

East 14th Street South Area Development Strategy

Corridor Urbanism & Context Based Road Design

REGION



CITY

Corridor New Urbanism
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APA 2006 National Conference

BUILDING



NEIGHBORHOOD

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Today's Presentation

❖ Hanson Hom

- Background - How the City got ready to plan the Corridor
- Public Involvement & Working with Decision-makers

❖ Phil Erickson

- Corridor Development Strategy - Urbanizing the Strip

❖ Thomas Kronemeyer

- *Future Context* Based Design - Setting the Stage for Urbanism

San Leandro

Brief History

- ❖ Community with 19th century Spanish land grant origins.
- ❖ Incorporated in 1872 with an emerging agricultural and shellfish economy (cherries, oysters).
- ❖ Post World War II – boom years; becomes one of the first San Francisco “suburbs.”
- ❖ East 14th Street corridor transformed into product of 1950s and 1960s commercial strip development.

San Leandro

Today

- ❖ Population approximately 80,000.
- ❖ Changing demographics
 - Increase in family households and incomes
 - Greater diversity: racial and household composition
- ❖ Moderate-income community by Bay Area standards.
- ❖ Balanced community with large industrial base and well-maintained neighborhoods.
- ❖ Primary retail uses have relocated from main street to malls and shopping centers.

East 14th Street - Past

Electric streetcar system ran along East 14th Street before the dominance of the automobile.



Key System (circa 1923)

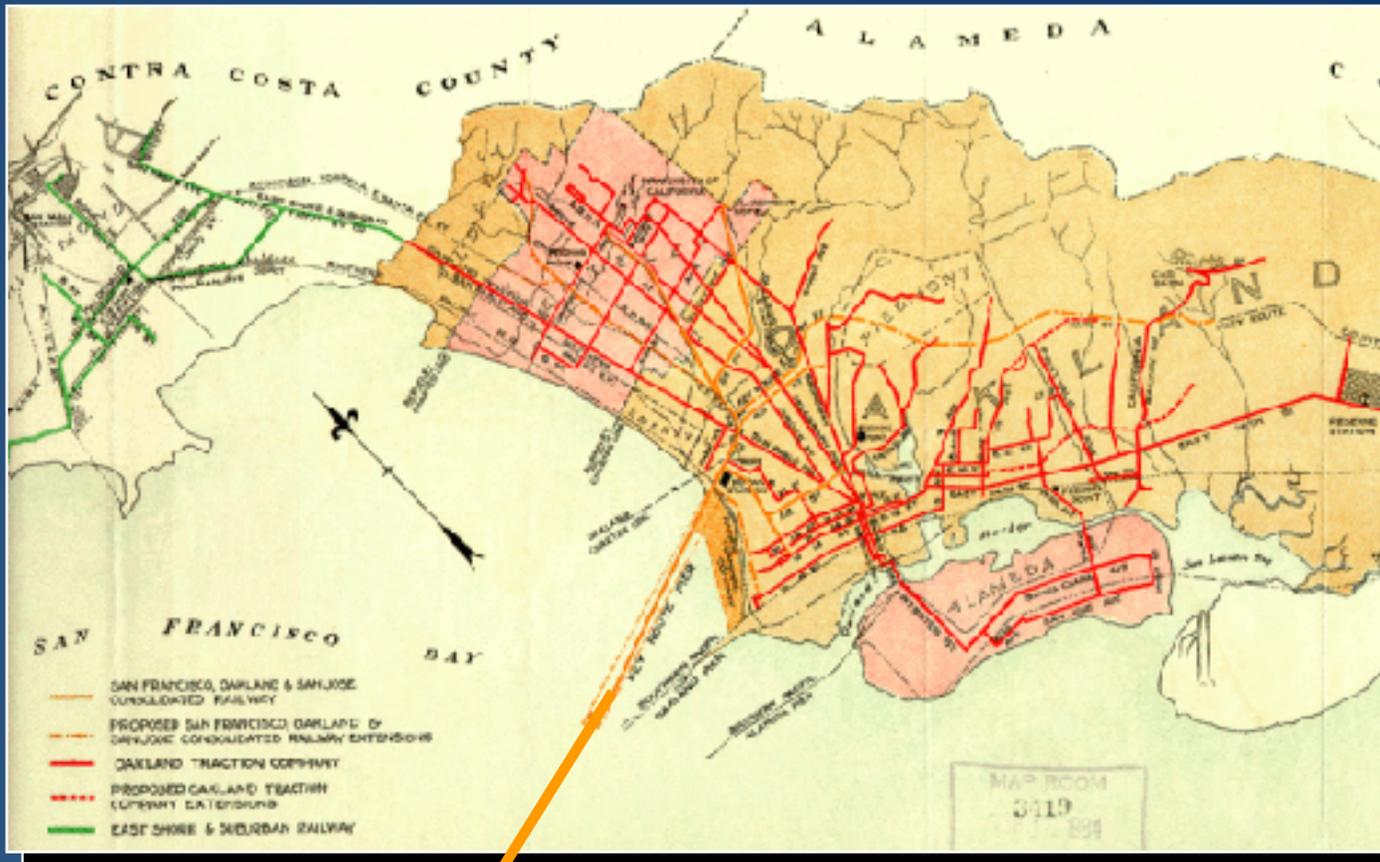
Oakland, San Leandro & Haywards Electric Railway (1892)

Longest electric streetcar line in the nation at the time (20 miles in length).



Regional Streetcar System

Network connected San Leandro to San Francisco and the rest of the East Bay Area



San
Leandro

San Francisco

East 14th Street - Today

State Highway 185 – conversion to an auto-dominated street



East 14th Street

❖ Opportunities:

- Political consensus for change
- Strong adjoining neighborhoods
- Future enhanced bus service
- Redevelopment Area
- Emerging specialized retail markets
- Strong housing market

❖ Challenges:

