

The Portage Community Charrette



SINCE THE VIEW OF THE CITY OF

PORTAGE

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The Portage Community Charrette

Introduction

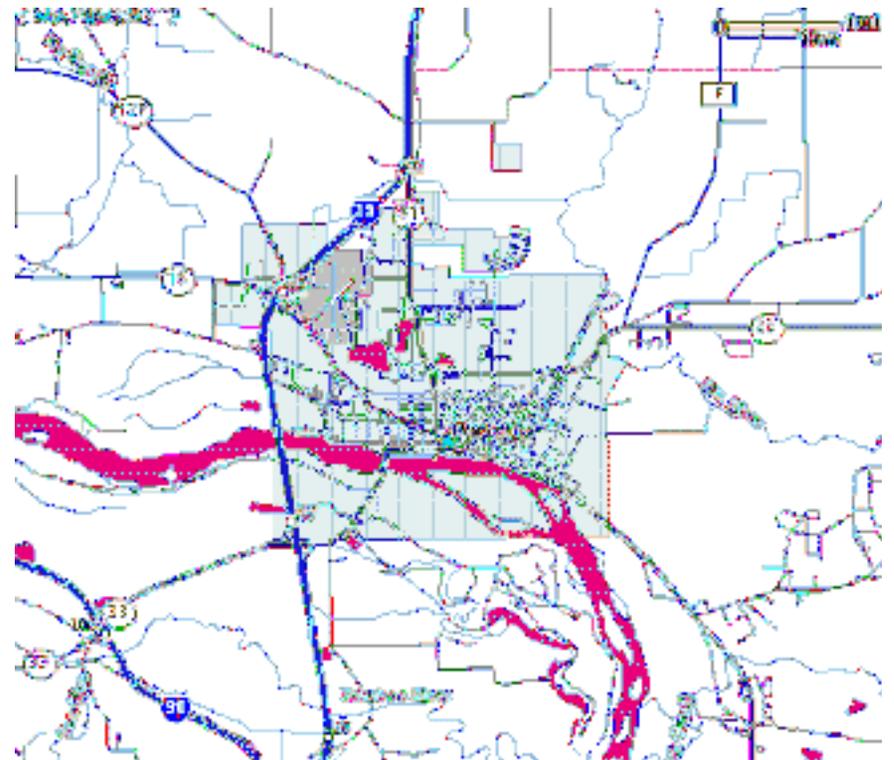
The city of Portage and its surrounding areas is a community rich in natural amenities and history. The Native American tribes that once lived here, and later the European traders and settlers, took advantage of the lowlands between the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers as a natural “portage.” This functional characteristic eventually lent itself to the name of the community, taken from the word the French fur traders used to describe the place, “le portage.” As a portage, this community developed as a center of commerce and trade, and later, a canal was constructed to facilitate this trade. When the railroads came through, it continued in this role.

Fortunes have come and gone, but the foundations remain. Today, the canal that once aided in navigation and steamboat commerce stands idle, but the community surrounding the canal remains vital. The city has seen much change, but the people are justifiably proud of their history and look to maintain and celebrate their natural and cultural heritage. It is this natural and human heritage that can provide the foundation for the future of Portage. Revitalization of the canal corridor, minimizing the truck traffic burden from the downtown, and developing new amenities are among the opportunities from which this community can choose.

This is the beginning. The ideas of the people and the strong work ethic that have supported the community for many years will do so again.

Description of Study Area

The study area for this charrette included the urban area of Portage and the surrounding industrial and rural areas in order to consider the issues associated with the rivers and the impact of various land uses on each other. The primary areas of study include the canal corridor, the central business district, the roadways, and recreational areas.





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Developing The Vision

The community visioning process was a highly open and public one. This was not the first community participation study undertaken for Portage. Much of the background work was prepared for us before our arrival. The community sought and secured input from a wide variety of affected persons and interests in the greater Portage community.

The community leaders consciously sought to maximize the participation of residents and businesses throughout the planning process, gathering input from the broader community and local residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. We held a public participation workshop in an empty storefront in the middle of downtown during the *Taste of Portage* festival in the summer of 2002. While the participation was limited, those that did participate represented a broad cross-section of the community and provided invaluable insights into the issues at hand and possible solutions to improve the quality of life in Portage.

Each phase of this process is built upon the preceding phases. Some of the ideas and challenges identified came from earlier visioning exercises; however most were developed during this workshop. A community-based process allows for encourages open discussion of new ideas and a reexamination of old ones with the objective to ensure the participation of as many stakeholders as practicable.

Charrette Workshop

The community hosted an open community planning workshop, or “charrette,” on Friday through Sunday, August 23-25, 2002. Several dozen people participated, along with an experienced team of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning designers from Ball State University and many local community leaders.

The Portage community charrette helped the local residents and business owners define the community’s vision of who it was, where it was going, and how it was going to get there. The visualizations found on the following pages are presented as idea pieces or concept drawings intended to paint a picture of the possibilities. A number of community-based proposals were developed through the charrette process. These were reviewed and refined in the goals and actions described in later sections of this action plan.



Canal Corridor Redevelopment

Goal: Transform the canal into a natural and commercially viable asset for the community

- ❑ Develop connections to the trail system and the CBD
- ❑ Develop a towpath trail from the Wisconsin to the Fox River with landscaping and other buffers to separate the trail from private landowners
- ❑ Redevelop the gateway to the CBD to improve traffic flow, visual interest, and add amenities to the community
- ❑ Maintain and increase public awareness of the value of the canal as a community asset



Photos courtesy of the Galley Collection



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Canal Corridor Redevelopment: Minor Enhancement Scenario

The ideas presented on the next several pages represent projects/enhancements that can be undertaken relatively easily, and are relatively high “value-added.”

Most projects in this scenario involve:

- Clean-up/fix-up of existing buildings/structures
- Community activities
- Trail/walkway expansion/enhancement
- Interpretive and wayfinding signage
- Gateway enhancement
- Infill development

All projects should be done in cooperation with other local groups to maximize the leveraging of resources and to make sure the impacts of one project don't interfere with the goals of another.

Minor Redevelopment

This picture harkens back to a discontinued tradition, playing hockey (or curling) on the canal in the winter. A potentially vibrant and business-boosting (and relatively inexpensive to stage) event: an annual winter hockey tournament could be hosted along the canal. Multiple mini-matches could be held end-to-end along the canal, at the same time. This could draw participants and their families and friends from a large region to participate. This could have a great benefit for the restaurants, hotels, downtown businesses and for exposure of the town in general.





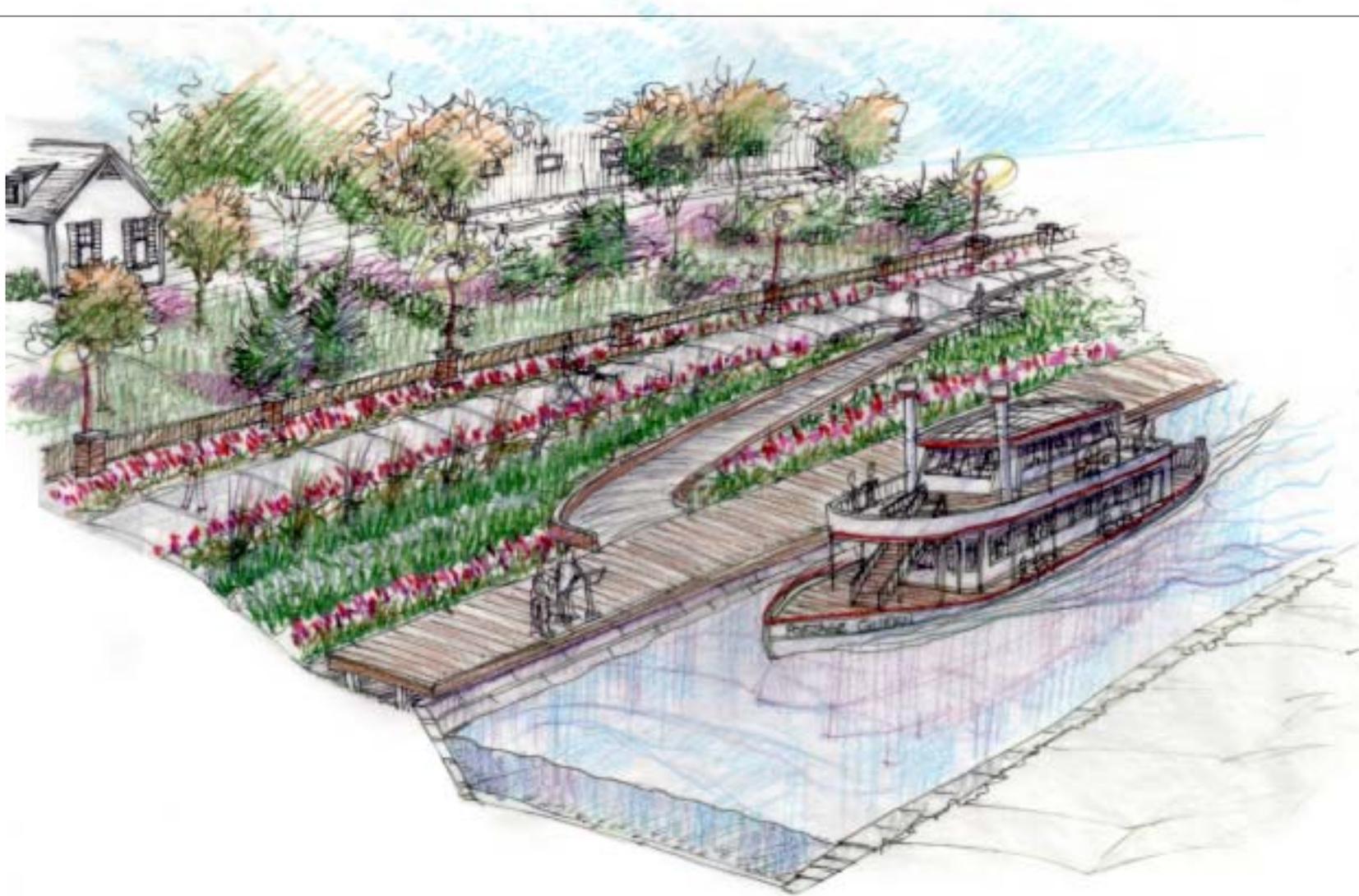
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Canal Corridor Redevelopment: Minor Enhancement Scenario

An approach that has been applied elsewhere, to great success in some cases, is the idea of a dinner boat. Many of these always remain tied up, and don't require construction free of locks and bridges; rather it is their location and aesthetic that gives them a niche to exploit. A riverboat with gambling is not seen as in keeping with the nature and wants of this community. Other river enhancements illustrated here are:

- Construction of a boardwalk, which will stand up to heavier foot traffic than the grass currently in place.
- Extensive use of landscape, and hardscape, such as fences and earth mounds, etc. to beautify as well as to delineate those spaces that are private from the canal.
- An appropriate lighting scheme, as shown here can provide adequate levels of illumination for safety and comfort, but is sensitive to the residences and businesses nearby.
- Interpretative signage can be developed along the canal to point out natural systems, and items and places of historical significance, as well as to give directions and an overview of the history of this place.







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Canal Corridor Redevelopment: Minor Enhancement Scenario

This image explores one possible scenario for the adaptive reuse of the mills. The possible alternative uses for these architecturally interesting and centrally located structures range from upscale dining, retail to civic spaces. Although these buildings could serve well into the future housing their current tenants, eventually, as the canal becomes better appreciated and exploited as a cultural and aesthetic gem for the community, these uses will likely find new facilities to house them elsewhere in town, as these buildings are redeveloped for more intensive uses.







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Canal Corridor Redevelopment: Minor Enhancement Scenario

North of town the towpath narrows to a point where it would be difficult for multiple users to pass comfortably, so this drawing shows a wider boardwalk to replace the existing one. This new boardwalk is not only wide enough for users to comfortably pass one another, but it is also high enough above the level of the water as to make its edge sit-able in places. In other places the level of the walking surface could align with the current boardwalk. Allowing a closer experience between the canal and the hikers, bikers, rollerbladers, or joggers using the trail.



This diagrammatic section illustrates the relative widths required by several of the basic trail user types.



Handicap Accessible Overlook

It is essential that people of all levels of mobility be provided with equal access to the recreational options available within the community. As shown in this illustration, the allowances for universal accessibility do not necessarily drastically change the look, function, and most importantly, do not affect the cost of construction in many cases. Highly mobile users appreciate being provided with adequate width and gentle slopes just as much people with impaired mobility.



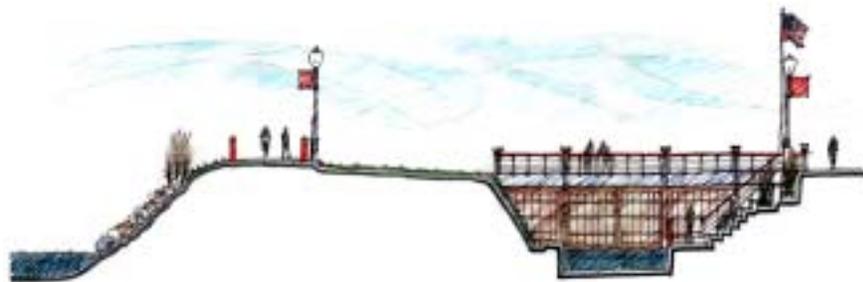


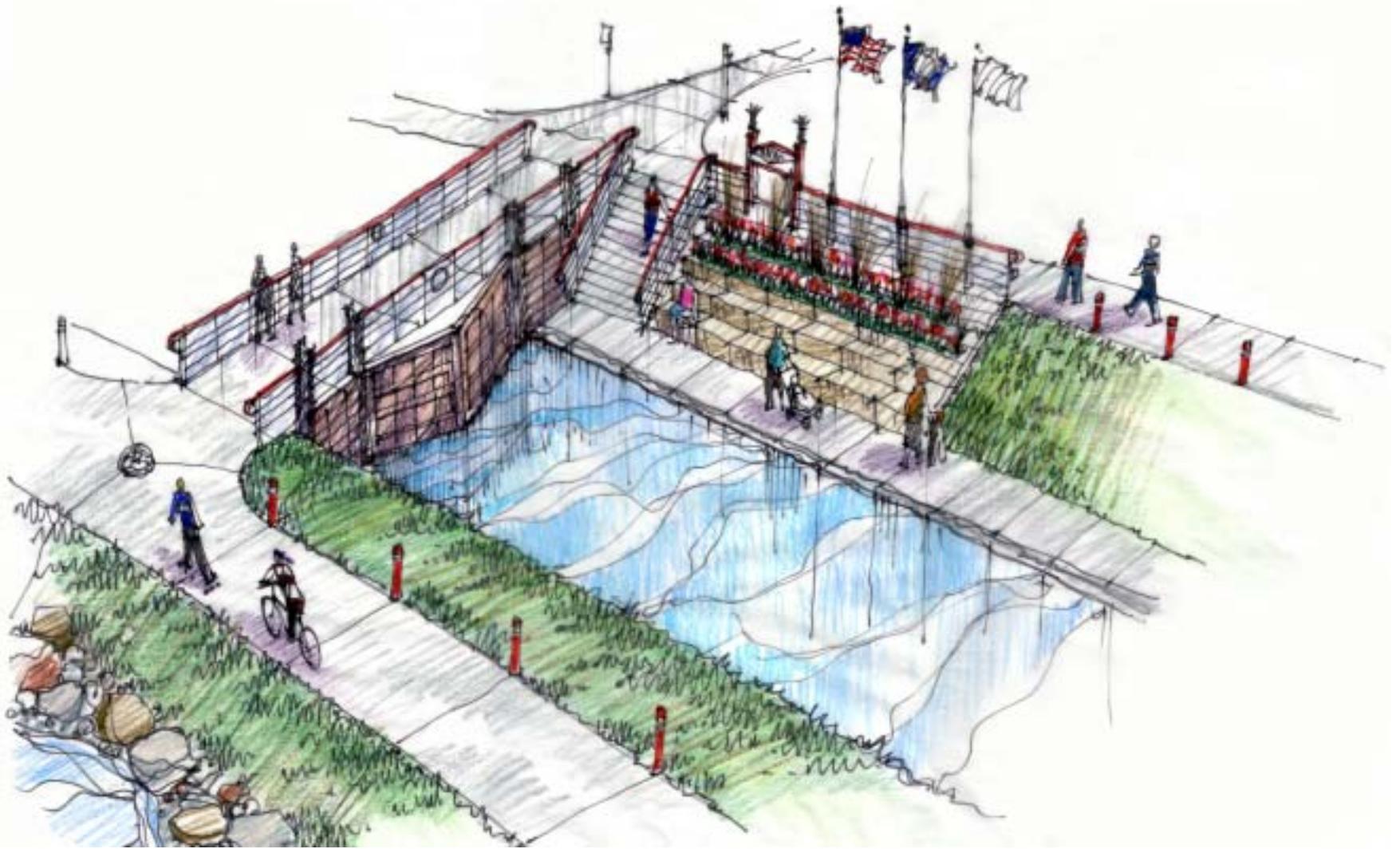
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Canal Corridor Redevelopment: Minor Enhancement Scenario

The locks adjacent to the Wisconsin River are currently fenced off and do not add to the visual character of the canal. The fencing was installed to reduce the risk of personal injury and damage to the lock structures. There are a variety of ways to provide security for the locks area and still allow visual access. The security improvements should not only protect visitors and the locks, but complement their visual character.

Shown here is a rather extensive reworking of the structure, making it more aesthetically pleasing, accessible, and, most importantly, inherently safer. The discontinuity of the canal from the Wisconsin is maintained, and a footbridge is constructed across the head of the lock to facilitate foot traffic from one side of the canal to the other. A broad, comfortable stair has been integrated with the landscaping to provide an easy transition from the dike level down to the canal level. The side of the canal has been equipped with a paved walk, which is ideal for walking, or biking. This walking trail would connect to the other paths shown along the length of the trail for continuity of exercise and educational trails.







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Canal Corridor Redevelopment: Major Enhancement Scenario

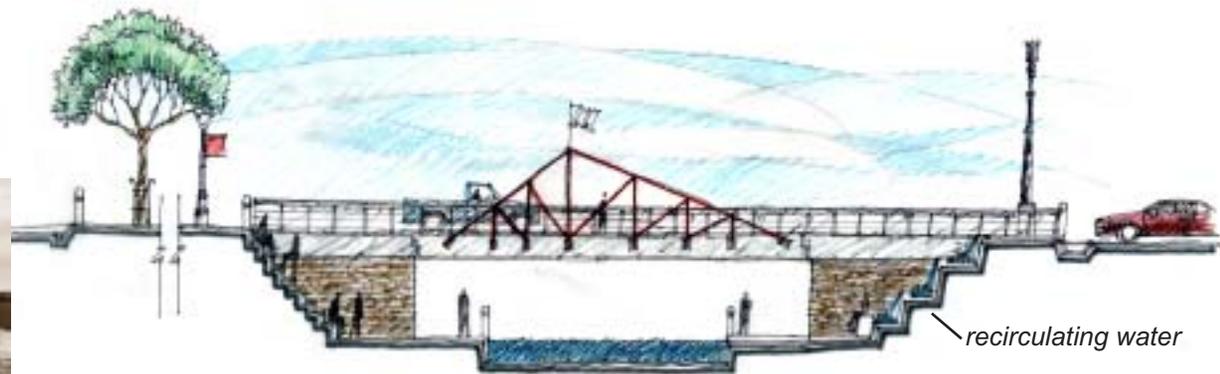
Major Redevelopment

The images presented here illustrate a number of potential canal enhancements. These represent a rather significant change and investment of resources, but can be integrated into a wide variety of federal and state granting programs:

- Paved walking areas flanking the canal, nicely landscaped sitting areas, which are designed to buffer the Canal Zone from its neighbors.
- Improved access down to the canal level from the street level.
- Appropriately scaled lights that provide interest, safety and beauty without over lighting the neighboring properties.
- Finally, the bridge has been replaced with a historically reminiscent structure, which recalls the old operable bridge over the canal, but now reinterpreted as a modern stationary structure with wide sidewalks, curbs and rails to separate the vehicular from the non-vehicular traffic.



