



CHAPTER 5:

NORTH FISH HATCHERY ROAD DESIGN GUIDELINES

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CHAPTER 5: NORTH FISH HATCHERY ROAD DESIGN GUIDELINES

The North Fish Hatchery Road Urban Design Guidelines are a joint project of the City of Fitchburg and the Dane County Better Urban Infill Development or BUILD program. It is part of a coordinated effort to revitalize the north Fish Hatchery Road corridor. The study area for the North Fish Hatchery Road Design Guidelines includes all properties fronting on north Fish Hatchery Road between Traceway Drive on the south and Greenway Cross on the north.

The purpose of these design guidelines is to provide clear direction for how property owners should make improvements to their building and properties to improve the visual character and safety of north Fish Hatchery Road. When applied, these guidelines will create a consistent building and site design along the corridor while continuing to allow each building and site to uniquely express itself. In addition, these guidelines will discourage incompatible development and will help prevent the visual and functional impact of uncoordinated design decisions.

The North Fish Hatchery Road Design Guidelines will accomplish the following goals:

- Improve the visual character of the north Fish Hatchery Road corridor to reflect its role as one of the major entrances to the City of Fitchburg and encourage high quality infill and redevelopment projects in this centrally located urban corridor.
- Design a visually pleasing, safe, and socially stimulating business district for the north side of the City.
- Improve the destination appeal, identity and long-term economic vitality of the North Fish Hatchery Road Business District in order to encourage infill and redevelopment in an urban district well served by existing infrastructure.
- Allow for self-expression, innovation, diversity and affordability in private property improvements to create an overall attractive appearance for the north Fish Hatchery Road corridor.

There are several benefits that can be derived from the implementation of these design guidelines. Benefits for the property owner include maintaining and enhancing property values, attracting tenants and customers and improving the use of buildings and sites. Design guidelines inform property owners and developers of the projects the neighborhood, business community, and policy makers can support. The process of getting projects approved will be more predictable and efficient. Benefits to the community include improved accessibility, a safer environment, and a greater sense of community image and pride.

Description of the North Fish Hatchery Road Corridor

North Fish Hatchery Road is the gateway to the City of Fitchburg. It connects workers and residents to destinations throughout the community and the greater Fitchburg metropolitan area. The City of Fitchburg is experiencing a growing residential, office and commercial market and possesses an abundance of community and natural resources. An increasing number of people and businesses are viewing Fitchburg as a place to live, work, shop and do business. While these are assets to build on, there are also many opportunities for improvement. Because this area is so centrally located within the greater metropolitan region, there is a tremendous opportunity for infill

and redevelopment in a portion of the City already well connected to urban services and major transportation routes. Positioning this corridor for new development, redevelopment and infill on land is critical in that it absorbs development pressure that would otherwise affect areas on the periphery. In the long-term this will minimize environmental impacts and infrastructure costs, preserve open space, and facilitate greater access to goods, employment and services for the larger community.

- Although north Fish Hatchery Road is a major gateway into the City of Fitchburg, it lacks a coherent visual character. Land uses along the street are varied, ranging from industrial businesses to open spaces to neighborhood-oriented stores, which are an interesting mix, but these places are not tied together in a consistent way. Consequently, these uses are isolated in their design and appearance and often compete – rather than complement – one another.
- The West Beltline Highway and Greenway Cross on the north, the limited street network east of the corridor, and Fish Hatchery Road are all barriers that limit connections within the study area and isolate the business district and surrounding neighborhoods from the rest of the community.
- Surrounding neighborhoods lack full connectivity for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles to north Fish Hatchery Road and other parts of Fitchburg and the City and Town of Madison. This lack of connectivity, according to citizens participating in this planning process, makes the few connecting roads “thoroughfares” in which high volumes of vehicles travel above the speed limits.
- The study area is home to a significant number of senior and low-income residents who live in rental housing and rely heavily on walking and transit as their primary modes of transportation. However, both the volume and speed of traffic and the design of the north Fish Hatchery Road make this corridor difficult to safely cross for pedestrians.
- The north Fish Hatchery Road corridor is perceived by many residents and visitors as being unsafe. This perception influences the type of businesses and customers that the community is able to successfully attract to north Fish Hatchery Road.
- Structures along north Fish Hatchery Road are generally small in scale – one story buildings, with large parking lots, and low density. There is potential for significant infill and redevelopment on numerous sites along the corridor.

I. PRINCIPLES AND ORGANIZATION

The intent of these guidelines is to provide design direction for the exterior improvement of buildings and private property along north Fish Hatchery Road, including renovations and additions to existing properties and new construction. These guidelines apply to all buildings, except for residential buildings of four units or less.

The goal for these guidelines is **not** to create a uniform “style” or character for the street, but rather to allow north Fish Hatchery Road to evolve as a distinctive place that builds on the strengths of its businesses and neighborhoods. The desired outcome of well-designed private property improvements, combined with well-designed public street improvements (not addressed in these guidelines), will be a dynamic entrance

to the City of Fitchburg where residents, business people, visitors and commuters will enjoy living, shopping, and interacting with one another.

A. URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The urban design principles embodied in the north Fish Hatchery Road Design Guidelines have stood the test of time in communities across the country and are defining elements of great places. Based on the key elements of downtowns and other successful urban business districts, these principles underpin the design of some of the most popular and economically viable urban commercial business districts in the United States. Walkable streets, human-scaled architecture, public spaces, street furnishings, and landscaping are common design features that make these places attractive environments for people to shop, work, and live.

The North Fish Hatchery Road Design Guidelines are based on the following urban design principles:

Land Use

A mix of uses that encourage pedestrian activity, work with natural topography and express the street's cultural identity, including; retail; restaurants; residential; offices; service businesses; light industry; civic uses; and public open spaces are encouraged.

Buildings

Buildings are at least two stories in height to give scale to the street with ground floor retail/commercial and upper floor residential and office uses. Buildings are located closer to the street to create a sense of enclosure for the public sidewalk. Building setbacks provide space for amenities that enhance pedestrian activity along the street.

Parking

Parking lots are primarily located on the sides and rears of buildings and are shared by two or more businesses.

Walkability

Sidewalks/terrace areas are a minimum of 10 feet wide with a six foot wide unobstructed sidewalk zone and minimum four foot wide terrace next to the public street. Street furnishings are provided in the terrace to enhance the pedestrian character and use of the street including pedestrian scale lighting, benches, bicycle racks, information kiosks, etc. Crosswalks are clearly marked and include pedestrian refuge islands for safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings. A recreational greenway connection with fountains and other public art is provided to the Nine-Springs E-Way.

Streets

Streets are designed to accommodate efficient traffic flow and multiple transportation choices including automobiles, buses, bicycles, and possible future light rail or electric streetcar options.

Landscaping

Tall canopy street trees are provided to shade the sidewalk, provide a sense of enclosure for the street, and visually unify the blockface.

B. NORTH FISH HATCHERY ROAD CHARACTER

North Fish Hatchery Road is centrally located within Dane County and the greater Madison metropolitan area. It is also positioned as the entrance to Fitchburg. This important central and gateway location is expected to attract investment interest in properties abutting the corridor. These guidelines will assist property owners in directing their investments to achieve an attractive and pedestrian friendly character over the entire corridor.

