

*County of Santa Cruz*

# **BOULDER CREEK SPECIFIC PLAN**

*Land Use Policies  
Public Improvements  
Development Standards & Design Guidelines*

Prepared by the Citizens of Boulder Creek  
with assistance from  
Freedman Tung & Bottomley

Approved by the Planning Commission, March 11, 1992  
Adopted by the Board of Supervisors, May 12, 1992

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*Chapter I.*

# **INTRODUCTION**



## I. INTRODUCTION

### Historical Roots

The Village of Boulder Creek is a memorable, well-defined community. Despite its relative isolation, it has a surprisingly strong mix of commercial services and businesses. Though much can be done to improve the community, there is much to build upon. It has not fallen victim to the placeless urban sprawl common to many California cities and towns. One reason for this is that its citizens have a strong sense of the Village's historical roots.

Boulder Creek was a bustling logging community even before the railroad came in 1884. By 1890, there were twenty-five saw mills in the area. Always a vocal and evolving town, Boulder Creek became an incorporated city in 1902; the saloons went "dry" in 1908. By 1915, however, the town was unincorporated once again and the saloons were back in business. When its "timber days" ended, Boulder Creek became a resort destination for summer tourists from around the State. There is still a "hardworking" feel to the community, though, as well as a constant sense of its proximity to natural beauty.

### Purpose of the Plan

The Boulder Creek Village Specific Plan is a policy document which will be used to guide and coordinate public and private

sector actions within the Boulder Creek Village Planning Area (see Planning Area map). It balances goals for preserving Boulder Creek's unique character with goals to improve local services and the community's overall quality of life.

### County of Santa Cruz Village Plans

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the 1980 Santa Cruz County General Plan, which calls for the creation of Village Design Plans for community centers in the unincorporated portions of the County. General Plan Policy 8.4.101 states that the County should:

*"Prepare and adopt Village Design Plans, with input from Citizen's task forces, for the village areas in Soquel, Live Oak, Boulder Creek, Ben Lomond, Felton, Davenport, Freedom and La Selva Beach. Include in the Village Design Plan a community design framework, priorities for capital improvements, traffic and parking plans, sign plans and specific provisions for commercial and residential use and siting. Consider Village Design Plans as Amendments to the County General Plan where the plans conflict with any portion of the County General Plan."*

The goal of the Village Plans are to preserve and build on the unique attributes of each of the Village areas as stated in General Plan Objectives 8.4.1 and 8.4.2:

*"To preserve the unique characteristics of the village areas as community focal points for living, working, shopping and visiting."*

*"To provide a planning framework to guide future public and private improvements in the village areas and to promote economic viability and coherent community design."*

The Specific Plan also establishes Development Standards and Design Guidelines to be applied to new development and renovation through the design and review of new projects as specified in General Plan Policy 8.4.3:

*"Review all new development in Village Areas, as defined in adopted Village Design Plans, through the Planned Development Permit process and require compliance with all requirements of an adopted Village Design Plan for a Village Area. Encourage all landowners and businesses in the Village Areas to follow the guidelines adopted in the Village Design Plans."*

## State of California Specific Plans

This Specific Plan is a legal document that also executes and implements General Plan policies in accordance with California Code, Sections 65450 through 65457:

*"The Specific Plan shall include a text and a diagram or diagrams specifying all of the following: (1) distribution, location and extent of the uses of land including open space within the area covered by the Plan; (2) proposed distribution, location, extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water drainage, solid waste disposal, energy and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the Plan and needed to support the land uses described in the Plan; (3) standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources where applicable; and, (4) a program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects and finance measures necessary to carry out items 1, 2, and 3."*

The Specific Plan includes the background material, goals, objectives and policies required for consistency with the General Plan. It is subordinate to the General Plan, incorporating the General Plan's county-wide goals and applicable portions of the County Zoning Code. Adoption of



*Central Avenue (i.e. Route 9) is Boulder Creek's historic "main street." One of the Specific Plan's principal goals is balancing pedestrian and automobile needs in order to promote a strong commercial district.*

the Specific Plan will require an amendment to the existing County General Plan.

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### The Planning Process

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#### Community Workshops

The Boulder Creek Village Specific Plan was developed in cooperation with local citizens who contributed their ideas and

unique perspective during a community participation process. Between 200 and 300 people attended each of six Specific Plan Workshops, beginning in November of 1990. At the first workshop, those in attendance identified the range of issues and concerns. At the second, existing physical and economic conditions and County policies were reviewed. At the third, alternative approaches to an overall village plan and public improvements program were discussed. At the fourth, a

## Chapter I. Introduction

preferred plan was evaluated and modified. At the fifth, residents decided to have a subcommittee meeting to try to resolve remaining land use issues. At the sixth and final workshop, a presentation of subcommittee recommendations was given, and general consensus among residents and merchants regarding the extent of community development was achieved.

Summaries of public comment from each of the workshops were distributed by the County. (See the Appendix for a complete list of community comments grouped by workshop and issue.) At different stages of the process, drawings and graphics from the workshops were placed in the Boulder Creek Library for public review. Reductions of these drawings were mailed by County Planning Staff to local citizens upon request. As a result of these outreach efforts each workshop built upon discussions and decisions made during the prior workshop.

### Village Plan Goals

Many issues were raised by the participants during the community workshops. They ranged from pragmatic concerns about pedestrian safety on Village streets, to less tangible concerns, "dreams or visions" for making Boulder Creek a better community in the future.

One of the principal goals of residents and business people alike was to retain the unique character of the Village, while

addressing significant issues of public safety, traffic circulation, parking, and land use and development. Primary community goals are listed below. The specific issues that led the community to define these goals are described in Chapter II.

- *Retain the unique character of the Village.*
- *Accommodate expanded commercial services within the Village Core to reduce the "leakage" of local and tourist dollars.*
- *Retain neighborhood integrity through buffering intense retail uses from purely residential areas.*
- *Create a community gathering space or "green" adjacent to Central Avenue, preferably near the river or creek.*
- *Provide more activities for children and adults, and improve recreational facilities.*



*Special elements, old and new, add to Boulder Creek's charm and character.*

*Chapter II.*

**BOULDER CREEK TODAY**

## II. BOULDER CREEK TODAY

This chapter provides an overview of conditions, issues, problems, and opportunities discussed during the course of the public workshop process. They are the framework for the "Village Plan" described in Chapter III.

### Location and Context

Boulder Creek Village is located approximately 10 miles east of Big Basin State Park, 15 miles north of Santa Cruz, 15 miles south of the San Jose metropolitan area, and 50 miles south of San Francisco (see Context map).

It is located in the heart of the San Lorenzo Valley, an area of steep, redwood-covered hills formed by the San Lorenzo River, Boulder Creek, and their tributaries. The river flows through Boulder Creek on the east and south through Brookdale, Ben Lomond, and Felton, and continues south to the City of Santa Cruz where it enters Monterey Bay.

State Route 9/Central Avenue runs through the center of the Village. It connects to Los Gatos to the north via Saratoga, and to Santa Cruz to the south. Route 9 also serves as an alternate commute route to "Silicon Valley" (i.e. Santa Clara County). This was most evident just after the Loma Prieta earthquake in October 1989, when it was the only link to Santa Cruz while Route 17 was closed for

repair. Route 9 provides access to two State Parks, Henry Cowell State Park to the south, and Big Basin State Park to the west, which serve more than three million visitors per year.

### Subareas

Boulder Creek has three general subareas, referred to for planning purposes as the "Village Core," "South Village," and "Outlying Village Areas" (see Subareas map).

### Village Core

The Core is the principal focus of the Specific Plan. It extends from Harmon Street on the south to West Park Avenue and the Boulder Creek Library on the north. Central Avenue (State Route 9) is Boulder Creek's "Main Street." It is lined by attractive older storefront commercial buildings, a number of them with historic significance. A different, more auto-oriented commercial development pattern exists on Big Basin Way, with gas stations and surface parking lots along the frontage. Quiet residential streets lined with charming older houses and cottages flank the Village Core on the west; newer homes are located to the east.

### South Village

The majority of the population within the Plan Study Boundaries live in this area,

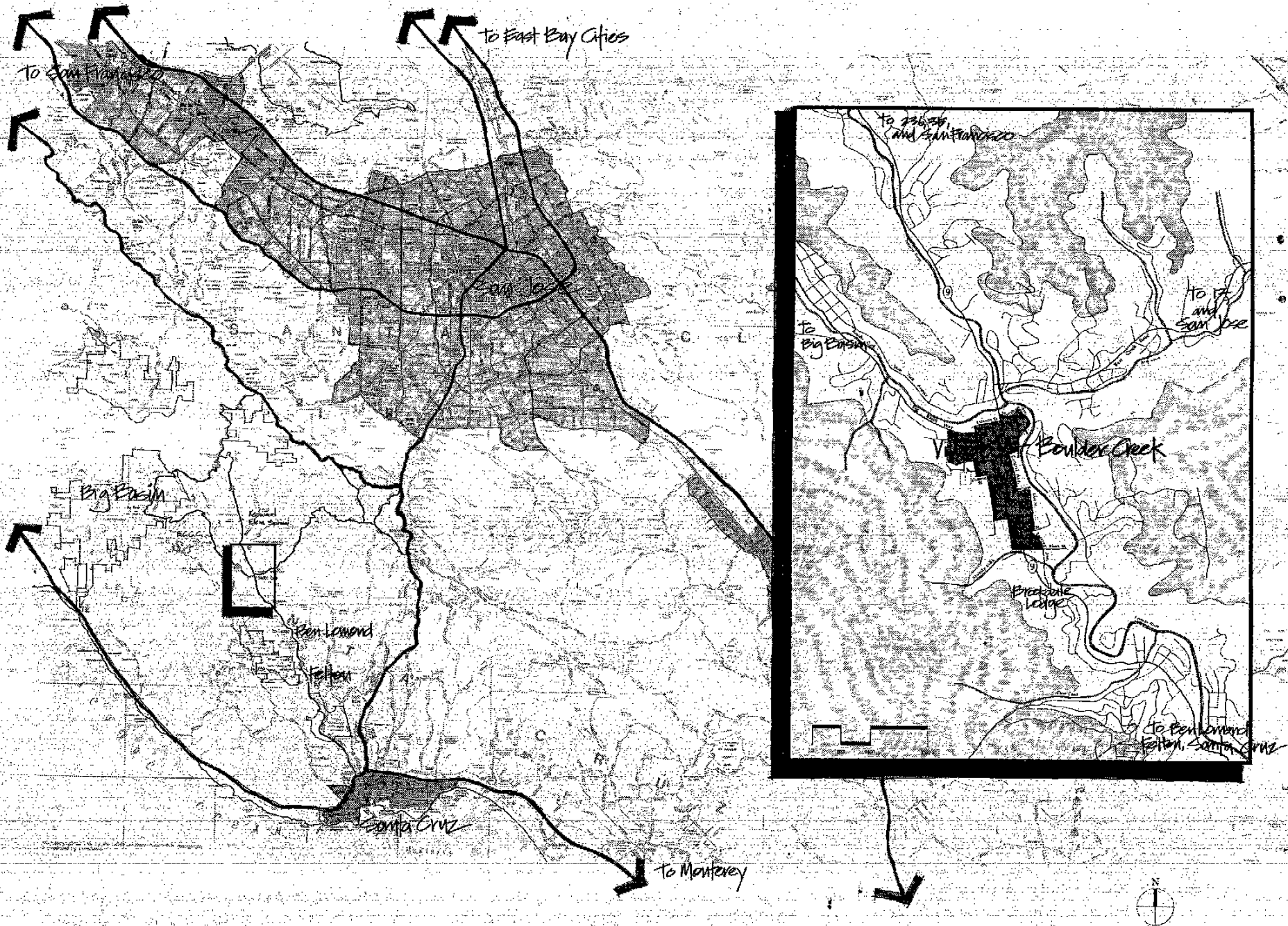
bounded by River Street on the south and Harmon Street on the north, where a stand of landmark redwood trees mark the beginning of the Village Core.

Pockets of commercial and residential development alternate with homes along Route 9. Quiet residential streets and houses flank the Route 9 corridor here much the same as they do in the Village Core.

Alternating commercial and residential development along Route 9 provides a transition from the purely residential character of Route 9 between Brookdale and Harmon Street and the distinctly commercial core area on Route 9 between Big Basin Way and Forest Avenue. Commercial buildings and homes are both set back from the frontage. However, commercial buildings are set back behind parking lots. Asphalt parking aprons open directly onto Route 9, without

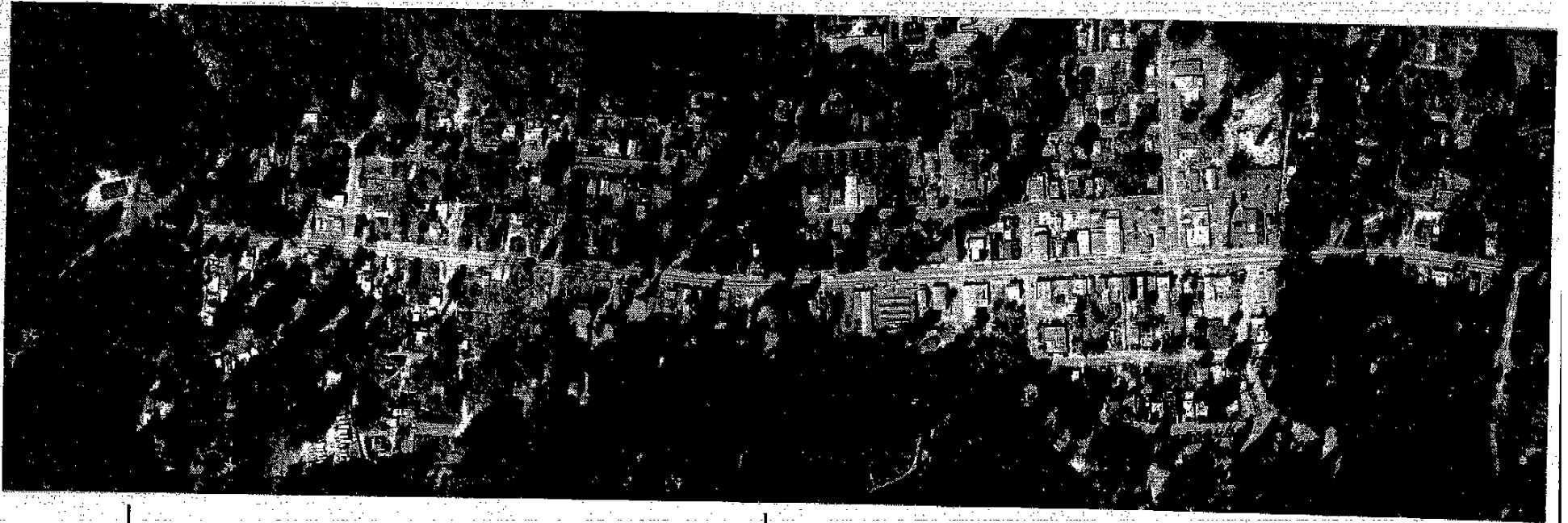


*No facilities for pedestrian or bicycle access exist along Route 9 south of the Village Core.*



CONTEXT MAP





River  
Street

South Village

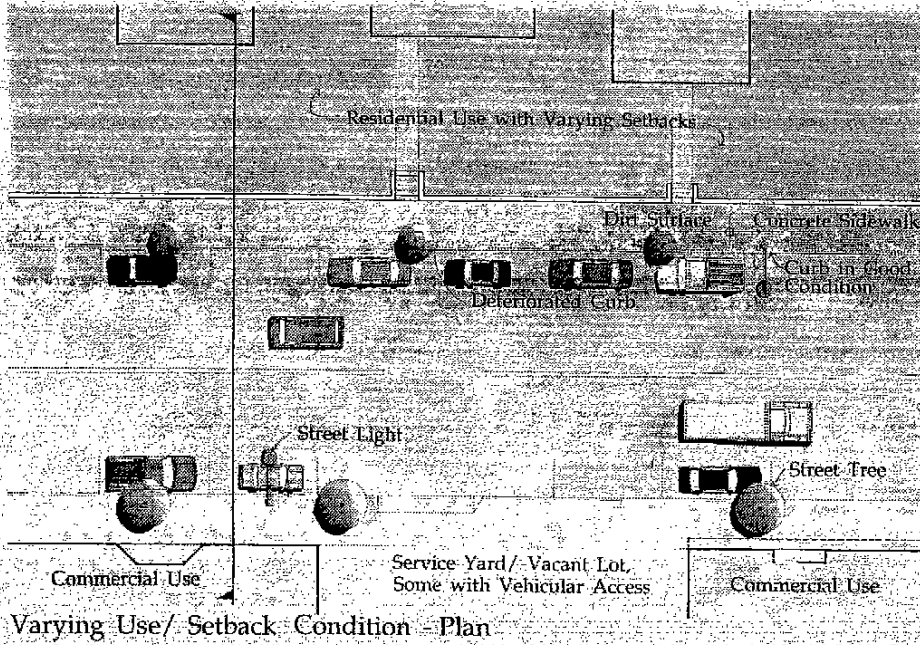
Harmon  
Street

Village Core

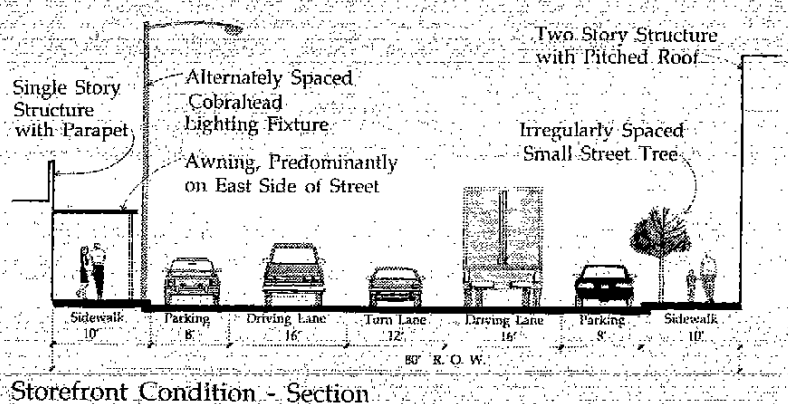
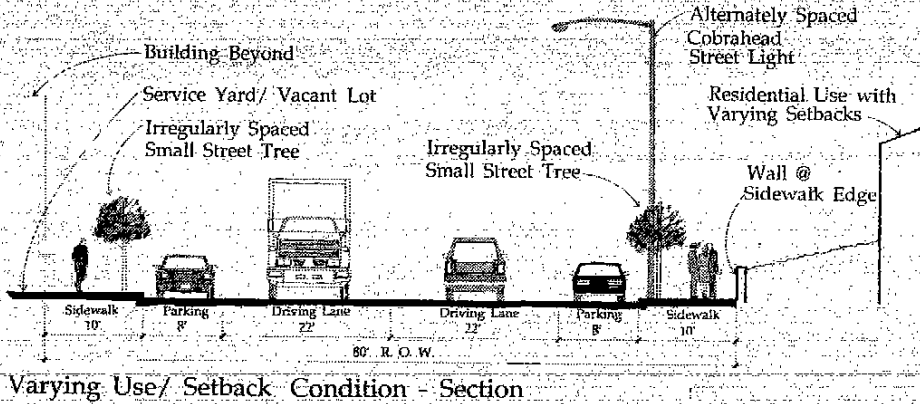
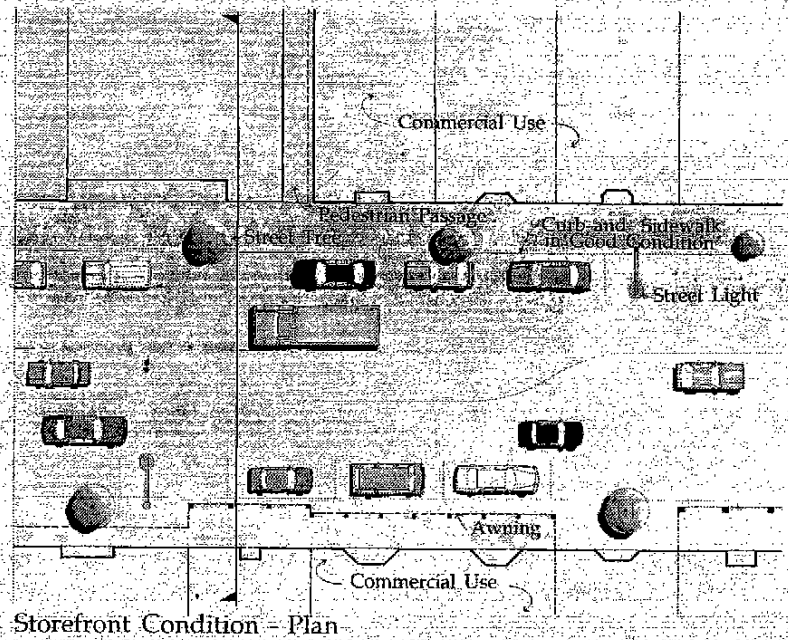
West Park  
Avenue



# South Village



# Village Core



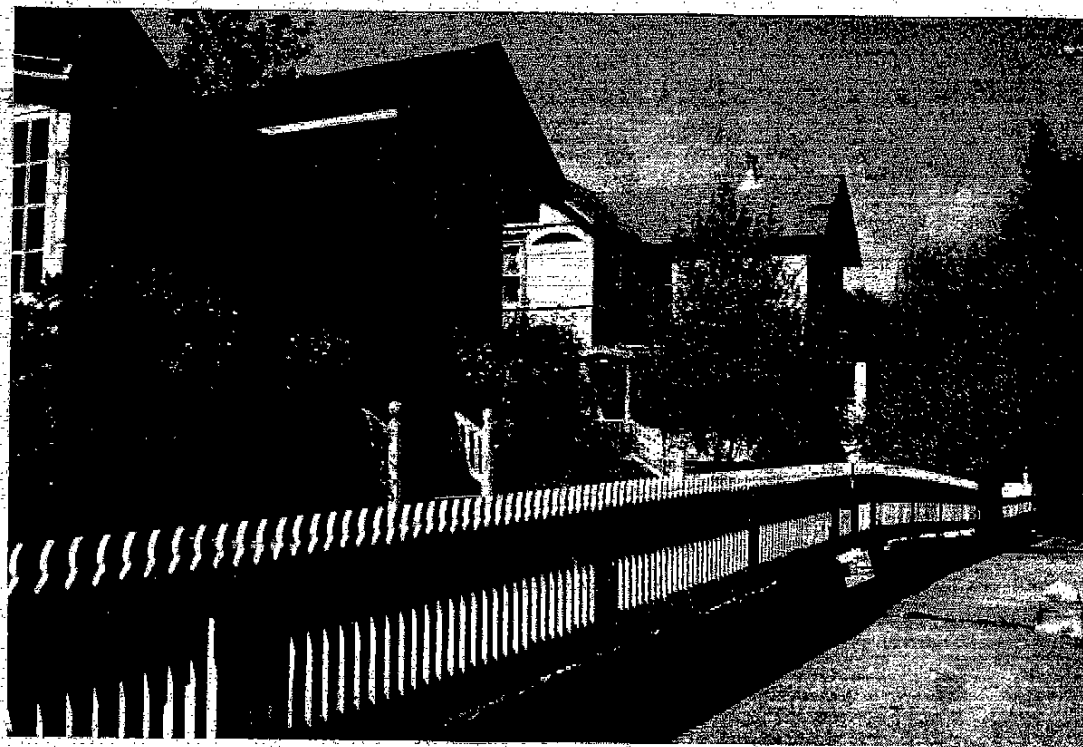


driveways to coordinate vehicular movements or provisions for pedestrians; it is a dangerous condition for both. Homes have attractive front yards with fences or stone walls lining the frontage.

### Outlying Village Areas

There are several concentrated residential areas outside of the Village Core and South Village. The largest of these are the Boulder Creek Country Club, 3 miles north of the Core on Big Basin Way, and Bear Creek Estates, 4 miles east of the Core on Bear Creek Road. With the exception of Boulder Creek Country Club, Bear Creek Estates, and a few other isolated neighborhoods, homes in areas surrounding the Village create a kind of "rustic perimeter." Many were vacation homes which have been converted to year-round residences. The majority of these houses are set back in the woods and built with materials that blend with the landscape - redwood, cedar, and stone.

Houses near the Village are closer together and are parallel to the street, parcels are smaller, ornamental fences define the public right-of-way, and Victorian architectural features predominate. This gradual transition from the outlying areas to the Village Core provides a sense of order and orientation for residents and visitors. It is the development pattern that was typical of turn-of-the-century America, and it contributes greatly to Boulder Creek's overall character.



*Historic houses in the village create "neighborly" streets, with front porches, stoops, and bay windows. Fences are low, yet clearly separate public and private space.*

Redwood Elementary School (opened in the fall of 1991) is located along Route 9 approximately 3 miles north of the Village Core. It serves the growing residential population in this area. The lack of pedestrian and bicycle access between the School and the Village and provisions for a safe crossing from the bus-stop to the school were noted as significant concerns during the workshops.