Photo courtesy of the Galley Collection







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Canal Corridor Redevelopment: Major Enhancement Scenario

Looking across *The Triangle* that greets vehicles driving into town from the East and South is a view much different from what is seen today. During bridge replacement, with a structure that is reminiscent of the former operable bridge that stood on the site many years ago, the fill under the roadway has been removed allowing the triangle to be excavated down to the level of the canal. This opening allows the passersby a glimpse down to the canal, and at the water feature and sitting areas incorporated into the embankment. This also allows light into the areas making it more *user-friendly*. Featured prominently at the point of the triangle is an iconic pair of steamboat smokestacks, which both celebrate the historic value of the canal and act as a gateway element, announcing your arrival into downtown Portage.





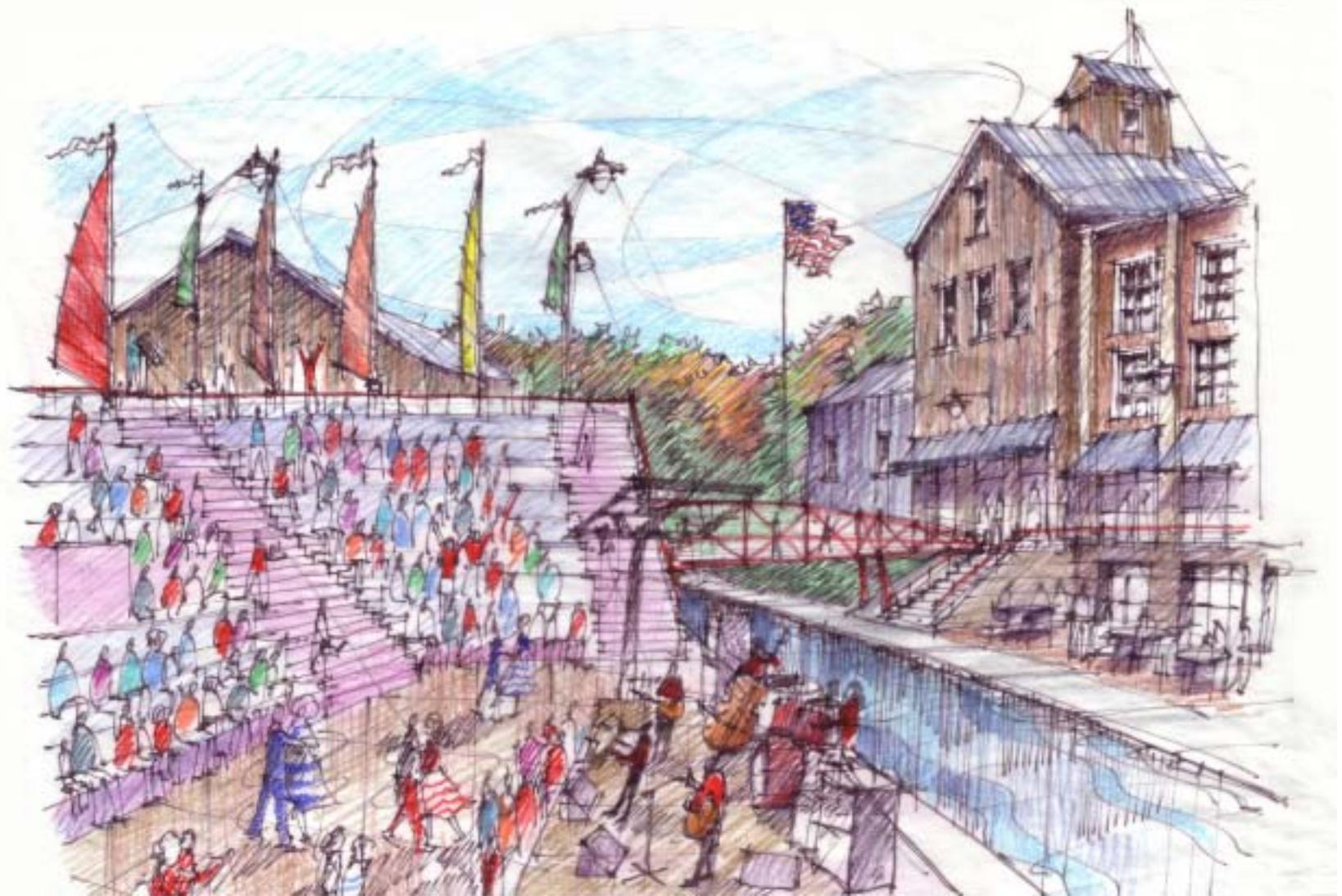


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Canal Corridor Redevelopment: Major Enhancement Scenario

The amphitheater illustrated here is highly ambitious and draws upon the growing interest of the open-air performances currently hosted adjacent to the mills, across the canal from this location. This vision is of the Canal Zone as a fully developed cultural amenity for the community. The mills, by this point in development, have most likely been converted to some combination of upscale dining, retail or civic spaces. The cultural and entertainment potential of this development are boundless; comedians, concerts, actors, dancers, and other performances / events could take advantage of this central location.







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Canal Corridor Redevelopment: Major Enhancement Scenario

As development along the canal continues, more locations could be developed for access down to the canal level from the street level. Integration of more significant landscape, hardscape and other features work together, as shown here, to create an exciting and inviting public space. Housing along the canal is a viable option, and as the redevelopment of the canal continues, will become an ever increasingly attractive one, as illustrated here.







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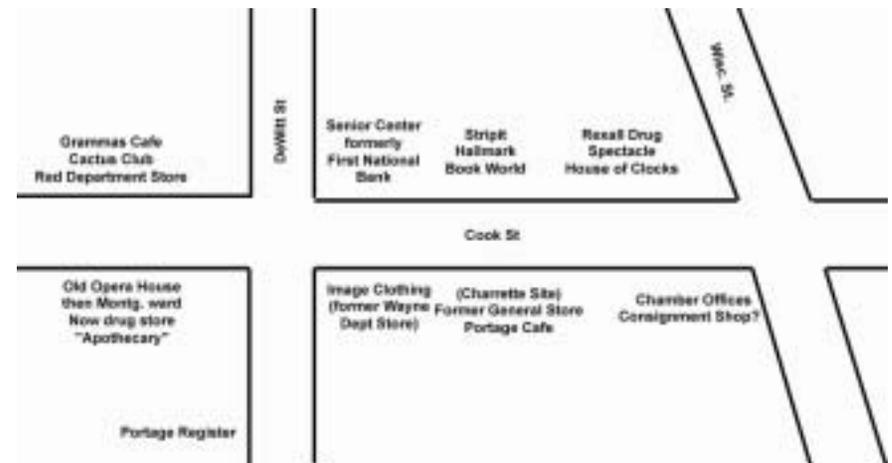


Historic photos courtesy of the Galley Collection

Central Business District Enhancements

Downtown Portage has tremendous potential as the *Heart of the Community*. Many of the buildings are in good repair and are occupied by locally owned businesses. The variety of activities associated with the downtown also add to its potential. All of these things could be enhanced by building a stronger link to the canal redevelopment effort.

A good retail mix and pedestrian-friendly environment are going to be critical to the vitality of the *Heart of Portage*. The illustrations that follow show some potential infill and redevelopment strategies, facade improvements and streetscape enhancements that would help establish the downtown area as **the** destination of choice in Portage. A “quality of experience” approach to downtown revitalization linked with the redevelopment of the canal would be a draw for locals and visitors as well. As with the ideas for canal enhancements, there are some projects which will be relatively easy to undertake and others which will involve more significant investment of energy and resources.





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Central Business District Enhancements: Minor

Enhancements to the *Heart of Portage*: Minor

- Point Café
- “The Triangle”
- Canal housing and redevelopment
- The “Feed Mill”
- Canal housing development
- Facade restoration
- Streetscape enhancements



Central Business District Enhancements: Major



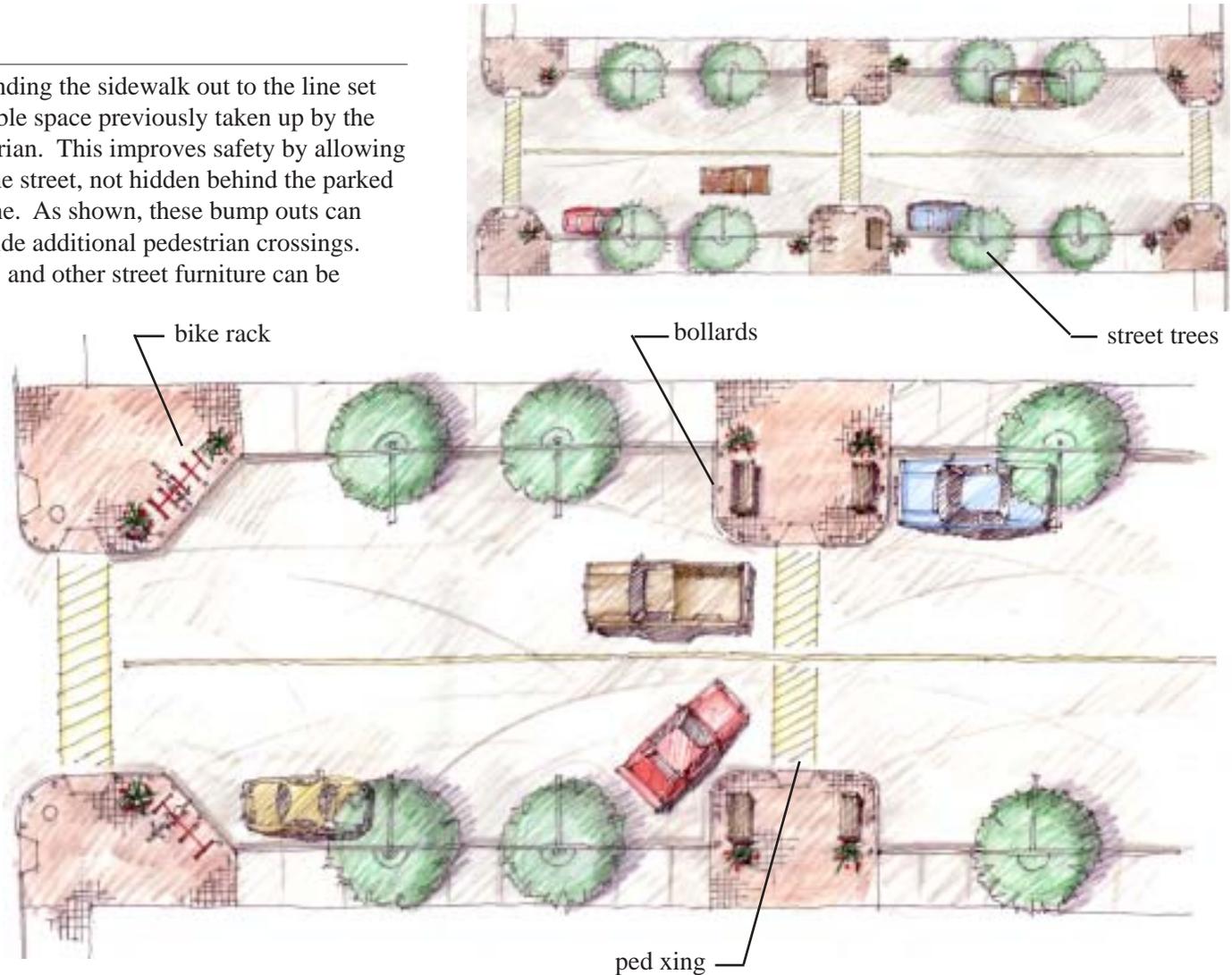


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Central Business District Enhancements - Alternative Traffic Patterns/Street Design

Minor Change: Bump Outs

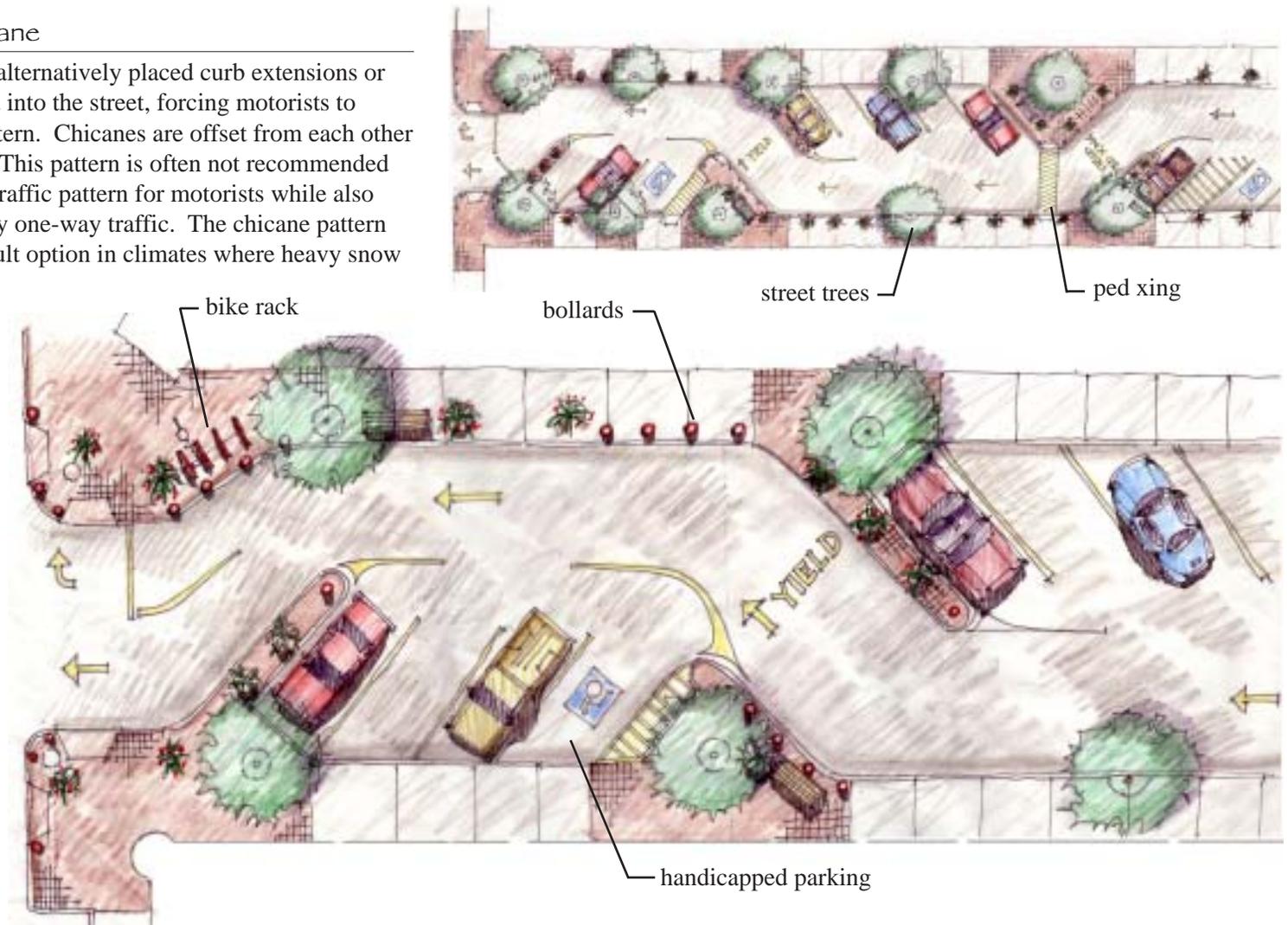
Bumpouts are developed by extending the sidewalk out to the line set by the row of parked cars. Valuable space previously taken up by the roadway is returned to the pedestrian. This improves safety by allowing the pedestrian to begin to cross the street, not hidden behind the parked cars, but forward, at the traffic line. As shown, these bump outs can also be placed mid-block to provide additional pedestrian crossings. Landscaping, bike racks, benches and other street furniture can be placed on the corners and at mid-block bump outs to develop a pedestrian-oriented atmosphere. This alternative psychologically reduces the width of the roadway, causing traffic to slow down while traveling through the Central Business District. Bump outs also reduce the turning radius at the intersections, discouraging large trucks from using that route.



Major Change: Chicane

The chicane consists of alternatively placed curb extensions or parking bays that extend into the street, forcing motorists to drive in a serpentine pattern. Chicanes are offset from each other in mid-block locations. This pattern is often not recommended because of the difficult traffic pattern for motorists while also limiting the street to only one-way traffic. The chicane pattern has shown to be a difficult option in climates where heavy snow accumulations occur.

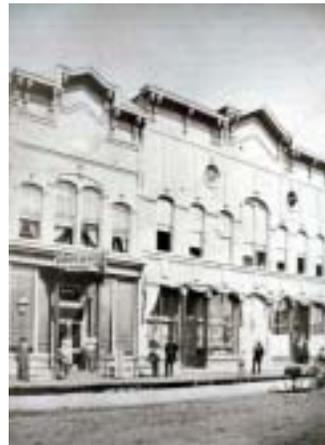
The serpentine patterns makes it difficult for snow plows and provides no room to place the snow that has been cleared from the roadway.





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Central Business District Enhancements - Facade Enhancements/Infill Development



Historic photographs courtesy of the Galley Collection



Facade Restoration and Streetscape Enhancement:

- Repointing brick as necessary
- Replacing removed parapets and other ornamentation
- Restoring traditional awnings
- Removing false fronts and repairing/restoring original facades
- Reestablishing appropriate signage
- Utilize upper floors as commercial/office or apartments.
- Address “missing teeth” in streetscape with planting, small infill buildings and/or linkages to parking in the rear.



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Central Business District Enhancements - Facade Enhancements/Infill Development







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Central Business District Enhancements - Facade Enhancements/Infill Development

Reestablish the original character and charm of the downtown

- Restoring facades and architectural detail
- Focusing on downtown and a pedestrian-oriented destination
- Undoing past “remuddlings”
- Continued emphasis on downtown redevelopment as a whole entity rather than individual projects will help rekindle the vitality of the “Heart of Portage.”



Historic photograph courtesy of the Galley Collection





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Central Business District Enhancements - Facade Enhancements/Infill Development

Night lighting considerations:

- Appropriate urban lighting replaces highway style *cobra head* street lamps
- A well-lit and dramatically illuminated streetscape promotes usership and businesses
 - Building illumination
 - Tree “uplighting”
 - Miniature lights in trees
 - Bollard lighting



Historic photograph courtesy of the Galley Collection



Bump Out

Illuminated Bollards



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Central Business District Enhancements - Facade Enhancements/Infill Development







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Central Business District Enhancements - Facade Enhancements/Infill Development



Historic photograph courtesy of the Galley Collection

Original windows restored

Awnings added



Original lower register restored

Handicap Accessible Ramp



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Central Business District Enhancements - New Uses for Old Spaces

New Café

This illustration shows what can be accomplished in “found” space. The corner of Wisconsin and Edgewater is a space that currently serves as parking for approximately six cars. Using relatively inexpensive components such as potted plants, a simple wooden pergola, precast concrete pavers, and/or hanging baskets, what was an awkward parking area is quickly transformed into an attractive and inviting outdoor sitting area for a café or coffee shop. Other opportunities around town include the few vacant storefronts, alleyways and other spaces behind existing buildings, as well as all of the underutilized second floor apartments located throughout the downtown.



