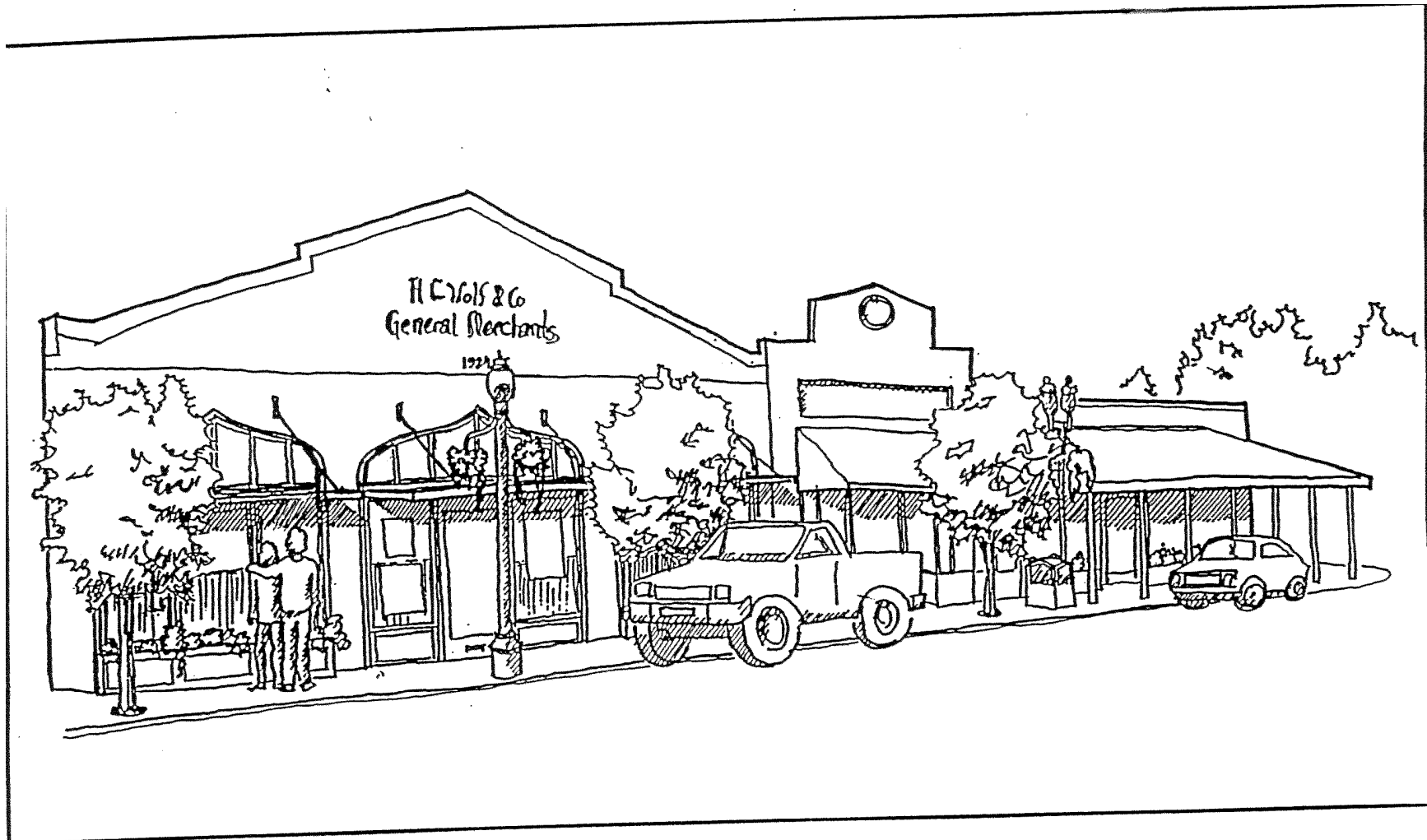


Yelm Vision Plan



January 5, 1995

Acknowledgments

YELM VISION COMMITTEE

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NISQUALLY VALLEY NEWS

Fiona Reeves

MAKERS ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN

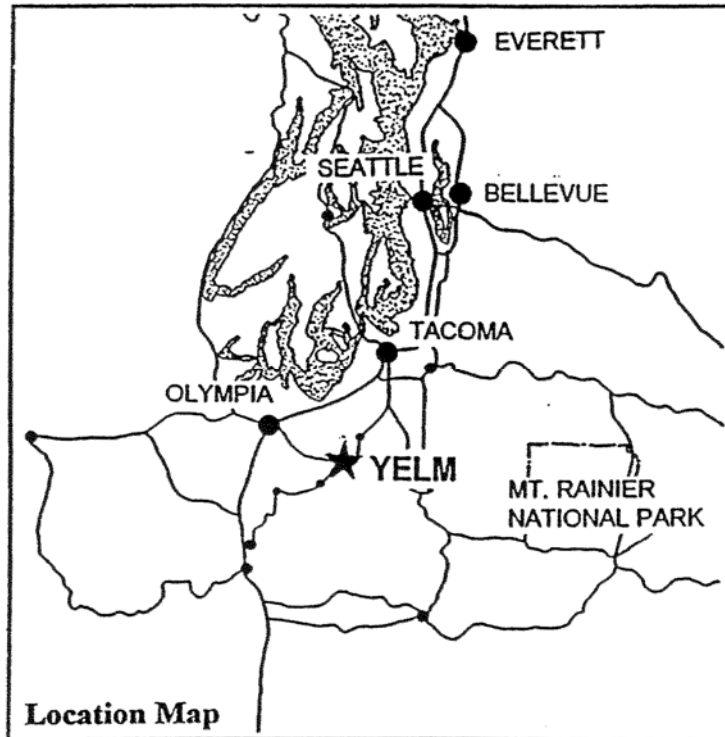
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I. Introduction

Background



Yelm is located in the midst of a 600-acre prairie in the Nisqually River valley. To the east looms Mount Rainier. Olympia and Tacoma are within about a half-hour drive to the west and north, respectively.

The city's site on a fertile prairie, with close proximity to an important waterway, and at the cross roads of major trails had long made it a settling place of Native Americans. The north-south trail, which was improved to a wagon road in 1846, is today's SR 507. Today's main axis through Yelm, SR 510, lies along the path of an east-west trail that may have led to a Cascade Mountain crossing at Naches Pass.

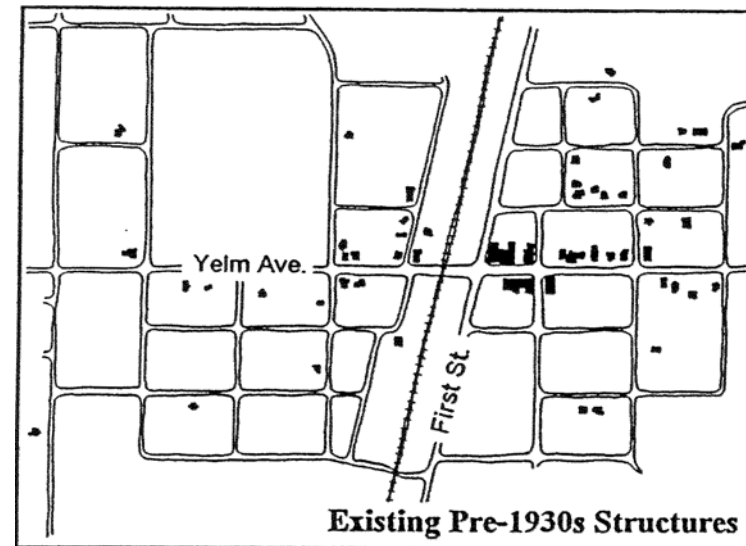
The first European settlers came to the area as part of the British Puget Sound Agricultural Company, a sheep raising operation that supported the Hudson Bay Company. In the mid 1800s, agreement between the United States and England ceded the area to the Americans. The prairie south of the Nisqually River was surveyed and opened to homesteading and purchase. One still sees evidence of governmental land platting in the north-south/east-west agricultural grid.

The birth of Yelm as a business community came in 1873 when Northern Pacific Railroad established a transcontinental line from Vancouver to Portland along the original north-south trail. Shortly thereafter, two businesses were established on Yelm Avenue, one on either side of the railroad tracks. By the 1880's, the town had expanded along Yelm Avenue and was the commercial center of the prairie, with an economy based on dairy farming, grain, and cattle. Evidence of this stage of the town's development can still be seen in The Newcomer House and Hotel Yelm.

The 20th century brought the emergence of the wood products industry, population growth, and devastating fires. The third and worst of these fires destroyed most of the business district in May 1924. This event catalyzed the city's incorporation in order to construct a water system to provide fire protection.

The 1930s depression slowed development until post-World War II, when the current boundaries of the central business district were established. By the late 1940s, the city's population had reached 500 persons. Its economy was dominated by agriculture until the 1950s and 1960s, when the small farms began to give way to residential development. During the 1970s, the city doubled its residential population. It has since evolved into a bedroom community to Olympia and Tacoma, with many residents commuting to work in those cities.

Yelm now faces the challenge of accommodating substantial additional residential growth and wishes to regain its status as the area's primary commercial center. The Washington State Growth Management Act of 1990 requires that each city in highly populated counties of Washington plan for future growth. The citizens of Yelm have taken an active roll in their comprehensive planning. Channeled properly, growth can be positive, bring jobs, and strengthen the community. However, if growth is allowed to occur unchecked and without careful planning, the small-town, neighborly qualities, and natural beauty of the city may be destroyed. Therefore, the Vision Committee has been working to upgrade the downtown, create a real heart for the community, and direct future growth of the city.

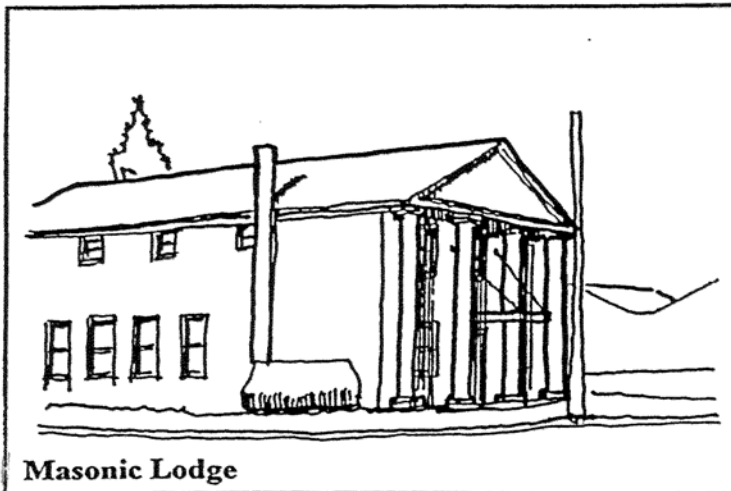


Purpose

The Committee's intent is to improve the commercial area's economic viability and convenience , as well as its appearance. The project's purposes are to:

1. Improve the economic vitality of the city's commercial areas by focusing on three economic sectors; industry, retail and commercial, and tourism.
2. Build community pride and involvement.
3. Enhance Yelm's identity with a directed sense of character, downtown improvements, and coordinated improvement efforts.
4. Improve vehicular circulation.
5. Promote efficient and high quality land use.

Process



The Committee's work will result in the following products:

1. A vision for downtown Yelm, showing how the city center/commercial area can grow and evolve to become a vibrant regional center.
2. Guidelines to direct new development to contribute to the city's future, economically and aesthetically. Guidelines can be designed to be responsive to the community's changing needs and can be upgraded over time.
3. Recommendations for public improvements to improve the quality of life for all Yelm residents.
4. An implementation strategy to which the City, citizens, and business community can adhere in upgrading the city center.

The visioning process began in early 1994, when members of the Yelm Chamber of Commerce's "Make Yelm Attractive Committee" initiated the idea of a visioning process for the city. Their proposal was presented to the Chamber and received overwhelming support. The Vision Committee, funded by the Chamber through a fund-raising drive, grew out of this process.

In April 1994 the committee chose the firm MAKERS architecture and urban design to assist in the visioning process and development of design guidelines to help direct the city's growth. MAKERS' process has included a number of community workshops to determine residents' wishes for their town. The workshops' contents are outlined on the next page:

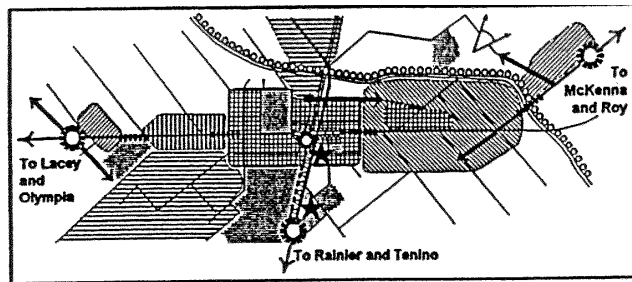
- Workshop #1, on July 9, 1994, began with a short slide presentation by the consultant team outlining the visioning process. It was followed by a brainstorming session to identify key issues affecting Yelm and goals for the project. The afternoon session involved conducting a visual preference survey to determine the community's preferred design characteristics (e.g. streetscapes, site development, landscaping, etc.). Finally, the workshop participants played "urban designer" and sketched their visions for Yelm on base maps of the city. The ideas generated in Workshop #1 were used to develop the materials for the next community workshop.
- Workshop #2, on August 13, 1994, reviewed the results of the first workshop and, with the help of "the slide show from hell," introduced proposals for urban design improvements and features for Yelm. These proposals (e.g., entry gateway features, street tree ideas, creation of distinct districts, etc.) were based on ideas generated at the first workshop and were illustrated on base maps of the city. In groups, the workshop participants evaluated each design alternative on a scale of one to five and gave specific comments. The input from Workshop #2 was consolidated into the Vision Plan proposal.
- The task of the third workshop, on November 1, 1994, was to review and prioritize the proposed elements of the Vision Plan. The workshop was preceded by an insert in the Nisqually Valley News informing area residents of the elements in the plan. The plan was refined, on the basis of public comment at the meeting, and compiled into this report.





Hotel Yelm

MAKERS subsequently will prepare a poster illustrating how the plan's many pieces fit into a comprehensive redevelopment strategy. Concurrently, the team will prepare design guidelines to direct new development to meet both public and private objectives. The final product will be incorporated into Yelm's Comprehensive Plan and will include an implementation program with a number of short and long-term tasks for upgrading Yelm's town center. The Vision Plan for Yelm recommends three types of town improvements:

Executive Summary



-  Each tone represents a specialized design district
-  Park/open space
-  Gateway
-  Transitional landscaping
-  Landscaped connector
-  Old Town pedestrian amenities
-  Stream banks and flood plain
-  Special development opportunities

- Guidelines to direct the quality of the city's commercial districts,
- Specific design elements and capital improvements, and
- The enhancement of several design characteristics that give Yelm its unique prairie identity.

The creation of commercial sub-districts, each with a defined character, will help Yelm avoid the pitfall of becoming a nondescript, linear "strip mall." The districts respond to existing zoning in Yelm. Each is intended to be experienced as a unique part of the greater town. The main retail districts are designed to have pedestrian friendly focal points and multiple access routes from other town districts.

The design elements are public projects to be undertaken to help define specific places in the town. Many are streetscape improvements that will help reinforce the identity of each district. Others involve creation of gateways to announce and invite entry to the town.

Defining and reinforcing Yelm's town character will help residents retain town attributes as the city grows. New development should respect and add to the town character by incorporating some of the materials, views, and landscape qualities that typify Yelm's setting.

