow streets, as seen in the District Map on the right. Design options for narrow streets are the foundation also meant for use when designing for and along arterial streets.

Most redevelopment opportunity is foreseen in the Primary Focus Area shown on the District Map. Initial efforts should be concentrated on streetscape improvements and business development in this sub-area. Several vacant or underdeveloped tracts make up the Special Focus Areas. Development occurring in these locations should be consistent with the design concept. The remainder of the Arts & Business District should be allowed to transition according to demand, but the neighborhood southwest of Baird and Anderson should be preserved as residential with some home occupations.



# District Design Goals

## Promote Architectural Diversity



Image Courtesy of Alex Lipstein

Well designed streetscapes provide space for programming a variety of interesting events. Activating the street helps to activate the local economy.



Image Courtesy of kansastravel.org

## Design for a Range of Activities



Image Courtesy of Metro Jacksonville

Buildings are designed for both form and function. Potential uses and aesthetic preferences are nearly boundless. Flexibility allows homes to transition seamlessly into live-work spaces or commercial uses. Architectural stylings reflect the diverse creativity of artisans and range of uses within the District.

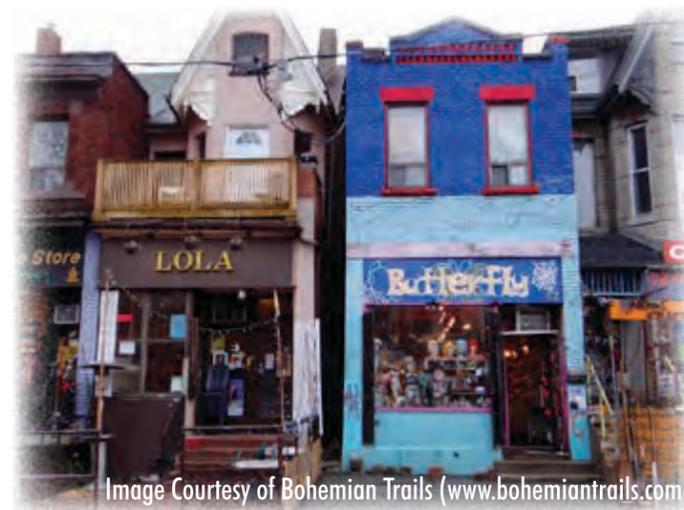


Image Courtesy of Bohemian Trails ([www.bohemiantrails.com](http://www.bohemiantrails.com))

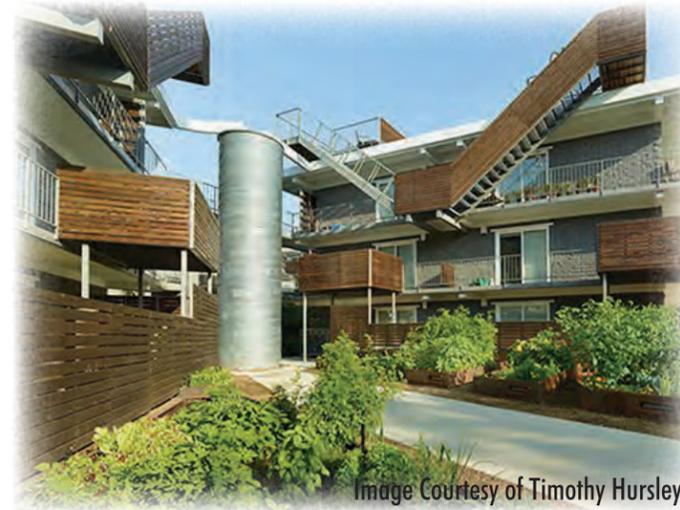


Image Courtesy of Timothy Hursley

Good design accounts for more than architectural style. It also understands the spaces it creates. Building and site are designed to complement one another functionally and aesthetically.



Image Courtesy of Feldman Architecture

Buildings are designed in harmony with the natural and built environment. Cohesive architectural design elements establish the look and feel that defines the District.

## Establish a "Sense of Place"

## Connectivity & Integration



Places and spaces are physically and visually connected. Access to businesses from the street is functional for all. Integrated streetscape amenities enhance the experience of living, visiting and doing business in the District.



Image Courtesy of American Planning Association



# Design Concepts for Narrow Streets

## Preferred Design Concepts



Sidewalks or shared use paths with street trees and furnishings will help create a walkable environment for residents and visitors. Street furniture can be used strategically to help buffer pedestrians from vehicular traffic.



The addition of on-street parking (diagonal parking shown above) will help support business needs.

Porous pavers and other pervious pavement can be used in lieu of standard concrete to reduce stormwater runoff. This is a “low impact” drainage technique that can add greenery to the streetscape or a building site. Many products are durable enough to utilize in commercial or onstreet settings.



Image Courtesy of Soil Retention Products, Inc. - "Drivable Grass"

Narrow streets can be an advantage to “activate” the street environment. The illusion of hustle and bustle is created when the space is visually constrained.



Artistic and creative signs are a good alternative to boring standardized sign configurations. They can help draw customers into shops with their artistic flair.



Image Courtesy of Bohemian Trails ([www.bohemiantrails.com](http://www.bohemiantrails.com))

Eclectic designs can bring a vibrant palette to a business community while reflecting artistic creativity. When allowed and embraced, diversity of architectural styles, colors, façade materials and flexible site layouts can enhance the sense of place.

Plaza spaces provided on narrow streets help to improve pedestrian safety and slow traffic. They are effective where there is high pedestrian traffic between shops and restaurants on both sides of the street.