The Marketplace - A Four Seasons Place

This image illustrates what some simple landscaping, trees, shrubs and benches can do to dress up what is essentially an open parking lot. This community is known to embrace its outdoor living, in all seasons. These multi-use facilities take advantage of that with a mixture of ideas designed to support the sense of community while bringing people together at times that they may not normally gather. Events such as seasonal choral singing, whether competitively or as a concert, a walk of lights, where special seasonal lighting displays could be set up throughout the downtown, or even along the river, adjacent to the walking trail or even a special *Midnight Madness* or *Moonlight Madness* shopping and event nights for late night shopping during the holiday season are examples of events that could bring people downtown.





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Central Business District Enhancements - New Uses for Old Spaces

The Market place - Farmer's Market

The current marketplace utilizes an unimproved parking lot, which, although functional, could be made a much more usable and attractive amenity for the community with some of the improvements illustrated here. Permanent signage and lighting standards would allow for better visibility and longer hours of operation if equipped with appropriate lighting. Paving the surface with a mixture of materials, as shown, with concrete and/or brick inset flush with the asphalt can define the areas of each vendor's stall without interfering with the use of the lot on off days for parking. If the marketplace ever became established as a daily feature of Portage, larger circulation areas and amenities such as tented areas or even built warehouse-type structures could be utilized to house the market year round. A market is a vibrant and positive event for any community, and has great potential for socialization as well as promoting local raw goods and local value added products, helping to stimulate the local economy and entrepreneurship.



Entrance / Gateway

The city's logo could be developed into a three dimensional, larger than life sculpture, placed in the prominent, south-east entrance to downtown. This would serve as a powerful and dramatic welcoming element.

Gateway elements are an important component of a town's image; it is the first element that announces your arrival at a particular place, and is one of the most lasting images a visitor takes away with them. Currently, this triangular lot is essentially vacant, aside from some parking, and does not present an appealing image of the town. This gateway element would help bring focus to the long transitional area between the Central Business District and the city beyond. It would help define the edge of downtown. Establishing an element with strong visual character at the other major entry point into the city, structures, which are more memorable and interesting than the "Welcome to Our Town" metal signs commonly used, are ideal for establishing a strong visual character at the city's major entry points. They also serve as a source of pride for residents and a memorable introduction to the city for visitors.



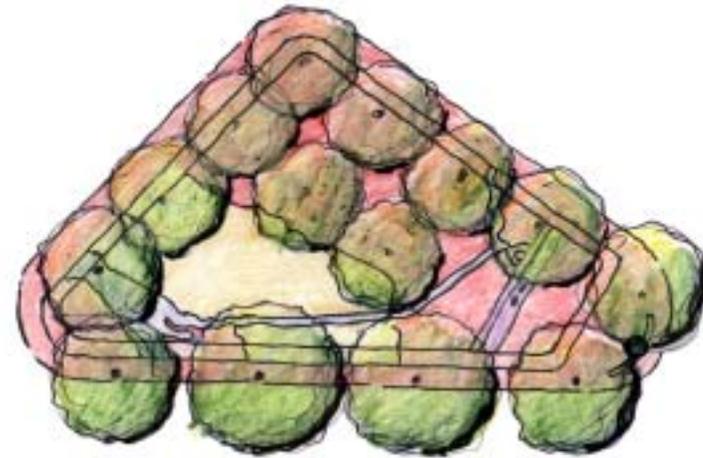


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Central Business District Enhancements - Entrance/Gateway

The Triangle

This element is a smaller scale version of the Plaza Image, and shows how deciduous trees might be used to provide cool shaded areas in this public space. A good street tree, such as the Honey Locust provides shade in the summer, and drops its leaves somewhat early in the year so that more sunlight can penetrate into the site, as it gets cooler, extending the usable season for the plaza. Other characteristics of a good street tree might be salt tolerance, low oxygen tolerance, because foot and vehicle traffic tends to compact soil in an urban setting, small leaves, and other factors which can be best addressed by an arborist or landscape architect familiar with local species and conditions.



The Triangle Flag

This image is yet another alternative for the triangular site at the south-east entryway to downtown, and is probably the least expensive option presented here. A simple, yet patriotic flag, tall and lit at night, is a very appropriate gateway element into a downtown. Surrounded by lush flower beds, those driving through the downtown throughout the spring and summer would be greeted by the sweet aroma of the flowers as well. One asset of this design scheme is that it only occupies the front end of the site, allowing parking or other use of the remaining portion of the triangle.



The Point Plaza

An interesting possibility for the entry triangle at the south-east entry into the downtown would be the construction of a tree ringed public plaza.

One element that could become a theme carried through other public works projects is the reference to the historic and natural character of the Portage region. A concrete and cast bronze map of the region set into the pavement of the plaza can present many educational, historical and wayfinding opportunities. Not only would this embody the geography of the place, but it could also include inscriptions citing the history of local, state and national significance that has happened here. Projects such as this are often funded, not by public endowment, but through “Buy a Brick” campaigns, or by donations of local businesses that might be interested in having their buildings represented in the bas relief map, and other participant funding campaigns.





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Transportation/Circulation/Access

Goal: Transportation/Circulation/Access - Roadway Linkages and Enhancements

- Develop alternative circulation/street patterns to alleviate truck traffic in the CBD
- Develop truck route around the CBD, while maintaining through-traffic of passenger vehicles
- Control land use and development along new truck route to minimize sprawl-type development
- Informative signage to direct truck traffic along alternative route
- Gateway signage to enhance community image and define town entrances

Parking Issues - Bump Outs

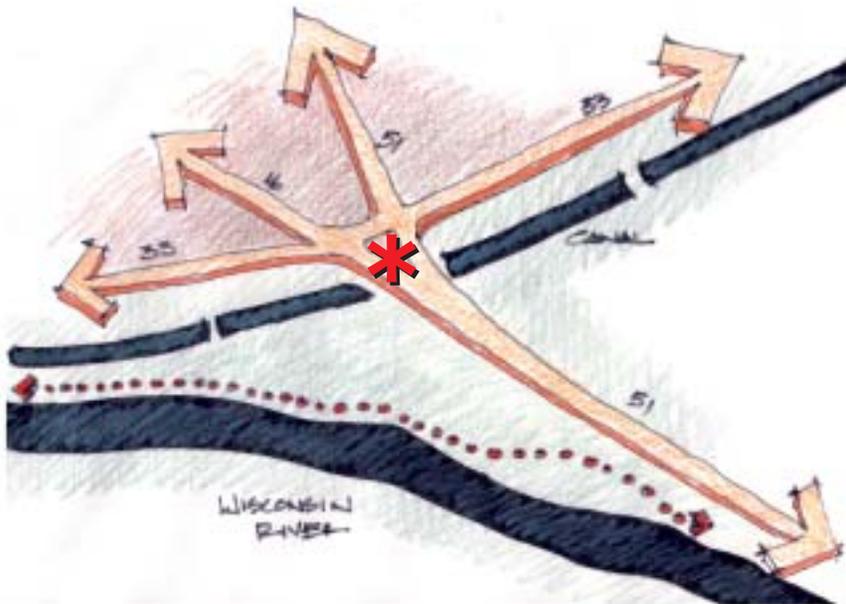
This drawing illustrates just one possible scheme for improving the downtown pedestrian and vehicular experiences by using a tool known as the bump out. In this approach, the sidewalk is extended forward at the intersections, moving the edge of the walk out to the line set by the row of parked cars. This improves safety by allowing the pedestrian to begin to cross the street, not hidden behind the cars parked along the curb, but forward, at the traffic line, making them more visible to the moving traffic, and visa versa. Landscaping, such as low shrubs and flowers could be planted in the corner of the sidewalks, as shown, without reducing this visibility. The bump outs are equipped with integral low slope ramps for easy access by people with all levels of mobility. Although not shown in this configuration, climates with heavy snow accumulations do use this type of design, and either provide an appropriate plow radius to enter the parking lane near the curb, or even ignore the parking lane altogether with the plows, and direct the snow to the end stalls of the block where drains and planting beds can carry away the snow melt.



Alternate Truck Route

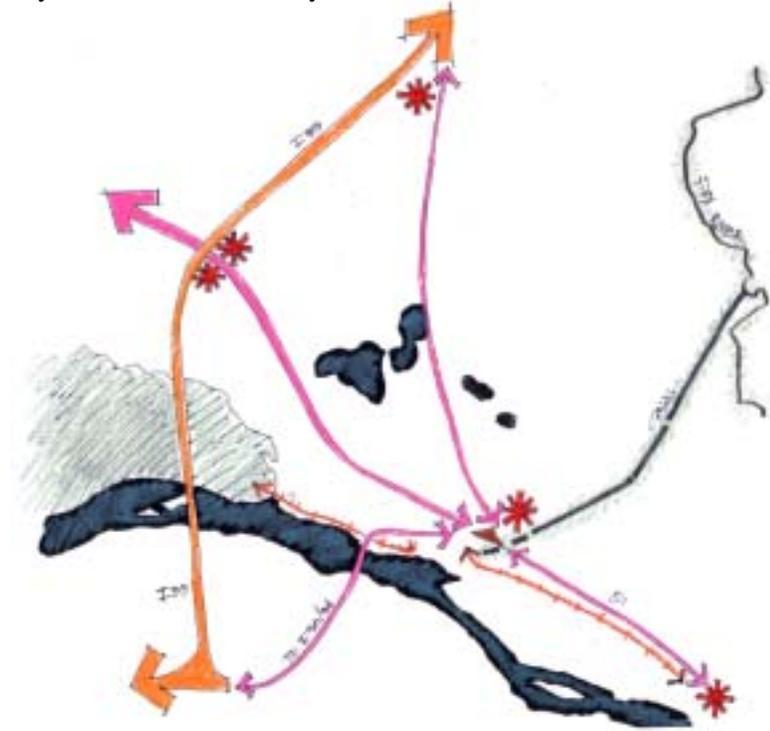
Traffic Analysis - Local

This diagrammatic map illustrates the primary circulation routes into and out of the central business district of Portage. The asterisk indicates the primary gateway to downtown, or “Triangle.”



Traffic Analysis - Area

This diagrammatic map illustrates the primary circulation routes into and out of the city of Portage, and looks at the same information as A Traffic Analysis, at larger scale. This diagram also indicates opportunities for gateway elements, indicated by the asterisks.



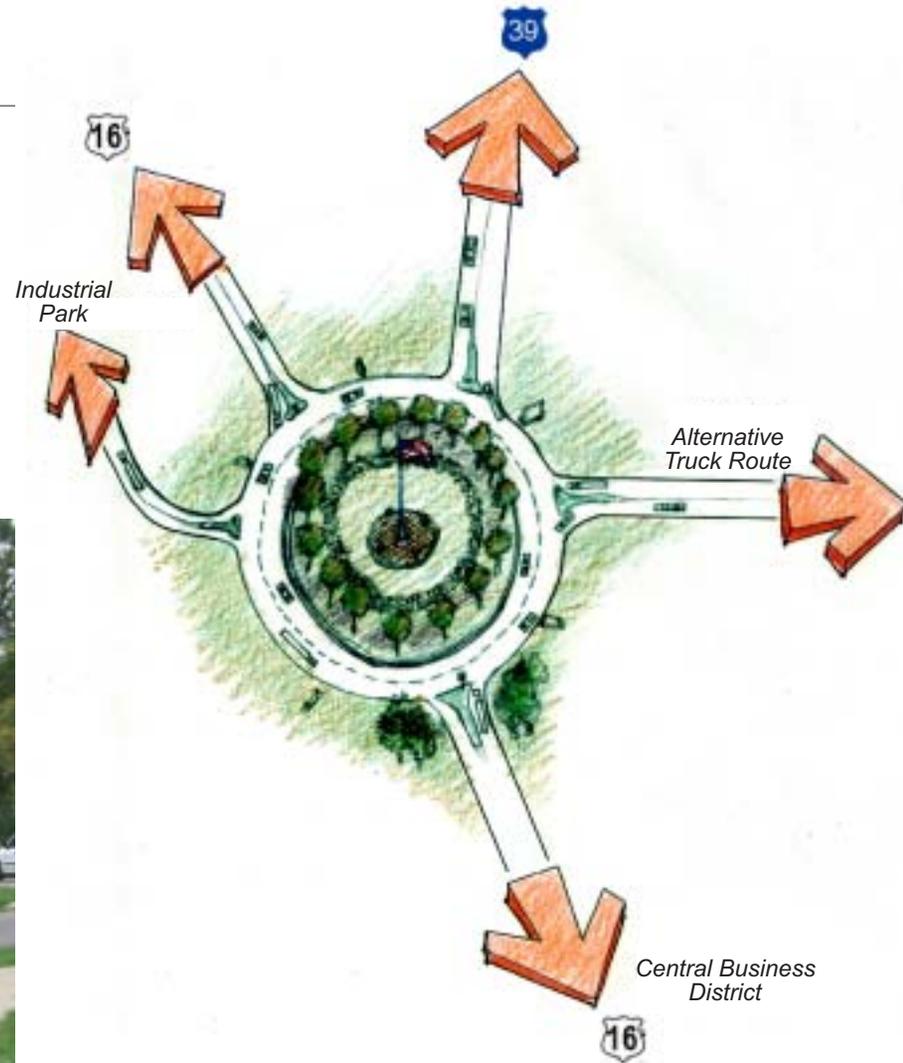


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Transportation/Circulation/Access

Traffic Circle

This illustration shows the generic traffic flow around a traffic circle, which could address the circulation and traffic management issues at intersections that have odd geometries or other conditions where traffic flow, safety and noise are an issue. These intersections have numerous advantages over ramp systems, because of price, and stoplight systems because of continuous traffic flow. All traffic flows around the center circle in a clockwise manner, with a large enough turning radius to make safe navigation for semi tractor trucks and trailers. Because the traffic does not stop, there is less noise from starting and stopping vehicles. The inner circle could be landscaped to cut down on headlight glare from oncoming vehicles and provide an attractive view.



Interchange Detail

This location specific implementation of a traffic circle is shown near the US-51 and I-39 interchange. There are a number of roads that intersect here currently, and as the current airport site is redeveloped in the near future, at least one additional road is likely to be built through this area. This point can also act as an anchoring point for the alternate truck route carrying truck traffic north of the CBD. The entry and exit lanes are divided, for added ease of use and safety, and the interchanges are equipped to allow pedestrians to more safely cross than the current arrangement. Just north of the traffic circle is a grade crossing, showing how multiple traffic systems can be integrated easily together.





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Transportation/Circulation/Access - Truck Route & Gateways

Transportation Flows

This diagram is a simplification of the traffic flows into, through and around Portage. The converging pattern recalls the city's heritage as a center of trade. The unfortunate side effect of this is that semi-tractors and their trailers are still routed through the center of town. The drivers of these "big rigs" certainly do not want to route through town because of the close quarters, heavy traffic and numerous stoplights, however there is no clear alternative provided for these vehicles other than through the heart of town. Most importantly, the reduction in truck traffic through

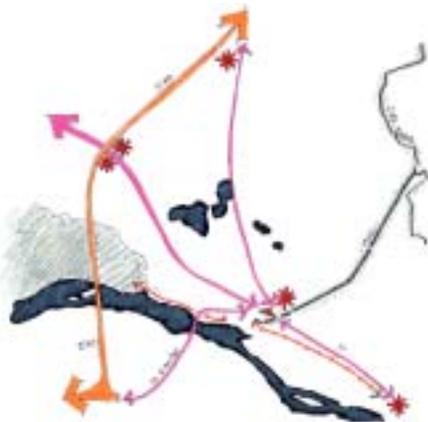
town will result in eliminating the issues supporting the call to widen the thoroughfares into and out of town. This solution does not appear to adequately remediate the traffic congestion, and seriously degrades the quality of the neighborhoods that the street widening is to occur within. Maintaining good sidewalks, green space and overall sense of continuity within the community should outweigh the expansion of the road to allow more trucks easy access into town, when that is precisely counter the desires expressed by the residents.



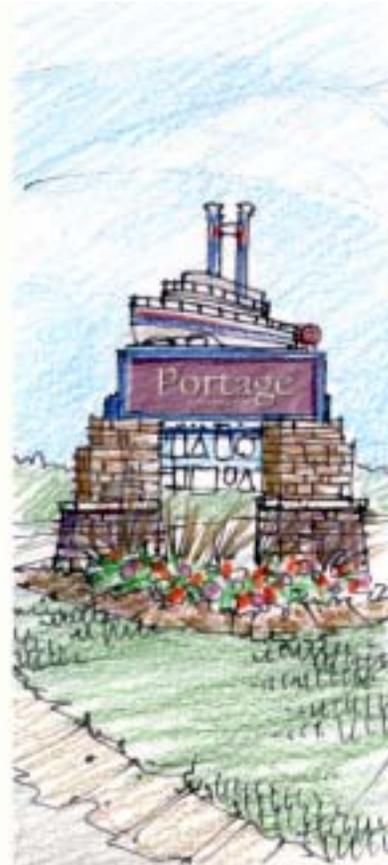
Courtesy of MapQuest, Inc.

Potential Gateways

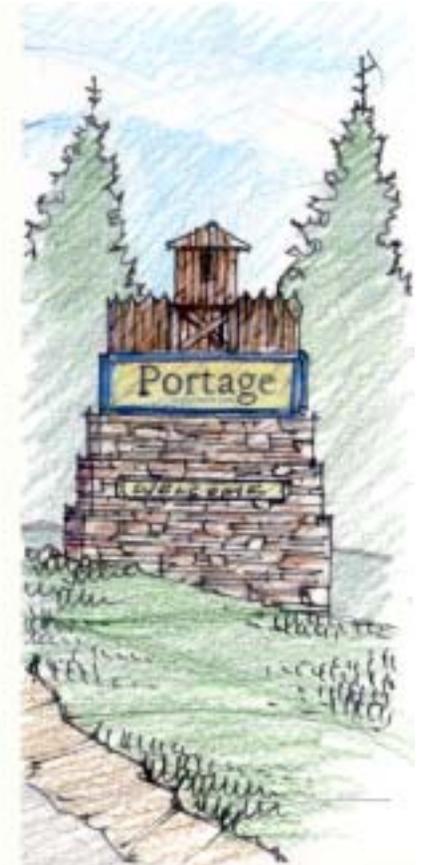
Illustrated here are some potential gateway signage options, including three levels of sign construction and three levels of landscape development. The iconography recalls various historic themes of the Portage area.



*Low Budget Sign Construction/
Higher Landscaping Budget*



*Moderate Budget Sign Construction/
Moderate Landscaping Budget*



*Higher Budget Sign Construction/
Low Landscaping Budget*



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Transportation/Circulation/Access - Gateways



Illustrated here are landscaping and signage options for the Route 51 business corridor. Low level signage maintains visibility and identifies the businesses while keeping the corridor "quaint." Bike lanes and crossings enhance accessibility.