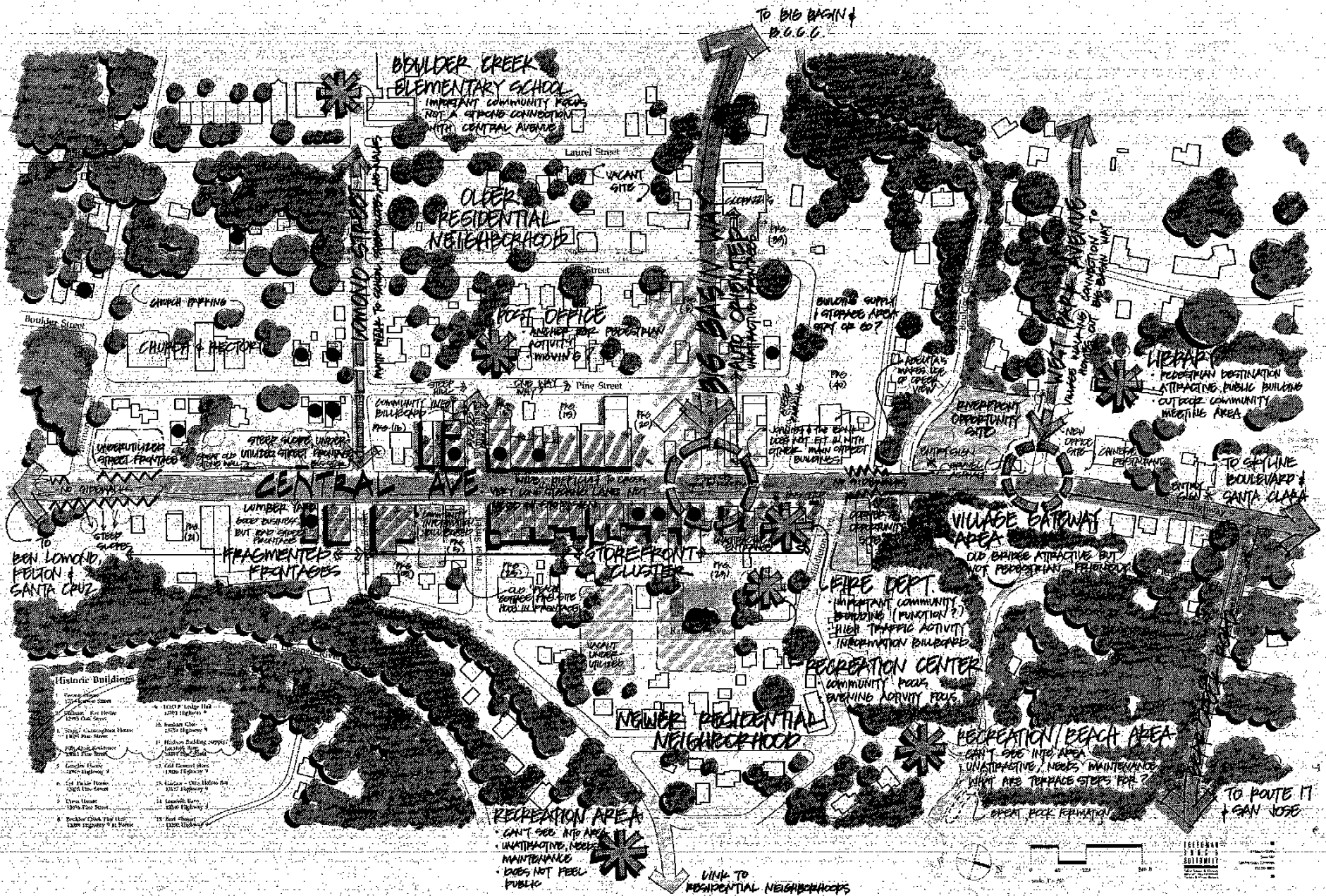
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### Conditions in the Village Core

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#### Land Use and Development Patterns

*Core Commercial District* - Commercial uses are primarily focused on Central Avenue. There are approximately 60 businesses in the Core, containing a total



# EXISTING VILLAGE CHARACTER



of approximately 170,000 square feet of mixed retail, restaurant, and office space. The densest concentration of storefront retail and restaurant businesses is between Big Basin Way and Forest Avenue. The historic roots of Boulder Creek are most evident here. Display windows, building entrances, and "western false front" parapets exhibit the quality of details and craftsmanship common at the turn-of-the-century. The generally narrow widths of storefronts reflect the premium attached to a "Main



*Arcades and canopies are typical of Boulder Creek's storefront buildings.*

Street" frontage. Canopies are a theme along the east side of the street, providing shade from the afternoon sun; they make a significant contribution to the overall character of the district.

"Johnnie's Market" adjacent to Big Basin Way is a destination business that "anchors" the north of the commercial district. There is a comparable combined anchor on the south; Scarborough Lumber and the Redwood Keg Liquor Store generate traffic in numbers significant enough to be designated as an anchor.

The prime commercial location in Boulder Creek is the intersection of Big Basin Way and Central Avenue. The existing Beacon Gas Station could be a prime redevelopment site, if justified by land values and market support. Other corners of the intersection are built out.

At the time the Plan was being written, there were six storefront vacancies along Central Avenue. The limited second floor space was reported to have a number of vacancies as well. Most of these vacancies are on the east side of the street. The former "Simoni's" building at the corner of Middleton and Central Avenue was also partially vacant when the Plan was written. This indicates a process of gradual disinvestment, and/or a mismatch between what landlords are requiring for rents and what tenants can pay.

**Institutional and Public Uses** - These uses are "magnets" which bring people

from surrounding areas to the Village. The Library on West Park Avenue draws people to the north end of the Core. The Post Office "anchors" Forest Avenue (although at the time the Plan was written, it appeared as if the Postal Service would construct a new, much larger facility behind Liberty Bank). Boulder Creek Elementary School is located on Lomond Street, at the South end of the Core four blocks west of Central Avenue (see "Public Facilities," later in this chapter). The Boulder Creek Recreation Hall and Fire Station are located adjacent to Middleton Avenue and provide prime meeting sites for local residents, groups, and organizations.

**Core Residential Areas** - Residential development in the Village is almost exclusively single-family. Existing parcelization supports a density of approximately eight units per net acre. Actual densities are in the range of four to six units per acre. These densities contribute to the village-scale character of the Core's residential streets. However, they are not high enough to support the commercial district with a significant level of "walk-in" business.

**Lodging** - The "Merrybrook Lodge" cabins on Big Basin Way are the only lodging facility within the Village Core. "Brookdale Lodge" is located 1.5 miles south of the Core on Route 9.

**Vacant and Underutilized Lands** - A number of parcels in the Village Core are vacant or "underutilized," meaning they

could be invested in more intensively based on current zoning and/or land values. The easterly frontage of Railroad Avenue is vacant for the most part, cottages along the westerly frontage of Pine Street have some serious maintenance problems, and a relatively large land area along Lorenzo Street is used for storing building supplies and construction equipment. The "Schwarzbach Site" and "Evans Property" north of Bear Creek Bridge are largely vacant.

### Development Potential and Development Constraints

*Potential.* During the workshop process, residents and merchants expressed the need to accommodate expanded commercial services within the Village. A recent revitalization feasibility study (Zephyr Urban Management Associates; 1989) stated that Boulder Creek was in a "moderately active" tourist market and that currently this market was focused towards day trips because of the lack of guest accommodations. The study recommended design and development guidelines to retain the historic character of the community, pedestrian-oriented public improvements, and a coordinated district parking approach. (These recommendations are all provided for by this Plan; see Chapter III).

The study also determined that retail sales leakage for Downtown Boulder Creek was between \$17.4 and \$22.5 million for both resident and tourist expenditures. It

estimated that the community could capture a portion of this leakage and support an additional 170,000 square feet of commercial development. The largest projected increase was in the "General Merchandise" and "Eating and Drinking" categories: 36,000 and 37,000 square feet, respectively.

*Constraints.* Wastewater disposal restrictions are a significant development constraint. Much of the downtown commercial district experiences high groundwater and clay soil, which severely constrain on-site sewage disposal. At least half the businesses utilize sealed holding tanks and must have their sewage pumped out and trucked away. The area has a history of sewage overflows with adverse impacts on public health and water quality. In 1982, the State Regional Water Quality Control Board imposed waste discharge prohibitions which limit on-site waste discharge and preclude any new development or expansion of existing uses.

The County has completed preliminary study of five alternative wastewater management strategies to solve the sewage problem within the study area. They are:

(1) *Continued Use of Existing Haul-Away System* - with disposal at a "common drainfield" site.

(2) *Local Mound Systems* - this alternative would provide a mini-sewer system with ultimate disposal on several drainfield

sites scattered among several vacant parcels in the immediate area.

(3) *Treatment Plan with Local Leachfields* - this alternative is similar to alternative 2 with the exception that the effluent would be treated prior to disposal.

(4) *Harmon Leachfield* - this alternative would provide a sewer collection system to an area immediately west of the Boulder Creek Cemetery at the end of Harmon Street.

(5) *Treatment/Disposal at Boulder Creek Country Club* - this alternative would provide for a sewer system in Boulder Creek and export the sewage to the existing package treatment plant operated at the Boulder Creek Country Club.

Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 are not viable in terms of implementation of the Town Plan. Alternative 4 is only marginally viable due to fixed maximum capacity of 20,000 gallons per day (gpd), and would prevent full implementation of the Town Plan.

Only alternatives 4 and 5 would result in excess treatment capacity for limited, additional development. Alternative 5 would offer as much as 40,000 gallons per day of treatment capacity. Preliminary cost estimates of each alternative are illustrated in Table 2.1.

*Existing parking policies* are another constraint. Current County standards reflect parking needs in a shopping center



**TABLE 2.1  
ESTIMATED COSTS FOR BOULDER CREEK WASTEWATER  
ALTERNATIVES (PRELIMINARY)**

Alternative	Number of Lots Served	Construction Cost		Annual O & M Cost	
		Total	Per Lot	Total	Per Lot
Alt. #1 On-Site Systems/ Haul Away	80	270,00	3,400	114,000	1,400
Alt. #2 Local Mounds	24 (1)	617,000	25,700	30,000	1,250
Alt. #3 Local Leachfields	24 (1)	612,000	25,500	30,000	1,250
Alt. #4 Harmon Leachfield	80	1,542,700	19,300	70,500	880
Alt. #5 Interceptor to Golf Course Facility	120	2,891,800 to 3,397,600	24,100 to 28,300	79,100 to 94,500	660 to 790

rather than in a community commercial district. Storefront buildings of the same size and character as those that exist today are economically infeasible to build or rebuild; e.g. application of these standards has stalled the redevelopment of the burned-down "Peach Cottage" site.

*Residential areas on the perimeter of the Village Core* also limit development potential and commercial expansion. These attractive, high-value properties are located directly adjacent to the commercial district on the east, south, and west. Redeveloping them for commercial

uses is unlikely; existing residential growth controls increase the costs of residential properties, making residential land values competitive with commercial land values.

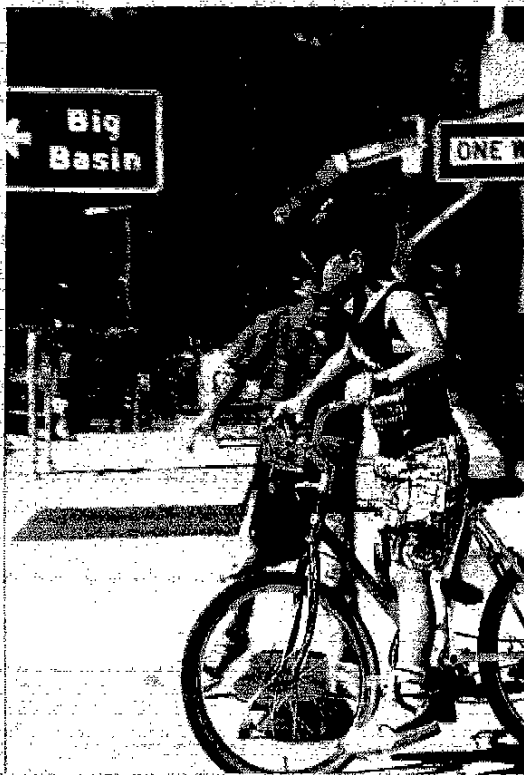
**Circulation, Pedestrian Access, & Parking**

*Central Avenue, Big Basin Way, and Bear Creek Road* - These streets are the "backbone" of the Village circulation network. Average daily traffic (ADT) on Central Avenue/S.R.9 ranges from 11,700

to 13,500 vehicles, reflecting the seasonal variation that accompanies tourism (Cal-Trans, 1989). Big Basin Way/S.R. 236 ranges from 8,200 to 9,100 ADT. Bear Creek Road has an ADT approximately 5,000 vehicles (County of Santa Cruz).

Central Avenue/Big Basin Way is the busiest intersection in the community. The major movement is northbound Route 9 to westbound Big Basin Way and back. It reflects both local traffic, for example between the Village and Boulder Creek Country Club and homes in wooded areas to the west, and non-local traffic, for example between Santa Cruz and Big Basin State Park. The movement from westbound Bear Creek Road to southbound Route 9 to Big Basin Way and back is also relatively heavy. Turn lanes exist on all approaches to the intersection. The "stacking" lane for left turns northbound on Route 9 is longer than needed, however (330 feet/13-15 cars); it was striped when a signal was installed to accommodate heavier traffic in the aftermath of the Loma Prieta Earthquake. With stop signs now reinstalled, it is possible for this stacking lane to be reduced to approximately 75 feet. (This would allow for more room for angled parking; see Village Plan "Public Improvements," Chapter III.)

The stop signs create a "pedestrian-preferred" intersection at Big Basin Way that was to the liking of most all of the participants at the public workshops. The minimal level of pedestrian amenities along the Central Avenue commercial



*Pedestrians, particularly children and the elderly, need safe and visible Route 9 crossings in and adjacent to the Village Core; a crossing should also be provided adjacent to Redwood Elementary School.*

frontage were regarded as a problem, however. Trees are small, and they appear to be stunted from lack of water. Lighting is provided by "cobra head" highway lights. Benches are few, mostly provided by neighboring merchants. Central Avenue is difficult to cross, especially for children and the elderly, as it is 60' wide from curb to curb.

**Pine Street and Railroad Avenue** - Pine and Railroad function, in part, as support streets for the Central Avenue commercial district. They provide access to rear parking areas and adjacent residential properties. In the 70's, Pine Street was made one-way northbound between Lomond Street and Big Basin Way. As intended, this decreased traffic movements at the intersection of Lomond and Pine and reduced the possibility of accidents involving schoolchildren walking to and from Boulder Creek Elementary School. The one-way flow does, however, make circulation in and around the Village Core more difficult for shoppers looking for a place to park, and adds "circling" movements to the already relatively heavy flow of traffic along Central Avenue.

Railroad Avenue is a less busy street. It is used primarily by local traffic between residential areas east of the Village Core and Route 9. For those "in the know," it provides a bypass of the Central Avenue commercial district for through-traffic on Route 9, as well as traffic serving the pizza restaurant, existing businesses on Railroad Avenue, and the parking areas on the east side of Central Avenue.

**Lomond Street, Middleton Street, and West Park Avenue** - These streets figure prominently in both pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns. Lomond connects to Boulder Creek Elementary School, Middleton to the "Junction" beach area, and West Park to the Library and residential areas west of the Village.

There are no sidewalks along the streets today, which create significant pedestrian and vehicular conflicts.

Participants at the workshops were particularly concerned with creating pedestrian access along Lomond Street and West Park Avenue. Lomond has a steep grade that encourages speeding. Accidents involving children crossing Central Avenue at Lomond were cited during the workshops, with many people supportive of installing a stop sign or signal at the intersection. West Park is preferred over Big Basin Way for walking or biking to the Village because there is less traffic, though automobile speeds were noted as a problem.

**Boulder Creek Bridge** - Pedestrian connections to the Library and commercial uses north of the Bridge are a problem. Existing walks along Central Avenue to



*Pine Street should be redesignated for two-way traffic to enhance circulation, especially access to rear-block parking areas.*

the south do not connect to walks on the Bridge; on the east side of the street the walk ends at Lorenzo Street, next to "Adelita's" restaurant, and on the west it ends at Middleton next to the Fire Station.

The walks on the Bridge are narrow, do not have railings to separate pedestrians from moving traffic, and are unlighted. Gravel paths north of the Bridge do provide some accommodation for pedestrians.

**Parking** - The overall supply of parking in the Village Core, including on-street and off-street spaces, is somewhat less than is needed to serve the square footage of existing commercial space. There are approximately 465 spaces today: 200 spaces on-street and 265 in off-street lots. At an average shared-parking ratio of 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet of space, the 170,000 square feet of commercial space in the Village Core requires 510 spaces (170 X 3). This results in a deficit of 45 spaces for the Village as a whole (510 - 465); in other words, the parking supply needs to be increased by about 10%.

Merchants and other members of the community agree that parking is a serious problem involving both the efficient distribution of existing parking and a need for additional parking in the commercial area. It is also a constraint on the commercial vitality of the district. This probably stems from the *distribution* of parking, currently concentrated adjacent to Big Basin Way and Lorenzo Street at

the north end of the district. The most obvious distribution problem affects the easterly frontage of Central Avenue, where there are houses rather than parking areas to the rear of commercial buildings in the central portion of the block. Another area where parking is problematic is on Pine Street between Lomohd Street and Big Basin Way. Both on- and off-street parking needs to be addressed.

"Parking streets" like Lorenzo and Forest add to the sense of parking availability, especially on the west side of the district. The angled parking lot between "McDonald's" and Beacon Gas looks like a parking street even though it is a private lot. Forest is the most notable and lively. Its angled parking, active shops, and balance between pedestrians and cars is a model for what other streets in the district could be like.

The one-way movement on Pine and the relative invisibility of some of the surface lots, on the other hand, decrease the sense of parking availability there. The parking lot accessed from the east side of the Big Basin Way intersection, for example, is at one of the most visible locations in the Core, yet it is not identified clearly by signage. Gravel lots behind stores on the west side of Central Avenue are not particularly attractive or efficient in terms parking layout. Appropriately located and sized Park and Ride lot(s) may be beneficial to both merchants and local neighborhoods.

## Public Facilities

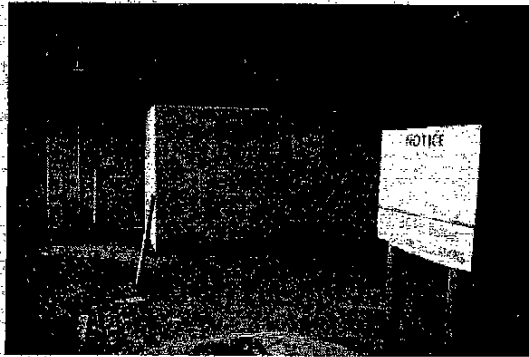
**Buildings and Meeting Places** - Important buildings include the Post Office, Library, Boulder Creek Elementary School, Fire Station, and Recreation Hall. The existing Post Office is planned to be vacated and another site will be selected within the Village for a larger facility (see Village Plan).

The Library, School, Fire Station, and Rec Hall each provide a share of the communal facilities needed by the community. The School, the Station, and Rec Hall host public meetings, pancake breakfasts, etc. The amphitheater behind the Library offers a quiet setting for public outdoor gatherings.

Participants at the workshops expressed a need, however, for a single central facility in which to hold community meetings, have functions for teens and adults, and generally serve as the social hub of the community. (One resident, noting the difficulty newcomers have meeting people, commented that she met her next-door neighbor for the first time by coincidence at a tot lot in Santa Cruz, where both families had driven for their children to play.)

Participants also indicated a desire for a Village green or plaza for outdoor events, similar to the Plaza that used to exist on the Fire Station site. The one-acre Schwarzbach Realty building site at the





*Existing Junction facilities need improvement and maintenance.*

corner of West Park Avenue and Route 9 has served this function for years, however it is privately owned and is likely some day to be developed.

**Recreation** - Public recreation facilities include the two beach parks, the play areas at Boulder Creek Elementary School, and a "tot lot" in front of the Recreation Hall.

The beach parks and the tot lot are in need of renovation. The rock formations and creekside setting of the "Junction" beach park make it a unique community asset. At one time, the creek was dammed during summers and the Junction was the community "swimming hole," site of fishing contests, and general center of Village recreational activity. Today, the parking lot, rest rooms, picnic area, and signage have a run-down appearance and need renovation and higher levels of maintenance. The parking area obscures the beach beyond; a number of newer

residents were unaware there was a beach there at all. The ramp down to the beach is steep and slippery when covered with sand. The concrete terraces are also steep, and out of character with the more natural qualities of the surroundings.

The beach park adjacent to Lomond Street is not as heavily used as the Junction, though it is also an attractive area. Access to the riverside is down a steep slope. Visibility of both of the beach areas is low, contributing to a sense among some in the community that the areas are not safe.

The tot lot in front of the Rec Hall is reportedly not used in proportion to the number of the children in the community. At a minimum, new play equipment is needed to make it more attractive. Its location next to the asphalt parking area for the Fire Station is also a problem; a better, more attractive location would encourage its use.

Park and recreation issues are within the jurisdiction of the Boulder Creek Recreation District. The Park District is governed by a directly-elected Board, and is an independent public agency. A master plan for improvements identified in this Plan would have to be prepared by or with the cooperation of the Park District.

### III. VILLAGE PLAN

The overall objective of the Village Plan is to preserve the unique character of Boulder Creek while strengthening the social and economic role of the Village Core. Policies and physical improvements for the Village Core are the focus of the Specific Plan. They are illustrated by the "Village Plan."

This plan reflects a compromise between two long term development options, the "Mixed Corridor/Limited Village" and the "Full Service Village" (see following pages). The Plan contains policies to concentrate commercial services in the Village Core while also accommodating them south along Route 9.

#### Village Plan Objectives

*Summary.* Plan Objectives reflect the three subareas identified in Chapter II: "Village Core," "South Village," and "Outlying Village Areas." They provide the foundation for the Plan's public improvement and development policies.

#### 1. Village Core

- a. *Install public improvements to create a pedestrian-oriented environment.*
- b. *Concentrate commercial development in the Core to include the east side of Pine Street and Big Basin Way; retain businesses, and encourage property renova-*

*tion and redevelopment with supportive parking policies and improvements.*

- c. *Preserve the scale and character of the Village Core's residential areas.*
- d. *Use new and improved park and recreation facilities, in particular a Community Center, to increase the Village's social and commercial "draw."*
- e. *"Anchor" the Village Core on the north and south with public or private-sector investment as opportunities arise.*

#### 2. South Village

- a. *Coordinate the form of development and install public improvements along Route 9 to create an attractive "Rural Boulevard" that provides for pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Village Core.*
- b. *Discourage new commercial development which will dilute the concentration of goods and services in the Village Core, while at the same time maintaining the existing mixed use.*
- c. *Preserve the scale and character of the South Village's residential areas.*
- d. *Recognize and encourage the preservation and enhancement of those aspects of this area which contain historic value and merit.*

#### 3. Outlying Village Areas

- a. *Extend pedestrian and bicycle connections out from the Village as feasible, in particular north to Redwood Elementary School and west on West Park Avenue to Loma Linda Avenue.*
- b. *Maintain a rustic character of residential development in areas surrounding the Village.*
- c. *Establish bike lanes from the Core area to Big Basin State Park.*

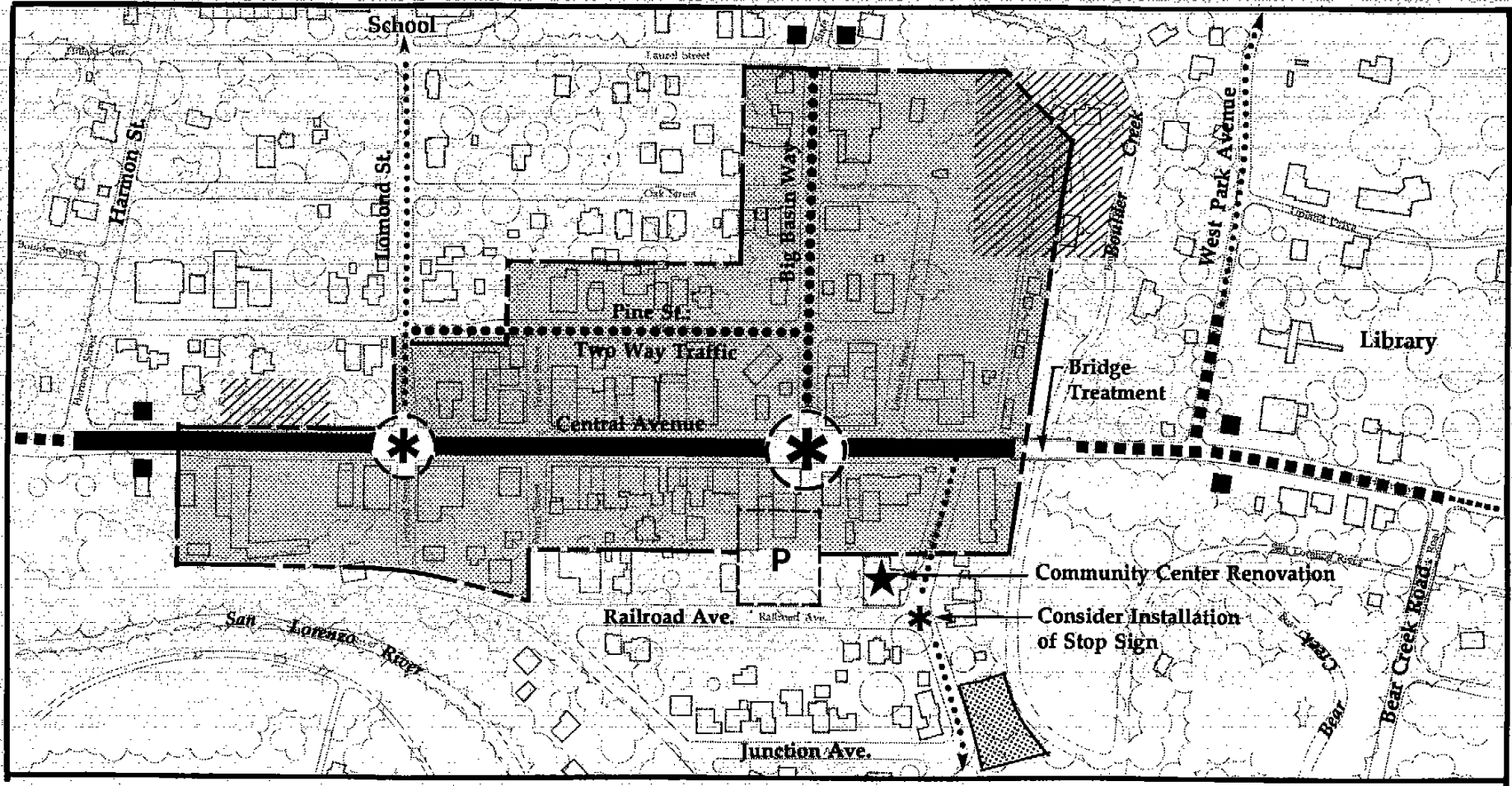
#### Village Core Policies

##### 1. "Community Commercial District"

This district, as illustrated on the Village Plan, is consistent with the Santa Cruz County General Plan regarding "Community Commercial" districts. According to section 6.2.2, the intent is:

*"to provide Community Commercial areas with definite boundaries such that the concentration of public and private investment and planning effort will result in more viable commercial areas which serve a role as special places for working, shopping and cultural activities and which increase the efficient use of transportation."*

"Village Core Commercial" development standards and guidelines apply to this



**LEGEND**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Community Commercial District</li> <li> Beach/Junction Area Improvements</li> <li> Housing Opportunity Areas</li> <li> "Village Main Street"<br/>New Trees, Lights, Angled Parking</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> "Rural Boulevard"<br/>New Trees, Lights, Ped. &amp; Bike Paths</li> <li> "Support Commercial Street"<br/>New Trees, Lights, Walk</li> <li> "Village Connector Street"<br/>New Walks</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> "Highway/Bikeway"<br/>New Bike Lanes; Continue to Redwood School</li> <li> Special Intersection Improvements</li> <li> Potential Parking Area</li> <li> Entry Markers</li> </ul> |
|---|--|--|

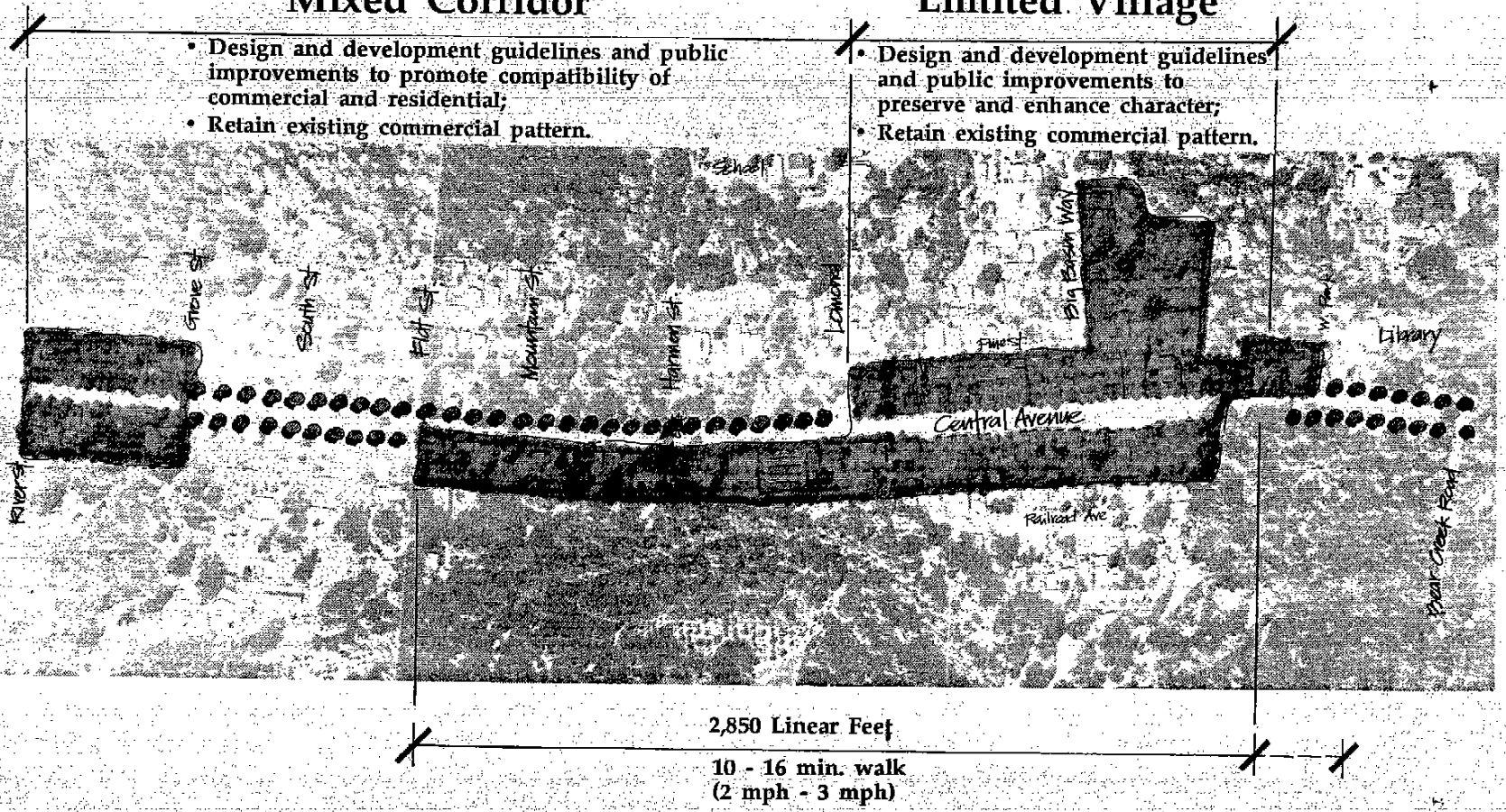
**VILLAGE PLAN**

## "Mixed Corridor"

- Design and development guidelines and public improvements to promote compatibility of commercial and residential;
- Retain existing commercial pattern.

## "Limited Village"

- Design and development guidelines and public improvements to preserve and enhance character;
- Retain existing commercial pattern.



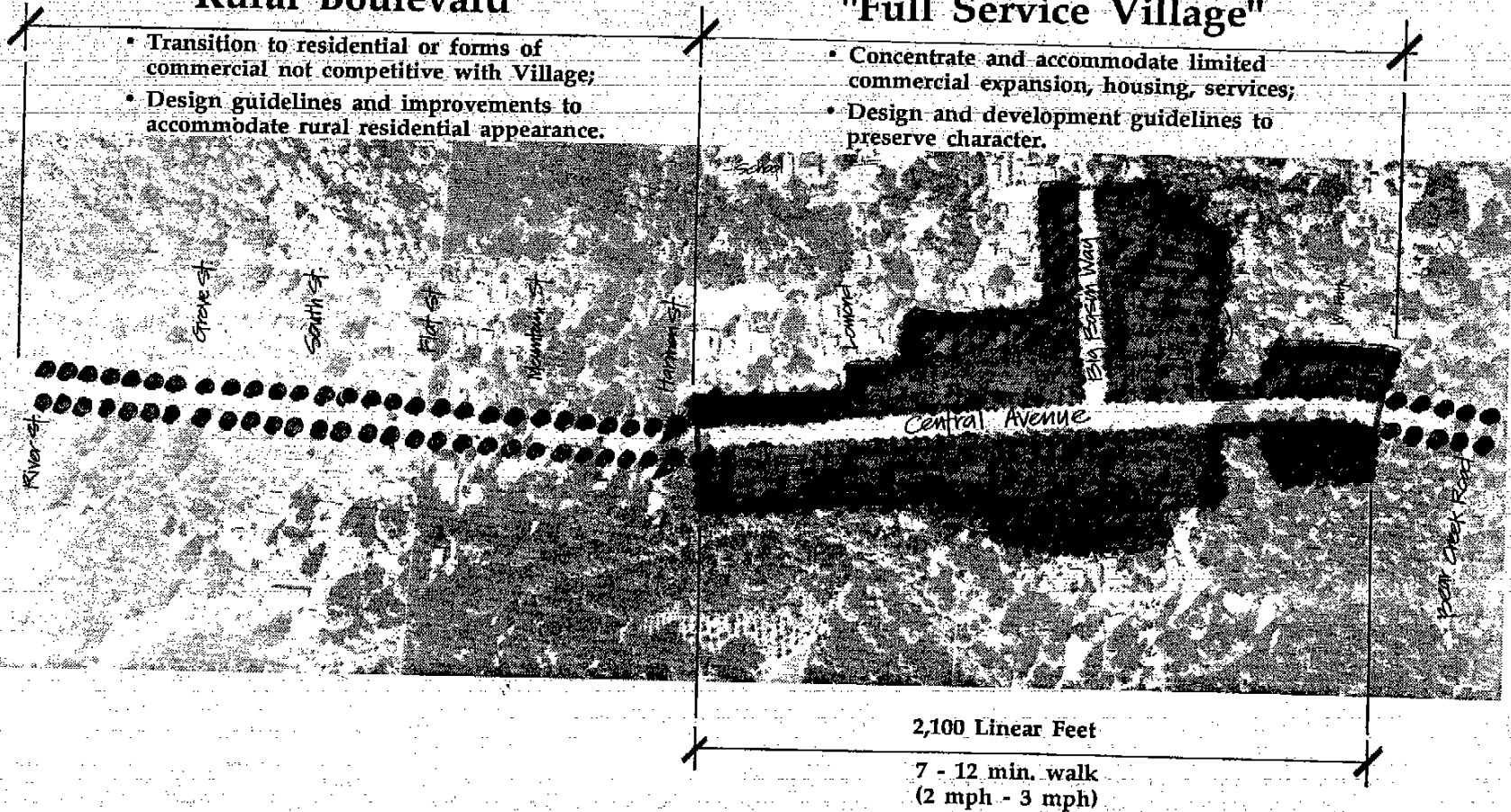
2,850 Linear Feet  
 10 - 16 min. walk  
 (2 mph - 3 mph)

## "Rural Boulevard"

- Transition to residential or forms of commercial not competitive with Village;
- Design guidelines and improvements to accommodate rural residential appearance.

## "Full Service Village"

- Concentrate and accommodate limited commercial expansion, housing, services;
- Design and development guidelines to preserve character.





area. The policy recommendations in this section reflect the General Plan and the Village Core objectives listed above.

## 2. Focus Improvements and Development

Future public and private development and revitalization efforts should be focused in the Core Commercial area. They should promote the Core as a place where people come and spend some time, rather than drive in for one purpose and leave. Public improvements should be concentrated and reduced, and flexible parking requirements should be applied to encourage private sector investment (see "Village Core Parking Recommendations" later in this chapter). Strip commercial development south along Highway 9 should remain limited to existing commercial sites only.

## 3. Create Facade Improvement and Parking Signage Programs

Programs should be developed which would upgrade the physical appearance of buildings within the district and help visitors find parking. A facade improvement program should provide for both architectural and construction assistance. An architectural firm could be hired by the County to provide designs, consistent with the historic styles of the district. The County and the landowner or tenant then could match funds for materials and construction up to a specified limit.

A similar approach should be explored for parking signage, in conjunction with a "Merchants Cooperative Parking Association" (see Parking Recommendations). The County would provide assistance to establish a design theme for directional and parking lot signs, with costs of installation shared.



*Parking areas should be shared among businesses and upgraded to include signage, night lighting, and shade trees.*

## 4. Retain and Promote Investment

The County and local merchants should retain a "Village(s) Coordinator" who would perform ombudsman/promotion duties, resolving landlord-tenant disputes and promoting the occupation of existing vacant spaces. Perceptions regarding rent levels, County policies, and the general business environment need to be explored and clarified to ensure that the Village Core remains a vital businesses environment. "Creeping disinvestment" in the form of vacancies should be

halted, in part by expanding the commercial core.

## 5. Accommodate Commercial District Expansion

Expansion of the Community Commercial District is allowed under General Plan Policy 6.2.8, but only when the Community Commercial District is unable to accommodate additional activity through (1) redevelopment of existing structures or (2) construction on undeveloped parcels.

The Specific Plan provides for existing commercial zoning to be expanded in the Village Core, consistent with the County General Plan. The "Village Commercial" designation extends along the easterly frontage of Pine Street, the easterly frontage of Big Basin Way, and north from Big Basin Way across Lorenzo Street to the banks of Bear Creek. Development Standards and Design Guidelines (Chapter IV) ensure that new development will reflect the historic qualities of the district.

Redevelopment of existing structures and construction on undeveloped parcels throughout the commercial district would yield approximately 85,000 square feet of additional commercial space. This estimate includes redevelopment of the Pine Street and Big Basin Way frontages noted above, Scarborough Lumber, the Schwarzbach and Evans properties, Beacon gas, the gas station site on the

east side of Big Basin Way, and properties to the north of Boulder Creek.

Development estimates are based on a floor-area-ratio (FAR) of .35:1, a typical ratio for commercial development with surface parking. This amount of development should be sufficient to accommodate growth needs for the near future.

### 6. Anchor the District

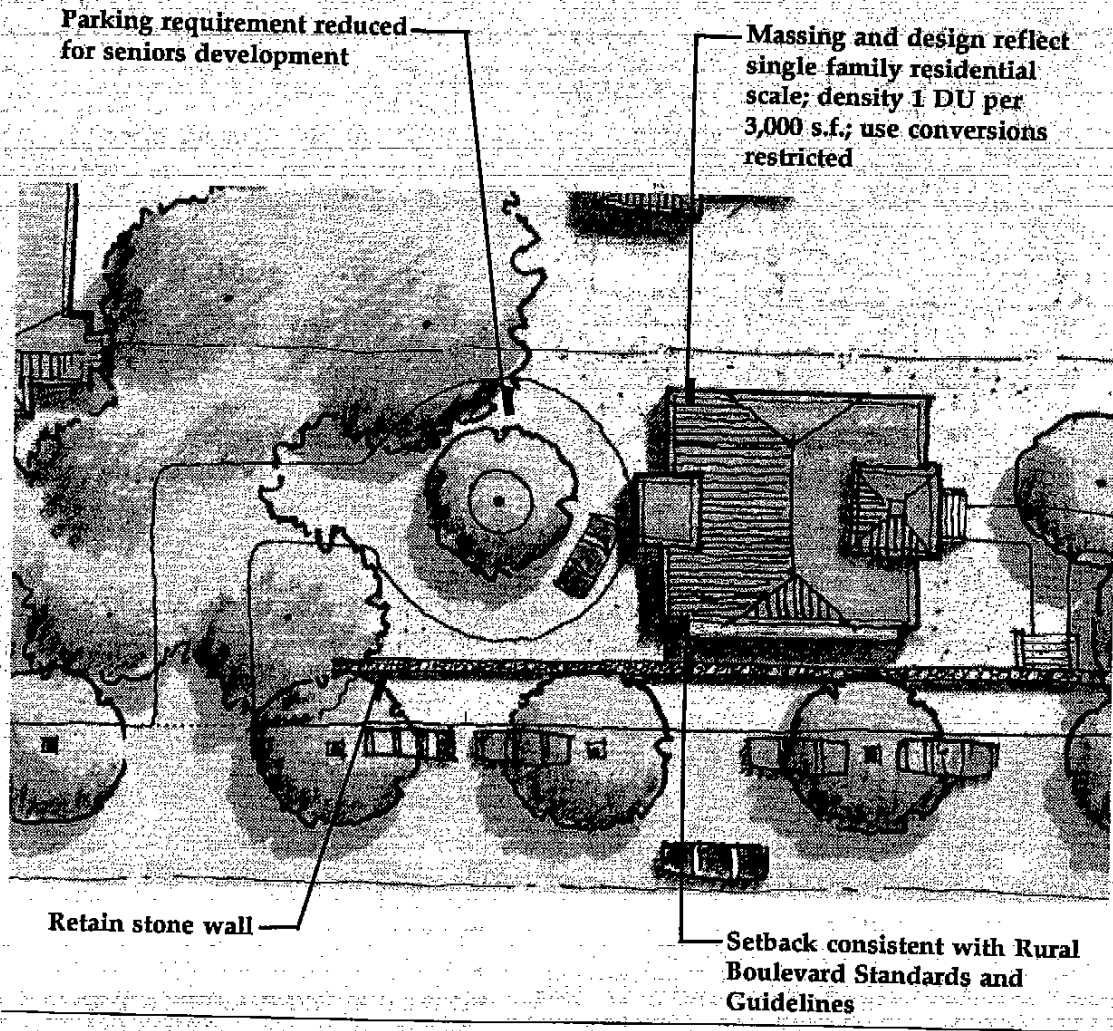
New development (public or private sector) should be guided to anchor Central Avenue at the north and south with activity-generating uses. This would encourage pedestrians to circulate back and forth through the commercial district. It would consolidate the development pattern that already exists, with the Library and Rec Hall on the north and Boulder Creek Elementary School on the south.

The Village Plan diagram illustrates the concept of anchoring the district and indicates potential types of development. Senior housing or lodging is an option for the Central Avenue frontage adjacent to the stone wall on the south end of the Core. Lodging, a Community Center, or additional commercial development would be appropriate on the north.

### 7. Preserve and Enhance District Character

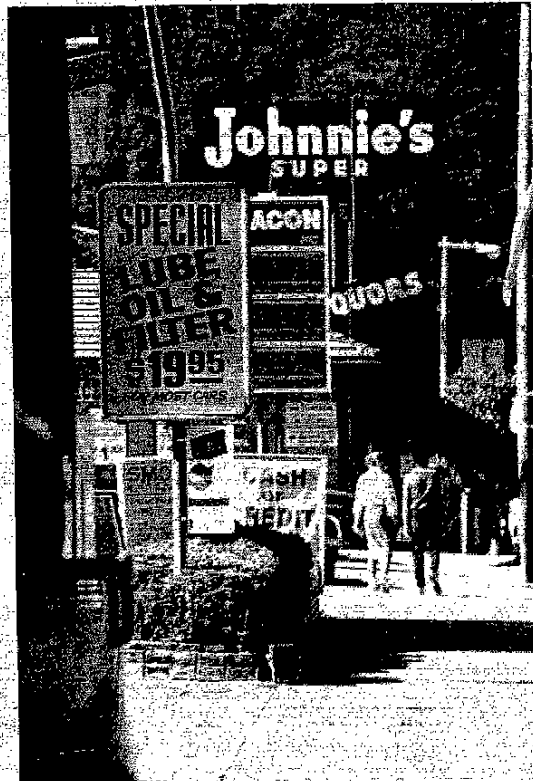
The Plan's standards and guidelines are based on the historic forms of develop-

## Seniors Residential at South End of Village Core



ment within the Village. They will help ensure that new development complements the old. More is needed, however. Important places and landmarks within the Village, like the stone wall adjacent to

Lomond Street along Route 9, or the landmark redwoods adjacent to Harmon Street, should be preserved. Highly visible sites with "strip commercial" development should be encouraged to



*Signs in Boulder Creek should reflect the village's historic building styles and forms; these do not.*

redevelop with storefront commercial uses. Unsightly loading and storage areas should be screened.

### **8. Preserve the Form of Residential Areas**

The forms of building and the transition between homes and the public right-of-way characteristic of the Core's older homes should be retained. New residen-

tial development or renovation must be compatible with the Core's older homes. Houses should be parallel to the street, with traditional roof and window forms. The transition to the street should have several layers - porch, front yard, fence and sidewalk. (This is the same form of development recommended for the "Rural Boulevard" area; see Guidelines sketch, Chapter IV.)

### **9. Preserve Historic Resources**

The County of Santa Cruz and the Village of Boulder Creek shall seek to preserve sufficient historic resources, in number and type, which evoke the historic character of the significant stages of Boulder Creek's history.

The "Churches Hill Downtown Historic District" shall be established to encourage the preservation of that historic neighborhood which exemplifies the historic character of Boulder Creek's original residential core.

Incentive programs specifically designated to encourage rehabilitation and preservation should be implemented, to provide for the protection of historic structures.

### **10. Encourage Community Awareness of Local History**

The County of Santa Cruz and the Village of Boulder Creek shall seek to

promote community awareness of local history and historic architecture.

### **11. Establish Design Standards for Historic Districts**

The County of Santa Cruz and the Village of Boulder Creek shall encourage conformance to appropriate design standards and existing uses of any infill. To promote the enhancement of the Churches Hill Historic District, design guidelines shall be developed for the modification of existing structures and the construction of new structures within the district.

To promote the enhancement of the Churches Hill Historic District, a design review process shall be implemented for the modification of existing structures as well as for new construction.

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### **Community Design & Public Improvement Recommendations**

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Recommendations fall into two categories. The first involves improvements to public rights-of-way, or streetscape improvements. These include improvements along Route 9 in the Village Core and Rural Boulevard areas, as well as improvements to Village connector streets, intersections, entries, and the Boulder Creek Bridge.

The second category of recommendations relates to the renovation of existing or development of new public facilities,



such as the Beach/Junction Park, construction of a Community Center/Town Green, and a wastewater treatment system.

Public improvement recommendations are described below and are summarized in Table 3.1. Estimated Village Plan construction and program costs are summarized in Table 3.2.

### I. Improvements to Public Rights-of-Way

**A. Village Core Community Commercial District** - Improvements are intended to enhance the district as a pedestrian-scaled shopping and community services destination. Improvements are also intended to revitalize the commercial core and to complement historic architectural themes, both commercial and residential.

Unless specifically designated otherwise, the improvements noted in this Town Plan are intended to be implemented as a complete package (curbs, gutters, sidewalks, shade trees, lighting, and angled parking).

1) **Angled Parking (AP)** - Restripe angled parking

2) **Shade Trees (ST)** - Shade trees should be planted at approximately 40' on center. Tree pits should have 4' by 4' ornamental metal grates or protective curbs and tree guards. Exist-



*Central Avenue has sufficient curb-to-curb width to accommodate angle parking within the Village Core; however, traffic speeds would need to be slowed entering and within the area.*

ing street trees should be removed. Trees should be irrigated.

3) **Pedestrian-Scale Streetlights (SL)** - "Post top" or "acorn" street lights are proposed throughout most of the area; 13' is the recommended height, and 60' on center is the recommended spacing.

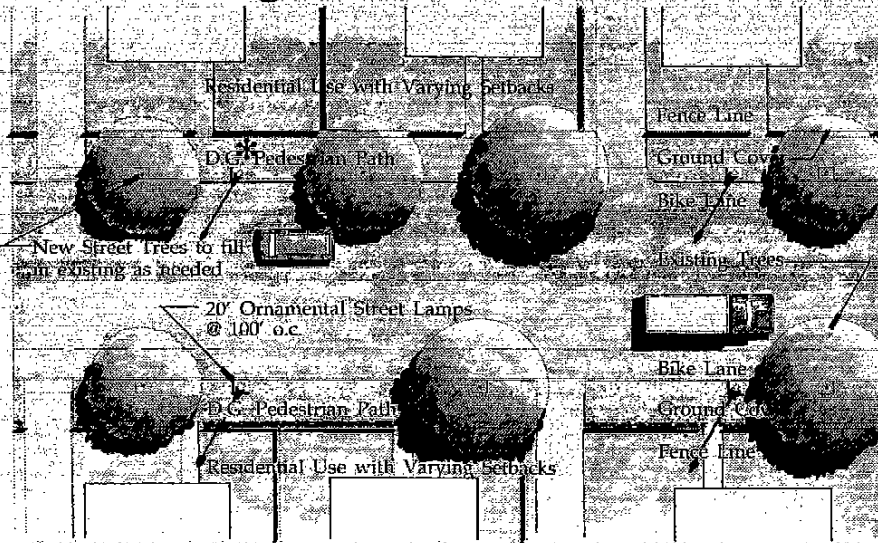
4) **Sidewalks (SW)** - Grade-separated concrete sidewalks.

5) **Forest Street and Pine Street 2-Way** - Pine Street should be signed and

striped for 2-way traffic between Forest Street and Big Basin Way. Forest Street should be striped for 2-way traffic. This change in traffic movements must be coupled with the construction of a pedestrian sidewalk along the south side of Lomond Street.

**B. Intersection Improvements** - Intersections are important in terms of pedestrian safety and community image, as well as traffic circulation. Proposed improvements attempt to balance these factors.