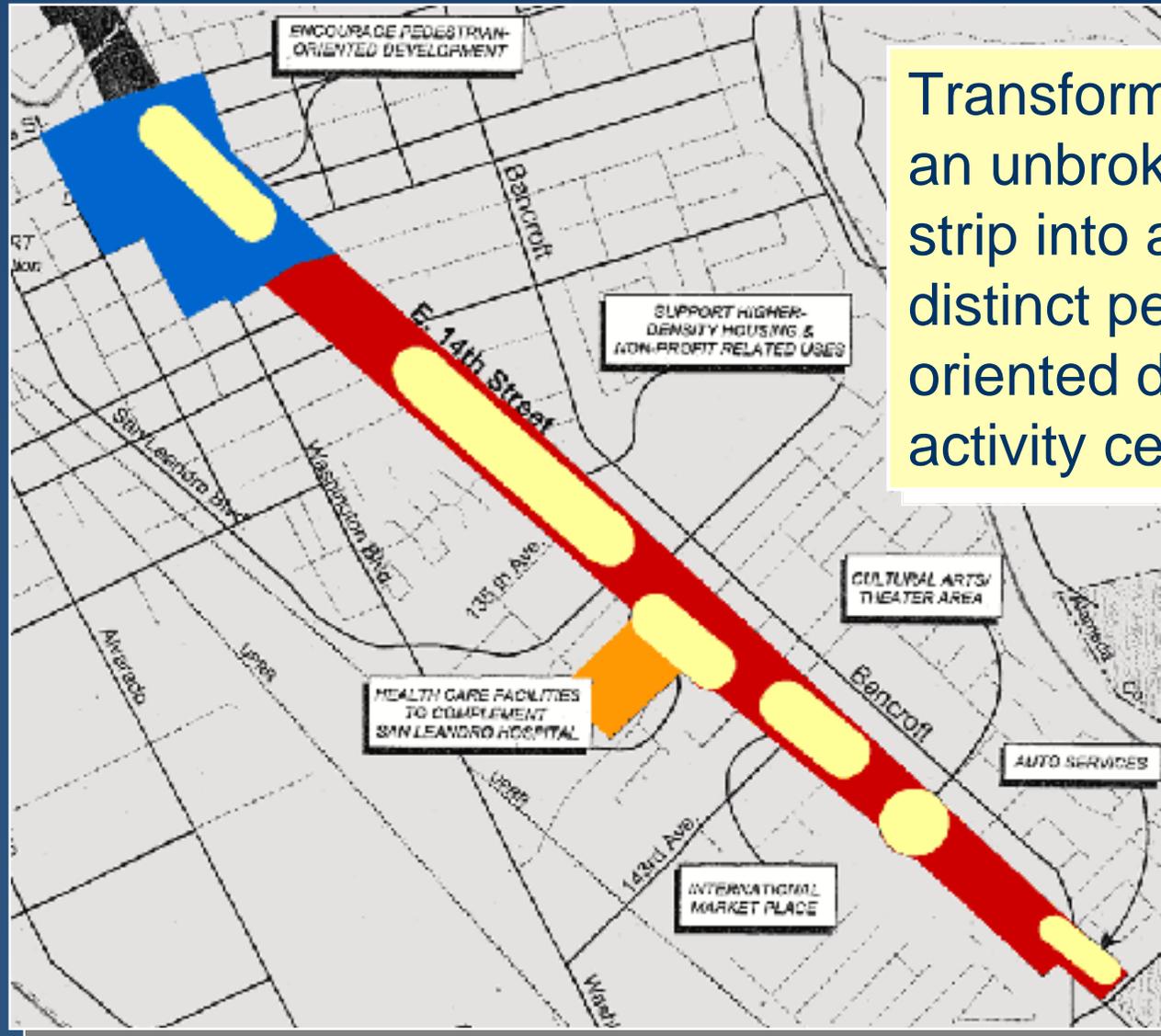
- Lack of private and public investment
- Auto-oriented commercial uses (11 used car lots)
- Pedestrian unfriendly street environment
- Restrictive zoning and parking standards
- Limited parcel sizes
- State highway standards

General Plan

Smart Growth Policies

- ❖ East 14th Street Corridor: identified as a priority “Focus Area” for change and improvement.
- ❖ Goals and Objectives:
 - Create a mixed-use transit-supportive corridor
 - Create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape
 - Respect neighborhood character
 - Provide uses that support adjacent neighborhoods
 - Promote quality architectural design

General Plan Vision



Transform corridor from an unbroken commercial strip into a series of distinct pedestrian-oriented districts and activity centers.

East 14th Street Strategy

Important Process Elements

- ❖ **Structured Planning Process: 18-month timeline**
- ❖ **Financial Support:**
 - Transportation for Livable Communities (Metropolitan Transportation Commission)
 - Housing Rebound Grant (State Housing & Community Development)
- ❖ **Technical Support and Coordination:**
 - Inter-departmental City project team
 - Multi-disciplined consultant team
 - Public agency coordination (Caltrans, AC Transit)

East 14th Street Strategy

Public Outreach & Involvement

- ❖ City Council-appointed South Area Advisory Committee (SAAC)
- ❖ Multiple Outreach Approach:
 - Community workshops
 - Neighborhood meetings
 - Public hearings
 - “PR road show”
 - City’s website
- ❖ Regular coordination w/ Decision-makers (City Council, Planning Commission)
- ❖ Press and media coverage



Recent Projects: Private Market Activity

- ❖ New neighborhood shopping center.
- ❖ Affordable housing proposals.
- ❖ Expansion and strengthening of ethnic retail district.
- ❖ Ability to say “NO” to undesirable uses.



Recent Projects: Public Investment

- ❖ Conversion of problem motel to affordable housing.
- ❖ Purchase of land for new City Senior Center.
- ❖ Phase I streetscape improvements.
- ❖ Development of plans for under-grounding utilities.
- ❖ Seeking capital improvement grants.



Common Resident Questions & Concerns

- ❖ *Parking:* Will I be able to park on my street?
- ❖ *Traffic:* How will the added traffic affect my daily life?
- ❖ *New Residents:* Who will live in these new projects?
- ❖ *Commercial Trade-off:* Will we lose retail stores?
- ❖ *Economic Impact:* How will it affect my property value and taxes?
- ❖ *Schools:* Where will the new kids go to school?
- ❖ *Density/Design:* Will it look offensive? How does it impact me?

Observations on Plan Implementation

- ❖ Strategy is a long-term vision; implementation is incremental.
- ❖ Adoption of a plan is only the beginning.
- ❖ Patience is a virtue; maintain the vision.
- ❖ Advocacy and political will are mandatory for success.
- ❖ Each project challenges the plan and requires regular validation.
- ❖ Long-term goals can conflict w/ short-term political perspectives.
- ❖ Celebrate the incremental successes.

Concluding Quote

- ❖ Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.

Peter Drucker

American management writer (1909 - 2005)

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Land Use Issues

- ❖ Focused nodes of strong retail activity
- ❖ Auto-oriented land uses set back from street edge
 - Adding to the apparent width of the street and
 - Separates active building frontages from sidewalks
- ❖ Opportunity sites for mixed-use, retail, and housing support change in the corridor.



Urban Design Issues

❖ Poor Overall Pedestrian Environment

- Dominated by pavement
- Does not support transit ridership



❖ Overly wide street for traffic (80 ft. curb-to-curb)



❖ Existing street trees will change character of street over time



Office & Retail Market Issues

❖ Office:

- **Weak market** – as in the rest of the Bay Area
- Likely 5 to 7 years before interest in new office will be evident – supported by developer interviews



❖ Retail:

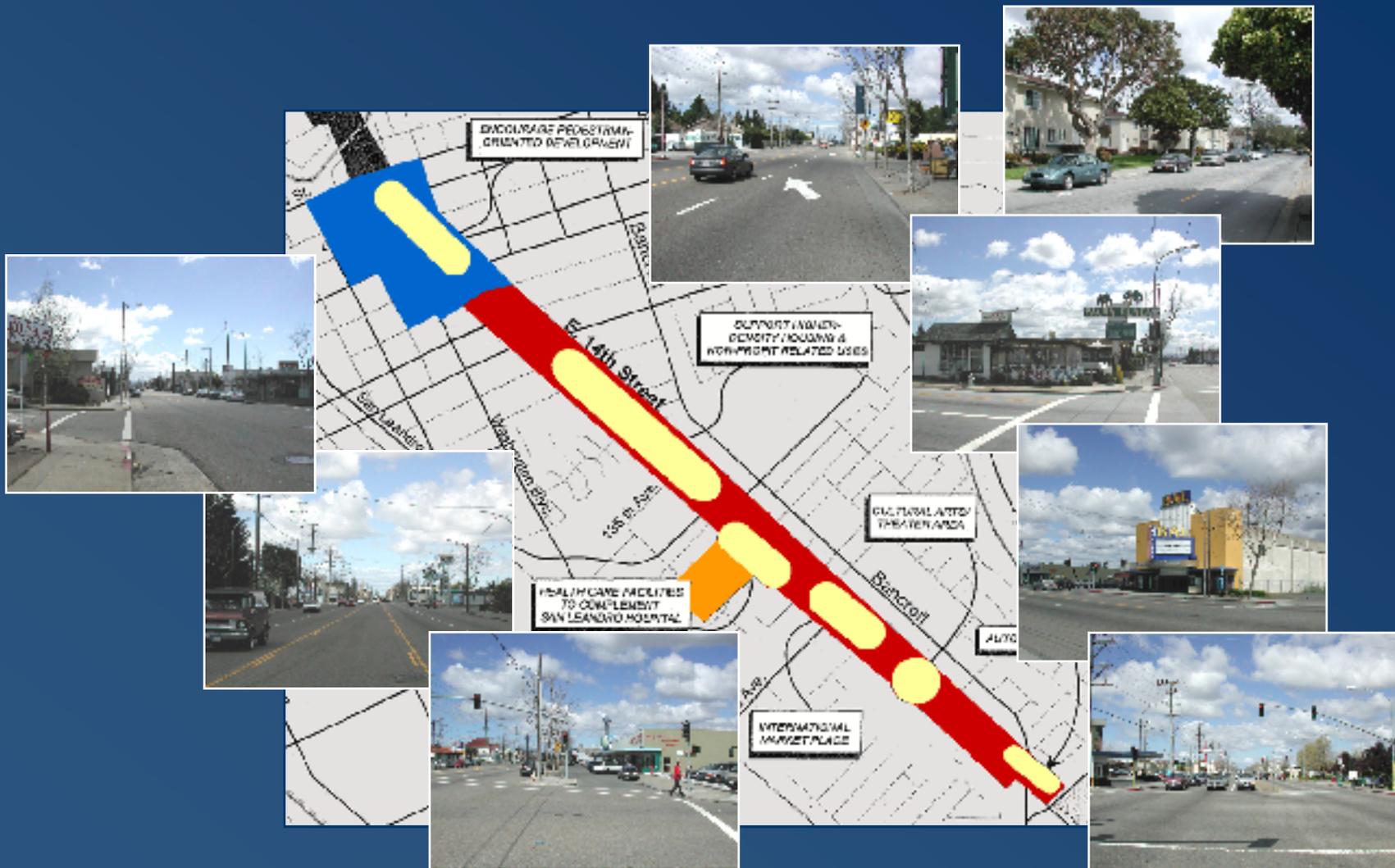
- **Somewhat weak retail location** – indicated by low rents and retail mix
- Current rents do not support new neighborhood retail



Existing Policies Provide a Starting Point

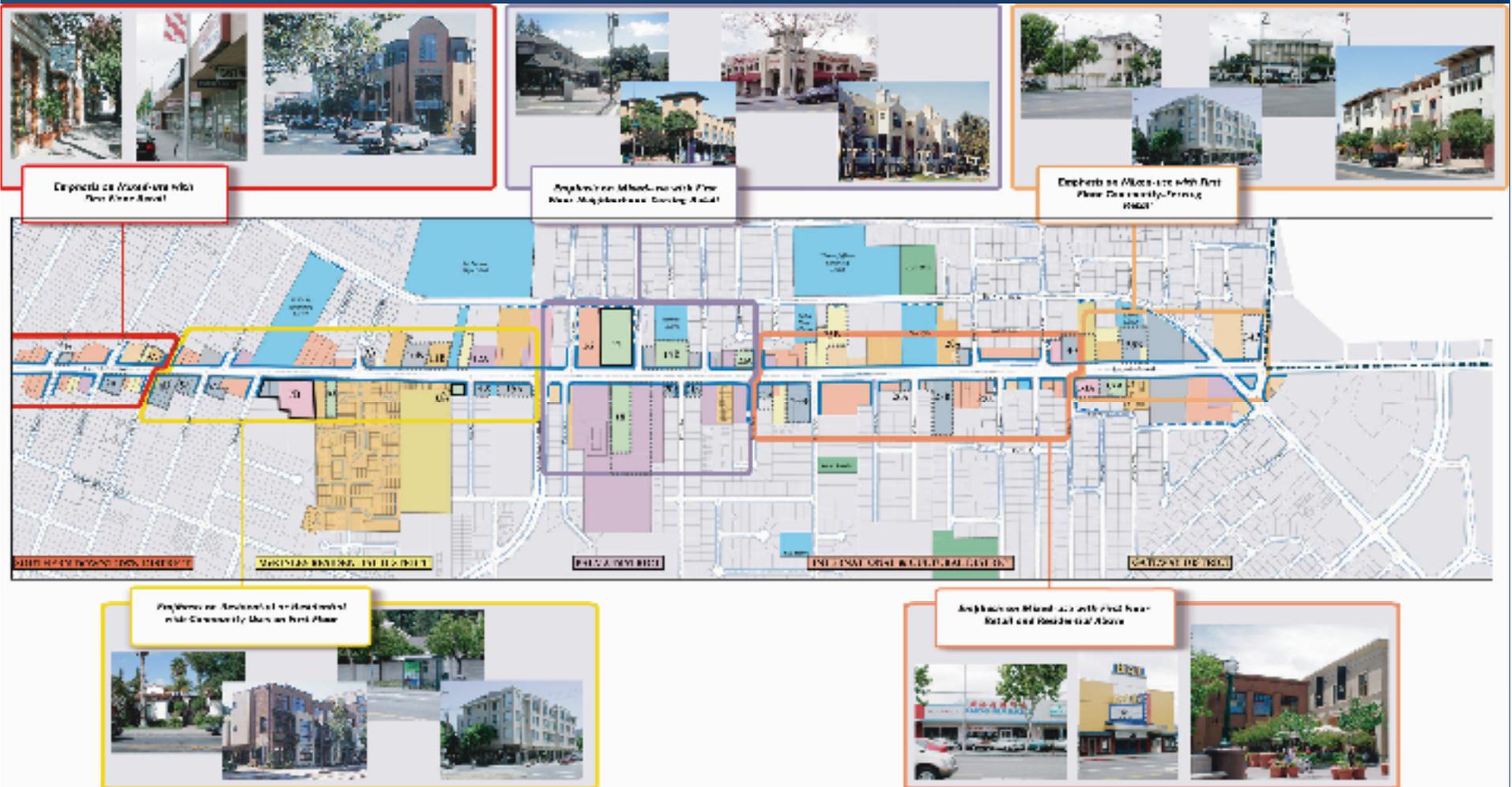
General Plan Sub-districts

- Land Use, Urban Form, & Synthesis Assets, Needs, & Opportunities



District Concept Plan

- Creates Distinct Districts and Activity Centers
- Identifies Opportunity Sites for Future Development