Illustrated here are more detailed landscaping and signage options for landscaping the highway median. As on the facing page,



The Portage Community Charrette

Recreational Areas and Amenities

Goal: Develop recreation opportunities and enhance natural area conservation

- Promote the eco-tourism opportunities of the Wisconsin River and the existing trails
- Develop heritage resources (Surgeon's Quarters, Fort Winnebago site, the Old Indian Agency House, the canal, etc.)
- Link trails and heritage resources with the Ice Age Trail and state and local recreation trails including the Pine Island Wildlife Refuge and the French Creek Wildlife Area
- Encourage and promote tourism-related businesses in the city of Portage
 - Outfitters: fishing, biking, hiking, hunting, etc.
 - Supplies: groceries, photography, pharmaceuticals etc.
 - Hospitality: restaurants, inns, hotels, bed and breakfasts, etc.
 - Service: equipment repair, guide services, etc.
- Investigate the feasibility of National Scenic Byway and/or National Heritage Corridor designation

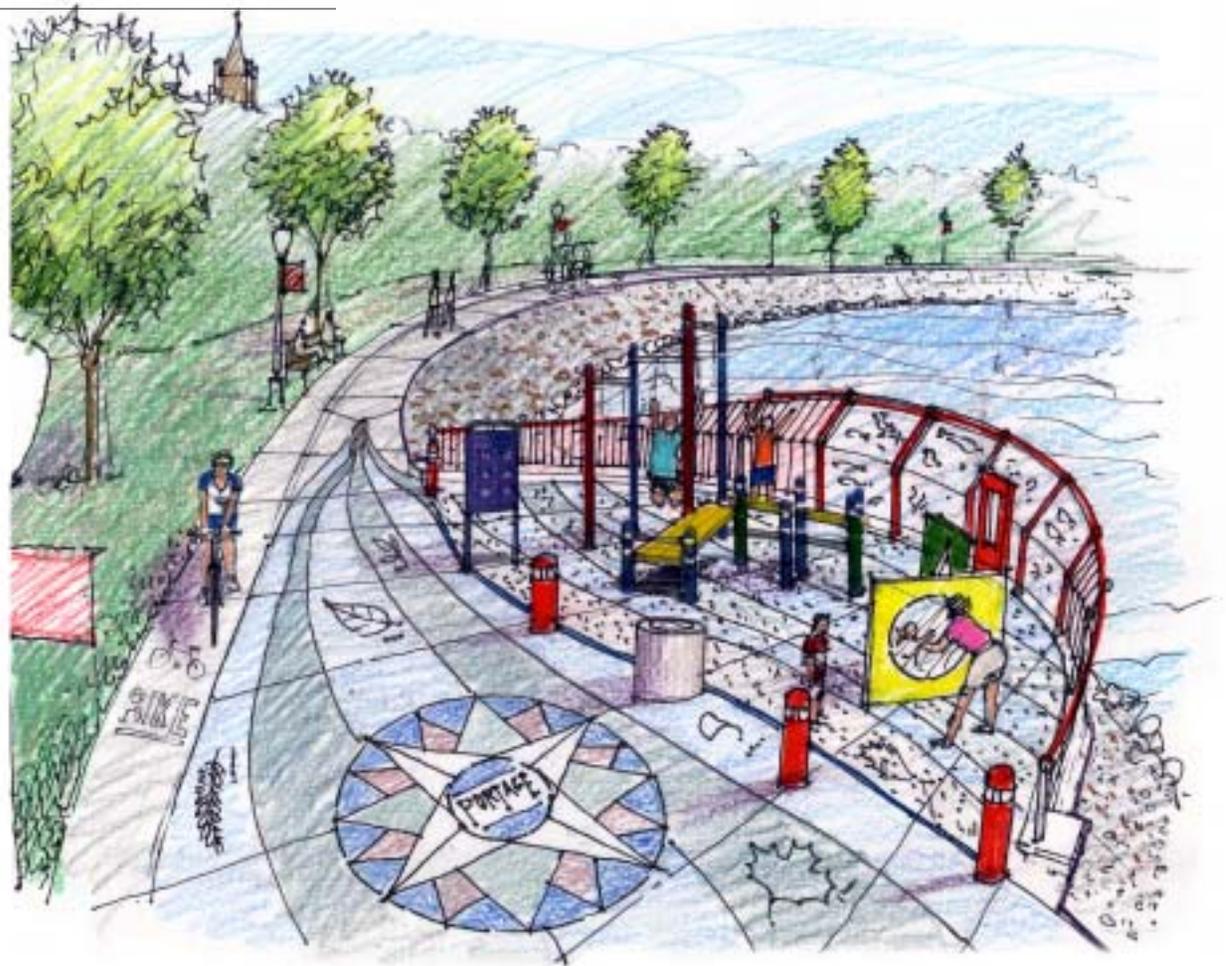


Trails

River Play Exercise

Along the existing, and successful, river trail, there are still opportunities to add elements and features which could further increase its appeal. Illustrated here is one such concept, recreational “bump outs” that are multi functional and appeal to a broad audience.

- Children are provided an entertaining physical play apparatus, including a jungle gym, a balance beam and other activities. The site is along the river, but provided with railings and other devices to keep children safe, but with a clear view of all of the activities of the river.
- This is also something that appeals to an older audience. The jungle gym can now serve as an exercise station, with an illustrated instruction panel to show the various exercises that can be performed at each station.
- A series of these along the walkway would provide a playground for all ages.



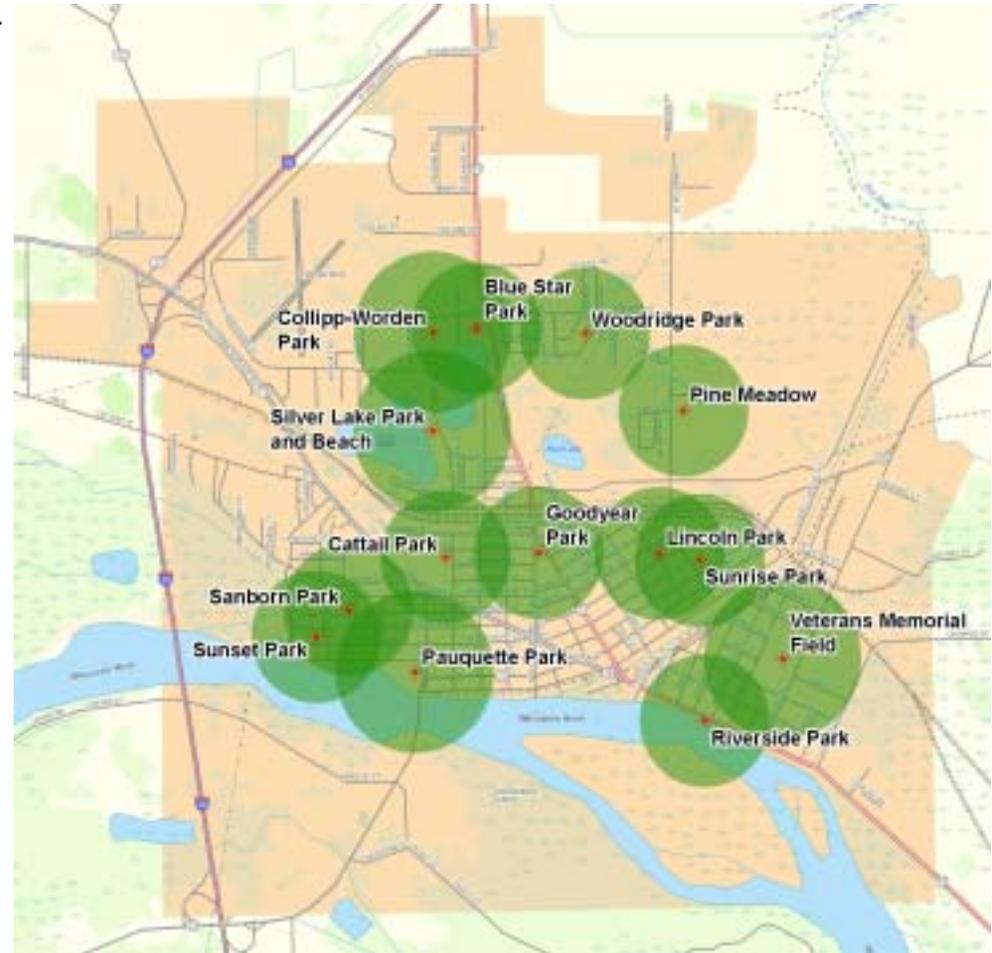


The Portage Community Charrette

Recreational Areas and Amenities

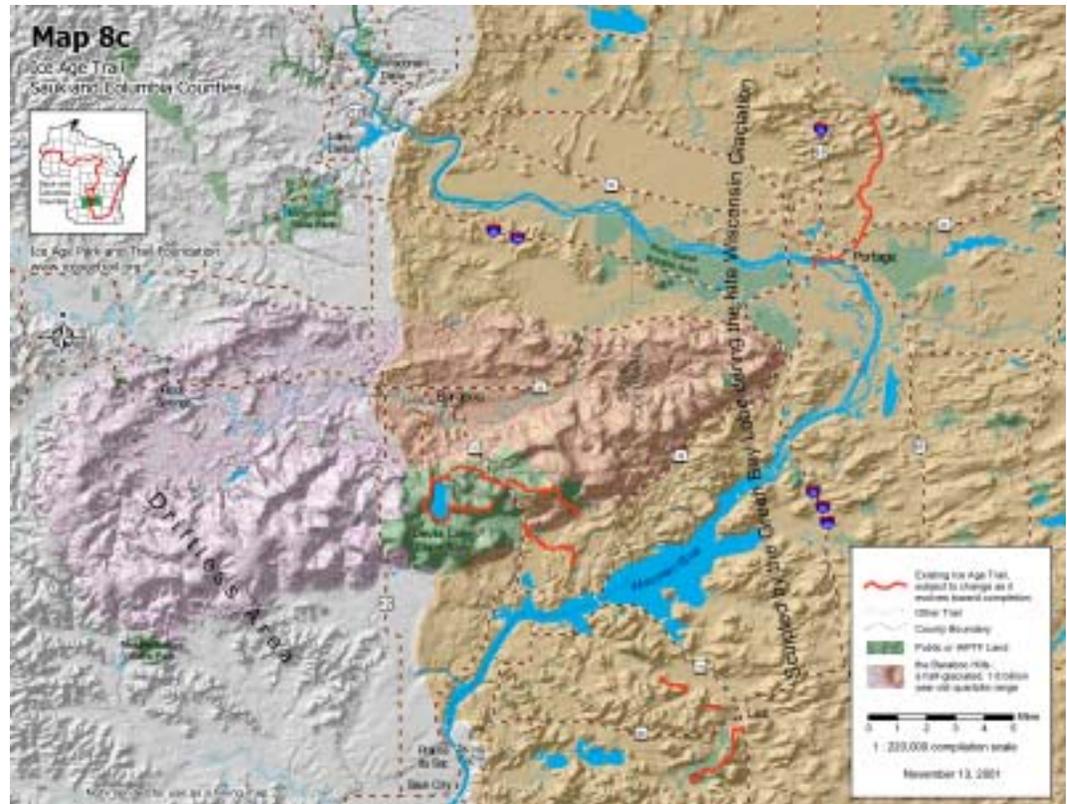
5-Minute Walk to Parks

Portage is blessed with an abundance of recreational opportunities. This map illustrates the comfortable walking radius for the average person, approximately 5 minutes, before that person is more likely to drive to their destination. The density of green shaded zones on this map speaks for itself. These parks are wonderful assets for the community, and their upkeep and expansion of features and amenities should remain the obviously high priority that they have been in the past.



Ice Age Trail

This map illustrates the progress of assembling the statewide Ice Age Trail. There is currently a segment of the Ice Age Trail established between the Wisconsin River and the Fox River. The first section between the Wisconsin River and the Surgeon's Quarters is also known as the Canal Trail. The segment between the Surgeon's Quarters and the Fox River is known as the Marquette Segment. A number of smaller trail segments are planned for interconnection to this existing trail, and the overall Ice Age Trail is being developed into a statewide recreational asset. Funding may be available to develop stretches of this trail within the Portage community from both state and national sources.





The Portage Community Charrette

Recreational Areas and Amenities

Overlook

The overlook illustrated here provides a number of enhancements for the riverfront. It allows a large platform area to be used for public gatherings and performance, as well as to provide some sun screening for sitting and watching the river during warmer months.

Incorporated into the side of the overlook is a ramp, which provides easy access to the top of the levy for people of all levels of mobility.

Enhancements that could be provided at the overlook might include interpretive signage to describe historical or natural features or high-powered, stationary binoculars for river watching.



Greenscape Map

This color-enhanced, high altitude view of central Portage clearly indicates the natural amenities available to the people of Portage. The numerous trails, waterways and open green space are an under-exploited resource for the community. A relatively untapped industry in this area is eco-tourism and all of the provisioning, supporting and associated businesses that this industry supports. The annual canoe race is just one example that could be used as a basis for expanding this eco-tourism potential.





The Portage Community Charrette

Recreational Areas and Amenities

Parks and Trails

This diagram illustrates the proximity to recreational opportunities that exists in central Portage. Much like the 5-minute walk diagram, this clearly indicates that access to this type of amenity is abundant. Because recreational spaces are ubiquitous elements within this community, their maintenance and upkeep are essential.



Environmental Issues

Goal: **Protect natural and sensitive areas, and enhance environmental quality**

- ❑ Protect surface and groundwater resources through *Best Environmental Practices*.
- ❑ Develop an effective stormwater management system using natural and engineered systems.
- ❑ Protect wetlands and other sensitive lands.
- ❑ Remediate existing brownfield sites and waterways.

Landforms

This image, generated by the United States Geological Survey (USGS), shows the position of Portage at the intersection between several large-scale geological features: rivers, high flatlands and a highland range. This position means that environmental conditions in and around Portage have a profound effect on the environmental quality of the entire region.





The Portage Community Charrette

Environmental Issues

Impaired Lakes, Rivers and Streams

This image, generated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), indicates those bodies of water within the state of Wisconsin, which are either sensitive ecosystems or easily polluted due to topography, hydrology or other conditions. Both the Wisconsin River and the Fox River near Portage fall into the “impaired” definition. This means that there has already been a measured decline in the chemistry, biology or other measures of the quality of these rivers. Rivers and their riparian zones are particularly adept at cleaning themselves over time, however continued pressure from industrial pollution, septic discharges, agricultural runoff and other factors will continue to degrade these rivers until the sources of pollution are eliminated or mitigated. Plantings of specific types of native (non-exotic) rushes, reeds and other specific kinds of plants in the riparian zone are a proven method for restoring natural habitat and enhancing the river’s ability to clean itself at low cost, with little or no maintenance. Invasive plant and animal species, such as the purple loosestrife and the zebra mussel, are a continual issue because, among other reasons, these organisms may not be as suitable to assist the river in cleaning itself as the native species.



Groundwater Susceptibility Map

This map, developed by the United States EPA, illustrates the susceptibility of groundwater to contamination. Many sources of surface pollution can percolate through the ground and contaminate the underground water supply. Underground tanks and other buried sources, such as leaking pipes, are another significant threat to the underground water supply, particularly if such pollution occurs in the vadose zone. The vadose zone is the area of soil where the seasonal water table rises and falls. Therefore, any pollution, which occurs high in the vadose zone, can be drawn down rapidly through the soil as the water table falls. All of Portage is located in an area with a high vadose zone. Therefore, pollution does not have to penetrate deeply into the ground before being carried away by movement in the underground water supply. Regulation and enforcement of pollution within the watershed is therefore critical to avoid contamination of local drinking wells.



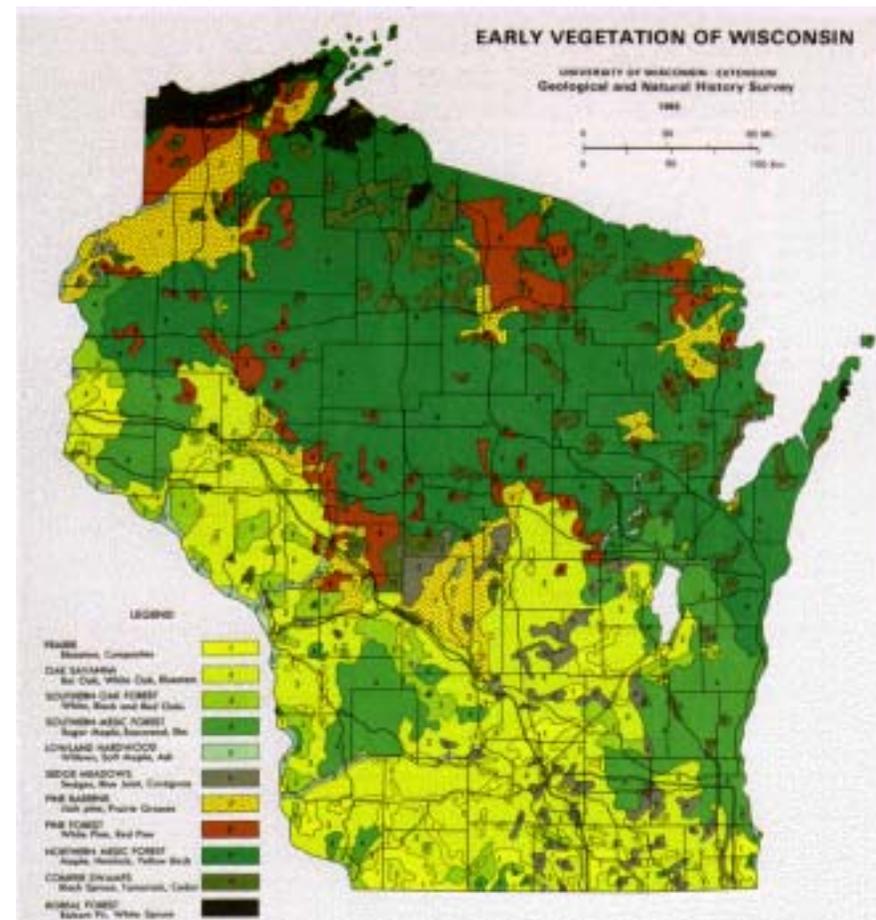


The Portage Community Charrette

Environmental Issues

Vegetation Map

In this map, prepared by the University of Wisconsin, Extension Service: Geological and Natural History Survey, the predominant plant species for the different areas of the state are illustrated. Portage sits in a transitional area, so more specific study of the indigenous species in this particular area is required. The results of this study can be used to create a list of appropriate flowering plants, shrubs and trees. It can be used throughout the community in public plantings and be recommended for private use, helping to restore the natural ecology of the region.

