

Appendix B

North Leroy Street Subarea Plan

PLANNING AREA BOUNDARIES

This planning area includes the properties fronting North Leroy Street beginning at Kellogg Street and running north to the City boundary. Residential neighborhoods adjacent to the North Leroy Street area are considered in the plan but are not part of the project area.

BACKGROUND

The North Leroy Street area is a commercial strip that developed when retail businesses needed more land for building floor area and parking than downtown was able to provide. A wide variety of buildings, site layouts, and signage has developed in an ad hoc fashion along this stretch of North Leroy Street over the years.

With construction of Silver Lake Village nearly complete, there has been speculation that businesses in the North Leroy Street area will suffer as a result. While the development on North Leroy Street is somewhat disjointed and less attractive than Silver Lake Village, the North Leroy Street corridor remains a viable commercial district. A significant number of new townhouse and single-family housing units have been approved or constructed recently in the northeast area of the Fenton. Continued residential growth will increase the need for retail businesses to service adjacent neighborhoods. This area also draws customers from Fenton Township to the north.

New development and re-development in the North Leroy Street area presents the City with an opportunity to upgrade land uses along with the appearance of buildings and sites. This subarea plan will look at the various planning and development issues in the North Leroy Street area and present a series of design guidelines to be used when evaluating site plan review applications.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

A considerable amount of development activity has occurred over the past eight years in the North Leroy Street corridor. Much of it has been the upgrading and redevelopment of existing sites. There is little vacant land still fronting North Leroy Street so future development and redevelopment activity in the corridor will also be to existing buildings and sites.

The uses are primarily retail and automotive-related with a mixture of franchise and non-franchise businesses. A small amount of office space is present but the dominant uses include restaurants, fast food restaurants, small strip centers with neighborhood commercial uses, mini-marts, and automobile repair facilities.

The majority of the lots in the corridor have a depth of 300 feet, but in some instances, the lots are quite narrow. A number of lots on the east side of North

Leroy. have a depth of about 100 feet. Depending on the specifics of each situation, it can be difficult to provide suburban-type parking, landscaping, setbacks, etc. for certain commercial uses.

There appears to be enough parking spaces for the majority of the businesses in the corridor. The exceptions are those businesses on small lots that generate more traffic activity than the site can adequately handle. The City will want to consider limiting the commercial uses that can occupy these structures, thereby making the existing uses nonconforming.

Cross-access is provided between some of the sites but there is not a consistent plan to do so throughout the corridor. Completion of such a plan is a short-term goal of the City. As new development pressure in the northeast area of Fenton increases over the next few years, traffic congestion along North Leroy Street will also increase. It will be then be even more important to have fewer curb cuts and provide cross-access/shared entrances between sites so that drivers can limit the number of entries onto North Leroy Street; thereby maintaining future traffic safety.

In addition to the above site design considerations, there are too many different architectural styles in the corridor. While it is nice to have some variety in design it is equally important to provide an element of continuity throughout the frontage properties. Features such as height, scale, roof styles, door, and window openings should be proportionate from one building to the next.

A wide variety of materials is used on the exterior of the structures. Siding material can be found throughout the corridor in numerous color combinations. While this may express the individuality of each property owner, it does not help to identify the corridor as a unified commercial district. The same can be said for the signage, of which some are internally illuminated box signs on poles and/or mounted to the building facades. Recent changes to ground-mounted monument signs have improved the appearance of the corridor. However, a number of the sites still have inadequate landscaping and none of them follows a common design theme.

In summary, the North Leroy Street corridor while improving, still has sites that need upgrading. The look suggests outdated services and merchandise which leads to a poor business climate, affects values in adjacent residential areas, and discourages reinvestment in both residential and commercial properties. There is, however, an opportunity to continue upgrading both the uses and appearance of this area over the next five to ten years. Planned residential growth in adjacent neighborhoods will ensure the future vitality of the local retail market. This will lead to increased redevelopment of existing sites in the corridor and an opportunity for the City to require specific improvements. To do this, the City will need a set of well-defined guidelines by which the Planning Commission can evaluate development proposals.

