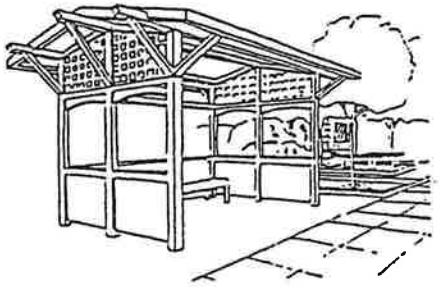
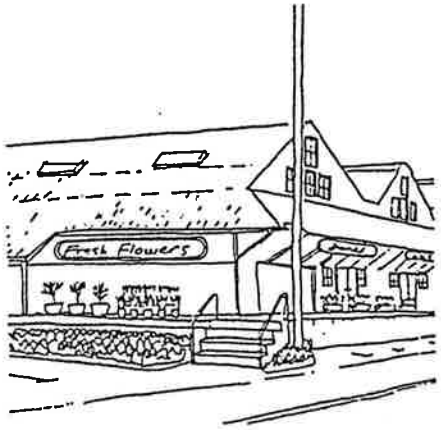
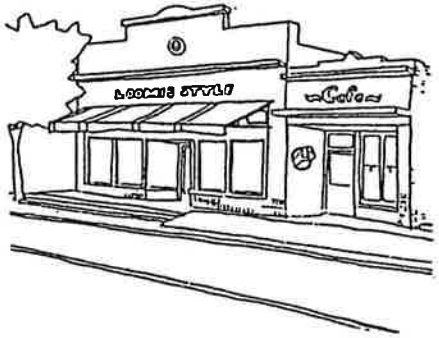
BS.00

Downtown Loomis

Economic Development Implementation Program







DESIGN GUIDELINES HANDBOOK

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. Economic Revitalization

Historic Downtown Loomis is at a crossroads. The community can attempt to attract the kinds of goods and services sought by a growing region, or see such businesses establish themselves elsewhere. It can work together to enhance Downtown's underlying strengths, or let property owners and merchants attempt to work independently.

Recognizing that revitalization of Downtown requires a concerted, joint effort of the business community and local government, the Town of Loomis undertook a planning process guided by an "Economic Development Commission", representing business and property owners and City staff. Members of the Commission are listed following the title page.

The planning culminated in the Loomis Economic Development Program Handbook, and this accompanying Design Guidelines Handbook. Together these two documents define an integrated strategy to help revitalize Downtown.

The Economic Development Handbook includes such components as Centralized Retail Management, Business Retention and Recruitment, Improved Merchandising Techniques, a Downtown Marketing Strategy focused upon an historic rehabilitated "fruit shed", and Civic Beautification.

2. The Design Guidelines

The proposals in this handbook broaden the concept of Civic Beautification to improve the quality of the overall physical environment so that Downtown will attract more visitors, shoppers and potential new investors. Ultimate goals of the guidelines are to:

- Create a people-oriented setting that encourages fun, excitement and interest;
- Improve the convenience and safety of Downtown for drivers and pedestrians.

- Enhance business transactions, employment, and property values; and

- Instill a sense of "pride of place" built upon the Town's unique history and character.

3. Area Subject to the Guidelines

Although the Town Zoning Ordinance and Town Center Master Plan refer to the "Downtown Core", these guidelines focus on that portion of the Downtown Core which is really the heart of the community: Taylor Road, roughly between Webb Street and Circle Way. Some proposed programs, such as the Facade Improvements Program, apply to an even smaller area: Taylor Road between Horseshoe Bar Road and Oak Street.

The purpose of this sharp focus is to avoid dissipating energy and funds over too wide an area, and to highlight sites with the greatest opportunity for improvement.

4. Organization of the Guidelines

This Handbook is action-oriented. The heart of the document is Chapter B., which includes descriptions and illustrations of eight improvement projects which are seen as pivotal to the long term success of Downtown Loomis. Chapter C. provides specific guidelines which should be used by the Town to review potential proposals for improvements to building facades, expansion of existing buildings, and development of new projects.

Chapter D. Appendix provides supplemental information on cost estimates for the public and private projects discussed in Chapter B.

It is hoped that the community, armed with the overall Implementation Program, will inspire Town officials, property owners, merchants and citizens to undertake a systematic program of actions to enhance the convenience, character and visual attractiveness of Downtown, thereby helping to bring about its economic revitalization.

B. PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

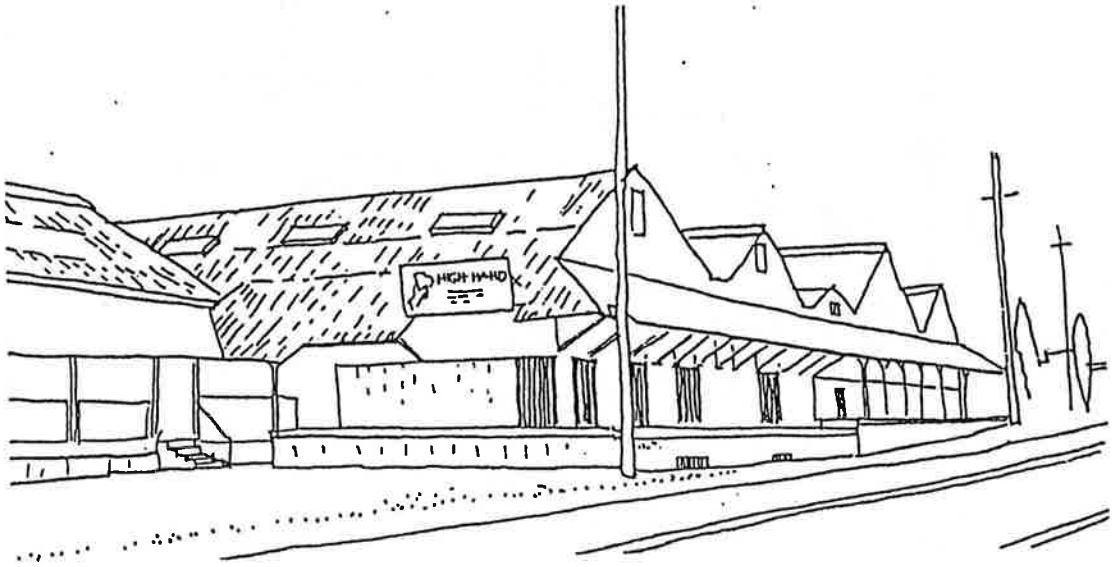
Downtown revitalization will depend, in part, on a concerted effort to improve the quality of downtown for residents, visitors, property owners, merchants and other business persons. Together, these improvements are intended to strengthen the identity of Downtown, make it more attractive and exciting as well as more convenient to use.

Eight projects are proposed:

1. Reuse of Historic Fruitshed.
2. Reuse of Historic Train Depot.
3. Street Tree Enhancement.
4. Facade Improvements.
5. Public Arts Program.
6. Entrance Features.
7. Parking and Vehicular Circulation Improvements.
8. Pedestrian Circulation Improvements.

1. Reuse of an Historic Fruitshed

Fruit growing and packing has been at the heart of the Loomis economy for most of this century. The Loomis Fruit Grower's Association was chartered in 1901, and continues to operate today. In recent years, however, fruit growing has declined and most of the area's large fruit packing "sheds" have been closed. Today, packing occupies only a small floor area in the two vast sheds still operated by Loomis Fruit Grower's Assn. and the Blue Anchor Company in Loomis. In fact, these two companies have discussed merging their operations into one shed.



The Loomis Fruit Grower's Shed looking northeast along Taylor Road.

Of the sheds in Loomis, the Loomis Fruit Grower's shed at 3750 Taylor Road (opposite Oak St.) presents the best opportunity for conversion to uses which would help to revitalize downtown Loomis. This shed is located directly on Taylor Road, with a raised covered walkway along the front of the building. Five prominent gables face the street, suggesting the possibility of separate stores or businesses (although inside, the entire floor is not subdivided, allowing for great flexibility in use). Recently, Green Valley Produce opened its fresh fruit store at the west end of the structure.

The Loomis Fruit Grower's shed looking southwest along Taylor Road.

Existing Structure and Layout of the Shed

The packing house was the first of its kind in Placer County, begun in 1926 and added onto as late as 1956. Its heavy timber, post and beam construction shelters about 25,300 square feet of floor area, including a 3,000 sf cold storage room. There is also a cool, dry basement with another 11,250 sf. The flooring, corrugated metal cladding and roofing are in good condition. However, the foundation may need replacement, and seismic upgrading could be required.

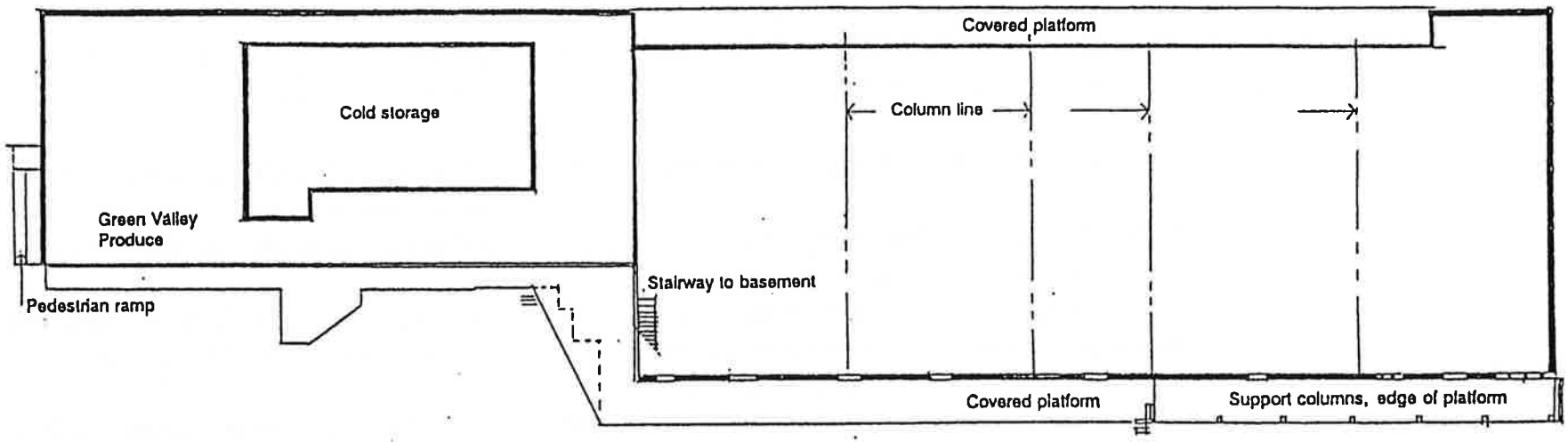
An attic is used for storage and assembly of fruit packing boxes which are slid down to the main floor on unusual curving tracks. Conveyor belts carry fresh and boxed fruit around the floor. The cavernous space is illuminated by relatively small skylights and hanging lamps along the assembly lines. To visitors, the operations - largely unchanged since the shed was put into use - are fascinating.

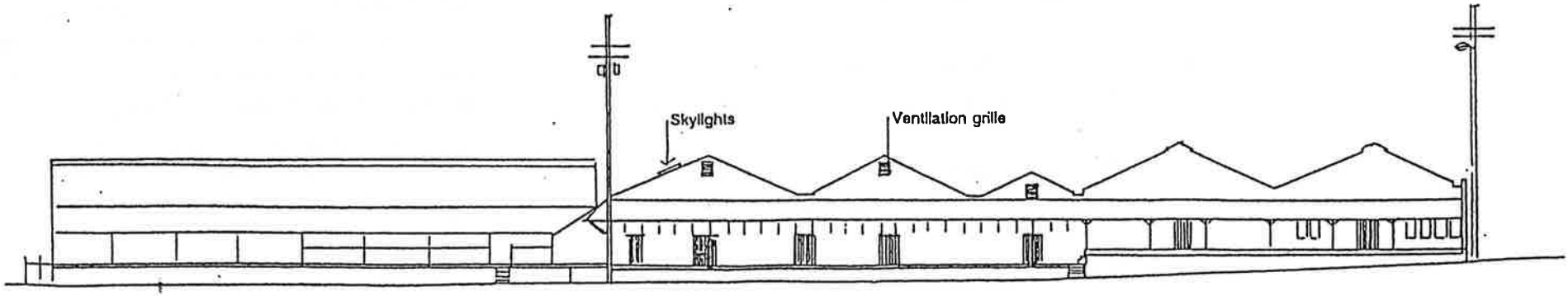
Behind the shed are the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks, which once carried boxcars of peaches and plums to Eastern Markets. Today, much smaller shipments are made by truck.

The structure is noted in the Historic Resources Inventory of the Department of Parks and Recreation of the State of California.

EXISTING FRUITSHED, TAYLOR ROAD
LOOMIS FRUITGROWERS

0' 25' 50' 100'





Potential New Uses for the Shed

The Board of the Loomis Fruit Grower's Association supports the conversion of floor area in the shed to uses which will help to revitalize Downtown and provide a return on investment. Potential uses should:

- Capitalize upon the building's history and character;
- Take advantage of its large floor area;
- Support a mixed use concept, whereby visitors are encouraged to walk between businesses;
- Not require major or costly conversion, such as fully enclosed air conditioned space; and
- Open up to Taylor Road, with new windows and activity along the covered platform.