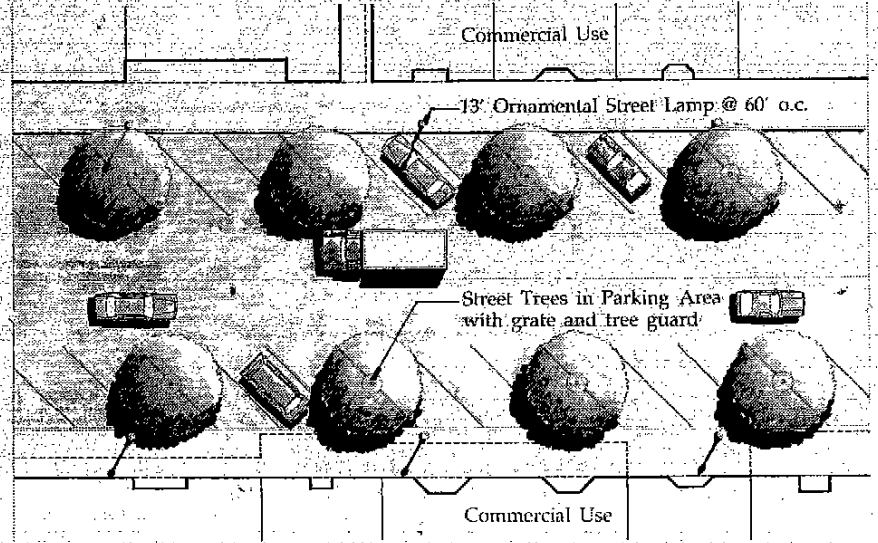
# South Village / Rural Boulevard



Plan

\* Decomposed Granite

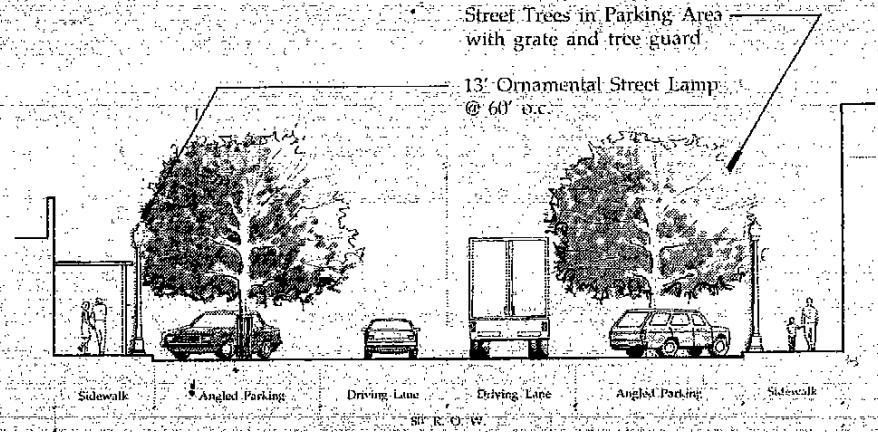
# Village Core



Plan



Section



Section

**Table 3.1  
Public Improvement Recommendations**

Street	AP	ST	SL	SW
Central Avenue (West Park Ave. on north to Flat St. on south)	X (1)	X	X	X
Pine Street (Big Basin Way to Lomond St.)		X (2)	X	X
Forest Street		X	X	X
Big Basin Way (Laurel St. to Central Ave.)		X	X	X
Middleton Avenue (Central Ave. to Railroad)			X	X
Middleton Avenue (Railroad to Junction Park)			X (4)	X (4)
Lomond Street (Central Ave. to BC Elementary School)			X	X
Lomond Street (Junction with Railroad Ave. to Junction Park)			X (4)	X (4)
Railroad Avenue		X	X (3,4)	X (4)
West Park Avenue			X (5)	X (5)

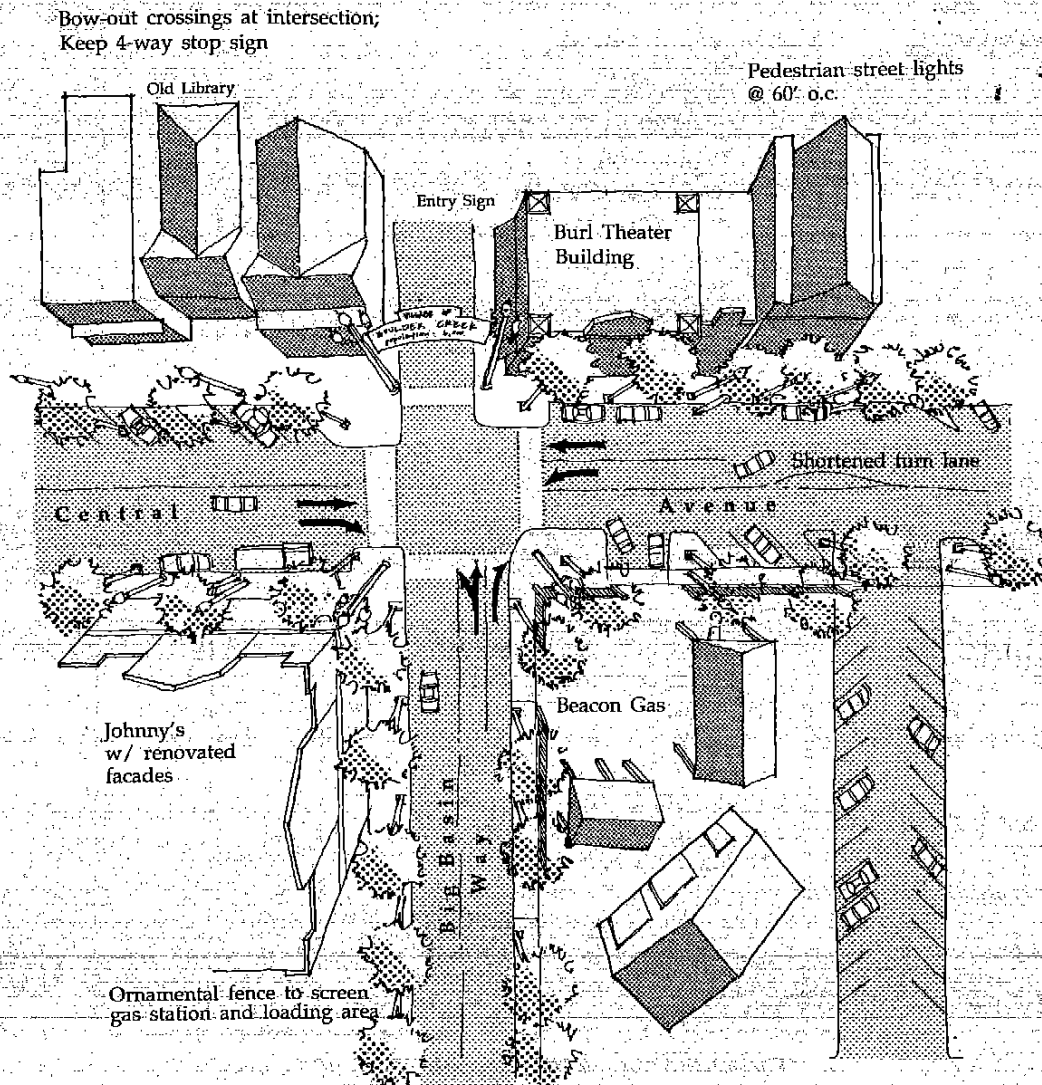
- (1) Shade trees should be planted to alternate between the sidewalks in the parking area between every three angled parking spaces. No angled parking north of bridge.  
 (2) East side from Big Basin Way to Forest Street, and no street trees from Forest Street to Lomond Street.  
 (3) Timers for street lights, to allow the lights to be turned off during normal sleeping hours, are recommended.  
 (4) Sidewalks of decomposed granite and street lights 13' on 100' centers.  
 (5) From Highway 9 to the library.

**Table 3.2  
Construction and Program Cost Estimates (1)**

	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)	(000's)
<b>Street Improvements</b>				
- Village Core	720			
- Rural Boulevard	610			
- Village Connector Streets				
· Lomond Street	41			
· Middleton Avenue	31			
· West Park Avenue (3,800 LF)	53			
- Route 9 Bike Lane (striping only vs. additional asphalt paving)	42	- 421		
- Redwood School Pedestrian Over-crossing	500			
<b>Subtotal</b>			\$1,997	- 2,376
<b>Intersection Improvements</b>				
- Big Basin Way	77			
- Lomond Street (2)	7			
- Middleton/Railroad (2)	—			
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$84
<b>Village Entries</b>				
- Entry Markers (Three Pair)	27			
- Bridge Improvements	48			
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$75
<b>Beach/Junction Area Renovation</b>			\$154	- 244
<b>Community Center Renovation</b>				\$650
<b>Facade Improvement Program (3)</b>				\$247
<b>Parking Signage Program</b>				\$20
<b>Construction and Program Costs</b>			\$3,227	- 3,696
<b>Project Cost (35% of Construction Costs)</b>			\$1,036	- 1,200
<b>Total Cost</b>			\$4,263	- 4,896

- (1) Sewage system is a separate County budget item.  
 (2) Stop signs installation costs to be determined.  
 (3) 58 businesses total/assumes 65% participation at \$6,500 per business.

## Central Avenue / Big Basin Way - Trees, Walks, Screen Fence and Entry Sign



1) *Central Avenue / Big Basin Way* - The existing four-way stop sign is good for pedestrians trying to negotiate the intersection and should be retained. Corner curb "bow-outs" are proposed for crosswalks to increase safety and shorten the crossing distance. A Village "entry sign" should be installed over the driveway on the east side of the intersection to identify parking and provide a landmark that welcomes visitors.

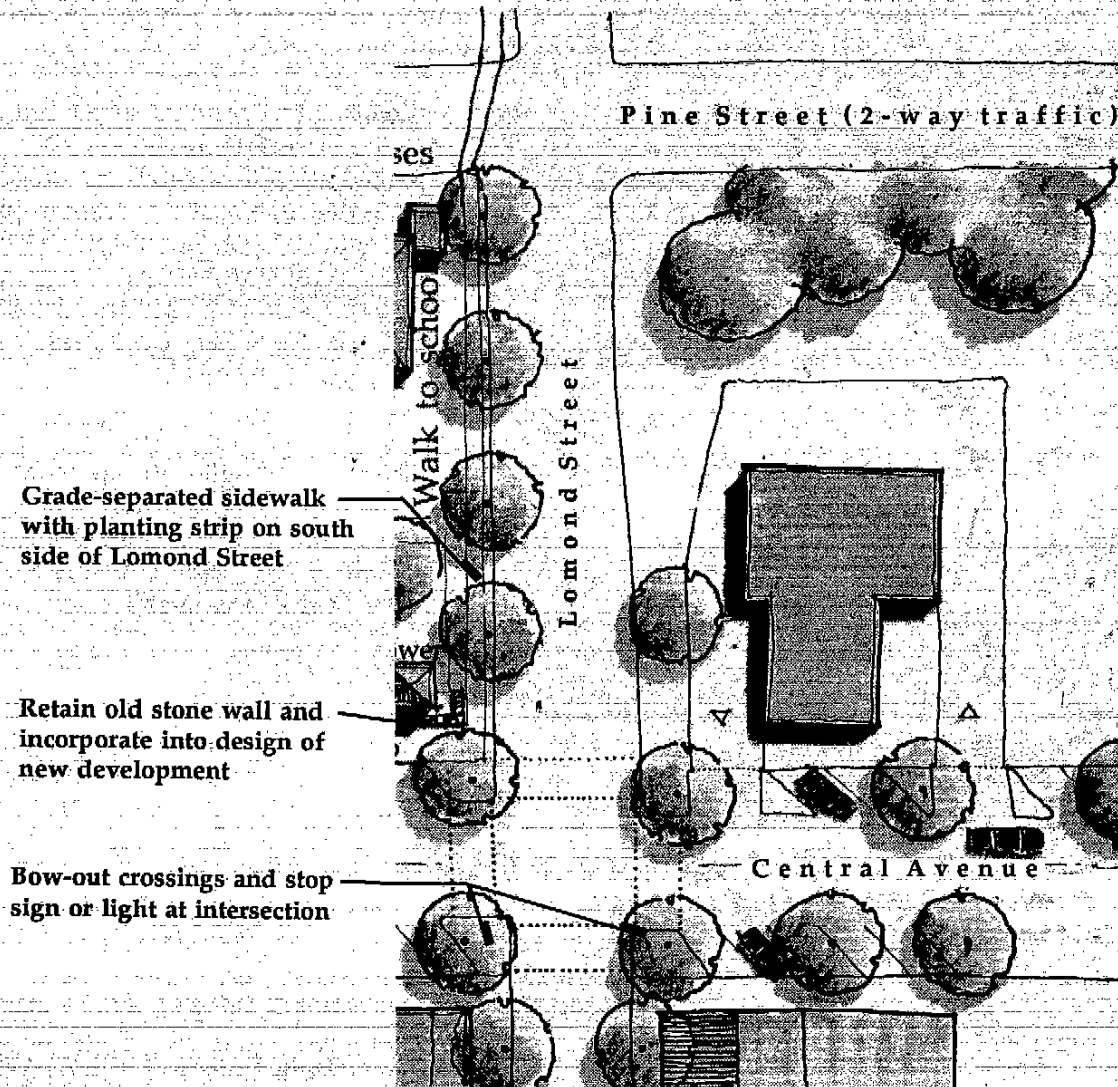
2) *Central Avenue / Lomond Street* - A four-way stop sign or traffic signal is proposed for this intersection. This will provide a safe crossing for children en route to Boulder Creek Elementary School, and will help to slow traffic as it enters the Village Core from the south. "Bow-outs" are proposed for crosswalks on Central Avenue.

3) *Harmon Street / Boulder Street / Pine Street* - This intersection needs further study to analyze traffic flows and safety. Such a study should be undertaken.

**C. Village Entries** - Landmarks and additional Village Entry Signs are proposed to add community identity and signal traffic to slow down as it approaches the district.

1) *Entry Markers* - should be located at the three major entries into the Village Core: Central Avenue to the north and the south, and Big Basin Way near

## Central Avenue / Lomond Street Intersection



Laurel Street on the west. Markers should be made of ornamental wood, precast concrete, or field stone. "The Bear" should be preserved in its present location.

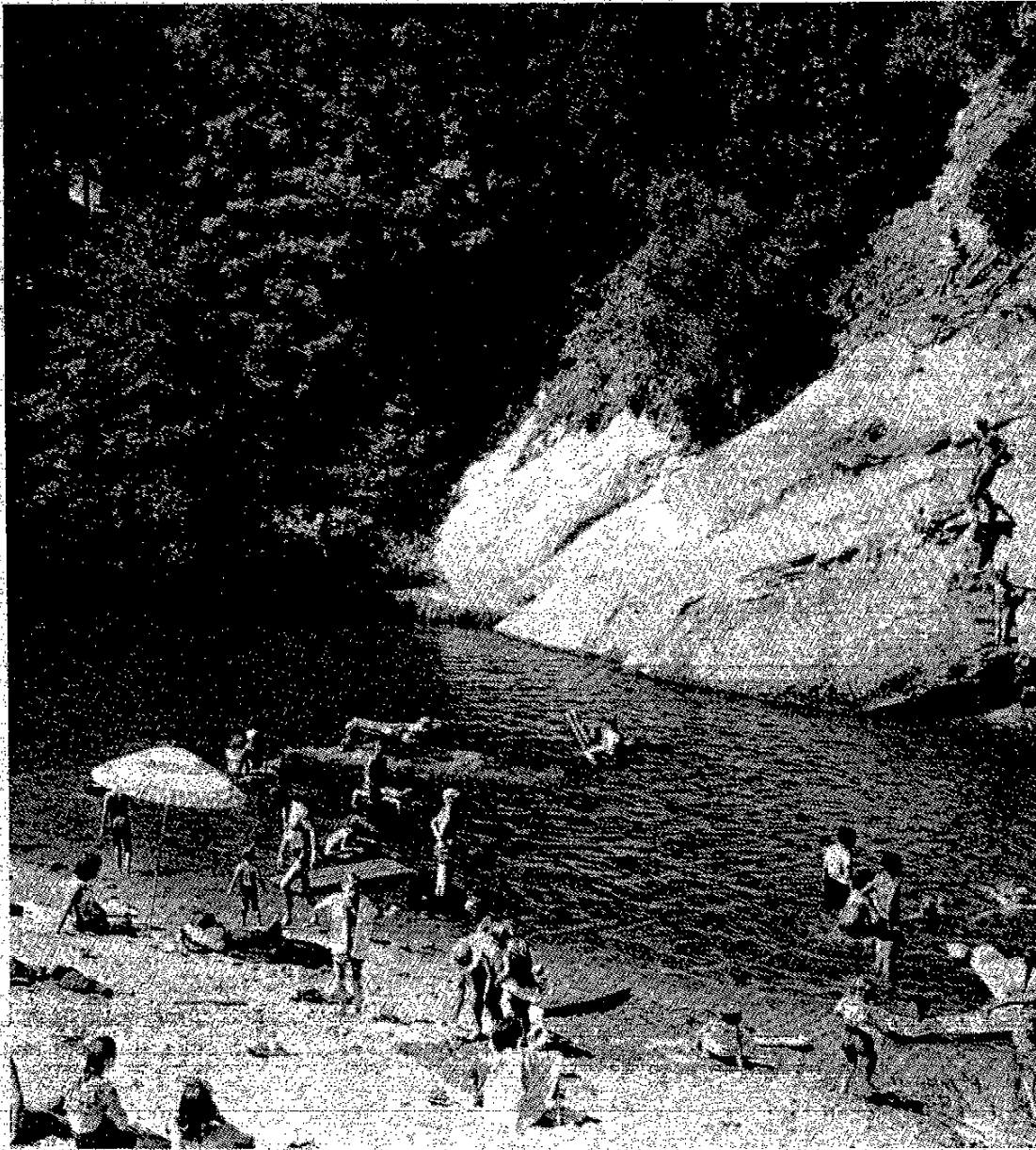
2) *Bridge Improvements* - "Post-top" or "acorn" streetlights, matching those proposed for Central Avenue, should be mounted to the outside of the existing concrete bridge rail. If feasible, some safety measure should be installed to separate pedestrians from moving traffic.

*D. Rural Boulevard* - These improvements are intended to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle circulation between the South Village and the Village Core along Route 9. Improvements are more "rustic" than proposed for the Village Core, reflecting the rural residential character of the area (see illustrations).

1) *Pedestrian Path* - A decomposed granite path, approximately eight feet wide with a rolled asphalt curb and gutter, should be established along both sides of the highway south of Flat Street to River Street.

2) *Bicycle Lanes* - Striped lanes should be established along both sides of the highway adjacent to the pedestrian path. North of the Village, lanes should extend to Redwood Elementary School, depending upon right-of-way conditions: e.g. adjacent slopes, drainage ditches, etc. A pedestrian overcrossing should be con-





*The Junction should be restored as a focus of Village life (photo reprinted from the San Lorenzo Valley General Plan (1967).*

structed as a safety measure at Redwood Elementary School. Bicycle lanes should be separated from traffic lanes with reflectors or "drunk bumps." These "lanes" could be used by pedestrians as well.

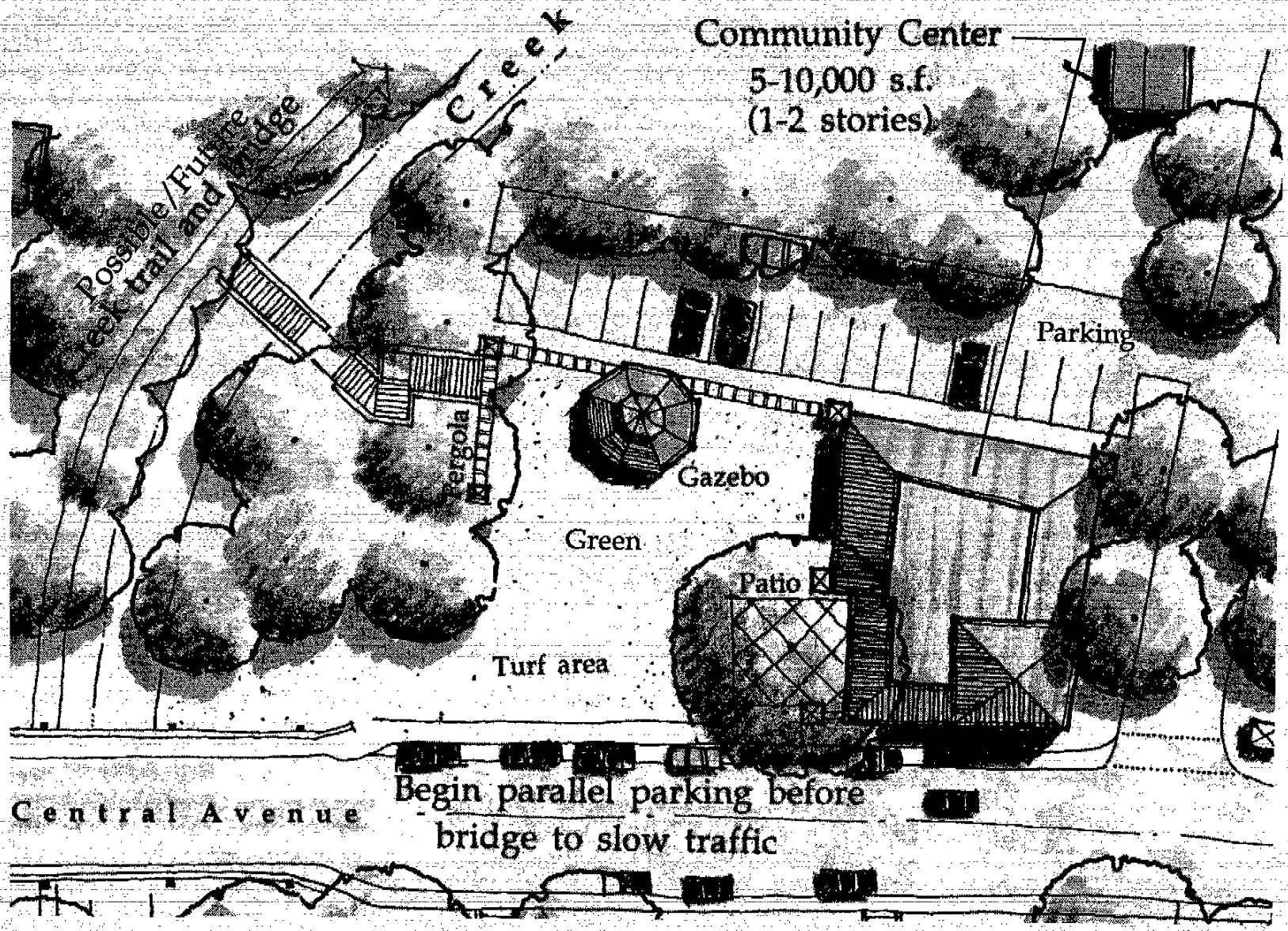
3) *Infill Street Trees* - Native oaks or similar broadleaf species should be planted at approximately 50' on center along the edge of the pedestrian paths. A low-growing, drought-tolerant flowering ground cover should be planted around the base of each tree. Existing trees should be retained unless damaged or diseased.

4) *Streetlights* - Tall, "post top" or "acorn" street lights are proposed to create a boulevard, rather than highway, character for the area: 20' is the recommended height, and 100' on center is the recommended spacing.

## *II. Public Facilities*

*A. Beach/Junction Area* - This park has much to offer in terms of natural beauty and proximity to the Village Core. Renovation of the park and street improvements on Middleton Avenue will tie the Junction to the center of the Village and make it a community focus once again.

1) *Renovate Existing Facilities* - Existing signs should be removed and new signs installed that match the format of Village Entry and Parking area signs. Restrooms should be repainted



CONCEPTUAL COMMUNITY CENTER PROGRAM

and plumbing fixtures replaced as needed.

The parking and picnic area should be resurfaced and redeveloped. Shade trees and landscaping should be installed to buffer parking from picnic areas and to create an attractive gateway from Middleton Avenue, while still allowing views through. Existing concrete terraces should be removed and the space used to increase beach area and accommodate a new, less steep access ramp with switchback.

2) *Recreation District* - The citizens of Boulder Creek recommend that the Boulder Creek Recreation District adopt this town plan as a guide to future activities of the district.

**B. Community Center** - This facility should be the main community gathering place for Boulder Creek. Several sites are options for its location. It is important for the building and site to create a landmark that, regardless of its location, enhances the character of the Village. The program would consist of a building which could accommodate a variety of functions, a "town green" outdoor civic space, and a play area to broaden the types and hours of activity within the Village (see Concept Sketch).

1) *Community Center Building* - The building should be between 5,000 - 10,000 square feet in size, depending on the facilities it includes. If the building is used primarily as a

large meeting hall, the low end of the size range could be appropriate. If it includes special facilities for teens or seniors, or offices for community representatives, then a larger building would be needed. Initial consideration should be given to remodel or reconstruct the existing recreation hall behind Boulder Creek Fire Hall. Other sites which may come available in the future should be evaluated to meet all or some of the needs regarding community center, town green, and/or play area.

2) *Town Green* - This space should work for both formal and informal functions. It should be 10,000 - 15,000 square feet in size and located adjacent to Central Avenue for ease of access and visibility. A gazebo or other structure for small concerts and other public activities should preside over the space.

3) *Play Area* - The area should be approximately 1,200 square feet in size, and include a climbing structure; it should complement the Community Center and the Town Green.

**C. Post Office Relocation** - Due to existing size limitations, the Post Office will be relocated within the Village Core, consistent with its role as the hub of the community. The new facility should be designed and oriented to provide an attractive complement to the historic forms of development that exist within the Village. It should minimize site area

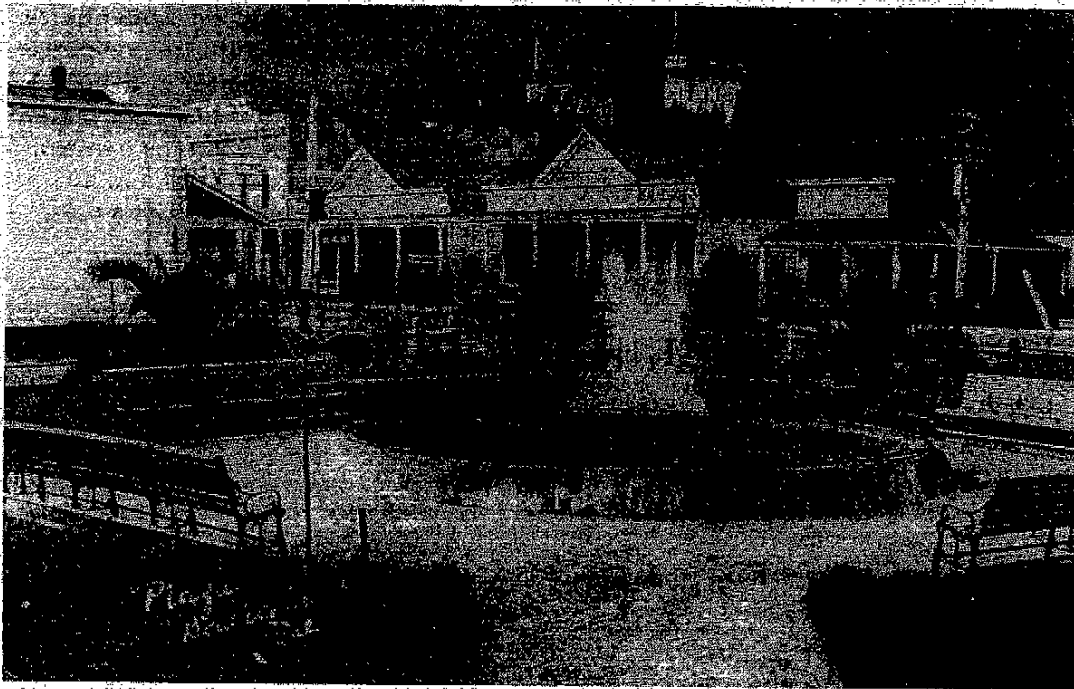
so property may be reserved for future private sector development. Two sites are currently being considered for the relocation: one site off Highway 9 on Westpark Avenue and the other on Lorenzo Street. There may be associated impacts with relocation, including traffic and parking. However, these potential impacts can be mitigated given the locations which the Postal Service has been considering. In this regard, it is important to note that this project will have a beneficial economic impact, one of the primary objectives of the Town Plan. A larger, centrally-located post office would function as a draw for the Village Core, thereby assisting in the downtown revitalization effort.