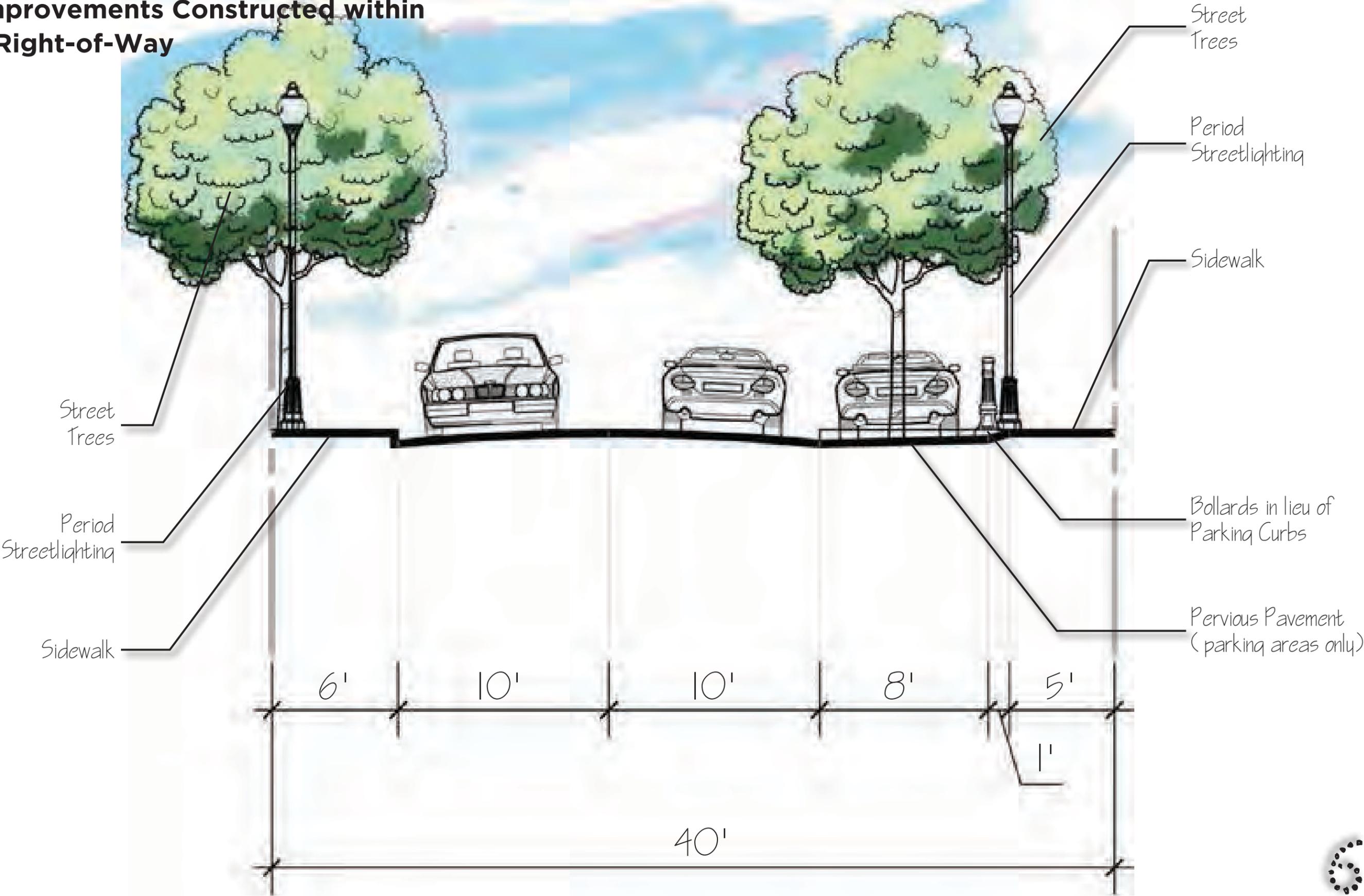


Rain gardens and bioswales could be used to manage stormwater runoff in constrained street space. Properly designed, these features are environmentally beneficial and enhance streetscape aesthetics. This type of “low impact” drainage feature can help meet federal and local stormwater management regulations.