North Fish Hatchery Road is a complex corridor containing a variety of uses with a strong suburban character in much of the existing development. For the purpose of the land use plan the improvement area has been divided into three districts. The design guidelines are intended to reinforce the identity of the three design districts. **These Design Districts are illustrated on Map 5.1** found on page 5.5.

The Community Gateway District

The northern portion of north Fish Hatchery Road represents the entrance to the City of Fitchburg from the Beltline Highway. This section includes a mix of commercial, industrial and multifamily residential uses with an emphasis on small scale commercial uses on individual lots. Many of these uses – fast food restaurants, gas stations, and bank branches – are oriented toward the significant number of commuters that drive through the district daily. Many of the properties fronting the western side of north Fish Hatchery Road are included in one of the redevelopment concept areas illustrated in **Section F** of these guidelines. Opportunities in this section include office and mixed-use buildings designed to enclose the street and better articulate the gateway to Fitchburg.

The Residential/Institutional Mixed Use District

This district includes the area east of north Fish Hatchery Road in the northern portion of the improvement area. Currently, this section is comprised of a mix of light industrial and office uses with senior housing and assisted living facilities. Many of the uses in the area enjoy spectacular views onto the open spaces which abut the study area including the Nine Springs E-way. Buildings in this section are primarily one story in height with the exception of the senior housing apartment buildings. This section also includes the site of the new St. Marys Dialysis Center. Opportunities in this area include future office and institutional uses transitioning from the industrial area to existing and future housing developments in the area.

Neighborhood/Community Commercial Core District

This section is characterized by significant retail development on the west side of north Fish Hatchery Road which has recently evidenced a trend towards service uses.

Development on the east side has been more limited due to the lack of a connecting street network and currently consists of a large industrial use in the south (Foremost Farms, Inc.) and a significant and stable multi-family housing development in the north (Valley View Apartments). A handful of single family homes separate these two uses and front the eastern side of north Fish Hatchery Road. The area generally lacks a sense of street enclosure, continuity of buildings and uses and street connections to the adjoining neighborhoods and community destinations.

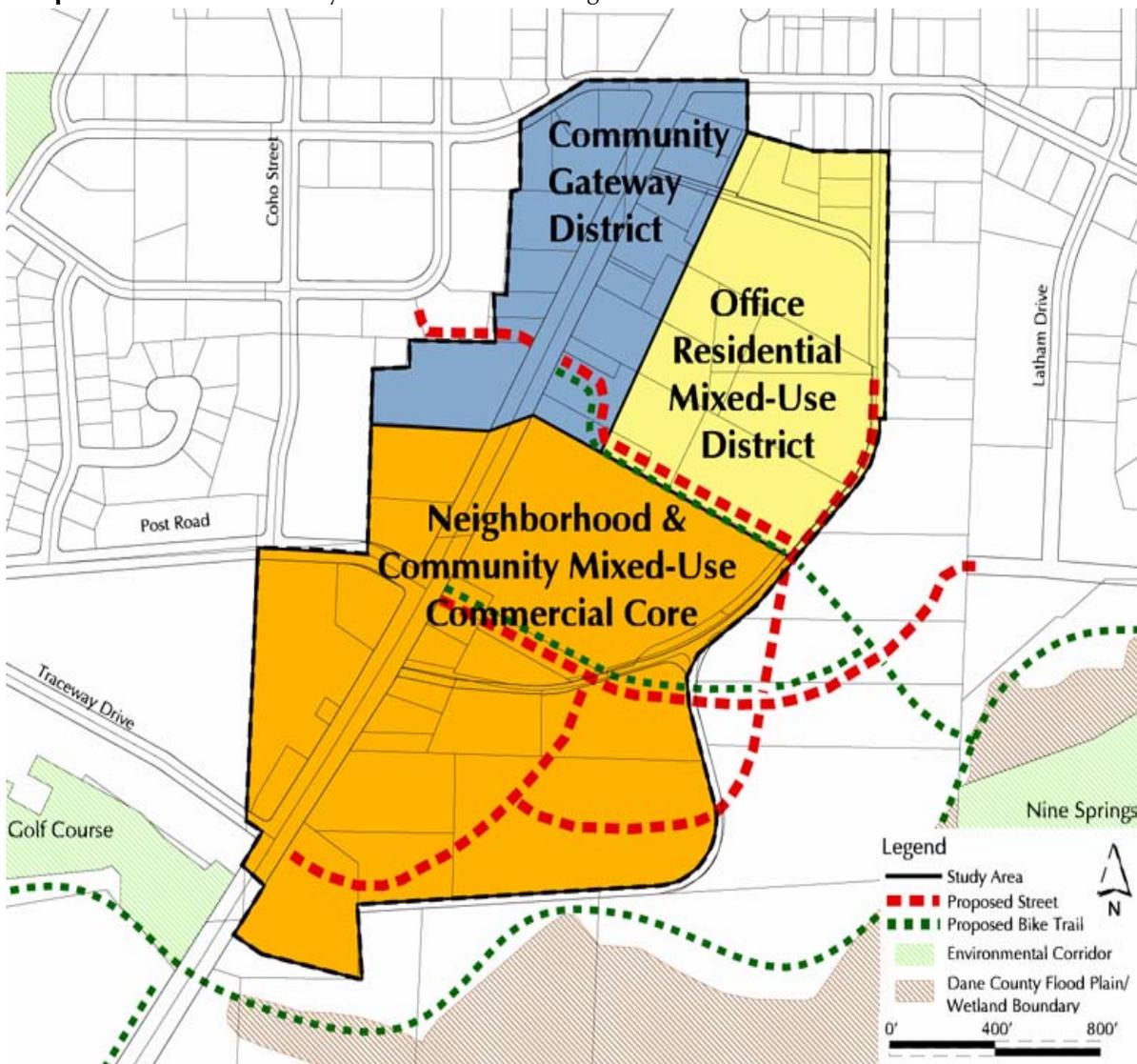
In the future, with the extension of the street network east of north Fish Hatchery Road, this portion of the study area could develop as an important commercial center

and the heart of north Fitchburg. Commercial uses serving nearby neighborhoods and the larger community could anchor the intersection of Post Road and north Fish Hatchery Road. Large properties east of the intersection could also be developed as residential and office uses to take advantage of a significant open space network, while also supporting and benefiting from commercial uses along the corridor.

C. ORGANIZATION OF URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

These guidelines have been organized into two principle sections: General Design Guidelines and Specific Design Guidelines. The General Design Guidelines present broad principles related to blockface design, site design, building design, building height, and property maintenance. Specific Design Guidelines provide specific, numbered guidelines for all private property improvements, including new construction projects, existing building and site renovation projects, and private signage. There are also three redevelopment concept plans which provide more detailed analyses of specific sites in the study area.

Map 5.1: North Fish Hatchery Road Land Use & Design Districts



II. GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following General Design Guidelines provide overarching design principles that are common to all new construction and renovation projects on north Fish Hatchery Road. These guidelines fit into several functional categories: blockface design, site design, building design, building height and property maintenance.