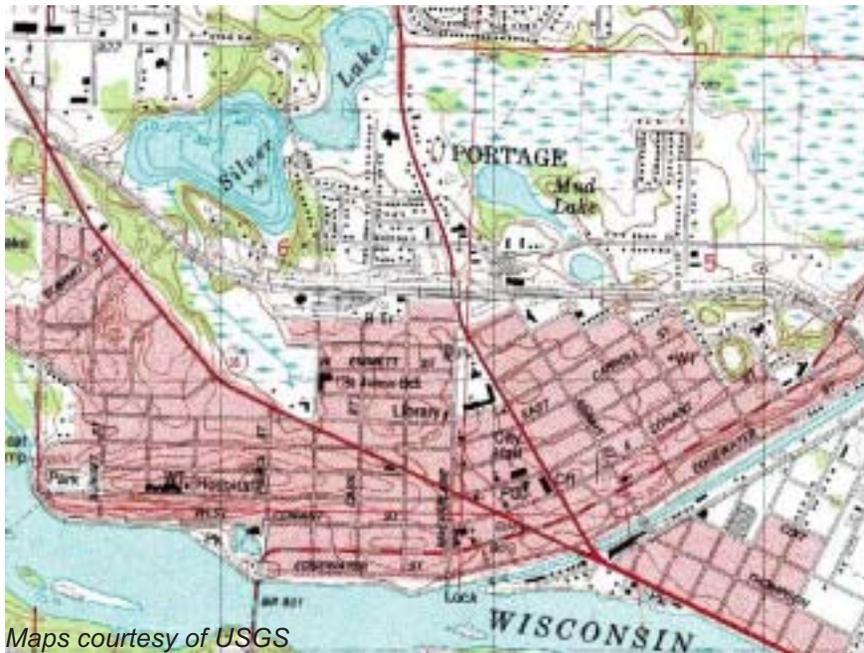


Portage Topography

These maps, prepared by the USGS, shows the relatively flat topography and low elevation of the land that Portage is built upon. The chronic flooding, which has plagued Portage in the past, adds empirical evidence that the ground beneath the city has a natural tendency to be marsh or flood plain, particularly in the first ward. The flood works constructed by the US Army Corp of Engineers have gone a long way towards addressing the flood concern, however to date, the flood works are

incomplete. It was reported the only remaining element is the construction of a floodgate at a rail grade crossing east of town, however the project has languished in this state for several years. Completion of the flood work has the potential to reduce or eliminate the financial burden of federal flood insurance, particularly for the first ward, whose residents tend to be of lower income.

Priority Watershed Projects



Maps courtesy of USGS





The Portage Community Charrette

Environmental Issues

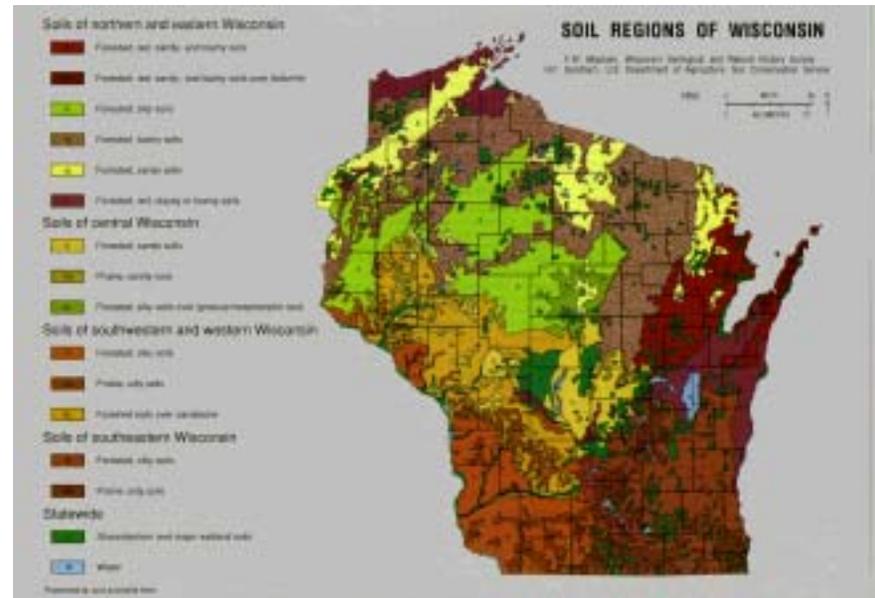
This image, prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, delineates their project priority zones. Numerous projects illustrated on this map will have an impact on the water quality in the Portage area. If projects are developed within Portage that can address water quality issues, state funding may be available. The funding for the projects shown on this map are largely state funds that may include federal grants and other funding sources. When developing project proposals, all funding sources should be investigated to maximize the local dollars effectiveness.



Courtesy WDNR

Soil Profile Map

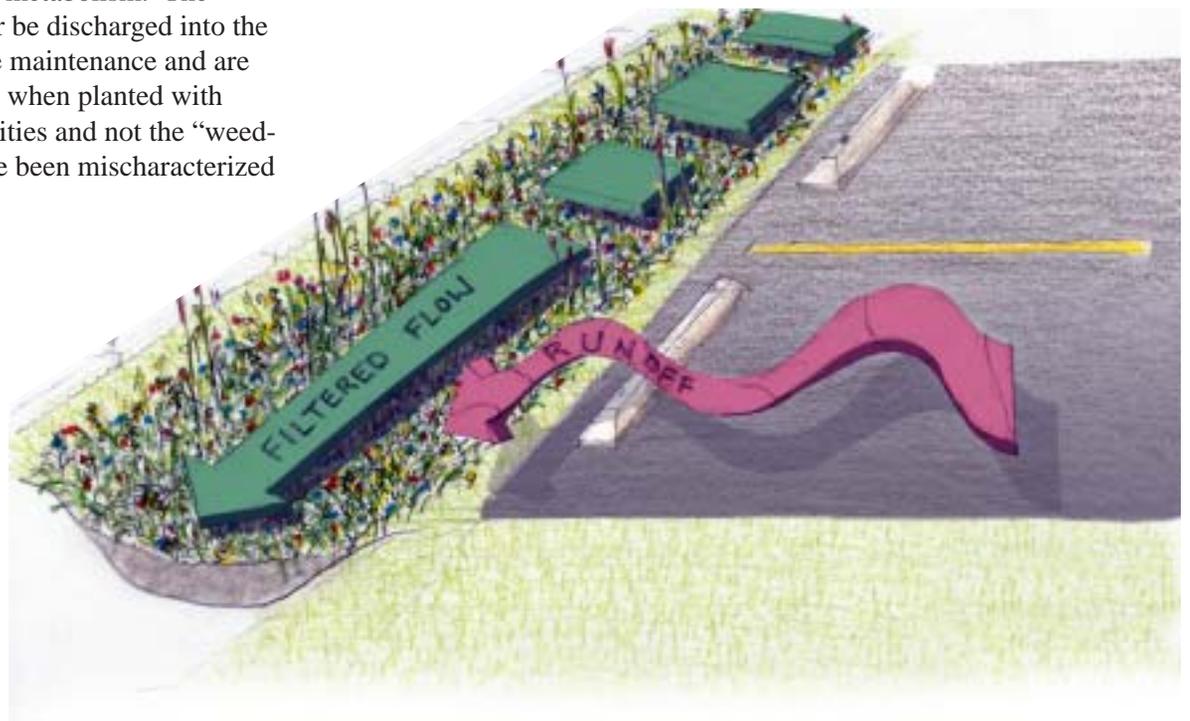
This map, prepared by the USGS, shows the general soil profile types around the state. The soils in the Portage area tend to be a mixture of sandy types, which explains the susceptibility of the underground water supply to contamination. Sandy soils have high percolation and tend to have low organic binding properties so that contamination spilled on or in the soil tend to quickly migrate to the water table. This soil type makes certain types of pollution, such as BETX (benzene, ethylene, toluene, and xylene), which are the primary petrochemical components, easy to remove in majority but almost impossible to remove in entirety.



Courtesy University of Wisconsin - Extension

Bio Swale

This diagram illustrates how a system of natural attenuation can be used to address surface run-off, in this case surface run-off from a parking lot. By providing a swath of green space planted with appropriate native reeds, rushes, grasses, flowering plants and certain woody plants selected for their particular abilities to metabolize common run-off components, a bio swale can be created. The bio swale works by employing several mechanisms: filtration, absorption, adsorption and metabolism. The filtered water can then percolate into the ground or be discharged into the local storm water system. Bio swales require little maintenance and are self cleaning, self repairing, low cost systems that, when planted with properly selected plants, are attractive urban amenities and not the “weed-filled ditch” or “trash catcher” that bio swales have been mischaracterized as in the past.



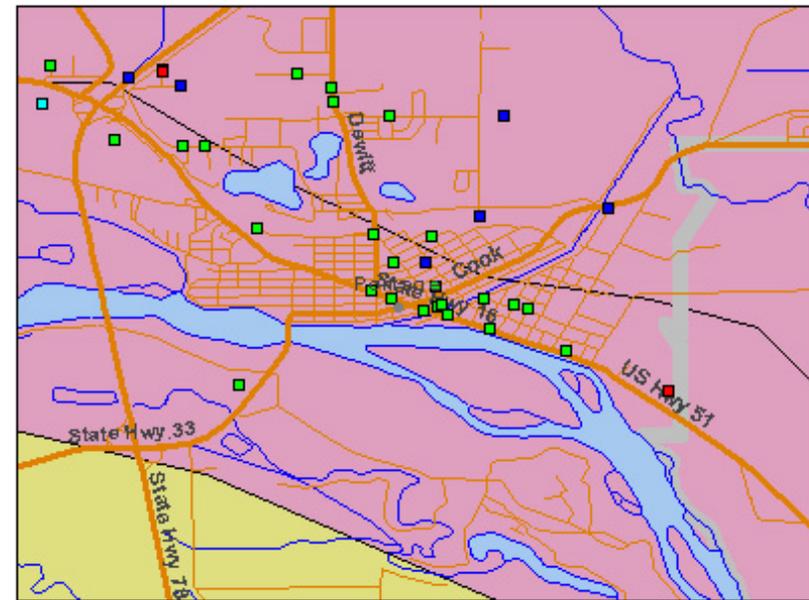


The Portage Community Charrette

Environmental Issues

Portage Overall Watershed Characterization

This map, generated by the US EPA, shows the actionable ground, water and air discharges released and/or permitted in Portage, WI in 2000-2001. Only point sources, such as factories, businesses, spills and the like are illustrated on this map. Non-point sources, such as farm chemical run-off, are not indicated. Point source solution tends to be the easiest to address through “end of the pipe” solutions, such as filters, collectors, scrubbers, etc. An emerging trend, however, is to find industrial uses for this “waste” and market these by-products as saleable raw materials. By encouraging businesses that utilize these raw materials to locate in or around Portage, a “closing the loop” can be achieved. This concept is employed in what is known as the eco-industrial park but may be applied to any industry.



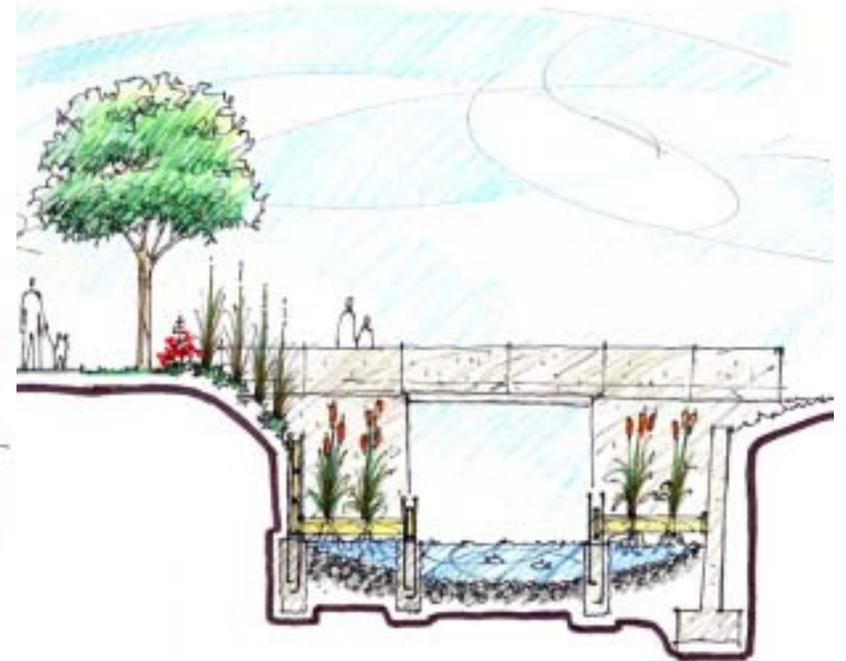
- Red Square** Air Release
- Blue Square** Ground Release
- Green Square** Water Release

Portage, WI - Toxic Release Map
Overall Watershed Characterization

Source: US EPA

Canal Restoration

The canal has only minimal flow and is subject to frequent blooms and the accumulation of pollutants through surface/stormwater run-off. The systems illustrated here show a possible solution: a variation on a constructed wetland. These systems utilize stationary beds of hydrophilic plants that also serve to “polish” the water systems. These biofilter systems, developed by *Ocean Arks, International* (www.oceanarks.org) would best be used in the western end of the canal.





The Portage Community Charrette

Housing Issues

Infill Housing Examples

This section offers some possible infill housing types that would be well-suited for the neighborhoods of the First Ward.

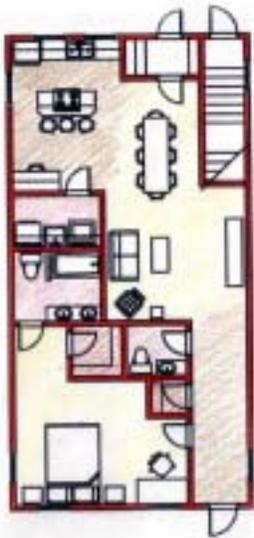
Single Family 2-Story Floor Plan

This floor plan arrangement provides a three-bedroom single-family detached unit in keeping with appropriate lot sizes and housing character of the neighborhood. The lower floor's access addresses the street side of the property, and features a covered porch. A second entrance/exit at the rear provides easy access from the alley or side driveway from the garage. The unit features three bathrooms, and locates all sleeping quarters on the second floor. The single-family residence is clearly the predominant housing type in Portage, and is expected to continue to be so, but higher density floor plans have been provided to illustrate an alternative to the high density apartment option currently provided.



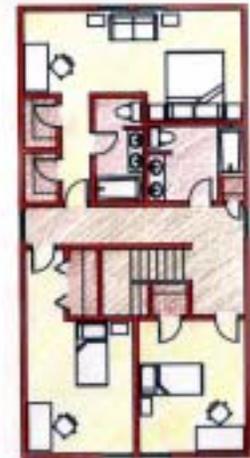
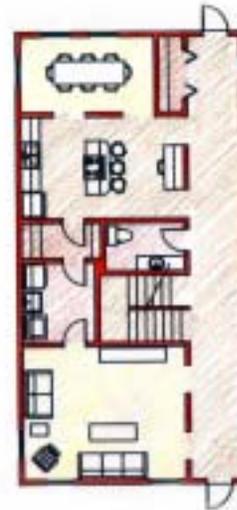
2-Single Bedroom 2-Story Floor Plan

This floor plan arrangement provides a single bedroom detached unit in keeping with appropriate lot sizes and housing character of the neighborhood. The lower floor's access addresses the street side of the property, and features a covered porch. A second entrance/exit at the rear provides easy access from the alley or side driveway from the garage.



Stacked 3-Bedroom 2-Story Floor Plan

This floor plan arrangement provides two three bedroom stacked units in keeping with appropriate lot sizes and housing character of the neighborhood. The lower floor's access addresses the street side of the property, and features a covered porch. A second entrance/exit at the rear provides easy access from the alley or side driveway from the garage. The upper floor unit enjoys access from a full width deck at the rear of the unit. Each unit features three bedrooms and two bathrooms. Homeowners may benefit from renting the upper unit to defray mortgage costs, house elderly, college age or other family members, or rent to the market.





The Portage Community Charrette

Housing Issues

Barn

Utilizing a standard sized lot, this elevation is of a sympathetic style and scale to many of the surrounding homes, and could be constructed for an average budget for new residential construction in the area. Aesthetics and detailing recall and are sympathetic to the range of Eclectic styles surrounding the farmhouse tradition. A gambrel roof and rustic shutters are shown.



Bungalow Cottage

Utilizing a standard sized lot, this elevation is of a sympathetic style and scale to many of the surrounding homes, and could be constructed for an average budget for new residential construction in the area. Aesthetics and detailing recall and are sympathetic to the Italianate style. This unit is shown with sloped dormers for additional volume and natural light in the upper floor.



Dutch Cottage

Utilizing a standard sized lot, this elevation is of a sympathetic style and scale to many of the surrounding homes, and could be constructed for an average budget for new residential construction in the area. Aesthetics and detailing recall and are sympathetic to the range of Arts and Crafts styles surrounding the Victorian period. Ornamentation such as corbels, trim, shutters, and column capitals can be obtained off the shelf or manufactured from patterns.



Modern

This design, while appearing more modern in scale and geometry, contains historical references that allow it to be sympathetic to the other buildings in the neighborhood. Wood or vinyl siding or masonry materials can compliment the design well. Distinctive features such as the eye window in the upper floor add to the architectural character of the unit and the neighborhood.





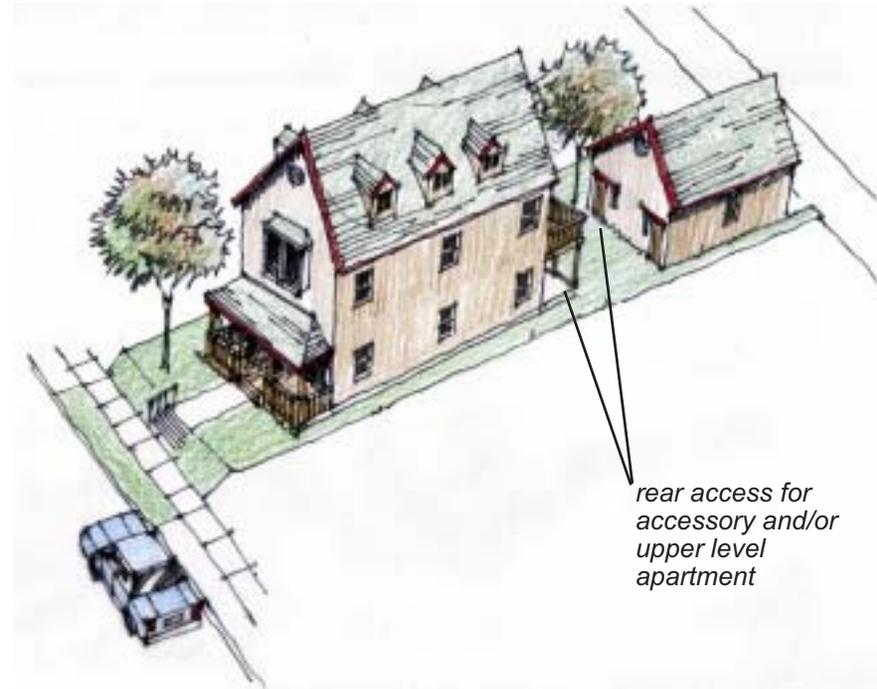
The Portage Community Charrette

Housing Issues

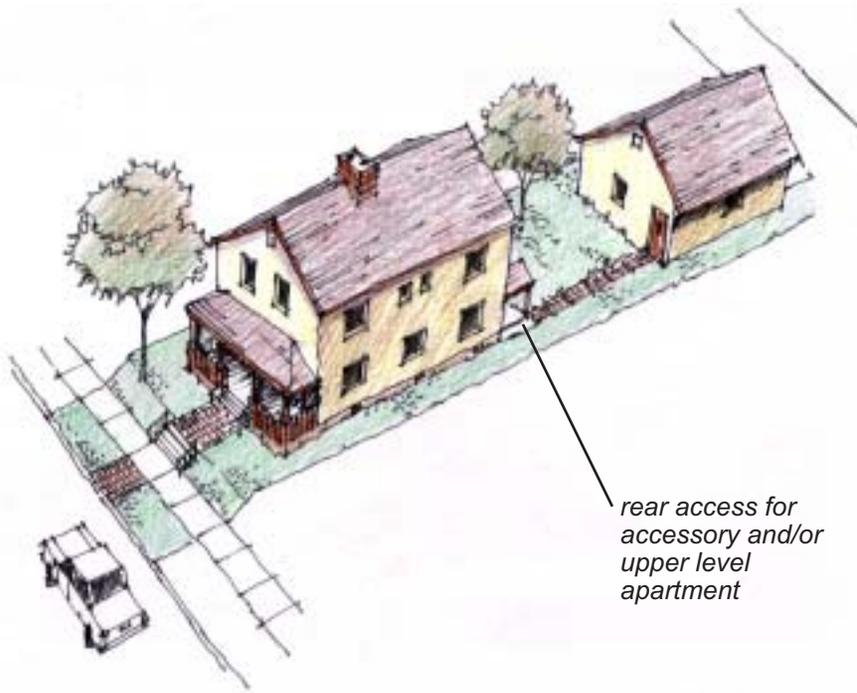
These infill prototypes illustrate the advantages of the alley-loaded arrangement. The side yard space is maximized, providing more green space, less construction cost and less maintenance for the narrow lot.

