

Downtown Johnstown Improvements Master Plan

December 2007



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1.0 introduction

1.1 Why Now?

The need for the Johnstown Downtown Improvements Master Plan arose out of the Comprehensive Plan update that was prepared for the Town in the fall of 2006. The comprehensive plan stressed the need to enhance and expand the civic and commercial core of Johnstown in preparation for, and in conjunction with, the growth of the Town.

With the growth along I-25 and SH34, downtown Johnstown has begun to experience pressure from new commercial and retail developments. In addition, a shortage of entertainment alternatives, parking concerns, the lack of a cohesive downtown image and lack of public amenities led to the desire for a downtown improvements plan. To address these and other issues, the Downtown Improvements Master Plan was undertaken to develop both a comprehensive vision and a series of strategic projects. The master plan will assist with coordinating public and private investments, and guide the type and location of future improvements within the downtown.

In the spring of 2007, the Town commissioned a team of landscape architects from EDAW, Inc. in Fort Collins, Colorado to help develop an

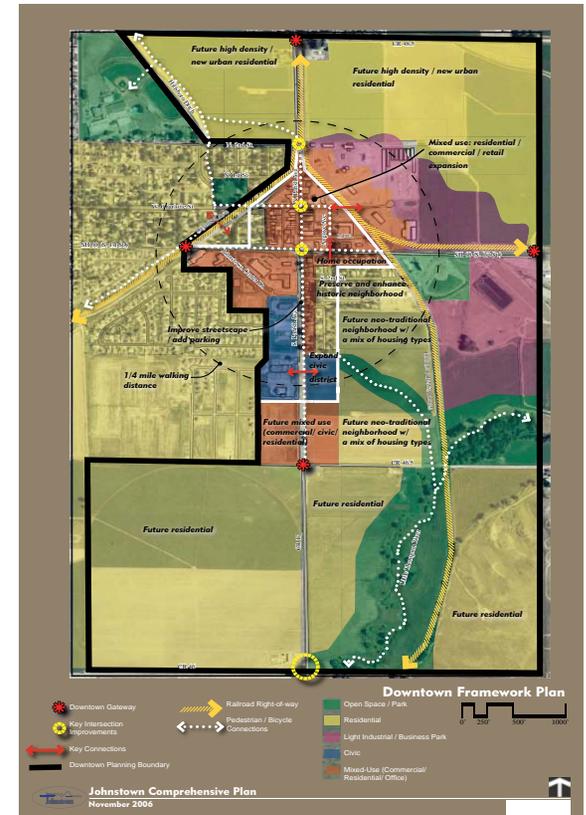
overall downtown improvements plan that included streetscape design, parking improvements, character enhancement, and recommendations for future growth and expansion in the downtown area. The design team, which included Transportation Planners FHU, worked closely with the Town of Johnstown, Planning & Zoning Commission, Town Council, local property and business owners, and residents to arrive at a plan that would best represent the desired future of the downtown.

The master plan provides guidance on ways to improve conditions for pedestrians and bicycles, manage parking, improve the streetscape, and promote appropriate, compatible infill development and redevelopment opportunities.

1.2 Project Process

The plan was developed through a number of public meetings that were held to discuss the desires, needs, and concerns of local business owners, property owners, and residents of Johnstown.

The project team developed a public process that allowed a variety of opportunities for the community of Johnstown to provide valuable input and suggestions on how they would like to



Downtown Framework Plan from the 2006 Comprehensive Plan.

see their downtown develop and improve. During the process, issues were identified, specific goals established, and the vision for downtown created. The following public sessions were held to solicit suggestions from the community, notes from which are included in Appendix A.

Vision:

"An expanded and enhanced downtown which draws on the positive character and heritage of the original business district."



Goals:

1. A larger downtown area that consists of a commercial core and complementary neighborhoods and civic uses.
2. Expand, diversify and reinforce the economic core of downtown.
3. Maintain downtown as the civic, cultural and entertainment heart of the community.
4. Introduce complementary residential areas into the downtown area.
5. Enhance existing, and create new, pedestrian connections to downtown.
6. Reinforce the character of downtown by constructing streetscape and other public improvements, and also by promoting complementary private streetscape and design improvements.

Downtown Goals, from the 2006 Comprehensive Plan.

Project Kick-Off (April 10, 2007). The project kick-off was held to generate awareness and interest in the Downtown Improvements Master Plan project. The design team outlined critical areas of concern and areas of opportunity that were identified during the comprehensive plan planning workshops, and facilitated a discussion regarding what the community's goals were for the project. Improving aesthetics, pedestrian safety and circulation, and parking were the greatest concerns expressed.

Workshop (June 20 & 21, 2007; July 17, 2007). The project team met with local business and property owners and residents to discuss specific areas in need of improvement, and to gather thoughts and ideas for detailed recommendations for improvements. Workshop participants were divided into small groups to discuss critical issues in more depth, and to begin identifying specific recommendations or potential projects. The following day, the design team assembled all the ideas into a comprehensive vision with key recommendations.

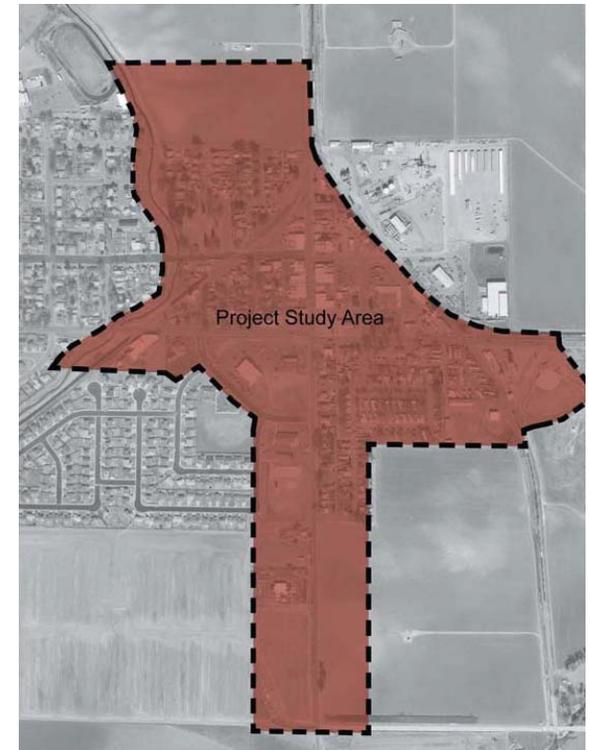
Open House #1 (June 21). Following the first day of workshops, the design team presented the ideas to solicit reactions to the initial downtown vision and emerging improvement projects, and to gather additional ideas.

Open House #2 (October 4, 2007). After refining the overall downtown vision and creating multiple alternatives for the streetscape of North Parish Avenue, the design team held a public open house to gather final thoughts and reactions from the community.

1.3 Project Scope

Downtown Johnstown has traditionally been the heart of the community, serving residents with shops and restaurants, providing recreation areas in the form of parks, and where the public institutions are located. The study area is roughly

bounded by North 2nd Street to the north, County Road 46.5 at the south, Sticker Stadium on the east, and Rutherford Avenue to the west. The area contains a mix of commercial and retail, public buildings, residential, public open space, and light industrial. The downtown study area is bordered by agricultural land on the east, north, and south. As Johnstown continues to grow over the next 10 years, the downtown will see a transition from traditional land uses to new uses.