Corporate Identity

Palette of Building Types

❖ Retail Commercial 'Anchors'



Walgreens, Temescal,
Oakland, CA



Andronico's, Danville, CA

Local Identity



Whole Foods, San
Diego, CA



Ann Arbor, MI



Kent, WA



Omaha, NB

Palette of Building Types

❖ Mixed-Use Buildings



Walnut Creek, CA



Seattle, WA



Berkeley, CA



Phoenix, AZ

Developer Symposium Feedback

❖ Key Physical & Market Factors

- Land Price
- Rents & Sales Levels
- Lot Size

❖ Key Planning Factors

- Parking Ratios & Proximity to Transit
- Zoning and Development Regulations
- Building Type



Districts and Transect Zones

- ❖ Districts defined by character of use and level of urbanism
- ❖ Transect not used in planning document, but linkage is clear



Southern Downtown
Mixed-Use
T5-Urban Center

McKinley Residential
T4-General Urban
T5-Urban Center

Palma Mixed-Use
T6-Urban Core

International & Cultural
T4-General Urban

Gateway Retail
T3-Suburban

Sample Opportunity Site: (Existing Condition)

T3 -Suburban



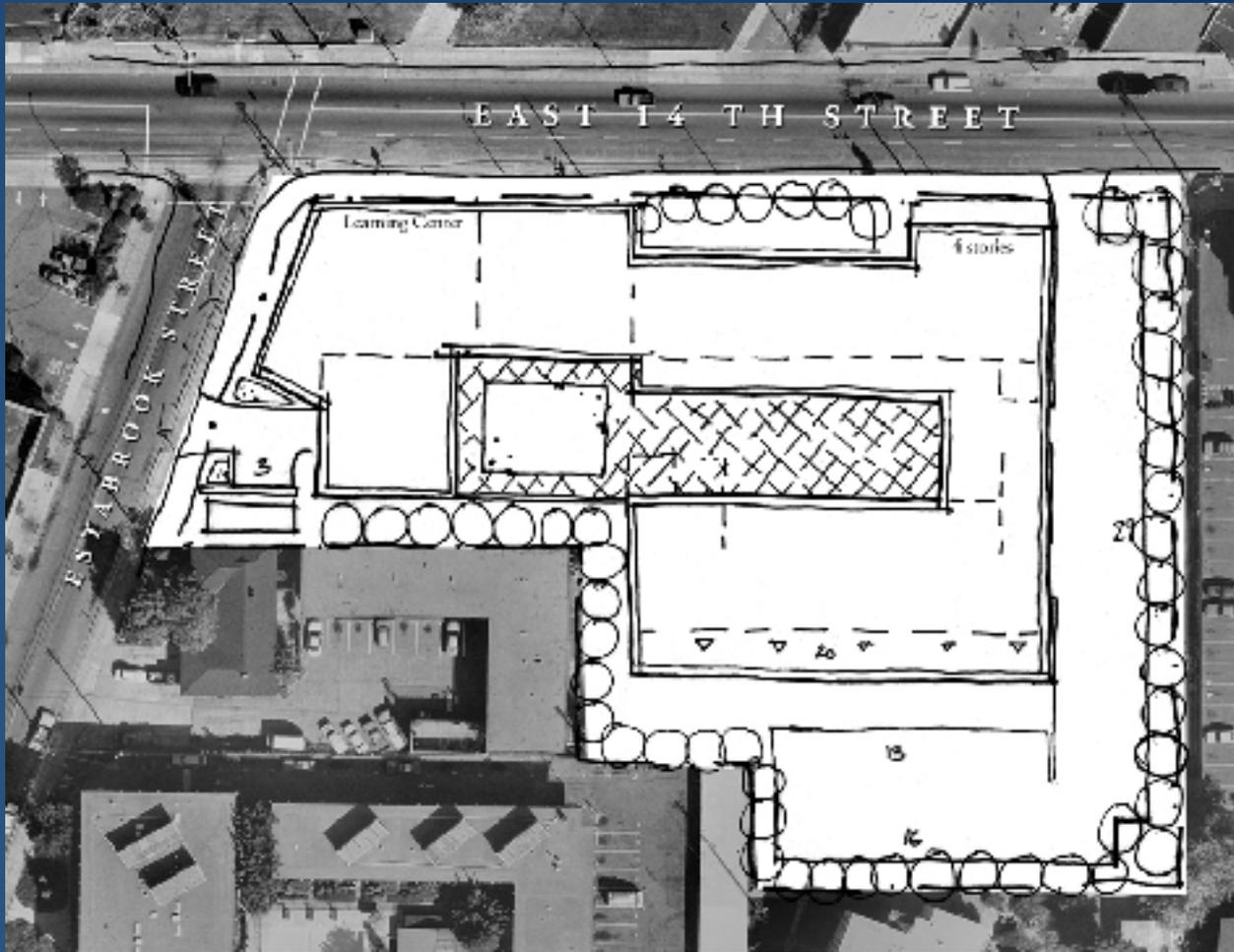
Photo by Urban Advantage

Sample Opportunity Site: Mixed-Use

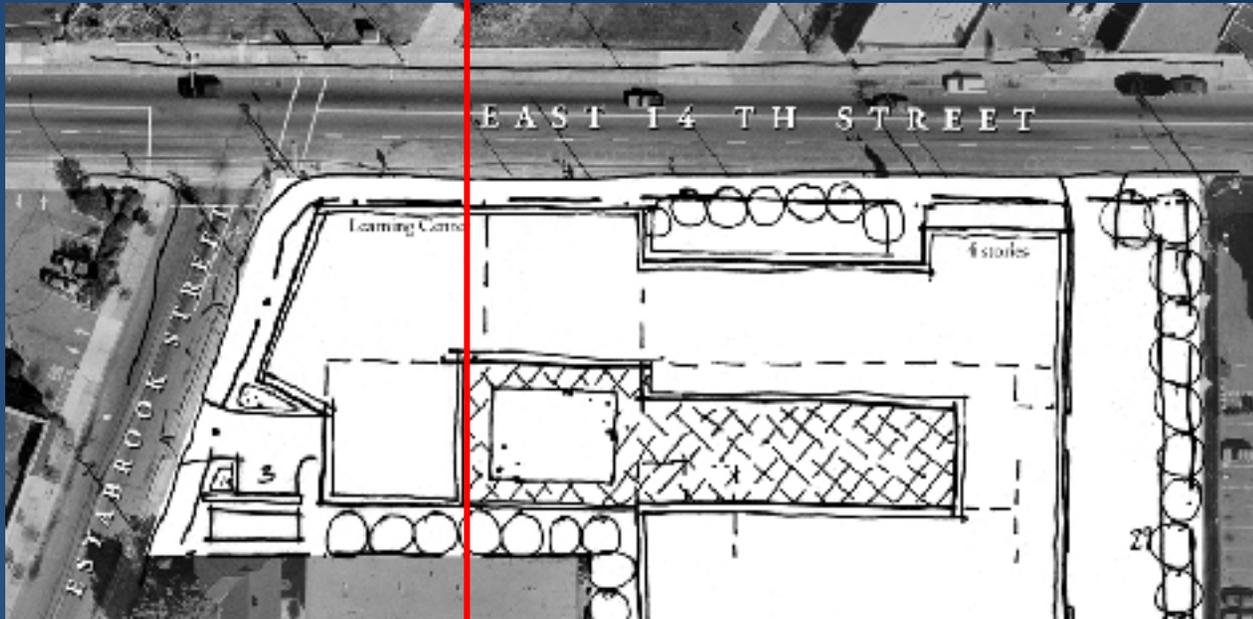
(Existing - Used Car Lot & abandoned Salvation Army) **T3 -Suburban**