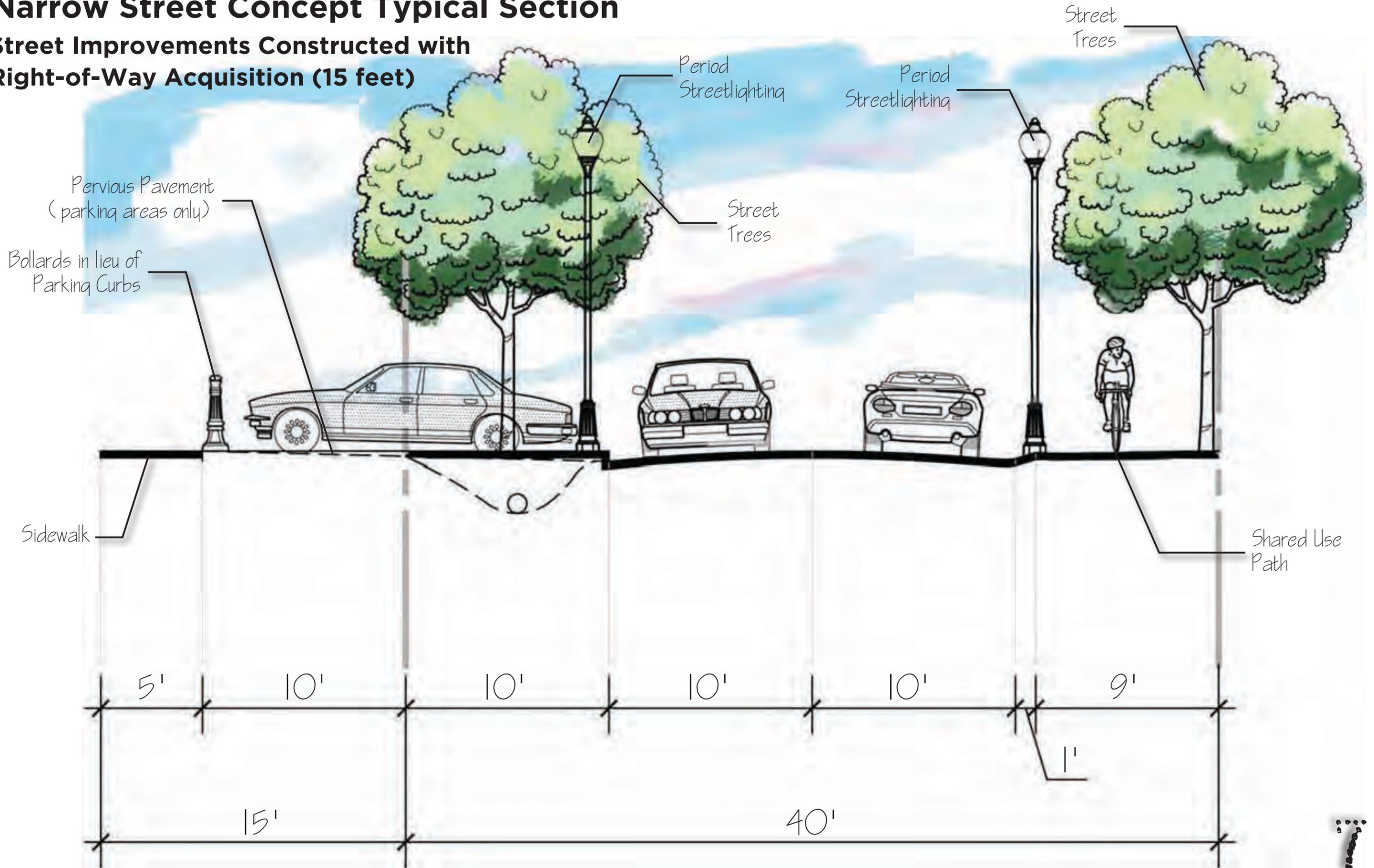
# Narrow Street Concept Typical Section

Street Improvements Constructed within  
40-foot Right-of-Way

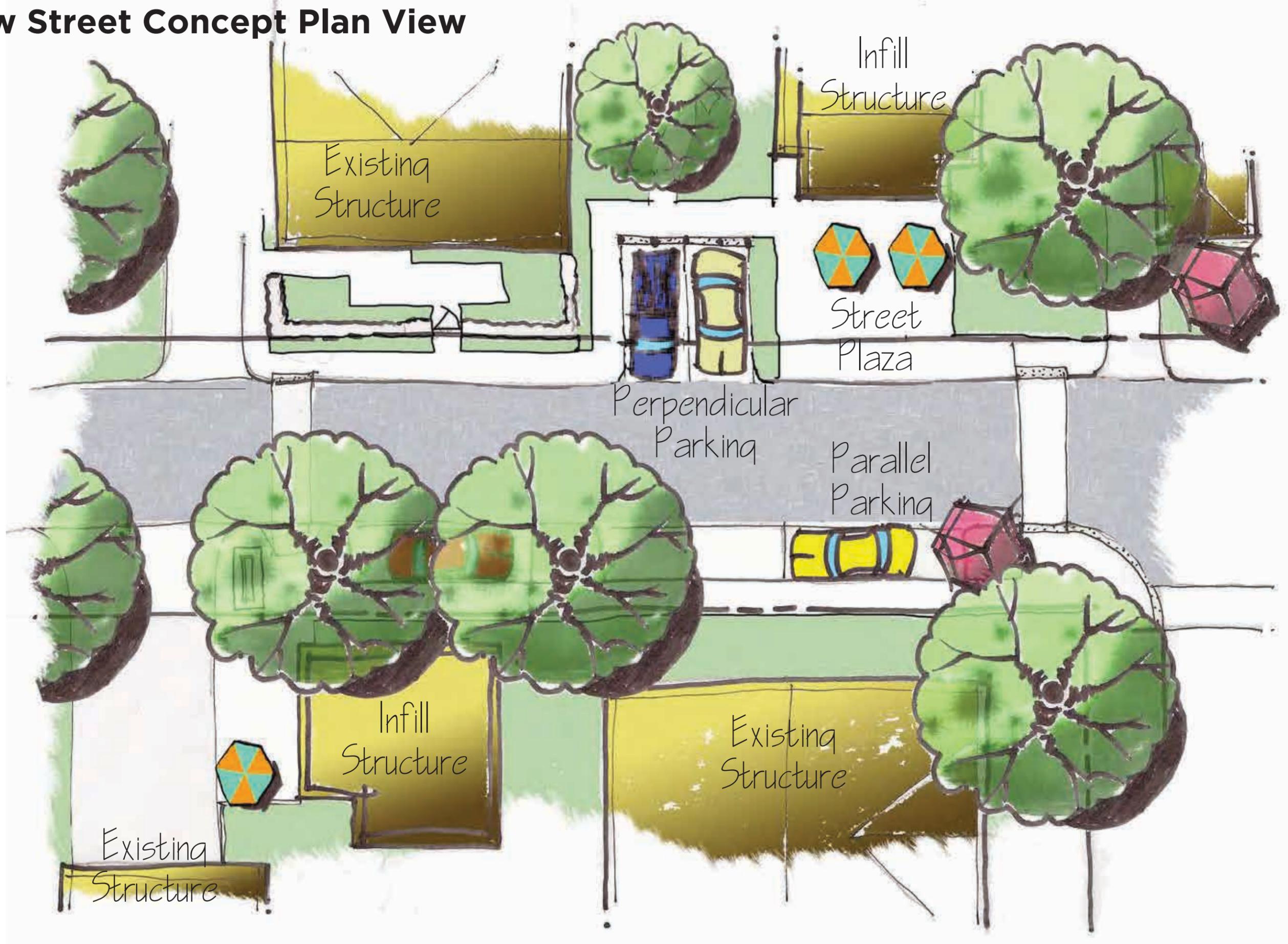


# Narrow Street Concept Typical Section

## Street Improvements Constructed with Right-of-Way Acquisition (15 feet)



# Narrow Street Concept Plan View



# Narrow Street Concept Perspective

View north on Foreman Ave.



Current Streetview of Location

©2015 PEC, Skinner Design Studios



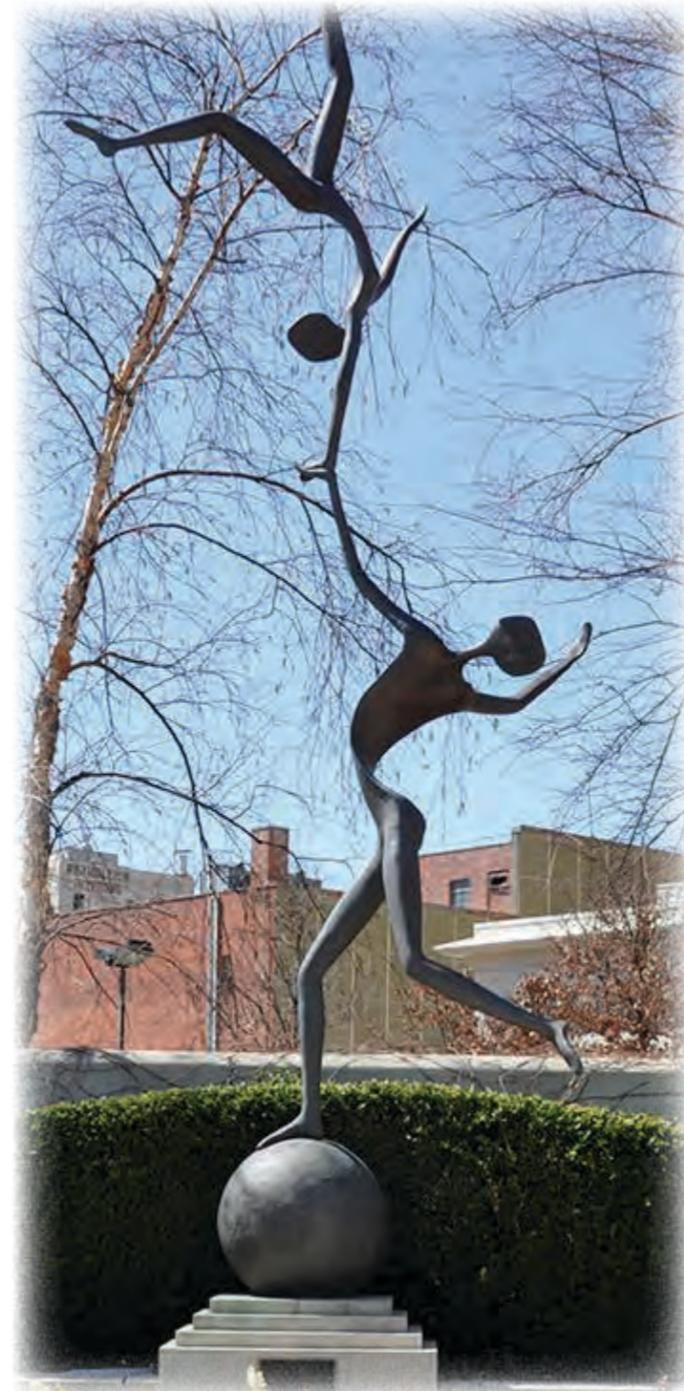
# Design Concepts for Arterial Streets

## Preferred Design Concepts

Interpretive features can help educate, celebrate community pride and create visual interest. Designs should have interesting subject matter with tactile and graphic components.



Visual interest can be added to concrete sidewalks with paver inlays or by simply varying the score joint pattern.



Integrating public art will beautify the streetscape and emphasize the District's character. Add local interest by commissioning the work of artists from within the District.

Basic infrastructure can be made even more appealing in simple ways. Using a stone culvert headwall in place of concrete is one example of how this can be done.



Creative and artistic gateway monuments welcome visitors into a district and help convey a visual impression of the area's character.