Master Plan study area.

1.4 Master Plan Summary

The master plan is a flexible framework for downtown improvements for the next 10 years. This summary provides an overview of the vision and specific areas for improvement that are presented within this document. The purpose of this document is to provide the foundation as well as guidelines and strategies for improvements.

At the public meetings, people expressed what they felt were downtown Johnstown's greatest strengths and weaknesses. Some of its greatest assets include the small town charm and friendly atmosphere with unique places to eat and shop, along with Johnstown's history as an agricultural community. The downtown is typically busy, with most of its storefronts occupied, but has room for expansion as well as willing participants. Concerns about the downtown were pedestrian circulation and safety, parking accessibility, attracting new customers to downtown, and the overall image and character.

Reconfiguring parking to create more spaces and creating a signage program are key pieces of the recommendations. Aesthetics and improved street treatments will help make the downtown more inviting, and slowing traffic through the core of downtown will make it feel safer for pedestrians. Additional suggestions that did not directly relate to physical improvements included updated sign standards for the downtown, creating

design guidelines for the downtown, developing a Downtown Business Association, incentives for improvements, and updated or additional Town ordinances. Many residents felt that an activity and events calendar in addition to physical improvements would encourage more people to drive from I-25 and outlying parts of Johnstown to the downtown.

Specific master plan goals are:

Johnstown's Unique Character

Preserve and enhance the sense of place that is downtown Johnstown by maintaining high standards of architecture, urban design, and landscaping that enhance the existing areas and guide new development in a manner that complements the historic, quaint and rural character of the original downtown. Enhance the streetscapes of downtown while preserving the local character.

Animate the Public Realm

Maintain, enhance and create new public features, such as parks, plazas and streetscapes. Encourage community-wide events and activities that attract people to the downtown and activate

public spaces. Create great outdoor public spaces to hold events, meet and greet, or people watch.

Economic Vitality

Establish downtown as the local destination for entertainment, dining, and shopping. Ensure the future economic stability of downtown by actively promoting retail and tourism. Make coming to downtown safe, inviting, and memorable to encourage additional business development and more consumer activity.



Sustainable Infrastructure

Protect the public health, safety, and prosperity by providing and maintaining facilities that enable the community to live in balance. Ensure that public services and amenities keep pace with new development in downtown. Incorporate sustainable design strategies into design projects wherever possible. Encourage the implementation of public transportation, as well as new bicycle and pedestrian ways.

Circulation and Safety

Improve and organize vehicular circulation and parking to improve the pedestrian environment. Identify additional locations for parking near businesses.

The analysis of downtown Johnstown and its surroundings helped to identify pertinent issue areas.

2.0 summary of existing conditions

Land Use

The central business district for Johnstown has traditionally been on North Parish Avenue between SH60 and Charlotte Street. The street is the heart of downtown and contains a mix of commercial and retail businesses. The businesses are generally small, local enterprises. Residential areas facing South 1st Street, SH60, and along Rutherford Avenue are beginning to transition to in-home or small commercial businesses. The residential areas surrounding the central business district are a mix of historic neighborhoods and newer developments, with the majority single family housing.

The downtown traditionally supported agricultural and light industrial uses, some of which remain along the railroads east of the central business district. There are also several public institutions within downtown; south of SH60 along South Parish Avenue is the library, police services building, and post office. A new Town Hall will be constructed near these facilities, reinforcing a civic core of the downtown south of SH60.

Public open space is a minor land use in the downtown area, but is important for recreational uses and public gathering space. These areas are Parish Park, Sticker Stadium, and Eddie Aragon Park.



Current land use in downtown Johnstown.

The downtown study area is bordered by agricultural land on the east, north, and south; over the next 10 years, it is anticipated that this land will gradually begin to transition to a combination of mixed-use and residential developments.

Circulation and Parking

Through discussions with the community, it became apparent that two of the critical issues were traffic through the heart of downtown and the parking in downtown.

The train tracks running through downtown, along with associated spurs, create several dangerous intersections along North Parish Avenue. Realigning Parish Avenue north of downtown and closing a limited number of streets would help alleviate this problem.

As downtown continues to grow, some of that growth will occur south of SH60 – a major local and regional transportation corridor. SH60 bisects the downtown study area, and heavy traffic on this road during peak travel hours inhibits pedestrian access between the north and south parts of downtown.

The majority of public parking in downtown is on-street, angled parking, with two public parking lots – east of North Parish Avenue and adjacent to Town Hall. There is limited parking in the alley west of North Parish Avenue, but it is unorganized and inefficient. The primary area for criticism of parking is on the one-block stretch of North Parish Avenue between SH60 and Charlotte Street. This is where the current concentration of business is located and

reflects people's desire to park directly in front of the business.

The design team's observations and parking analysis did not indicate a deficiency in parking quantities within the study area for the number of businesses today, but rather a lack of knowledge about additional parking areas or the lack of desire to walk a slightly greater distance. (See Appendix B, Parking Analysis for the complete study.)

Image and Aesthetics

Downtown Johnstown has grown from a small, agriculturally based community to one that is rapidly changing as the Town grows. As the Town demographic changes, the need to draw people to downtown also grows. An attractive and inviting environment draws visitors and encourages them to stay longer, and thus spend more money.

The quaint charm of the downtown is evident in the historic architecture of the commercial buildings and residential areas. Yet, downtown lacks a cohesive landscape character and is not ideal for pedestrian activity. Some areas within the downtown are worn down and need refreshing or updating. The Town shops area on Angove Avenue is unattractive, limiting desirability and use adjacent to it.

The sidewalks on North Parish Avenue are narrow, cluttered, and marginally accessible for people with disabilities.

3.0 recommendations

3.1 Downtown Vision

Recommendations encompass ideas from many suggestions made during public meetings and open houses. In general, there was public consensus in the overall direction for the downtown improvements plan.

The primary purposes of the downtown improvements master plan were identified as the following:

1. Enhance the streetscapes within downtown Johnstown while preserving local character.
2. Enhance the pedestrian experience and feeling of safety.
3. Make coming downtown safe, inviting, and memorable.
4. Create great outdoor public spaces to hold events, meet and greet, or to people watch.
5. Improve and organize vehicular circulation and parking; identify additional locations for parking.
6. Incorporate the Town's rich history into the heart of downtown.
7. Use sustainable design strategies wherever possible.
8. Encourage public transportation, as well as bicycle and pedestrian ways.

These purposes are incorporated and described in the following topic areas:

- *Public Open Space*
- *Pedestrian Connections*
- *Streetscape Improvements*
- *Circulation + Parking*
- *Infill Development*
- *Other (non-physical aspects of the plan)*

While the recommendations are divided into topics for easier discussion, there is overlap between them and they are all connected to some degree.

3.2 Plan Details

1. Realign Parish Avenue north of the central business district away from the railroad tracks to allow for better land use for redevelopment.
2. Improvements to Parish Park, Sticker Stadium, and Pocket Park.
3. Consistent streetscape in the downtown area.
4. Close 1st Place and create an urban plaza for gathering.
5. Enhanced crosswalks at Parish Avenue and SH60, and Parish Avenue and Charlotte Street.
6. Midblock crossings with pedestrian-activated signals at critical locations.
7. Create gateways at the four edges of downtown to announce arrival.
8. Improve the alleys to the east and west of Parish in the central business district.
9. Redevelop existing Town Hall site into a vibrant arts and events center.
10. Improve pedestrian safety across canal along SH60.
11. Create signage program for downtown to direct people to parking and businesses.
12. Allow for transition to home businesses along Parish Avenue, SH60, and Rutherford Avenue.