Potential uses include:

- Fresh Produce sales. Green Valley Produce recently opened a store in the fruit shed.
- Fruit Packing in a portion of the shed for periodic operation and attraction to visitors.
- Fresh Flowers, or other, colorful use particularly at the southwest corner of the shed nearest Taylor road, where merchandise could be displayed on the platform (see drawing on Page 9).
- Restaurants/cafes with outdoor seating along the front platform.
- Art Gallery and Antiques, taking advantage of the availability of large floor area which may not require air conditioning or heating.
- Micro-Brewery and Pub, taking advantage of the cool basement level for storage.
- Specialty Retail, such as a coffee shop/bakery.

Improvements to the Shed and Adjacent Areas

1. Covered Walkway. Provide stairways to Taylor Street where shown on the plan on Page 7. Provide a handrail along the edge of the platform. The covered walkway would serve as a public sidewalk, and would require approval of the Loomis Building Inspector. Additional stairways could be built on the rear of the shed, if parking were to be provided on that side of the building.

POTENTIAL RENOVATION AND REUSE OF
FRUITSHED, TAYLOR ROAD
LOOMIS FRUITGROWERS

0' 25' 50' 100'

SPRR property

Gravel parking lot

Overflow parking on SPRR property

New stairway

New stairway

New ramp up

Existing cold storage

Green Valley Produce

Pedestrian walkway

Relocate stairs to basement

Potential microbrewery in basement

Small area for existing fruit packing and new uses

Pedestrian walkway

Pedestrian ramp

Highly visible use on corner (flower sales)

Antiques and Art sales

Striped parking bays

Flower boxes or potted plants along edge of platform

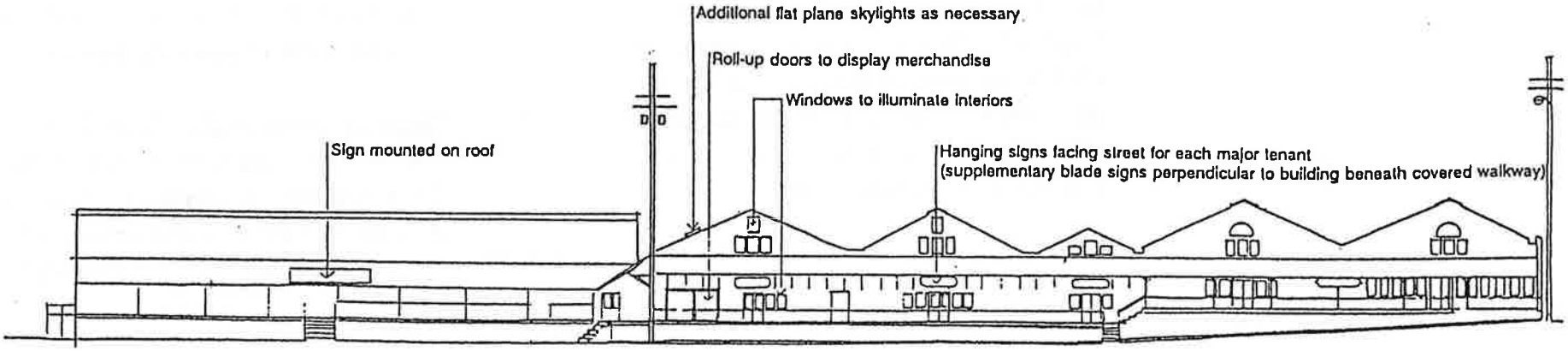
Taylor Road right-of-way

New stairway

Striped parking bays

New stairway

Edge of roadway



2. Windows. Install windows along the Taylor Road walkway frontage to attract visitors, display merchandise, and illuminate the interior. Also, provide high windows to replace the grilles near the peaks of gables, and/or add additional flat plane skylights in the roof, where needed. Windows should be in the same proportion and size as existing windows and grilles.

3. Doors. Doors and adjacent windows should be centered beneath gables, as shown in the elevation on page 7. The placement of doors at these locations will help to reinforce the effect of separate "stores" beneath gables. Roll-up or lift-up doors are encouraged to open up the structure to display merchandise, and reveal activity to passers-by.

4. Signs. Hanging signs would be installed by tenants, according to guidelines discussed in Chapter C. They would be hung along the edge of the walkway canopy. Smaller blade signs would be hung across the walkway as well, opposite each entry. Signs would be illuminated by external sources.

5. Parking. Spaces would be provided along Taylor Road and southwest of the structure on Loomis Fruit Grower's property. If needed, spaces would be provided on the adjacent land leased from SPRR. The Town should consider allowing for gravel surface parking.

   Convenient parallel spaces in front of the walkway would continue the pattern of parallel parking downtown. Fruitboxes could be treated to become planter boxes and placed along the walkway to screen views of parked cars. These parking spaces are located within the Taylor Road right-of-way.

6. Utilities and Other Tenant Improvements. Water supply, sewage collection, electrical distribution, or other site improvements may be required, but have not been evaluated. Some of these improvements may be carried out as part of tenant improvements depending upon the needs of particular tenants.

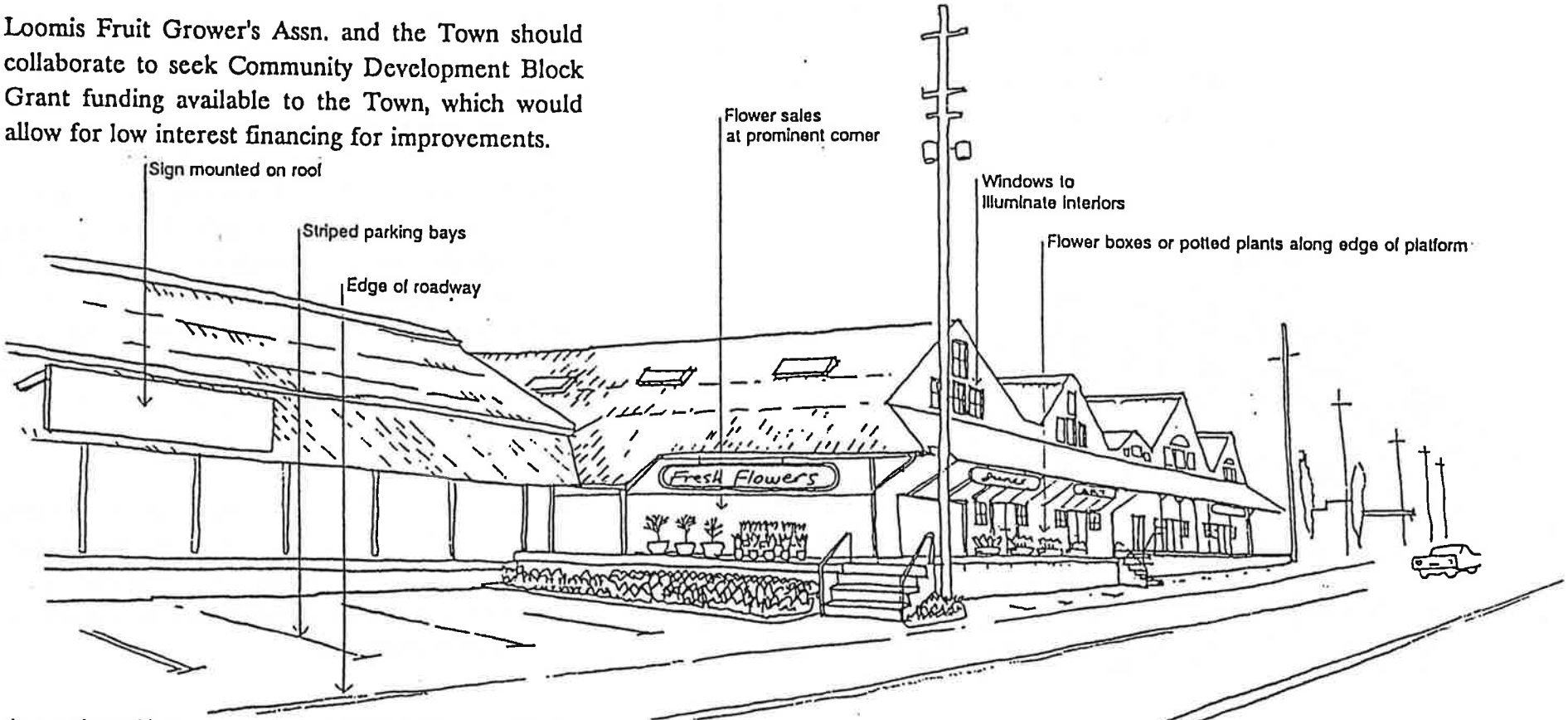
7. Off-site Improvements. The Town should endeavor to improve the image of the Mid-Town Apartments, opposite the fruit shed. It is an eyesore which may adversely affect the commercial viability of the fruitshed project.

Cost of Improvements

Itemized costs of fruitshed improvements are estimated at $871,537 (see Chapter D for details).

Implementation

Loomis Fruit Grower's Assn. and the Town should collaborate to seek Community Development Block Grant funding available to the Town, which would allow for low interest financing for improvements.



An attractive use like flower sales at the most highly visible corner of the shed would help to attract visitors to the entire shed.

2. Reuse of Historic Train Depot

Loomis' historic passenger train depot lies in disrepair at the northern extension of Horseshoe Bar Road, about 50 feet from the railroad tracks. The long, narrow structure (approximately 30 feet wide by 110 feet long) has a raised floor at the northeast end accessible by an adjacent loading dock. The passenger waiting area on the southwest end is at ground level.

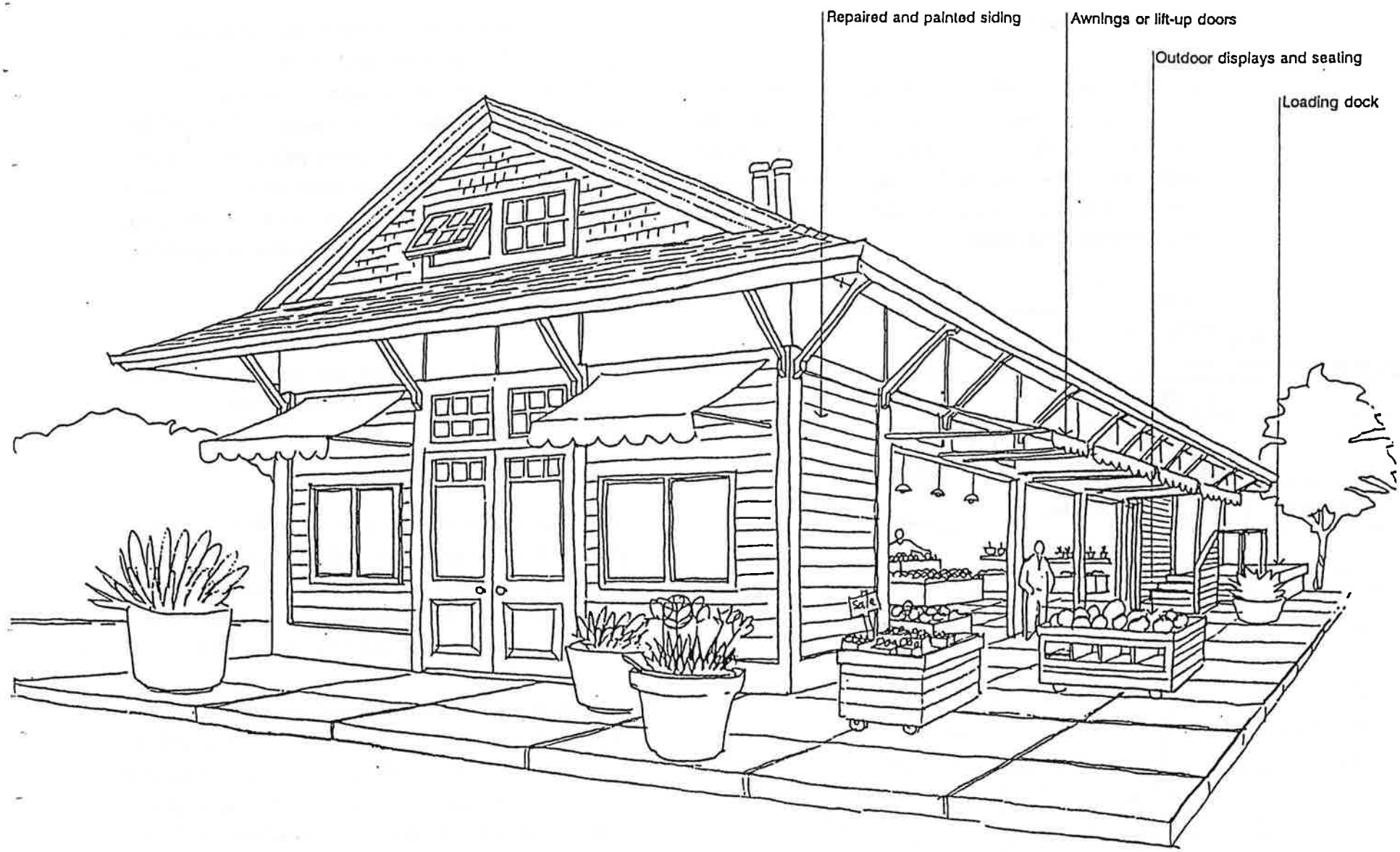
The Loomis train depot as it looks today.