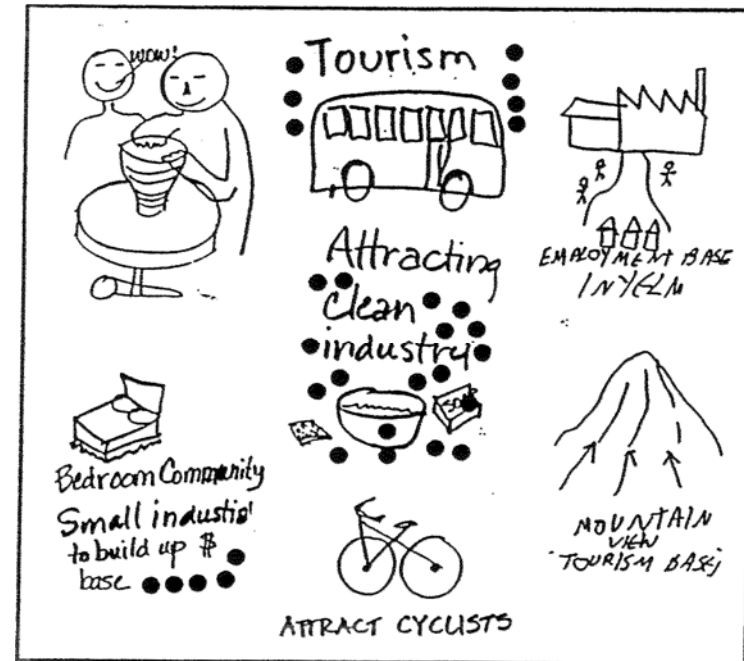
II. Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies were formulated during the Yelm Vision Plan process. Citizen participants brainstormed their ideas and values at a workshop on May 10, 1994. The results were organized into goals (numbered headings) and supporting policies (lettered headings). Bulleted items listed under a policy are ideas that were supported at the vision workshop. These goals and policies will guide the implementation of the project elements described in Section IV and serve as the policy basis for integrating the Vision Plan with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

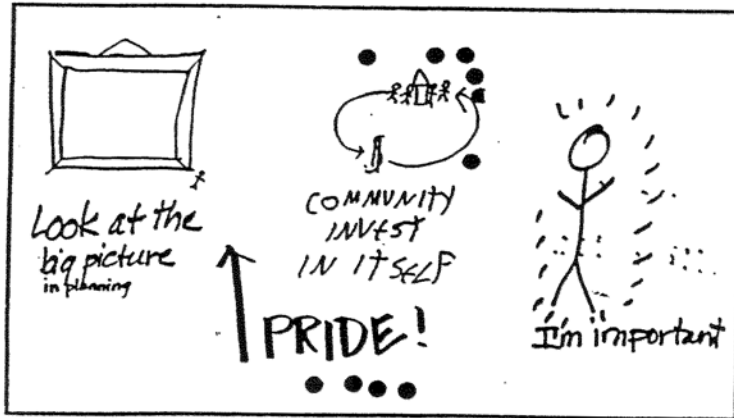
Goal 1

Create a healthy economic base. Focus on three economic sectors to support the local economy by creating opportunities for clean industry, tourism, and retail services. These three sectors can become a "three legged stool" to support the town's vitality.

- a. Attract clean industry by providing large parcels suitable for development and supporting infrastructure. Seek out potential businesses to locate in Yelm's industrial areas.
- b. Develop retail and commercial services to meet the needs of Yelm's growing population. Focus new commercial services in existing commercial areas.
- c. Attract tourism to Yelm by emphasizing Yelm's attractions: agricultural setting, Mount Rainier views, location at the head of the proposed regional railway right-of-way trail, fishing, hiking, bicycling horseback riding, and day-trip proximity to Mount Rainier, ocean, and theme parks.



Goal 2



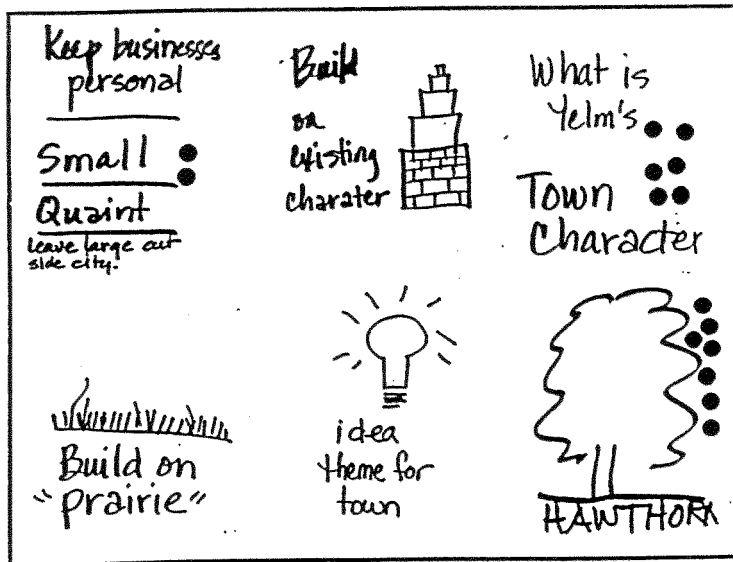
Build community pride and involvement.

- Community should invest in itself to reap benefits.
- Improve conditions of existing town (i.e. fix older buildings, provide better landscaping and weed control, provide better upkeep of town).
- Educate public and businesses in the planning process.
- Encourage better coordination between public and private interests.
- Strengthen and connect neighborhoods.
- Provide settings for community activities and services.

Upgrade Yelm's image and identity.

- Create special places (districts) and features.
- Implement high quality public improvements.
- Keep pedestrian-orientation, small town scale.
- Identify building design qualities (i.e. cobblestones, prairie landscaping, etc.).
- Connect commercial areas to overall town.
- Determine a "town character" for Yelm that builds on the following ideas:
 - Agricultural climate/setting.
 - Views of Mount Rainier and "prairie" landscape.
 - "Connection to nature" idea.
 - Hawthorn tree boulevards.
 - Cobblestones as a local identifiable building material.

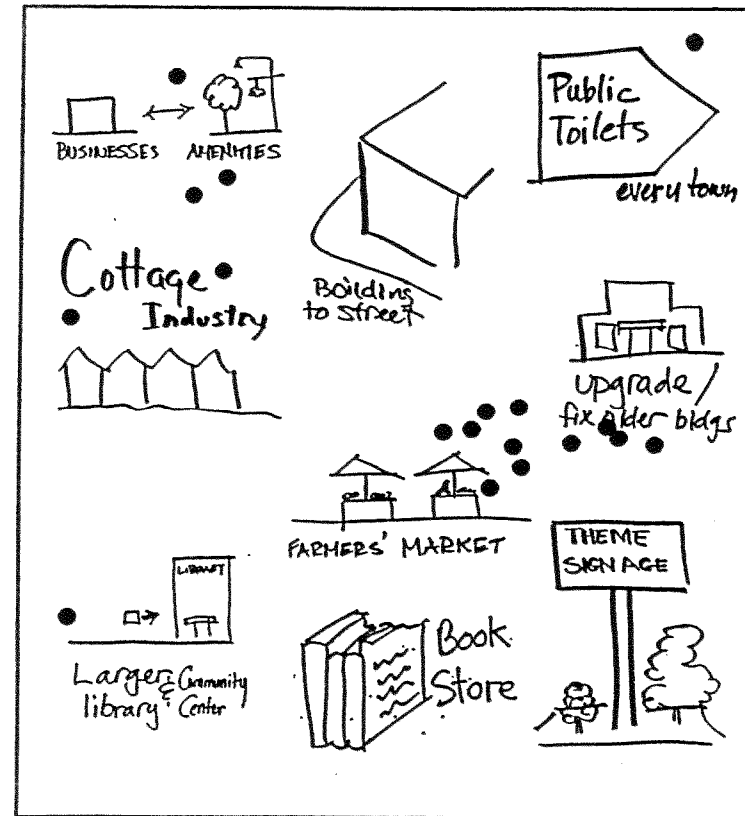
Goal 3



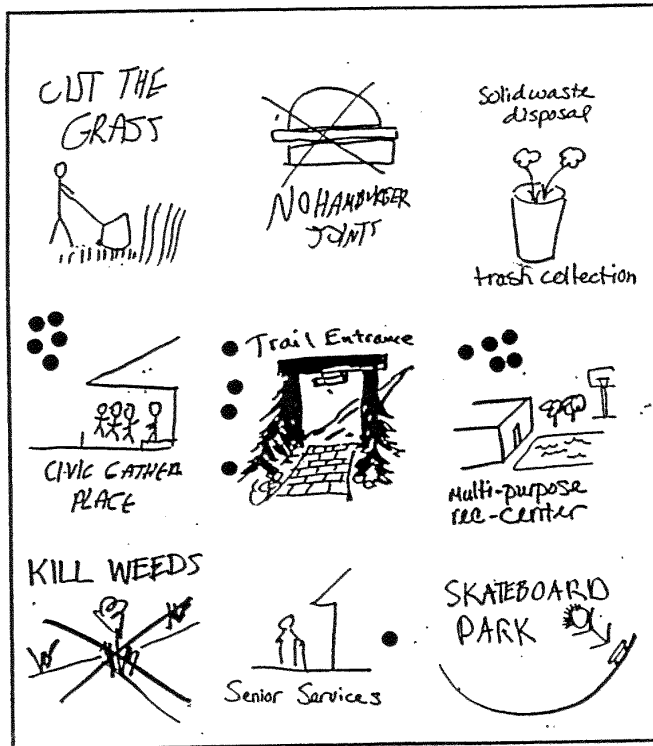
Improve Yelm's historic downtown (roughly between Solberg St. NW/SW, Stevens Ave. NE/NW, 4th St. NE/SE and Mosman Ave. SW/SE).

Goal 4

- a. Provide more street amenities and pedestrian-oriented businesses, such as open-air restaurants.
- b. Locate buildings directly on street. (No off-street parking in front.)
- c. Provide mix of large and small businesses.
- d. Keep downtown businesses' quaint and personal character.
- e. Define boundaries of the Central Business District vs. newer development along Yelm Avenue.
- f. Attract more diverse businesses to the downtown.
- g. Initiate downtown streetscape improvements.
- h. Institute a program of loan assistance to upgrade/fix older buildings.
- i. Promote cottage industries where citizens can work and live in the same structure.
- j. Utilize transit-based improvements to upgrade the district and provide an alternative to the automobile.
- k. Locate at least some of the Cty's facilities (e.g. library, community center) in the downtown.
- l. Provide clean, safe public restrooms (shared between businesses).



Goal 5



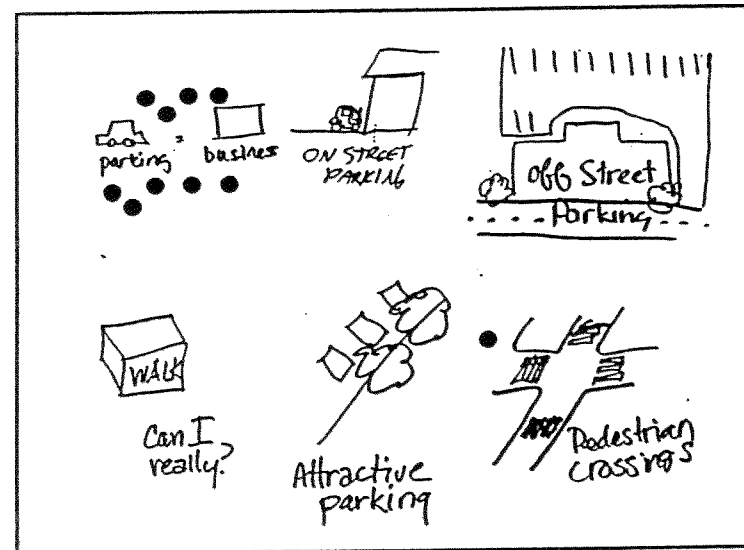
Undertake town-wide improvements.

- a. Perform physical improvements, such as:
 - Upgrade/fix older buildings.
 - Minimize impact of unsightly properties and objects by screening.
 - Improve pedestrian crossings on Yelm Avenue.
 - Screen dumpsters.
 - Improve landscaping quality by cutting grass and controlling weeds.
- b. Regulate design character and location of fast-food restaurants.
- c. Avoid use of cyclone fencing.
- d. Provide more services and public facilities.
 - Provide better community services (i.e. larger community center, larger library, and hospital).
 - Provide better senior services (i.e. housing, parking, and senior center).
- e. Improve solid waste disposal.
- f. Develop parks and public open space.
 - Create a civic gathering place.
 - Develop railroad tracks right-of-way into regional hiking, bicycling, and horseback riding trail.
 - Create multi-purpose recreation center with pool and playing fields.
 - Create more city parks (i.e. skateboard park or Mill Pond park).
- g. Improve signage.
 - Provide discreet directional signage.
 - Encourage pedestrian-oriented signs with a consistent character.
 - Allow for eccentric signs in some areas.
 - Pursue City's sign ordinance.

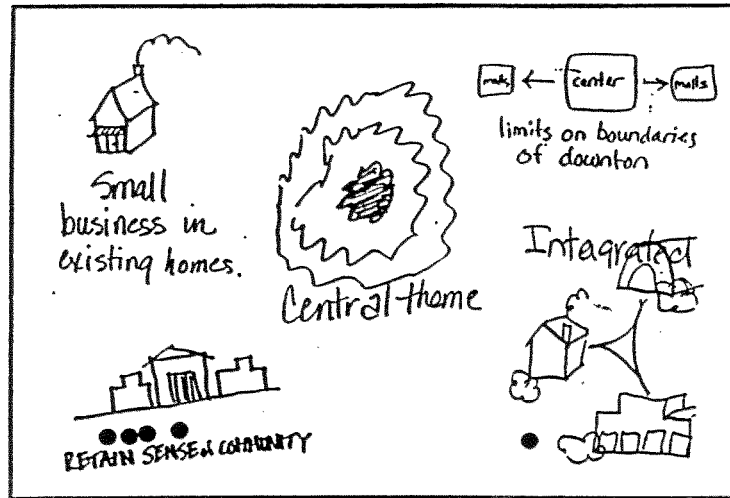
Improve transportation circulation in a way that is appropriate to Yelm's character and needs.

Goal 6

- a. Construct a connector system of arterials to parallel Yelm Avenue (see city Transportation Plan).
- b. Extend Stevens Avenue NE to the east.
- c. Keep traffic-oriented improvements on Yelm Avenue to the minimum necessary to move traffic efficiently.
- d. On Yelm Avenue, retain on-street parking and construct safety medians in center lane where possible. Retain pedestrian-oriented character with wide sidewalks, street landscaping, and amenities.
- e. Add sidewalks when constructing or upgrading streets.
- f. Construct a network of bicycle/pedestrian pathways.
- g. New multi-lot development should feature a connected network of streets integrated into the City's existing street system so that there are multiple access routes through the development tract.
- h. Alleys are encouraged in residential areas.
- i. On-street parking is recommended in the city center.
- j. Shared parking, managed by two or more businesses, and joint-use parking between non-competing uses (e.g. the same parking might be used for office workers during the week and by shoppers during the weekend) are encouraged. The City should pursue a joint public/private parking management strategy in the downtown.
- k. The City should pursue public transit service improvements as a component of Yelm's transportation system. New development should provide good access to new and potential transit stops. Public transit planning should be integrated into large development proposals and public facilities.



Goal 7



Promote efficient and high-quality use of commercial land.

- Restrict commercial development to those lands already zoned for commercial land use.
- Encourage the formation of informal sub-districts within Yelm's commercial areas through the use of design guidelines. Each sub-district should feature a mix of compatible uses with an efficient circulation/parking system and an identifiable image.
- Encourage proximity, compatibility, and connectivity between residential and commercial uses.

III. Strategic Redevelopment Concept

The urban design concept map on Page 14 identifies principal elements and features of the Vision Plan. At first glance, the plan appears to be a list of loosely related elements. These elements are, however, all linked to the project's goals by a unifying concept. The concept includes the three main components described below:

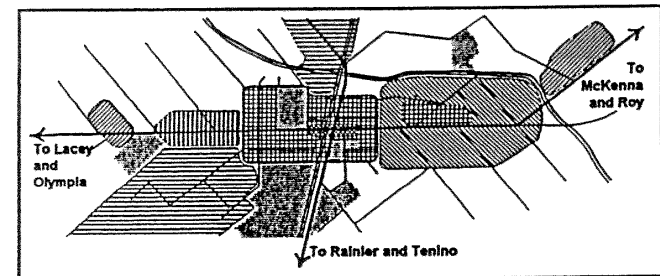
Create a set of specialized commercial districts that provide attractive settings for a broad spectrum of business activities.

Since one of the strategic goals is to provide a setting for:

- a) retail businesses serving local citizens;
- b) clean job-creating industries; and
- c) visitors-related (tourist) businesses;

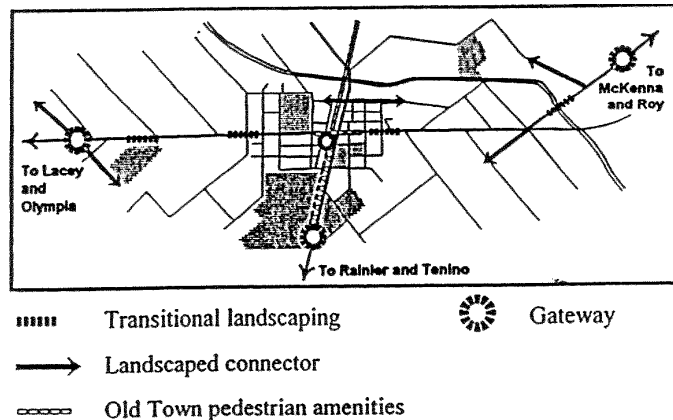
a critical strategy is to apply specific guidelines that govern distinct areas to attract appropriate compatible uses. The urban design concept map shows these different districts as shaded "bubbles." Each district would allow the full spectrum of uses as defined by zoning (Zoning will *not* be changed.) but will also feature guidelines to encourage specific activities and take advantage of special opportunities. For example, the "village retail" district will create an attractive pedestrian-oriented retail center to serve new residents in the southwest annexation (as well as providing a unique shopping experience in the city). The downtown district targets visitors' service businesses through historic preservation, street improvements, and by encouraging small cottage industries in existing structures. In this way, the distinct commercial areas will compete less with each other and will appeal to a broader spectrum of businesses searching for a development site in the vicinity.