Overall Downtown Improvements Plan



3.3 Public Open Space

Existing public open space within downtown should be individually evaluated for improvements and enhancements. Additional public open spaces should be added within the downtown as new development occurs.

Parish Park. Parish Park is a classic-style town park, with mature trees, public access from all four sides, and primarily passive recreation. Parish Park should have some minor upgrades to improve its functionality and aesthetics. A fully functional restroom facility should be considered if the park is utilized for future public events. Concrete paths should be added for better accessibility to the picnic shelters and new site furnishings added.

Sticker Stadium. The ballpark should be evaluated for needed improvements to outfield areas, infield mix, and bleachers. Shade trees should be added along the perimeter.

Pocket Park. The pocket park across South Parish Avenue from Eddie Aragon Park should be improved to provide a safe and attractive park for the surrounding neighborhood. Seating, a small play area, and improved basketball courts should be provided, along with additional attractive landscaping. At the time of this report, the ownership of the property was uncertain, yet the Town maintains the landscape. Ownership needs to be clarified for this site.



Public open space within the downtown study area.



Existing condition of the Pocket Park on South Parish Avenue. Improvements to the park would enhance the neighborhood.

Public Plaza. Presently, there is no public open space within the commercial core. An opportunity for public space within downtown can occur if 1st Place is closed to traffic. The distance between 1st Place and South 1st Street is less than one block and is not necessary for vehicular traffic circulation. A small public plaza facing South Parish Avenue with seating, shade trees, and landscaping would provide an area for people to rest while shopping, eat lunch, or to just people watch. The plaza would provide an excellent opportunity for public art, an interactive water feature, and for events such as the farmer's market.



View of 1st Place toward North Parish Avenue where the street could be closed to create a plaza.



Example of a small public plaza that could be created on 1st Place.

New Parks. As new development comes into downtown, public parks and open space of varying sizes and designs should be encouraged. Pedestrian connections between the parks should be designed along with safe, inviting connections to the commercial center of downtown.

Public Art Program. Opportunities for public art should be explored for public open space areas. A public art program should reflect the community's heritage and be unique to Johnstown.

3.4 Pedestrian Connections

During the public meetings, it became clear that there is a need for improved pedestrian connections within the downtown. With increasing vehicular traffic and increasing interest in attracting people to downtown, a safe and clear pedestrian system is needed.

One primary goal is to increase pedestrian safety and enhance pedestrian amenities so that people will enjoy walking within downtown, browsing in shops, and contributing to a lively, active area. In order to meet this goal, the downtown improvements plan has explored the benefits of sidewalk reconstruction, redirecting traffic, and traffic calming with curb extensions, parking reconfiguration, new surfaces for crosswalks,



Areas for improved pedestrian connections with the downtown.

comprehensive Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessibility, attractive street furniture, and new street trees. Many of these elements, along with increased landscaping and lighting, contribute to another important goal – enhancement of the overall image of the downtown area.

Accessibility and Safety.

The first priority is to make all areas within downtown fully compliant with current ADA guidelines. Full ADA accessibility also accommodates people pushing strollers, those who are temporarily disabled (a broken leg, for example), and the elderly.



Areas of downtown on Charlotte Street, North Parish Avenue, and 1st Place with marginal or no ADA accessibility.

During the planning process, the design team noted that there are multiple locations within the study area where sidewalks are in poor condition, do not meet current ADA guidelines, or are missing altogether. The sidewalks along North Parish Avenue within the central business district are 7 feet wide, but narrow to 3 feet or less in some areas due to vehicle bumper overhangs and site fixtures, such as newspaper boxes. Curb ramps are not provided at all intersections and some do not fully meet ADA guidelines. Clear sidewalk widths should be a minimum of 3 feet, and all curb ramps should meet ADA guidelines.

Crosswalks.

Enhanced crosswalks should be added at key intersections, such as South Parish Avenue and Charlotte Street. Initially, this intersection should be restriped to clearly identify the pedestrian zone to vehicles. The long-term recommendation is to redesign the intersection with curb extensions to better align the crossing points and reduce the crossing distance. The crosswalk itself should be constructed of colored concrete or concrete pavers to clearly delineate the walk. Curb extensions should incorporate special paving, bollards, planter pots, shade trees, and benches.

Mid-block Crossing.

Pedestrian activated signals should be added at a few critical points in downtown



Example of a well-design pedestrian crosswalk that provides full ADA access and is differentiated for easier visibility by vehicles.



A new pedestrian bridge should be built over the canal on the north side of SH60.



Trails along the canal would connect neighborhoods to downtown and provide a safe alternative for pedestrians and bicycles.

at mid-block crossings. One is between the Pocket Park and Eddie Aragon Park on South Parish Avenue, another is across SH60 at Rutherford Avenue. Mid-block crosswalks should have special paving to further identify them.

Additional public access between streets should be explored to better facilitate people walking or bicycling to downtown. The Town should work with property owners to identify locations for public access points between alleys and streets and between properties.

Trails.

The opportunity to create a pedestrian and bicycle trail along the canal west of downtown should be explored. This trail could connect other parts of Johnstown with downtown, bringing more people to the area.

Along with the trail, a new, accessible pedestrian bridge should be constructed across the canal on the north side of SH60 to replace the current, unsafe bridge.

3.5 Streetscape Improvements

Streetscape improvements go hand-in-hand with the pedestrian experience, and are integral with the prior topic.

Streetscape Design.

Wide sidewalks, street trees, clear pedestrian signage, attractive street furniture, and pedestrian scale lighting all can improve the aesthetics of the downtown. A cohesive streetscape design



Locations for streetscape improvements within the downtown study area.

Newspaper racks and other objects dominate the sidewalk

Awnings are inconsistent in color and style

Sidewalks are narrow and cluttered, creating an uncomfortable walking area

Streetscape lacks site furnishings in some locations

Lighting is unattractive and not at a pedestrian scale

Existing signage is a hodge-podge of styles and not compatible with the unique character of downtown



Existing streetscape condition along N. Parish Ave. in the central business district.

that visually connects the major streets of downtown will create a unique identity that is readily identifiable when coming into downtown from a different area.

Considerations for streetscape improvements include the sidewalk design, pavement materials, sidewalk edge

treatment, type of curb, and tree grate locations. The existing cobra-head lights on North Parish Avenue should be replaced with ornamental, pedestrian scale lights that are in character with the downtown and complement the street furniture. Street elements should be unified in design style and sympathetic to the historic

character of the downtown. Seasonal banners and a themed sign system will further enhance the streetscape. Bicycle racks should be provided in convenient locations to encourage alternate modes of transportation.

Only by creating a pleasant walking experience to and from parking areas, which are not on Parish Avenue, can the Town make the most of the parking that is available. The streetscape design should reinforce the connections between Parish Park and Parish Avenue and the central business district with the civic core (post office, Police Services, and Town Hall) south of SH60. Pedestrian connections from adjacent neighborhoods to downtown should be enhanced with some of the streetscape elements.

Sidewalk cafes can further animate the streetscape, and should be encouraged for restaurants and coffee shops along major streets and in alleys behind businesses.

All of these suggestions can create a more inviting experience for visitors, who will then tend to linger longer and spend more money.