The depot enjoys a visible location, nearly on axis with Horseshoe Bar Road as it approaches the intersection with Taylor Road, the main intersection in town. The structure also appears to be in essentially sound condition.

Potential Uses for the Depot

The historic structure could be converted to specialty retail use, restaurant/cafe, or both. A civic use such as a museum could be considered. The key to the success of the conversion would be to take advantage of the shed's visibility, by opening it up with new windows and doors, and by making the depot a centerpiece in a plaza containing other amenities and features.

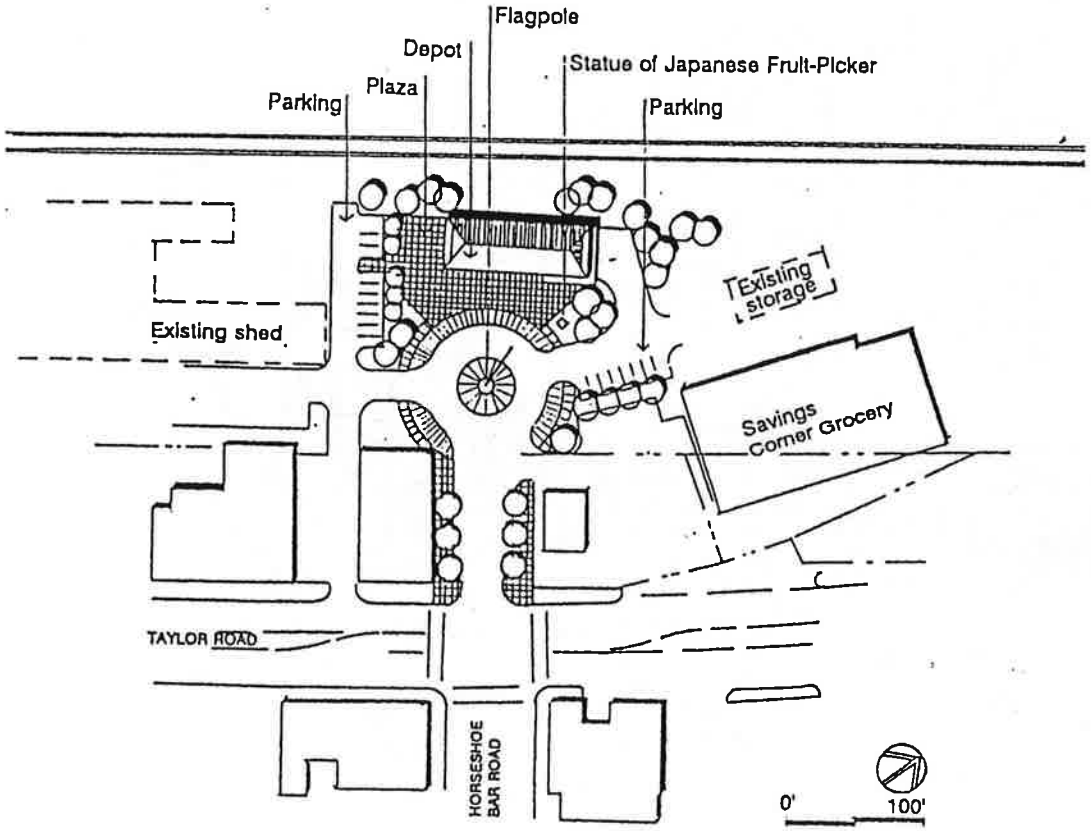
As the drawing on Page 11 shows, the addition of new windows and doors, in keeping with the original structure, coupled with awnings and attractive paving could create an attractive setting for a specialty foods market, or outdoor cafe.



The depot could be opened up to display colorful activities and merchandise attractive to visitors and residents alike.

Site Improvements

A civic plaza would be built around the depot, containing seating and a possible sculpture memorializing the role of Japanese fruit pickers in the early economy of Loomis. Parking would be provided on each side of the plaza, accessible from a cul-de-sac on Horseshoe Bar Road.



Sidewalks would be widened on each side of Horseshoe Bar and the corners "bubbled out" at Taylor road, to create an entrance to the area. A flagpole would be placed in the middle of the cul-de-sac, which would be prominently visible on approach via Horseshoe Bar Road. Banners or flags could be displayed on shorter poles in the plaza. Landscaping would frame the depot and plaza and screen parking.

Cost of Train Depot Improvements

Preliminary costs for depot and site improvements total $871,537 (see Chapter D. for details).

Implementation

The Blue Anchor Company owns the building. Blue Anchor has a ground lease with the Southern Pacific Railroad. Possible future use of the depot as a passenger depot for commuter rail service is not anticipated nor being planned for at this time.

Blue Anchor has offered to sell the building to the Town of Loomis for a nominal amount, and to sublease the site for a dollar per year. All or portions of the depot could be subleased for appropriate commercial uses, or the entire structure used as a community center.

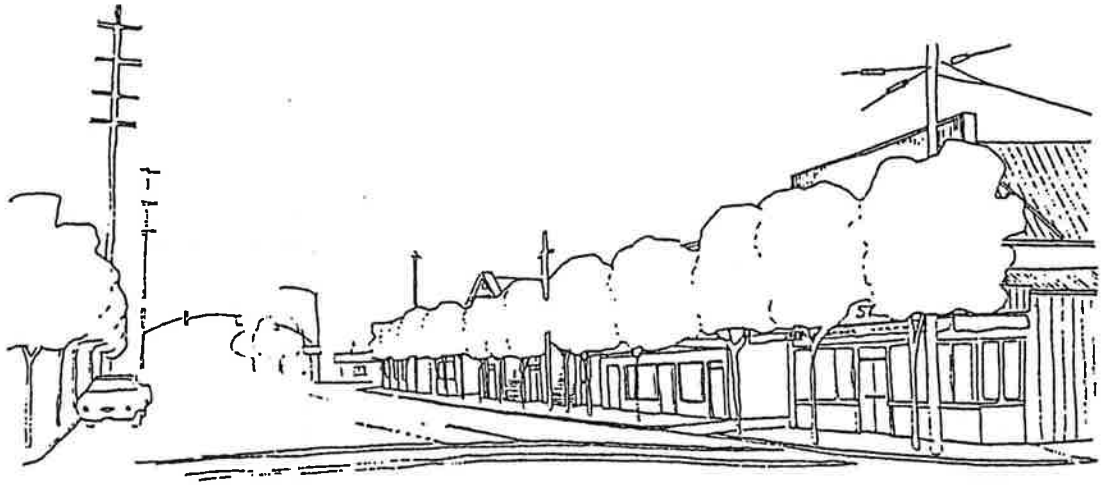
3. Street Tree Enhancement

In the mid-1980s the Town of Loomis planted street trees in the sidewalk on both sides of Taylor Road, between Horseshoe Bar Road and Walnut Street. Sixteen trees were planted on one side and 18 on the other. Different types of street trees are planted irregularly on other blocks in Downtown.

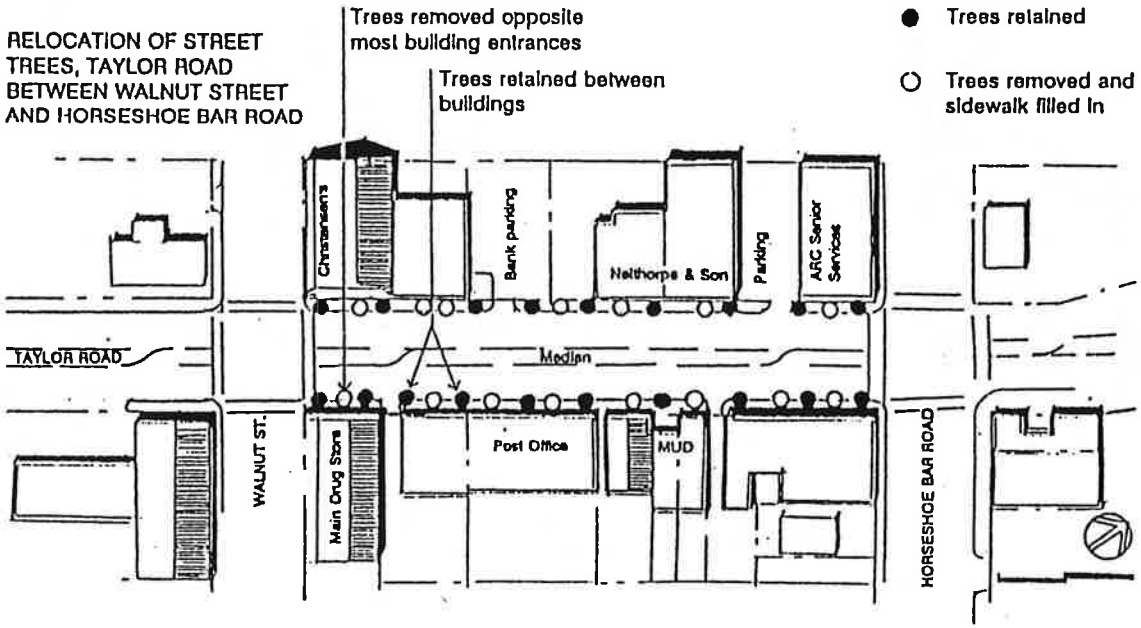
The street tree beautification program was a good idea, and has provided sun protection and introduced attractive fall color to Downtown, but it has had some perhaps unintended effects. The Chinese Pistache trees tend to branch out horizontally, and have grown up against awnings and buildings, often obscuring business signs, architectural features and building entrances. Because the trees are close together, the visual effect is almost uninterrupted foliage all along the street, above awning height, as shown at right.

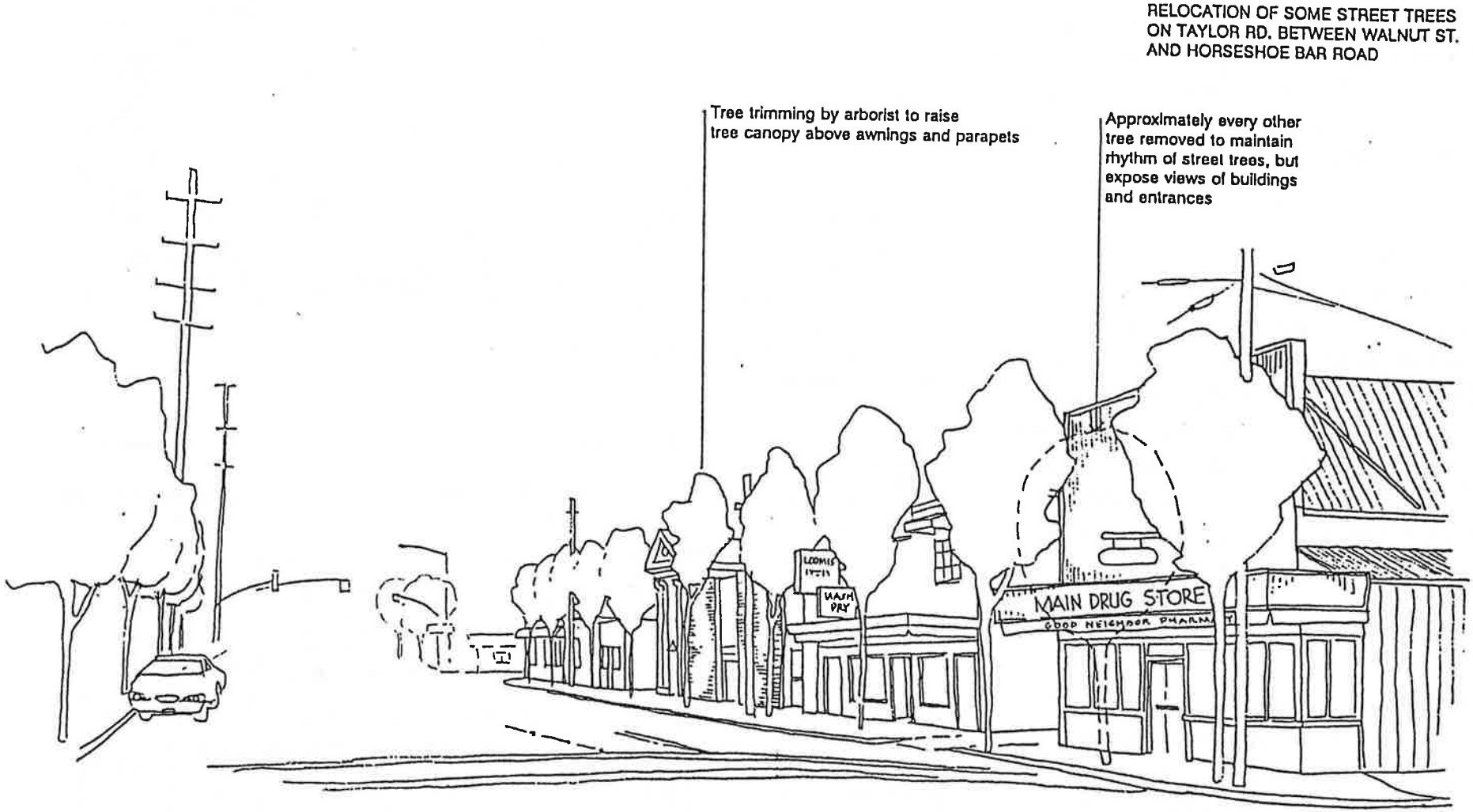
Street Tree Improvements

Selective removal of some trees is proposed to better reveal building entrances, architectural features and business signs. About every other tree would be removed, particularly opposite building entrances, while retaining them at the junctures between buildings (see the adjacent street plan).