During the original Master Plan preparation a Avisioning@ session was held to obtain public input on how the North Leroy Street area should develop. The audience was broken into two separate groups, with one discussing downtown

and the other the North Leroy Street area. The latter group was asked to look fifteen years into the future and describe what the North Leroy Street area looks like. Without any constraints being placed upon them, the attendees developed the following list of items that are still applicable today:

- A clean, neat and manicured appearance.
- Underground utilities.
- A common design theme throughout the corridor.
- Extensive landscaping throughout including the use of berms.
- A boulevard down the center of N. Leroy Street.
- Consistent signage with the use of monument signs as opposed to pole signs.
- Consistent lighting for both street lights and site/parking lot lights.
- Good pedestrian connections to the corridor from adjacent neighborhoods.
- Vehicular cross-access between sites.
- Common architectural theme.

CORRIDOR GOALS

It is clear from the recent improvements and the results of the visioning session that there is a desire to upgrade the quality and appearance of development in the North Leroy Street corridor. To provide additional guidance in working toward this vision, a series of goals for development in the corridor are identified here. These goals provide the basis upon which the guidelines found later in this section been developed. They are:

1. Improve traffic flow between sites through the use of cross-access drives, thereby minimizing the impact on North Leroy Street.
2. Upgrade the overall appearance of the corridor.
3. Follow a common theme for the corridor with architecture, landscaping, lighting, signage, etc.
4. Provide guidance to prospective developers, and to the Planning Commission who will review the site plans, by adopting a set of development guidelines that incorporate the above mentioned themes.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Each development contributes to the overall appearance of the corridor and how well it functions. The overall appearance affects public perceptions of the area and thereby affects the success or failure of each business in the corridor.

Having planning guidelines provides a clear message to developers about the City's expectations for thoughtful and attractive site planning along this important corridor route. It is for this reason that a series of development guidelines have been prepared and are listed below. They are to be used when reviewing development proposals in the North Leroy Street corridor.

It is important to keep in mind that these are guidelines and not intended to be strict rules. They provide the Planning Commission a framework within which decisions can be made. Independent judgment must be exercised in each case without sacrificing the intent behind the guidelines. For example, changes to

existing developments may be reviewed differently than new development proposals, where sites have fewer initial limitations. Consideration must be given to the specifics in each case and handled accordingly

Objective. *Encourage site layouts that are functional, attractive and allow views of businesses to reduce the need for cluttered advertising such as banners, posters, and window painting.*

SITE LAYOUT

Site layout needs careful consideration early in the design process to determine how to best use the site to showcase the business from the road while integrating other essential features such as parking. Also to be considered in site layout are adjoining land uses, and whether it makes sense to provide visual or physical linkages to them, or to separate them with screening techniques.

- Minimize the number of site features, displays, and landscaping in front yards that are between three and twelve feet tall. This will improve the visibility of businesses from the road and leave a less cluttered look for the corridor.
- Outside storage of goods within the corridor should be prohibited.
- Where residential land uses adjoin commercial lots, a building setback of at least thirty feet should be maintained by the commercial development from the property line abutting the residential use. A minimum thirty foot landscaped buffer should also be provided along the property line. When the rear lot line of the commercial lot abuts the residential use, a six foot high decorative masonry wall and/or landscaping should be provided.
- Building footprints should maximize frontage along the roadway to screen parking and provide visibility for the business. Avoid placing end walls or the narrow portion of the building facing onto the street. Additions to existing businesses should maximize roadway frontage.
- The layout of buildings and site features should be square and true to the roadway. Other than rectangular or square shapes and relationships to the road generally look odd and detract from roadside continuity.
- A curbed, planted strip, at least five feet wide, should be maintained along the North Leroy Street property line. The only breaks in this strip should be for driveways.
 - A planting area twelve feet wide, incorporating a sidewalk at least five feet wide, should be located between building and parking lots or driveways. The sides of buildings which neither have store fronts nor require sidewalks should have a planting strip at least eight feet wide.

ACCESS

- Pedestrian entrances to businesses should be oriented toward the parking area and main pedestrian traffic flow. Entrances should be clearly identified as to the businesses served.

Objective. *Consolidate and reduce the number of access points from the highway to improve safety and visually organize the roadway edge. Make driveways well-defined, easy to negotiate, and designed to accommodate any type of vehicle which might enter the site.*

Clearly defined driveways not only help people find their way into businesses, but they also warn through traffic about where cars and trucks may be exiting or entering the roadway. Frequent, ill-defined curb cuts create traffic congestion and motorist confusion. A lack of definition where the roadway and parking blend together is a serious traffic hazard because cars and trucks are allowed random access to the road. This situation increases the number of potential conflict points between through-traffic and shoppers.