A. BLOCKFACE DESIGN

The buildings and sites along north Fish Hatchery Road are not isolated structures. The placement and appearance of the buildings, sites, and signs contribute to the character of the entire block and ultimately to the character of the street. A blockface is one side of a street block. Because north Fish Hatchery Road runs north and south, the blockfaces along the street face either east or west. When the buildings along a street block are closely spaced or contiguous or incorporate closely spaced landscape elements and architectural features into their design, the blockface becomes a cohesive vertical element or “street wall”. The opposing blockfaces along the street create a series of relatively parallel street walls that – to varying degrees – enclose the public streetscape and create outdoor, linear “rooms”.

The general guidelines for how private property owners can improve the blockface design include:

- Coordinate building and site designs with adjoining properties.
- Promote shared driveways and parking.
- Use landscaping and furnishings to enhance the public sidewalk.
- Consider infill development and landscaping to create a continuous blockface.

B. SITE DESIGN

Site design refers to the physical arrangement of buildings, walkways, parking lots, landscaping and other elements on a property. The placement of these elements on the site will contribute to the functional and aesthetic character of the site and north Fish Hatchery Road. For example, sites with large front parking areas or large setbacks generally contribute little to the aesthetic quality or walkability of north Fish Hatchery Road. Site development that places well-designed buildings, closer to the street will strengthen the character and spatial enclosure of the street. To achieve this enclosed parking or rear- and side-yard parking is encouraged.

Much of the north Fish Hatchery Road study area is located within or immediately adjacent to the Nine Springs E-way and development can affect the environmental quality and recreational value of this important natural resource. Sustainable site design practices are encouraged to reduce or eliminate the negative affect of stormwater runoff on this resource.

The general guidelines for how private property owners should improve their sites include:

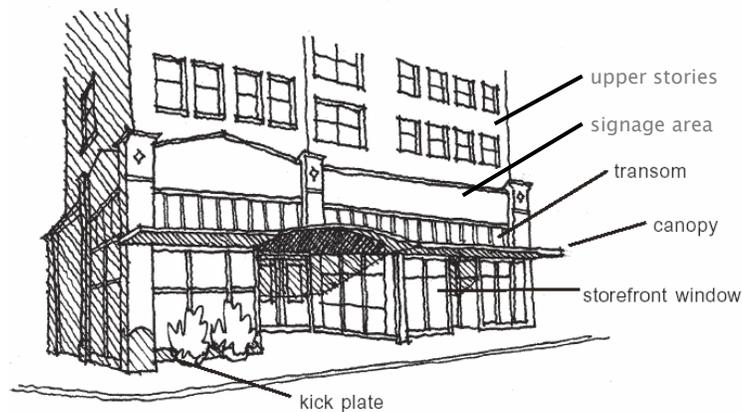
- Locate buildings close to the street.
- Connect entrances with public sidewalks.
- Utilize rear and side-yard parking where possible. Employ screening techniques where front-yard parking is considered necessary.
- Provide attractive landscaping/outdoor spaces.
- Complement the public 'streetscape'.
- Locate trash and utility areas away from the street and out of public view, and provide appropriate screening.
- Employ environmentally sustainable design practices.
- New development should respect the existing topography of the site.
- Promote crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). CPTED strategies for commercial and residential environments include:
 - Provide clear border definition of controlled space. Fences, landscaping and signage all represent acceptable border definition. The underlying principle is that the "reasonable individual" must be able to recognize that (s)he is transitioning from public to private space.
 - Provide clearly marked transitional zones moving from public to semi-public to semi-private to private space this will help to encourage appropriate behavior throughout the business and mixed-use district.
 - Relocate gathering areas to areas with good natural surveillance and access control. Private gathering areas may be located in places that are out of view of "abnormal users" (defined as persons whom you do not desire to be in a certain space).
 - Place safe activities in unsafe locations. Safe activities serve as magnets for normal users (defined as persons whom you desire to be in a certain space).
 - Re-designate the space to provide natural barriers. Conflicting activities may be separated by distance, natural terrain, or by other functions to avoid fear producing conflict. For instance the sounds emanating from a basketball court may contribute to a perception of insecurity for a senior gathering area. Environmental guidelines can minimize both perceived and real threats.
 - Improve scheduling of space. Generally, it has been found that the effective and productive use of spaces reduces real and perceived threats for normal users. Conversely, abnormal users feel at greater risk of surveillance and intervention in their activities.
 - Redesign or revamp space to increase the perception of natural surveillance. The perception of surveillance is more powerful than its reality. In this way windows and clear lines of sight can be more effective than hidden cameras, and as effective as on-site guards.
 - Overcome distance and isolation. Improved communications and design efficiencies such as the location of building entrances may be planned to create the perception of immediate access to help.

(Source: Crowe, Timothy D., National Crime Prevention Institute. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, 2nd Edition. Butterworth-Heinemann, Boston. 2000.)

C. BUILDING DESIGN

The design of buildings is a key part of shaping a positive and attractive character to the north Fish Hatchery Road corridor. New buildings and renovation of existing buildings should enliven the public streetscape, complement the character of adjacent buildings, and provide inviting entrances to pedestrians. Building designs should be sustainable, as well. “Green” architecture, which uses water, energy, and other natural resources more efficiently, is encouraged.

A recent trend has encouraged the construction of new buildings according to the principles of traditional commercial and mixed use architecture. Older, traditional mixed-use buildings provide a stronger sense of place with scale, proportion, and details that relate to the pedestrian. The detail and scaling found in these buildings generally makes them more appealing than some of the modern facades located on north Fish Hatchery Road. These buildings have several distinct parts, including the storefront, upper facade, transom, canopy and kick plate as shown in the illustration.



The ground level of the building must provide for pedestrian interest and comfort along sidewalks.

The intent of these guidelines is **not** that new construction or renovations on north Fish Hatchery Road should attempt to recreate historic buildings. What is recommended is that building improvements incorporate the basic facade design elements of older buildings while encouraging creative architectural expression.

General design parameters for building design include:

- Create buildings with details and proportions that are scaled to the pedestrian.
- Complement scale and character of adjacent buildings.
- Encourage mixed-use buildings.
- Create inviting entrances.
- Maximize storefront transparency.
- Design all sides of the building to be visible to the public.
- Encourage franchises to respect community character through strict architectural and design review processes.
- Employ environmentally sustainable design practices.
- Provide details that express community identity.
- Provide variation to the building face design through the use of human scale elements, materials and color, or by dividing the building into bays to break up large facades and create pedestrian interest at the street level.

Franchise Design

Design review guidelines that define a vocabulary of elements appropriate for the character of the community are a means of assisting corporations in choosing building and plant materials, accoutrements, and signs that support and enhance the larger community identity of Fitchburg. Design review and enforcement must be consistent. A single franchise building exhibiting conventional design, or outrageous “brand” colors and signage can negate a good job of finding compatible solutions elsewhere.

Franchise structures should reinforce community character. Insist on an architectural style and building materials for gas stations, fast food restaurants and other franchise commercial properties that is consistent with the desired image of Fitchburg. Further, landscaping on the franchise sites should reinforce compatible design or ameliorate the effects of conventional buildings. For gas stations, pump shelters and canopies can either diminish or strengthen design. Oversized pump shelters with outsized lights or plastic disks introduce a discordant rhythm to the street and negate public investment in the streetscape.