Commercial Districts



Each tone represents a specialized design district
Park/open space

Public Improvements



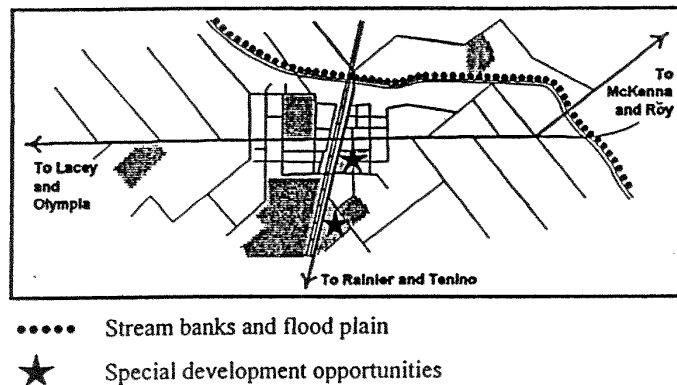
Coordinate public improvements to enhance business activity and community livability.

The map also identifies recommended street improvements and public features. Part of the purpose of Workshop #3 was to set priorities for funding and constructing these elements.

While these elements will undoubtedly make Yelm a “nicer,” more attractive town, they also have strategic development value. For example, the gateway improvements at the new bicycle trail to Tenino will encourage the thousands of cyclists using the trail to enter the town and use its services. Also, recommended street improvements are specifically tailored to enhance adjacent land uses.

Consider special public/private development opportunities.

Public/Private Development

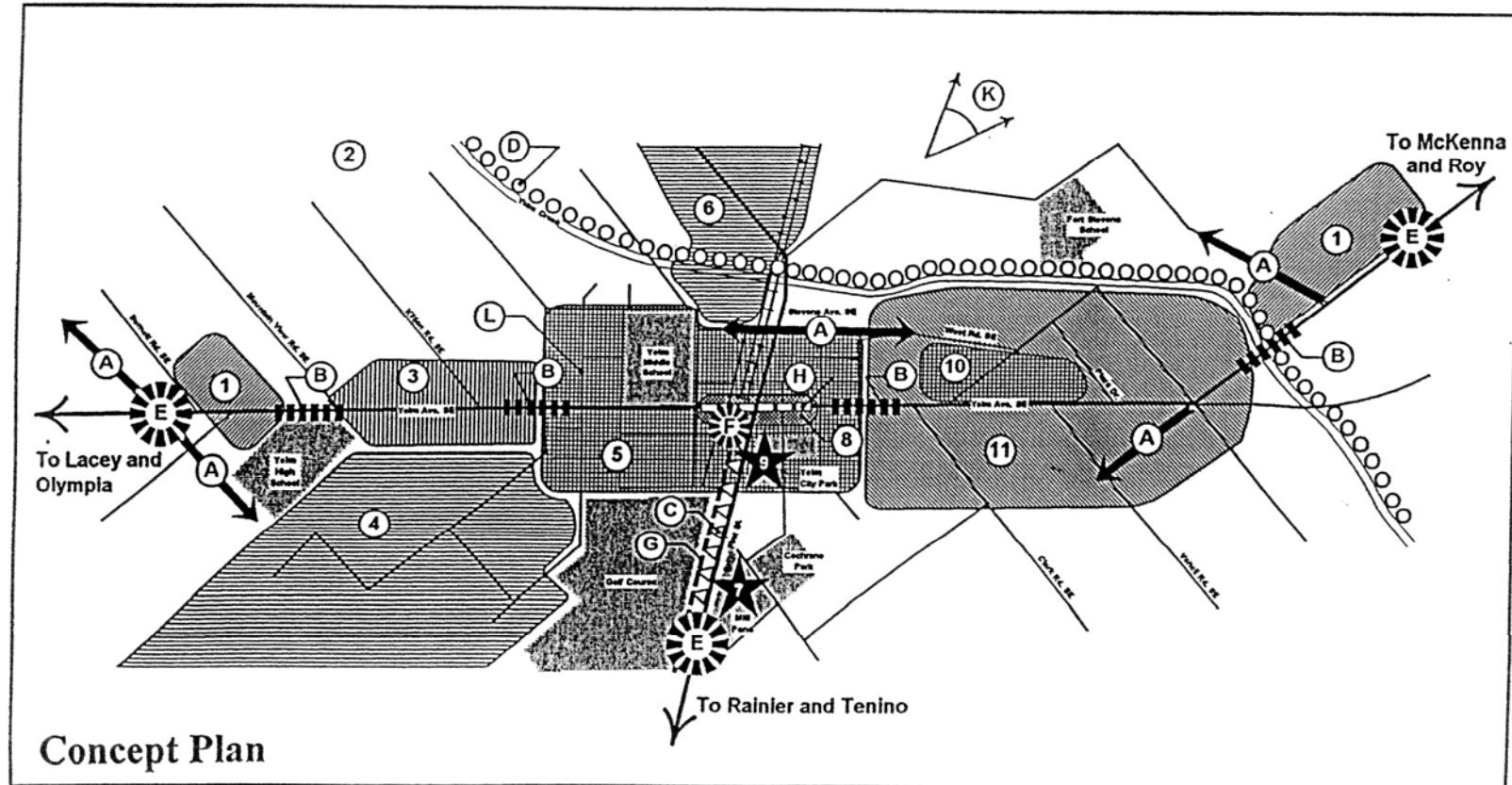


Some of the features identified on the map are suggestions for development efforts to pursue in the future. They are presented to stimulate interest and illustrate some intriguing opportunities. For example, the concept plan for a downtown civic campus may be only one option for locating civic buildings, but the diagram does indicate how the site could accommodate a city hall, library, community center, and park connected to other key features in the downtown. The Mill Pond site is privately owned, and therefore, the illustration is just a suggestion of how the unique setting could be developed for both public and private benefit.

In general, the illustrations on the following pages are design concepts only. The actual designs for elements, such as gateways or civic improvements, would be determined when and if those projects are undertaken. Our objective here is to describe the ideas so they can be evaluated.

IV. Elements of Vision Plan

Section IV presents the design districts, public improvement features, and design characteristics that constitute the Vision Plan's basic building blocks. This map and the list on the following page summarize the individual elements, which are presented in greater detail in the remainder of the chapter.



Legend:

Land Use and Design

1. Institute design guidelines for Gateway Commercial Districts to promote large-lot commercial activities in a managed setting.
2. Institute design guidelines for New Residential Development to integrate it with downtown.
3. Institute design guidelines for Village Retail District to serve new residents and provide attractive, small-town qualities.
4. Implement master plan for proposed SW Annex Development to form a high-quality residential community integrated with the rest of Yelm. Restrict new commercial development outside the current commercially zoned area along Yelm Avenue.
5. Upgrade Old Town District to attract investment and remain the heart of the community, with civic activities and visitor services.
6. Market the Industrial Area for job-producing clean industries.
7. Encourage master planned development of the Mill Pond Site, which provides a unique development opportunity in a special setting.
8. Undertake public and private improvements in the Historic Downtown Core, including redesigned storefronts, pedestrian amenities, and small shops.
9. Consider master planning a Downtown Civic Center, which provides a great opportunity for a civic campus and public parking connected to park, trails, core, and neighborhoods.
10. Institute design guidelines for Auto-Oriented Commercial District that encourage building on existing development with new shops and services.
11. Institute design guidelines for Mixed-Use Development combining compatible residential and pedestrian-oriented conventional developments within a unified setting.

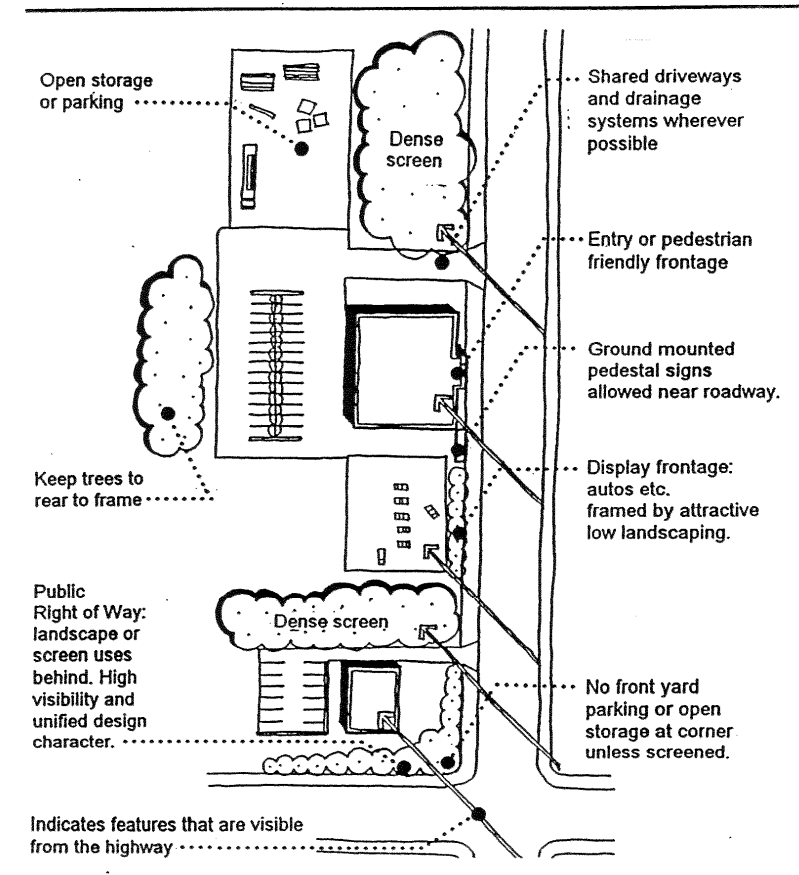
Design Elements

- A. Work with State Department of Transportation to build Connectors in landscaped corridors to provide greatly improved through access and retain Yelm's rural character.
- B. Install Transitional Landscaping to upgrade Yelm Avenue streetscapes in areas between special districts.
- C. Undertake First Street Improvements to provide an attractive entry from the south and support new development.
- D. Encourage public/private efforts to restore Stream Banks and Flood Plain to protect this natural resource, and construct a public trail as an amenity for public and private property owners.
- E. Construct Gateways to mark the city's entry points.
- F. Construct Trail Head Monument to attract bicyclists into downtown.
- G. Install Trail Landscaping that makes the most of the trail's important economic benefit.
- H. Construct Pedestrian Amenities in Old Town that build on past efforts and historic character.

Town Design Character

- I. Encourage use of Cobblestones as an indigenous building material and an inexpensive way to add a unique identity.
- J. Protect Prairie Landscape qualities, especially in open spaces.
- K. Frame Views of Mount Rainier in streets and open spaces.
- L. Define Edges where existing town grid meets north/south county grid with signature landscaping and carefully designed street intersections.

1. Gateway Commercial Districts



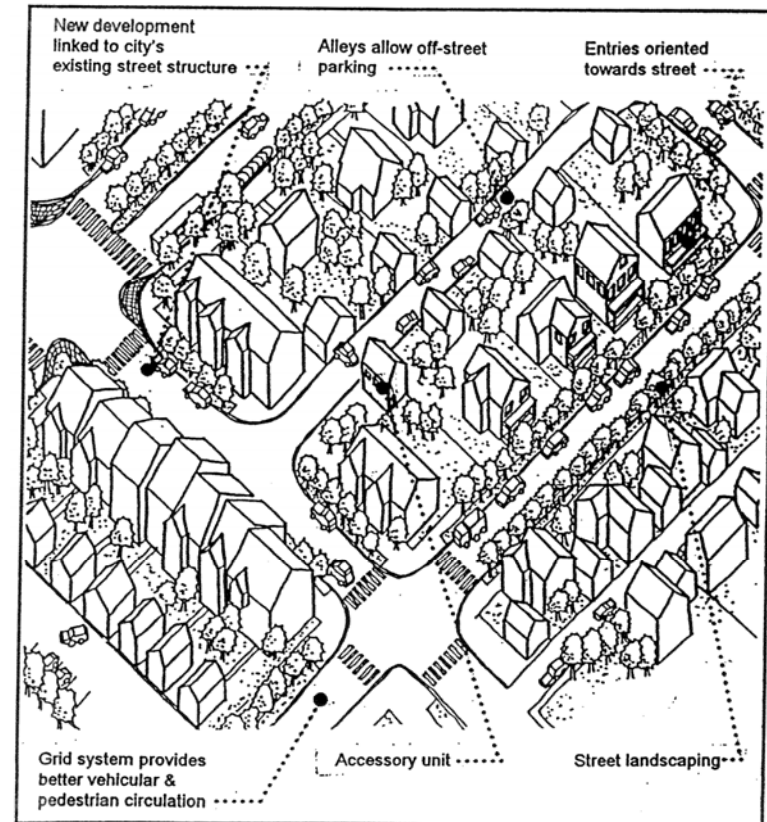
These areas are currently relatively undeveloped. The western district has potential to develop as auto-oriented retail or a small business campus. Due to its location at the edge of town, it is unlikely to develop as a pedestrian center. The eastern district is zoned for large-lot commercial uses. Such businesses can feature attractive buildings and landscaped settings, but also include unsightly outdoor storage and work areas. Therefore, guidelines must allow street visibility of attractive features while providing for heavy screening or separation of unsightly elements. Appropriate guidelines can reduce the negative visual impacts of these uses, while still retaining their viability. Guidelines for this area should encourage:

- A wide landscape buffer along the highway to screen the street from unattractive uses. This will allow large-lot storage yards to operate without compromising the streetscape at the entry into town.
- Strict sign control to promote well-designed, well-located, appropriate signage to direct customers to businesses. Signage should be coordinated to create uncluttered, readable directional assistance.
- Consolidation of businesses to minimize curb cuts and mitigate existing traffic problems. The streetscape will benefit from an uninterrupted landscape buffer and will be more pedestrian friendly and safer to walk along.
- Required site review prior to permitting of proposed new construction or major renovation. This allows the City to work with developers and potential business owners to ensure that the goals of the community are being met.

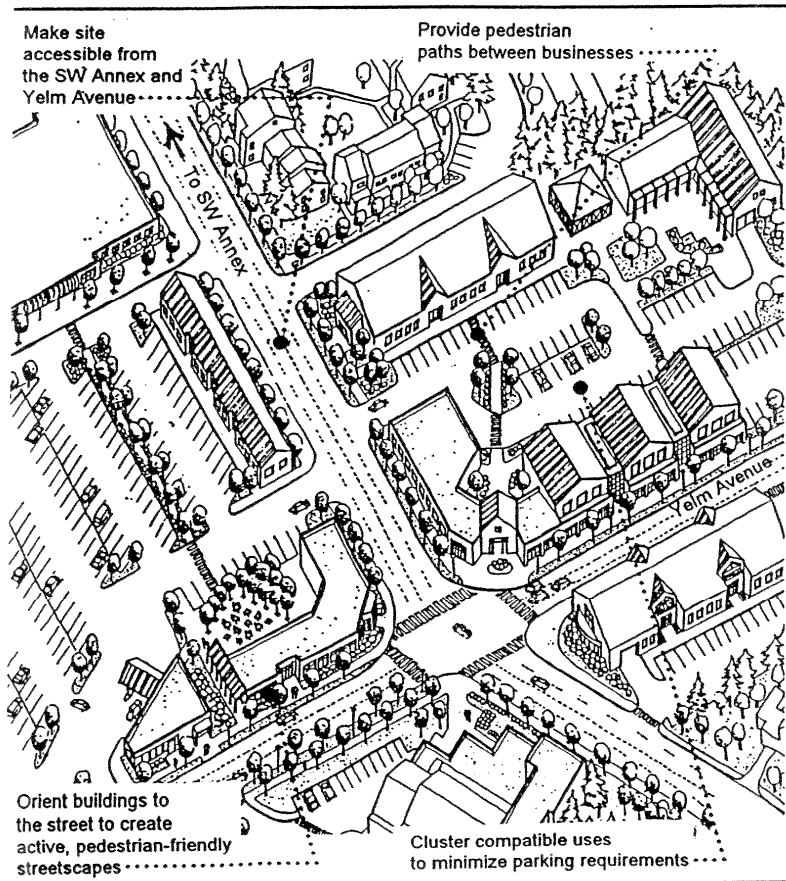
2. New Residential Development

Although residential design guidelines fall outside the scope of this report, it is important to outline here the community's strong feelings about the type of new residential development that it wishes in and around the downtown core. Prepare guidelines to accomplish the following objectives:

- a. Link new residential development to the city's existing street structure to allow access between existing and new neighborhoods and to provide alternative routes, thereby reducing congestion on Yelm Avenue.
- b. Organize new neighborhood streets according to a grid system to provide better vehicular and pedestrian circulation. This results in a more efficient use of land for housing and increases the feeling of "neighborhood."
- c. Reduce impact of garages by providing alleys with garages to the rear of housing units. This increases visibility of inviting house entries, allows for a lack of curb cuts along the residential street, and facilitates garbage collection.
- d. Orient house entries to streets. Entries should be readily visible, accessible, and inviting to residents and their guests.
- e. Construct street improvements according to City standards for land widths, on-street parking, landscaping, sidewalks, lighting, and bicycle paths, when appropriate.
- f. Organize developments into neighborhoods. Create identifiable neighborhoods with schools, parks, community centers, and amenities to help create a neighborhood identity.
- g. Adopt design guidelines for accessory housing units and cottage industries to increase land use efficiency.