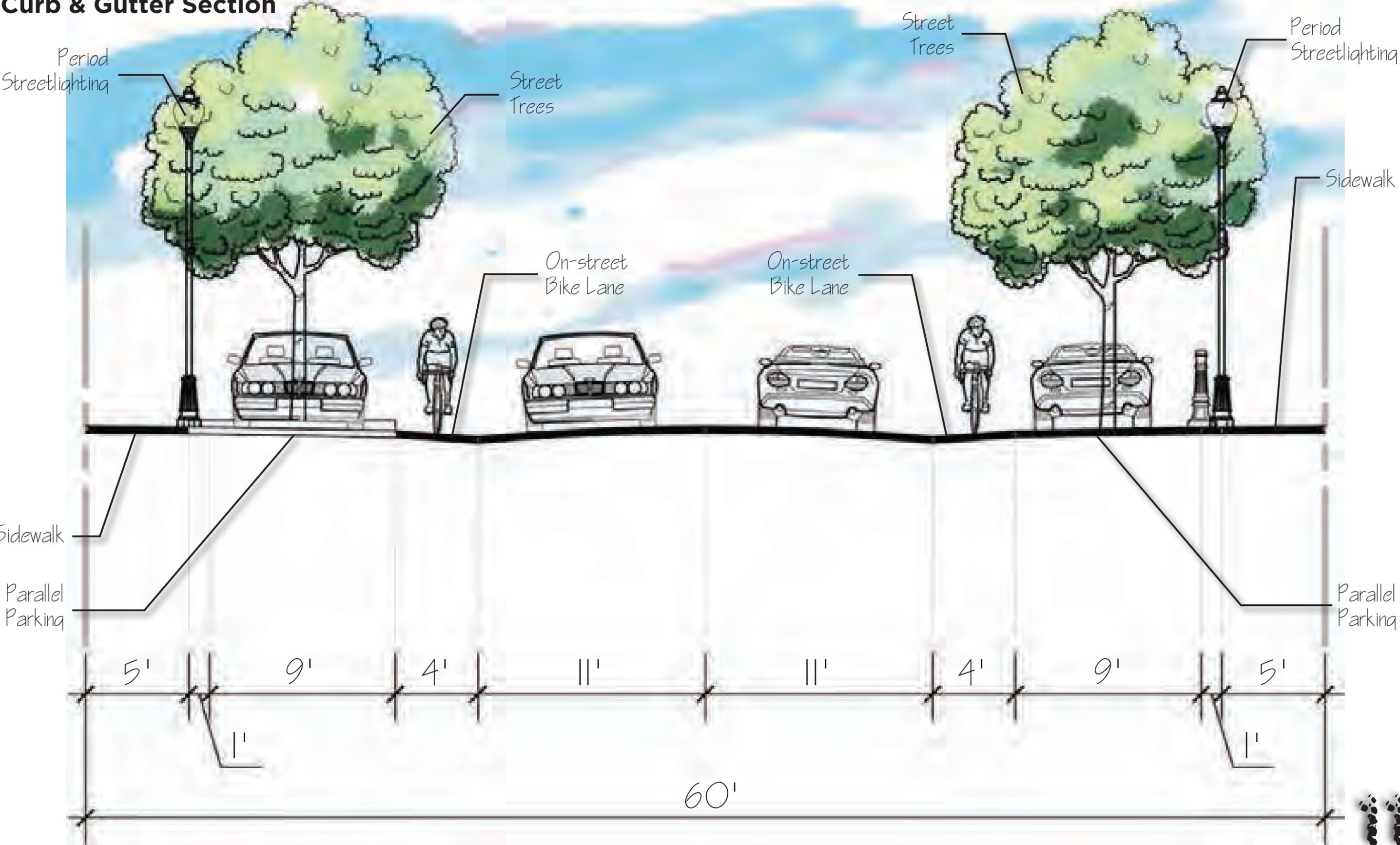


In the photo above, overhead power lines detract from the eclectic feel of the architectural character. Where possible, overhead utilities should be placed underground to clean up visual clutter and beautify the streetscape. As can be seen below, this can make a dramatic difference in creating a sense of place.



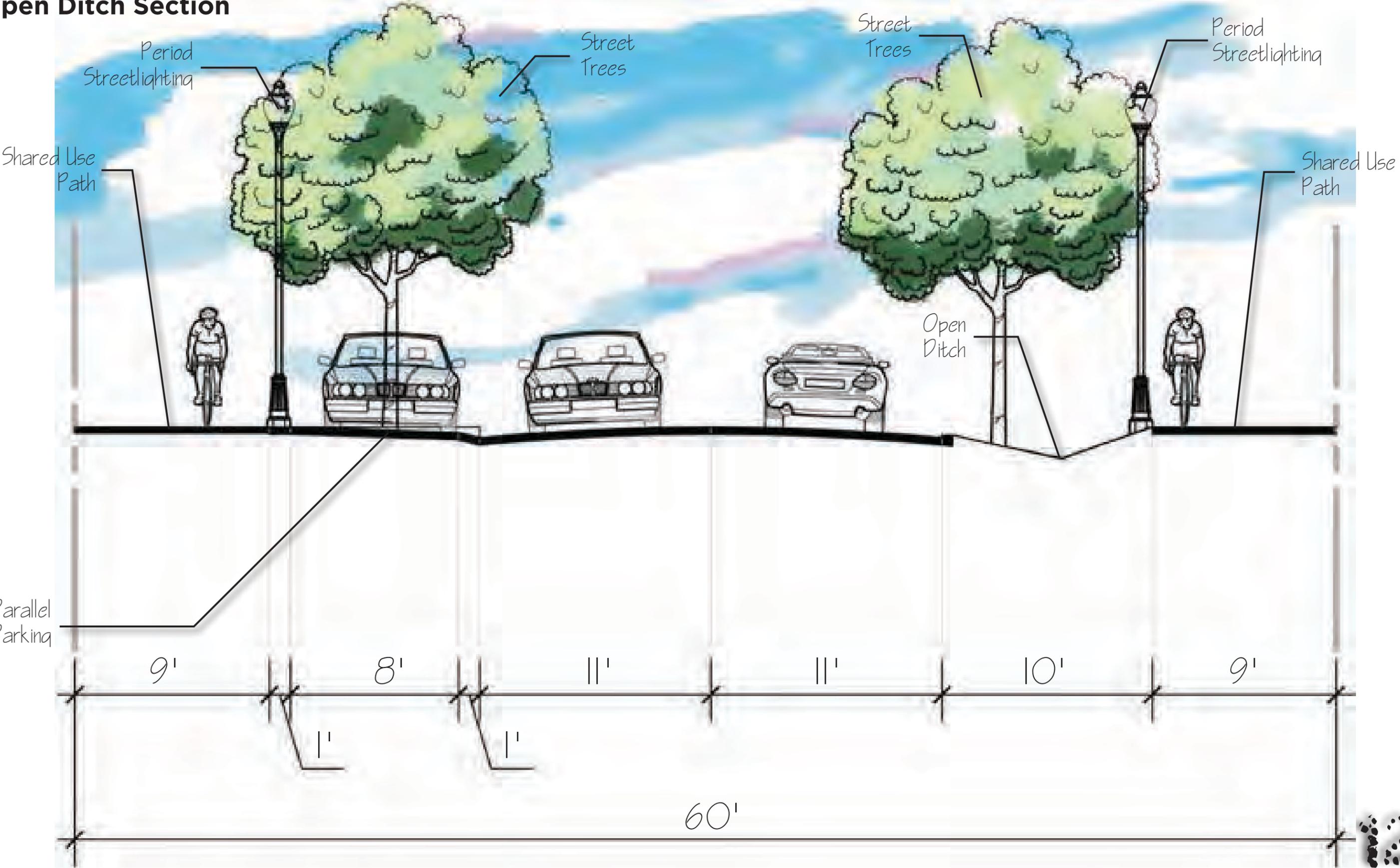
# Arterial Street Concept Typical Section