Recommended family of site furnishings for downtown to include: trash receptacles, bicycle racks, benches, pedestrian scale lights with seasonal banners, flower pots, and a unique downtown signage program.

Downtown Gateways.

Visual gateways should be created at the four edges of downtown to announce the arrival of a special district. These gateways could include decorative landscaping, unique signage or a monument, and would be the beginning point for the downtown streetscape.

Downtown Signage Program.

Signage is a critical component to a successful improvements program. Signage guides and informs people, and provides an identity through a unique design and character.

A downtown signage program would complement and reinforce the other streetscape improvements mentioned earlier. Well-designed and placed signage will aid in directing people to additional parking off North Parish Avenue and to businesses. The signage program should include pedestrian wayfinding and directory signs, vehicular wayfinding signs, parking lot direction signs, parking lot identification signs, street name signs, and regulatory signs. The signage package should have a consistent design, incorporating a uniform style, downtown logo, and color scheme.

In the future, an informational kiosk may be desired that can orient and direct visitors to businesses, and be a venue for public notices and event promotion. The new public plaza facing North Parish Avenue would be an ideal locations for a kiosk.

North Parish Avenue Streetscape Improvements.

The most important street to consider for streetscape improvements is North Parish Avenue, since it is where the majority of business is located now. During the planning process, alternative concepts for North Parish Avenue were explored that looked at various parking and circulation scenarios.

The preferred streetscape recommendation is to remove the existing curb and gutter and sidewalks, and to widen the sidewalks to 14 feet, convert parking to parallel, and narrow the drive lanes to 12 feet. This recommendation helps with a number of current issues in downtown. Widening the walks and providing street trees and street furniture along North Parish Avenue will create a better pedestrian environment, which can attract more people to the area – both businesses and shoppers. People tend to stay longer in an attractive and comfortable environment. The wider sidewalks will also accommodate ADA accessibility and allow several people to walk together.

Narrowing the drive lanes will slow traffic through this critical location, reducing the number of potential vehicle/pedestrian encounters. The parallel parking also buffers the pedestrians from moving vehicles, making people feel safer than if there was no parking. There is minimal loss of parking spaces along Parish when



Example of a well-designed streetscape that includes wide sidewalks with special paving, a family of site furnishings, directional signage, seasonal banners, and street trees.

converting to parallel from angled parking. And, with the restriping of the angled parking on Charlotte Street, there will be an overall gain in parking numbers.

Prior to implementation of the improvements to North Parish Avenue, additional parking areas within the downtown need to be identified and

established. An overall parking plan should be created that identifies existing parking and future opportunities for additional parking.



Recommended streetscape improvements for North Parish Avenue.

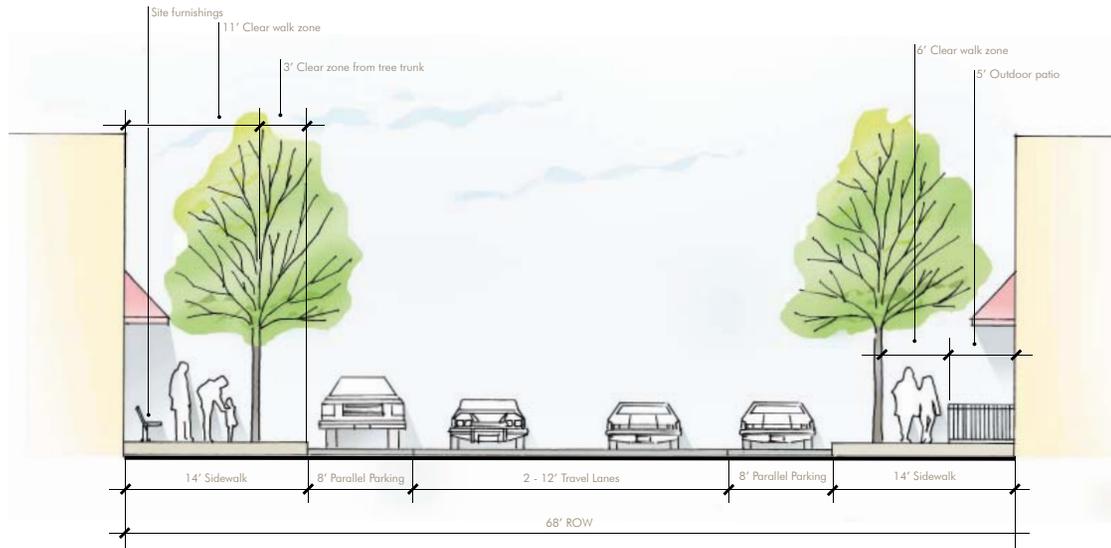


Existing streetscape of North Parish Avenue.

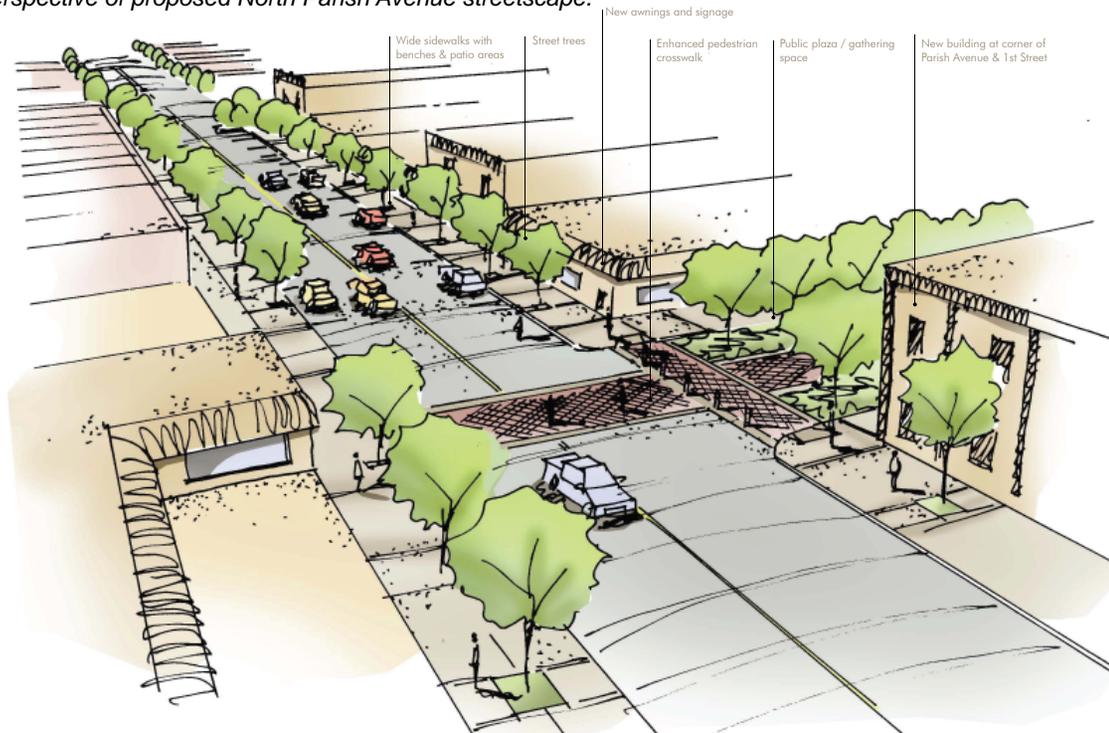


Example of pedestrian-friendly streetscape with parallel parking.