3. Village Retail District



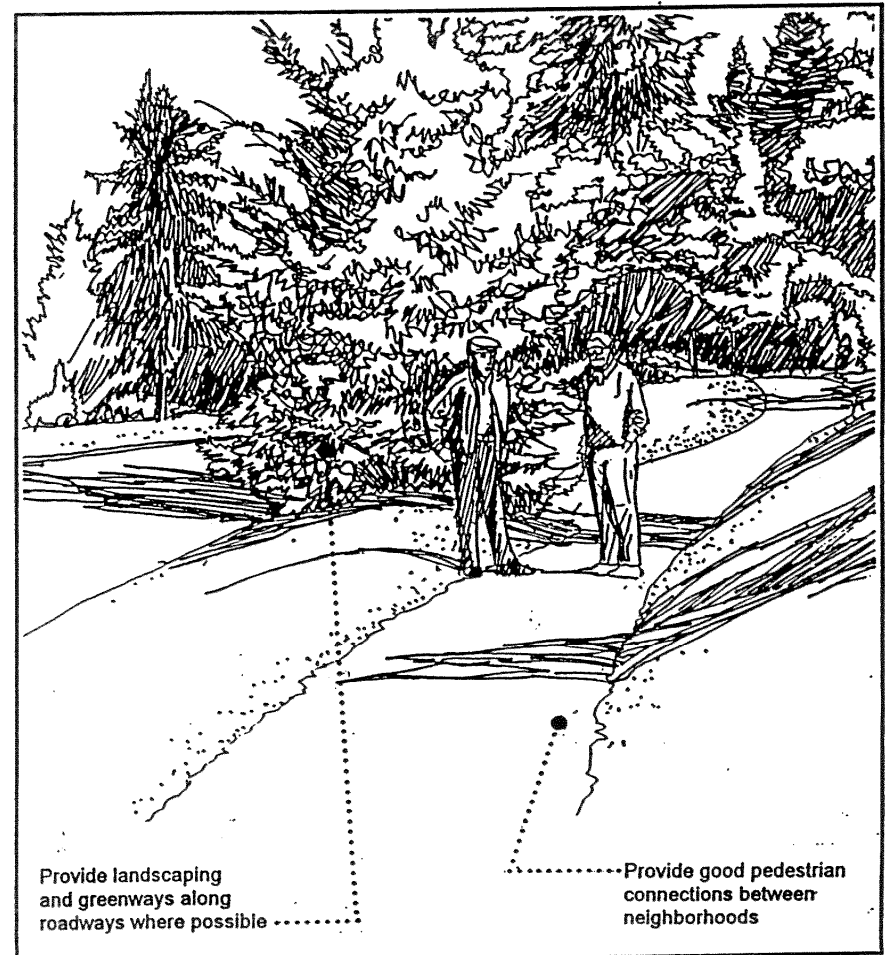
The Village Retail District offers an opportunity to create a relatively dense, pedestrian friendly, destination-retail complex. It is currently a large, definable, relatively underdeveloped area on the west end of town, situated just to the north of the proposed Southwest Annex residential development. Prepare guidelines to encourage:

- a. A coordinated, cohesive, pedestrian-friendly complex. This entails clustering compatible uses to minimize parking requirements, providing pedestrian paths through parking lots between businesses, landscaped parking, and screening of unattractive uses, such as dumpsters and loading docks.
- b. Make the site accessible from the Southwest Annex and Yelm Avenue. This will reduce congestion on Yelm Avenue by providing alternate access to the development. Easy access from the Southwest Annex will encourage residents to shop in the Village Retail District.
- c. Orient buildings to the street to create active, attractive, pedestrian friendly streetscapes.

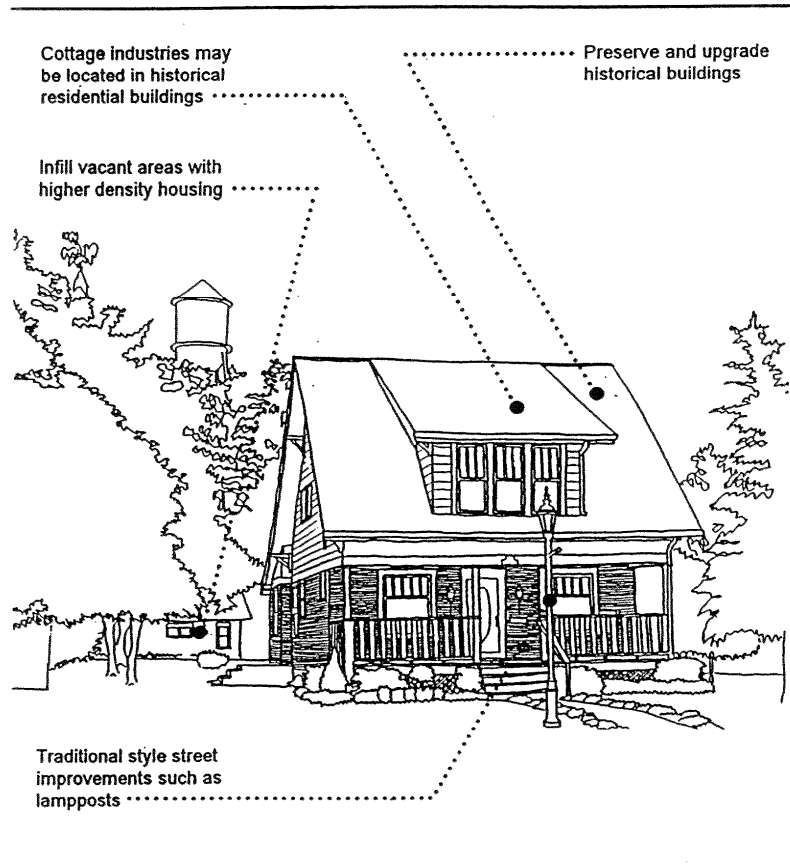
4. Proposed Southwest Annex District

The City is currently reviewing a proposal for a 5,000 unit residential development in the Southwest Annex, to be constructed over the next twenty years. In addition to being subject to the residential guidelines outlined above, the following specific guidelines are recommended for this district:

- a. Higher density development, involving a mix of multi-family and single-family units should be located near Yelm Avenue to encourage pedestrian trips to the Village Retail District.
- b. Good pedestrian connections, greenways, and landscaping should be provided to create a high-quality, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood environment.
- c. Commercial development should be kept to a minimum. Allow only small neighborhood-oriented commercial, such as small grocery stores.



5. Old Town District



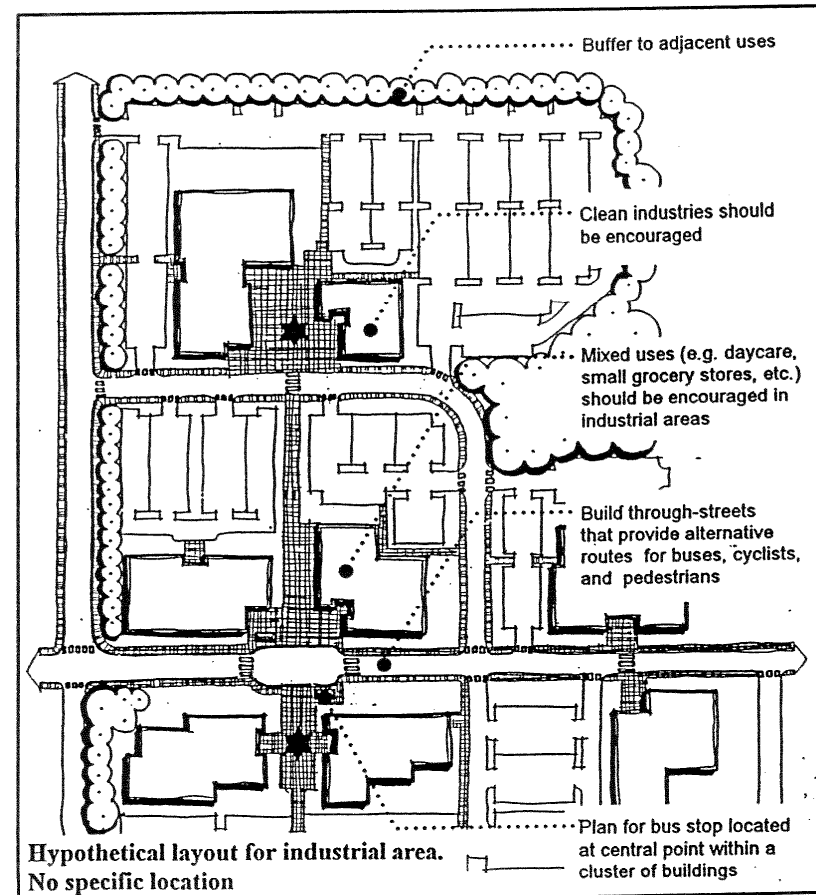
Old Town incorporates the original town of Yelm. It is characterized by gridded streets, orthogonal to Yelm Avenue, but skewed from the north-south grid of the surrounding agricultural land parcels. Its architecture consists of 1920's bungalows, with an infill of more recent structures. The town is in need of restoration and upgrading of streets and other infrastructure. Traffic congestion along Yelm Avenue is a major concern. Prepare guidelines to encourage:

- a. Preservation and upgrading of historic buildings. These are an important historical and community resource.
- b. Traditional-style street improvements that reinforce the charm and character of the existing town. Elements might include adding old-style street lamps, flower boxes, benches, and street trees. Maintain existing street amenities.
- c. Infill vacant areas with higher density housing (e.g. co-housing, multiplexes, or row houses). Many downtown lots are vacant and many homes are built on double lots. The town would benefit from quality infill development to increase liveliness and activity.
- d. On-street parking where possible. On-street parking reduces the number of parking lots required, buffers sidewalks from passing cars, and makes streets safer by reducing the speed of traffic.
- e. Cottage industries and accessory dwelling units. This would quickly and efficiently develop the commercial district without losing the charm of its older residential structures.

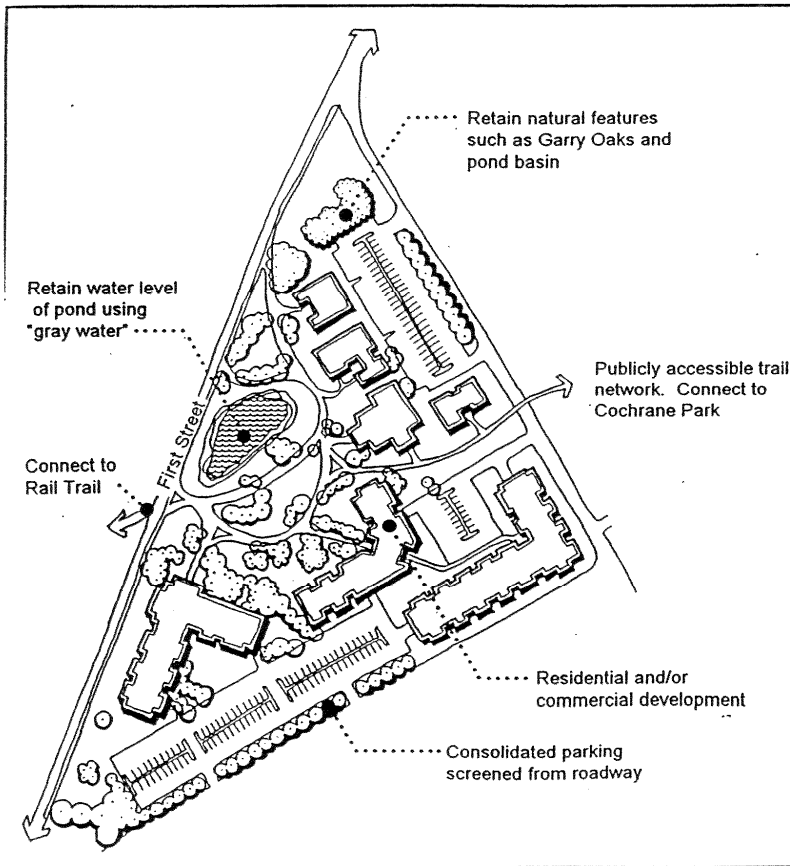
6. Industrial Area

The industrial area north of downtown offers an opportunity for the city to broaden and strengthen its economic/employment base. Industrial development will ultimately be most successful if guidelines are prepared to:

- a. Encourage clean industries that are environmentally sound, relatively quiet, and non-invasive to the surrounding community.
- b. Buffer to adjacent uses (i.e. UCBO), roads, etc. A wide landscape buffer will screen unattractive uses from the surrounding community and roads.
- c. Consolidate large sites to protect natural resources, share parking and driveways, upgrade design quality, and simplify landscaping.
- d. Build through-streets that provide alternative routes for buses, cyclists, and pedestrians.
- e. Plan for bus stop located at a central point within a cluster of buildings.
- f. Cluster and orient buildings to the street to reduce walking distances and encourage pedestrian activity. Include walkways and sidewalks to provide convenient and safe access to the bus stop and other buildings.
- g. Encourage mixed uses (i.e. daycare, banks, cafeteria) to reduce the need to drive.
- h. Encourage construction of a public trail along Yelm Creek.



7. Mill Pond Site



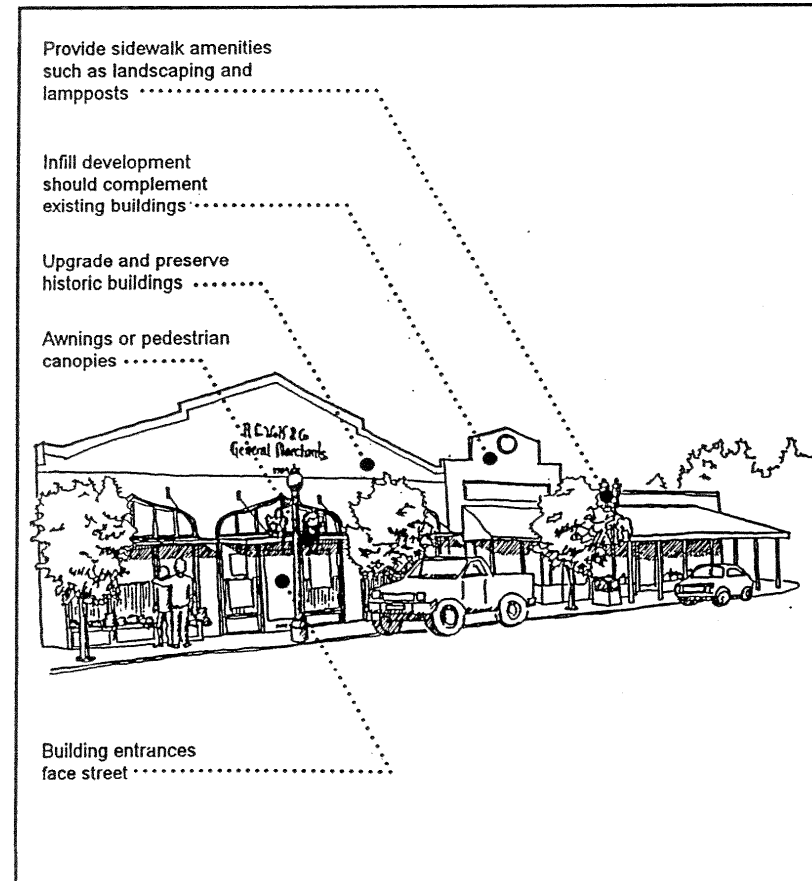
The Mill Pond site offers a unique setting for environmentally sensitive development. It is not only located at the city's southern vehicular entrance, but it could be connected to the regional Rail Trail. The Mill Pond vicinity would make a pleasant civic campus location as an alternate to the downtown site described in Item 9. Currently the site is privately owned and would need to be acquired by the City in order to develop public facilities such as a recreation center, city hall, or library. Residential or mixed-use development is also an attractive option for the site. Whether the site is developed for public or private use, the following guidelines are recommended:

- a. The site's natural features, such as Garry Oaks, and the pond basin should be retained.
- b. Parking should be screened from the roadways by heavily forested buffers.
- c. A publicly accessible network of trails should be constructed around the pond to provide an attractive south entry to Yelm and a superb development setting. Trails should connect to the Rail Trail and Cochrane Park.
- d. The water level of the pond should be maintained using recycled "gray water" from Yelm's innovative new waste water management program and/or on-site surface water runoff. This could be a model storm water management project.