Dense foliage obscures buildings along Taylor Road, as seen from its intersection with Walnut St.





Selective removal of about every other tree will reveal buildings, signs and entrances without interrupting the visual rhythm of street trees.

Brick would be filled in where the trees are removed. Benches would replace the removed trees at two locations on each side of the street. Planter boxes in place of the removed trees are not recommended, due to the narrowness of the sidewalks. Plaques honoring persons who contributed to the original street tree program would be relocated adjacent to plaques at the base of retained trees.

Annual trimming of trees by an experienced arborist is recommended to direct the trees into a more vertical shape. Trimming, in combination with removal of some trees will also facilitate the installation of canopies and awnings under the proposed Facade Improvements Program.

Cost of Street Tree Enhancement

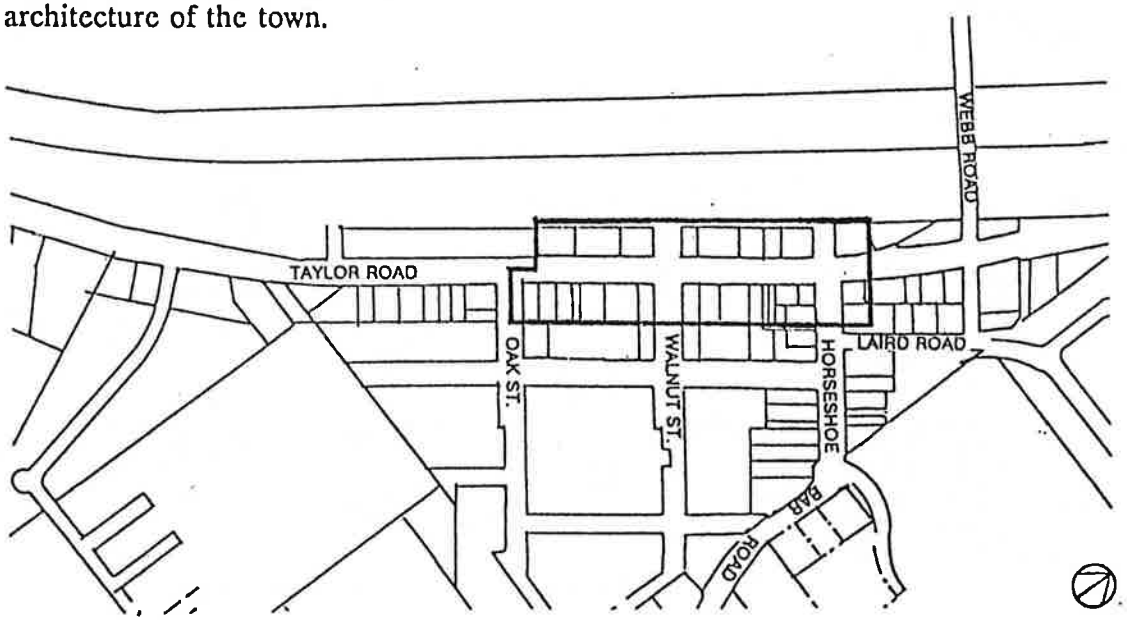
The street tree program is estimated to cost $22,798 (see Chapter D. for details).

Implementation

This would be a project of the Town of Loomis. Funding contributions from benefiting property owners might be considered.

4. Facade Improvements

Attractive commercial buildings invite visitors and instill pride in a community. Loomis has some fine historic buildings which have been well maintained (particularly the Greek Revival style Bank of Loomis, now owned by South Placer County Municipal Utility District). Even more modest buildings with false fronts and fixed, sloping canopies over the sidewalk (such as Christensen's Saddlery, with corrugated metal over a braced timer structure) continue a design vernacular perhaps begun by the historic fruitshed architecture of the town.



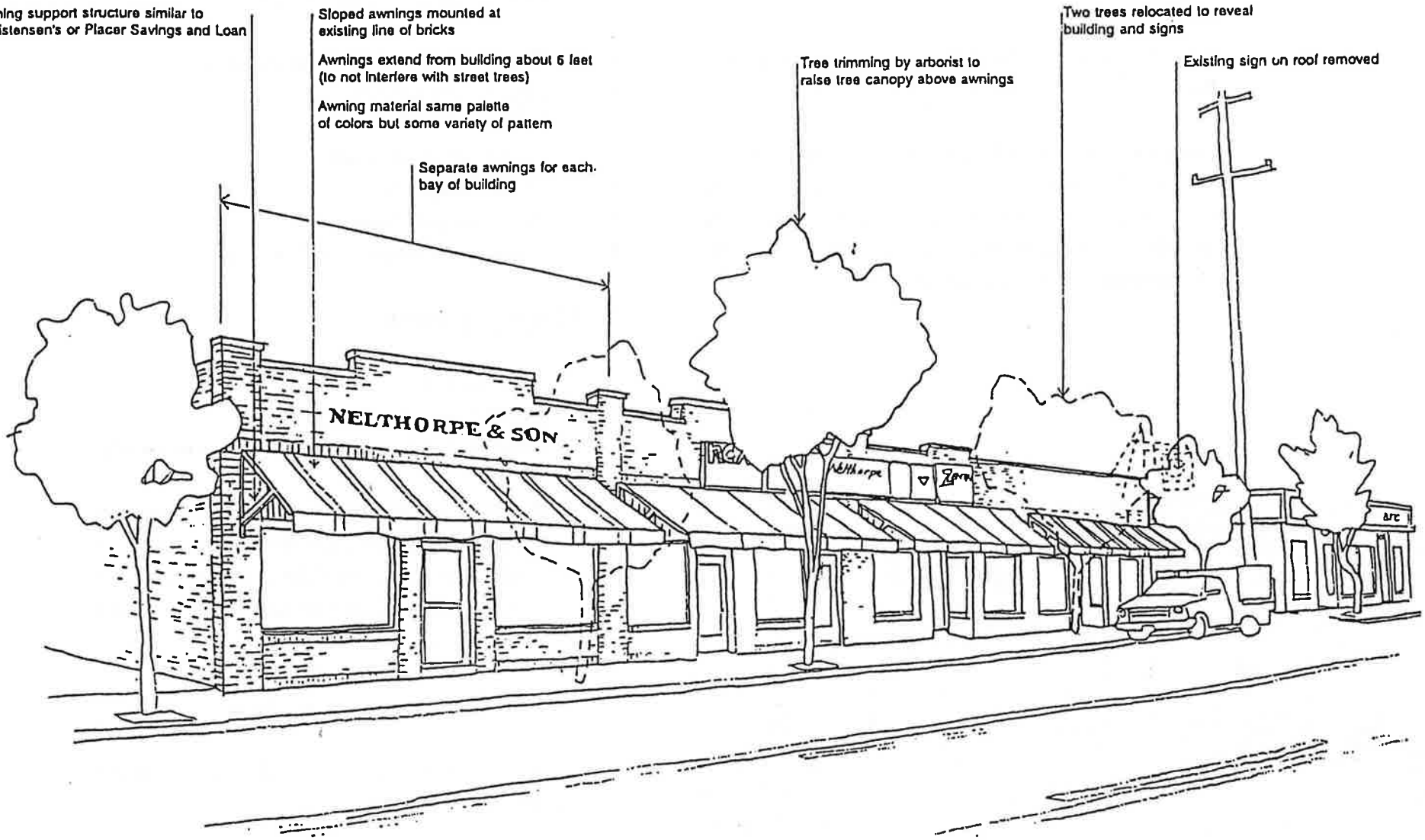
The boundary of the facade improvements program would be tightly focused on the Downtown core.

Unfortunately, there are other historic buildings in Downtown which have been stripped of ornament and canopies, leaving flat, featureless facades (as shown on this page). Other buildings are painted with dark, unappealing colors, or with just one color, obscuring differently-patterned brickwork or millwork detail.

Implementation of the Facade Improvements Program

A program is proposed for the Town of Loomis to subsidize improvements to the facades of buildings facing Taylor Road or Horseshoe Bar Rd. (see the limits of the area of eligibility). A number of cities have such programs to revitalize their declining downtowns. The Town could consider providing grants with an equal match from property owners (or tenants), up to a fixed amount. Narrow frontage buildings would receive less than wider buildings. The Town could pay for schematic-level designs (more detailed construction plans would be the responsibility of the owner). The Town could also waive permit fees. Matching funds would be distributed upon satisfactory completion of eligible improvements.

The Nelthorpe Building, built in 1915, has lost the awnings it once had.



Historic Nelthorpe family signage, replacement of awnings within each bay of the building, and removal of two street trees would enhance Downtown.

A trellis or other landscaped structure constructed across the front of the Nelthorpe parking lot would desirably screen parked cars (not shown above).

Eligible Beautification

All improvements would have to be consistent with design guidelines established in Chapter C.

The program is aimed particularly at buildings with flat, undifferentiated facades, where historic design features may have been covered up or painted over, and there are opportunities to restore some of the character of the original building.

The General Merchandise store on Horseshoe Bar Rd. at Taylor Road has a flat facade, with out-of-scale signs and boarded up transom windows.

Particular items which would be funded:

- Fixed, sloping canopies or awnings
- Signage and lighting
- Painting
- Plaster or stucco work
- Wood treatment
- Windows and doors
- Appropriate decorative features

Ineligible Improvements

- Maintenance
- Roofing
- Structural improvements unrelated to facade
- Paving
- Seismic retrofit of unreinforced masonry buildings (parapet caps shown on Page 19 would necessarily be light materials such as metal or "Dryvit", or otherwise retrofit would be required)

Cost of the Facade Improvements Program

Facade improvements are estimated to cost $65,062 (see details in Chapter D).

POTENTIAL FACADE IMPROVEMENTS,
EXISTING VACANT STORES,
SOUTHEAST CORNER HORSESHOE BAR ROAD
AND TAYLOR ROAD

The kinds of facade improvements shown above would be eligible for matching funds under the facade improvements program. The "Welcome to Loomis" mural would be separately funded by the Town.

5. Public Arts Program

Public artwork can lend identity, a sense of place and pride in a community. Artwork in outdoor public places, unlike gallery art, must be conceived as part of an overall architectural and landscape architectural design for a particular setting.