These prototypes feature side approach driveways with a rear-detached garage, when alley thoroughfares are not available. Shifting the garage to one side slightly increases the net area of rear yard, varying with lot width. Avoid placing garages toward the street side of the property, as doing so creates a very unpleasant pedestrian environment, and minimizes social interaction between neighbors.

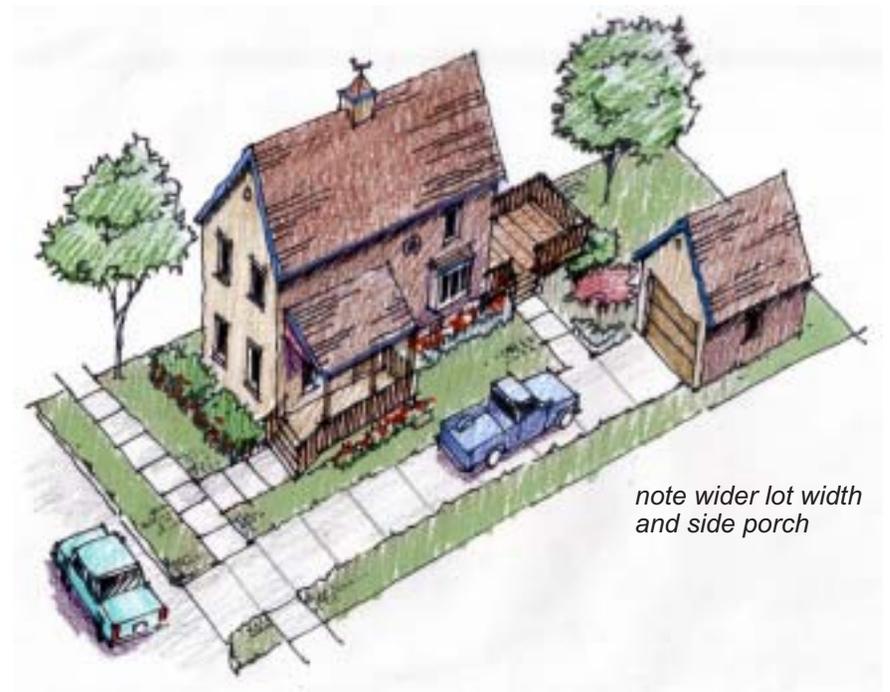
Double Unit with Detached Garage



Single Unit with Detached Garage



Single Unit with Detached Side Yard Garage





The Portage Community Charrette

Housing Issues

Streetscape Issues

These images illustrate a range of housing opportunities that are sensitive to local housing scales, neighborhood rhythms and neighborhood amenities. These images, and those on the previous pages are typical of, or appropriate for, those found in Portage neighborhoods in the downtown area. A more detailed “Pattern Book” of housing types and details should be prepared in preparation for the development of redevelopment/maintenance guidelines for neighborhood housing.

Issues to be considered should include:

- Building height/width
- Building materials
- Fenestration patterns
- Landscaping patterns
- Setbacks
- Sidewalks/curbs
- Lighting

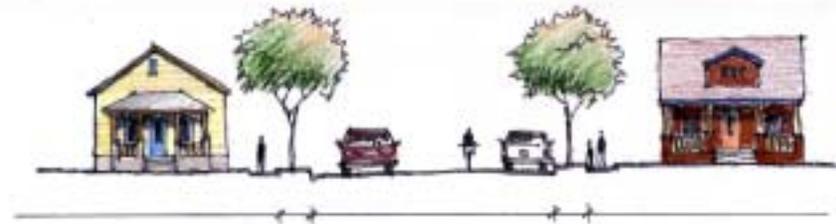
This example is modeled on a typical residential grid street pattern in early 20th century development. Double parallel parking and two-way traffic on all streets are featured. Sidewalks with greenways (of varied sizes) with street side trees provide shade and shelter. Residential units’ entrances address the street and feature porches for outdoor living and socialization in warmer months.

A variation of a residential grid street pattern retains much of the original. Double parallel parking and two-way traffic on all streets are featured. Sidewalks with greenways and trees provide shade and shelter. Pedestrian friendly “bump-outs” reduce crossing distances and extend the green

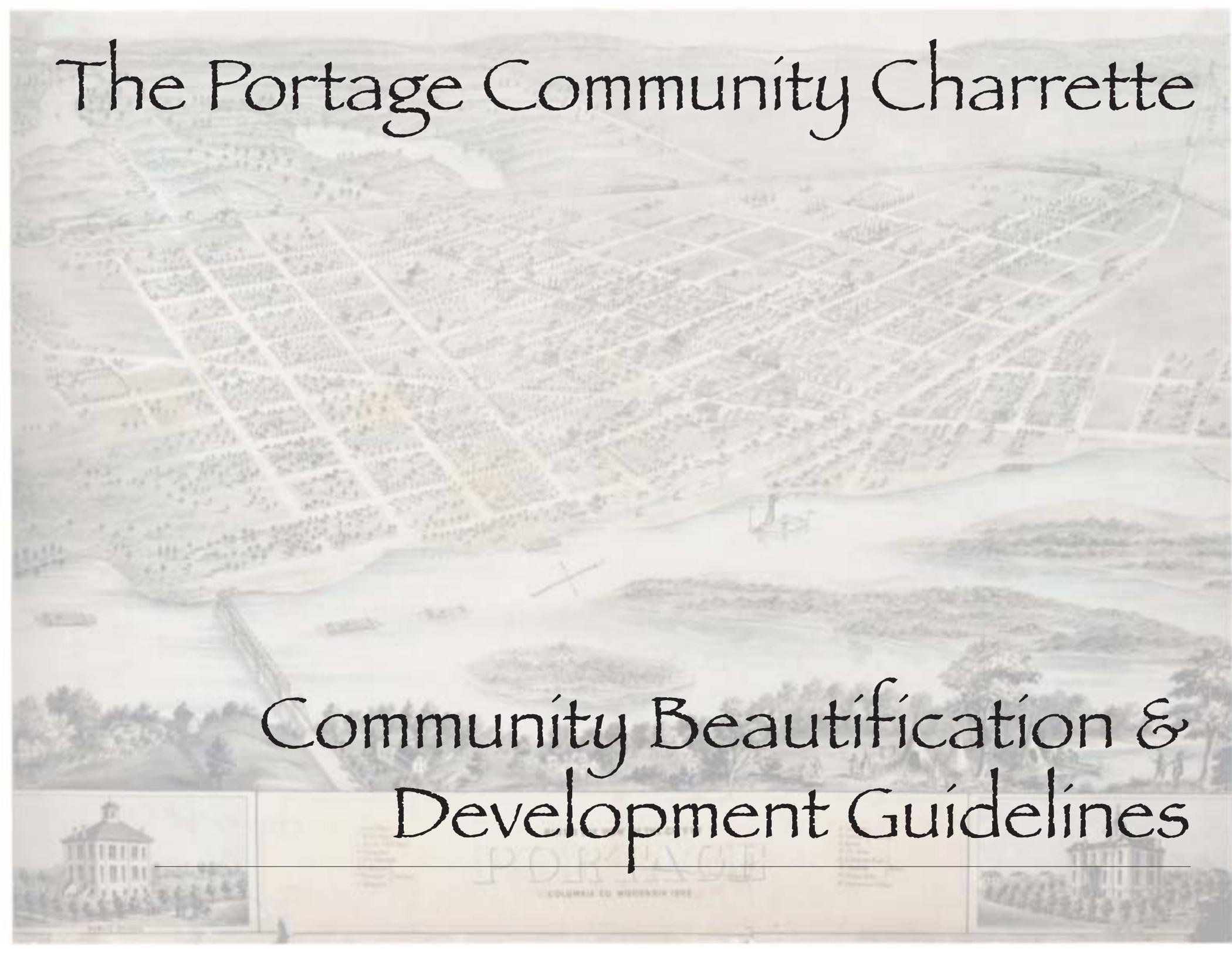
space of corner lots. Period lighting is featured at each corner. Residential units’ entrances address the street and feature porches for outdoor living and socialization in warmer months.

Technical Assistance can be found through the *Affordable Housing Design Advisor* - an interactive tool available on-line at www.designadvisor.org

Housing stock that has decayed to the point where in needs to be demolished provides another opportunity for this type of project. A variety of funding sources, such as Hope VI, will grant funds for this type of work.



The Portage Community Charrette

An aerial, sepia-toned photograph of a city grid, likely Portage, Indiana. The grid is dense and rectangular, with a prominent river flowing through the center. A bridge crosses the river. The surrounding landscape is hilly and wooded. The image is faded and serves as a background for the text.

Community Beautification & Development Guidelines

A historical map of Portage, Indiana, showing the city's layout and surrounding areas. The map is titled 'PORTAGE' and 'COLUMBIA ED. WOODRICK 1855'. It features a grid of streets and a river. There are two small inset images: one on the left showing a large building with a dome, and one on the right showing a street scene with a building.



The Portage Community Charrette

Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

The character of Portage is one of its greatest assets. While growth and development of the town is essential for its continued success, this growth and development must maintain and enhance the character of the place. The guidelines presented in this section will help encourage development appropriate to Portage. These are intended to serve as recommendations for a Beautification Committee or a Development Review Board to use in evaluating projects and proposals and for developers and property owners in the development of projects and proposals in the Portage area. They have been drafted in such a way that they can serve like ordinances associated with an overlay district for Portage area zoning issues.

Note:

The guidelines presented here are standard guidelines following the principles and practices of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Adjustments should be made to fit specific details not available to this project at the time of the charrette.

Small Town Design Principles

A community's identity and character are critical components of its quality of life and economic vitality. The design of small towns should celebrate and improve the quality of the physical environment in relation to the social, economic, ecological, political and historic driving forces that give it its unique character. This unique character goes far beyond the design and appearance of individual buildings and landscapes. It arises from the heritage of the community and its people. The enhancement and design of small towns involves:

1. Understanding what you have;
 - What makes the community look the way it does?
 - What are the things that have influenced, and are influencing the character of the community?
 - Where do you take visitors?
 - Where do you not take visitors?
 - What makes the community unique?
 2. Deciding what you want;
 - What's important to the community?
 - What are we willing to do?
 - What will be the impact of the changes?
 3. Taking action; and
 - What are the community's priorities?
 - Who's going to do it?
 - What can we do when?
 - Does the community have the resources it needs to get the job done?
 4. Getting the job done.
-



The Portage Community Charrette

Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

When asked, most people who live in small towns will say they do so because of the community's small town character and charm. Some of the things that give a small town its character, identity and charm include:

1. Architectural compatibility:

A community will benefit visually from a consistency of architectural character. While much of a community's character comes from the often eclectic assortment of buildings, there should be a compatibility (but not uniformity) of architectural styles. Buildings should be sensitive to the basic character of the community and reflect its continuing development.

Each community or district should find its own unique combination of elements, character and features. This helps to give the community or district its identity. While it is important to avoid cute "themes," establishing a clear character (i.e. gas light district, turn-of-the-century village, etc.) helps maintain and promote the community's visual quality.

Some of the key points to consider in examining the architectural compatibility of small towns include:

- A consistency of roof style and height;
- All buildings should follow the same orientation (narrow, wide, square, etc.);
- The proportion (height and width) and scale (relative size) of buildings should be the same across the entire district. This not only helps define the visual character of the district, but also helps define the district itself;

- There should be a distinct and characteristic rhythm (spacing) of building openings (windows and doors);
- The general massing and details of the buildings in the district should be consistent;
- Each building should have a clear and characteristic entrance;
- In order to establish a clear edge, all buildings should have a similar setback from the curb; and
- Buildings should use similar materials, colors and textures. New buildings should be of compatible materials and textures. New and renovated buildings should preserve basic architectural details.

2. Gateways:

The first impressions of a community are lasting ones. The community should have a distinct entrance, or gateway. Each individual district should also have clear boundaries and entrances.

By focusing on infill development in the downtown and maximizing density, the sprawl along corridors leading into town can be minimized and traffic congestion, visual clutter, and the need for costly services can be greatly reduced.

3. Density and Infill Development:

A community gains much of its character from the density of its buildings and activities. Whenever possible, new development should locate in the downtown district. Upper floors should be utilized as offices and/or apartments. Vacant or abandoned areas should be renovated to comply with and enhance the downtown. This helps bring life and vitality to the downtown and avoids the "missing teeth" that are too often a part of small towns.

Vacant lots should be developed as community gardens or pocket parks until appropriate uses can be found for the space. Discourage the temptation to make them into parking lots.

4. Open space:

While density of buildings and activities is important to the visual quality of a community, open space is important as well. Activities need places to happen. The spaces should provide for a variety of events and relaxation. Larger spaces can be home to community events and recreation while small places can provide for relaxation. Community gardens, parks, and urban seating/gathering areas can be great ways to bring citizens together and be a positive addition to the visual character of the community as well.

5. Parking:

Parking (or the lack of it) is often mentioned as a problem in small town downtowns. In reality, it rarely is. If the destination is of quality and the path is well designed, most people don't mind a slight walk. In fact, most downtown shopping areas have closer parking than large suburban shopping malls.

While on-street parking is important to businesses' success, the majority of parking should be in lots behind the stores, or in non-prime building lots in or near downtown. It is also easy to hide parking behind walls or landscaping. Lots should be well landscaped and well lit to be a positive addition to the community.

6. Signage:

It is important for businesses to inform customers of their location. The types, size, location and character of signs should be consistent and well designed. A well designed signage system can be an effective part of a community's visual character and a very important and successful marketing resource for the businesses as well.

Wayfinding is also important in a community. A well designed system of information signs clearly directing visitors is an important part of community character and design.

7. Sidewalks and alleys:

Not only are sidewalks and alleys important circulation elements, they are also critical design elements. The importance of well maintained sidewalks and alleys goes without saying. The character of these very public places is a major factor in the visual character of the community. They should be pleasant places to walk and should convey to patrons a sense of security.

8. Street furniture:

Seating, lighting, newspaper racks, waste containers, flower boxes, etc. are all important ingredients in a community's visual character. Like all other aspects of small town design, street furniture should be compatible with the design of the buildings and spaces and not a design afterthought.



The Portage Community Charrette

Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Basic Considerations

Why Make Improvements to My Building?

There are numerous reasons to improve your building. Making improvements to your building can:

1. Extend the life of the structure;
2. Enhance its appearance, thus improving the market image of the business or businesses which operate in it. A “tired” looking building is far less likely to attract new clients or customers to the businesses;
3. Reduce the energy consumption, thus reducing the operation/overhead costs to the businesses;
4. Increase the income generation from a building via increasing rent/lease rates. In some downtowns, building owners have been able to renovate the upper stories into elderly or studio apartments;
5. Result in receiving tax credits on the amount of money invested in the structure. Buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places are eligible for income tax credit.
6. Improve the overall character of the downtown and the community. Upon improving the overall character of a downtown, improved vitality is sure to follow.

What Type of Improvements Should I Make?

There is not a standard answer for each building, but in general, the following rules should apply:

1. Focus first on structural damage or deterioration. Deteriorated stone or brick, collapsing roof structure, and leaky roofs are examples of structural damage;
2. Second, maintenance needs should be attended to. Items such as tuck-pointing, painting, re-glazing windows and weatherproofing are considered maintenance items;
3. Finally, if the building is structurally sound and in good repair, consider cosmetic improvements. Some enhancements may include: replacing single pane windows with thermal insulated windows; cleaning exterior brick and stone; replacing or repairing architectural details which have been removed, are damaged, or are deteriorated; or adding or replacing an awning.

Making “Main Street” Work

Adopted from a presentation at the *Congress for New Urbanism VII* Conference by Joseph Kohl: Dover Kohl & Partners The success of beautification and design efforts in small communities depend largely on providing a good pedestrian environment and in providing something of interest to visit and be a part of. The downtown area of a community is its front yard - the focus of community identity and pride.

The following factors are paramount whether fixing or maintaining an existing Main Street, or building a new one:

Making the pedestrian feel comfortable

- **Wide sidewalks:** Sidewalks need to have enough room for friends to walk side by side.
- **Shade and shelter:** Shoppers need shelter from the summer sun and rain.
- **Spatial enclosure:** Buildings need to be up against the sidewalk to create a “sense of place.”
- **Safety:** Pedestrian safety is improved by having these:
 - Large storefronts and upper story windows facing the street for natural surveillance
 - On-street parking to create a physical barrier between moving cars and pedestrians
 - Aligned building facades to minimize places for people to hide
 - Mixed-use buildings to increase pedestrian activity at all hours of the day and night
 - Small curb radii at corners reducing the width of roadway to make it easier to walk across the street, and slowing turning vehicles
 - Narrow car lanes, as few as practical, to control the pace of vehicles & minimize pavement

Providing points of interest

- **What’s for sale?** Well-designed displays in the storefront windows entice shoppers, provide entertainment, and increase pedestrian activity.



The Portage Community Charrette

Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Making “Main Street” Work (continued)

Stores & services people want

- As retail markets change, merchants have to **keep up** with what people are willing to spend money on; otherwise no one will go there.

Buildings with architectural character

- **Avoid boring blank facades:** there has to be articulation.

Human action

- People like to watch people and see what they’re doing.
- Interaction with each other

Generating Pedestrian Activity

- **Doors facing the sidewalk:** People will use the sidewalk if the building’s main entrance is there.
- **Large storefronts facing the sidewalk:** People want to see what’s for sale.
- **Mix of uses:** People will use the sidewalks during more hours of the day and night if there is a mixture of residences, offices, stores, and entertainment.
- **Street Furniture:** Benches, planters or low walls. People like to rest and enjoy being in the center of activity.

Pedestrian activity creates a subconscious reinforcement that it’s okay to spend your money there. When people are visible from the street, curious passersby are more likely to park, get out of their cars, and find out why everyone is there. Being “where the action is” can be irresistible for many people.

Building Conditions

The Past and Present Condition of Buildings

Many buildings are altered over time. The drawings below illustrate how this can happen. Sometimes alterations made to buildings are very beneficial; other times they are damaging to both the structure and character of the building as well as the integrity of the downtown.

Buildings can be described on a scale between the “original design” and “significantly altered.” The drawings below illustrate buildings on both ends of the continuum. The position on the continuum will determine what redevelopment or improvement options are available for a building.



*Three typical downtown buildings:
Existing conditions*



*Three typical downtown buildings:
With minor restoration/renovation*



*Three typical downtown buildings:
With major restoration/renovation*



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Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Original Design or Minimally Altered Buildings

Do:

- Maintain the historic fabric of the building (i.e. maintain the original stone or brick);
- Spruce up a “tired” look. Add color selectively by painting the building’s details, window trim, or cornice;
- Add a cloth awning which complements the storefront or upper story windows, where appropriate;
- Maintain the original facade design and signage.