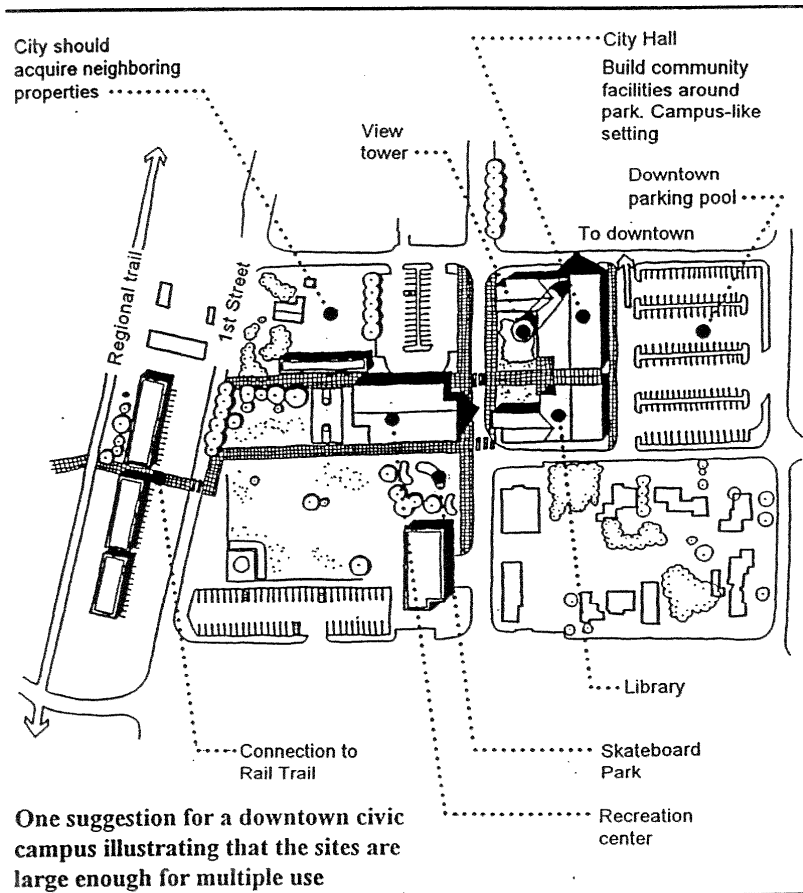
8. Historic Downtown Core

Yelm's historic downtown core consists mainly of structures built after the fire of 1924. National Historic Register nomination recommendations include the Masonic Lodge and the Senior Center building. The downtown is characterized by one to two story structures, built directly to the sidewalk, with awnings. These buildings have the potential for a high degree of street appeal. Prepare guidelines to encourage:

- a. Preservation of historic buildings. These physical reminders of Yelm's history need to be retained and upgraded.
- b. Sidewalk amenities. These are the touches that make a street interesting and inviting for pedestrians. They include, among other things; awnings, street lighting, inviting store fronts, benches, flower boxes, street trees, and public art.
- c. Street facing building entrances. This is important to maintain an active and interesting street front. Parking lots should be located preferably behind or alongside businesses, screened from the sidewalk.
- d. New infill development on vacant parcels. New structures should be designed to respect and compliment the existing buildings that comprise the city.



9. Downtown Civic Center



The area surrounding Yelm's City Park offers a unique opportunity to develop a focus for community activity in downtown Yelm. The City's equipment yard site will become available in the future, and neighboring residential properties could be acquired for building sites for a library, community or recreation center, or other community facilities. Currently, the town's well is located under the water tower, which affects the types of uses that could be developed for the site. Until development of the site becomes feasible, land acquired by the City could be used for recreational uses or parking for the downtown. City residents have proposed ideas, including a Mount Rainier view tower for the water tower site.

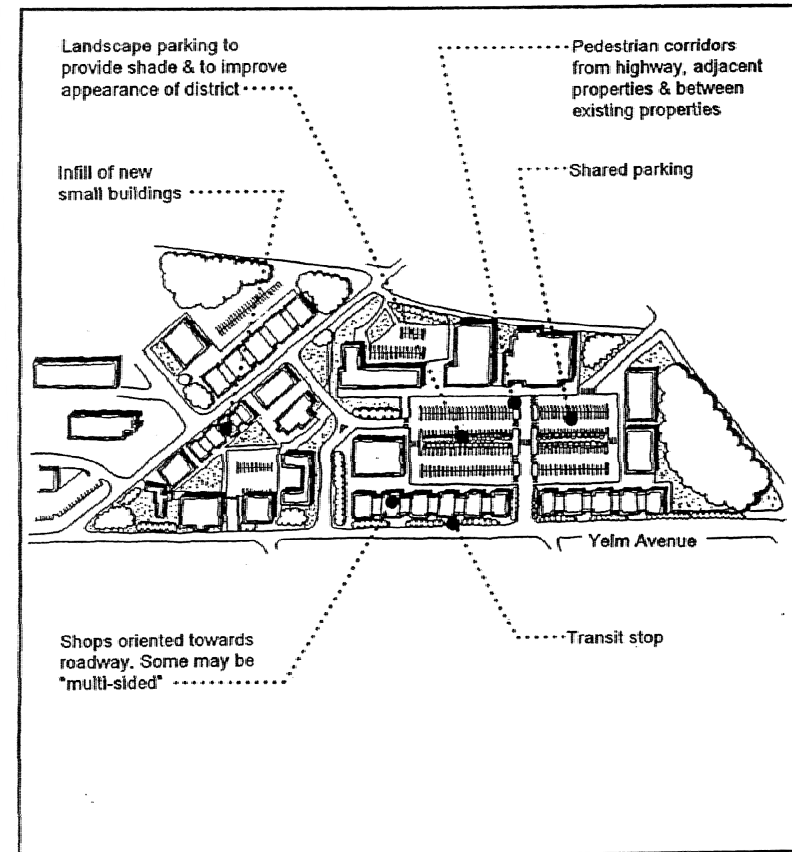
Prepare guidelines to encourage:

- City acquisition of non-compatible adjacent properties. Use as parking for downtown and Rail Trail in the short-term.
- Use of the acquired sites for community facilities (i.e. library, city hall, recreation and/or community center).
- A skateboard park and view tower.
- A physical and visual connection to regional Rail Trail to invite hikers and cyclists into the heart of the city.
- Good pedestrian connections to Yelm Avenue to create a link between downtown and City Park and encourage local and tourist pedestrian traffic between the two.
- Public art to attract visitors and make their experience more pleasurable.
- Architectural design unity and a campus-like setting.
- Park improvements to enhance attractiveness and usability of City Park.

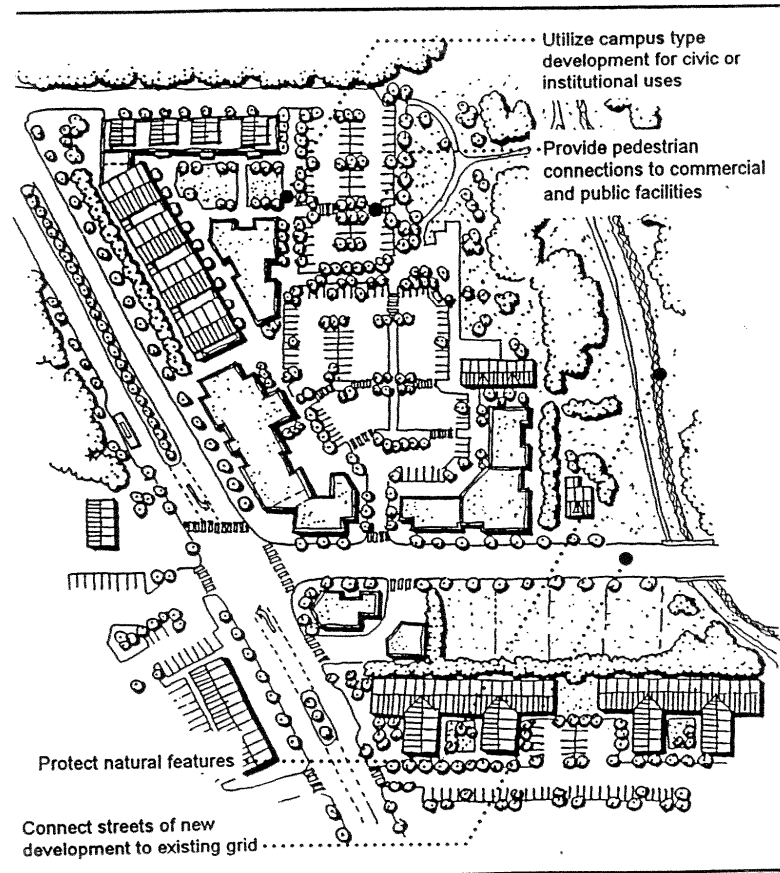
10. Auto-Oriented Commercial District

This district has already developed with auto-oriented commercial uses, but could be made more attractive and pedestrian friendly. Prepare guidelines to encourage:

- a. Pedestrian corridors from highway, adjacent properties, and between existing businesses. Clear, well-marked pedestrian paths slow auto speeds in parking lots and increase pedestrian visibility and safety.
- b. Integration of existing transit stop into the development. Encourage shoppers to use transit to reach their destinations.
- c. Infill of center with new small buildings and associated uses.
- d. Relaxation of parking standards to allow future infill, especially shops along roadway. Compatible uses can share parking, thus increasing attractiveness and activity in the commercial center without increasing automobile traffic. Shops should be designed to orient their fronts to the roadway to create a livelier, more interesting streetscape. Some shops may be "multi-sided," facing both the street and the parking lot.
- e. Landscape parking lots to provide shade and aesthetic quality.



11. Mixed-Use Development



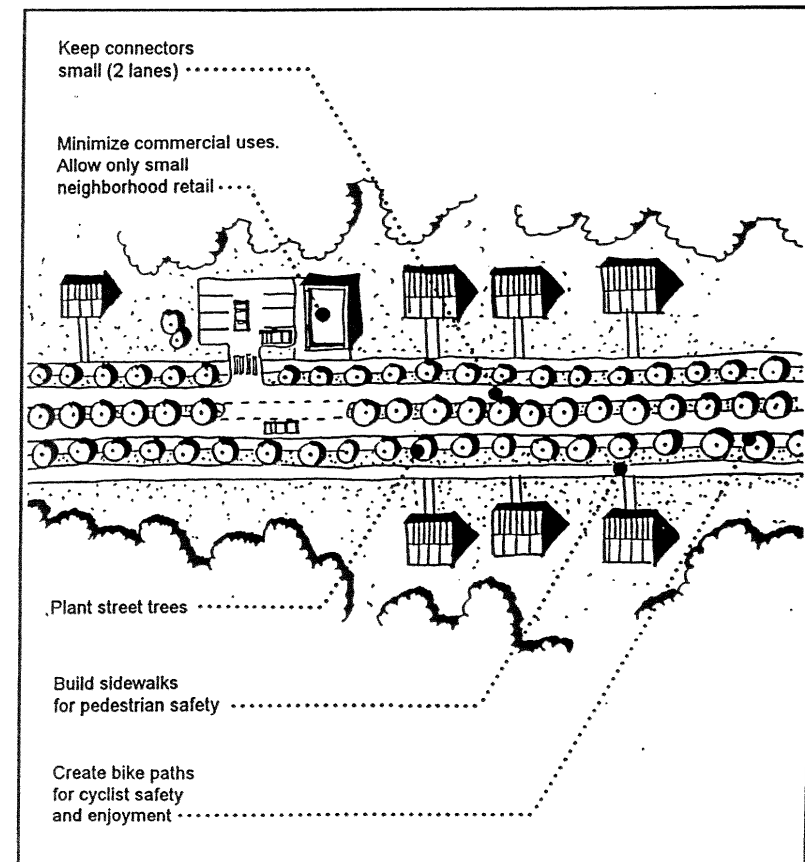
The area surrounding the existing Auto-Oriented Commercial District is zoned commercial and residential and is currently developing with a mix of uses. Mixed-use areas have the potential to be vibrant, exciting places with proper design guidelines. Prepare guidelines to encourage:

- a. Connecting street grid into town. Link new development to the city's existing street structure to allow access between existing and new areas and to provide alternative routes, thereby reducing congestion on Yelm Avenue (for example, Stevens Avenue extension).
- b. Excellent pedestrian connections to commercial and public facilities. This will encourage people to walk rather than drive.
- c. Increased mixed-use compatibility. This includes unifying landscaped streetscapes to create a sense of "neighborhood" and buffering of non-compatible uses.
- d. Campus development for civic or institutional uses (i.e. civic campus, hospital complex, corporate park, etc.).
- e. Protection of natural features (i.e. creek, existing large stands of trees, and views of Mount Rainier). This will help retain the qualities that Yelm currently possesses as the city grows.

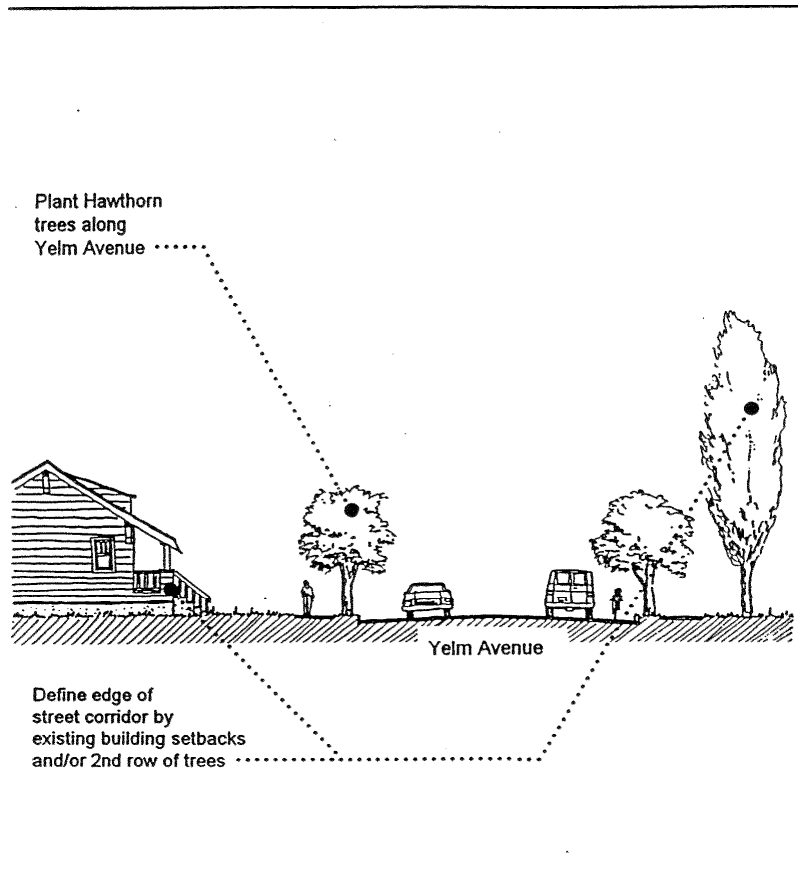
A. Landscaped Connectors

The connector roads, intended to route highway traffic around Yelm's downtown core, are currently in the development stage. They are intended to help solve the problems of traffic congestion, but their establishment can infringe on the rights of private landowners and, if not implemented properly, they could draw business away from the downtown. Therefore, it is essential that only a small amount of neighborhood retail be allowed on these corridors. Landscaping of connectors softens their impact and creates a sense of protection. Guidelines for landscaping include:

- a. Keep connectors small (two lanes).
- b. Plant street trees, especially Hawthorns that are typical of Yelm. Plants such as Scotch Broom and Tanzi should be avoided, as they are unhealthy. Low profile deciduous trees will help to emphasize the rural character of Yelm.
- c. Build sidewalks and median strips to increase pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- d. Create bike paths along road for a safe and pleasant cycling environment.
- e. Involve local residents in design and upkeep to increase community pride in the project.