Section of proposed North Parish Avenue streetscape.



Perspective of proposed North Parish Avenue streetscape.



3.6 Circulation + Parking

Parking has been one of the most critical discussions during project planning. The parking study done as part of this master plan has identified that, overall, there is not a parking shortage for downtown. Town parking lots frequently have parking available, and there was no time during the study that the available public parking was at 100% capacity. Key issues identified in downtown included overall parking capacity, misuse by employees, parking location, and a need for directional signage.

The planning process identified several strategies for improving parking within the downtown. Public parking should be improved and better organized, with no net loss of parking within the downtown study area.

Parking Management Plan.

The first proposed strategy is a parking management plan that implements time limitations. For example, parking time limits could be established by use zones. Zone A could be 2-hour on-street parking time limits; Zone B, 4-hour off-street parking time limits; and, Zone C, no time limits. Zone A could be on Parish Avenue and Charlotte Street; Zone B would be Town parking lots; and Zone C, secondary streets such as Angove and Rutherford Avenue. It was noted during the planning process that some shopkeepers and employees park in front of their shops, reducing parking availability for customers. Short-term



Locations in the downtown study area for parking and circulation improvements.

(customer) vs. employee parking areas should be established that encourage employees to park in alleys behind businesses or in parking lots, rather than on the street.

Charlotte Street.

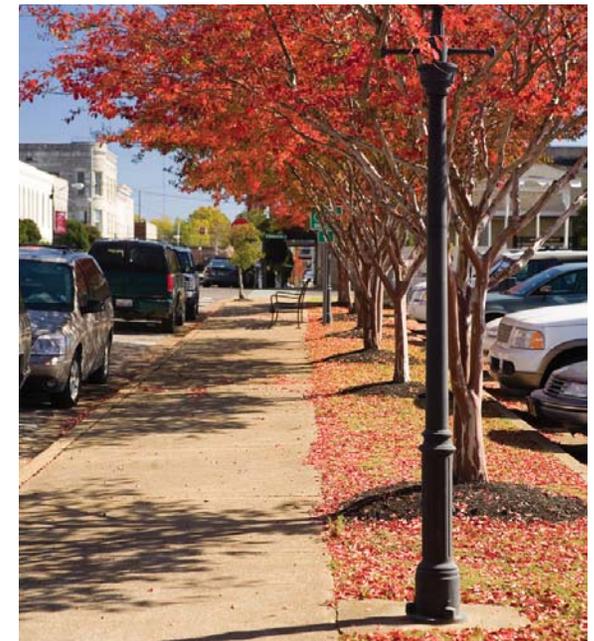
A second parking strategy is to restripe the 30° angle parking on Charlotte Street to 60°. This would substantially increase parking numbers without changing curb and gutter locations. Additional parking can also be gained on Angove Avenue by

widening the right-of-way into the Town-owned lot, which is currently used for materials and maintenance storage, and adding 60° angle parking.

Town Parking Lots.

The Town parking lot east of North Parish Avenue should be improved by proving tree islands and reconfigured parking spaces. Directional signage from Parish Avenue to parking lots should be provided. Lighting should be added if necessary for safety.

The Town should actively seek and acquire additional land for public parking lots that are in close proximity to the central business district.



Parking lot facing a street with street trees and sidewalk.



Examples of alley improvements and rear entries.

Alley Improvements.

Alley improvements within downtown can improve pedestrian connections, the image of downtown, and the usability of existing space.

The alley west of South Parish Avenue should be improved by consolidating trash dumpsters; implementing dumpster screening; creating clear, dedicated parking stalls; adding planting to soften edges; adding murals on backsides of buildings; improving drainage and accessibility; encouraging rear entries; and undergrounding utilities where possible. The alley improvements would also aid pedestrian circulation by providing a safer and more comfortable back entry to businesses. Alley parking could be used primarily by employees, freeing up parking along the streets for visitors and shoppers. A detailed lighting plan to adequately light the alleys for safety should be included.



Closing the alley east of Parish Avenue to vehicles should be explored to create a pedestrian-only access between the Town parking lot and Parish Avenue. This would create a more clear connection between the main street and parking lot, encouraging people to park in the lot.

Road Realignment.

In the long term, Parish Avenue (north of the existing Town Hall) should be realigned away from the railroad to better accommodate new development, which can then front Parish Avenue on both sides of the street, increasing frontage for new businesses and extending the downtown character northward.

3.7 Infill Development

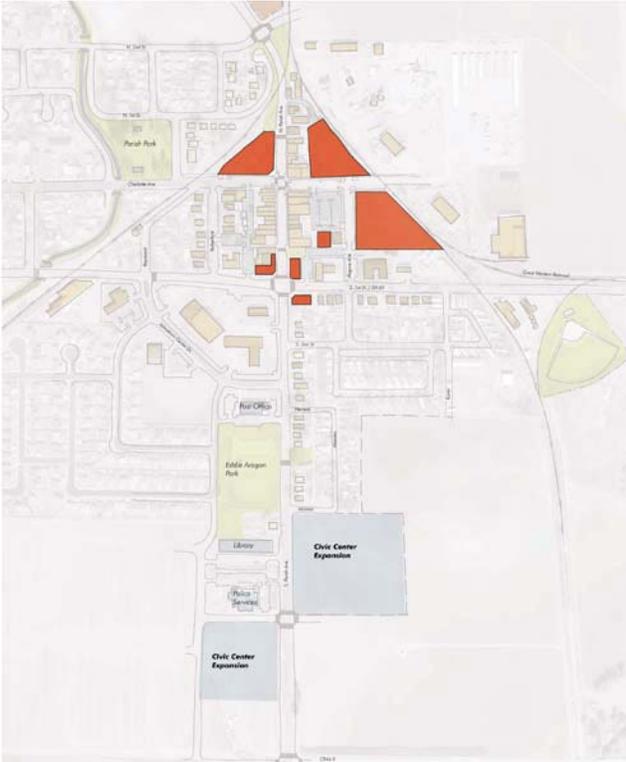
Infill Development.

Infill development should be compatible with the historic character of downtown. Building heights, materials, mass, and the relative position of buildings to the street define the character of downtown and create the sense of place. In general, street level floors should be commercial, with upper floors either office, commercial, or residential. Alternatives for providing parking on site for each new building should be explored, such as a cash-in-lieu option that would allow the Town to create a public parking lot within the downtown boundary. Providing parking on site is a suburban model that will not work well for downtown.

Explore alternatives for creating additional business opportunities on Raymond to expand the commercial and business district west.

Town Hall Site Redevelopment.

The existing Town Hall site is an exciting opportunity for redevelopment within the downtown. The site is critical to building momentum for more development north along Parish. The site should be evaluated for its best use, considering its important location at the intersection of Parish and Charlotte Street. A new building, if developed, should face Parish and not turn its back on the street, as the current facility does. The prominent location offers an opportunity for a significant architectural statement.



Possible locations for infill and redevelopment within the downtown.



The existing Town Hall site may be an ideal opportunity for redevelopment.

3.8 Other (non-physical aspects of the plan)

The public workshops identified a number of opportunities to improve downtown that are not physical improvements. These should carry equal importance as the Town moves forward toward implementation of the master plan. A number of the following recommendations will require public/private partnerships and motivation by business and property owners.