Sample Opportunity Site: Mixed-Use (apartments w/ podium/tandem pkg.) **T5-Urban Center**



Sample Opportunity Site: Mixed-Use (apartments w/ podium/tandem pkg.) **T5-Urban Center**



Sample Opportunity Site: Mixed-Use (Existing Condition) T3 -Suburban



Photo by Urban Advantage

Sample Opportunity Site: Mixed-Use (apartments w/ podium/tandem pkg.) T-5 Urban Center



Photo Simulation by Urban Advantage

Sample Opportunity Site: Courtyard Condos

T4 - Urban General



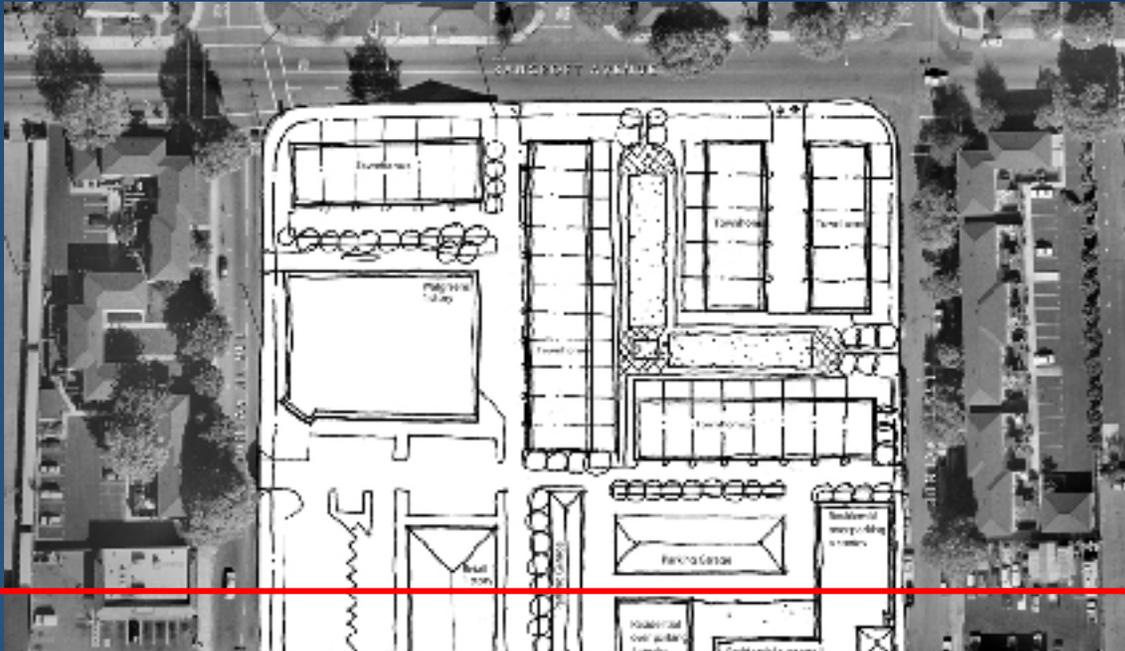
Photo Simulation by Urban Advantage

Sample Opportunity Site: Mixed-Use (Existing - Retail Center & Used Car Lot) **T3-Suburban**



Sample Opportunity Site: Mixed-Use

(Retail Anchor w/ apartments & structure parking) **T6-Urban Core**



Site-specific Opportunity Site: Sites 17: Freitas Site (Existing Condition) **T3 -Suburban**



Photo by Urban Advantage

Sample Opportunity Site: Mixed-Use (Retail Anchor w/ apartments & structure parking) **T6-Urban Core**



Photo by Simulation by Urban Advantage

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Photo by Simulation by Urban Advantage

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Planning Context

- ❖ City's **Strategy for Revitalization** of East 14th Street Corridor specifically included **Streetscape Improvements**

- ❖ Strategy Components:
 - East 14th Street South Area Corridor Concept Plan
 - Land Use and Zoning
 - Opportunity Sites for Future Development
 - Design Guidelines for Development on Private Properties
 - **East 14th Street South Area Streetscape Improvements**
 - **Context Sensitive Design Approach**
 - **Multi-modal Improvements**
 - Implementation Strategies

Context Sensitive Design Approach

- ❖ Context Sensitive Design here meant responding to a “context” that is *part existing* and *part vision* - Corridor New Urbanism
- ❖ Context Sensitive Design approach included multi-modal improvements to East 14th Street
- ❖ Proposed improvements were developed with substantial community involvement
- ❖ Caltrans (DOT) reviewed and commented on proposed improvements

Key Transportation Characteristics

- ❖ Street is designated State Highway - (Improvements require design approval from California Department of Transportation)
- ❖ About 20,000 ADT with minimal traffic delays
- ❖ On-street parking along entire length
- ❖ Key transit Corridor with 3,000 trips originating or arriving in the Corridor
- ❖ Bicycle Plan targets alternate route paralleling East 14th Street



The Pedestrian Experience

- ❖ A corridor's success can be gauged by the pedestrian experience. East 14th Street scores poorly, because it has:
 - Narrow sidewalks (9 to 10 feet)
 - Long distances between signalized or striped crosswalks (up to 1700 feet);
 - Long crossing distances (up to 80 ft.);
 - Access to transit and adjacent neighborhoods reduced by high frequency of T-intersections (85% of all intersections);
 - A visual dominance of paved surfaces



Goals and Policies to Build On

- ❖ Applicable Goals and Policies from the General Plan:
 - Transformation from unbroken commercial 'strip' into a series of distinct and active districts
Requires Redesign of commercial street sections to be accommodating of residential and other uses
 - Make East 14th Street more transit- and pedestrian-friendly
Requires wider sidewalks and more frequent, safer, and convenient crossings as well as improved access to transit

Context - Existing and Envisioned

- ❖ Transformation from unbroken commercial 'strip' into a series of five distinct districts:
 - Creates opportunities for **Focal Points of Activity** that relate to adjacent land uses
 - **Character of new districts informs the Streetscape Improvements** needed to support that vision