B. Transitional Landscaping



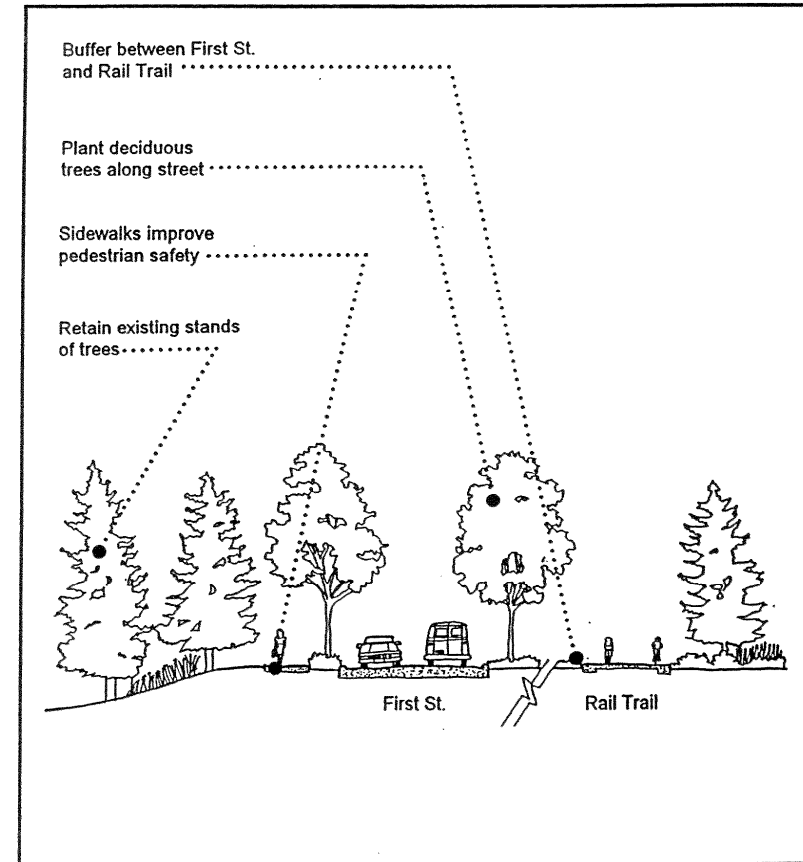
The sections of Yelm Avenue between districts should be enhanced with a special landscaping to indicate passage from one district to another. The road is currently being repaved by the Washington State Department of Transportation, which will result in a solid foundation for later road enhancements, such as sidewalks, drainage, and landscaping. The improvement of each portion of the road should reflect its particular context and should be coordinated with private development. Potential design guidelines may include:

- a. Plant Hawthorn trees along Yelm Avenue.
- b. Define the edges of the street corridor with consistent building setbacks or a second row of trees (perhaps Poplars).
- c. Improvements should reflect the context of that road portion (i.e., reflect land use character, complement existing landscape character, etc.).

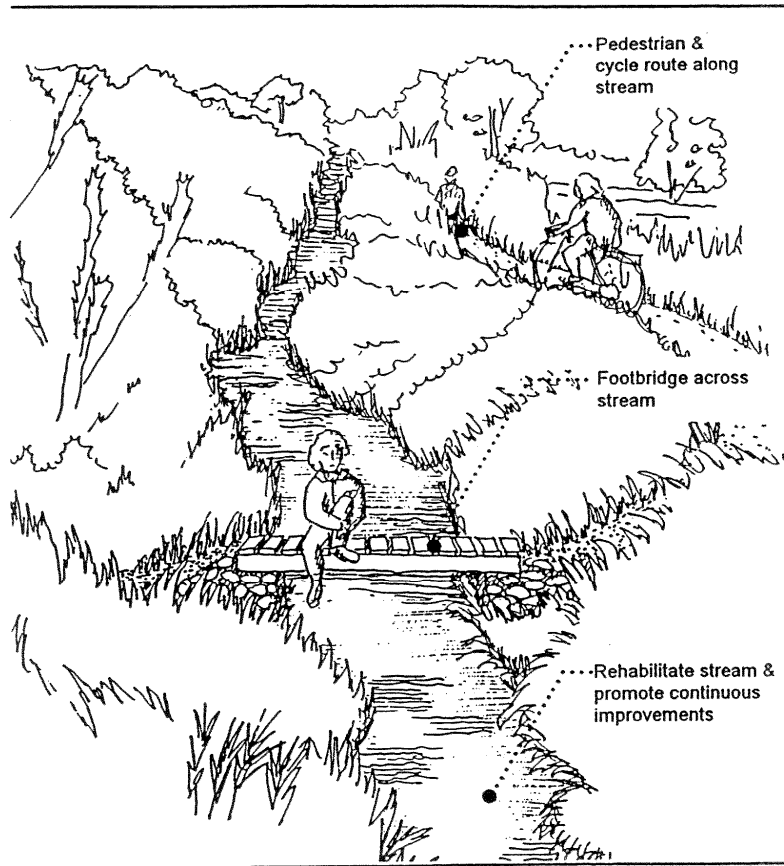
C. First Street Improvements

First Street should be upgraded to reflect its importance as the southern entrance to town. Landscaping should complement other streets in Yelm (i.e. use of Hawthorns as street trees) and the natural qualities of the nearby Rail Trail. Guidelines may include:

- a. Install sidewalks along the road to improve pedestrian safety.
- b. Improve lighting according to Washington State standards.
- c. Plant deciduous street trees (preferably Hawthorns or another tree typical of Yelm) along First Street.
- d. Involve local residents with maintenance to increase pride and concern for the street's upkeep and appearance.
- e. Landscaping at the southern gateway should be consistent with that at other town entrances.
- f. Retain existing stands of trees (i.e. evergreens and Garry Oaks) along the roadway corridor.
- g. Maintain a buffer of trees between First Street and the Rail Trail.



D. Stream Banks and Flood Plain



Creation of a trail along Yelm Creek has been suggested as a desired improvement. The banks of the creek are private property. Because they do not fall under shoreline jurisdiction, the only available means to encourage improvements is through tax incentives. The local ESAO (Environmentally Sensitive Areas Ordinance) requires setbacks of 50 feet on stream banks. Design guidelines may include:

- a. Rehabilitate the stream and promote continuous improvement of water quality and fish habitat.
- b. Build a path with a footbridge across the creek, perhaps near Fort Stevens School or on U.S. Army land.
- c. Involve private landowners in potential stream improvement projects (i.e. creating a path along the creek or allowing public access to the water's edge).

E. Gateways

Gateways are important to announce and invite entry to the city. They should reflect the character of Yelm and generate a sense of having arrived in a special place.

A gateway is proposed at each of Yelm's three major entry points. They should be located;

1. On Yelm Avenue at the west end of the city at Burnett Road,
2. At the east edge of the city, just west of McKenna Road, and
3. To the south of town on First Street at the Mill Pond.

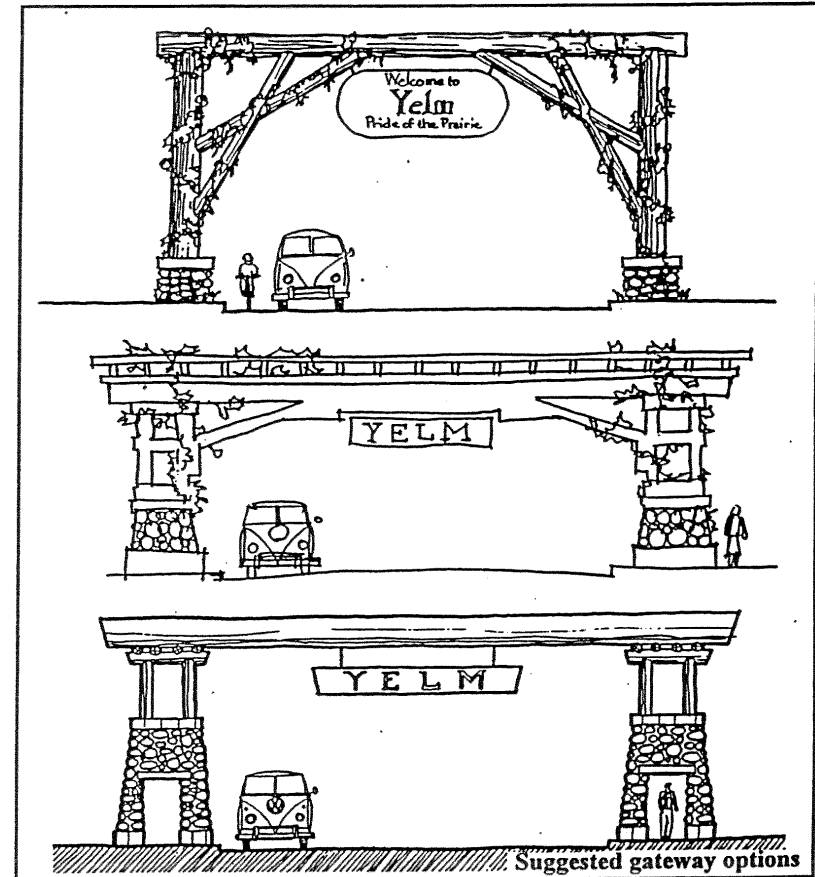
All gateways should be of consistent design. Wood and locally abundant cobblestones are the proposed building materials.

The gateways should be well lit and landscaped. They should be framed by trees and surrounded by high quality, low maintenance landscaping. A plan for upkeep of the gateway areas is necessary to maintain an attractive appearance.

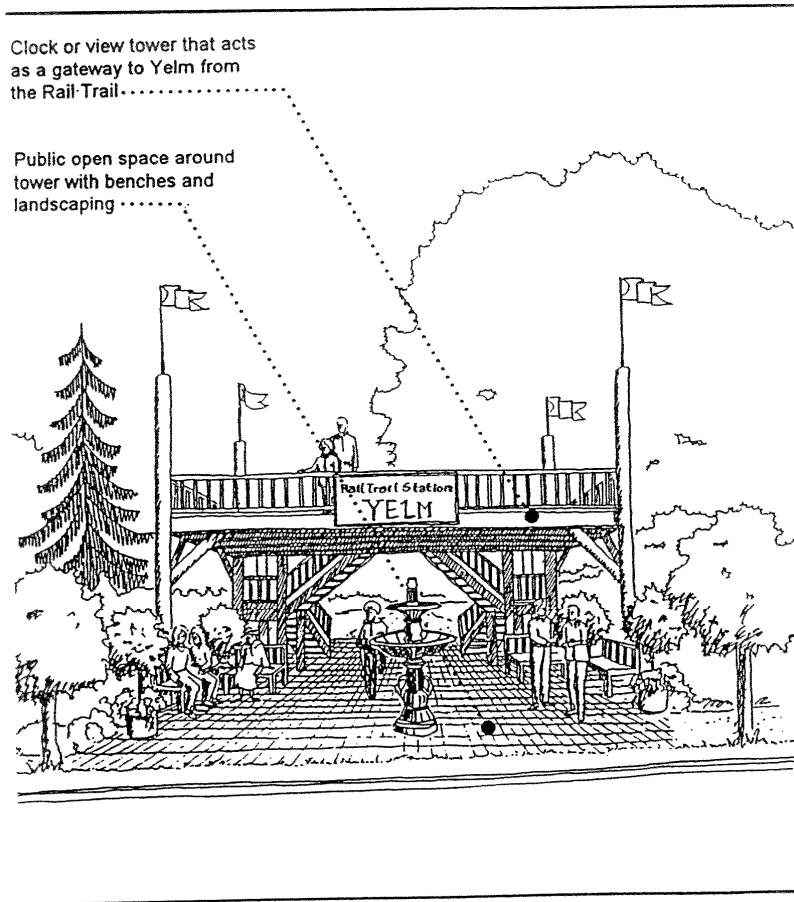
Design guidelines will acknowledge the high visibility of the gateway sites. Building complexes at the city gateways should be designed with special architectural or landscaping features, in response to their prominent location.

Entry features should not obscure views of Mount Rainier.

The following sketches suggest three examples of possible gateway designs for Yelm.



F. Trail Head Monument



The trail head monument is intended to provide information about the trail and to serve as a pointer into the heart of Yelm. It could additionally serve as an historic marker. A number of possible design options have been suggested by members of the community:

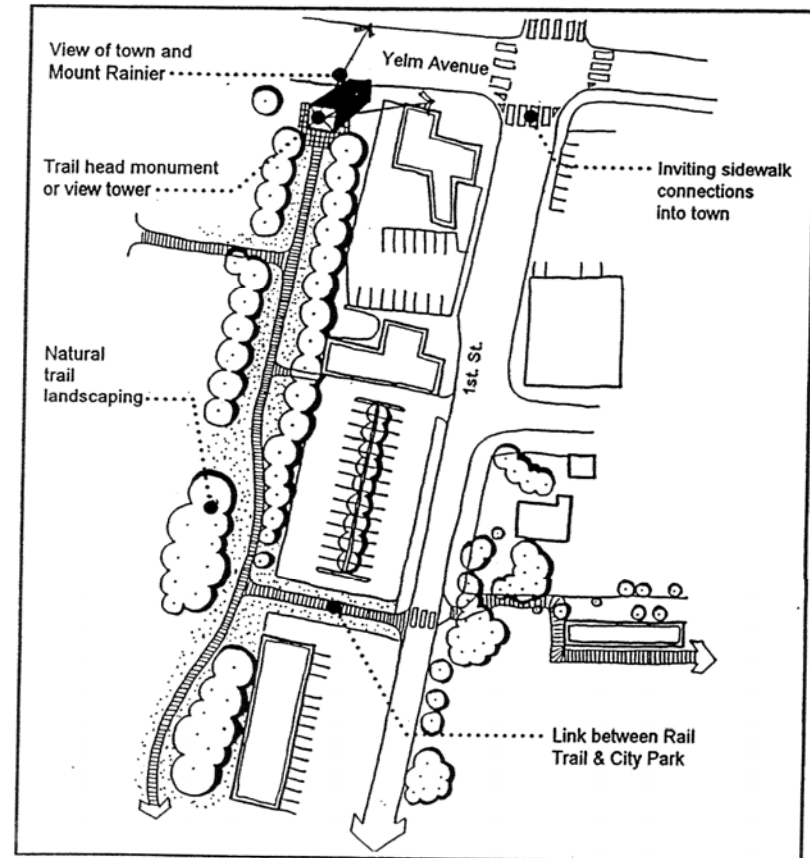
- a. A clock/view tower that would allow the public to enjoy the view of Mount Rainier.
- b. A pointer that draws cyclists into Yelm. This would impact positively on local commerce.
- c. Creation of a public open space around the tower with benches, flowers and landscaping, and public art elements, such as statues or a fountain.

G. Park-Like Landscaping Along Trail

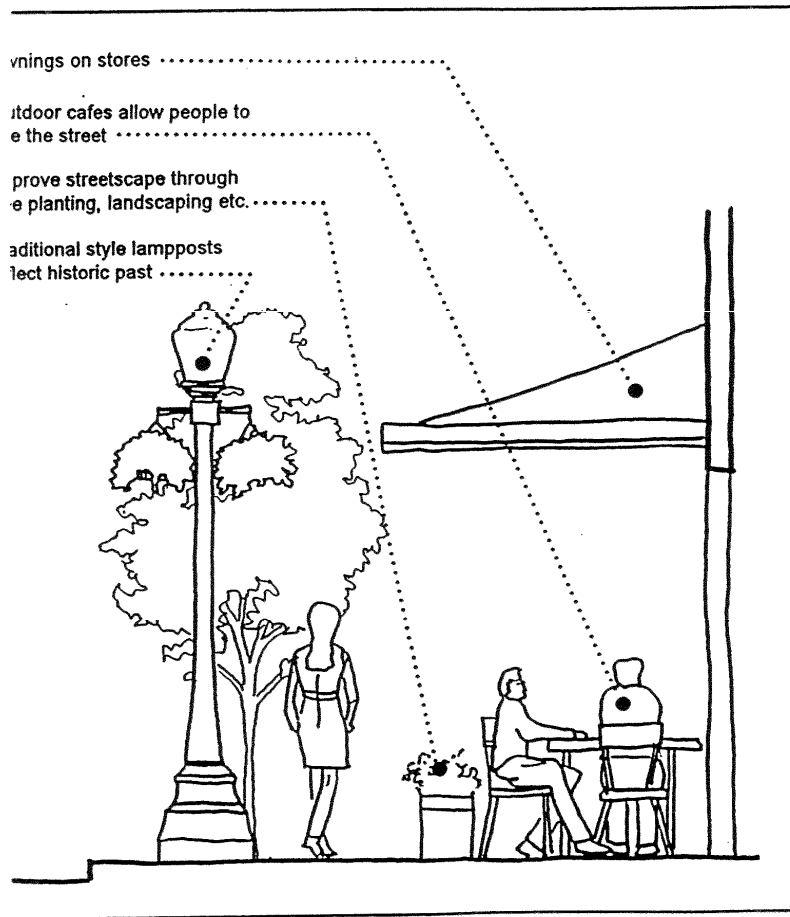
The landscaping along the regional Rail Trail will be natural except at the trail head where more formal landscaping will focus attention on the trail head monument.