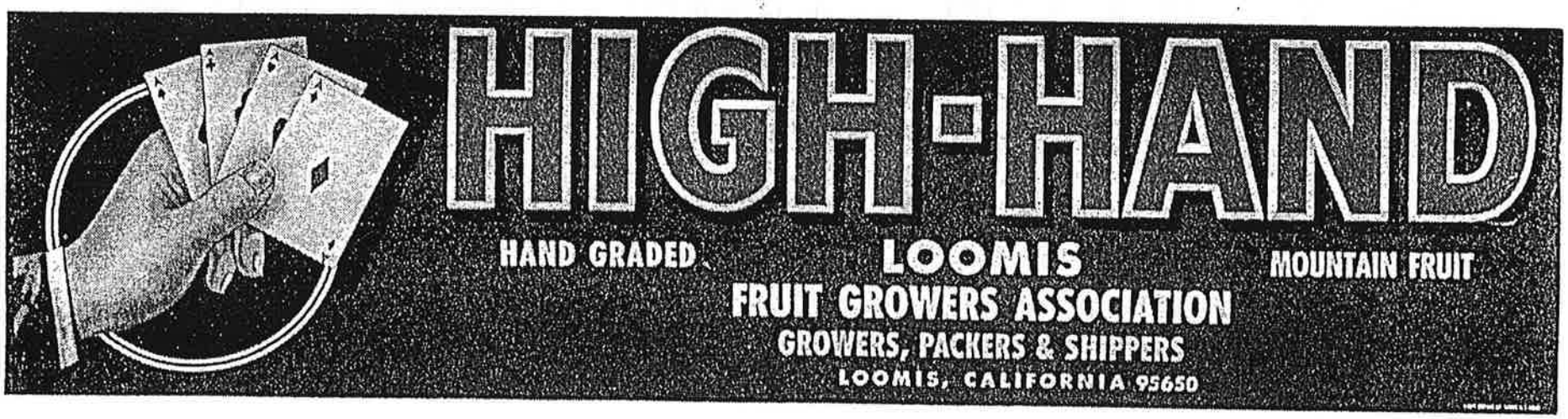
Murals and Sculpture

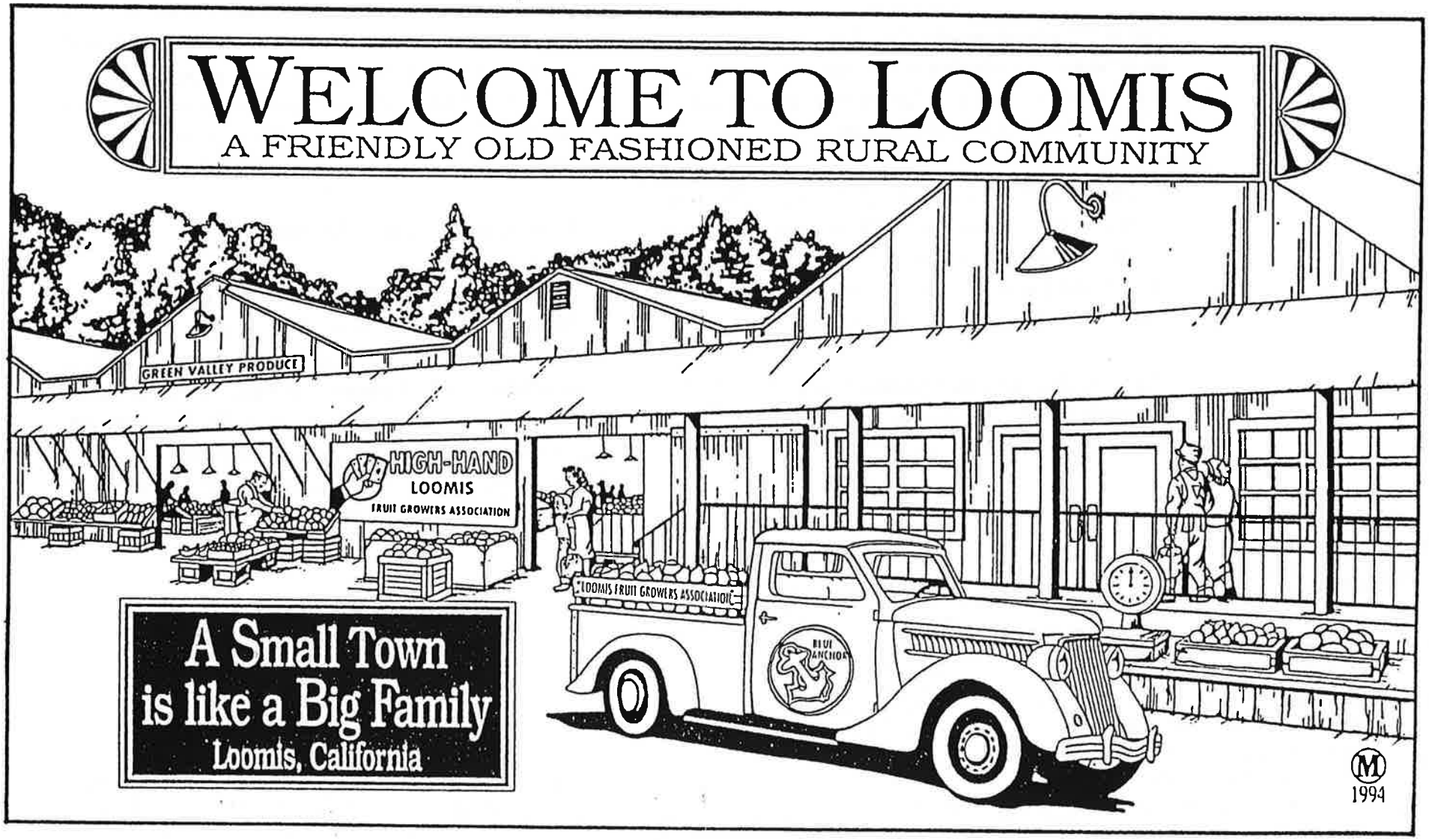
Wall murals incorporating historic fruitbox label advertising art (example below) are recommended to be painted on conspicuous blank walls in Downtown (for example, the wall in Nelthorpe's parking lot, and the west wall of former feed and grain store on Horseshoe Bar Road - see Page 19).

A sculpture commemorating the role of the Japanese-American community in the Loomis area may be appropriate as part of the proposed reuse of the historic train depot (see Page 12). Fountains, monuments, mosaics and other features should be considered in Downtown, in addition to Downtown entrance features, discussed on Page 22. Decisions about appropriate artworks and selection of artists should be made by an Arts in Public Places Committee, comprised of arts professionals, architects, and representatives of the community and Town staff.

Cost of Public Arts

Costs are estimated at $15,000 (see Chp. D for details).





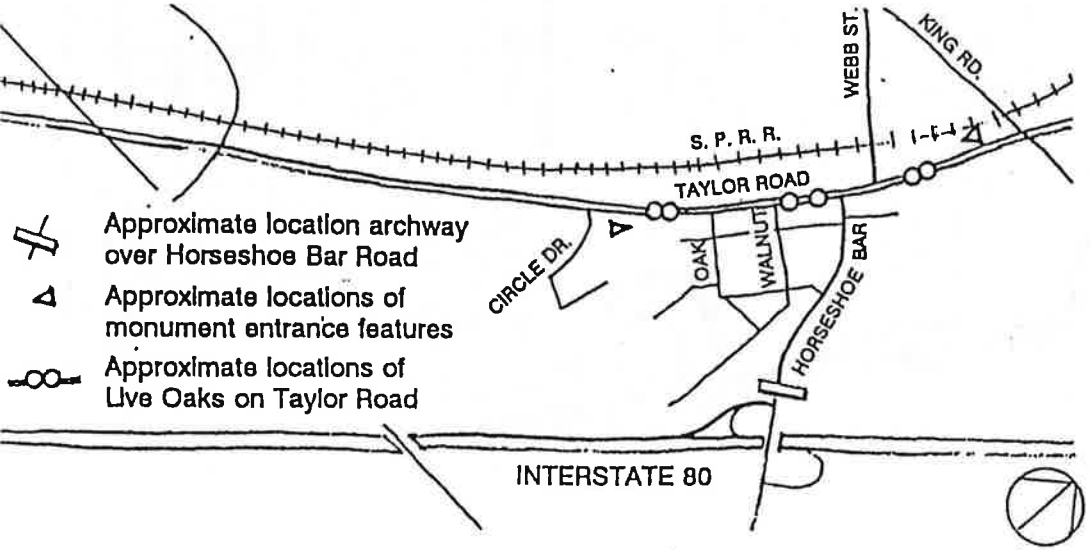
This mural is proposed to be painted on a blank wall in downtown. It could also be displayed on a billboard visible from Hwy. 80 on approach to Loomis.

6. Entrance Features

The Downtown economic revitalization program aims to enhance the identity of Downtown as a unique destination for visitors. Part of that identity can be conveyed by giving visitors a sense of arrival by car.

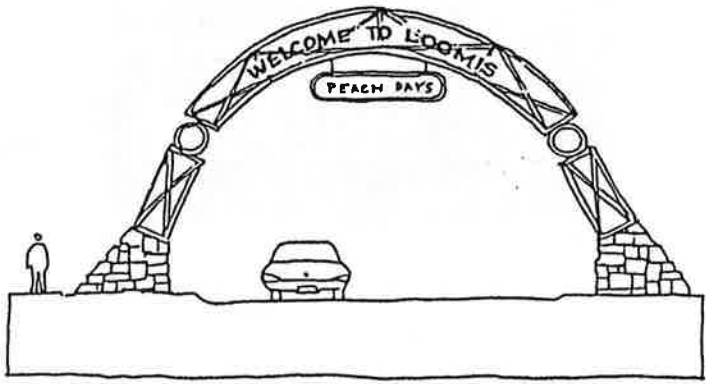
It may not be possible to place signs along the freeway directing drivers to Downtown, because of federal and state restrictions on advertising signage close to the freeway. However, entrance features can greet them when they exit the freeway.

Three kinds of entrance features are proposed: 1) a welcoming archway crossing Horseshoe Bar Rd. on the north side of the freeway; 2) monument signs on Taylor Road at either end of downtown; and 3) Live Oaks planted in the median of Taylor Road at three locations in downtown. The approximate locations of these features are shown in the map opposite. Precise locations would depend upon right-of-way, land availability, the character of the surrounding area, roadway geometry and traffic safety.



Archway on Horseshoe Bar Road

A free-standing archway over the road could be designed to incorporate local materials and to symbolize the history of the area. It might have a foundation of Loomis granite, and a steel superstructure to represent the historic railroad, perhaps as shown below. Timber elements reflecting the heavy timber construction of the historic fruit sheds might also be considered in different designs.



Monument Signs

Monument signs could be placed adjacent to Taylor Road. Their design could incorporate Loomis granite and highlight the fruit-growing history of the area (perhaps incorporating the image of a cornucopia).

Gateway Oak Trees

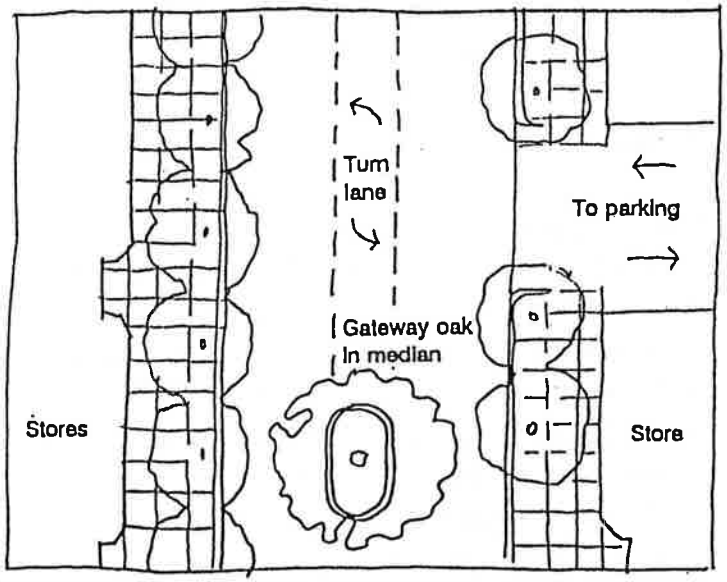
Live oak trees are proposed within the median of Taylor Road in Downtown. The plan at right shows typical placement in the block between Horseshoe Bar Road and Walnut Street. The oaks would alert drivers to slow down upon entry to the pedestrian-oriented Downtown.

Water Tower Artwork

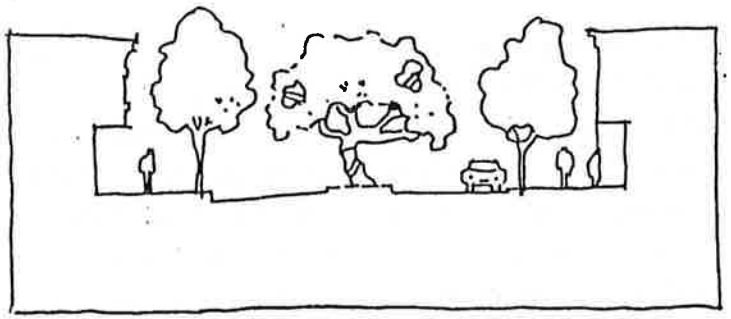
A tall water tower is located northeast of Downtown. Concern about graffiti on the highly visible tank suggests that artwork, potentially designed by students at the nearby high school, be professionally painted on the tank. The painted tower could give identity to Loomis and become a prominent entry feature.

Cost of the Entrance Features

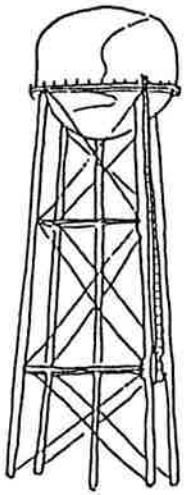
Preliminary costs are $50,275 (see Chp. D for details).



Typical plan, oak tree in raised median in Taylor Road between Horseshoe Bar Rd. and Oak St.



Typical cross-section, oak in raised median.



Water tower

7. Parking and Vehicular Circulation Improvements

Parking Shortage

Some property owners and merchants have observed localized shortages of parking in Downtown which may be discouraging to existing and potential customers. While there appears to be enough parking in the aggregate, there are localized shortages that are adversely affecting some property and business owners. For example, some properties were developed many years ago with no off-street parking. They rely solely upon on-street parking. Owners of some vacant buildings without off-street parking have found it hard to lease business space.

An inventory of on-street and off-street parking was conducted in the downtown area as part of this plan. The number of available spaces was compared with the number required by the Zoning Ordinance for the amount of building space served. These calculations were done on a block-by-block basis as well as on a 300' walking distance basis, as measured from the Taylor Road intersections of Horseshoe Bar Road and Walnut St. The brief study found that there is a shortage of parking on the east side of Taylor Road in the vicinity of these two intersections.