- Require, where feasible, adjoining businesses to use shared driveways and eliminate unnecessary curb cuts. In addition, relocate and enhance major entrances as needed to visually organize the corridor.
- Cross-access agreements and escrows to finance improvements should be required to ensure that cross-access is implemented when approved on a site plan.
- Limit access to each corridor lot by following the access management guidelines found in the City of Fenton Zoning Ordinance.
- Driveways should be oriented perpendicular to the roadway.
- Accent entrances with landscaping and signs since these are areas where more elaborate landscaping is effective. An identification sign placed close to the driveway will further strengthen the entrance identity. (Refer to landscaping and signage sections for more details).

Objective. *Provide on-site circulation systems which are logical, well-delineated, and safe. Parking lot design should ensure that each business has adequately sized and well-planned parking areas.*

Once on-site, moving cars, pedestrians, parked cars, and deliveries must be adequately accommodated. Motorists must be able to comprehend the site in order to know where to go and where not to go.

- Keep parking to the sides and rear of the building where practical.
 - In general, parking should not be located between the building and the roadway. A better location for parking lots is to the sides and rear of the building. Where this is not feasible, landscaped islands and strips should be used to soften the appearance of the parking area.
 - All driveways, parking lots, and walks should be paved, either with asphalt or concrete, and maintained without large cracks or deterioration of the surface. Masonry pavers are an optional decorative opportunity. Dirt, gravel, and other unpaved surfaces are ineffective for commercial development because of dust, mud, and erosion.
 - All driveways and parking lots should be defined by concrete curbs six to eight inches high. Timbers, wheel stops, and asphalt curbing should be avoided due to their appearance, short life span, and vulnerability to damage by trucks and cars.
 - Parking lot spaces and driving lanes should be identified with painted striping. The use of double striping should be encouraged for parking spaces to improve separation between vehicles.
 - Screen parking adjacent to roadways and adjoining uses. A low wall or landscape screen thirty-six inches high will screen wheels, bumpers, and paving, but allow views.
 - Use vertical elements, such as planted, curbed islands and medians, to help define the circulation pattern and visually contain the parking area. Islands and medians are also ideal locations for walks. An open area of asphalt allows motorists to take the shortest route to their destination, rather than keeping within driving lanes.
 - Parking lot islands should be a minimum of ten feet wide and as long as the adjacent parking space.
 - Planting medians should be at least five feet wide.
 - Landscaping for parking lots should be simple and easy to maintain. Hardy shade trees, low evergreen shrubs or ground covers, and grass are good choices.
- Objective.** *Provide a safer and more pleasant pedestrian environment which would encourage people to walk and shop in nearby businesses, reducing the volume of on-site vehicular movements.*

Walkways should be located where people are most likely to use them and head in directions that people are most likely to want to go. Walks should be delineated by curbing, paving, and striping where appropriate and protected from moving vehicles. Pedestrian entrances to the businesses should be clearly in view from the sidewalks and marked in some way.

- Landscaping and other low site features should be used to create a more comfortable and inviting pedestrian environment.
- Sidewalks should be constructed of concrete or decorative pavers rather than asphalt, and should never be made of dirt.
- Separate and protect walks from parking areas and driveways with curbs and planted areas. Place walks in parking lot islands and medians when logical.
- Walks should be a minimum of five feet wide. Where more foot traffic is expected, increase the width by at least two feet. Where a car bumper might overhang the sidewalk, the sidewalk should be made at least three feet wider than normal.
- Sidewalks should connect parking areas with store entrances in the most direct manner. Use sidewalks to encourage foot traffic to pass by store fronts to increase window shopping and entice people to enter the stores.
- Use sidewalks to connect adjoining businesses so that people can park once and shop in a few places.
- Sidewalks in the public right-of-way must extend across the driveway apron, thereby creating a visual separation of the pedestrian area for motorists.
- Provide and maintain painted warning striping (crosswalks) in parking lots and driveways where pedestrians must cross.
- Make the shopping district accessible to all according to the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and local and state laws. This includes such measures as supplying handicap parking spaces, ramps as alternative to stairs, and flush entrances into buildings, among others.

Objective. *Make delivery and trash storage areas accessible yet inconspicuous. Screen other essential yet unsightly elements which detract from the overall look of the corridor.*

Service and utility functions can often be selectively located out of public view. Screening is required for other elements and activities which must be located in the public area. The purpose of screening is to visually integrate the unsightly element into the public environment. A few different options for screening are discussed below.