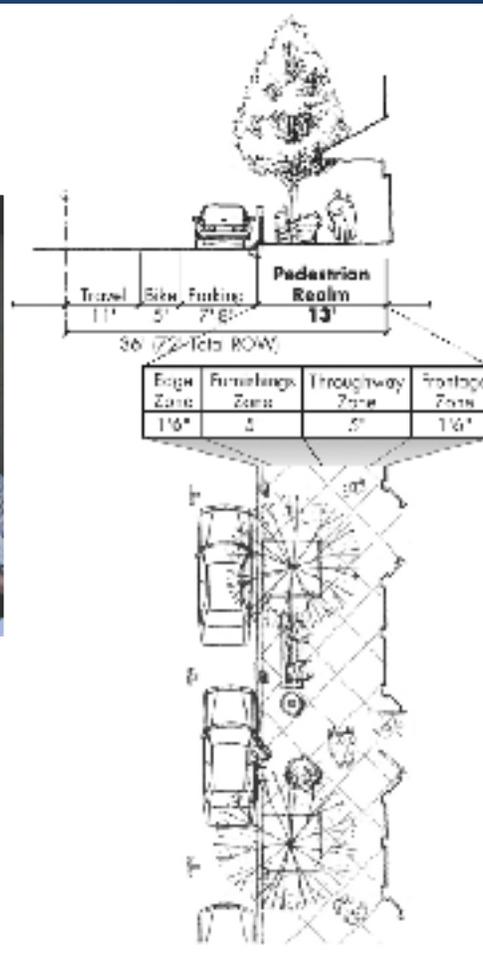


Street Design Element – Sidewalks

- ❖ Scale and use of sidewalk based on function and context



Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park



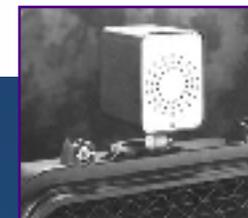
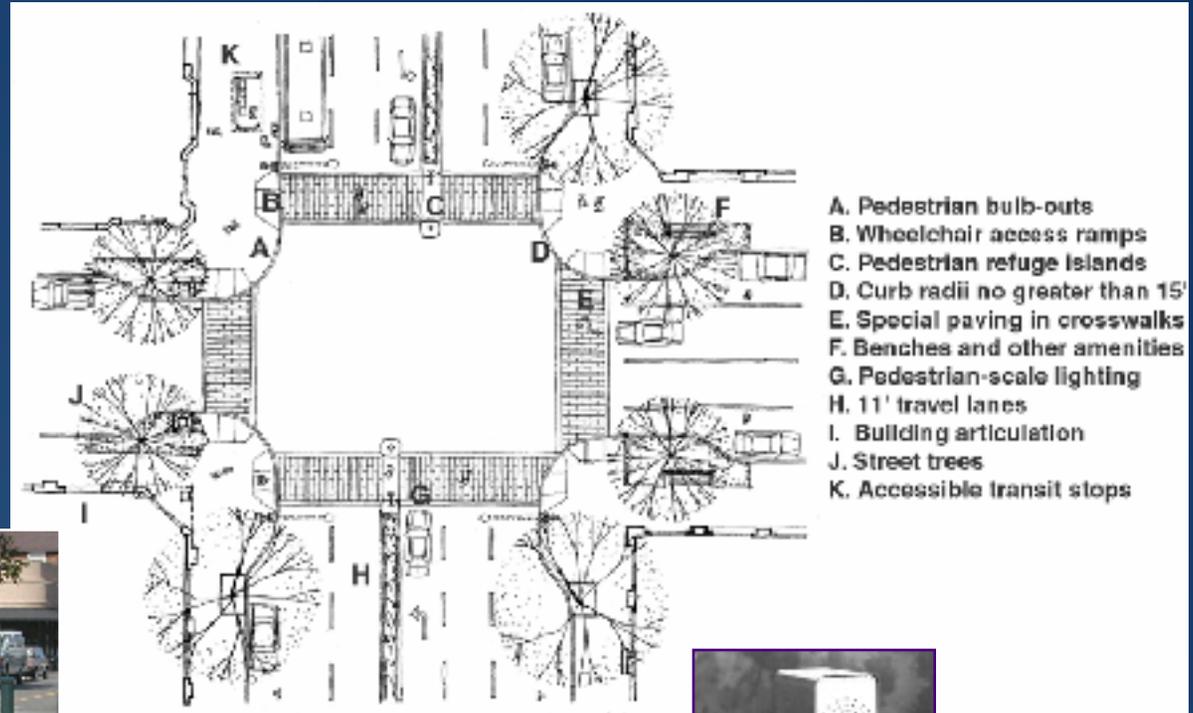
Pedestrian Technical Guidelines
VTA - Santa Clara Co., CA



San Pablo Ave., Berkeley (13 ft.)

Street Design Element – *Safe Crossings*

- Curb ramps
- Curb extensions
- Pedestrian refuges
- Crosswalk striping



Street Design Element - *Medians*

- ❖ Tree-lined Medians Greatly Change the Visual Appearance of a Street



**Broadway, Oakland
(5 ft. - next to turn lane)**



East 14th Street, San Leandro



International Blvd., Oakland (10 ft.)



San Pablo Ave., Berkeley (13 ft.)

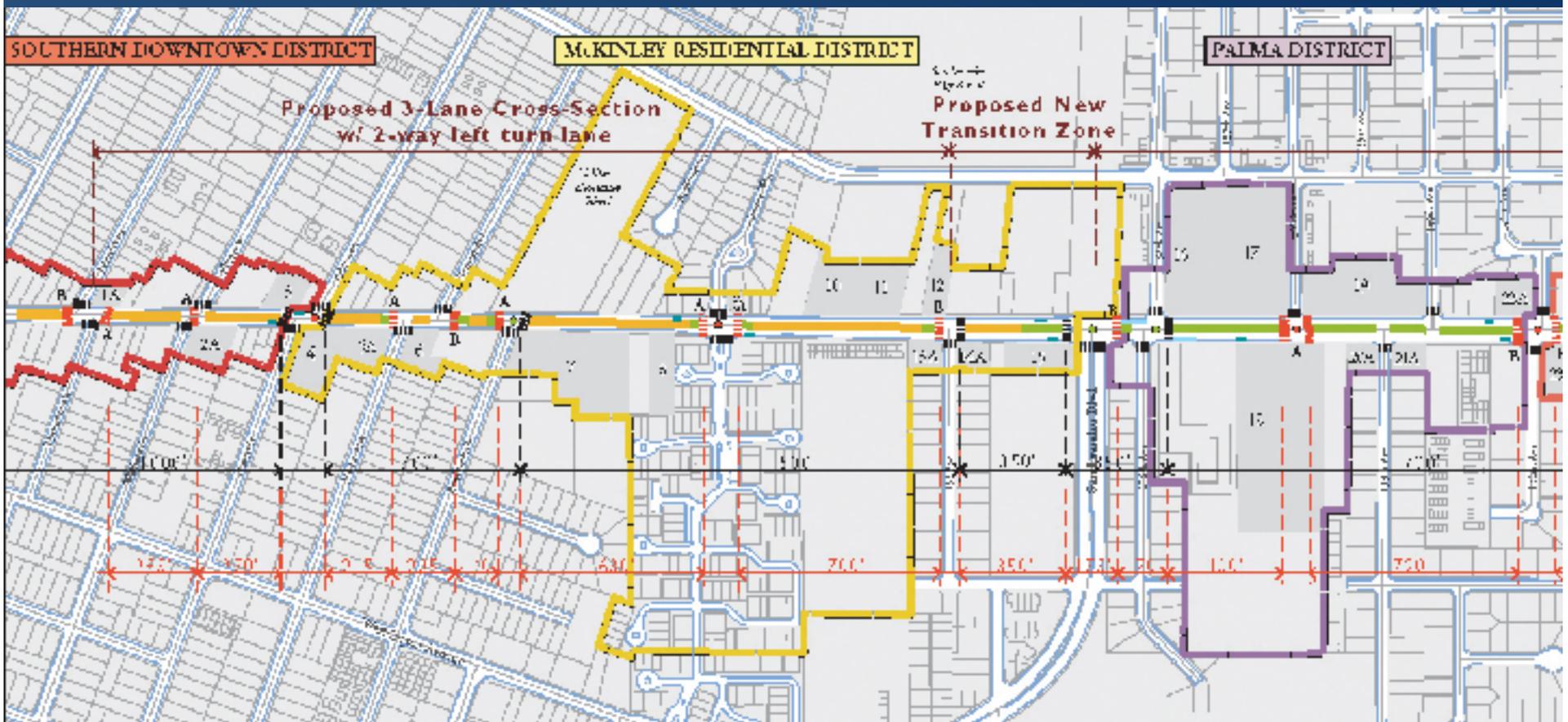
Making the Street Transit- and Pedestrian-friendly