- Design guidelines should be created for downtown that address improvements to the existing built environment and to guide new development. Guidelines would ensure a cohesive image, and would clearly define what is expected for both public and private improvements. The guidelines should address architecture, site, and landscape.
- The Town sign code should be reviewed and potentially updated to better regulate sign design within downtown to keep within the character of downtown. The sign code should be studied to better regulate size, number, and placement of signs, including building-mounted signs.
- Establish a Downtown Business Association to coordinate marketing, management, and maintenance efforts.
- Create a facade grants improvements program for existing buildings within downtown.

- Create incentives for new businesses downtown.
- Allow for the transition to home businesses in residential areas within downtown. Location of home businesses should not negatively impact the residential neighborhood, and should be located in areas that face major streets and not in the neighborhood interior.
- Create a “brand” identity for downtown and a marketing plan to attract outlying parts of Johnstown and the surrounding communities. This could include signage along I-25 and SH34, highlighting downtown Johnstown.
- Create an events calendar for downtown and encourage more events to be held downtown.



Examples of improved signage that can be obtained by revising the sign code

4.0 implementation

Implementation

Implementation of the entire master plan discussed in the previous section will involve a coordinated effort by Town officials and staff, special interest groups, business and property owners over a period of several years. Many of the recommendations require further detailed study and analysis before implementation can begin.

Possible priorities may be:

Short Term

- Create a downtown parking plan
- Parish Avenue upgrades
- Restripe Charlotte Street
- Restripe crosswalks in zebra pattern
- Establish a parking management program
- Develop downtown design guidelines
- Create a façade grants program
- Establish a Downtown Business Owners' group to manage and promote downtown
- Create a downtown "brand" to unify and promote downtown
- Develop new parking lot(s)

Mid Term

- Streetscape improvements beyond North Parish Avenue
- Park improvements
- Ballfield improvements
- Pocket Park

Long Term

- Town Hall site redevelopment
- Consider additional Charlotte Street improvements, such as widening sidewalks and planting street trees

Implementation Strategies

Implementation of downtown improvements should look at social, political, physical and economic values – together, the four values create a dynamic, active, and vibrant downtown atmosphere. Incremental and comprehensive improvements will lead to overall success, rather than piecemeal improvement projects that do not look at the downtown holistically.

The first step is to agree on the overall vision of downtown and the projects the plan includes. From the public meetings this summer, an overall consensus has been reached for the overall vision and for the majority of projects that are part of that vision. These four points

1. Organize.

Town must work toward the same goal. Gather the appropriate resources for success – both human and financial resources.

2. Promote.

Sell a positive image and encourage the community to live, work, shop, and play downtown. Market the unique characteristics of the area to residents, business owners, investors, and visitors. Create an effective promotional strategy through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns.

3. Design.

Get the area into top physical shape and capitalize on its best assets. Create an inviting atmosphere – through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping. These improvements will provide a positive visual message. Good maintenance also enhances a positive image.

4. Economic Restructuring.

This strengthens the existing economic assets while diversifying the economic base. Recruit new businesses and sharpen the competitiveness of existing businesses by responding to today's consumer needs.

The 8 principles of a successful downtown improvements program as suggested by the National Trust's Main Street Program:

1. Comprehensive.

There is no single focus of the improvements. For a successful and long-term program, the approach must be comprehensive and incorporate social, political, physical, and economic values.

2. Incremental.

Begin with basic, simple activities, which demonstrate that things are happening, and then tackle more complex problems and ambiguous projects.

3. Self-Help.

Local leaders must have the desire and will to mobilize local resources and talent. This means convincing business owners and residents of the benefits of change and of investing time and money into downtown. Only local leadership can produce long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment.

4. Partnerships.

Both the public and private sectors have vital interest in improvements and must work together to achieve common goals. Must build upon the strengths and weaknesses of both.

5. Identify and Capitalize Existing Assets.

Capitalize on what is unique. The unique local aspects must serve as the foundation for all aspects of improvements.

6. Quality.

Emphasize quality in every aspect of the improvements program. This includes all aspects of the program – from physical design to marketing campaigns. Shoestring budgets and “cut and paste” efforts reinforce a negative image.

7. Change.

Changes in attitude and practice are slow but definite; public support for improvements will build as goals of improvement are met. Changes also mean engaging in better business practices, altering ways of thinking, and improving the physical appearance.

8. Implementation.

To succeed, visible results must come from completed projects. Frequent, visible changes are a reminder that improvement projects are under way and succeeding. Small projects pave the way for larger projects, and create confidence within the community and greater levels of participation.

appendix A meeting notes

April 10, 2007 Open House Public Comments

Issues and Concerns:

- Cluster housing
- Future of Spanish Colony – fear of widening Parish or condemnation of properties
- No way to get from country side to downtown without walking along highway. Westside sidewalk w/ bridge preferred
- Desire ordinance against “adult stores”
- Multi-story office building going in next to JM Post – concern for parking
- People like Town Hall where it's at: Concerned it will move out of walking distance
- Façade improvements?
- Reroute Hwy 60 traffic– detracts from downtown – too much traffic, air pollution, traffic needs to slow down, don't like bridge
- Railroad tracks bisect downtown
- Hwy 60 and Parish not pedestrian friendly
- Railroad not used – is wasted space and can be used better
- Narrow, bumpy sidewalks
- All you see on backsides of businesses are trash cans, alleys are cluttered and ugly

- Parking still occurs on Parish where there are “No Parking” signs, which disrupts the turn lane
- Compacts vs. big pick-ups parking on Parish
- 18 wheelers block street when making deliveries
- Activity at 2534 feels disconnected from Johnstown
- Needs signage by I-25 indicating that Johnstown is worth going to, especially for downtown
- Who is going to push this through? – need implementation strategy
- When drive into Johnstown, the streets look dead – not because of storefronts, but because of street treatment
- The Colony is a historic neighborhood that has generations who have lived there. Do not jeopardize this. Never condemn the properties
- Don't want to remove residences to widen road
- Any considerations to relocating Hwy 60? To get trucks out of downtown?
- Where will future Town Hall be? People at meeting like downtown location

Needs and areas for improvements:

- Alternative funding sources
- Parish maybe shouldn't be main street
- Downtown to be pet friendly
- More parking

- Look at programs and policies to make downtown a destination – encourage certain kinds of business
- Would like a way to help small businesses to convert their home into a business without spending a lot of money
- Historic landmarks
- Should have a good balance of residential use and businesses to encourage bike/pedestrian travel
- What is pedestrian friendly? – Sidewalks, connection across Hwy 60, outdoor eating areas
- Needs a draw : shops, theater, pocket parks, café/restaurant, pet friendly, benches, places to sit (especially at Hwy 60 & Parish, look at Estes Park, Morrison)
- To be unique – shopping opportunity, appearance, themes
- Outdoor amphitheater
- Business and events calendar
- Need to draw people both from within Johnstown and from outside Johnstown
- More opportunities for kids to play
- Create draw / identity at 2534
- Future perimeter parking for future mass transit
- Focus on senior independent living (look at Milliken)
- Need downtown to be pedestrian friendly and need parking