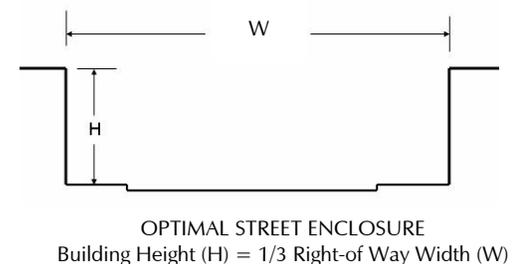
The key to improving community character in areas with a predominance of franchise architecture lies in good design review. While there may not be a mechanism for changing the design of buildings that were approved before the design review process was initiated, the City can very effectively use the design review process when businesses propose physical changes. Additionally, the presence of non-conforming franchise signage can often be addressed through a 5-year amortization or sunset clause. In any design review process, there are unlikely to be visible results in the immediate short term but overtime the City can drastically improve the look of the corridor by coordinating with building owners and developers to ensure good design.

D. BUILDING HEIGHT

These guidelines allow the flexibility to build taller structures, recognizing that it is good land use policy to promote greater density in northern Fitchburg – the center of the Madison metropolitan area. However, determining appropriate building height will depend on the context in which the development is proposed. Does the development adjoin an existing neighborhood? Is the development part of a redevelopment plan for a larger area?

A general rule of thumb for achieving optimal human-scaled, pedestrian-friendly urban streets is that the average building height should be at least one-third of the right-of-way width to create a sense of enclosure. Considering that the typical width of north Fish Hatchery Road is 110’-120’ within the public right-of way, a building height of 35-40’ or three-to-four stories would be an optimal scale for the street. In the short term it is unlikely that the street would achieve such a level of enclosure, however as properties redevelop, buildings which provide a greater degree of enclosure on north Fish Hatchery Road should be encouraged.

These guidelines generally recommend that new buildings on north Fish Hatchery Road should not be less than two stories high or taller than four stories and utilize enclosed or underground parking wherever possible. However, single-story and four-story buildings could be developed if it can be shown that they exhibit extraordinary design quality that enhances the desired use mix, character, and affordability of north Fish Hatchery Road, and four-story buildings should demonstrate that adequate parking can be provided (on-site, off-site or shared) to accommodate the additional residents or uses.



E. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Well-maintained buildings and sites present a positive and attractive business district image to visitors, customers, prospective tenants and owners. Additionally, property maintenance can contribute to crime prevention. Buildings should be kept clean and in good repair. Parking areas and open spaces should be kept free of trash and debris and regularly re-paved and striped. Landscaping should be maintained and plants replaced when they die. Business and property owners should maintain their public sidewalks through regular sweeping and removal of litter from terrace areas. Quick removal of graffiti is also important for projecting a positive image for the business district.



Removal of graffiti is important for maintaining a positive image for the business district.

III. SPECIFIC DESIGN GUIDELINES

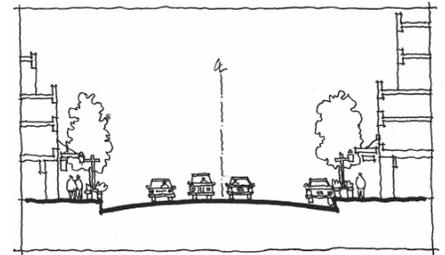
The following guidelines provide specific recommendations for all exterior private property improvements on north Fish Hatchery Road. These guidelines cover all buildings except for residential buildings of four units or less. These guidelines supplement requirements established in the Fitchburg Zoning Ordinance and property owners should consult applicable zoning requirements as they plan for their property improvements.

These guidelines are organized to identify their applicability to the type of improvement: new construction, renovations/additions to existing properties, or both. Guidelines are also provided for special conditions such as redevelopment areas, and multi-tenant buildings.

A. BLOCKFACE DESIGN

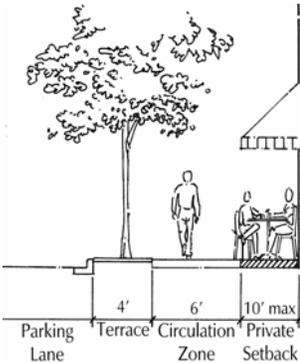
Buildings and sites are not isolated occurrences, and their design should respect, reinforce and enhance the surrounding block. New construction can have a positive or negative affect on the shape and character of an entire block. The following guidelines detail how new construction or renovation projects can enhance, strengthen, or even create, a new blockface along north Fish Hatchery Road.

1. Creative architectural designs and details are encouraged so long as designs do not conflict or draw attention away from other buildings in the block.
2. The use of attractive landscaping is encouraged to establish continuity between buildings and to define the blockface where there are no buildings.
3. Shared parking and access between properties is encouraged.
4. New buildings may be built up to four stories to create a new blockface character depending on the quality of the design, the contribution of the project to the use mix, activity, and character of the street and the affect of the development on the adjoining neighborhood.
5. Stepbacks of 15 feet from the building face should be provided for the fourth story of four story buildings.
6. New buildings on north Fish Hatchery Road should exhibit consistency in scale in order to create a new blockface along the street.
7. Greater flexibility for building height and stepbacks may be allowed as part of a coordinated redevelopment project approved by the City of Fitchburg.

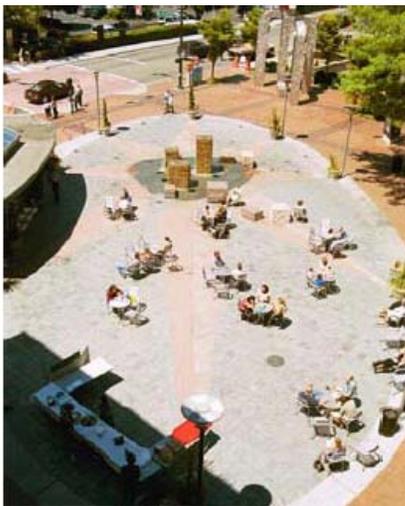


5. Recessing the upper stories of developments on arterials maintains natural light on the street and minimizes the impact of height on pedestrians.

B. SITE DESIGN



8. Building setbacks can provide space for landscaping and activities such as outdoor eating to enhance the public sidewalk.



9. Buildings can have larger setbacks to allow for the development of useable public spaces such as urban plazas.

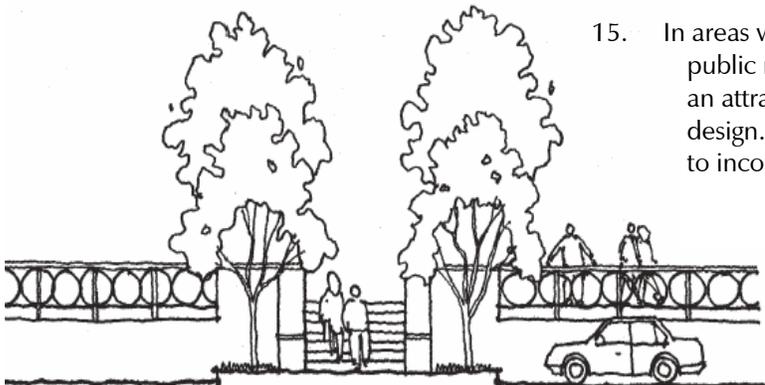
This section provides specific guidelines for the physical arrangement and aesthetic character of the site. New developments along north Fish Hatchery Road are encouraged to contribute to increased density in this area to reflect its central location and the potential to redevelop and infill properties already served by existing infrastructure. The current Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR) requirement for Fitchburg is 65%, developments in this area will likely require a higher ISR to achieve desired densities and should compensate with environmentally sensitive stormwater and landscaping treatments on much of the remaining surface area.