- ❖ Major Improvements Include:
 - More frequent and improved crossings throughout the Corridor (target: every 600 feet)
 - Wider Sidewalks (13.5 feet where feasible)
 - Tree-lined, raised medians with pedestrian refuges at crossings
 - Pedestrian-scale lighting
 - Improvement of unique but dysfunctional activity centers



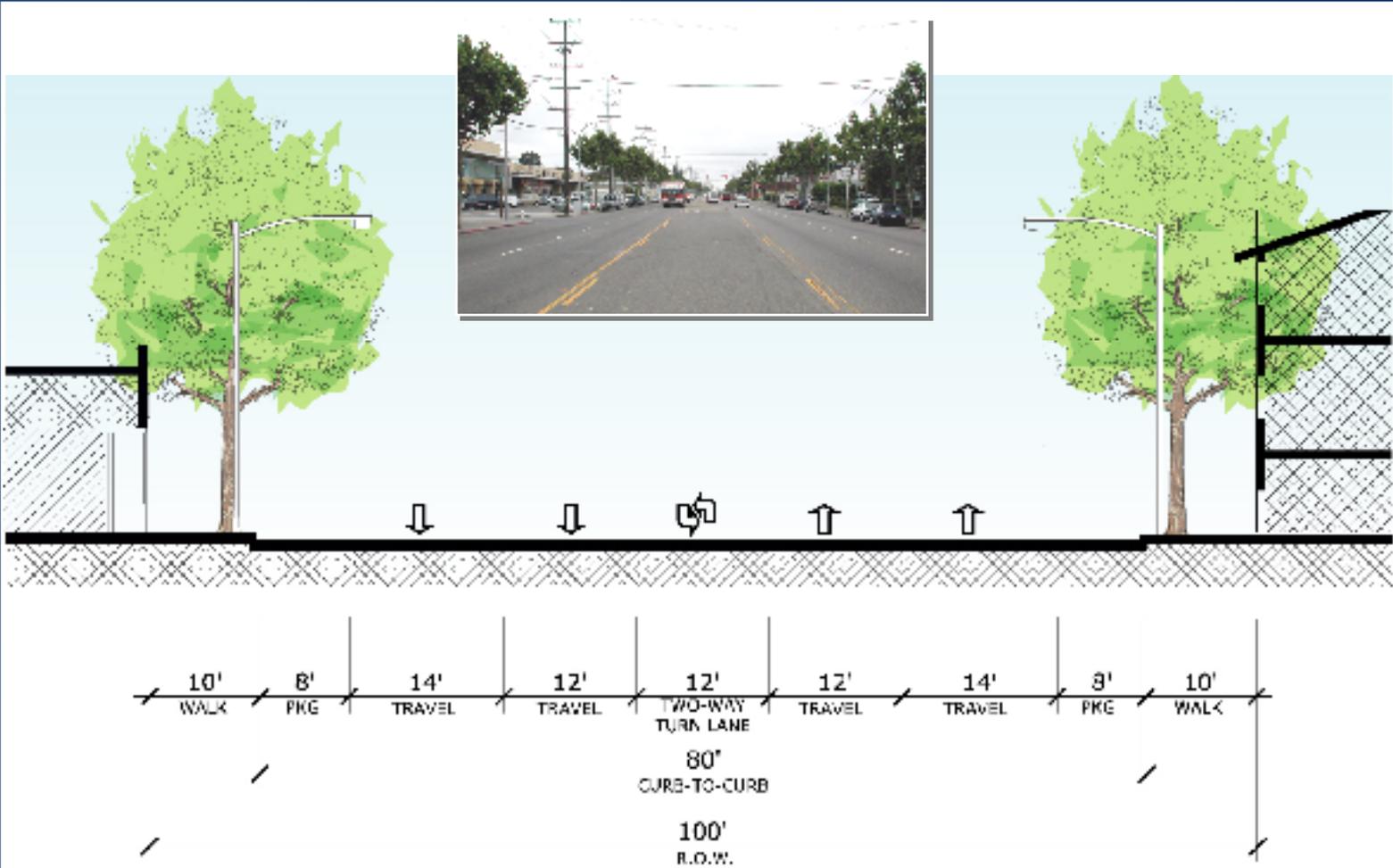
Corridor Streetscape Concept

- ❖ Locations for Medians, and possible New Crosswalks and Traffic Signals



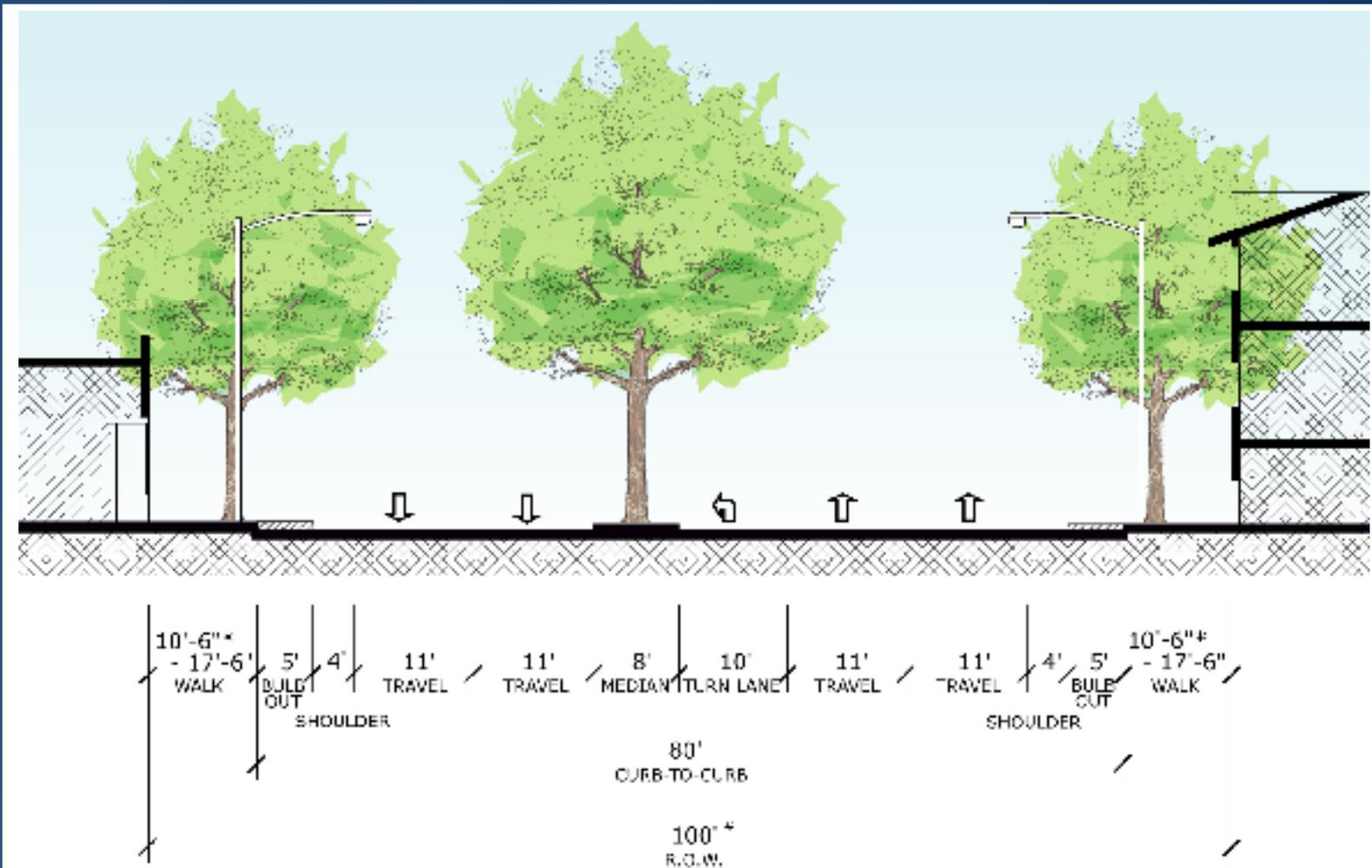
East 14th Street South

❖ Existing Condition



East 14th Street South

- ❖ Cross Section needs to balance needs of all modes



Trees Can Transform A Corridor's Character



Photo by Urban Advantage

Existing Condition - Wide Section

Trees Can Transform A Corridor's Character



Photo Simulation by Urban Advantage

Streetscape Improvements as Advance Armature for Revitalization



Photo by Urban Advantage

Existing Condition

Streetscape Improvements as Advance Armature for Revitalization



Photo Simulation by Urban Advantage

Simulated Intersection Improvements

Crosswalk Improvements



Photo by Urban Advantage

Existing Condition

Crosswalk Improvements



Photo Simulation by Urban Advantage

Simulated Intersection Improvements