Guidelines include:

- a. Retain natural landscaping along the trail (i.e. prairie grasses, indigenous trees, etc.).
- b. Businesses such as cafes and shops along First Street may wish to cater to Rail Trail traffic by providing access from the trail side. This access should provide pedestrian amenities, including landscaping, lighting, seating, and awnings.
- c. Design the final stretch of the trail near Yelm Avenue in such a way that it draws tourists into the town. The trail head monument would be the focal point of this section of the trail.



H. Old Town, High Pedestrian Amenities



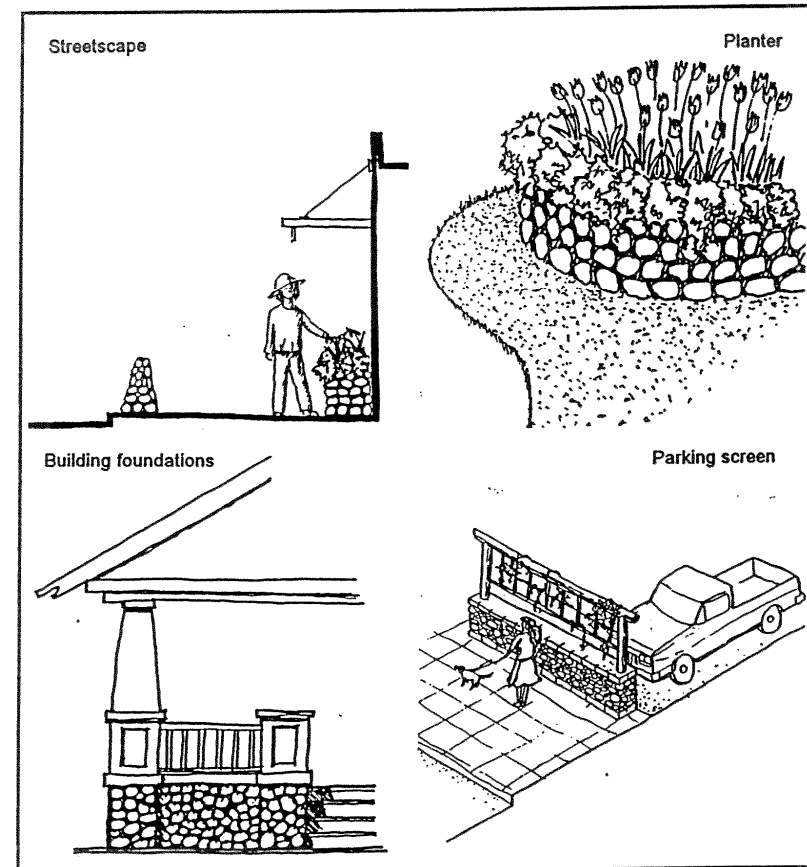
The streetscape along Yelm Avenue in the Old Town District should reflect its historical importance and should enhance the existing small town, “main street” atmosphere. Old Town should be connected to the Rail Trail with the use of high quality pedestrian amenities and landscaping. Guidelines should encourage:

- The use of cobblestones as a local resource and an attractive building material.
- Good signage and implementation of signage regulations to avoid inappropriate and unsightly signs in future development.
- Historical lamp posts, currently in the City’s possession, should be installed to complement existing lamp posts in the downtown core.
- Outdoor cafes, awnings over storefronts, benches, and public art opportunities should be realized. Outdoor cafes bring life to town streets by creating public spaces on the sidewalk. Benches also create public places to stop, rest, and visit. Awnings protect pedestrians from sun and rain and encourage them to linger before shop windows.

I. Use of Indigenous Cobblestones

Cobblestones have been used for centuries as paving and building materials. They add texture and pattern to enliven the townscape. They can be found in the fields surrounding Yelm and are, therefore, an inexpensive local resource. Use of cobblestones in Yelm could lead to the creation of a new local industry. Cobblestones give a town a feeling of permanence and connection to the past, while, in practical terms, they serve to clearly define walkways and can help to slow traffic. Design guidelines may include:

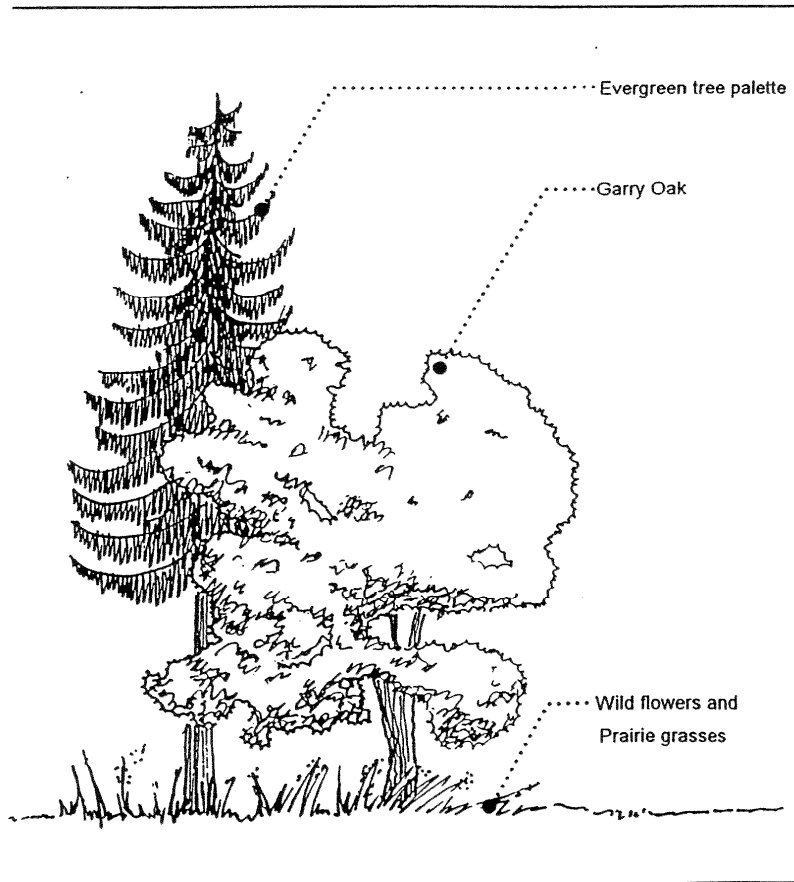
- a. Avoid the use of simulated stone.
- b. Avoid overusing the cobblestones, which could be visually overwhelming and monotonous.
- c. Incorporate the needs of cyclists and wheelchair users into design. Textured paving, if placed without thought, can act as impediments, especially on street crossings.
- d. Combine cobblestones with other materials in street planters, in building foundations, with brick on walkways, etc. A cottage industry could be developed to manufacture cages in which to place the stones to make bollards.



J. Protect Prairie Landscaping

Prairie grasses and trees are indigenous to Yelm and therefore have historical significance. These plants are easy to maintain and thrive in the area. They are inexpensive, grow rapidly and are ecologically correct. To encourage protection and further propagation of this type of landscaping, the following design guidelines should be adopted:

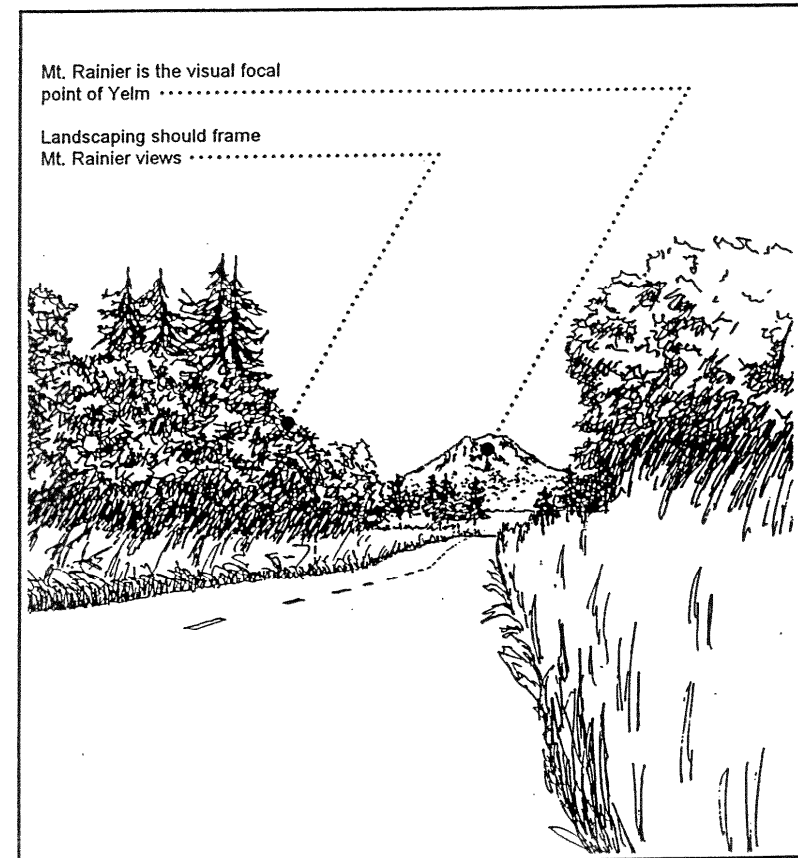
- a. Adopt the "Nisqually Savannah" look by using prairie grasses and indigenous trees. Local plants include heather, Oregon Grape and Salal.
- b. Plant wildflowers for additional color in spring and summer.
- c. Ensure good maintenance through community participation and interest. Natural landscaping can tend to look uncared for. There should be a balance between natural and human care.
- d. Avoid the use of plants with potential negative impacts (i.e. extreme fire hazards or plants that cause unhealthy reactions in humans).
- e. A variety of tree elevations should be used. Evergreen plantings and deciduous trees should be mixed to maintain a natural landscape appearance.
- f. The City should start an oak and ash replanting program as part of development. This could be achieved by mandating that new residents plant 50% indigenous tree species and 50% optional species to minimize use of natural resources and chemicals.



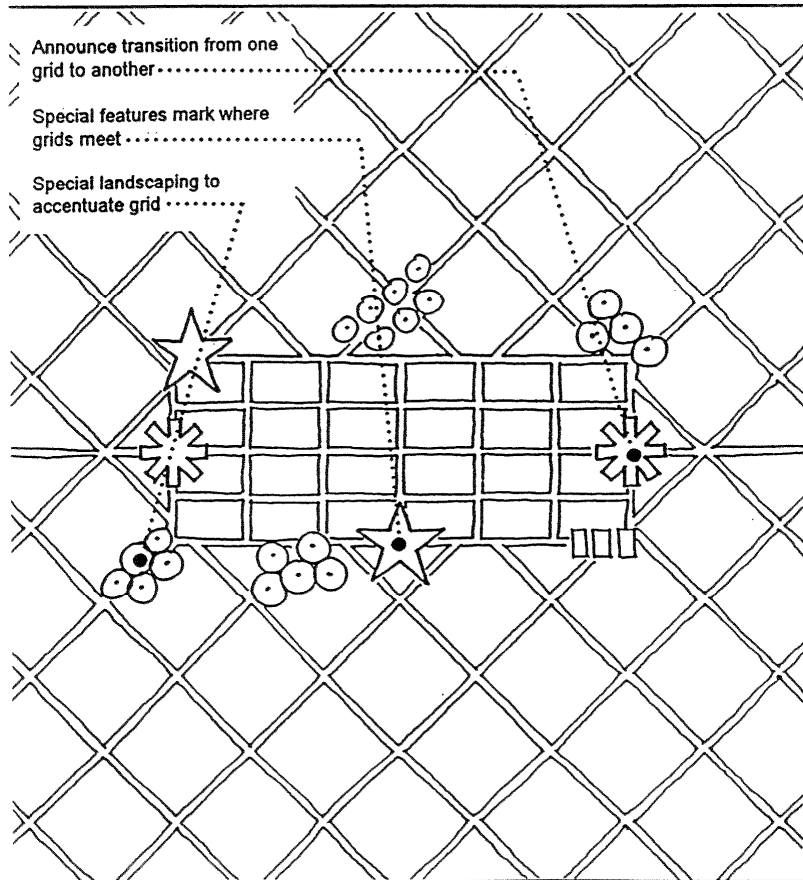
K. Frame Mount Rainier Views

The sight of Mount Rainier looming above the prairie is one of Yelm's most striking and inspiring features. The mountain is the visual focus for the entire community and can be seen from almost every part of the town. There is strong concern that future development could block this view. To avoid this, design guidelines should be created to:

- a. Provide clear shafts of space and multiple viewpoints to allow glimpses of the mountain.
- b. Landscaping should frame Mount Rainier along view corridors.
- c. The striking view of Mount Rainier creates an exciting potential for attracting more tourists to Yelm. The fact that the view "moves" with the viewer should be stressed.
- d. A viewing structure could be constructed to allow visitors to better enjoy the view. It could be located near the water tower or at the head of the Rail Trail.
- e. Signage must be strictly controlled to avoid blocking views of the mountain.
- f. Building height limits should be implemented to avoid blocking the mountain view.



L. Existing town Grid

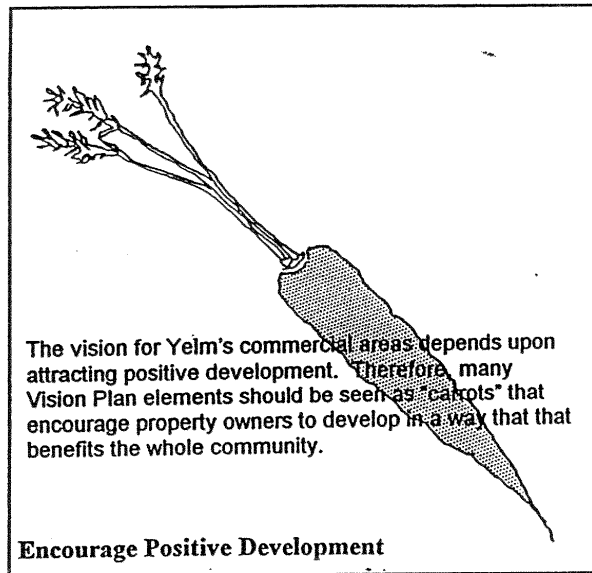


The existing town grid is a unique feature of Yelm. The historical town is distinguished from the rest of Yelm by the different orientation of the street grid. This defines the heart of the town and provides a discernible boundary between the old city and the newer, more rural areas. New development should hook up to the existing grid, which would result in a more pedestrian friendly environment than would be achieved with prevalent subdivision patterns. Guidelines to encourage an expanded street grid should include:

- Define the difference between the old grid and more recent road patterns with visible boundaries. For example, a sundial could be built into the road at a junction of two grid systems.
- Develop a motif characterizing the skewed grid of the Old Town, for example, depicting the north point on each building in the historic core to facilitate orientation.
- Do not allow the defining line between town and rural to become a dividing line. One should flow into another, but the passage from one to another should be experienced.
- Upgrade existing street grid with sidewalks, turning lanes, and traffic controls.
- Connector roads should be constructed to reroute through traffic around the historic area thus reducing traffic congestion and enhancing pedestrian enjoyment.

V. Implementation Plan

Implementation Tools



Just as the Vision Plan concept consists of three community redevelopment tools for development options, the plan's successful implementation involves a combination of three efforts: design guidelines, comprehensive planning, and business/community initiatives. Together, the three elements of this triad can direct future growth, provide necessary public infrastructure, and coordinate private activities most effectively.

Regulatory Guidelines

The Vision Plan serves as an initial step in defining a program for the city's development strategy. The next task is to create specific design guidelines to regulate new construction and major renovation projects to support the Vision Plan. Design guidelines are most useful to create a setting for the desired development. The elements in this plan describe the type of settings that the design guidelines will pursue.

Comprehensive/Regional Planning

The Vision Plan and Downtown Design Guidelines are intended to support and be part of the City's other comprehensive and regional planning efforts. The City is currently developing a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the 1990 Washington Growth Management Act. It represents a 20 year community development vision and outlines policy for elements including land use, transportation, housing, parks and open space, and public utilities within the city's urban growth area.