The overall site design for new developments in the study area should incorporate the existing topography of the site into its design.

Building Setbacks and Orientation

8. New buildings should have a setback between 10 and 15 feet from the public sidewalk, depending on the adjacent buildings, to provide room for amenities that will enhance the visual and pedestrian character of the street.
9. Where new buildings are designed for existing blockfaces, the building setback should be consistent with adjoining buildings but not more than 25 feet. Buildings not fronting on north Fish Hatchery Road can have larger setbacks to allow for creation of useable public spaces such as urban plazas.
10. In areas with minimal sidewalk/terrace width, building setback areas should include additional pavement to expand the sidewalk zone.
11. Walkways should be provided to connect building entrances to the public sidewalk.
12. The building face should be parallel to north Fish Hatchery Road.
13. It is preferred to have the front of the building and the public entrance face north Fish Hatchery Road. If the public entrance is allowed on the side of the building, it should be positioned close to north Fish Hatchery Road and preferably as a corner feature of the building.
14. Additions to existing buildings should help bring the building closer to the street and minimize “gaps” in the street wall.
15. In areas where there is a significant grade change between the public right-of-way and commercial/mixed-use properties create an attractive transition using creative grading, landscaping and site design. Where appropriate, property owners are also encouraged to incorporate pedestrian access.

15. Where a grade change is unavoidable consider opportunities to use creative grading and landscaping and, where appropriate, to incorporate pedestrian access.



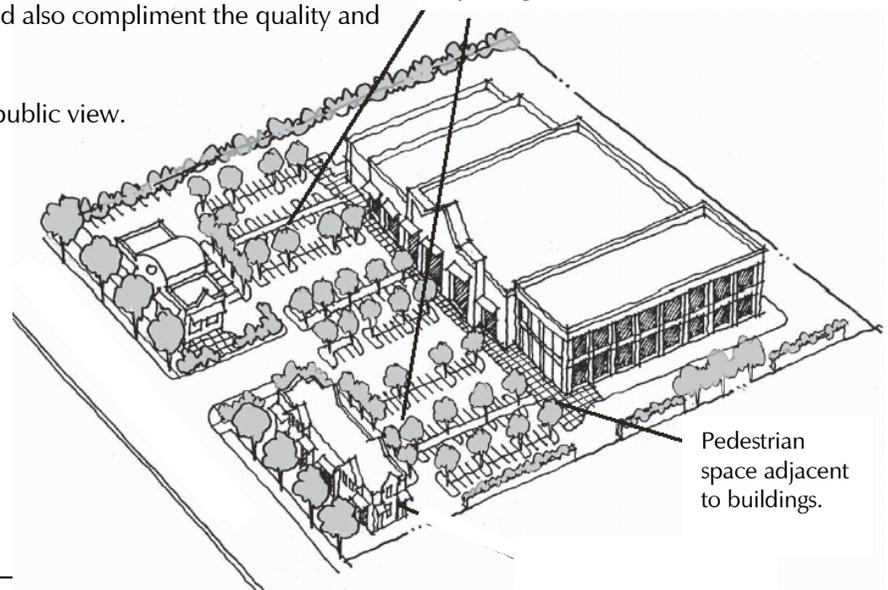
Parking and Service Areas

16. Parking for new buildings should be located at the rear and on the sides of the building. Parking in the front of buildings is discouraged.
17. For existing properties, where the site area permits, parking in the front should be relocated to the side and rear of the building.
18. For properties such as gas stations, where front parking cannot be removed, walkways, landscaping, architectural features and lighting should be provided to make these areas more attractive and inviting. Decorative fences, walls and/or landscaped edges should screen front parking areas from the public sidewalk. Screening should not exceed 3'6" in height.
19. All parking areas should be well landscaped and appropriately lighted.
20. Large parking areas should include walkways to allow safe pedestrian access to the building entrance. Multiple walkways and landscaping connect the site to adjacent streets and properties and minimize the impact of a large parking area on the pedestrian. Pedestrian walkways should be delineated through use of special paving treatments such as colored paver blocks or textured concrete.
21. Shared parking areas are encouraged. Whenever possible, adjoining parking lots should be linked to provide internal traffic circulation. Internal walkways should be provided to interconnect parking lots with building entrances. Driveways along north Fish Hatchery Road should be minimized to improve traffic flow and reduce pedestrian conflicts.
22. Pedestrian areas and customer parking areas should be separated from loading, service and drive through areas.
23. In the future, new parking ramps fronting on north Fish Hatchery Road should include ground-floor commercial uses and attractive commercial facade designs. The facade design for the upper stories should obscure the parking ramp and present an attractive building face for north Fish Hatchery Road. The design of parking ramps should also compliment the quality and design of the buildings they serve.
24. All trash areas should be screened from public view. If possible, trash areas should be located inside buildings.



19. All parking areas should be well landscaped and appropriately lighted.

20. Multiple walkways through parking lot and landscaping connect the site to the adjacent street(s) and create smaller parking areas in place of one large parking lot.





26. Property owners are encouraged to provide landscaped outdoor spaces for the use and enjoyment of employees and customers.

Landscaping and Open Space

25. Screen fences and/or landscaped buffers should be provided at property edges, particularly where commercial properties adjoin residential properties.
26. Property owners are encouraged to provide landscaped outdoor spaces for the use and enjoyment of employees and customers.
27. Landscaping and fencing should be designed to complement the character of the building and provide a pleasing relationship with adjoining properties and the public sidewalk.

Site Lighting and Furnishings

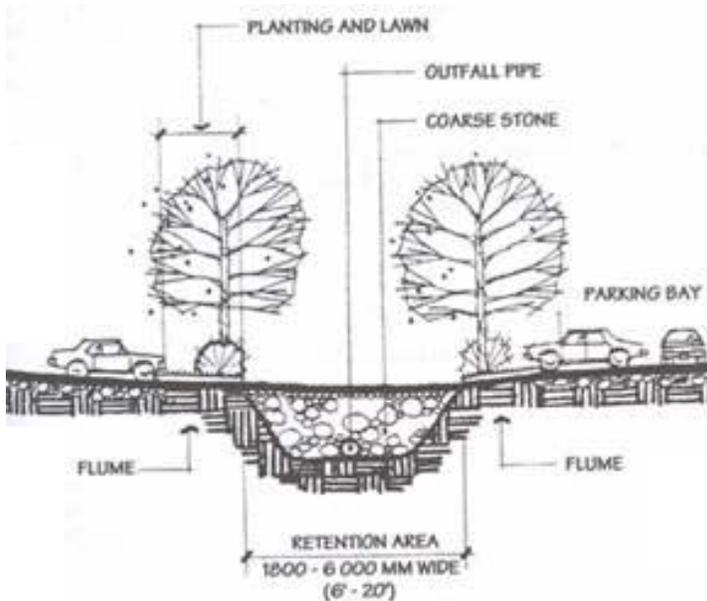


29. Lighting and site furnishings can provide a pleasing relationship between private properties and the public sidewalk.