Don't:

- Cover up or alter architectural details such as the cornice, decorative hoods above upper story windows, or clerestory windows;
- Paint or stucco-coat the original brick and mortar. Once a historic structure is painted or covered with stucco it usually can never be reversed without substantially damaging the integrity of the brick;
- Substitute modern metal and tinted windows or doors for the original ones;
- Use large signage or neon lighting.



Examples of buildings that have remained in their original state or seen only minimal alteration.



Sketches of buildings that have been substantially altered.

Substantially Altered Buildings

Buildings that have been significantly altered have a variety of options for improvements. Those options range from reconstructing the original facade to disguising it to reduce the impact to the overall character of the downtown. Some examples of how this can be accomplished are illustrated below.

Do:

- Investigate the potential for removing the materials covering the original facade;
- Restore original facade, if possible;
- Add or enhance elements which may reflect the scale, patterns, and lines of neighboring buildings;
- Add an awning to add color and help disguise the substantial alterations;
- Add color selectively to complement colors used by neighboring structures.

Don't:

- Use large, protruding signage;
- Continue altering the architectural style.
- Use bold, eye catching color or materials.

New construction/ infill in the downtown can have a good or bad result.

Buildings which are constructed to match or reflect the context are positive additions to a historic downtown. New buildings which ignore height, width, scale, building lines, rhythm and the indigenous materials used by surrounding buildings generally are not good neighbors in the downtown.

Do:

- Use materials which match or complement surrounding building's patterns, color and appearance;
- Match the sizes, scale and rhythm of the windows and store fronts of neighboring buildings;
- Use signage which is not overpowering.

Don't:

- Introduce materials which are not already found in buildings in the downtown;
- Use exotic shapes or patterns which will disrupt visual continuity;
- Try to imitate historic styles without professional assistance and thorough investigation of the scale, materials, proportions, and characteristics of that style. Some historic styles such as Colonial and Beaux Arts are not appropriate in a downtown.



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Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

New Construction/Infill

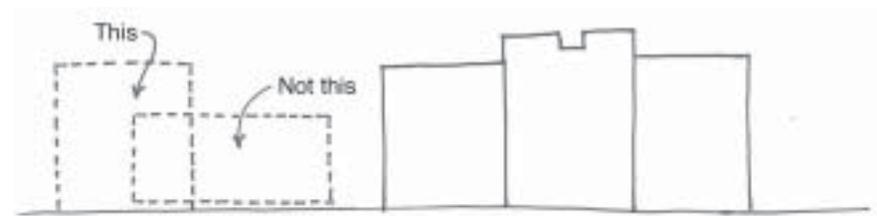
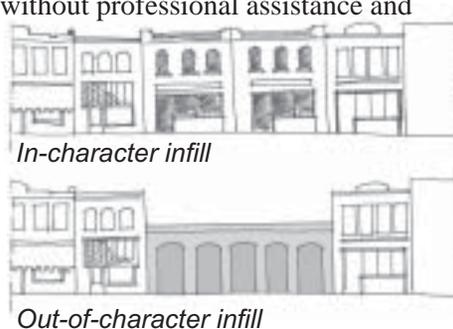
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Do:

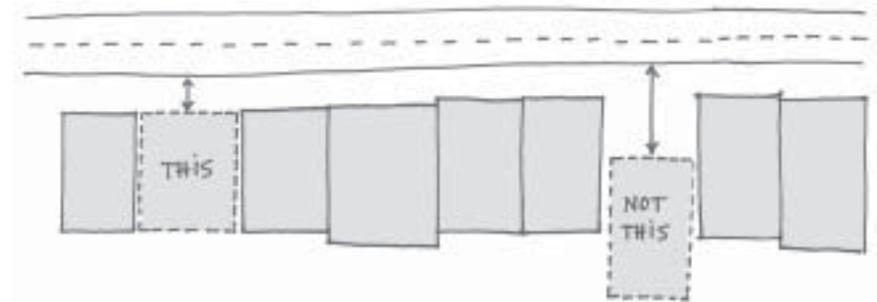
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- Match the sizes, scale and rhythm of the windows and store fronts of neighboring buildings;
- Use signage which is not overpowering.

Don't:

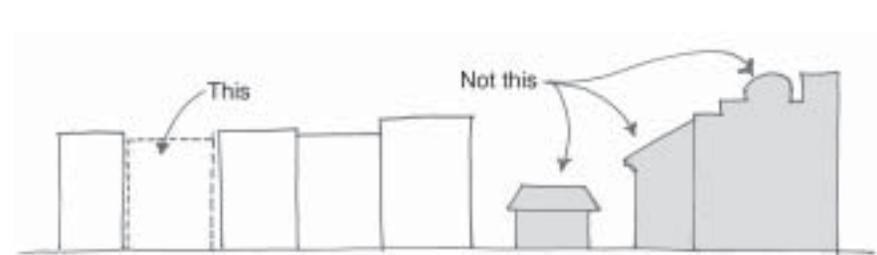
- Introduce materials which are not already found in buildings in the downtown;
- Use exotic shapes or patterns which will disrupt visual continuity;
- Try to imitate historic styles without professional assistance and thorough investigation of the scale, materials, proportions, and characteristics of that style. Some historic styles such as Colonial and Beaux Arts are not appropriate in a downtown.



Encourage similar proportions to existing buildings.



All buildings should be on the same vertical plane. Irregularities in this pattern detract from the downtown's overall cohesiveness.



Roof patterns should conform to or accentuate existing facades and roof patterns.

Storefront Design

A storefront is often the heart of a business' identity. It acts as an invitation, and therefore, its design, relationship to the pedestrian, and relationship to the street are very important. Because of this, it is often the most frequently changed component of a building's facade. Though change is positive and necessary for maintaining an image, there are some traditions that should be considered when altering a building's storefront.

The storefront, historically, was built into the facade, whereas many of today's storefronts appear to be applied as additions to the front of the building. This interrupts the historic pattern established by the openings. The following guidelines apply to storefronts:

1. Storefronts of adjacent buildings should be of similar proportions, scale and height;
2. The pattern of storefronts creates a very strong relationship between the buildings on a street and the pedestrian. Traditionally, it is appropriate to slightly recess the storefront at the sidewalk edge. A storefront that is pushed back into the building more than a few inches, however, isolates the first floor from the street;
3. Storefronts of the era when many Indiana downtowns were built were composed largely of windows with a recessed entry. This was a functional solution to allow natural light to penetrate into the building. The design also allowed for visual access from the sidewalk deep into the building giving the pedestrian a chance to view merchandise without entering the store;
4. Storefront windows usually consist of an upper band of transoms, the large display windows, and a lower base of wood, masonry or some other material;
5. Usually the door had a vision panel. Recessing the door emphasizes the entry and is a way to provide shelter for customers when going in or out. It also lessens the hazards of opening a door directly onto the sidewalk and must be done to meet codes;
6. Display windows and transoms are appropriate places for subtle painted signs. Decoration of the storefront should be carefully considered, as the design may detract the customer's attention from merchandise. Loud patterns, colors or signs will not make it easy for the customer to look through the storefront;
7. When choosing materials for your storefront, consider first those that are indigenous to the buildings along the street. They should be simple and inconspicuous so that the emphasis is on the entry and the relationship of the sidewalk to the interior is strong; and
8. Avoid using materials in nontraditional applications; variations in the overall pattern may negatively isolate the building.



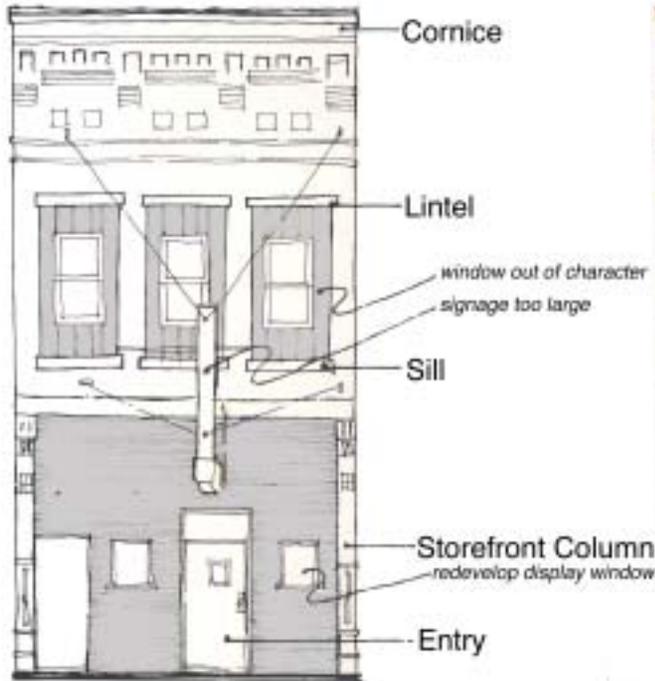
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Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

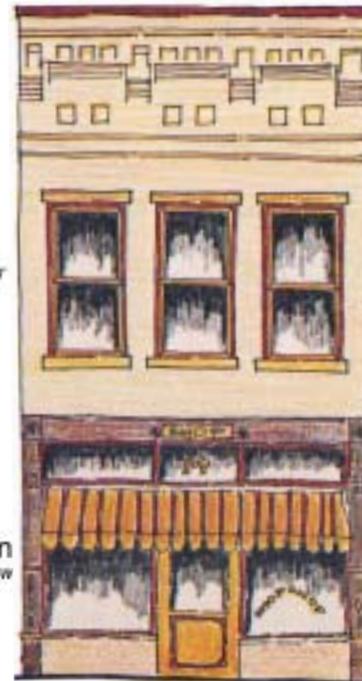
Storefront Design (continued)



Existing Modified Storefront

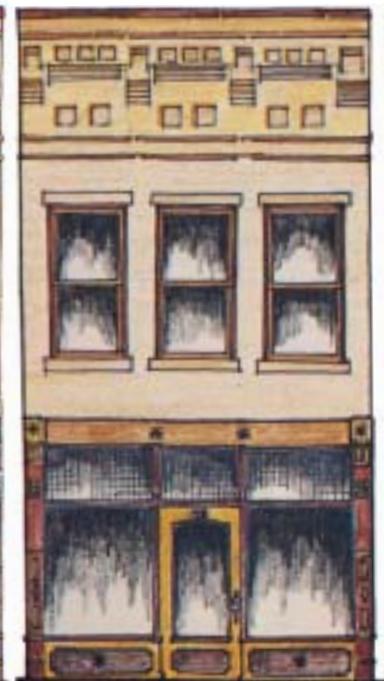


Modified Storefront - Assessment



Minor improvements:

- Paint Trim
- Add Awning
- Reglaze Windows



Significant improvements:

- Clean exterior surfaces
- Use historic kickplates
- All items from minor improvements listed above

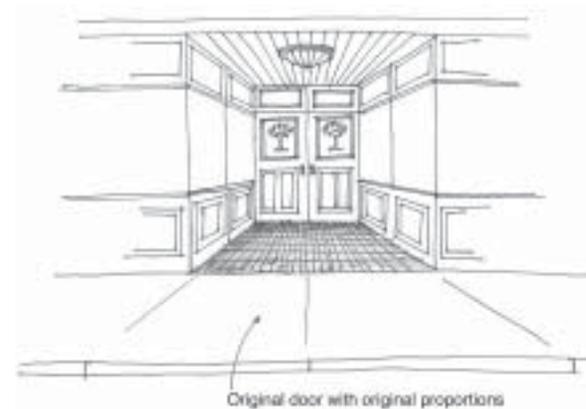
Doors & Entryways

Doors are a very important design feature of a storefront. Doors are not only for a person to walk through, they also add character and identity to the storefront. Doors serve also as an insulator from weather and can provide light.

When choosing a door consider the following:

1. Use a door which imitates the original. If the original door has been removed find a historic photo to base your decision (if possible);
2. Avoid “slab” doors. These doors not only do not fit the character of downtown buildings, they are uninviting to the customer as well;
3. Doors with windows are generally more inviting. People naturally tend to avoid entering spaces they cannot see into;
4. The door should be made of materials which look compatible to the rest of the facade;
5. Doors for external stairway entrances (secondary doors) should have less detail to avoid drawing attention to them; and
6. If you choose an aluminum and glass door, select one which has a dark finish rather than a reflective one.

Maintenance Note: All original doors in good repair should be kept. New hinges and hardware can be added to make them more operable and secure. Wood doors should be kept well sealed with a varnish or paint.



Maintain original doors and proportions.



Poorly altered entryway: door relocation, modern door with no windows.



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Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Storefront Design (continued)

Decorative Elements

Decorative elements, or details, add visual interest and character to the streetscape. These can be in the form of carved ornaments, mouldings, stained glass or painted graphic elements. Care should be taken not to introduce too much detail into a building facade as this may result in visual clutter.

The typical details found in many midwestern downtowns are brick, stone or metal:

- Brick - many building facades have incorporated decorative brickwork. If brick must be replaced at any time, it is important that the craftsmanship and pattern of the existing masonry be respected. This includes coursing, brick shape or design, and pointing.
- Stone - stone details can be very elaborate or simple accents to other elements.
- Metal - metal is used frequently in cornices and bracket details.

In restoring the details of downtown buildings, you should:

1. Uncover any original elements that are hidden by inappropriate additions or alterations. For example, cast iron columns are decorative structural elements that often are covered by storefront modernizations and are likely to still be in place; and
2. Many times, pieces of decorative elements are removed for alterations, such as modern signage; or pieces simply deteriorate. It is important to protect and preserve existing decorative elements, as reproduction of details can be costly. However, it is recommended that missing elements be replaced to match existing if possible. It is the collection of details that creates a building's character and enhances the overall streetscape.



Painting and Color

A building's color can have the single most significant effect on its appearance. Buildings painted using complimentary colors are inviting. On the other hand, buildings that have been painted with single, bland colors will have the opposite effect. Additionally, paint that is peeling or in bad condition makes a building unattractive.

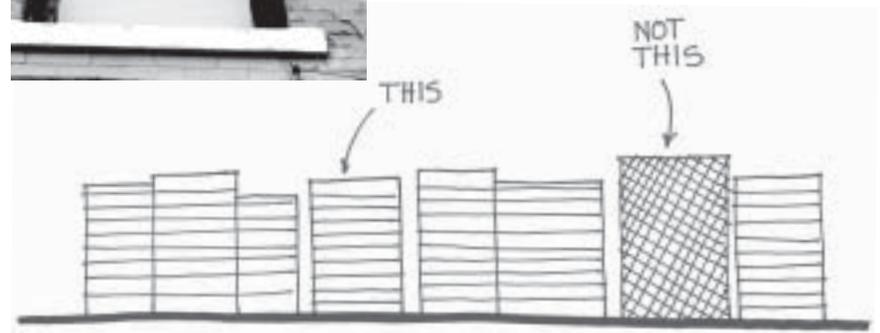
Below are some things you should consider when painting a building.

1. Look at your neighbor's properties to select a color which will not clash with its surroundings or duplicate the scheme of another building. Being a good neighbor is important in building a clear identity for downtown;
2. The weather and sun will fade and damage paints. To ensure longevity of your paint, buy top quality paint, properly prepare the surfaces, and select colors which are less likely to fade;
3. If you are not good at selecting colors that match or work well together, consider consulting with someone who can. Consulting with someone may make a considerable difference between a bland building and an exciting one;
4. Consider using colors which were used at the time the building was built. Most major brand paint companies have specific pallets for historic buildings. White paint was not used on buildings in the periods during which most midwestern downtowns were built;
5. Do not paint details or trim in dark colors;
6. Once a brick building has been painted, it generally should always be repainted verses restoration back to the original brick;
7. Repoint brick before painting (if necessary);
8. Reglaze (reputty) windows before painting;

9. Remove all peeling and loose paint; and
10. Consult a paint specialist to determine the best paint for the surface you are painting.



When painting windows or architecture details, use medium to light shades versus dark colors as seen here. Lighter colors highlight buildings details.



Be sure to look at your neighbor's properties to select a color which will not clash with its surroundings.



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Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Storefront Design (continued)

Awnings

Awnings serve numerous purposes and should be considered by building owners as a wise addition to their structure. On this page these benefits are described.

1. Protect merchandise, interiors, and furnishings from sun damage;
2. Provide shade and shelter from elements for customers and pedestrians;
3. Reduce heat loss and heat gain;
4. Help establish a pedestrian scale - encourage street activities;
5. Can be operable or fixed and are available in a variety of styles;
6. Variety of materials - canvas, plastic and vinyl. Canvas is traditional material, but requires maintenance. Vinyl is durable;
7. Provide opportunity to add color to building;
 - to decide on a color - consider colors that will contribute to variety and diversity of street;
 - if building is rich in detail, use a subtle color for awnings;
 - if building has fewer architectural details, use a bright color to enliven facade;
8. Provide an effective space for signage. Advertising on awnings is encouraged. Signage on awnings should be used primarily for identification and be limited to simple designs.
9. Awnings should be weather resistant and vandal resistant;
 - consider durability against wind damage, color fastness (resistance to sun-bleaching), retardant to deterioration caused by rain and snow;
 - certain colors are more likely to fade than others. Dark colors tend to fade faster; and
10. Can be used to “hide” inappropriate store front alterations.

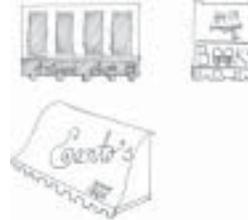
Inappropriate awnings:

In a historic downtown like Portage’s, there are several types of awnings that are considered inappropriate and out of place. They include:

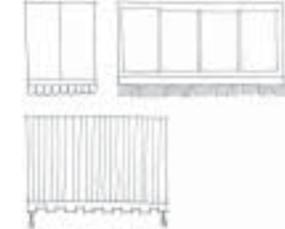
1. Metal, flat awnings on historic buildings;
2. Back-lit cloth, vinyl, or plastic awnings;
3. Permanently constructed;
4. Shake/shingle Mansard awnings.



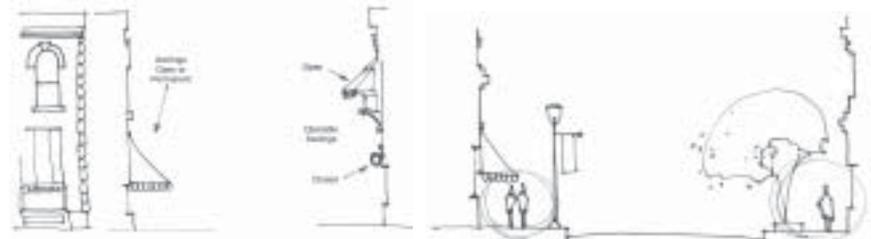
Awnings can communicate



Awnings establish a pattern of elements



Awnings create visual interest



Awnings establish pedestrian scale.

Rear and/or Side Entrances

Many businesses have benefited greatly by introducing a side or rear entrance. The advantage of a side or rear entrance is that customers, clients, owners, and employees can park behind the building, utilizing typically wasted space. Rear entrances, whether they are used frequently or not, improve the overall character of the building.

Nice rear entrances also make alleys feel safer for pedestrians who are frightened to walk in an alley. Adding a rear or side entrance will cater to the people parking in these spaces and can also increase fire safety.