- Should look at ways to make downtown a destination.
- Need to focus on a more sustainable future with alternative transportation
- Restaurants with outdoor seating – may not be feasible to do this along Parish
- Pedestrians = Sidewalks
- Make Hwy 60 and Parish more pedestrian friendly
- Need “attraction” – events calendar, activities, and performances
- Town Hall looks pink, repaint it
- Window boxes on Parish Avenue
- Planters on light poles
- Wheelchair accessibility
- Empty service station and abandoned lot
- Charlotte and Angove need improvements
- Cut through from Town parking lot to Parish
- Alleys – backdoor access
- What kinds of businesses in various areas are appropriate?
- Ways to help local, small businesses go through process to establish themselves
- Program to designate historic landmarks that give incentives – what is available?
- Fix vacant lots and businesses fixed at variable areas
- Theatre, public pocket park, good café/restaurant
- Improved bridge at the west gateway – slow down
- Pet friendly
- Alternative funding sources

- Benches
- Needs to have unique opportunities – restaurant, railroad cars novelty? Get Great Western Railroad involved
- Drinking fountain
- Improve Town Hall – (don’t like pink color)
- Universal accessibility
- Signage at I-25 to encourage 4-mile drive
- What kind of organization will carry this forward?
- Chamber of Commerce?
- New Downtown Organization to “Program”?
- Focus on safe perimeter parking that leads to transit opportunities
- Focus on senior independent living that will support downtown business. Milliken ahead of Johnstown in this regard and they look good too

History

- Use history for art program or downtown improvements ideas
- Meteorite
- Farming community
- Ag revolution
- Contact Historical Society

What towns or cities come to mind as having “great” downtowns? What makes them great?

- San Antonio – pedestrian friendly, river walk, Fort Collins Old Town, Estes Park – places to sit outside, places to eat and shop

- Niwot – quaint – good use of old buildings
- Denver – modern – good use of old and new
- Fort Collins is okay
- Even though a great downtown would consist of unique shopping opportunities, to serve as a destination point, downtowns like Estes Park, Breckenridge, etc, are just tourist attractions and not really “great”
- Morrison, Fort Collins, LoDo

What are downtown Johnstown’s greatest assets?

- Angled parking, except when huge trucks do delivering
- Friendly atmosphere
- Many businesses are within walking distance once I park my car
- Please keep Johnstown pet friendly
- We have unique places to eat – Dominic’s Pizza and Subs, Santiago and the BBQ place – keep out the chain and fast food places
- Most of the storefronts are occupied
- Interesting history to build on – themes, etc. Historic buildings in old part of downtown
- Already busy, room for expansion, willing participants

What are three things you would like to see happen in downtown?

1. No more 3-story buildings (like the clock tower) It’s overbearing, keep 2-story design limit

2. Make “cross bridges” over irrigation ditch at several sites
3. Make a better and safer way to cross Hwy60 and Johnstown Center Drive

1. More and improved walking paths
2. Improved parking
3. Clean up storefronts

1. Main goal should be to identify “programs and policies” for downtown to be a “destination” for people in and outside of Johnstown; to plan for “unique” shops and businesses that would be attractive
2. Develop a theme and plan all improvements around that theme
3. Design a truck route for E-W (Hwy 60) and N-S (Parish Ave.) traffic.

1. More parking
2. Economic incentives
3. Create a feel or atmosphere.

June 20 & 21, 2007 Workshop Public Comments

Circulation

- Wider sidewalks on Parish
- Colony needs paving (roads or sidewalks, not sure which was meant)
- Street cleaning throughout
- Improve bridge across Hwy 60 – unsafe across ditch – improve – ownership?
- Hwy 60 & Parish is NOT pedestrian friendly
- Charlotte and Parish – visibility and pedestrian crossing are difficult
- Hwy 60 and Parish – pedestrian scale lights/ plantings – feels dangerous
- Enhance crosswalks where needed – walk/ pathway –from Herrera to Post office – canal
- Improve N-S Parish from future Civic Center to north end AND E-W between gateways
- Need mid-block crossings and signs to give pedestrians priority
- 4-way stop at Charlotte and Parish – better for pedestrians
- East on 60 towards DT – need a bridge – attractive entry, train car for gateway
- Need directory signage
- Rutherford, E 1st Place and S Parish all need pedestrian access
- Slow down traffic
- No semis in downtown
- One way on 1st Place?
- What happened to the original plan for a truck bypass to I-25?

- Walk through west side of Parish to alley; remove building to create an arcade

Maintenance

- Weeds, grass, unmaintained res. / county property
- Soda machines on 1st Place intrude into sidewalk – Town should enforce appropriate uses in public ROW
- Enforce weed control ordinance
- Need public restroom
- Irrigation ditch enclosed/ buried on Herrera Street – need landscaping to buffer from Farm
- Need downtown development association / downtown business association
- Town needs to enforce existing ordinances – weeds, trash, etc.

Parking

- East of VFW – public parking? Ownership?
- Parish Park needs designated parking and sidewalks; also – art sculpture and port-o-let with enclosure or restroom
- Make Townhall lot known as a place to park
- Have to walk too far
- Need signage for public parking
- Employees should be forced to park in the alleys
- Signage is needed to direct people to parking and from parking to businesses
- Priority number 1 is parking!
- Need parking on NW corner of Parish and SH/60

- Disagree – need buildings with parking behind
- Town parking lot – needs a picnic shelter with a table – make it a better resting area
- Odd large trucks are bad for parking downtown
- Need 4-hour time limits for parking on Parish
- Angle parking is unattractive
- Parker established town parking on side lots
- Parking requires changes
- A parking garage should be built either by the town or by a private investor
- Parallel parking would allow widening the sidewalk
- Don't like angle parking – it feels dangerous
- It should be fun to get from parking to stores
- Look at option with angled parking on only one side of street and widen sidewalks
- Can some businesses have reserved parking on public streets (i.e., Rutherford), for a monthly fee?

Aesthetics

- Like awnings, but need consistency
- Façade improvement program
- Underground utilities in the alleys
- Recommend updating sign code for downtown
- Consolidation of clutter on Parish
- Newspapers, pamphlets, signs
- Attractive new lighting
- Night sky friendly

- Pedestrian scale
- Banners, events; BBQ days, Christmas, seasonal
- Event banner across Parish
- Ownership of streetlights? Is the style dictated by the power supplier or can the Town have different lights?
- Consistent streetscape throughout the downtown area
- Like street trees (where there's room)
- Remove a parking stall for tree and planting and bench
- Priorities for streetscape:
 - 1 – Hwy 60 and Parish
 - 2 – Charlotte and Angove
 - 3 - Alley improvements
- Keep quaint, small town, older look
- Lights, signage, use of materials, clean up utilities
- Dress up existing town hall if new one is not built soon
- Downtown Johnstown needs branding
- Street furniture is important
- Need vertical elements
- Places to sit
- Appropriate lighting
- Fix up the alleys
- Key is old character and aesthetic improvements first – but that is not enough....
- Rocks/planting in front of cable TV – Hwy 60 and Parish – like them – expand throughout downtown – larger landscaping areas
- Like Johnstown – need to preserve and make downtown attractive
- Downtown needs a focal point
- Preserve the 50's feel

- Like existing look – would like to preserve it and expand it
- Downtown needs more definition
- Branding can be done with art
- There is poor signage in Downtown – Like Johnstown Center – interior lit – need a good design umbrella – want perpendicular signs
- Create design guidelines for the downtown