**D. Wastewater Management System** - Facilities and programs should be developed which will provide suitable wastewater disposal for existing development, and will allow expanded development in the Village Core. Uses which serve a broader community role, such as community facilities, commercial uses and affordable housing, should be given a higher priority in the allocation of disposal capacity for new uses.

The County Environmental Health Service has hired a consultant to do a feasibility study of options for wastewater disposal for the downtown area. Preliminary options are summarized on page 7.

Once the preliminary cost estimates have been finalized and the options for project financing have been evaluated, the Board





*Boulder Creek needs a community gathering space for formal or informal activities, such as the plaza that existed at the turn of the century.*

of Supervisors and the community will determine the most suitable option for long-term wastewater disposal in downtown Boulder Creek.

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## Village Core Parking Recommendations

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### Requirements

The following parking requirements function as an incentive for new commercial investment in the Village Core in two

ways: requirements are reduced relative to what they are throughout the rest of the County, and greater flexibility is allowed in meeting them.

**Minimums** - Requirements reflect the shared trip and high-turnover characteristics of parking in a storefront commercial district, 1 space/300 s.f. of commercial space rather than the characteristics of parking in a shopping center.

(The Urban Land Institute has estimated that in the typical shopping center 50% of the available parking is unused 50% of

the time the center is open. Full capacity is required only during the last two weeks of the holiday season.) Requirements for rebuilding (e.g. former "Peach Cottage" site), enlargements, or use changes apply only to net new floor area and/or the incremental increase in parking demand that accompanies a higher intensity use (see "Replacing and Converting Uses," below). For the purposes of parking requirements, intensification of use means a use requiring higher parking ratios as specified in this plan.

**Options** - On-site parking should not be the only option available for Village Core uses to meet parking requirements. The County should explore the following alternative parking options:

- 1) **Allowing lease arrangements for shared parking** - banks are an example of a type of business that has on-site parking lots which may be underutilized during evenings and weekends. Evaluation of the feasibility of such arrangements could be made by the Zoning Administrator.
- 2) **In-lieu fees** - Fees for parking are assessed as part new development applications. They go into an earmarked, interest-bearing fund to be used for parking spaces and facilities in Boulder Creek when they are needed.

Two aspects of an in-lieu fee program are essential to understand: a) Funds are put toward development of *shared district parking facilities*; they do not result in a

reserved parking space or spaces for those who pay the fee; b) In-lieu fees alone are not likely to pay the entire cost of new parking facilities.

This type of fee is a financing method to provide parking, usually within a district, in lieu of actually providing needed spaces of the property(ies) generating the additional demand for parking. The fee can take at least two forms. One would be for the fee to be set on an annual basis, commensurate with the actual cost of providing for the space (construction and land costs), or the fee could be set at some percentage of the actual costs of providing an additional parking space with a subsidy being provided by a governmental or private entity in charge of parking administration for the business district served. The latter type could be tied to the establishment of a parking and business improvement district (see Financing section of Plan). In-lieu fees may need to be matched with other funding sources. Because they are intended to function primarily as an incentive, in-lieu fees are not expected to cover the cost of remedying existing parking deficits.

3) *A Merchants' Cooperative Parking Association* - a voluntary association could be established for the coordination of signage and other improvements necessary to promote an open parking policy throughout the Village Core; i.e. merchants share their lots with any and all users/shoppers in the Village. (Parking distribution, as opposed to real supply, is the central issue in the

Village today; see Existing Street Conditions in Chapter II.) This option is recommended.

*Existing Commercial Uses* - In accordance with the County zoning ordinance provisions, no existing use of land or structure shall be deemed to be a non-conforming structure solely because of the lack of offstreet parking required. However, any alteration of uses or structures which creates the demand for additional parking shall be required to facilitate additional offstreet spaces either on-site or by way of a "parking in-lieu fee."

*Replacing and Converting Uses* - Space may be replaced, as the result of major renovation or disaster (e.g. fire), without any additional parking required, provided the space is put to the same use that it was previously, or a similar use in terms of parking demand. If the new building use is different, or if an existing space is converted from one use to another, parking requirements apply to the incremental increase in demand created by the new use. This policy shall be retroactive to those disasters which happened on or after January 1, 1989. Two typical cases where additional parking would be needed are:

1) *Converting a retail or service use to a dental office.* In-lieu fee, shared, or on-site parking is required based on the demand differential between the pre-existing use and the dental office. For example, a 1,400 square foot retail

use is converted to a dental office: the parking required for the retail use would be 5 spaces ( $3.33 \times 1.4 = 4.7$ , or 5). The dental office would require 7 spaces ( $5 \times 1.4 = 7$ ). The dental office must provide or contribute to a fund for 2 parking spaces ( $7 - 5 = 2$ ).

2) *Converting a residential use to a service or office use.* In-lieu fee, shared, or on-site parking is required based on the demand differential between the pre-existing use and the new service or office use. For example, a 1,000 square foot second floor apartment is converted to office: the parking required for the apartment would be two spaces. The same amount of office space requires 3 spaces ( $3.33 \times 1 = 3.33$  or 3). The office must provide or contribute to a fund for 1 parking space.

### Improvements

Two types of parking are needed to support a successful commercial district, *real supply* and *supply distribution*. Real supply is the number of parking spaces needed to serve the district during its period of maximum demand. Supply distribution is the ease of access to parking spaces and their relative proximity to destinations within the district. Real supply may be low without hurting business, provided supply distribution is high; conversely, real supply may be high, but businesses could be hurt if supply distribution is low.

### Chapter III. Village Plan

1) *Angle Parking on Central Avenue* - Restriping Central Avenue for angle parking, as recommended under "Community Design and Public Improvements," would provide a net increase of approximately 42 spaces. This would reduce the existing district parking deficit from 45 to 3 spaces. Supply distribution would be increased dramatically.

2) *Lots on East Side of Pine Street* - Between Forest Street and Big Basin Way there is a vacant space which is used for some parking. This location appears ideal for a formal, landscaped, paved, off-street parking lot, which would include approximately 20 spaces.

3) *New Lot East of Central Avenue* - The east frontage of Central Avenue between Forest and the Big Basin Way intersection is under-served today. If angle parking proves insufficient to address the district's parking shortage, consideration should be given to the acquisition and development of properties to the rear of this frontage for a new parking lot. At approximately 28,000 square feet, the area could accommodate approximately 80 additional spaces (see Village Plan for location). This parking option should be considered following good faith efforts to develop both the angled parking on Central Avenue and the lot on the East Side of Pine Street.

4) *Extend Lorenzo Street* - Consideration should be given to improving Lorenzo Street with asphalt paving and angle parking to the rear of "Scopazzi's" restaurant. Though not recommended for the near term, because of the distance to the majority of the Core's shops, this improvement could be of benefit as areas to the north develop over time.

5) *Consolidate/Relocate Bus Stops* - Bus stops at the north end of the Core eliminate options for curbside parking. Consideration should be given to relocating bus stops to free up curbside areas. For example, the bus stop in front of the Fire Station could be moved to the north side of Middleton Avenue adjacent to the bridge.

#### Financing New Facilities and Maintenance

Three general options should be considered:

1) *County Subsidy* - Construction and maintenance of facilities could be funded by the County from County Redevelopment Agency revenues, grants from state or federal agencies, or other sources. In-lieu fees could be included in this fund.

2) *Assessment Districts* - The County could form assessment districts to pay for and maintain new parking facilities when conditions require. A *Parking*

*Improvement District* would assess existing properties that have not paid in-lieu fees; fees collected to date would be included in the fund. A *Maintenance District* would assess all properties for maintenance of parking facilities, and, if desired, for maintenance of special streetscape improvements or other district amenities.

3) *Public/Private Mix* - Public subsidies, fees, and assessments could be combined. For example, the County could fund improvements, either in whole or in part through the establishment of a San Lorenzo Valley Redevelopment Project Area, but not fund maintenance, or it could provide matching funds to assist with development.

#### Staff Responsibilities

County Planning Staff will work to ensure that parking policies support rather than hinder economic vitality in the Village Core.

*Chapter IV.*

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS &  
DESIGN GUIDELINES**

## IV. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS & DESIGN GUIDELINES

### COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS IN VILLAGE CORE

The commercial development standards listed below apply in the Village Core. (The diagram on the following page illustrates a prototypical application of these standards and guidelines.)

- A. **PERMITTED USES** - Village Core Commercial uses shall be those specified in the County Zoning Ordinance (See Zoning Plan). Such uses include, but are not limited to, retail, commercial services, personal services, and office type uses.
- B. **CONDITIONAL USES** - Conditional uses are those allowed in the County zoning ordinance for the underlying property.
- C. **HEIGHT** - as measured from sidewalk to top of cornice, parapet, or eave line of peaked roof, shall be as follows:
  - 1. **Maximum Building Height** - two (2) floors and thirty-two (32) feet; sloping roofs may exceed the height limit by one (1) floor or ten (10) feet.

- 2. **Minimum Building/Storefront Height** - to maintain the "Main Street" spatial definition, shall reach twenty (20) feet.

- D. **FRONT SETBACK/BUILD-TO-LINE** - first and second floors of all buildings shall be built to and parallel with the front property line, with the following exceptions.

- 1. **Mid-Block Buildings** - between existing adjacent structures shall be no closer to the street than the adjacent building closest to the street, and no further than the adjacent building furthest back from the street.
- 2. **Corner Buildings** - may be "cut back" up to six (6) feet to create a diagonal at the ground level and/or at upper levels.

- E. **SIDE SETBACKS** - New buildings should be built to both side property lines and must be built to at least one side property line.

- 1. **Minimum** - at least four (4) feet shall be provided for an access way.

- F. **REAR SETBACKS**

- 1. **Adjacent to Designated Residential Areas** - setback shall be a minimum of twenty-five (25) feet from the rear property line. This condition is characteristic of lots

along both Central Avenue, Big Basin Way and Pine Street.

### G. ACCESS

- 1. **Direct Pedestrian Access** - shall be provided from the thoroughfare and/or side street to the main building entrance; i.e. pedestrian access to buildings shall not be restricted to parking lots.

- 2. **Service Access** - from side streets shall be preserved and enhanced wherever possible. Trash and loading areas shall not be visible from Central Avenue or Big Basin Way, and shall be screened from view from side streets and properties to the rear.

- 3. **Curb Cuts/Vehicular Access** - shall be minimized on Central Avenue and Big Basin Way. Shared parking arrangements are encouraged to reduce the need for new curb cuts. Where curb cuts are necessary:

- a. **Minimum Spacing** - shall be one (1) per one hundred (100) feet of right-of-way frontage, or one per parcel, whichever is less.

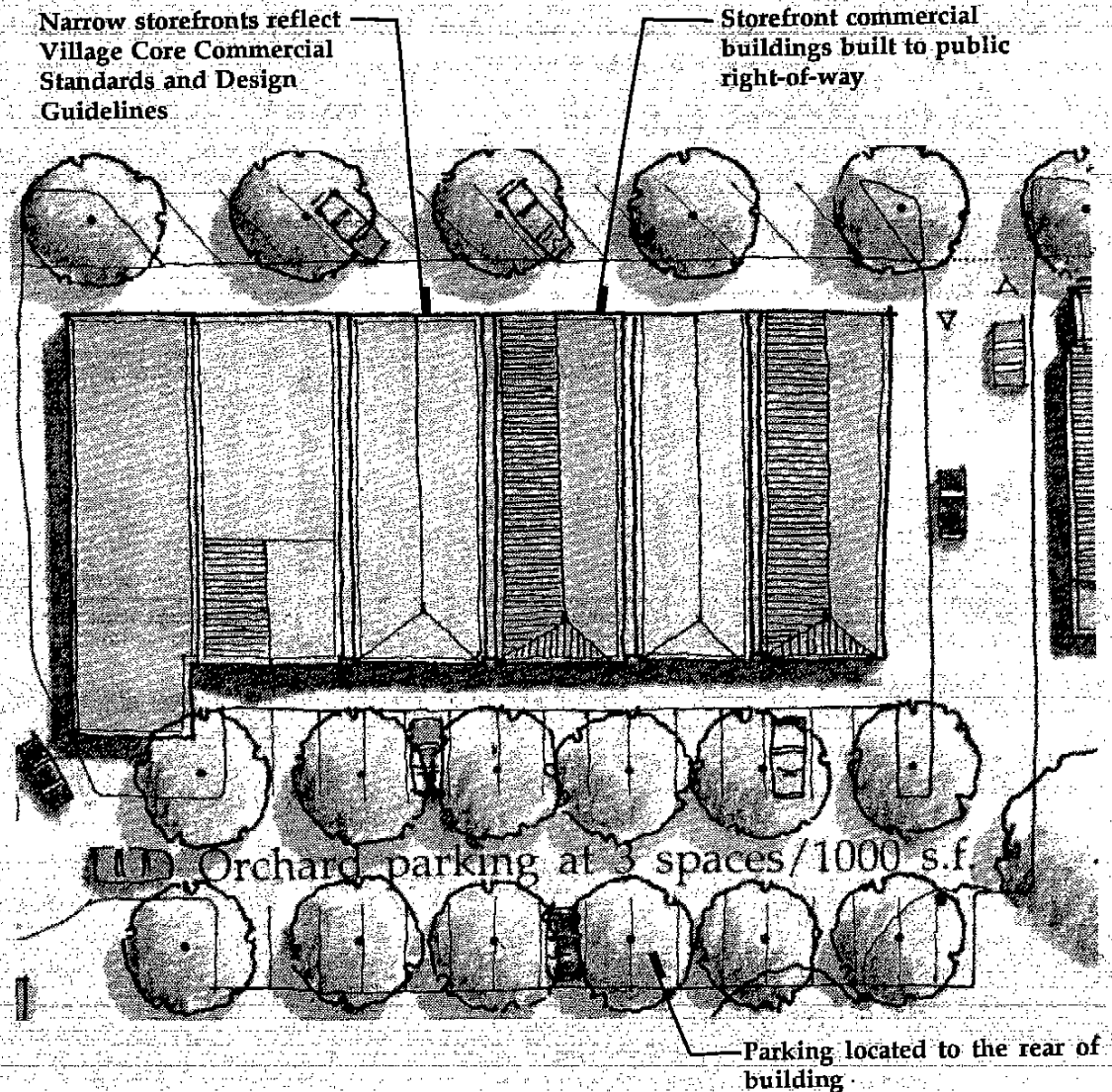
- b. **Maximum Width** - shall be twelve (12) feet for a one-way driveway and twenty (20) feet for a two-way driveway.

## H. PARKING

1. **Minimum Requirements - Requirements for new development are listed below. They are reduced from typical County standards to reflect the special characteristics of a storefront commercial district. Requirements for renovation, enlargements or use changes apply only to net new floor area and/or the incremental increase in parking demand that accompanies a higher intensity use.**

- a. **Retail - 1 space per 300 square feet (3.33/1,000 s.f.).**
- b. **Eating and Drinking Establishments - 1 space per 300 square feet (3.33/1,000 s.f.) up to and including 1,500 s.f.; 1 space per 100 square feet for that increment over 1,500 s.f.**
- c. **Personal Services - 1 space per 300 square feet (3.33/1,000 s.f.).**
- d. **Business Services - 1 space per 400 square feet (2.5/1,000 s.f.).**
- e. **Business and Professional Offices - 1 space per 300 square feet (3.33/1,000 s.f.).**
- f. **Medical and Dental Offices - 1 space per 200 square feet (5/1,000 s.f.).**

### Village Core Commercial





g. **Bars with Live Entertainment and Nightclubs** - 1 space per 200 square feet used for seating and dancing.

h. **Clubs and Lodges** - 1 space per 100 square feet used for assembly purposes.

i. **Residences and Lodging** - 2 spaces per residential unit, except 1 space per studio residential unit and lodging unit.

j. **Other Uses** - As per the Zoning Code.

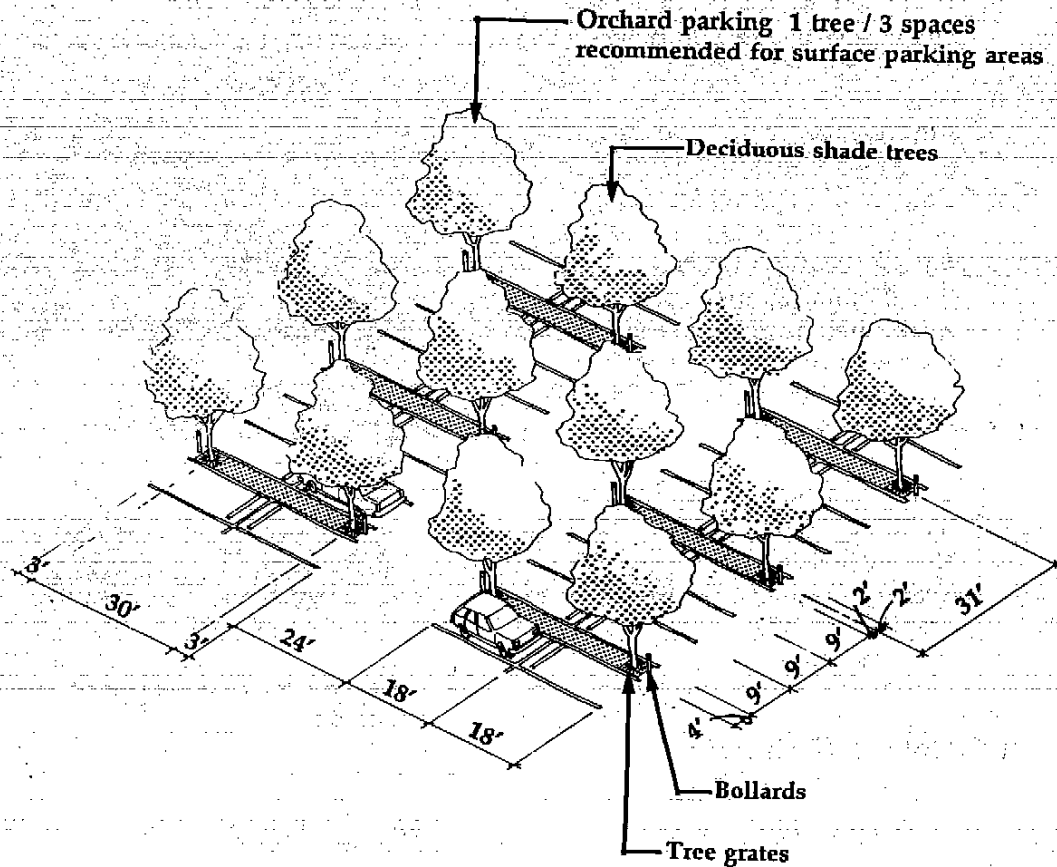
2. **Location** - of surface parking lots shall always be to the rear of the buildings. See Screening and Landscaping below for parking lot treatment.

3. **Shared Parking is Recommended** - to maximize efficiency and preserve land for future commercial uses. Lease arrangements for sharing parking in existing lots are permitted; banks are an example of a type of business that has on-site parking lots which may be underutilized during evenings and weekends. Evaluation of the feasibility of such arrangements shall be made by the Zoning Administrator.

#### I. SCREENING & LANDSCAPING

1. **The Perimeter of Parking Areas and Driveways** - adjacent to streets and sidewalks shall be screened or landscaped.

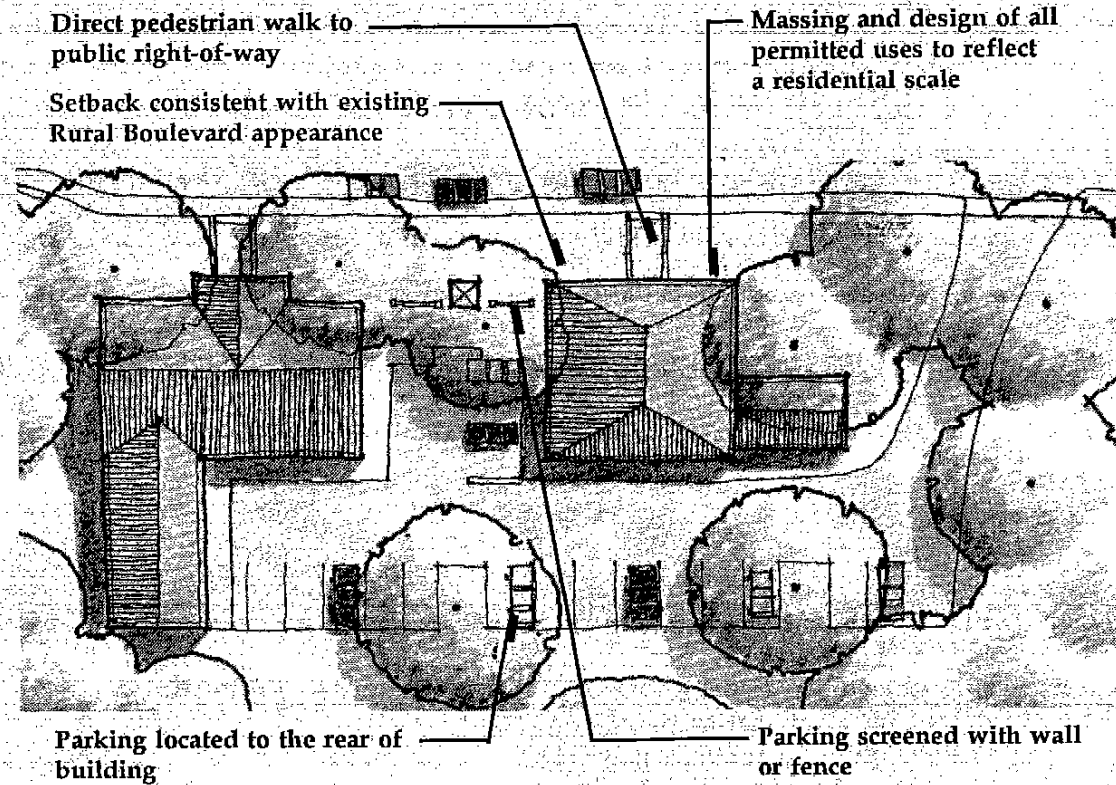
### Orchard Parking\*



\* parking lots may contain 90 degree and/or angle stalls; aisle and stall dimensions are for reference only

2. **Parking Areas Shall be Planted** - with shade trees at a minimum ratio of one (1) tree for every five (5) spaces in an "orchard" planting arrangement; one (1) per every three (3) spaces is recommended. (See diagram, page 26.)
3. **Adjacent to Designated Residential Areas** - attractive fencing or walls shall be provided along the property line to screen buildings, service areas, and parking areas; a five (5) foot planting area shall be established adjacent to the fence or wall with deciduous trees at a minimum spacing of twenty (20) feet on center.
4. **Trash and Service Equipment** - including satellite receiving dishes, shall be located away from streets and enclosed or screened by landscaping, fencing or other architectural means.

## Commercial Outside the Village Core



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

### A. BUILDING FORM

1. **Buildings Should Reflect Special Locations.** Special architectural features, such as gables, turrets and towers should be provided at major street corners and other Village focal points.
2. **Second Story Additions are Encouraged.** This will strengthen the

existing frontage and increase the mix of uses in the district.

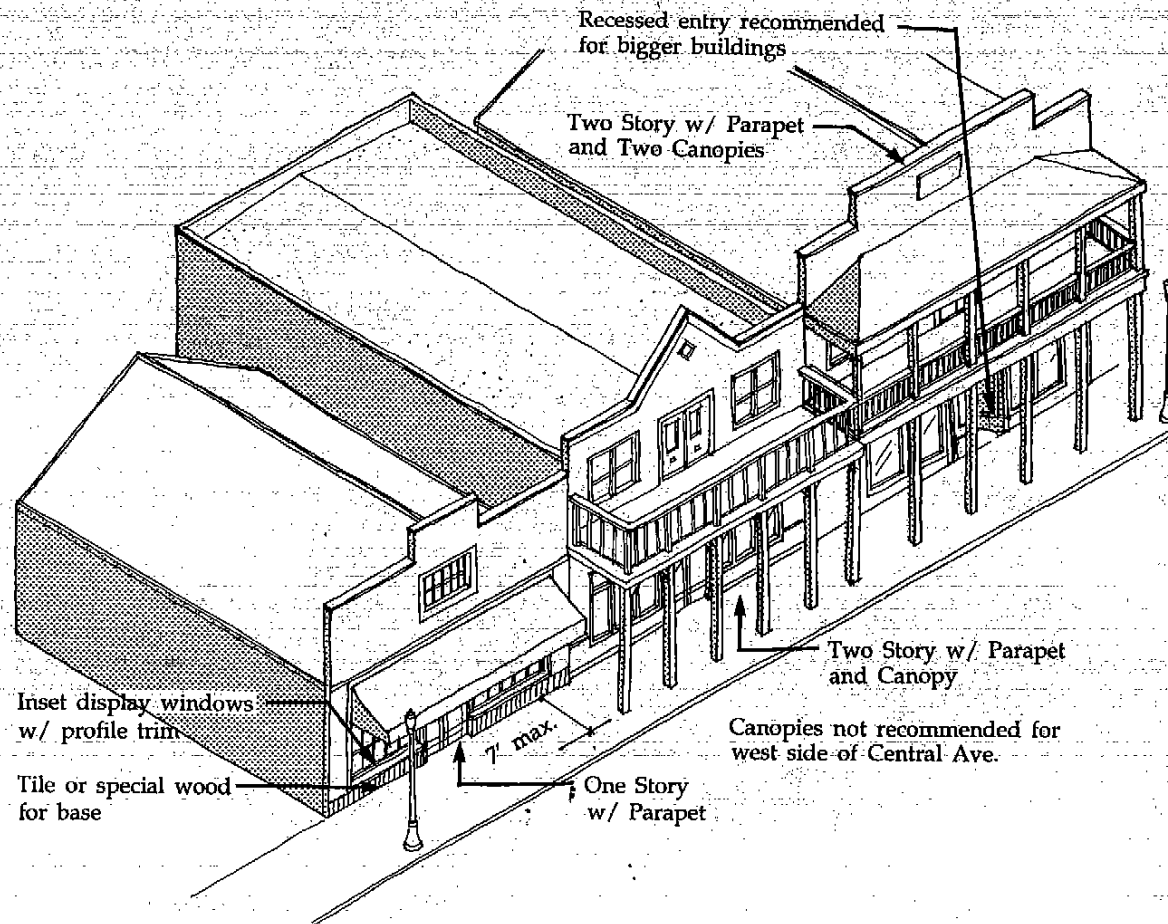
### B. FACADE COMPOSITION

1. **Storefronts and Building Bays Should Be Narrow.** Vertical elements, such as pilasters, canopy columns and material or color changes should occur at intervals of approximately twenty-five (25)

feet to retain the visual interest typical of the Village's storefront buildings.