28. Cut-off light fixtures should be used to illuminate the site. Higher lighting levels should be provided for pedestrian use areas. Low-level building and landscape accent lighting is encouraged, where appropriate.
29. Lighting and site furnishings (benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, etc.) should be designed to complement the character of the building and provide a pleasing relationship with adjoining properties and the public sidewalk.
30. Bicycle storage facilities should be located near the building entrance.
31. Decorative, colored paving is encouraged for walkways and outdoor use areas.

Stormwater Management

32. The use of rain gardens and bio-retention basins to collect runoff and filter pollutants is encouraged, where practical.
33. Landscape islands, open spaces and porous pavements should be provided, where practical, for stormwater infiltration.



32. If possible, rain gardens or retention basins should be incorporated into the design of parking lots to allow for stormwater infiltration.

34-35. Examples of how materials and architectural details are used to establish human scale and interest for the pedestrian.

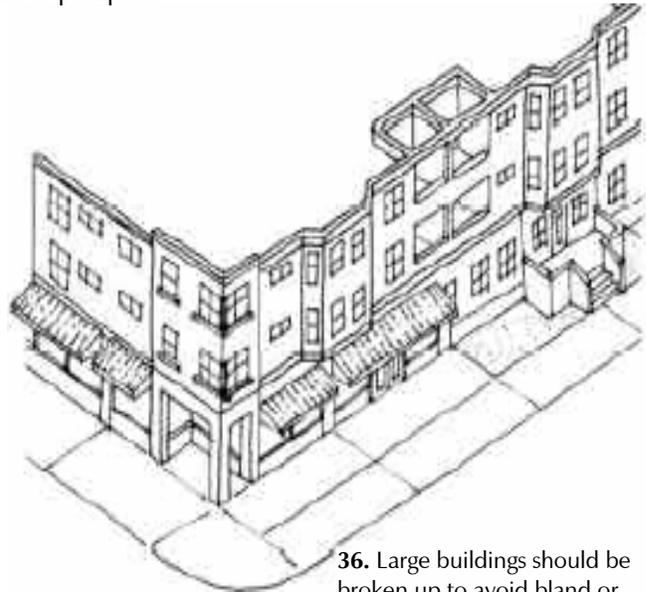


C. BUILDING DESIGN

This section provides guidelines for building design including building massing and articulation, materials and color, and windows and entrances. See Blockface Design, page 5-11, for building height guidelines.

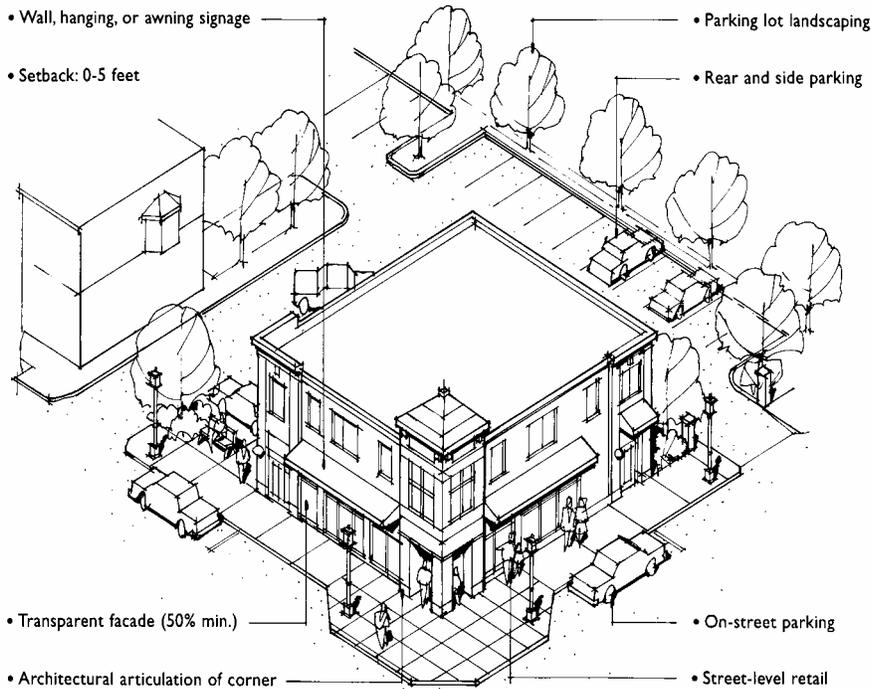
Building Massing and Articulation

34. Avoid blank building walls with little detail or variety, particularly along primary facades. Improvements to these buildings should include details to create a more comfortable pedestrian scale and character.
35. Provide architectural details at the ground floor to enhance the pedestrian character of the street. Details include window and door trim, recessed entries, awnings and other features.
36. For large buildings, it is important to provide variation to the building face design through the use of human scale elements, materials and color, or by dividing the building into bays to break up large facades to create pedestrian interest at the street level. This is particularly important for existing large industrial and commercial buildings on north Fish Hatchery Road.
37. All visible sides of the building should be designed with details that complement the front facade. Side facades that are visible from north Fish Hatchery Road should receive equal design attention.
38. Building facades should be designed to create a visual distinction between the upper and lower floors of the building.
39. Provide a positive visual termination at the top of the building with decorative cornices or parapets.



36. Large buildings should be broken up to avoid bland or monotonous building walls and enhance the pedestrian experience.

40. New corner buildings should be located near the sidewalk edge and should define the street intersection with distinctive architectural features such as towers, rounded walls, recessed entries or other design features. This should be done in a manner which does not compromise the City's prescribed vision plane.
41. Franchise businesses are encouraged to modify their corporate designs to fit the desired north Fish Hatchery Road character.
42. Where possible, existing, one-story buildings should be renovated with extended facades and parapets to increase building height and provide a more pleasing scale for north Fish Hatchery Road.
43. Mechanical equipment should be screened from view by using screen designs that are architecturally integrated with the building design.



40. Corner buildings should help define intersections with distinctive architectural character.

Materials and Color

44. Exterior materials should be durable, high-quality materials and appropriate for external use.
45. Brick, stone and terra-cotta are preferred primary materials for new buildings or additions. Other materials such as EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems) or architecturally styled concrete block such as split-face block may be used but should not be the predominant building material. Wood or Hearty Plank siding are also appropriate materials for new residential siding.
46. The use of false brick or other “faux” sidings is discouraged.
47. Color choice should complement the style and materials of the building’s facade and provide a pleasing relationship with adjoining buildings.
48. Property owners are encouraged to use a three-color paint scheme with a “base” color on the majority of the building surface, “trim” colors used on building features such as window and door trims and cornices and “accent” colors on signs, awnings and other architectural details.
49. Painting of natural brick and stone is discouraged.