Other

- Constraint of the railroad
- Open space by condensing – pocket park?
- What is to be done with the old town hall? – Reconfigure parking lot?
- Retain residential feel for in-home businesses – good in some areas
- “Meteorite”
- Need to adapt planning and zoning codes and to have a downtown development authority
- Need some public fund assistance for private business façade improvements – also assistance for cottage business in homes
- Need to get a downtown development committee of business owners to get ideas together
- Like town hall where it is
- Encourage and help in-home businesses
- Like downtown Lafayette – its built around the neighborhood
- Love the Hays – would like to see a big box store in town – so don't have to drive to Fort Collins

- Like Aragon Park
- Need a balance between preservation and money
- Issue of variety – and what is available
- Trains – beet factory – history needs to be preserved
- Finance – downtown development committee – needs a champion!
- Involve people – strong vision – approve signage, etc.
- Zoning and planning code needs to fit, be appropriate
- Feel mixing homes and businesses would be appropriate – also a way to preserve and protect Colony

Events/ Activities

- Shopping and food
- Farmers Market in Downtown Johnstown this year
- Street dances
- Taste of Johnstown
- “Visit Historic Johnstown”
- Variety in food
- Downtown needs to be adaptive
- Needs to have a draw
- Needs to continue to be a place to bump into people
- Needs a rec center in order to be an active downtown
- Needs the Civic Center to be closer to downtown
- Business leaders need to have a voice
- Need a theme – water – canals are a huge part of the town’s history
- Need attractions, unique businesses (incentives to get people here)

- Need affordable shopping as well for local residents
- Women drive retail (salons, shopping, things for kids, places to walk around, etc.)
- Need places to see/ eat
- Like downtown – don’t want it to become a place that only tourists want to shop at
- Downtown is a place people bump into each other – want it to remain that way
- Farmers market is important – need one – can happen behind Johnstown corner or in parking lot of church
- Downtown Loveland changes their downtown every 10 years or so
- Provide cafés and restaurants
- Like new ball park
- A rec center would be great – there are no tennis courts in town – can be built with improvement money
- The Spanish Colony is a historical area and should be declared as one and preserved. Homes there were built by the Great American Sugar beet company, also brought down from Camp Hale

October 4, 2007 Public Open House Comments

Do you have any additional questions, concerns, or suggestions for downtown as a whole that have not been addressed?

- Move ahead quickly with Parish changes and increase parking on west alley.

- More rear parking for Parish Street businesses. Rear entrances (nice looking) with good parking needs to be addressed more fully.
- I would like to see something brought into the area that would keep people downtown for an extended time. I suggest a bowling alley and an upscale restaurant. Just where I am not sure. Maybe at 60 and Parish in place of rebuilding a service station there.
- Need to make sure highway 60 pedestrian access and aesthetic link to Parish area is improved.
- I worry about isolating the Town Hall in the south quadrant of the design. Greeley isolated their Hall-Municipal Center way north and felt/regretted the folly of their move.

The plan identifies alternative ways to enhance the pedestrian environment of downtown, and in particular Parish Avenue, while maintaining adequate parking, improving aesthetics, and addressing safety and circulation.

Please indicate which is your favorite Parish Avenue alternative and why.

- B (parallel parking), wide sidewalks.
- D (one-way circulation), optimizes parking and circulation.
- B (parallel parking), wider street, wider sidewalk, would work well with the extra parking on side streets.

- D (one-way circulation), the one-way circular flow reduces vehicle congestion (tight feel to traffic) while not losing parking
- B (parallel parking)
- B (parallel parking), it seems to be more efficient and offers greater flexibility
- B (parallel parking), I like the idea of wider sidewalks, trees, and cafe seating
- B (parallel parking), improves downtown and provides added parking

Please indicate which is your least favorite Parish Avenue alternative and why.

- D (one-way circulation), narrow sidewalks, difficult to get in and through Town
- A (existing condition), doesn't change
- C (parking on only one side of street), parking on only one side of street
- B (parallel parking), parallel parking can serve to discourage people from parking on Parish, and lose spots
- D (one-way circulation)
- D (one-way circulation), too many problems
- D (one-way circulation), it may steer people away from downtown...that change may be too drastic

Do you think a better pedestrian environment (wider sidewalks, street trees, benches) would make downtown a more inviting experience?

- Yes. It will help reshape the types of businesses in Town and increase business space value
- Yes. With appropriate mix of retail, food, and service
- Definitely, also as it extends into surrounding area
- Yes definitely. I also hope that we will try to engage in dialogue the railroad company now for future needs
- Yes. Parking a block away doesn't bother me
- Absolutely. It may also draw in more businesses

appendix B parish avenue alternatives

N. Parish Avenue Alternative C - Angle Parking on One Side of the Street



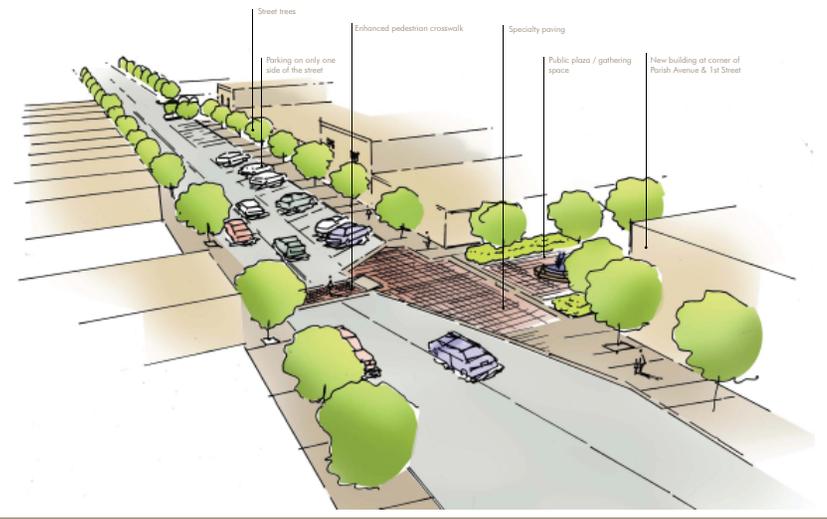
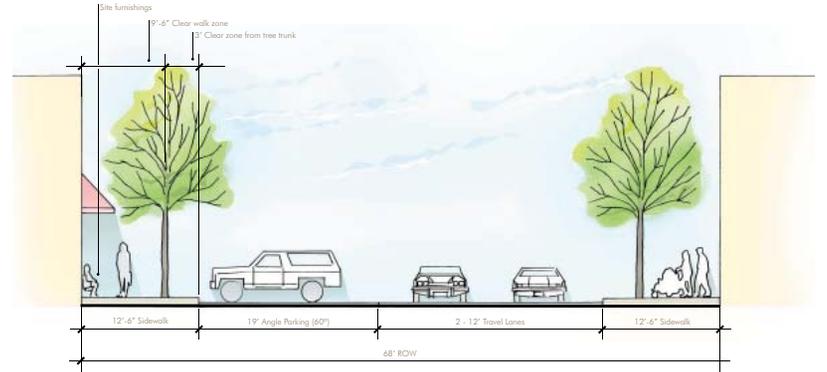
Total on-street parking on N. Parish Ave.: 53+/-



1000 | 1000
October 4, 2007



N. Parish Avenue Alternative C - Angle Parking on One Side of the Street



1000 | 1000
October 4, 2007



N. Parish Avenue Alternative D - Angle Parking with One-Way Traffic



Total on-street parking on N. Parish Ave.: 53 +/-



N. Parish Avenue Alternative D - Angle Parking with One-Way Traffic