2. **Facades Should Reflect Features Common to Boulder Creek's Attractive Older Buildings.** Though facades should express the identity of individual tenants, recessed doorways, storefront windows parapet profiles, and other features should complement exist-

## Village Core Commercial



silhouette and finish off the overall composition of the facade.



*Western false-front parapets are a characteristic architectural feature of older commercial buildings.*

ing buildings. Signs should be an integral part of the facade composition.

3. **All Buildings Should Have a Base.** The base should be a projection of the wall surface below the display

windows, a change in the wall surface finish or color, tile, etc.

4. **All Buildings Should Have a Clearly Visible "Cap" - Peaked Roof, Cornice Line or Parapet.** These elements create a distinctive

5. **Canopies and Balconies are Encouraged on Central Avenue.** This is a prominent existing characteristic which should be maintained by new development and/or renovations.
6. **Awnings Should Not Cover Architectural Details.** An individual awning for each storefront is more characteristic of the Village and provides more visual interest than one continuous awning.

7. **Historic Styles are Encouraged.** New or renovated buildings should be designed to reflect the character of designated historic resources; materials and details characteristic of Victorian or

"Western" false front styles are recommended.

## DEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVATION STANDARDS IN THE CHURCHES HILL DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

### A. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this designation is to protect the neighborhood residential resources of Boulder Creek. The neighborhood boundaries for this designation are generally as follows, although a specific boundary will be determined by the Historic Resources Commission.

North: Lomond Street  
East: Central Avenue  
(Highway 9)  
South: Grove Street  
West: Oak Street

Additionally, the purpose is to complement the downtown commercial core through the formation of a historic district with guidelines for maintaining historic structures while allowing for appropriate infill.

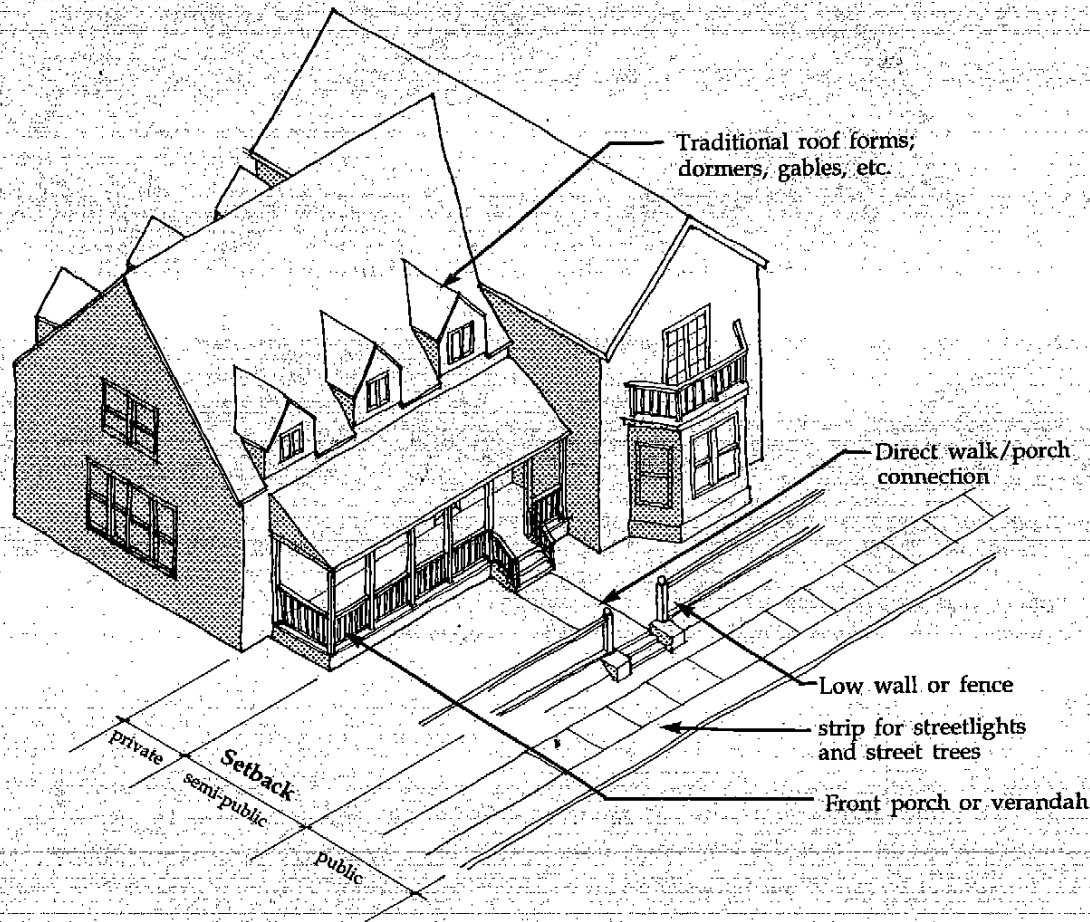
This plan calls for specific guidelines with respect to restoration, maintenance, signage and public facilities. The overall intent is to establish a historic district which captures the unique residential history of Boulder Creek. The original housing stock

is from an era of unique scale, purpose, and design that engenders a certain relaxed and simple quality of life. Any decision or interpretation of this plan should be consistent with this intent.

### B. ISSUES

The village of Boulder Creek has a unique identity which is reinforced by the strong image of Victorian and frontier

## Village Core Residential \*



\* Guidelines also apply to commercial buildings North and South of the Village Core.

homes, and accented by the unique architecture of Spanish and Tudor, popular in the 1920's-1930's. The homes of the Churches Hill Historic District are primarily wood frame with wood siding whose texture is consistent with their periods. Stucco homes are present but contain sufficient accent and architectural features to set them apart from the more "boxy" stucco construction of the post-World War II period.

1. The Churches Hill Historic District sits on a rise above the downtown commercial core. Its placement sets it off as a contiguous residential neighborhood with a unique vantage point. This vantage point allows the neighborhood to act as a focal point for the village and a magnet for visitors.
2. The Churches Hill Historic District contains a good variety of structures representing the historic period in which Boulder Creek was founded and established. There is a high concentration of homes built from the mid-late 19th century through the beginning of WWII. These homes are predominately well maintained, particularly those overlooking or backing onto Central Avenue (California State Highway 9).
3. Most of the homes in the Churches Hill Historic District are owner-occupied. Rental properties are predominately locally owned.

Some of the homes in the district are currently local County landmarks, and other homes in the district are worthy of such distinction.

4. The nature of the homes in the Churches Hill Historic District, the high proportion of owner-occupied homes, and the sound structural condition of most of the homes make the district ideally suited for walking tours.

#### C. PROBLEMS

1. Few sidewalks and a lack of public benches make walking tours difficult for visitors.
2. Lack of a consistent design standard makes inappropriate infill likely, detracting from the present cohesive appearance of the district.
3. There is no County agency chartered with the task of design review for the purpose of maintaining consistent architecture, scale, and land use within historic districts.

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#### VILLAGE HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL

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The Village Historic Residential design guidelines apply to certain properties on the west side of Route 9, from Lomond

Street to Grove Street, with the exception of those properties bounded by Harmon Street Extension on the north and Mountain Street on the south which are designated C-2 Historic. With the exception of the following standards and guidelines, existing County codes and regulations apply. Existing commercial uses shall remain as legal, non-conforming uses, until such time as existing buildings are replaced or substantially renovated. At such time, the Standards and Guidelines of the Specific Plan shall apply.

#### Site and Architectural Design Policy for the Village Historic Residential Area

New residential construction or renovation shall be designed to reflect the character of designated Historic Resources with respect to existing scale and character.

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#### RAILROAD AVENUE/ JUNCTION AREA

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This section is intended to provide specific guidance concerning development on the east and west sides of Railroad Avenue between Forest Street and Middleton Avenue. Existing commercial uses shall remain as legal, non-conforming uses, until such time as existing buildings are replaced or substantially renovated.



## Design Guidelines for the Railroad Avenue/Junction Area

The intent of this section is to establish a transitional buffer zone between the commercial town core and the residential neighborhood east of the core. A combining zone district will be established to provide for the mix of intended land use shown on the Land Use Plan and the more stringent development standards specified below.

### A. SCREENING & LANDSCAPING

1. **The Perimeter of Parking Areas and Driveways** - adjacent to streets and sidewalks shall be screened.
2. **Parking Areas Shall be Planted** - with shade trees at a ratio of at least one (1) tree for every five (5) spaces in an "orchard" planting arrangement; one (1) tree per three (3) spaces is recommended.
3. **Professional/Administrative (PA) Development (Primarily Medical, Dental, Real Estate, Insurance, and Other Offices) on the East Side of Railroad Avenue** - attractive screen fencing or walls shall be provided to screen buildings, service areas, and parking areas. A five (5) foot deep planting area, facing the residential area to the east, shall be established and maintained adjacent to the fence or wall.

4. **Trash and Service Equipment** - including satellite receiving dishes, shall be located away from streets and enclosed or screened by landscaping, fencing or other architectural means. Trash collection shall be limited to once per week, and the PA occupant shall size the trash container appropriately. Recycling is encouraged to reduce waste disposal.

### B. BUILDING FORM

1. **Front Porches or Verandas Should be Provided.** This will continue the residential character and create an attractive transition from the public way.
2. **Traditional Roof Forms such as Dormers and Gables Should be Used.** This will add to a residential character. Long expanses of flat, uninterrupted roof line are discouraged.

### C. FACADE COMPOSITION

1. **Buildings Should Have a Prominent Front Facade.** Front entries, prominent bay windows and other building forms should create a "public face."
2. **Windows Should be Residential in Scale and Style.** Bay, dormer, and double-hung windows are recommended.

3. **Trim and Detailing** - should reflect older residential buildings in the Village.

4. **Signs Should be Discreet.** Small, freestanding wooden signs which complement the materials and colors of the principal building are recommended.

### D. SITE DESIGN

1. **Walks Should Connect the Front Door Directly to the Public Way.** This will add a gracious, public quality to the street.
2. **Attractive Low Walls or Fences Should be Located along the Edge of the Public Right-of-Way** - to define public and private areas.
3. **Front Lawn and/or Landscaped Areas Should be Prominent.** Driveways should be de-emphasized. They should generally be no wider than 20% of the site frontage.

*Chapter V.*

# **IMPLEMENTATION**

## V. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing a town plan involves a series of coordinated public and private actions, including the provision of adequate funding to pay for improvements, establishing the appropriate land use and design regulations to assure consistency with the Plan, and initiating the day-to-day programs and activities that turn vision into reality.

### **Plan Financing & Administration**

A preliminary cost estimate for the public improvements proposed by this Plan, exclusive of land acquisition and sewage treatment facilities costs, is between \$4.4 million and \$5 million (1991 dollars). Inclusion of certain improvements into the Capital Improvement Programming (CIP) process is one way to implement some of the improvements proposed. This process, however, entails a lengthy prioritization process as all proposed capital projects compete for limited funds on a county-wide basis. Therefore, construction of improvements via this funding mechanism would result in uncertainty in terms of time and committed funding.

The following funding options may be used to supplement, or substitute for, Capital Improvement Program monies necessary for the public improvements recommended in the Specific Plan for Boulder Creek.

### **Assessment District Financing**

Assessment district formation can be an attractive public improvement financing tool because it is reasonably fair and it is easy to execute. District boundaries are formed in relation to the area benefiting from the public improvements to be installed. Bonds are sold to provide the initial cash outlay for the improvements, and property owners with "frontage" along the improved development pay a yearly assessment that goes toward the debt service of the bond.

### **Establishment of a New County Service Area (CSA)**

The County of Santa Cruz is authorized by law to form county service areas, covering portions, or all, of the County. CSA's were created so that counties could provide more urban type services in unincorporated areas without requiring the entire county to pay for those services. CSA's are authorized to provide, among other services, road improvements and maintenance, and wastewater management services. CSA's can be formed at the initiative of the Board of Supervisors with the approval of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Service charges for the proposed improvements and maintenance are levied by the Board for the area of benefit only.

### **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)**

The federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered by the State Housing and Community Development (HCD) Department, has a specific allocation of funds reserved for economic development purposes. The intent of this allocation is to stimulate economic development in small communities and rural counties with high unemployment rates. Santa Cruz County is considered an eligible county for funding with a population within the unincorporated area of less than 200,000. A maximum annual grant of \$800,000 is allowed under this program, although competition for funding is intense. An extensive grant application package is required, with only communities with the greatest need receiving funds. The Block Grant program also awards funds for housing-related projects. In the past year, the County has successfully received two \$500,000 grants for assistance in providing affordable housing. Since housing is not an essential element of the Boulder Creek Plan, the economic development portion of CDBG funds would be most appropriate.

### **Establishment of a Redevelopment Area**

Redevelopment can assist with a wide variety of projects and programs, such as capital projects and programs, improvements to public facilities, business assis-

tance programs and affordable housing. By law, it cannot, however, finance on-going operations and maintenance cost. The County has already embarked upon a process whereby redevelopment funding may come to the San Lorenzo Valley area.

In January 1991, the Planning Commission selected proposed project area boundaries. These were approved by the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) Board of Directors (the Board of Supervisors) in February.

Redevelopment funds are derived from something known as "tax increment financing" (TIF). As property is sold and new construction occurs in the redevelopment project area, the assessed value of the property increases. *This causes property tax revenue to increase even though the tax rate does not change.* The increased tax money is known as the "tax increment," and it is accumulated by the RDA as a result of the following process.

Before a redevelopment project area is formed, all tax revenue is distributed among various taxing agencies, including special districts, schools, and the County. Following redevelopment project area formation, all taxing agencies continue to receive their "base year" tax revenue plus a two percent increase per year as provided by law. The RDA receives increments of property tax above this two percent threshold. These increments are generally caused by normal market rate increases and new construction. The RDA may, however, enter into a tax sharing agree-

ment with any taxing agency (e.g., fire district) to prevent financial burden due to redevelopment.

Initial funding is expected to be available in mid- to late 1993. Projects could continue to be implemented over the lifetime of the Redevelopment Plan (thirty to forty years).

### Use of Highway Improvement Funds (CalTrans)

State Route 9 is the location where most of the public improvements recommended in this Plan will occur. This highway/Main Street is within the jurisdiction of the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) and, as a result, any final improvement plans within the Highway 9 right-of-way will require this department's review and approval. Improvements that modify strict highway standards, such as those proposed in this Plan, seldom receive funding from CalTrans. CalTrans' basic function is to provide maintenance services and "capacity improvements" to State highways, neither of which qualifies the Boulder Creek project. However, it is still possible that some funding may be available. The process for qualifying for State funds is laborious, requiring a long lag time to be placed on the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) projects list. Segments of highway and major arterial streets within all of California must compete for such funds, with areas of greatest need generally

receiving top priority, i.e., projects within congested urban areas.

### Federal and State Grants

Other than the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) mentioned above, the other public program with most relevance to the Boulder Creek project area is the Rural Economic Development Infrastructure Program (REDIP). This program, administered by the State Department of Commerce, authorizes low interest loans and grants to small rural communities such as Boulder Creek for job-retention and expansion purposes. For instance, as part of a loan/grant successful application process a few years ago, the City of Auburn received funds for a downtown improvement project. Again, competition for funds among eligible jurisdictions is high, necessitating a very well-organized application effort and demonstration of need.

### Private Funding

There are many private organizations that grant funding for public and private projects according to the organization's particular area of concern. One such organization in Santa Cruz County is the Santa Cruz Community Foundation. Availability of these funds is strictly dependent on matching a very specific need to a foundation interested in supporting that need.

### **Business Improvement District**

In relation to downtown Boulder Creek, the type of district recently formed in downtown Soquel may be appropriate given the comparable concerns of parking improvements, parking maintenance and administrative costs related to business promotion. A "parking and business improvement area" was formed in Soquel, as provided for under the Parking and Business Improvement Law on 1979. This financing vehicle should be considered because, in addition to the acquisition, construction and maintenance of parking facilities, use of monies can also be allocated to the promotion of business activities including decoration of public places, promotion of public events and furnishing music for public functions.

### **Main Street Program**

The Main Street program is administered by the State Department of Commerce and is used as a downtown revitalization strategy in many small cities and towns in California. The primary purpose of the Main Street approach is to encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation. The program does not provide funding as part of its services. Instead, each area receiving approval for a Main Street designation receives technical assistance from the State to: (1) provide program training to staff and board members from the local community; (2) provide a team of specialists in such fields as architecture, business

development, marketing, and traffic management; and (3) provide on-site assistance in areas of building rehabilitation, facade improvement and general site improvements as necessary. All unincorporated town areas in Santa Cruz County are eligible for the program. Successful programs generally need to commit \$50,000 to \$60,000 each year for Main Street staff, operations and program expenses.

### **Leveraging of Funding Sources**

A combination of any or all of the above funding sources would significantly add to the effectiveness of any one option. Funds can also be "leveraged" with local matching funds from the Capital Improvement Fund or private sources. This leveraging also illustrates to public and private agencies granting the funds that there is some "earnest" money involved, adding to the perceived commitment of the receiving party, whether public or private sector.

### **Town Plan Facilitator**

Recent Town Plans completed for villages within Santa Cruz County recommend the establishment of a "Town Plan Facilitator." Boulder Creek merchants have also discussed this concept in terms of having a "Main Street Coordinator" being instituted, modeled after the state Commerce Department's Main Street program.

A facilitator would be available on a regular basis and, in the case of Boulder Creek, he/she could be shared with the communities of Ben Lomond and Felton. The facilitator position would act as an advocate for each village, lobbying the various County departments for project implementation as recommended in each village plan. The facilitator would also work closely with the Redevelopment Agency staff (should a project area be formed) and merchants to coordinate physical improvements downtown with the least amount of business disruption possible. The facilitator would also act as a business liaison to promote such activities as facade improvements and signage programs, marketing plans, and public events designed to attract residents and tourists to the downtown area.

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### **Town Center Land Use & Zoning Plan**

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Under California planning law, zoning and general plan designations must be consistent. Where there is an inconsistency, the general plan designation supersedes the zoning. Current General Plan and Zoning designations for the core area of Boulder Creek are shown in Figures 5.1 and 5.2, respectively.

As Figure 5.1 indicates, the 1980 General Plan defines the limits of the commercial district and the narrow band of commercial uses along Highway 9, currently in commercial use, for "residential reserve,"



although it is zoned commercially. Also, the General Plan designates several parcels along Big Basin Way and Pine Street as "community commercial" which are now zoned for residential uses. These inconsistencies are proposed to be reconciled by the following land use and zoning plan for the "town center."

### Land Use Plan

Much of the community workshop process was spent on determining the appropriate limits of commercial development within "downtown" Boulder Creek. Part of this discussion was prompted by the Boulder Creek Merchant's Association and a report prepared in 1989 by Zephyr Urban Management Associates, Sacramento, both of which indicated a need for additional commercial floor area opportunities to capture some of the spendable income within the Boulder Creek trade area. The fourth community workshop specifically dealt with this need and the related issues of where the commercial development would be allowed to expand, and what type of development would be acceptable to the community.

Based on the reports of the fourth community workshop, as well as other workshops that addressed the commercial land use issue, the proposed land use plan, illustrated as Figure 5.3, will become the General Plan land use designations for downtown Boulder Creek, following adoption by the Board of Supervisors.

The land use plan, as proposed, is designed to: (1) recognize the existing commercial land use currently within the downtown, including "pocket commercial" uses in the southern end of the Highway 9 corridor from Grove Street to River Street; (2) provide General Plan/Zoning consistency (see Proposed Zoning Plan, Figure 5.4); (3) ensure that no commercial impacts "spill over" to residential areas by providing strict residential compatibility standards within a mixed use zoning category; (4) accommodate the type of flexibility and variety of land use desired by workshop participants; and (5) result in sound "village planning" by having a mix of uses that engenders a lively downtown while not detracting from neighborhood residential environments.

It is important to recognize that any areas of proposed expanded commercial activity or housing growth can only occur when necessary wastewater management problems are resolved. Page seven of this Plan describes the progress of wastewater management solutions.

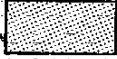
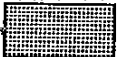



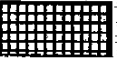
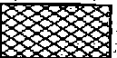

### Commercial and Residential Plan

A. C-4, Service Commercial, properties along Big Basin Way (e.g., rockery, construction yard, service station) will remain "Service Commercial" which also allows a variety of retail uses thereby having the potential to convert to a more pedestrian-

oriented, downtown, commercial use over time.

- B. The parcels on which the brewery and lumber yard are located, along Central Avenue, will be designated as C-4, Service Commercial. If the brewery ceases to operate on that parcel, the zoning should revert to C-2, Community Commercial.
- C. All zoning that is currently C-1 or SU along Highway 9 will be changed to C-2, Community Commercial, allowing existing uses to remain as legal, commercial uses, while expanding the number of potential community-serving commercial uses within this area of the downtown. This change provides the opportunity for additional retail commercial floor area as recommended by the Boulder Creek Merchants Association. The lumber yard will become a legal, non-conforming use.
- D. "Churches Hill Historic District." The Churches Hill Historic area, with final boundaries to be determined by the Board of Supervisors upon recommendation of the County Historic Resources Commission, will be zoned and planned in accordance with the land use plan and zoning plan shown on Figures 5.3 and 5.4. The area will be primarily zoned for residential use, consistent with the predominant use in the area. Two adjacent properties along Highway 9 will be zoned commercial, allowing existing com-

## General Plan Land Use Categories

-  Rural Residential (R-R)  
2-1/2 to 20 acres/dwelling
-  Suburban Residential (R-S)  
1-5 acres/dwelling
-  Suburban/Urban Reserve (R-S)  
5,000 - 20,000 sf/dwelling
-  Neighborhood Commercial (C-N)
-  Community Commercial (C-C)
-  Service Commercial (C-S)
-  Office Commercial (C-O)
-  Public Facilities (P or O-R)  
School, park, hospital, cemetery, landfill  
(O-R=existing parks and recreation)

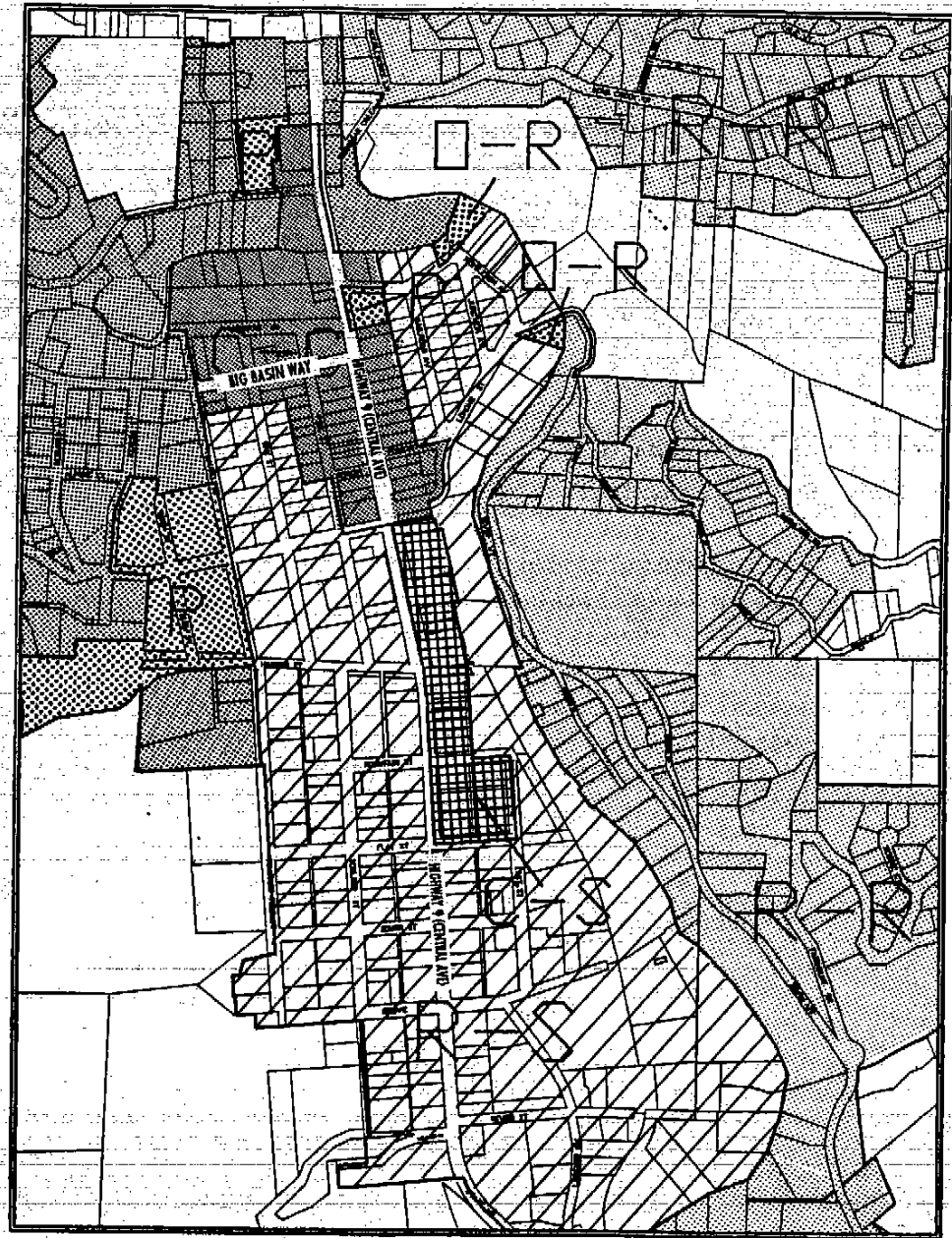


Figure 5.1

# Zoning Categories

- C-1 Neighborhood Commercial
- C-2 Community Commercial
- C-4 Commercial Services
- R-1-6 Single Family Residential on 6,000 SF Lot
- R-1-9 Single Family Residential on 9,000 SF Lot
- R-1-15 Single Family Residential on 15,000 SF Lot
- R-1-20 Single Family Residential on 20,000 SF Lot
- R-1-32 Single Family Residential on 32,000 SF Lot
- RA Residential Agricultural
- RM-4.5 Multiple Family Residential- 4,500 SF of Site/Unit
- RM-6 Multiple Family Residential- 6,000 SF of Site/Unit
- SU Special Use
- TP Timber Production
- PF Public and Community Facilities
- PA Professional Administrative
- PR Parks and Recreation
- (L) Historic Landmarks