Proposed Public Parking Lot

A 26-space parking lot is proposed to be developed by the Town on two surplus lots owned by Placer County Water Agency. The lots now have empty water tanks and a small utility shed which would have to be removed, the site graded and paved, parking stalls striped and the lot landscaped.

The site and 60° parking configuration is shown on Page 27. The lot would have a one-way loop drive, with no connection to Magnolia Avenue, to avoid impacts to residences along that street. Trees would be planted around the perimeter to screen cars and provide some shade.

The parking lot could serve businesses such as Main Drug as well as vacant buildings on Horseshoe Bar Road at Taylor Rd. It could also serve the Post Office, since the U. S. Postal Service has indicated an interest in leasing 9 spaces (9 spaces are in the entrance aisle of the proposed lot).

The Town could establish a Parking Assessment District [pursuant to Sec. 13.16.070(6) of the Zoning Ordinance] so that parking could be provided for benefiting businesses through in lieu payments.

Potential Parking on Fire District Property

The fire district has purchased property adjacent to the firehouse on Horseshoe Bar Road, to accommodate eventual expansion of district facilities. Their properties include a small white house on the corner of Horseshoe Bar Road and Magnolia Road, and a vacant parcel behind the firehouse and the house. Until the fire district facilities are expanded, it might be possible for the Town to negotiate for the use of a portion of the vacant parcel for public parking. This site is cleared and would only require proper posting and enforcement of parking regulations.

Parking on SPRR Property

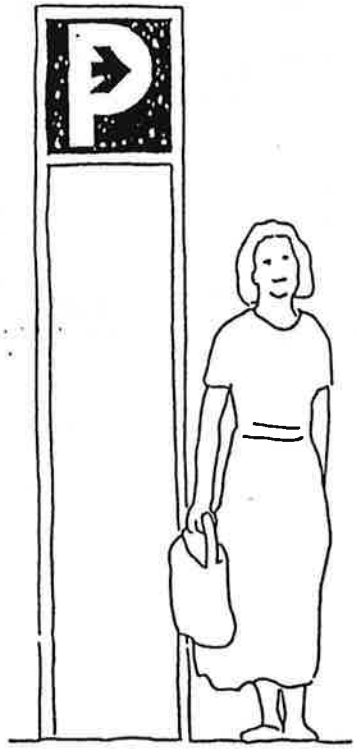
There is no current parking shortage on the north side of Taylor Road. However, adaptive reuse of the Loomis Fruit Grower's Shed and the Train Depot, or commercial development of Southern Pacific Railroad property could warrant development of parking on SPRR property behind buildings which front on Taylor Road, as shown in the plan on the following two pages.

The plan shows a great deal of potential parking, accessible not only from Horseshoe Bar Road and Walnut Street, but also from the rear of existing private parking lots, like the Placer Savings and Loan lot, and the Nelthorpe lot. The purpose of vehicular access from private lots to parking on SPRR property would be to continue the pattern of vehicular access from Taylor Road; if the private lots are full, drivers can continue onto SPRR property. The parking would be developed by the Town of Loomis, under a ground lease from SPRR.

Parking Directional Signs

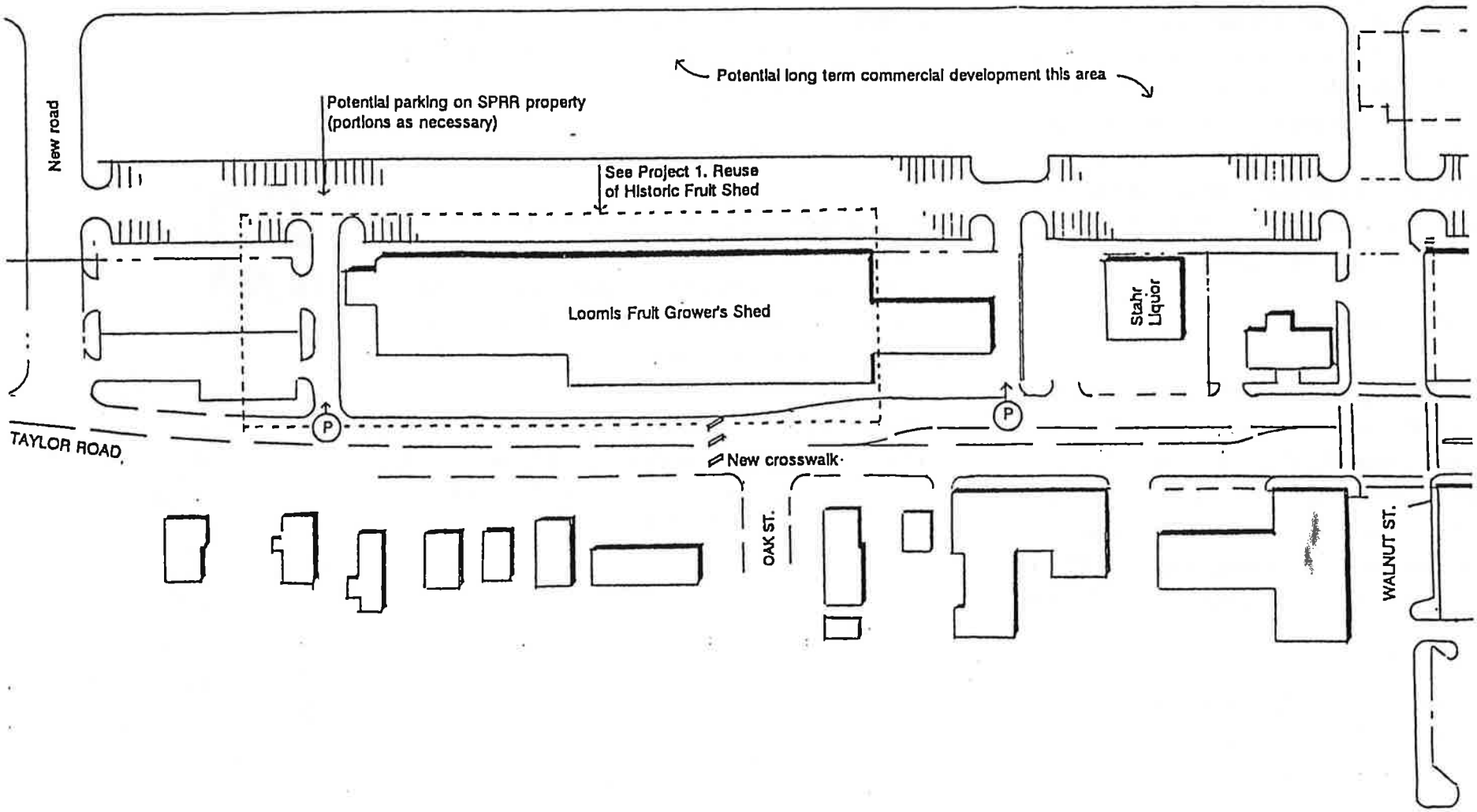
Visitors to downtown, and even residents may not be aware of the public parking now provided on the back side of commercial buildings. There are driveways and walkways between buildings which lead to this parking, but these passageways are not well-marked.

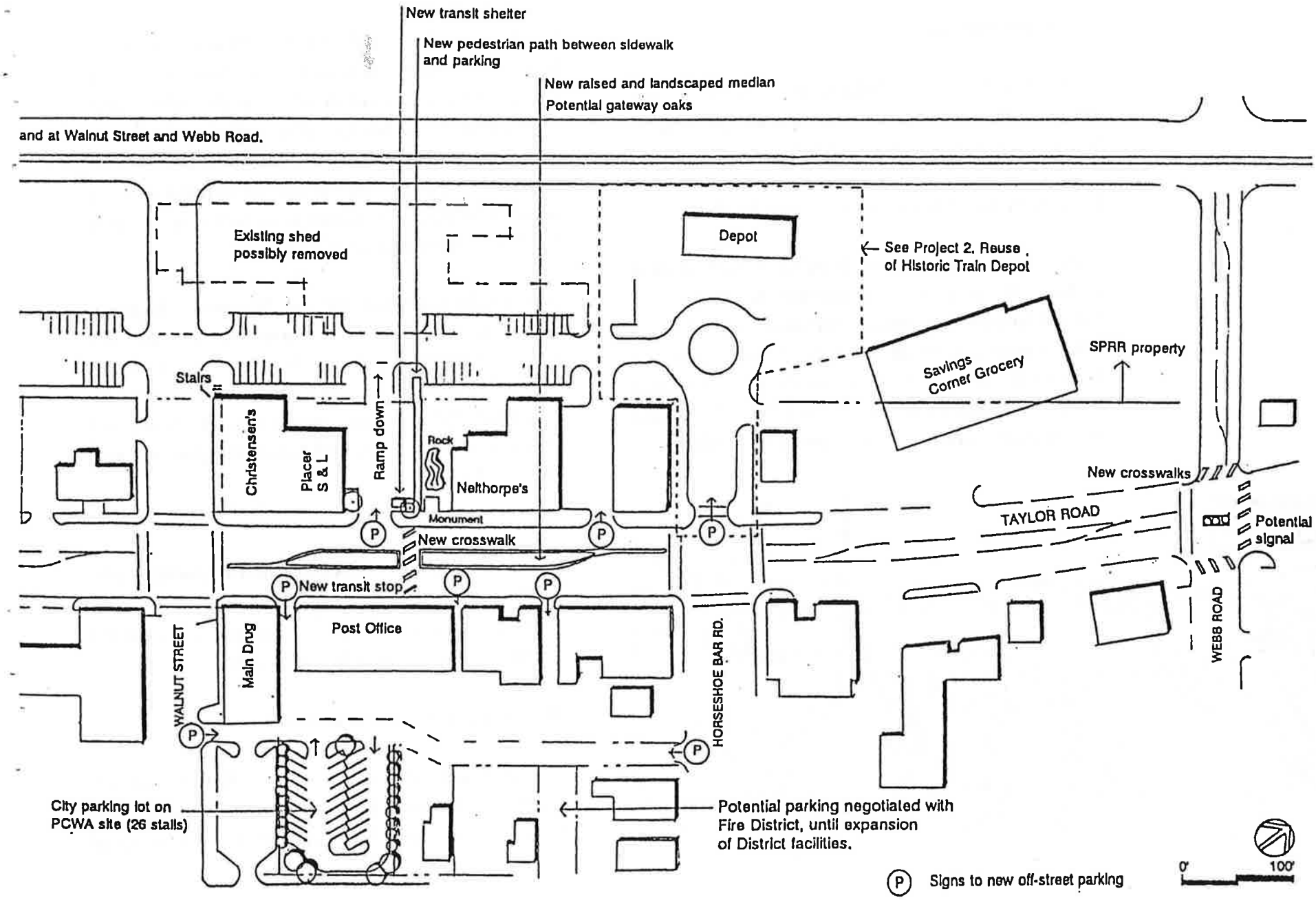
To lead drivers to existing and proposed off-street parking lots, parking directional signs are proposed to be installed by the Town in the sidewalk at locations shown on the plan on the following page.



To direct drivers and pedestrians to off-street parking, steel-framed signs, such as the one shown here, could be placed in the sidewalk.

NEW ROAD: Long term relocation of Taylor Road through traffic to Railroad right-of-way, with connections at a new road west of Loomis Fruit Grower's Shed,



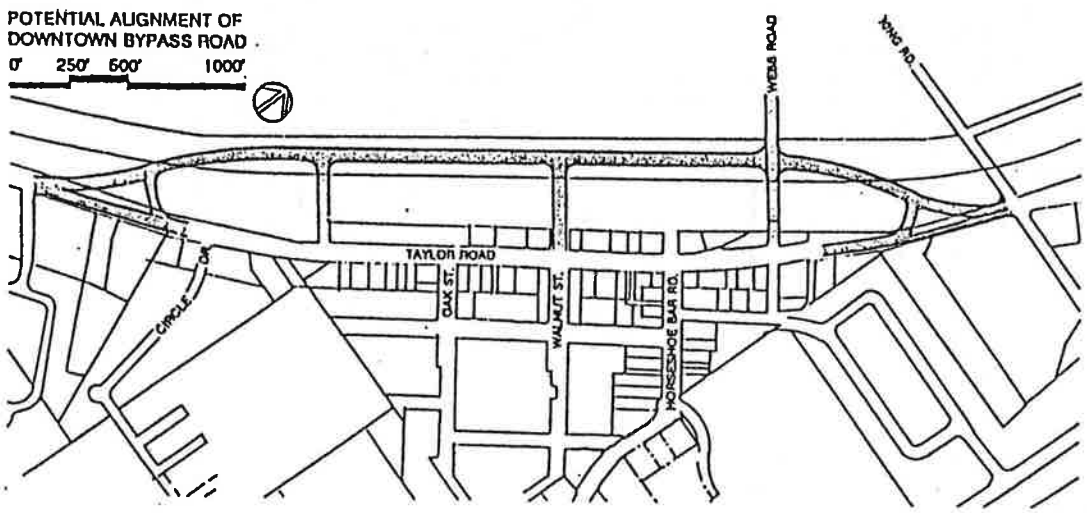

New transit shelter
New pedestrian path between sidewalk and parking
New raised and landscaped median
Potential gateway oaks
and at Walnut Street and Webb Road.
Existing shed possibly removed
Depot
See Project 2. Reuse of Historic Train Depot
Savings Corner Grocery
SPRR property
Stairs
Christensen's
Placer S & L
Ramp down
Rock
Nelthorpe's
Monument
New crosswalk
New crosswalks
TAYLOR ROAD
Potential signal
New transit stop
Post Office
Main Drug
WALNUT STREET
HORSESHOE BAR RD.
WEBB ROAD
City parking lot on PCWA site (26 stalls)
Potential parking negotiated with Fire District, until expansion of District facilities.
Signs to new off-street parking
0'
100'

Cost of Parking Improvements

Costs are estimated at $77,978 (see Chapter D. for details). This estimate does not include parking on SPRR, except for projects 1 and 2.