## Curb & Gutter Section

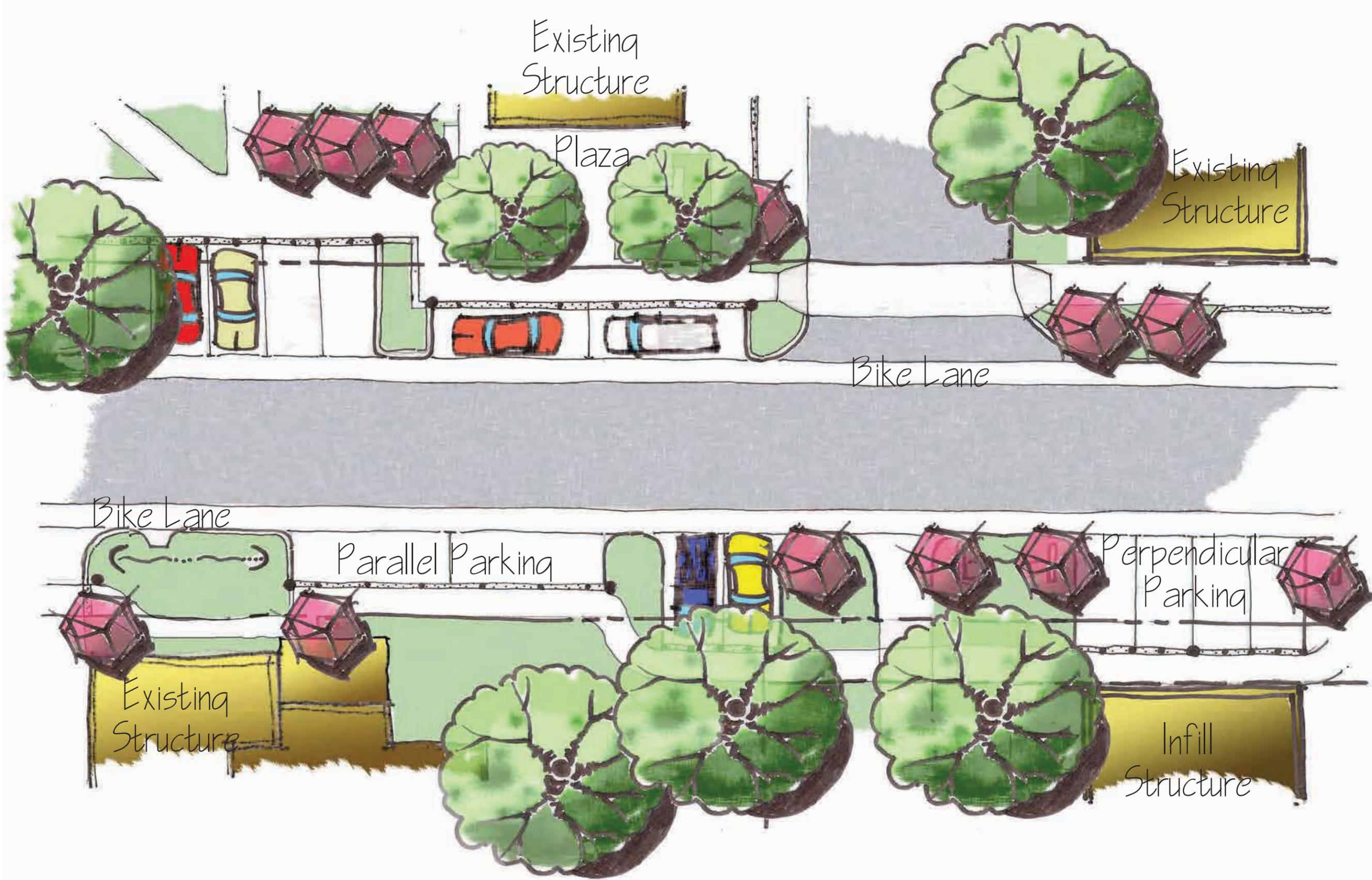


# Arterial Street Concept Typical Section

## Open Ditch Section



# Arterial Street Concept Plan View



# Arterial Street Concept Perspective

Kechi Rd. with Gateway east of Oliver



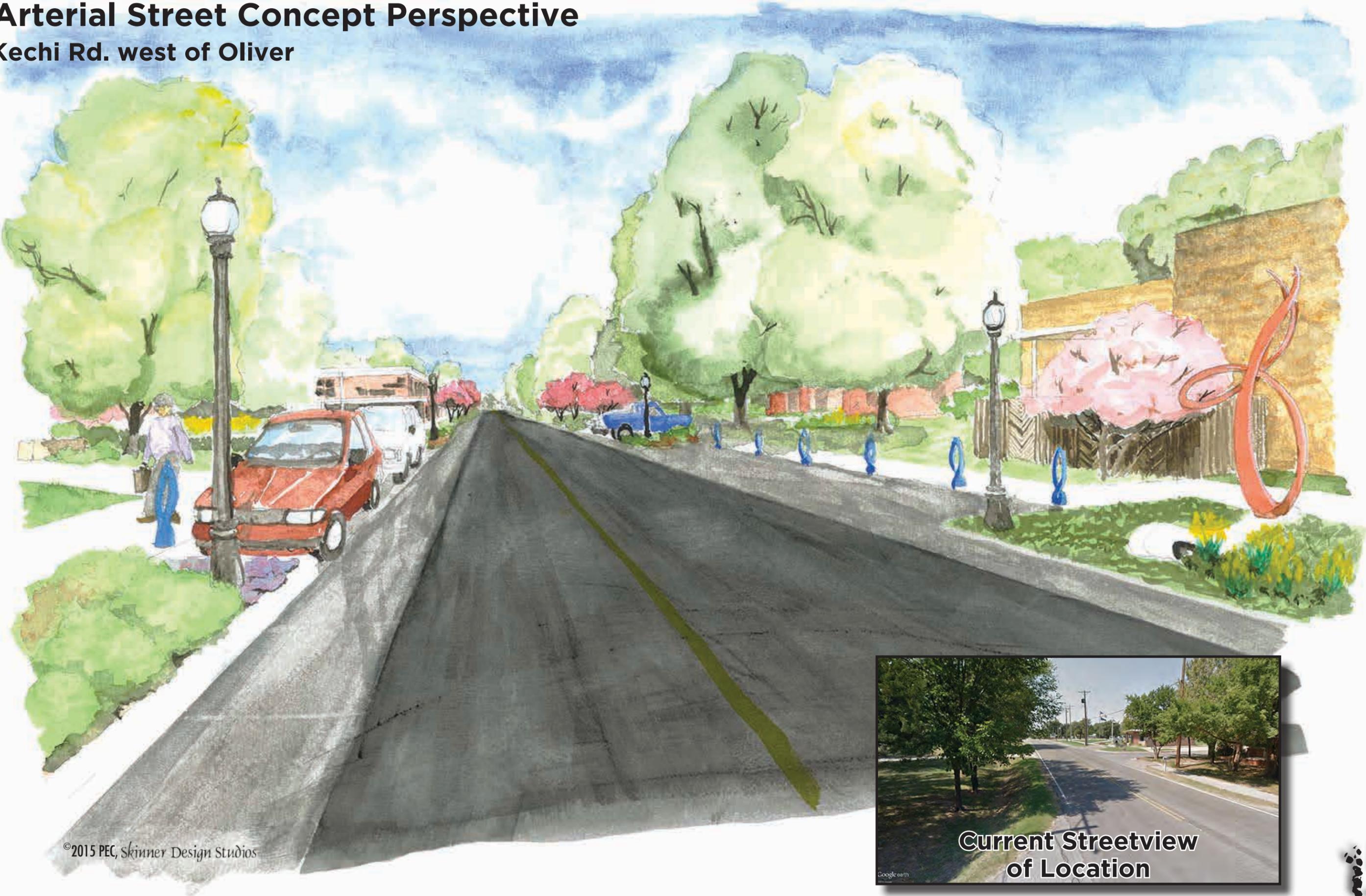
Current Streetview  
of Location

©2015 PEC, Skinner Design Studios



# Arterial Street Concept Perspective

## Kechi Rd. west of Oliver



©2015 PEC, Skinner Design Studios



Current Streetview  
of Location



# Strategic Implementation Priorities

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1** **Update the existing zoning and subdivision regulations to facilitate the type of development envisioned for the Arts & Business District.**

Zoning regulations assign each property a designated land use or zoning classification, each intended for a specific type of land use (R-1 for residential, C-1 for commercial, etc.). This dictates the allowable uses for the property along with the required design standards for architecture, signage and the site itself.

The Arts & Business District is currently made up of several different zoning classes, which segregates land uses by location. Successful redevelopment of the Arts & Business District will require a more seamless transition between the various land uses. In fact, uses that are now strictly segmented will need to be allowed on the same lot.

Design standards are also predicated upon a property's zoning class. They are intended to protect properties from the negative impacts of higher intensity adjacent land uses. For example, a commercial property may be required to provide a screening fence next to a residential property. This is entirely appropriate and necessary in some circumstances, but will serve as a detriment to redevelopment of the Arts & Business District. Strict segregation

of properties by use would disrupt the District's envisioned cohesiveness, both functionally and visually. Furthermore, the desired mix of residential, commercial and entertainment land uses is relatively compatible, avoiding the need for extensive design mitigation.

There are several recommendations related to the zoning and subdivision of property.

1) Rename the "C-1 Special Commercial District" zoning classification as "C-1 Arts & Business Mixed Use District." Add the desirable land uses (including residential) to the permitted use list and modify the design requirements as appropriate. These text amendments would be in affect upon approval for all properties zoned C-1 at that time.