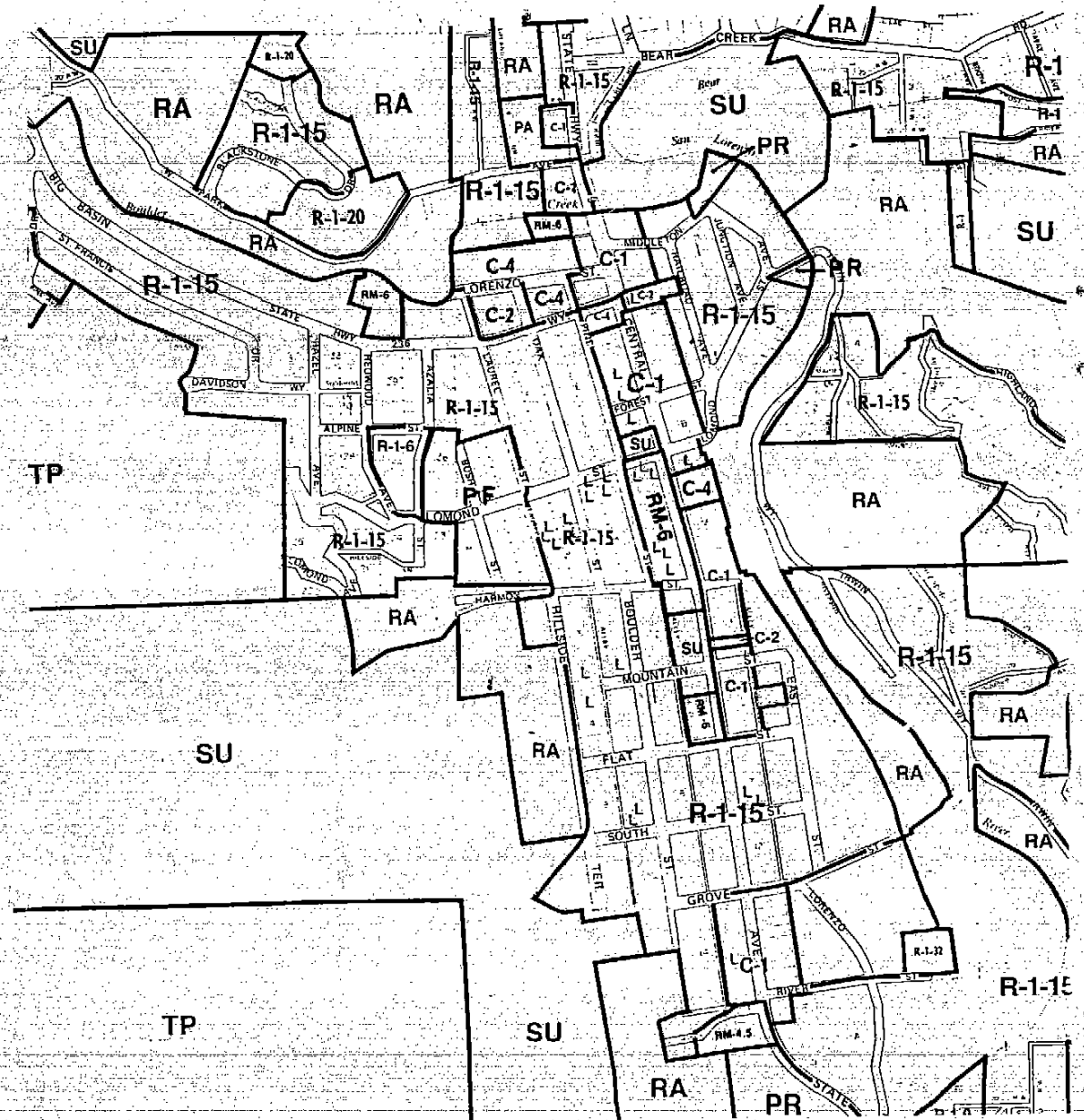
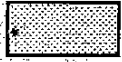
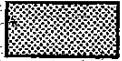
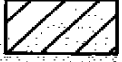

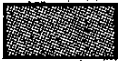





Figure 5.2

## EXISTING ZONING PLAN (PRE-PLAN ADOPTION)

# General Plan Land Use Categories

-  Rural Residential (R-R)  
2-1/2 to 20 acres/dwelling
-  Suburban Residential (R-S)  
1-5 acres/dwelling
-  Suburban/Urban Reserve (R-S)  
5,000 - 20,000 sf/dwelling
-  Neighborhood Commercial (C-N)
-  Community Commercial (C-C)
-  Service Commercial (C-S)
-  Office Commercial (C-O)
-  Public Facilities (P or O-R)  
School, park, hospital, cemetery, landfill  
(O-R=existing parks and recreation)

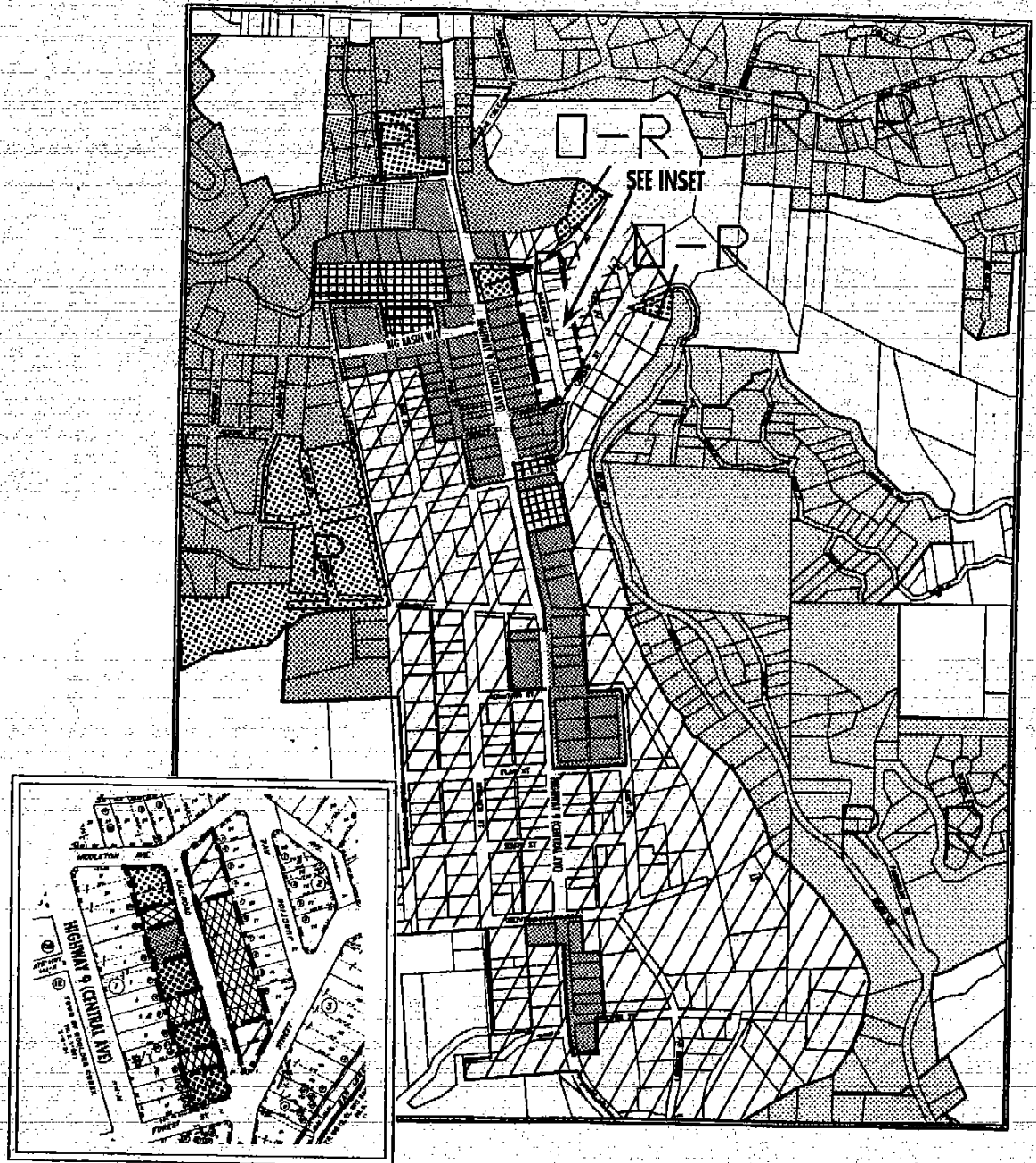


Figure 5.3

# Zoning Categories

- C-1 Neighborhood Commercial \*
- C-2 Community Commercial \*
- C-4 Commercial Services \*
- R-1-6 Single Family Residential on 6,000 SF Lot
- R-1-9 Single Family Residential on 9,000 SF Lot
- R-1-15 Single Family Residential on 15,000 SF Lot
- R-1-20 Single Family Residential on 20,000 SF Lot
- R-1-32 Single Family Residential on 32,000 SF Lot
- RA Residential Agricultural
- RM-4.5 Multiple Family Residential- 4,500 SF of Site/Unit
- RM-6 Multiple Family Residential- 6,000 SF of Site/Unit
- SU Special Use
- TP Timber Production
- PF Public and Community Facilities
- PA Professional Administrative \*
- PR Parks and Recreation
- (L) Historic Landmarks

\* Commercial District Designations shall be subject to parking standards of the Boulder Creek Specific Plan. Railroad Avenue properties shall be subject to Specific Plan development standards (S-BC combining district to apply).

\* This C-2 designation shall also allow residential use as a principal permitted use at densities consistent with the former R-1-15 and RM-6 zones as illustrated on Figure 5.2

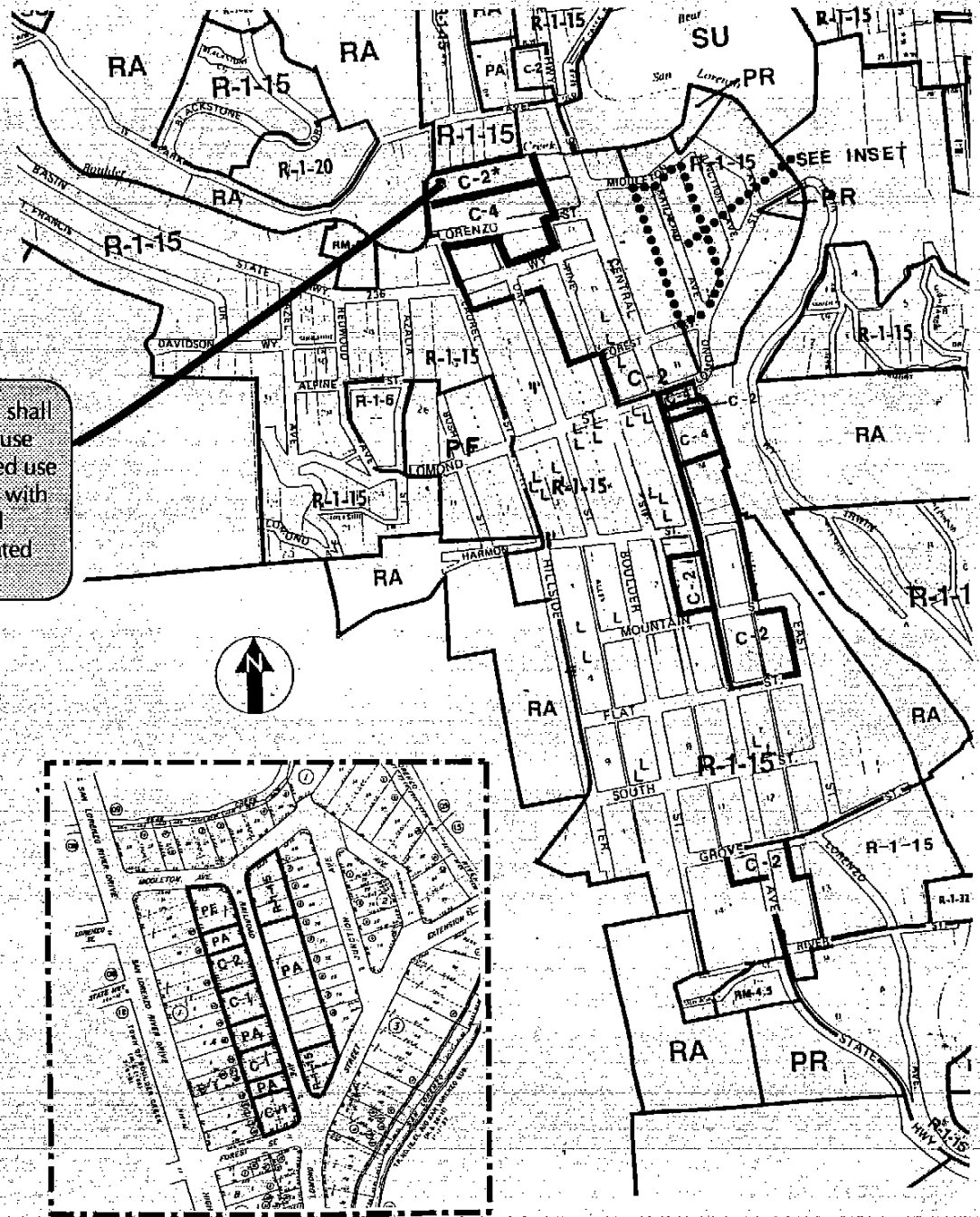


Figure 5.4



Chapter IV. Development Standards & Design Guidelines

mercial uses to continue. Additionally, all uses within this district shall be subject to the design guidelines of this Specific Plan to insure that the scale and design of future remodeling and new construction is compatible with the historic character of the area.

*Designation of District:*

1. The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors shall recognize, designate, and certify the Churches Hill Historic District of the Village of Boulder Creek.
2. The Santa Cruz County Historic Resources Commission shall work with the local residents to inventory all historic properties within the designated Churches Hill Historic District.

*Design manual:*

1. The Planning Department of the County of Santa Cruz, in conjunction with the residents of the Churches Hill Historic District, will develop a design manual with guidelines consistent with the inventory described above so that modifications to existing structures and infill will be in the character of the historic district.
2. All new construction, including manufactured housing, will be required to conform to the guide-

lines established in the design manual.

*Retention of Historic Resources:*

1. The Planning Department of the County of Santa Cruz should evaluate current processing requirements and procedures and revise them, if needed, to accommodate the unique needs of a historic district.
2. The Planning Department of the County of Santa Cruz shall develop procedural safeguards to avoid the demolition of any structure within the Churches Hill Historic District until such times as alternatives, such as, but not limited to, rehabilitation, adaptive re-use, and relocation are considered. This requirement would not apply to the demolition of any structure found by a building inspector to be necessary to protect health or safety or which are an imminent danger to public safety. (Structures moved from the Churches Hill Historic District shall carry landmark status to their new locations.)
3. The County of Santa Cruz shall review the demolition of certain structures of special historic merit, distinction, or architectural significance.

*Preservation Programs:*

1. The County of Santa Cruz should begin the processing of district nominations for the listing of national registered districts and certified local districts on the National Register of Historic Places.
  2. The County of Santa Cruz shall designate the Churches Hill Historic District of the Village of Boulder Creek as a designated County Historic District.
  3. The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors shall explore and implement, where appropriate, the use of Community development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to encourage the neighborhood revitalization of the Churches Hill Historic District.
  4. The County of Santa Cruz will work with the property owners and residents of the Churches Hill Historic District, and other interested parties, to help promote the cultural heritage and preservation of this historic district.
- D. "Railroad Avenue/Junction Area." Land use along Railroad Avenue, from Middleton to Forest Avenue, will allow for a mix of commercial office and residential uses. On the west side of Railroad Avenue, "neighborhood commercial" uses

Chapter IV. Development Standards & Design Guidelines

(C-1) are proposed to be interspersed among office uses (PA - professional/administrative). The lot immediately adjacent to Boulder Creek Recreation Center, which fronts on Railroad Avenue, will be zoned PA - professional/administrative. The east side of Railroad Avenue is proposed for residential uses at both ends of the street, with the interior lots reserved for office or residential use. Although the PA, professional/administrative zoning district allows for walk-in commercial service uses such as banks, barber shops, beauty shops and other uses, it is the purpose of this specific plan designation to reserve this area primarily for office-type uses and commercial uses of a residentially-compatible nature. Future development of this area shall also be subject to the design guidelines specified below. Due to the lack of visibility of these properties from Highway 9, this land use evolution should occur as a result of the private market.

*Development Standards:*

The following site development standards shall apply to PA and other commercial development on Railroad Avenue.

1. Minimum lot area: seven thousand (7,000) square feet.
2. Minimum lot width: fifty (50) feet.

3. Minimum lot depth: one hundred (100) feet.
4. Maximum floor-to-area ratio: 0.5 for residential uses, 0.4 for commercial uses.
5. Maximum net floor area for commercial uses: five thousand (5,000) square feet.
6. Minimum setbacks, commercial (for new structures):
  - a. Front, twenty (20) feet
  - b. Rear, ten (10) feet
  - c. Side, ten (10) feet
7. Setback standards for existing structures within this zoning district shall be those of the existing structure, if less than the new structure standards above. If front, rear or side setbacks of existing structures are greater than those listed above, the new structure standard shall apply for the purposes of any future remodeling.
8. Maximum height, commercial: two (2) stories or twenty-five (25) feet, except that a single story limit shall apply to PA projects on the east side of Railroad Avenue.
9. Site, landscape and architectural design: per guidelines established in Village Plans, if applicable.

10. Design development shall be in keeping with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

*Commercial Use Performance Standards:*

To achieve residential compatibility with existing and proposed residential units in the Railroad Avenue/Junction area, the following standards shall apply for all commercial uses within this district:

1. Traffic: A trip generation figure of not more than two (2.0) trips per day per one hundred (100) square feet of gross floor area must be characteristic of the proposed use as determined by County Transportation Planning Staff.
2. Landscaping, including vegetative screening of the use from adjacent residential structures, shall account for a minimum of ten percent (10%) of the lot area.
3. Noise levels emanating from the commercial activity may not exceed forty-five (45) decibels community noise equivalent level (CNEL) at the property perimeter.
4. Commercial structures must be designed at a residential scale consistent with design guidelines established in the Site, Architectural and Landscape Design Ordinance and this Village Plan.

5. All proposed commercial use conversion or commercial building expansion shall be subject to Urban Designer approval.
6. All parking for the commercial use shall be provided on site or by way of in-lieu fee payment.
7. The site plan for commercial use shall adequately demonstrate that there will be no vehicle backout onto the street.

### **Additional Land Use Regulations**

The Town Plan contains policies and standards for parking requirements, permitted uses, building height and setbacks, pedestrian access and design. In some cases, these policies and standards vary from the County-wide land use regulations. Once adopted, the Town Plan acts as the General Plan for the Boulder Creek Village area, and therefore these revised standards can become the adopted regulations, either by ordinance or resolution. Typically, a resolution to adopt the Plan is followed by specific ordinance changes which codify the revised standards into the County Code. These changes will be implemented by staff once a final Plan has been adopted.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

As required by law for specific plans, the Boulder Creek Town Plan has been reviewed under the California Environ-

mental Quality Act (CEQA) to identify any environmental impacts and establish appropriate mitigation measures. The Boulder Creek Specific Plan received an environmental negative declaration finding that there would be no significant environmental effects resulting from adoption of the Plan.

Subsequent development, redevelopment, or other projects, whether public or private, are also subject to separate CEQA review as they are being proposed. However, if they are consistent with the Specific Plan, then it is likely that the environmental impacts and subsequent project-by-project review will be less than would otherwise be the case. Site-specific issues such as parking, circulation or building design will still be carefully considered at the individual project level.

# APPENDIX

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

**APPENDIX**

**Public Workshop Comments**

**Workshop #1 -  
NOVEMBER 7, 1990**

Before and after an introductory presentation of general planning and design considerations, members of the public were asked to offer their thoughts, observations, and concerns with respect to a strategy for the Boulder Creek Village Specific Plan. The following ideas were noted and discussed:

**PLANNING PROCESS:**

- Is there room for additional public workshops in this process? Yes, if we need to, even though there is a set number in the scope of services now.
- We should have our recommendations presented to the Board of Supervisors and adopted by Ordinance instead of just by suggestions.
- How far should we go in terms of planning boundaries? Base map doesn't include the library! There is some disagreement about whether everyone knows where Boulder Creek is and where it isn't.
- How will our input be organized? What happened to the surveys that were done before?

- Should extend north study boundary to Bear Creek Road... what about 3 miles north on Highway 9?

- This workshop process is a vehicle for ideas in an orderly fashion.

- Look into the "Downtown Boulder Creek Citizens Committee Sewer Plan" (1970's).

**LOCAL ECONOMY:**

- Don't want Boulder Creek to be just a tourist town. We want to see more local-serving retail.

- Design the plan so that local merchants are supported by local residents. Local businesses need support, but focus on local services.

- Can we get more trade and capture local dollars that are being spent elsewhere? We need to attract people who live here, instead of them shopping in Santa Clara County. We have become a bedroom community.

- We're going to have tourists anyway, so what about a natural history museum?

- Our own people do not support the local retail. The selection of goods and services is too limited.

- Tourists are going to Big Basin anyway. It would be silly not to take advantage of this.

- The ambience Downtown is great, even with a few problems. Could we use non-local dollars to fund local services? We want our money to stay here in town.

- There isn't a contradiction between serving both, local and non-local markets. The increased retail can be good for everybody - a compromise is possible.

- Don't agree that cars should be removed. Capture people going to Santa Cruz and get through traffic to stop.

- There are eight vacancies Downtown - it's hard to run a business. Access is difficult and we cannot ignore tourist traffic if businesses are to support local people. The volume of retail sales affects staffing, and merchandise; just can't attract enough business right now.

- Prices need to be competitive to keep local dollars here at home.

- It's harder to run the businesses because we are a bedroom community.

- "It bothers me to see vacancies downtown."

- Real estate prices are forcing out good businesses. "Squeezies" is leaving because of higher rent.

- Need more clothing stores downtown for better selection.

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

- Rezone streets around Central to encourage small software companies and other businesses so there will be more money downtown.

- Tourists are here, so let's get their money.

- Locals have to support local businesses. It's not a one-way street of just local residents wanting better services.

- Boulder Creek always has been a tourist town. A five mile radius of local residents have never been enough.

- Folks need to support local businesses.

- Keep out franchises!

**COMMUNITY DESIGN:**

- With four disasters in the last ten years, old buildings are vulnerable. How can we get low interest loans for building improvements?

- We need an ordinance restricting trash and abandoned cars.

- We need to take care of what we have!

- The slides don't apply here in Boulder Creek, the public improvements looked to expensive. Let's just fix up what we have first!

- Let's emphasize the trees and spruce up the buildings; some nominal improvements...O.K. The plan has to be practical.

- Get utilities underground! They are!? There is still the perception of a lot of clutter.

- Love Boulder Creek as is and never leave. We just need more parking on Pine and we need to discuss a signal vs. a stop sign at the main intersection.

- A lot of people live in Boulder Creek because they don't have too many regulations.

- There's no place for visitors to stay here in town. We need some small inns or B&Bs.

- Boulder Creek used to be an incorporated city. Historical city-wide photos show a fountain, sewer, and other nice things. The town character went downhill and became a bedroom community. Look into the Historical Museum - old logging community, horse and buggy era.

- Need some toilets downtown!

- Wonderful old buildings downtown - we still need some of them to be filled, especially on the second floor; need money to bring them to code.

- Shouldn't be a bedroom community? Must remember why we came here, and that this was a western mountain community.

- History is important. There is also a history of conflicting views, but our River is key to the life of the valley. A meeting place there would be incredible.

- Guys are hanging out at McDonald's - it doesn't feel safe. The lights are too high for pedestrians - meant more for highways.

- Need sidewalks to the school.

- Can make a change for the better, but don't want to lose sight of why we moved here. Now we cannot find a place to park downtown, and home prices have risen.

- Just because Boulder Creek is a bedroom community, doesn't mean folks working over the hill don't care.

- How do we get a concrete sense of community? Community Projects might be a good way to do this. There's plenty of volunteer labor around here.

- What parcels are left for a town square? What about moving the fire house?

- Don't want a sewer.



*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

- Need more appropriate trees along Highway 9, and more of them.

- This is a small town and I like it that way...I know lots of people on the street.

- What about a senior citizen's center near Boulder Creek with a footbridge and pathway to the library.

- Would like racquetball courts on Railroad Ave. by the Recreation Center.

- Like the outside seating at the deli, need more.

- Would like to see old fashioned street lights downtown.

- Rather than create a new town look, it's better to keep the history of the town in its looks. Keep Macs 100 year old wooden overhang.

- Post Office and Fire Department should change places... the P.O. is unattractive and should be more of a focal point.

- There should be a section of downtown set aside for professional buildings, but not on Central Ave.

**CIRCULATION AND PARKING:**

- Main problem downtown is that State Highway 9 is running through it. What authority do we have to change this?

- We need better access into downtown other than just for cars, like for pedestrians, bicycles, etc.

- Need some off-street parking for people who come to town.

- Off-street parking would be nice, but downtown could be too compact for this.

- There has been some discussion about rerouting Highway 9 around downtown. This could lead to trouble -- diverted into residential areas.

- Traffic is coming through downtown no matter what, so we might as well get them to stop.