The Vision Plan is an optional element of the comprehensive Plan. It will be adopted by reference in the Comprehensive Plan appendix. When the City and Chamber of Commerce adopt the Vision Plan, it will automatically become part of the City's draft Comprehensive Plan. Inclusion of the Vision Plan in the City's Comprehensive Plan provides

the ground work and justification for adoption of future design guidelines, ordinances, and capital improvement programs.

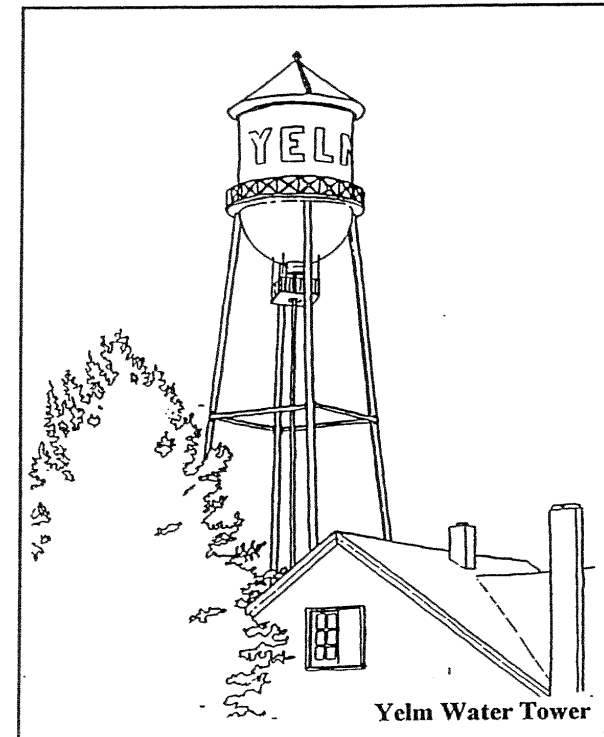
Private Business and Community Initiatives

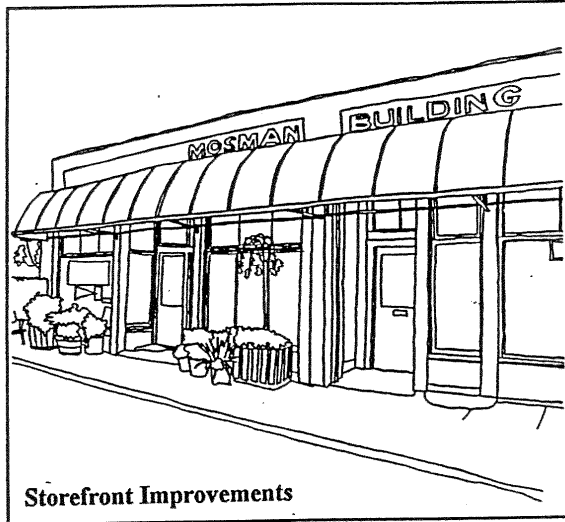
Design guidelines and physical improvements recommended in Section IV, Elements of Vision Plan, represent the major emphasis of the work to date.

Although private development and cooperative business marketing efforts were not a major emphasis of this work, the success of any community planning effort depends on close cooperation between business and civic groups and positive public involvement by local citizens. Initiating and funding a public improvements program itself will organize local interests and set the stage for further group efforts, such as a Public Business Improvement Association for advertising and parking management, design standards implementation, and commercial redevelopment strategizing. Also, public involvement activities, including the Vision Plan workshops and newspaper insert, all help to gather support for community improvements and to let people know that the Downtown has a strong stake in the future.

Since this plan is initiated and sponsored by an active group of business persons and citizens, it is clear that Yelm has the human energy to undertake a coordinated business promotion and improvement campaign. In addition to regulatory and public improvement actions, there are a number of activities that can help Yelm to achieve its role as the Nisqually River Valley's commercial service center. Actions that other communities have found effective include:

1. **Coordinated promotion and advertising campaign.** As the town improves itself, it will be especially fruitful to promote new businesses and civic features to attract greater attention to the community as a whole.








2. **Special Events.** The program should also incorporate plans which encourage merchants to sponsor special promotional events in the Downtown, which will attract new shoppers.
3. **New business development.** The present is also an opportune time for downtown property owners and business persons to undertake a program to entice compatible new development. A development committee could be formed to seek out and contact desirable clean industries and businesses such as restaurants, coffee shops, variety stores, clothing stores, etc., that would broaden the spectrum of Yelm's retail services.
4. **Storefront improvements.** Along with the promotional and business development campaign, a program encouraging businesses to dress up their individual properties would do a lot to upgrade Yelm's appearance. New signage, painting, building renovation, and window display improvements are a few of the many activities that could accomplish a great deal without a large monetary outlay. This program would be especially effective if it could be coordinated with the establishment of the design guidelines, self-help/design workshops, and/or a low-interest rehabilitation loan program. Several businesses have recently completed storefront improvement projects, to the betterment of the whole district.




Comprehensive Work List

The chart on the following pages lists the Vision Plan elements described in Section IV as a series of tasks. Individual elements have been prioritized based on citizen and Vision Committee input at Workshop #3. The implementation time frame spans about ten years. Participants for each task are listed as "Leader" or "Supporter" and funding sources have been identified.

Following the chart, this section concludes with a summary of redevelopment strategies. It organizes the tasks into a more comprehensive implementation approach and outlines a set of strategies that serves as a framework for individual actions.

Specific Implementation Actions

Action Legend:  Think about  Plan  Adopt/construct

 Leader  Supporter  Funder




































































































Time Frame

1994

2004

Participants

City Govern-
ment State/
County Citizens
Business
Community Property
Owner

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10					
Specialized Districts	1. Institute Design Guidelines for Gateway Commercial Districts to promote large-lot commercial activities within a managed setting.															 
	2. Institute Design Guidelines for New Residential Development to integrate it with downtown.															 
	3. Institute Design Guidelines for Village Retail District that serves new residents and provides attractive, small-town qualities.															 
	4. Implement master plan for proposed SW Annex Development to form a high quality residential community integrated with the rest of Yelm. Insure that there are ample pedestrian routes and public facilities. Restrict new commercial development outside currently zoned commercial areas along Yelm Avenue.															
	5. Update the Old Town District or Historic Downtown Core to attract investment and remain the heart of the community, with civic activities and visitor services.											 	 		 	 
	6. Market the Industrial Area for job-producing, clean industries to increase economic opportunities for Yelm.											 				
	7. Encourage master planned redevelopment of the Mill Pond Site which provides a unique development opportunity in a special setting.															 
	8. Undertake public and private improvements in the Historic Downtown Core including redesigned storefronts, pedestrian amenities, and small shops.															 
	9. Consider master planning for a Downtown Civic Center to provide an opportunity for a civic campus and public parking connected to park, trails, core, and neighborhoods.											 				
	10. Institute Design Guidelines for Auto-Oriented Commercial District that encourage building on existing development with new shops and services.														 	
	11. Institute Design Guidelines for Mixed-Use Development combining compatible residential and pedestrian-oriented conventional developments within a unified setting.														 	

Action		Legend:	<div> <div></div> Think about <div></div> Plan <div></div> Adopt/construct </div>	<div> <div>•</div> Leader <div>○</div> Supporter <div>\$</div> Funder </div>	Time Frame										Participants				
					<div> <div>1994</div> <div>2004</div> </div>										City Government	State/ County	Citizens	Business Community	Property Owner
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10					
Public Improvements	A. Work with State Dept. of Transportation to build Connector Streets in landscaped corridors to provide greatly improved through access and retain Yelm's rural character.														•	\$•		○	○
	B. Install Transitional Landscaping to upgrade Yelm Ave. streetscapes in areas between special districts.														\$•	○			\$○
	C. Undertake First Street Improvements to provide an attractive entry from the south and support new development.														\$•	○			
	D. Encourage public/private efforts to restore Stream Banks and Flood Plain to protect this natural resource. Construct public trails as an amenity for the public and private property owners.														•	○			○
	E. Construct Gateways to mark the city's entry points.														\$•	○		\$○	
	F. Construct Trail Head Monument to attract bicyclists and hikers into downtown.														\$•	\$•			
	G. Install Trail Landscaping that makes the most of the trail's important economic benefit.														○	\$•			
	H. Construct Pedestrian Amenities in Old Town that build on past efforts and historic character.														\$•		○		\$○
Character	I. Encourage use of cobblestones as an indigenous building material and as an inexpensive way to add a unique identity.						Ongoing								•			•	•
	J. Protect prairie landscape qualities, especially in open spaces.						Ongoing								•		•	•	•
	K. Frame views of Mount Rainier in streets and open spaces.						Ongoing								•				•
	L. Define edges where existing town grid meets north/south county grid with signature landscaping and carefully designed street intersections.						Ongoing								•	•			

The array of actions on the previous pages is a comprehensive work list of tasks for the prescribed organizations to undertake. However, it is not a unified development strategy that sets priorities to focus energy and identifies how various actions build on each other for greater effectiveness. The list, along with analysis and public input from throughout the process, supports the following strategies that serve as an organizing framework for individual actions. It relates elements in this plan to ongoing city planning, public works, economic development, and community revitalization efforts.

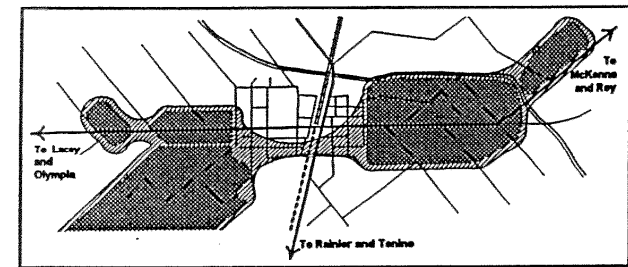
Strategies 1-4 should be undertaken immediately. The City and business community groups are already working on portions of these efforts.

Strategies 5-7 represent longer term or ongoing efforts that should be considered now, and will merit focused attention when the opportunity arises.

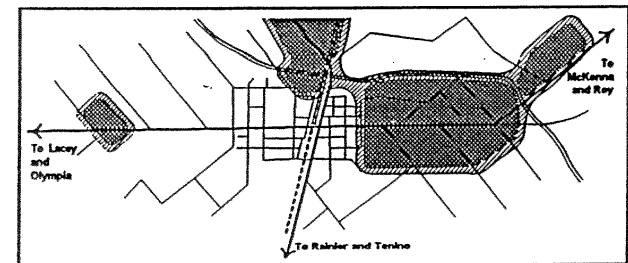
Intermediate Short-Term Strategies

1. **Institute design guidelines, development regulations, and area master plans to direct new development.** (*Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 11.*) Commercial district guidelines will be developed in the second phase of this project. The City is currently developing residential guidelines and working with the developer to master plan the Southwest Annex.
2. **Undertake a market study and business development programs to attract clean industry and other job-producing businesses to Yelm.** (*Item 6 and several comments from public workshops.*) A market demand analysis for various new industrial and commercial uses is an advisable first step. Once the most likely new commercial or industrial types are identified, specific businesses can be targeted, properties marketed, and supporting infrastructure (if needed) programmed.

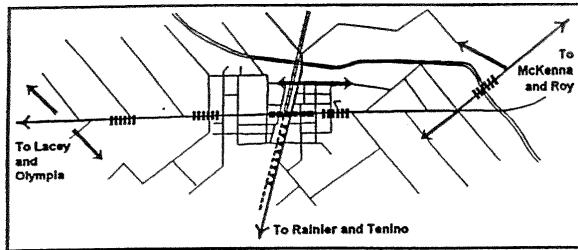
Conclusion – Summary of Redevelopment Strategies



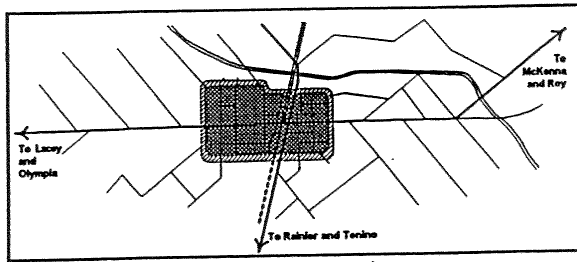
Implement Commercial District Guidelines



Attract Clean Industry and Business



Perform Transportation Improvements



Improvements in Downtown Core

3. Undertake comprehensive transportation improvements. (*Items 8, A, C, and public workshop suggestions.*) Work with the Washington Department of Transportation and the City to build connector roads. Construct local streets as needed. Work with the transit authority to upgrade transit.

The highway connectors are items necessary to avoid debilitating traffic problems. Continuous pressure should be put on the State to develop these links. Temporary or permanent street modifications to increase capacity on Yelm Avenue must not degrade pedestrian or shopping environments along the corridor. Connector roads should be well landscaped, with only very limited commercial uses.

In-city connectors such as the Stevens Avenue connection should be undertaken as funds are available. Transit should be considered in any street improvement or redevelopment effort. The *Guide to Land Use and Public Transportation – Vol. II*, by Snohomish County Transit Authority, provides a detailed discussion of transit planning considerations for small towns.

4. Focus coordinated public and private improvement efforts in the downtown core. (*Items 5, 8, 9, C, F, and H.*) As participants at the third workshop noted, Yelm's historic downtown is a logical place to focus public and private redevelopment. Several actions are mutually supportive and can combine small-scale private efforts with public improvements and cooperative programs, including:

- Building restoration and property improvements.
- Sidewalk improvements, including lights, pavements, furniture, and landscaping, perhaps funded partly through a Local Improvement District (LID) or Business Improvement Association (BIA).
- New cottage industries.
- Development of a civic center and park improvements.
- Taking advantage of the Rails to Trails project.

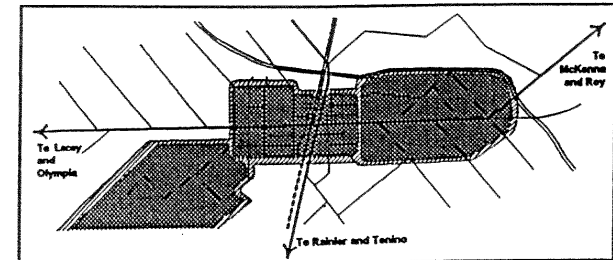
- Cooperative business marketing and advertising with sales and events. (This is a good way to maximize benefit from physical improvements.)
- Upgrading older residential neighborhoods.
- Cooperative parking areas.

Longer-Term and Ongoing Strategies

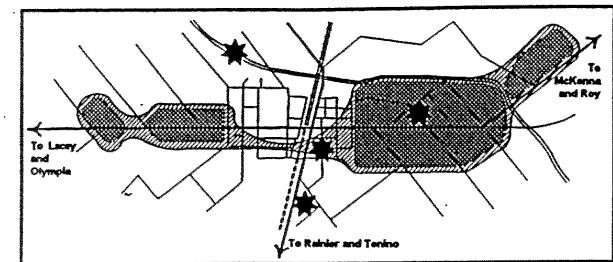
Revitalize existing neighborhoods and build new residential neighborhoods. (*Items 2, 4, and 11.*) The new residential growth will provide Yelm with the opportunity to build neighborhoods, not just housing. Schools, transit service, pedestrian connections, parks, and convenience services should be provided within walking distance to new residential subdivisions. The City and School District are currently working to accomplish this.

Watch for special development opportunities. (*Items 1, 3, 7, 9, 11, and D.*) Several sites in central Yelm offer unique development opportunities for special activities. The area near the water tower should be considered for civic activities, provided there is no unreasonable conflict with the water supply system. The Mill Pond site provides a unique setting for special uses, such as an extended-care community or an educational institution. Likewise, the area to the east of Old Town includes several large parcels that could accommodate, for example, a community college branch campus, a medical campus, or a governmental center.

Undertake image-enhancing infrastructure improvements. (*items B, C, D, E, F, G, I, J, K, and L.*) Since these improvements all require some public or cooperative funding, they should be accomplished on an incremental basis as funds are available and/or as interest and opportunities arise. For example, “transitional” and First Street landscaping might be installed when the streets are improved. Funding for the gateway structures might best be achieved through a community participation program. And, stream bank restoration will require a joint public/private effort as properties along Yelm Creek develop.



Create Vital Neighborhoods



Special Development Opportunities

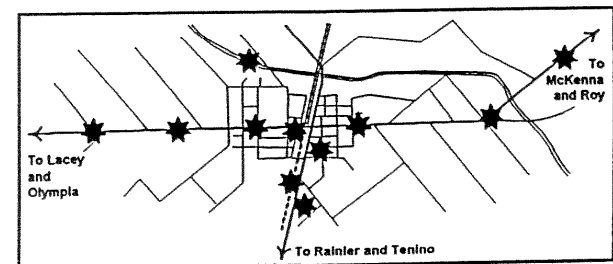


Image-Enhancing Improvements