Long Term Diversion of Taylor Road Traffic

Taylor Road carries through traffic as well as local traffic. While it may be possible for Downtown Loomis to capture a certain amount of business from drivers passing through the area, it could also lose business if Taylor Road becomes much more heavily traveled. Heavy traffic could make the achievement of a pedestrian-oriented downtown more difficult.



While the prospect of significantly greater amounts of traffic is not foreseeable in the short run, the Town should consider diversion of through traffic from Taylor Road to the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way over the long term. This policy assumes future abandonment of the right-of-way for railroad or other mass transit purposes, although no such abandonment has been determined at this time.

A potential alignment for the Downtown bypass is shown below. Road connections between the new road and Taylor Road are also shown on Pages 26 and 27. However, if the railroad ROW remains dedicated for rail use indefinitely, it would not undermine the land use and circulation plan on Pages 26 and 27.

8. Pedestrian Circulation Improvements

Improvements are proposed to make pedestrian circulation more convenient and safe.

Pedestrian Access to Parking Lots

The preceding section mentioned signs to identify pedestrian walkways leading to off-street parking. If parking is developed behind Placer Savings and Loan

or Nelthorpe's Appliance Store, a paved walkway is proposed to connect the parking to the Taylor Road sidewalk. The walkway would pass between an existing monument (containing a Kiwanis Club recognition of Loomis, Doc Takemoto's memorial and a memorial to Viet Nam soldiers) and the asphalt curb which forms the north side of the Placer Savings & Loan parking lot, as shown on Page 27.

If parking is developed behind Christensen's Saddlery, it should be connected to the raised sidewalk on the Walnut Street side of the building with a new stairway (see page 27).

Crosswalks and Signalization

Additional crosswalks are needed at the intersections of Taylor Road with Webb Road and Oak Street (see Pages 27 and 28). A mid-block crossing opposite the Post Office is warranted because the block is nearly 400 feet long and jaywalking now frequently occurs at that location.

The mid-block crossing could pass between sections of a proposed raised and landscaped median, replacing the present painted median between Horseshoe Bar Road and Walnut St. The median will close off left turns into the driveways along this block, which will benefit traffic flow along Taylor Road.

Traffic volumes and turning movements should be studied at the intersection of Webb Road and Taylor Road, to determine whether or not the intersection should be signalized. Currently, vehicles and pedestrians attempting to cross Taylor Road can experience significant delays during peak hours.

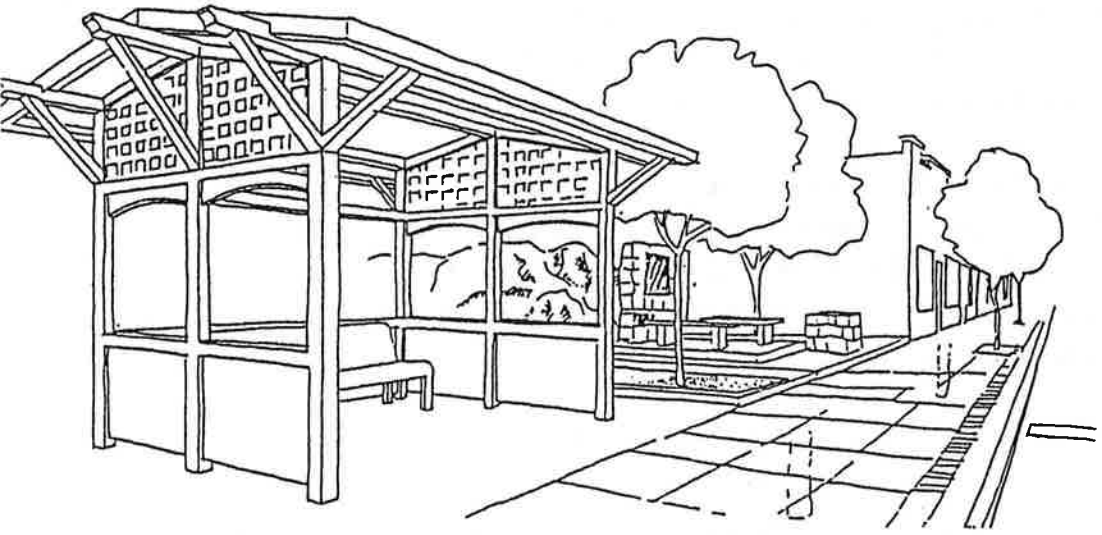
Pedestrian Scaled Street Lights

Currently, Horseshoe Bar Road is illuminated with approximately 14 ft. high, colonial style lantern lamps. The lamps provide good lighting with low brightness, illuminate sidewalks and are in scale with the street and the small-town character of Loomis.

By contrast, Taylor Road is illuminated with "cobra-head" highway fixtures mounted on aluminum arms well above the street. These luminaires provide good intersection lighting, but are not appropriate for mid-block lighting for pedestrians.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company will be undergrounding some utilities in Taylor Road, as funding permits. Concurrent with that program, new

light posts and fixtures which are the same or very similar to those in use on Horseshoe Bar Road should be installed along Taylor Road. Assuming poles about 100 ft. apart on both sides of the road, about 25 poles would be required between Webb St. and Oak Street. About 15 poles would be required in the priority area of Horseshoe Bar Road to Oak Street.



A new bus shelter could be built adjacent to the monument, near a mid-block crosswalk leading to a new bus stop in front of the Post Office.

Transit Shelter

The Town of Loomis contracts for bus service with Placer County Transit District. Buses currently stop in Downtown opposite Stahr Liquor. There are no bus shelters.The Town should reconsider a more central location for the bus stop, adjacent to the Post Office on one side of Taylor, and west of the monument on the opposite side. A shelter is recommended to be provided by the Town, perhaps within the first parking space in the Placer Savings & Loan parking lot. These improvements are shown in the plan on page 27. A bus shelter could be designed to be compatible with the historic heavy timber construction used in fruit sheds in Loomis, with tempered glass on three sides and a wood lattice-work above, as illustrated here.

Cost of Pedestrian Circulation Improvements

Proposed improvements are estimated to cost $166,929, of which $150,000 is for traffic signalization (see Chapter D. for details).

C. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The design guidelines in this chapter serve two purposes: 1) help implement the Facade Improvement Program discussed in Chapter B.4., and 2) assist in the existing Design Review process for new projects and significant expansions of existing development (> 500 sq. ft.) in the Downtown Core and Shopping Center zoning districts.

In the first case, projects would have to comply with the guidelines in order to be eligible for participation in the Facade Improvements Program.

In the second case, new projects would be evaluated against these new guidelines, as well as the standards in the Zoning Ordinance, Sign Ordinance and design guidelines in the Town Center Master Plan.

Where there is a conflict between these guidelines and the Town Center Master Plan, these guidelines shall prevail. Some of the guidelines dealing with signage may be incorporated into an update of the Sign Ordinance.

The guidelines are applicable in the area generally described as the "Central Commercial Area" in the Sign Ordinance, including Taylor Road between Circle Drive and Webb Road, and a portion of Horseshoe Bar Road.

The guidelines address the following topics: contextual building design, architectural materials, color, signs, awnings and canopies and lighting.

1. Design Guidelines for Facade Improvements as well as for New Construction

Building Compatibility

1. Context. New development and improvements to existing buildings should respond in a compatible manner to the existing materials, and color of nearby significant buildings.

2. Building Materials. Exterior materials normally not permitted include imitation or

fake materials, plastics, mirror glass, dark tinted glass, indoor-outdoor carpet, plywood, and materials that are a fire or public safety hazard.

The principal facade facing the street should use durable and quality materials, such as brick and tile. Wood is acceptable if finished lumber - not veneers such as plywood.

Building Color

3. Three Colors. Two compatible colors should predominate. If intense colors are used they should be applied as accents.

In general, building colors should be coordinated with sign colors and colors of adjacent buildings, if appropriate. Neutral colors like greys, warm whites, and beiges bring out the most architectural detail.

Signs

Maximum sign size and other requirements are prescribed in Sec. 1.4 of the Sign Ordinance.

4. Sign Clarity. A sign is intended to identify a business. Signs do not have to be large and overbearing or cluttered with excess information. Too many signs competing with each other can give Downtown a cluttered and confused image, which may make it less able to compete with a shopping mall using consistent, readable signage. Text should be kept to a minimum. Location, size, materials and other features should be selected to achieve sign legibility.

The objective of sign guidelines is not uniformity, but elimination of elements that result in a cluttered and unattractive setting. The guidelines provide basic parameters for creative signs that may be as unique as the businesses they represent.

5. Sign Color. Sign colors should be coordinated with the colors of the building.

6. No Free-Standing Signs. Such signs are not allowed. All permanent signs must be located on buildings.

7. Sign Height. No signs may extend above the height of the immediately adjacent roofline or parapet. No signs may be mounted on the roof (see Table 1.5 a. of the Sign Ordinance).

8. Sign Location on Building. Signs on storefronts should be located above display windows or awnings. However, large signs near the top of building facades are discouraged.

9. Hardware. All mounting hardware for signs must be concealed.

Permitted Signs

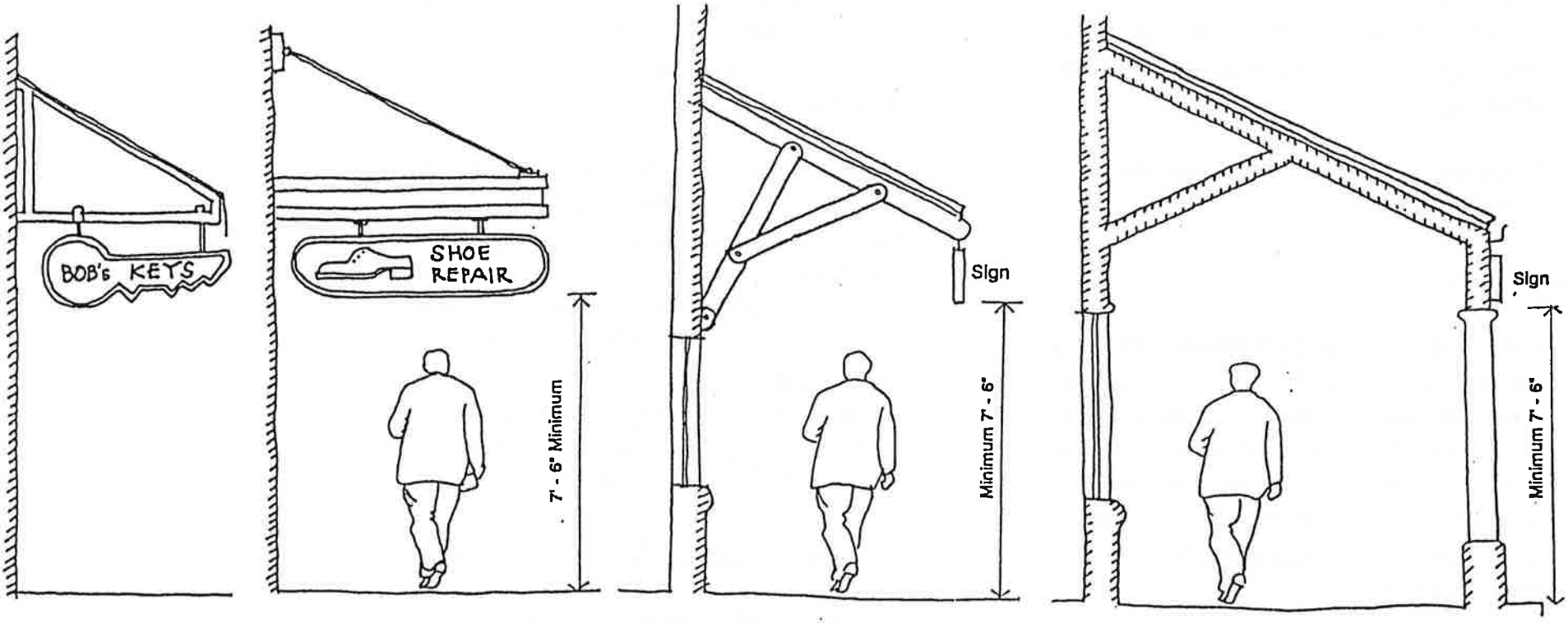
11. Flat Mounted or Painted Wall Signs. If letters are mounted directly on walls, they should be three-dimensional. Such signs should align with major architectural elements, such as doors and windows. Ornamental elements, such as moldings, recesses, pilasters, arches, roof eaves or cornice lines should be used as frames for signs.