- The street is very wide, parallel parking should be changed to angled.

- Scared to let kids cross Highway 9.

- Need to get out of our cars more. Would be better if there were more services.

- Enormous trucks are bad - there's too many of them.

- If Highway 17 gets closed, Highway 9 becomes a zoo.

- Population has grown - now on weekends, it's impossible to park.

- Don't widen Highway 9. Thanks for getting rid of the traffic light!

- Beer trucks are a problem on Highway 9.

- Issue of safe crossing across Highway 9 at Redwood Elementary School.

- Speeding cars of West Park Avenue... cars use this road as a short cut through residential areas.

- Angled parking at least on one side of Central Ave. between Lomond and Big Basin Way would be a good idea.

- Portion of Highway 9 in front of Johnnies' should be a right turn lane that would free up the present congestion.

- Need a 4-way stop sign at Lomond and Central Avenues with a crossing guard before and after school.

- Parking for the Post Office is a problem.

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

**RECREATION:**

- Must preserve the natural beauty here. The riverfront is key to Boulder Creek. There's only one waterfront property left - Schwarzbach Associates (realtors). Trees are very important -- don't want this to look just like San Francisco.

- What about a rustic gazebo on Schwarzbach Property on the River. It would be a place to gather.

- Really need a place to meet, for both adults and kids. There is no contradiction between having a beautiful town and tourists.

- Need more activities for children of Boulder Creek, and more public recreation.

- The transient problem keeps folks home instead of out at public recreation areas.

- Kids don't have anywhere to go! Use some of the vacancies for a community center. We just had one but it closed because it became a drug center. Put the new school on our map. This school is not on the map!

- Already have two open space and recreation properties on the River which are never used except by transients for drinking.

- Whether it's a bedroom community or not, kids are here all the time. So let's make it great for them.

- A railroad climbing structure for kids by the River.

- Need a space where "Peach Cottage" could be used for gathering/gazebo.

- Need a town "swimming hole" - We already have two!!

- "Easter Seals Site" (20 +/- acres) is a perfect site for some day care/recreation activities near existing school!

- River is hidden and cut off from town. We don't see it!

- Want to have a playground and picnic tables by the river.

- Like to see the riverfront park be more family oriented, more tables.

**DREAMS AND VISIONS:**

- Let's have a "farmer's/craft market."

- Ashland has a central theme; Ben Lomond has the Mountain Community Theater...need some cohesiveness and excitement here - Boulder Creek should have it!

- Was a romantic period in the past - it was wonderful. In the future, it would be good if folks could come

and stroll in a beautiful, environmentally sensitive alternative way of living; slow the traffic.

- Like to see a local government.

- Like to see a railroad line come back into Boulder Creek, like it used to.

- "We're still here because we love it." How about some horse trails?

- "I'd like to ride my horse into town again."

- Bring back the old Movie Theater! And the Dance Hall!

- We need a gathering place here in town. What about a hitching post! And minstrels!

- What about European Stair Streets!

Appendix: Public Workshop Comments

Workshop #2 -  
DECEMBER 13, 1990

After the consultants' presentation of their "outsider's view" of the study area, members of the public offered their thoughts, observations, and concerns. The following ideas were noted and discussed:

LOCAL ECONOMY:

- The building supply businesses in the downtown center were not represented enough in the presentation. We want to keep them.

- "Forest Pool" has been purchased by a private company "Planetary Plaything."

- Change zoning on the side streets adjacent to Highway 9 to allow businesses in homes there. Let's allow the town to grow a little and attract more people. Change zoning to allow growth as long as it's sensitively done.

- Let's just downzone the town to keep it more the way it is.

- Business should be encouraged to move south on Highway 9. Let the town grow another 2-3 blocks southward. But we have vacant buildings now.

- We should consider the growth-inducing effects of the sewer package plan.

- Build affordable housing close to downtown.

- Keep businesses off of Railroad Avenue and Pine Street.

COMMUNITY DESIGN:

- Encourage historic preservation and the use of the older facades.

- Sheriff substation and cottage owned by fire station. Does this mean relocation for the fire station?

- We have no place to gather.

- We need one central area for information about what's going on in the town; a central place for gathering.

- Fire station is a good location for the Community Center.

- Let's utilize the 2nd floor space in the existing buildings.

- Reuse the Post Office building after the Post Office moves.

- Only place we can socialize here is a bar; we need places to walk. Want to feel comfortable and safe; How about a place with a fountain or bandstand?

- Need a location for a public place? How about the "Peach cottage" site? Is it too small?

- Let's relocate the firehouse and use the site more creatively.

- Schwartzbach site is the place people think of now as the place to hang out.

- Packaging plant is disgusting.

- There are plenty of small housing lots we could take advantage of.

- Create walkways with proper lighting and a creekwalk.

- Let's make the Post Office the Fire Department, the Fire Department the Post Office, and the Boulder Club the Community Center?

- Need a sunny spot for community garden. Maybe this is a good thing to combine with the Community Center?

- Don't forget the importance of the Fire Department to community.

- What about fixing up the room attached to the Fire House for the Community Center?

- The library does a lot for children. Need to improve access to the library over the bridge.

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

- Like the idea of a Community Center/a place to go within walking distance. This goes along with our worry about being a commuter town! We need a place people can go to find out what's going on in town.
- The Fire Station building and the blue building have the possibility of meeting the needs for a Community Center.
- Let's use trees of the Southwest and put them in the parking zone. (Applause)
- Let's get Ornamental street lights. (Applause)
- We have a good recycling center that needs to move to a more central location.
- Some cottages that are located on the West side of Pine St. are beyond repair, no matter how quaint they look.
- The question is where to put things in Boulder Creek.
- Fixing up the back of the liquor store goes along with fixing up Pine Street.
- The town should expand widthwise instead of lengthwise! (and that's in the General Plan). (Lots of applause).

- Need walk-thrus between Central Avenue and Parking Areas.
- Improve parking lots to make them shady and more comfortable.
- The Post Office plans to relocate to a 9500 square feet building on a 45,000 square feet site.
- Do we have any input as to what the new Post Office will look like? Postmaster's answer: "I think so."
- The area behind the Fire Department is ideal for the Community Center. Is there any park land available? Can we organize a facility and programs?
- We need on-going merchant's and resident's organizations for Boulder Creek.
- The Community Center is very important; it's something this town needs! The Blue building is a good opportunity and also behind the Fire Department. (Railroad Avenue site).
- Historic characteristics of residences from Lomond going south on Highway 9 should be maintained.
- There is a Boulder Creek 4H Club Sign which could be used at one of the entrances to town to encourage local identity.

- Should we be incorporated? Is it an advantage?
- Bathrooms and payphones; Where are they?

**CIRCULATION AND PARKING:**

- If your coming to Boulder Creek from the north, you can't make a left on Pine Street. It limits your flexibility.
- Pine Street is a one-way street to make it safer. Visibility is poor in the other direction (in the direction of school). We also picked up additional parking spaces on Pine and Forest by making it one-way. (Disagreement on this point).
- If there was a more "channeled" way for kids to get to school on Lomond Street, maybe traffic wouldn't be such a problem.
- If we're going to have a one-way street we need a sign on both sides so that there's no confusion. Right now it's unclear on Pine Street which way we are supposed to go.
- People are bypassing the whole system and going by the school; they are bypassing downtown traffic and also speeding.
- We have to address the whole traffic flow problem in and out of town.

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

- The town itself has outgrown the traffic conditions. This must be addressed.
- We must deal with the problem of having no sidewalks where people need to walk.
- The speed at which people enter town is too fast.
- Need to be able to ride bikes to:
  1. Boulder Creek Country Club
  2. Bear Creek
  3. Mountain store to Redwood School
  4. Brookdale Lodge
- Make downtown more close and intimate. If we close down the center too much though, we will make the traffic problem worse.
- The symptom is traffic; the real disease is the type of traffic; if we expand roads even more, people will come through more. We are only interested in folks coming up who want to enjoy the mountains.
- Kids with cars and parents chauffeuring kids to school create a lot of traffic.
- Does making downtown more intimate mean slowing traffic down? It's already 25 MPH.

- What about a pedestrian overpass? (lots of "boo's" from crowd).
- Stop signs at South end of Hwy. 9 would slow people down; crosswalks don't slow cars down; they are dangerous.
- On Lomond Street, drivers hit the accelerator. This relates directly to safety with the school.
- We are being shortsighted; what about alternative forms of transportation.
- We need bike trails and places for kids to walk.
- We need a carpool lot for commuters.
- Need to reduce speed in front of school.
- Need a sidewalk on the steep portion of Lomond Street; maybe steps on the sidewalk in that section.
- Need more sidewalks! (Some disagreement murmurs).
- Let's have angled parking, from the bridge to Scarborough Lumber!
- Need bike lanes.
- Traffic tie-up would be aided by protected bike lanes.

- Accommodate more parking on Pine Street.
- Roads should be built to handle trucks going to and from the Post Office.
- We need a sidewalk up to Lomond School.
- Need a tunnel to separate pedestrians and traffic.
- The School really impacts the circulation pattern.
- Create more stops off the highway between San Jose and Santa Cruz.
- Don't like parking backing out onto Highway 9.

**RECREATION:**

- Is it possible to get multi-use from the school playgrounds?
- Recreational areas not well maintained.
- Not a lot going on for kids in Boulder Creek. The Community Center didn't serve all ages of kids.
- Let's have an adult Community Center with indoor and outdoor rooms. If the adults gather, than so will the kids.



## Appendix: Public Workshop Comments

- Why aren't the creek spots being used now? They're polluted and kids just go down there to drink. Let's keep them and fix them up.

- Why aren't we connected as a recreation district to Santa Cruz? They have more facilities/resources.  
Answer: Old boundary by Brookdale; we wanted more local control.

- Make parks more responsive to the needs of the community.

### DREAMS AND VISIONS:

- I have a dream of a Commuter Center that informs commuters, provides day-care and even serves meals as a way of bringing people together before they go home from work.

- Bring back fish ladders in the river.

### Workshop #3 - FEBRUARY 7, 1991

After the consultants' presentation of revitalization opportunities, strategies, and alternative design concepts, members of the public offered their thoughts, observations, and concerns. The following ideas were noted and discussed:

#### PLANNING PROCESS:

- How do we prioritize these recommendations? At the next workshop.

- How are we going to fund these improvements? Tax Increment Financing is one way.

#### LOCAL ECONOMY:

- The property owner of the Schwartzbach Site would like to see it remain as commercial property.

- The Compact Core proposed is too small. What about commercial on Pine and Railroad Street too? Why not? Let them expand. The sewer system is the real constraint.

- Like the idea of having commercial in the Village Core, and also down Highway 9, south of town.

#### COMMUNITY DESIGN:

- At the last meeting, there was talk about fixing up the recreation hall/fire station area. Let's fix up what we have.

- In terms of lighting, don't just put up concrete poles, but a smaller scale ornamental light.

- The blue blob on the south end of map...his house is on it...and other historic homes.

- Pine Street is still a big question...what happens there?

- We need a community center! Ben Lomond has one. Felton has one. What about the site across from the Schwartzbach Site?

- Possible sites for a Community Center:

- Existing Recreation Hall (applause)
- Peach Cottage Site (too small)
- Schwartzbach Site (No!)
- Evans Site (applause)
- "Bus Depot" Site from the junction back to Hwy. 9

- Don't think community center ought to take priority. What would take priority?

- angled parking, street trees and lights on Hwy. 9,
- getting children across the street,

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

- fix up existing parks, and slow traffic down from Redwood School to Video 9, because that's where kids are coming to school from.
- We're concerned about zoning changes. Would it limit rebuilding? We can do things like a "grandfather clause."
- Use the "stone wall site" for senior housing instead of for a park/playground.
- Let's get back to a gathering place being a priority. Look at sites we already have. What about the recreation hall?
- We're not talking about reducing the community core, but condensing it.
- Are we making the town smaller? No, just more defined.
- Maybe there are better locations for building supply trades than in the Village Core.
- Isn't it important to address the sewage problem first. It is important, but the funding for that is separate.
- Is it easier to handle sewage capacity of commercial property than of residential?

- Can we write into zoning the type of businesses that we want?...and where we want them?

**CIRCULATION AND PARKING:**

- The concern with angled parking is backing out onto Hwy. 9. That's a mixed bag - it looks more dangerous, but with the right design, it slows traffic down.
- Pros for angled parking are that it creates more parking, and it slows traffic down. Cons are that it could cause congestion.
- The stop sign at Big Basin/Hwy. 9 works well. Let's put one at Lomond Street, Bear Creek Road and Forest Street too.
- How hard is it to get CalTrans to go with angled parking?
- There was no pass-thru suggested to Railroad Avenue.
- Angled parking would improve things with more parking supply, both actual and perceived.
- Let's recognize and keep what we have and work from there. We need to address the parking issue for safety.
- Like the angled parking idea, but we're losing parking spaces down where you proposed a bike lane!

- Get a bike lane out to Redwood School.
- CalTrans is going to run a water line out to Redwood School. Can we coordinate construction with a bike lane?
- Can we get CalTrans to come to the next workshop.
- Parking regulations should be different in the "Village." Let's use shared parking. (applause)
- There are too many bus stops. They take out too many parking spaces.
- Let's downplay the car! Add angled parking, trees, lights, etc.
- Boulder and Grove Streets are a problem for pedestrians.

**RECREATION:**

- Playground...do we need one?
- It's a problem having a park so close to Hwy. 9.

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

**Workshop #4 -  
MAY 30, 1991**

The workshop began with a summary of the Working Draft Plan by the Consultant. The following comments were noted:

- What about a "walk-bridge" across Route 9 for children to get to Redwood Elementary School? Expensive...a light could be just as good.
- What about a CalTrans "Park and Ride" facility for commuters? It would free up some parking for Boulder Creek shoppers.
- We tried a "Park and Ride" facility several years ago and it didn't work. It was empty and dangerous at night.
- Let's eliminate redundant bus stops on Central Avenue to allow more opportunity for angled parking.
- Is angled parking legal on Highway 9? - They have it in Felton.
- Angled parking will conflict with deliveries on Central Avenue.
- Angled parking won't make the delivery problem worse than it is now and may force some better organization and coordination.
- Land acquisition for a public parking lot is a good idea.

- What about parking meters on Central Avenue to create more short-term parking? Might be OK if the district becomes very successful...probably not good for business in the short term.

- Lorenzo Street really continues north past Scopazzi's even though it isn't shown on the map. This land area could accommodate parking for 75 cars if the street were extended and improved for angled parking.

- What's all the talk about parking? I don't perceive a parking problem now, but angled parking does make traffic more congested.

- Won't adding additional stop signs on Central Avenue encourage traffic to take detours or "short-cuts" through adjoining residential areas? It's possible, but there are ways to discourage this if it becomes a problem.

- What about maintenance of trees in the parking zone? Won't the roots lift the pavement? This isn't usually a problem if you pick the right species of tree. They do need irrigation, however.

- Which types of commercial are allowed in residential areas now? Two employees max., must be a home occupation ... art gallery, professional/personal service, etc.

- I live on Railroad Avenue and like the idea of commercial there. It is hard for residential to develop there and it looks like an eyesore now.

Following the summary, participants formed ten study groups to evaluate the plan's recommendations, primarily the issue of extending commercial land use designations. The following comments were recorded:

**Group 1**

- Expanding the commercial area to Railroad Avenue with low-impact, residential-looking businesses and lighting, walk-throughs, etc., would be acceptable.

**Group 2**

- Expanding the commercial area to the west side of Pine is OK; west side of Railroad OK; turmoil/conflicted regarding the east side of Railroad.

- Prefer a redwood walk along Lomond instead of concrete to deter skateboarders.

- Possible to close/pedestrianize Railroad Avenue for commercial businesses in mid-block? create a green?

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

**Group 3**

- Support commercial on west side of Railroad Avenue: light commercial with new lights and walks.
- East side of RR opinion split residential vs. light commercial.
- County should buy vacant lots on RR; don't like parking there.
- Lighting should be extended up Lomond to the school.
- Should install a stop at Railroad/Middleton.
- Rather see crossing guards than a stop sign at Lomond/Central Ave.

**Group 4**

- Low impact commercial uses are acceptable on both sides of Railroad Avenue; 1-story only.
- Closing Railroad for a "green" could be OK if delivery issues are resolved.

**Group 5**

- Light commercial acceptable on west side of Railroad; no consensus on east side.
- Traffic speed control needed on East Lomond.

- Like some additional crosswalks on Central.
- Should put a new stop sign at Forest instead of at Lomond.

**Group 6**

- Commercial from Bear Creek Road south OK.
- West side Railroad OK for light commercial; East side mixed opinions.
- Must make sure light commercial along Railroad stays that way, with small signs, etc.
- Pine Street commercial OK; east side of Pine parking areas should be cleaned up.
- A small new parking area would be OK adjacent to the Recreational Hall and downtown business.

- Extending Lorenzo Street west to Laurel is recommended for access and additional parking.
- Annoyed that the Village Plan stops at Mountain Avenue.
- Would like to see some additional stops to slow traffic on Central Ave.

**Group 7**

- Working Draft content seems OK except for Railroad Avenue; low impact commercial OK.
- Low impact multi-unit residential along stone wall is OK.
- Prefer stop sign at Lomond rather than light.
- Sewer treatment facility and off-street parking are needed.
- Agree with angle parking along Central Avenue.
- Some other parking pockets should be proposed on east side of Central; on the south side of the existing Post Office could be a good site for additional parking too; existing parking lots should be cleaned up and improved.
- Extending commercial use to Boulder Creek is good for expanding retail and office; what about traffic flow? extend Lorenzo? The area could be good for Bed and Breakfasts or a small hotel near the Creek.
- Must clearly define what you mean by commercial.
- Pre-school and other similar uses are OK along the west side of Railroad Ave.; vacant properties are a product of the sewer problem.

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

- Professional office uses could be OK on the east side; not a consensus.

- A stop sign is needed at Railroad/Middleton.

- What about increased demand for parking at the Junction if it is fixed up?

**Group 8**

- Agree with concept of expanding the commercial area east/west; Pine is best for retail.

- Railroad Avenue is logical for light commercial because residential development is constrained by lot size regulations and sewer capacity.

- Barrier vegetation may be needed to buffer residential areas adjacent to the Junction, and between residential and commercial development in general.

- Another parking area to be fixed up is along East Forest behind the hardware store.

**Group 9**

- Lomond/Central stop sign is a good idea.

- Recommend angle parking on only one side of Central to maintain some extra traffic capacity.

- Boulder Creek to Laurel area is good for extending light commercial and some parking.

- With the existing park at the Junction fixed up, Simoni's property could be good if acquired for recreational space/use.

- Agree with extending commercial along Big Basin Way.

**Group 10**

- Agree with most Plan recommendations.

- Railroad Ave seems OK with light commercial on both sides, but not a clear consensus.

- Like extending commercial to the Creek.

- Like the collective parking association recommendation.

- Should eliminate red zone in front of Fire Department and move bus stop to opposite side of intersection; would be safer.

- Parking sign ideas are good.

- Totally agree that light commercial development needs a barrier of some kind to protect residential properties to the rear.

- The area south of Lomond to Harmon contains the oldest houses;

R-1 zoning should remain there instead of a multi-family designation.



*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

**Workshop #5 -  
SEPTEMBER 5, 1991**

Following opening remarks by Supervisor Fred Keeley suggesting that additional "wordsmithing" needed to be conducted on the draft Boulder Creek Town Plan, and an explanation of the proposed land use plan by County Planning staff, workshop participants expressed the following views:

- One person noted that the cost of plan implementation was estimated to be between \$3 million and \$5 million and questioned how this implementation was going to be financed? If any additional taxes were involved, many of the residents wanted it put to a vote.

- Other residents wanted to know if the Plan and the question regarding establishing a redevelopment area would be put to a vote. Supervisor Keeley stated that the consensus-building workshop process is the technique the County has chosen to achieve a satisfactory plan, including the implementation technique of redevelopment.

- The question of rezoning notification arose early and was addressed as part of the staff presentation. A resident wanted to know why property owners were not officially notified that their properties may be rezoned. County staff explained that if proper-

ty were to be rezoned, all property owners effected, including property owners within 300 feet of proposed rezoned areas, would be notified prior to any Planning Commission meeting on the subject, as required by State and County law.

- Many residents wondered why this workshop was trying to achieve land use consensus they thought was achieved at the May 30th workshop. Other residents believed that in the key areas of Railroad Avenue and the southern strip of Highway 9, consensus was not achieved. Staff presented the Village Commercial/Residential (VCR) zoning concept as a method of addressing previous workshop issues of providing a "light commercial" zoning district while allowing some expansion of commercial areas. Many merchants felt that the disallowance of retail uses in VCR did not satisfy their needs, nor the recommendations which came out of an economic study prepared by Zephyr & Associates.

- Many attempts were made at trying to achieve a majority vote of those present on the following issues:

- The extent and type of commercial zoning to be allowed on Pine Avenue from Forest to Big Basin way. It was the clear consensus that Community Commercial (C-2) zoning be permitted on both sides of the street for this stretch of Pine.

(It is currently zoned commercial only on the east side of the street.)

- The extent and type of commercial on Railroad Avenue, from Forest Avenue to Middleton. No consensus was reached, however a resident continued to mention a petition of 52 residents indicated that they were against commercial zoning on both sides of the street.

Numerous "straw votes" were taken to try to achieve a meaningful consensus in the Railroad Avenue area. There was general dissatisfaction with the Village Commercial/Residential Zoning district; although no explicit definition was able to be reached at this meeting. The majority of merchants believed that some type of "light commercial" designation had been agreed to at the last workshop on both sides of Railroad. The majority of residents believed that "light commercial" type designation was agreed to on the west side of Railroad, they did not believe that the east side had been agreed to at the previous meeting.

Several participants believed that allowing for a mix of commercial and residential land uses in the same area would result in a blighted condition. Staff responded that when done carefully, mix of similar scale business and residential uses can result in an attractive and quality area, often adding vitality to both type of uses.

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

- The extent and type of commercial on Highway 9, west side, between Lomond and Flat Street. It was the majority view that Community Commercial (C-2) zoning be allowed in that area. However, there was a small contingent of residential property owners in the area that strongly objected to this and stated they would be circulating a petition.
- One resident stated that he had already lost faith in Federal and State government, and was beginning to feel the same way about County government. Another resident questioned whether there was some hidden agenda. County staff responded that there was not. The purpose of the meeting was to iron-out any misinterpretations that may have resulted from the last meeting and to begin the final editing of the Plan. Staff believed that they had arrived at a reasonable land use compromise, considering all that had transpired at that, and previous meetings. The purpose of this fifth meeting was to go over those areas still in dispute.
- Public parking remained a big concern of several of the merchants. Where is it going, and how many additional spaces will be provided?
- Bill Gutzwiler, from the merchants association, and Dave Wood, from the Railroad Avenue neighborhood, agreed that a land use category that allowed telecommuting on the east side of Railroad Avenue was acceptable. Mr. Gutzwiler further stated that an upgrading of telephone lines with special fiber optic line was probably needed to achieve this result. Although Mr. Wood had no objection to the idea, no consensus was reached with the rest of the workshop participants on this issue.
- Parking on the east side of Railroad Avenue as a possible land use was discussed at some length, but no consensus was achieved.
- The owner of the Beacon station at the corner of Big Basin Way and Highway 9 stated that he objected to the screening of his property as recommended in the Plan. County staff explained the reason for the low wall recommended, but some residents noted that low walls in this location resulted in people congregating and drinking, only to create an area for the collection of litter. There was no general support for the screening recommendation. Staff agreed to delete this from the Plan.
- One individual objected to the street trees proposed in the Plan. He stated that Boulder Creek had enough trees.
- Mr. Gutzwiler suggested the use of a tape recorder or stenographer at the next workshop.
- Participants discussed various ways to achieve consensus on the final issues unresolved. Some type of sub-group meeting process was suggested.

*Appendix: Public Workshop Comments*

**Workshop #6 -  
OCTOBER 29, 1991**

Supervisor Keeley presented opening remarks to the residents, including the introduction of resident planning subcommittee members who prepared a revised draft of the Boulder Creek Town Plan during the month of September, following Workshop #5. The Supervisor also extended his appreciation to Liberty Bank for permitting use of its office space over a weekend for the subcommittee's benefit. Subcommittee members then presented the recommended changes to the Plan.

A summary of the changes include:

- Establishment of an Historic District in the "South Highway 9" area, recognizing existing commercial uses (the White House and car restoration properties).
- Extension of the proposed streetscape improvements along Central Avenue, including diagonal parking to Harmon Street on the South and the library to the north.
- A compromise land use plan for the Railroad Avenue area with primarily professional/administrative land use allowed on the west side of Railroad, with a site designated for off-street parking.

- An expanded financing section with a menu of options taking into consideration the competitive nature of some funds, the focused character of other financing mechanisms (capital improvement only financing versus financing that includes the option of improvement and maintenance costs), and property owner approval.

David Eood, one of the subcommittee members, also mentioned some of the Plan "nuances" that would try to be achieved, including a commitment from the Business Association to improve parking along Pine Street and the Plan's intent to have professional and administrative type uses within the PA designation even though some retail uses are permitted by this zoning category.

Following the subcommittee's presentation, several questions were raised by the workshop participants regarding funding priorities, traffic safety issues, permitted land use along Railroad Avenue, wastewater management options, bike lanes to Redwood School (added Plan language to be included), the length of sidewalk on West Park Avenue (language in the Plan would be amended to assure that only a sidewalk to the Library on West Park would be constructed), and the need for clearer graphics in some cases. Also, Nancy Carlson, representing the Cultural Committee of San Lorenzo Valley, stressed the need for cultural activities to be included in

the planning of any new or rehabilitated community center.

Following the workshop discussion, Supervisor Keeley asked if there was consensus to forward the Plan to the Planning Commission and Board. There was unanimous support for this transmittal. The Supervisor was further congratulated for his dedication to the planning process and for his ability to assemble the resident subcommittee to resolve all of the major issues.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Ray Belgard  
Fred Keeley  
Robley Levy  
Gary Patton

### Planning Commission

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