2) The Planning Commission or City Council should then initiate rezoning of the remaining properties within the Arts & Business District to the modified C-1 zoning classification. Reference the District Map on page 2 for suggested boundaries.

3) Draft a Protective Overlay (P-O) for all properties outside of the District Map's "Primary Focus Area" and adopt the P-O at the time the new C-1 zoning district is approved. The P-O should restrict these properties to the uses and accompanying design standards existing on the date of enactment. The zoning

action for new development or use changes on affected lots will consist only of removing the P-O. Approval of such applications should be made subject to the following conditions:

- Site plan approval (according to new standards).
  - Dedication of needed rights-of-way and easements.
  - Replatting as necessary, with the possibility of requiring off-site improvements consistent with the Subdivision Regulations.
- 4) Add provisions for "Mixed Use Subdivisions" to the design standards in the Subdivision Regulations. Currently, the Subdivision Regulations only include design standards for residential, commercial and industrial subdivisions. The new design standards should be based on the Arts & Business District Redevelopment Design Concept and intended to implement the overall vision for the District. Specifically, new standards should be considered for streets, access, pedestrian facilities and storm water drainage.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2** **Use this design concept in conjunction with the adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan to guide redevelopment of the Arts & Business District.**

A planning process lasting over 18 months was conducted to prepare these planning documents. In addition to the City's significant investment, substantial effort was made to ensure their objectives reflect a community consensus. The expended resources should not be wasted. This guidance should be used in confidence when making development decisions. Ideally, this document should be either adopted as an element of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan or approved by a resolution directing staff to implement these strategies.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3** **Use this design concept to help market the Arts & Business District.**

The content and graphics of the Arts & Business District Redevelopment Design Concept should be used to market the District for economic development. This will help potential developers and business recruitment prospects understand the long-term vision for the area to make sure their project or business is a good fit for the District.



#### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4** **Develop a revenue stream dedicated to providing funds for redeveloping the Arts & Business District.**

There are many mechanisms authorized for use by Kansas statutes that could be used to help fund some degree of District improvements and revitalization efforts. Some possibilities include:

- Community Improvement District
- Tax Increment Financing
- Business Improvement District
- Municipal Improvement District
- Benefit District
- Development Impact Fees
- Local Option Sales Tax

It is recommended that Kechi study the feasibility of using a model similar to that used for revitalization of downtown Wichita. This would involve creating a Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District or SSMID (see K.S.A. 12-1794) and a nonprofit development corporation for the Arts & Business District.

Once established, the SSMID would generate revenue through a tax on properties within the District. A portion of revenues would be used by the City of Kechi to fund infrastructure improvements. The City would use the remaining portion of SSMID revenues to contract with the development corporation for District marketing and promotional services.

#### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY #5** **Invest public funds to construct a pilot street project designed according to the Arts & Business Redevelopment Design Concept.**

Public investment plays a critical role in most successful community redevelopment efforts, especially in the beginning stages of an initiative such as this. For the Arts & Business District, a City-funded project at the intersection of Kechi Rd. and Oliver Ave. would be an excellent kickoff for the redevelopment effort.

As mentioned on page 3, this “Crossroads of Kechi” is the critical node of the Arts & Business District. The improvements would be seen and the benefits shared by all who drive through this point. This location has several successful businesses that play a critical role in Kechi’s economy. Their owners have already made private investments toward District redevelopment. This pilot project would directly benefit those who are already making significant contributions to the revitalization effort. The suggested project might also spark new interest in developing the two vacant parcels on the south side of the intersection.

The recommendation is limited to intersection improvements plus roadway and streetscape enhancements within 500’ of the intersection in all four directions. Based on previous projects designed by PEC, a range of \$700,000 to \$1.3 million is a reasonable planning level estimate of project costs, depending on the degree of improvements.

#### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY #6** **Develop a municipal investment policy establishing parameters for the use of public funds on incentives for development in the Arts & Business District.**

Public investment, as previously stated, is important to any revitalization effort. However, it is equally important that tax dollars are spent wisely. A policy should be developed and adopted by Kechi City Council that defines the criteria by which the City will participate in District redevelopment funding.

Recommendations regarding the use of development incentives include:

- Public investments should only be made on improvements that can be used by the public and provide direct benefits to the community. Spending that only benefits the private developer should be avoided.
- Limit eligibility for incentives to projects that can demonstrate consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and established community development goals.
- Public investment should leverage additional private investment.
- Return on investment (ROI) targets should be established for all incentives.
- Implement “clawbacks” that require the repayment of any incentives provided for projects that fail to meet ROI targets or performance requirements, such as job creation.

- Those seeking to receive incentives should be required to pay for an economic study conducted by the City that identifies how the proposed development will meet the established eligibility criteria.
- Eligibility criteria should apply to all forms of public participation in private development. This includes tax abatements, industrial revenue bonds, tax credit programs, cash allowances, grant matches, fee waivers, utility discounts, concessions to development standards and development finance tools like community improvement districts or tax increment financing.
- It is also suggested that the policy apply to the municipal financing of benefit districts associated with new subdivision development. This practice is a common development finance tool whereby the City issues bonds to pay for development infrastructure. The bonds are paid back by the purchaser through “special assessment” taxes. This places the investment risk on the City and its taxpayers, rather than the developer. While it has been used successfully for decades by communities across Kansas, failed developments leave local taxpayers on the hook for repayment of bonds.

While specifically intended for the Arts & Business District, these suggestions could be the foundation for a comprehensive citywide policy directive.