Crosswalk Improvements



Photo Simulation by Urban Advantage

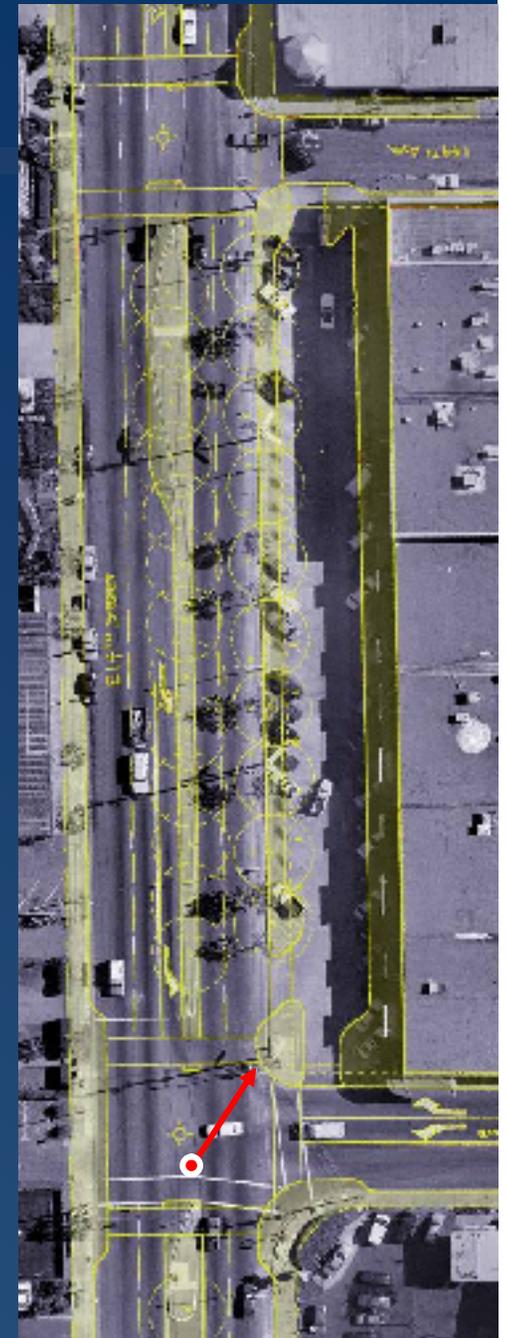
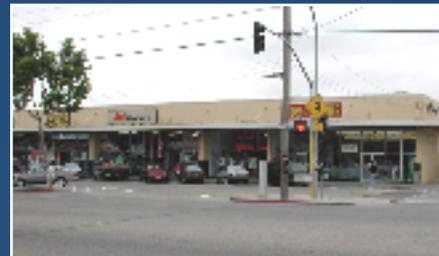
Simulated Intersection Improvements

Location Specific Improvements

- ❖ Maintaining Local Flavor of Place



Photo Simulation by Urban Advantage



Implementation Successes and Issues

- ❖ Increased developer Interest since release of the Plan
- ❖ Funding for construction of several blocks of tree-lined median
- ❖ CALTRANS approval of design elements is proving difficult despite Caltrans' commitment to Context Sensitive Design
- ❖ City Transportation Department has moved improvements forward that conflict with plan goals and design



Making Corridor New Urbanism a Success

- ❖ Provide clear project goals
 - Design street to improve safety
 - Design for speed management
- ❖ Understand the Context through the Community's eyes
- ❖ Create a center of community activity rather than a barrier between activities on either side of the Corridor.
 - Provide guidance and support through General Plan and Zoning
 - Work hard to make atypical but special local conditions work
- ❖ Use appropriate evaluation measures
 - Traffic flows at a consistent speed
 - Maintain travel time



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