12. Blade Signs Under Canopies or Awnings. The minimum height of the bottom of a blade sign from the sidewalk is 7'-6". Maximum sign area is 9 square feet. Blade signs should be at least twice as wide as their vertical dimension.

13. Window Signs With Painted or Vinyl Letters. Temporary and permanent window signs may not exceed 25% or the window area of the entire facade.

14. Signs on Awnings. The skirt face of an awning is preferred to the top of the awning for signage. Letters may not exceed 10" in height on the skirt face. A wall mounted sign above the awning, with a potential secondary sign on the face of the awning has been traditionally used in Loomis, and is especially preferred. Signs on awnings must be painted, printed, marked, stamped, or otherwise permanently impressed upon the awning.

15. Exceptions for Signs on the Sloping Surface of Awnings. A logo, an identification emblem, graphic or similar feature not exceeding 20% of the sloping surface area of an awning or canopy may be painted, placed or installed.



Examples of acceptable sign locations in relation to acceptable awning, fixed canopy and arcade structures (arcades acceptable in Shopping Center District but not the Downtown Core).

16. Routed, Carved or Sandblasted Wood. Historically derived decorative lettering and scrollwork is appropriate.

17. Engraved Metal or Wood.

18. Channel Letters.

19. Unpermitted Signs.

- Internally illuminated box signs (typically "lucite" plastic materials).
- Neon lighting (see Exceptions, below)
- Flashing lights
- "Reader board" signs
- Portable reader board signs
- Temporary signs for sales and/or special events which are displayed for more than 5 days.
- Temporary sandwich board signs placed within the public right-of-way.
- Free-standing signs.
- Projecting signs (perpendicular to the facade of the business). Projections of any kind must not exceed 9".

20. Exceptions to Sign Guidelines. It is recommended that the Sign Ordinance be revised so that exceptions may be granted for exceptional circumstances, such as impaired or difficult visibility, or unique or innovative design, consistent with the proposed land use.

21. Design. Signs must be clear and tastefully done, but not dull. The Town encourages bold and innovative approaches to signage, perhaps consistent with the Town's historic fruitbox labels and the mural program described in Chapter B.

22. Types of Sign Lighting Permitted. External incandescent sources (eg, spot lights, aimed to avoid glare). Small light sources placed inside

of opaque projecting letters (lighting directed at wall behind letters).

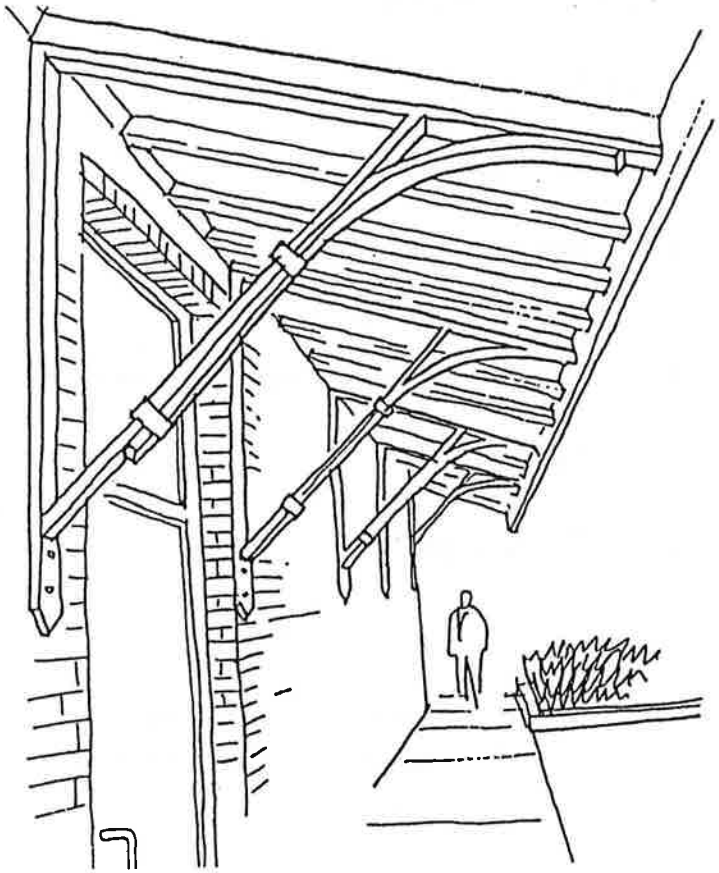
23. Types of Lighting Unpermitted. Back-lit awnings are prohibited. See also #19. Unpermitted Signs.

24. Light Fixture Height. The bottom edge of light fixtures mounted on a building must be at least 7'-0" above the sidewalk or finished grade.

25. Exceptions to Lighting Guidelines. All signs require permits from the Town. However, the Town should amend the Sign Ordinance to allow for exceptions to these guidelines. For example, decorative lighting elements are encouraged as components of storefront designs. Neon, incandescent, and other fixtures could be allowed. Businesses that are entertainment- or culturally-oriented and would contribute to night-life could be allowed to install creative signage and illumination that may exceed the requirements identified in this chapter. Examples of special signs include, but are not limited to, exposed neon tubing, marquee lights, etc.

Awnings and Canopies

An Encroachment Permit is required for an awning or canopy over the public sidewalk. See examples of acceptable examples on page 34 and below.



Placer Savings and Loan uses an attractive steel bracket to support the fixed sloping canopy along the streetfront and side of its building.

26. Canopies Encouraged. Fixed sloping canopies such as the metal canopies used on Christensens Saddlery and Placer Savings and Loan (see illustration previous page) are encouraged.

Horizontally mounted architectural canopies are also acceptable. Roof drainage shall be directed to drain pipes mounted against the building frontage, leading to storm drains beneath the sidewalk. Exposed drain pipes should be painted the same color as the building.

27. Awnings Encouraged. If fixed canopies are inappropriate, good quality canvas awnings are encouraged on new buildings, and existing buildings with flat, feature-less facades.

28. Canopy and Awning Colors. Light, colorful awnings are encouraged. The color of awnings should be compatible with building color. Subtle bands of color on awnings are appropriate; more complex patterns or textures should generally not be used.

29. Awning Continuity. Awnings should be designed to be compatible with the entire storefront and adjacent structures (e.g, comparable head height of adjacent awnings to provide continuity for sun and rain protection.

30. Awnings Within Bays. Awnings/canopies should span structural bays or major architectural divisions of a facade; there should be a break between awnings at each division or bay (see Page 17). Traditionally, awnings are mounted above transom windows, below the signband (see Page 19). Depending upon transom height, awnings may be attached between transom and display windows.

31. Awning Slope. Awnings shall slope downward at a constant slope; semicircular awnings are strongly discouraged.

Fixed structural canopies or canvas awnings should emulate the straight angle of slope of canopies on such buildings as Christensens Saddlery store, Placer Savings and Loan, and the Loomis Fruit Grower's packing shed on Taylor Road.

32. Awning Support. The support structure for sloped canopies or awnings could emulate the structure used for the fixed canopies on the Christensens Saddlery store and the adjacent Placer Savings and Loan.

33. Awning Projection. Awnings should project no more than about six feet from the face of existing buildings on Taylor Road and Horseshoe Bar Road, or less, depending upon the potential for interference with street trees planted in the sidewalk. Awnings may extend up to 10 feet into the street right-of-way in the Shopping Center district, assuming wide sidewalks and no street tree interference.

    Arcades extending to the edge of the sidewalk are acceptable in the Shopping Center District (see example, Page 34).

34. Awning End Panels. End panels for canvas awnings are discouraged, except at the end of a building where there is no possibility of an adjacent awning.

35. Awning Material.. Awnings must be made of a fire-treated or non-flammable fabric. Shiny, "plasticized" awnings are strongly discouraged.

2. Facade Improvements Program Design Guidelines

These guidelines supplement the guidelines described in part 1 above.

These guidelines are intended to help implement the Facade Improvements Program proposed in part 4 of Chapter B.

Applicable Area

Taylor Road. These guidelines focus on the Taylor Road portion of the "Downtown Core", established in the Zoning Ordinance and in the Town Center Master Plan. That is, it does not include the Horseshoe Bar Road portion of the Downtown Core, with the exception of the block between Taylor Road and Laird Street. See map on Page 15.

Facade Improvements

1. Facade Definition. The facade is the entire front surface of a building from sidewalk grade to the roofline. In facade renovation, all structural and decorative elements of building fronts and sides facing public streets should be repaired or replace, to match or be compatible with the original materials and design of the building.

2. Replacement of Original Materials. If original architectural materials have been destroyed, new elements can be added. The fascia and cornice can be built up, parapet raised and articulated, and architectural detail added, as long as the materials are permanent and generally consistent with the design of the original structure.

3. Windows. Window-less, or permanently covered storefronts are prohibited. Window treatments which significantly reduce window area are prohibited.

4. Building Color. With the exception of a few victorian houses which have been painted with lively colors, most existing buildings along Taylor Road are somewhat dull. There is an

opportunity to enliven building facades with a range of warmer colors such as warm whites, peach, burnt umber and mustard. Some existing darker colors, such as the brown on the building which houses the Chamber of Commerce and Tennessee South Cafe cover up the detail on the facade. Darker colors like brown also seem to make the sidewalk appear narrower.

5. Cleaning Masonry. Downtown Loomis has some buildings with fine brickwork, some of which has been obscured with painting. Removal of paint may be desirable, but brick should not be sandblasted. Because it has a porous surface, brick walls can be permanently damaged by sandblasting. Rather, they should be cleaned with acid washes or steam.

6. Tuckpointing. Masonry surfaces should be properly tuckpointed to avoid moisture seepage and excessive wear on the masonry. New mortar should be compatible with the color and texture of the original mortar.

Signs

7. External Lighting. Signs within the downtown Facade Improvement Program area should be illuminated by external sources. New internally lit box signs are prohibited within this area (existing internally illuminated signs are legal, non-conforming structures which may remain, but may not be replaced).

3. Guidelines for New Construction

The Guidelines for New Development incorporate the Guidelines discussed in parts 1 and 2 above, unless otherwise stated.

Compatibility Guidelines

1. Context. New construction in the Downtown Core and Shopping Center districts and the Central Commercial area described in the Sign Ordinance should be compatible with existing structures and the visual character of the historic small town, and contribute to the cohesiveness of the streetscape. The objective is not to recreate historic structures, but to assure that new designs will be compatible with the existing scale and character.

2. Building Massing. Most buildings in Loomis are one to two stories high. New construction should relate to the height and massing of existing buildings and the rhythmic spacing of structural bays. Retail storefronts should be a maximum of 30 feet in width. Buildings with a wider frontage should have a vertical architectural feature - column, pilaster, etc., every 25 to 30 feet, reflecting the structural bay.

3. Roofline. The roofline should be flat with an articulated parapet wall, a sloped roof with a gable end, or a stepped parapet concealing a gable end. Hipped roof buildings and towers with pyramidal tops are found in many shopping centers in Northern California and are not appropriate in Loomis.

4. Building Shape. New buildings on Taylor Road should be generally rectilinear in shape, and parallel to the street, and should not exhibit any obvious free-form, curvelinear or diagonal orientation to the street. More free-form structures may be possible in the Shopping Center district, although a small building scale should be maintained.

5. Avoidance of Drive-Up Structures in Downtown. Drive-up structures are out of character with the pedestrian orientation

sought for the heart of Downtown on Taylor Road. Their free-standing construction achieves maximum visibility from the street, but interrupts the pedestrian experience.

Building Vertical Divisions

6. Building Base. Every building should have a defined base. This may be a masonry or ceramic tile base or a small projection of the wall surface and/or a different material or color. The height of the base should range from approximately 18" at a minimum to 30" at a maximum.

7. Middle Section. The middle section of the facade should feature display windows and substantial, well-detailed doors. "Narrowline" aluminum frame doors are not recommended. Entrances are encouraged to be recessed to reduce the blocky effect of a larger building.

   Windows should be subdivided into proportions which are consistent with significant nearby buildings.

   Measured from floor level to the finished ceiling, new commercial building fronts should be at least 60% transparent. Glass must be tempered. Glass block is counted as opaque material.

   Mirror glass or darkly tinted glass are not acceptable.

8. Upper Section. The upper section of the building facade should have a gable end roof, or in the case of a flat roof - a parapet wall with a distinctive shape or profile, such as a stepped center, or arc. Mansard roofs are not allowed.

Commercial Lighting

9. Window Display Lighting. Timer-controlled window and facade nighttime lighting schemes are encouraged to maintain a livelier look to retail districts when businesses are closed. Lighting should be set to turn-off after late night hours.