The following are guidelines on how to improve or add a side or rear entrance

1. Remove all garbage and debris away from the entrance;
2. Place a small sign by the door along with an open/ closed sign;
3. Consider placing a small awning over the doorway to communicate that the door is operable and in use;
4. Windows or loading docks near the entrances should not be boarded up. This condition will indicate that the rear or side door of the building is not operable;
5. Creating a window display in windows along side the entrance will help indicate its purpose as an entrance; and
6. For reasons of security, cash registers, etc. should be located so both doors can be monitored.



Rear Facade - Before



Rear Facade - After



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Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Rear and/or Side Entrances (continued)

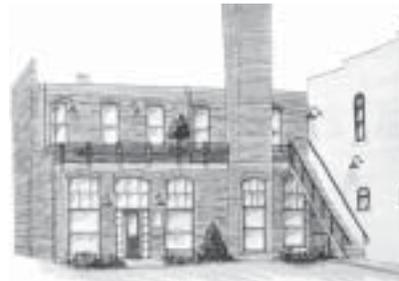
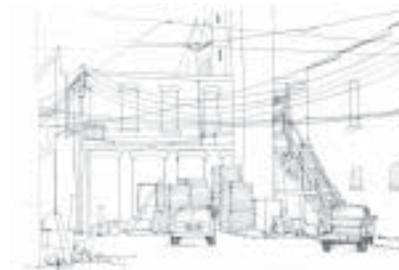


Before



After

Example of an enhanced-quality side entrance.



A typical cluttered rear facade showing minor and major enhancements

Signage

Signs are used to draw attention to a business and to help develop the identity and image of that business. In a historic downtown like Portage's, signs should be selected wisely to complement the buildings and to avoid a clustered appearance.

In general, signs in downtown Portage should follow these guidelines:

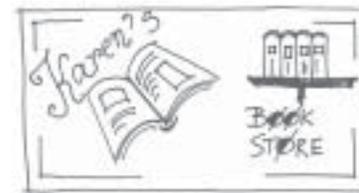
1. Use the smallest sign necessary to convey your message;
2. The sign should not dominate the facade. The shape and scale of the sign should complement the building;
3. Determine who you want to see your sign. If you want to attract pedestrians consider window signs, signs hanging from the entry, and signs above the doorway. Use awning signs and wall mounted signs to attract vehicular traffic;
4. Use materials which reflect and compliment the building materials;
5. If you use neon, it should be used carefully so as not to be overpowering;
6. Backlit plastic signs are not encouraged in the downtown;
7. Keep your message simple. Signs are generally a part of a complex, visual environment; and
8. Avoid flashy colors. These colors should be used on a highway, not in the downtown.



Awnings are effective for attracting vehicular attention.



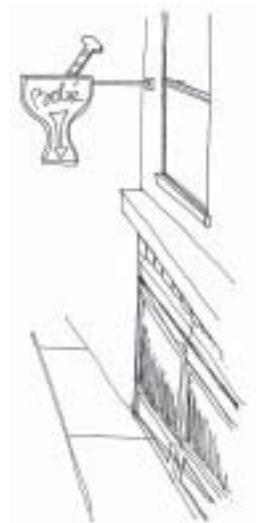
Window signs gain the attention of pedestrian traffic.



OR



Window displays and signage as effective marketing and character enhancement



Symbol sign



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Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Windows

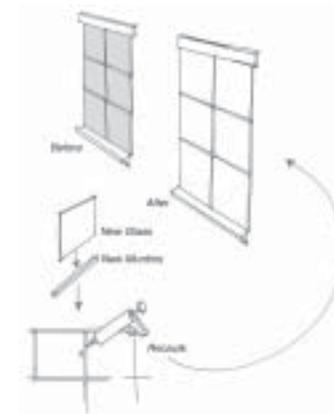
Windows are a very important design feature of any building. Windows not only let in light, they also add character and identity to the building. Windows also serve also as an insulator from weather and must be maintained.

When choosing a window consider the following:

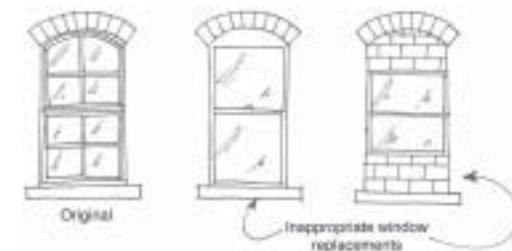
1. Use a window/glazing system which imitates the original. If the original window has been removed find a historic photo to base your decision (if possible);
 2. Avoid “stock” windows. These windows generally do not fit the character of downtown buildings, they are uninviting to the customer as well;
 3. Large picture windows facing the sidewalk are generally more inviting. People naturally tend to enter spaces they can see into;
 4. The window system should be made of materials and colors which look compatible to the rest of the facade;
 5. Windows for side and rear facades should have less detail to avoid drawing attention to them (unless they are part of an upper floor residential rehabilitation; and
 6. If you choose an aluminum or other metal glazing system, select one which has a dark finish rather than a reflective one.
- Maintenance Note: All original windows in good repair should be kept. New glass and hardware can be added to make them more weather resistant and secure. Wooden window frames should be well caulked and kept well sealed with a varnish or paint.



Window needing reglazing to maintain weather protection



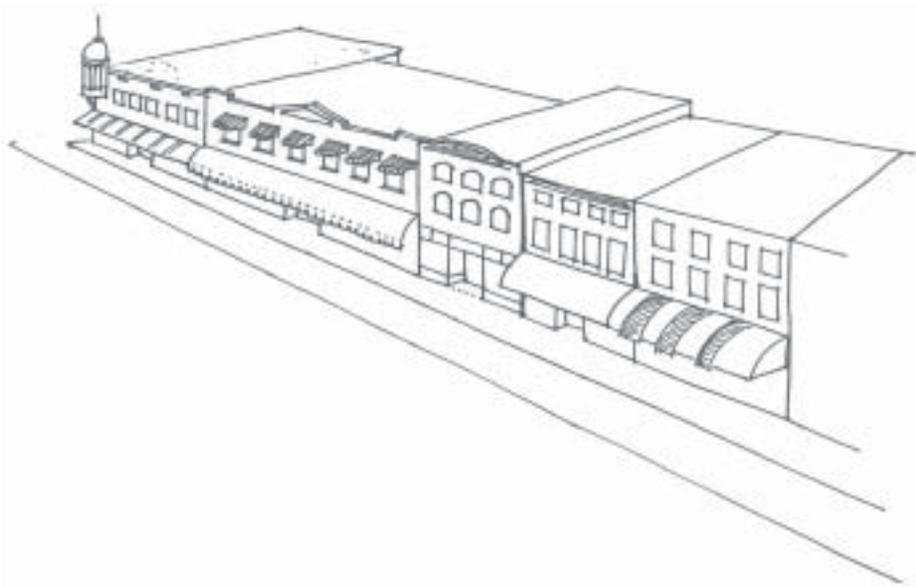
Traditional gridded windows are relatively easy to repair.



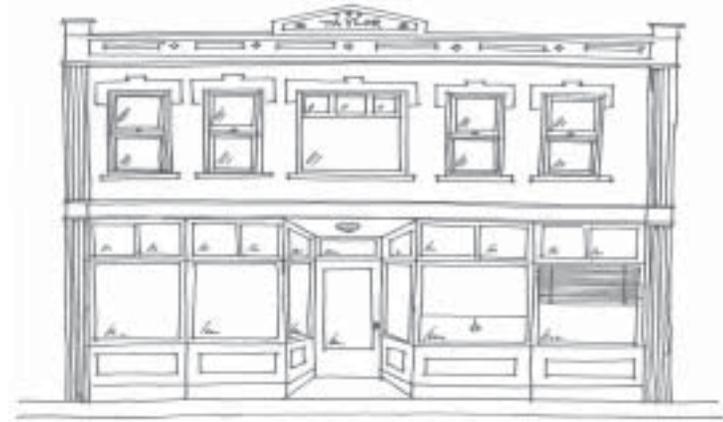
Avoid “quick fix” window replacements

Miscellaneous Issues

There are a variety of issues that lead to maintaining the character and quality of buildings, particularly in the downtown area. Most involve appropriate and regular maintenance and making changes and upgrades that are in character with the historic character of the buildings and area.



Buildings should reflect their uniqueness of function and heritage, but maintain a consistent character and quality



Facades with a lot of detail are more visually appealing and invite customers



Building enclosures for dumpsters and other utility features can significantly improve the building's appearance and reduce "visits" by unwanted pests



Wall "cutouts" are not only unattractive, but can also lead to significant weather related damage



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Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Masonry Maintenance

It is very important to maintain a building's masonry skin, as neglect can lead to accelerated deterioration of the structure resulting in very costly damage. Locating problems with masonry does not require a trained eye: the most serious problems include mortar deterioration and brick decay. However, the origin of the problem and its proper remedies may require the opinion of a professional. Often damage to mortar or to masonry units is caused by water infiltration. It is imperative that masonry be properly drained, including adequate flashing and weeps. Building owners should inspect bricks and mortar for signs of water infiltration. If the mortar has become soft it will allow water to seep into the brick. After this occurs, the protective outer covering of the brick will deteriorate, requiring that the brick be replaced, at risk of compromising the structural integrity of the wall.

When making repairs to deteriorated masonry:

1. Care should be taken to avoid obvious patching. The color, configuration, size of mortar joints and coursing of the existing masonry should be matched as closely as possible. Repointing brick is often all that is required, but the same attention should be given to duplicating the old mortar strength, composition, color and texture. After patching or repointing it is recommended that surface treatments to repel water infiltration be applied.
2. If a masonry facade has historically been painted, the paint should not be removed from the masonry, nor should the type or color of the paint be radically changed. The paint acts as a protectant for the masonry and removing it may cause damage to the brick.
3. Cleaning masonry is only recommended when necessary to halt deterioration to the brick or to remove heavy soiling. If masonry is painted, and is still in good condition, cleaning is acceptable. If masonry is dirty, microorganisms can multiply on the masonry, damaging it over time. The decision to clean masonry is not easy, so seeking advice is recommended.

4. The process of cleaning is very technical and requires a professional. Many methods are available, but not all are appropriate for all masonry. The wrong method can accelerate deterioration. Some appropriate methods available include simple water and detergent cleaning and chemical cleaning.
5. Sandblasting to remove soil and paint from masonry is highly discouraged and unacceptable, as it considerably damages the masonry and mortar. If a cleaning will be done, take care in selecting a contractor with a good reputation. Require that a test patch be executed and allowed to weather for several months before commencing with the project. Consider the effect that cleaning may have in areas that have been patched.



Tuck point brick walls when water infiltration is occurring or pockets in the mortar have formed (see graphic above). Tuck pointing is simply reapplying mortar to the joints between bricks, as pictured below.



Deteriorated brick can not only be unattractive, it can be an indicator of structural problems and should be repaired as soon as possible

Getting It Done

There are several steps in a community beautification/enhancement program.

1. Assess the physical condition of the buildings

It is important to do a thorough physical assessment of the buildings to determine if they are structurally sound and up to current code. Issues such as roof integrity (does it leak), tuck pointing of masonry, HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems being up to code, broken or leaking windows, etc. **must** be addressed first. While these things may not be exciting, if the building isn't sound, no amount of cosmetic improvement will help.

2. Establish a coordinated effort to implement improvements

Through a coordinated effort there is a greater chance that things will get accomplished and the individual property owners and businesses can benefit from grants, programs, etc. that are not available to individuals or individual property owners.

- One way to help local property owners is through *collective purchasing* types of arrangements. If it is determined that several buildings need repair/maintenance/etc. - negotiate with a **local** contractor to get a *quantity* discount on services. Many contractors will offer *deals* if they have the opportunity to do multiple projects in one area. This can be done with more cosmetic treatments as well (painting, awnings, etc.).



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Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Getting It Done (continued)

This would be an important opportunity for the community to provide assistance through a grant program or a revolving loan program.

- It is also important that if there is an improvement/enhancement program put in place that the property owners/businesses are **not** penalized for making those improvements. Many communities have *killed* enhancement projects by reassessing properties and levying higher taxes on the improvements. Simply - don't. If property owners and businesses participate in the coordinated program you should award them a tax abatement on the improvement for 3 years.
- An alternative approach is to establish a *Tax Increment Financing* (TIF) program that would provide public support for infrastructure improvements to be *paid back* through increased tax revenues.
- Portage should also consider the establishment of a *Portage Community Foundation* to accept and distribute donated funds, services and materials and administer grants is also a consideration worth making. This organization can work in association with similar organizations such as the Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation or the Columbiana County Foundation.
- The *Community Reinvestment Act* provision of the banking statutes requires local banking institutions to reinvest moneys locally. This is an opportunity not often explored by local banks or economic development groups. It could serve as the seed for a revolving loan pool or similar program.

- There are numerous grants available, but as a community you are encouraged to weigh the pros and cons of each carefully. Many grants, especially governmental grants have many conditions associated with them that may make them more costly than local funding options.

3. Implement

The bottom line is that there are many opportunities to getting these projects done. None of them are radically different or unusual. The recommendations made in this report are no more expensive than many "quick fix" improvements. It's mostly a determination that it needs to be done and that there is a benefit from a coordinated effort.

And don't underestimate the power of volunteers.

The steps outlined here are only preliminary suggestions. They will require a coordinated effort of the property owners and the town council (as well as several state agencies) to determine which approach is best for Portage. As suggested before The Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation, The Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Bureau of Downtown Development, The Wisconsin Main Street Program (associated with the Wisconsin Department of Commerce) and other similar groups can provide invaluable technical assistance in getting these programs underway.

The Chamber of Commerce or the Portage Business Improvement District would probably be the most logical and effective groups to implement beautification and enhancement standards.

The guidelines for such a program are outlined below:

The Process:

1. Establish a Portage Beautification Committee as a formal community organization or a committee under the jurisdiction of the Chamber of Commerce or Business Improvement District. The membership of the committee should be a broad cross-section of community stakeholders.

The following rules are to apply to the Portage Beautification Committee:

- No member shall be pursuing a grant award for their own property;
 - All members shall score the grant applications independently and objectively; and
 - No member shall directly assist the applicants in applying for the grants.
2. Upon developing the Portage Beautification Committee a property owner meeting shall be held to:
 - Make proper notification of the grant program and building owner meeting;
 - Distribute the applications;
 - Discuss the Building and Design Guidelines;

- Announce the deadline for grant applications;
 - Make clear the scoring criteria for the grants; and
 - Answer questions
3. All interested building owners must deliver their application to the building inspector/code enforcement offices by a specified date. No extensions, or exceptions will be awarded.
[note: it is recommended that this program be renewed on an annual basis]
 4. The Portage Beautification Committee will score grant applications according to the published Scoring Criteria.
 5. Announcements of grant awards will be made by a date specified by the committee.
 6. A press release announcing the grant recipients should be prepared for publishing in the next edition of the newspaper.
 7. Work/Construction can begin immediately upon award.
 8. All work must be completed by a specified Construction Deadline.
 9. The Portage Beautification Committee shall meet within 6 months to assess project progress. All grant projects will be reviewed for their adherence to the grant rules, expediency of the process and for meeting the project goals.
 10. The Portage Beautification Committee shall meet shortly after the construction deadline to prepare a Program Report to the City Council. This report shall address the strengths and weaknesses of the grant program and make a recommendation for continuing, altering, or eliminating the program.



The Portage Community Charrette

Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

The Grant Application Guidelines:

The following are the Grant Application Guidelines which determine the eligibility and parameters for each applicant.

1. The maximum grant award is two thousand dollars (\$2,000);
2. The grant will match a dollar for every dollar invested by the owner up to the maximum allowable grant award of \$2,000. All additional costs associated with the improvements are the responsibility of the owner;
3. Only buildings in the defined district are eligible for the grant program;
4. All privately-owned buildings in the specified district are eligible for a grant. Owners of two or more buildings in the district are eligible for a grant for each building;
5. Decisions by the Portage Beautification Committee are final;
6. All improvements, as described in the grant application, must be completed within twelve (12) months from the award date, or be subject to deobligation by the Portage Beautification Committee. Project extensions and/or modifications may be awarded with the approval of a majority of the Portage Beautification Committee;
7. If work has not begun by the specified date, a report must be submitted to the Portage Beautification Committee describing the reasons for the delay, and offering a revised time schedule for completion. The Portage Beautification Committee may approve an extension or revoke the grant at that time;
8. A change to the scope of the project outlined in the grant application must be presented to the Portage Beautification Committee for approval. If the change is substantial, a decision will be made by the Portage Beautification Committee to deobligate the grant or allowed to continue;
9. Any deobligated grant project is eligible to reapply for another grant, if or when, additional funds are available;
10. Grant funds awarded to a building owner will be paid to the owner upon substantial completion of the project, at the discretion of the Portage Beautification Committee. The grants will be used to reimburse expenses incurred to complete the project. Material, consultant fees, and labor costs qualify for reimbursement;
11. Proof of all costs, fees and labor must be submitted to the Portage Beautification Committee prior to grant award disbursement; and
12. "Sweat Equity" or donations will not count as matching funds.

Scoring Criteria for the Community Improvement Grants:

The following criteria will be used to score all grant applications. The maximum score is 100 points.

1. Amount of matching funds (20 point maximum). The minimum amount for matching funds is one dollar per every grant dollar. If the matching amount exceeds the minimum amount, additional points will be awarded. The below chart describes the scoring for matching fund amounts.

Minimum match (\$1 match per \$1 grant): 10 points
Exceeds \$2 match per \$1 grant: 15 points
Exceeds \$3 match per \$1 grant: 20 points
2. Readiness to proceed (15 point maximum): Projects that demonstrate that they can be started immediately will be awarded more points than projects that cannot start for several months. Projects that are not ready to proceed have a higher likelihood of not being completed within the twelve (12) month deadline. Furthermore, a goal of this program is to make an impact on the existing conditions as soon as possible. If the improvements can be started and completed within a short time frame, a higher point scoring will be awarded. Projects that are ready to proceed immediately will be awarded the maximum points. Projects that have considerable steps to accomplish prior to being ready to proceed will be awarded less than the maximum.
3. Demonstration of need (15 point maximum): Additional points will be awarded to building owners who demonstrate a need for the grant due to financial constraints, hardship, or due to emergency. Projects that can be afforded by the owner and that are not in an emergency situation will not score as high.
4. Degree to which the project follows the *Portage Beautification and Design Guidelines* (20 point maximum): *Portage Beautification and Design Guidelines* have been developed to steer building improvement decisions, to ensure consistency throughout the community, and to ensure quality improvements. These guidelines should be followed where applicable. The degree to which the *Portage Beautification and Design Guidelines* are followed will determine the scoring in this category. Projects which disregard the Building and Design Guidelines shall receive few or no points in this category.
5. Discretionary scoring (30 point maximum). The discretionary score will be determined using the following criteria: (A) existing condition of building - buildings which are in deteriorated condition, or are in disrepair will score higher, (B) impact to the overall structure, (C) impact to the overall downtown, (D) impact to the current business or operation in the building, (D) occupancy of building - buildings which are vacant will take priority, and (E) amount of grant request.



The Portage Community Charrette

Community Beautification and Development Guidelines

Downtown Improvement Grant Application Portage, Wisconsin

Name of owner: _____
Address of building: _____
Mailing address of owner: _____

Need for grant funds: _____

General description of proposed project: _____

How does this project meet the *Portage Beautification and Design Guidelines*?:

Total cost of improvement: _____
Total grant amount being requested: _____

How will this project improve the overall condition of the building, tenant(s) and the downtown?: _____

Time frame of project (include start date, benchmarks in the process, and completion date): _____