Windows and Entrances

50. The ground floors of commercial retail buildings should have at least sixty percent of the street wall area devoted to windows to enhance the pedestrian character of north Fish Hatchery Road.
51. Office buildings and other non-retail buildings should have at least forty percent of the street wall devoted to windows.
52. Windows on the ground floor should not be darkly tinted, colored or have a mirrored finish. Transparency in the street level facades of commercial and civic buildings provides for the interaction between people inside buildings and people near the exteriors of buildings – through a direct visual connection. This creates visual interest and activity for the pedestrian and improves the safety of the street and store.
53. Building entrances should be designed as the focal point of the façade.
54. Entrances of new buildings or additions located close to the sidewalk should include recessed entries to allow for pedestrian movement.

D. SIGNAGE DESIGN

Building signage should fit with and enhance the character of a building and the overall environment of the north Fish Hatchery Road area. The City of Fitchburg regulates building signage including dimension, location and installation practices. The following signage guidelines supplement the City's sign code (Chapter 24) to provide guidance as it relates to appearance.

The north Fish Hatchery Road area should be designated a special signage district to ensure well-designed and cohesive signage in the gateway corridor into the City of Fitchburg.

55. Preferred sign types include signs integrated into the design of the building, along a sign band, window signs, awning signs, projecting signs, pedestrian oriented blade signs, and monument signs of six to eight feet in height.
56. The use of natural landscaping features in conjunction with monument signs is encouraged.
57. Signs should be simple and easy to read.
58. Sign colors should relate to and complement the primary colors of the building facade.
59. Directory signage for shopping centers should be reiterated in the form of highly visible address information on individual storefronts.
60. Sign design and placement should fit the character of the building and not obscure architectural details.
61. Signage should generally be centered within the prescribed signage area of the building.
62. Large illuminated box signs (backlit "can" signs), pylon and post mounted signs should not be allowed on north Fish Hatchery Road.
63. Individually mounted backlit letters are an acceptable form of signage.
64. The use of small, well-designed building mounted light fixtures is a preferred method of illuminating signage.
65. Window signs should not mask a majority of the storefront.

55. Examples of signs preferred by the public during the Visual Preference Survey for North Fish Hatchery Road. See **Appendix**.



60. Sign design and placement should "fit" the character of the building and not obscure architectural details.

E. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

The following section identifies design guidelines for several special conditions involving new construction and renovation activities on north Fish Hatchery Road. Property owners and developers should consider these guidelines as additions to the guidelines previously presented.

Redevelopment Sites

Several sites have been identified as potential redevelopment opportunities to further improve the use mix, character, density and activity of north Fish Hatchery Road and stimulate the physical and economic revitalization of the north Fish Hatchery Road corridor. These sites include: the New Life Christian Center and Pop-eye's (including the Wendy's, Super America and M&I Bank sites); the Fitchburg Ridge Shopping Center and the Bowman Properties. Over time, other sites may be identified and approved for redevelopment. Design guidelines for the coordinated phase development of redevelopment sites, include the following:

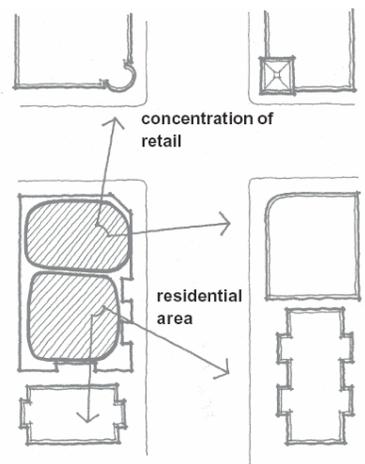
66. North Fish Hatchery Road has two multi-tenant commercial buildings or "strip centers" located in the western section of the corridor. The design of new centers and improvements to existing centers should follow the design guidelines presented in this document. If possible, new centers should be at least two stories in height with residential or office uses on the upper floors. New centers should front directly on north Fish Hatchery Road with parking located at the rear of the building. Rear and side facades should be designed to blend with the design of the front facade, with complimentary colors and materials.
67. Where appropriate, internal streets should be included as part of the development plan to improve connections between north Fish Hatchery Road and the adjoining neighborhoods.
68. Developments along the newly extended streets (including Post Road, and possibly Traceway Drive, Pike Drive, Coho Street and Index Road) should provide "pedestrian friendly" streetscapes with on-street parking.
69. Streetscaping and traffic calming features should be incorporated to enhance the pedestrian character of the development.
70. Development plans should limit driveways and curb cuts on north Fish Hatchery Road.
71. Shared parking is encouraged with a preference for enclosed parking integrated as part of the mixed-use building design. Surface parking is preferred behind or on the side of buildings.
72. Developments are encouraged to incorporate well-designed open spaces for customer, employee, resident, and community use.
73. Buildings are encouraged to incorporate pedestrian walkways and open spaces and encourage movement through their site and to the surrounding area. Such walkways should meet the sidewalk in an engaging and identifiable manner.



73. Buildings are encouraged to incorporate pedestrian walkways and open spaces.

- 74. Redevelopment sites should be developed as mixed-use centers incorporating quality architecture and site design.
- 75. Density is encouraged to enhance the pedestrian activity of the street.
- 76. Buildings facing north Fish Hatchery Road may be built up to four stories in height depending on the quality of the design such as the contribution of the project to the use mix, activity, the provision for affordable housing, character of the street, and the affect of the development on the adjoining neighborhood.
- 77. Buildings should be positioned to develop an attractive blockface along north Fish Hatchery Road and internal streets. Buildings should be located with minimal setbacks at corners to define intersections.
- 78. Well-designed bus passenger shelters should be located in high pedestrian traffic areas associated with new development and redevelopment along north Fish Hatchery Road.
- 79. The architecture of individual buildings should relate to the surrounding urban, built and natural environments.
- 80. In the short term, landscaping on the franchise sites (including fast food restaurants and gas stations) is encouraged to reinforce compatible design or ameliorate the effects of conventionally designed franchise buildings.
- 81. As existing franchise buildings (including fast food restaurants and gas stations) apply for permits to make physical changes, these buildings should be encouraged to improve building design, materials, colors, facades and other architectural elements to become more compatible with Fitchburg's desired community character.
- 82. In the long term, as existing single-use sites redevelop, franchise uses and other restaurants and services should be encouraged to locate on the ground floor of new mixed-use buildings along north Fish Hatchery Road.
- 83. Oversized gas station pump shelters with outsized lights or plastic disks introduce a discordant rhythm to the street and should be avoided.
- 84. In areas designated for mixed-use development outside the retail core area, orient and design the commercial facade at street level to be compatible with the streetscape of the surrounding residential neighborhood.

84. Break commercial buildings down into smaller volumes to relate to the scale, height and configuration of nearby residential structures.



F. Redevelopment Concept Plans

Figure 5.1 Community Gateway/Entrance District: Possible Short-Term Redevelopment Pattern



This conceptual sketch illustrates what can be done to private properties in the short term to increase access by vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists and improve the streetscape along north Fish Hatchery Road. In the long term the four sites along the western frontage could be packaged into one or two larger development sites and redeveloped into mixed-use commercial office buildings that would improve the blockface along north Fish Hatchery Road

- ① Park Bank redevelopment site.
- ② Enhanced pedestrian sidewalk with landscaping and limited curb cuts, reducing vehicular and pedestrian conflicts.
- ③ Potential long range connections along rear property lines to increase access.
- ④ New landscape buffer along rear property line to reinforce the transition between uses.
- ⑤ Improved pedestrian connections between businesses and public sidewalk.
- ⑥ Redefined parking areas. Reduces unused parking to increase landscaped area along rear and sides of property.
- ⑦ Improved landscaping to increase the character along north Fish Hatchery Road.
- ⑧ Existing frontage drive enhanced in the short term to allow for a reduction in curb cuts along north Fish Hatchery Road to increase pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- ⑨ Future access into current retail/ commercial, to reduce local trips along north Fish Hatchery Road.
- ⑩ Potential for future redevelopment to commercial / office use if market conditions warrant.
- ⑪ Shared access drive serving multiple users.
- ⑫ Potential future connection east of north Fish Hatchery Road to better connect the businesses to the larger community.
- ⑬ New access to Braeburn Court allowing fewer curb cuts and continuation of the boulevard to reduce vehicular conflicts.
- ⑭ Intersection improvements to address traffic flow, and pedestrian and bicycle safety.

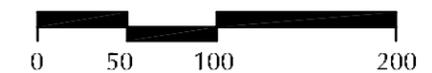
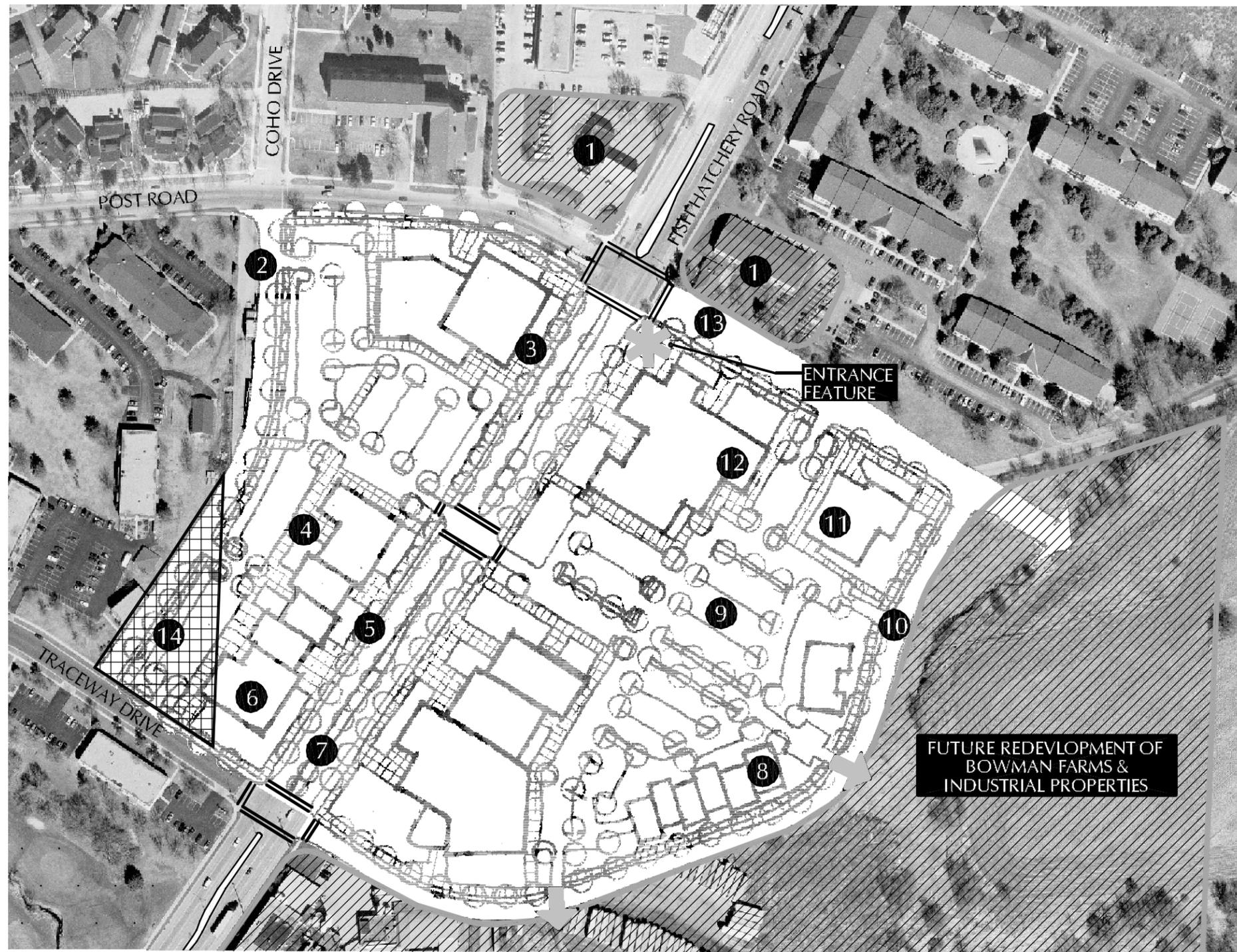


Figure 5.2 Neighborhood & Community Commercial Core: Possible Long-Term Redevelopment Pattern



This conceptual sketch illustrates a possible long-term redevelopment pattern for the Neighborhood and Community Commercial Core district. The redevelopment of private property is assumed to happen at a time when properties are sold or acquired for redevelopment purposes. The redevelopment of existing commercial property assumes greater density on the existing site, with 2-3 story buildings and underground parking at a time when property values warrant more intensive land use patterns in northern Fitchburg. This concept also illustrates the significant commercial potential that would accompany the extension of Post Road and overall enhancement of the street network in north Fitchburg.

- 1 Key location for future commercial/ mixed use buildings to contribute to the Neighborhood and Community Commercial Core that is proposed for the intersection of Fish Hatchery Road and Post Road.
- 2 Coho Street extension from Post Road to Traceway Drive. Reduces neighborhood traffic on Fish Hatchery Road and provides additional access points into retail/ commercial redevelopment area.
- 3 Buildings moved close to street to help define public spaces and maximize parking at rear.
- 4 Improved on-site pedestrian connections to allow customers to park once and accomplish multiple shopping trips without making multiple stops.
- 5 Enhanced pedestrian sidewalk with new landscape and limited curb cuts reducing traffic and pedestrian conflicts.
- 6 Potential multi tenant building with underground parking (2-3 stories preferred). Buildings moved close to the street to help define public spaces and maximize parking at rear.
- 7 Improved landscaping to increase the aesthetic character of Fish Hatchery Road.
- 8 High density owner occupied residential with parking located below building and shared with mixed use center.
- 9 New parking areas located to the rear or side of buildings.
- 10 Traceway Drive extension to Post Road, includes access points to new mixed use center.
- 11 Neighborhood-oriented retail or service uses.
- 12 Large anchor store at new intersection defines corner. Potential for underground parking.
- 13 Extension of Post Road east of Fish Hatchery Road, to provide primary access for anchor tenant parking and access to future commercial and residential development east of Fish Hatchery Road.
- 14 Site expansion to include adjacent properties. Allow for rear access to properties and expansion of street network to relieve traffic on Fish Hatchery Road. Improved site design on a key commercial property in north Fitchburg.



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