Surface parking often consumes 50% to 75% of a project site. Well-planned strategies for improving the appearance of parking areas along commercial roadways can be one of the most effective methods of improving the overall aesthetic quality of a road corridor. Screening techniques can effectively soften the visual effects of vast asphalt surfaces.

Residential development near commercial areas is a good economic relationship. Residences provide customers, and residents enjoy having conveniences and services nearby. Residential landowners will not, however, be happy looking at unkept backs of stores and delivery or trash storage areas. A visual barrier will allow these two land uses to coexist compatibly.

- Locating unsightly elements out of public view is the first preference. The undesirable element should be located where the least number of people will see it for the shortest length of time. Trash storage and service areas, for example, should be shielded from the corridor and major entrances.
- Partial screening is all that might be needed to effectively reduce the visual impact of some site elements such as parking. Partial screening, especially with low landscaping, softens the view while tying the element into the surrounding environment. This may be preferred to full screening for security or functional reasons.
- Full screening is required of those elements which are constantly messy or visually objectionable. The design and durability of the screen are very important. Full screening should be designed to require little maintenance and be located with adequate setback to prevent abuse. The design and materials used should harmonize with architectural and site development themes. Residential solutions, such as plastic or wooden fencing, should be avoided. These materials tend to fall into disrepair and become unsightly themselves.
- No screening is often an overlooked option. Trying to screen items which are only marginally obtrusive sometimes calls more attention to them. For example a meter box which is not close to a sidewalk may only require a coat of paint in the right color to blend with its background, whereas surrounding it with plantings would attract unnecessary attention and memorialize it.
 - In general, waste receptacles should require full screening, especially when the refuse is unsightly and soils or stains the dumpster or compactor and surrounding pavement. The enclosure should be constructed of brick or decorative masonry block that matches or compliments the exterior of the building. Where feasible, the doors to the enclosure should be oriented away from the public right-of-way.
 - Service and delivery bays, garage doors and loading/unloading doors should not face onto a public right-of-way.

- Loading and service areas should be located where they are least visible. Full screening should be required when visible from the public right-of-way. Partial screening, which provides boundaries between public and service areas, is absolutely necessary.
- Rooftop utilities should be located away from the corridor and fully screened where possible. Parapet walls provide the best method of rooftop screening. If not screened, units should be painted white or silver to blend in with the sky and clouds. New development should incorporate rooftop utilities within the roof geometry (including parapet walls) to avoid the need for screens on the roof.
- Utilities and transformers which are not near walks or in the front of the building should be painted a color which blends with the setting rather than drawing attention to them with plantings.
- Storage areas should be treated similarly to loading zones with regard to screening.
- Large areas requiring long sections of screening should be simple in design but not monotonous. Landscaping should be planted in masses with a limited number of species. Walls and fences should provide interruptions such as piers or columns for interest.
- Above-ground, roadside utility lines add to the visual chaos in the corridor. Every effort should be made to encourage power authorities to place their transmission lines underground wherever possible.

Objective. *Incorporate landscaped open space into the design of both the public corridor and private properties to functionally improve the area while making it more attractive and compatible with the surrounding environment.*

Landscaping is commonly used in development to add beauty, provide shade, for glare reduction and wind screening, and to visually screen undesirable elements. But landscape features can also greatly increase the motorist's ability to determine where one development ends and another begins. By delineating the edge of the development and the critically important driveway, landscaping increases the business's visibility and hence its viability in the competitive setting of the corridor.

Street trees in the public right-of-way provide scale, color, texture, and rhythm to the entire length of the corridor, unifying the diverse elements that make up the corridor's visual experience. They also help to break up long views of utility lines.

- Greenspace should be used to separate adjoining developments, enhance the roadway, strengthen the pedestrian setting, and soften the built environment.
- New developments should be encouraged to preserve healthy, mature trees twelve inches in caliper and larger. If such trees must be sacrificed, replacement trees should be required in addition to the basic landscaping requirements for the project.
- Maintain a view area between the roadway and developments between three feet and twelve feet above grade where no landscaping will obscure views of the businesses or compromise security and traffic safety.
- Only healthy, hardy, proven plant species recommended by a landscape architect or reputable nurseryman familiar with local conditions and climate should be used.
- A street tree program should be instituted along North Leroy Street where the City of Fenton Department of Public Works deems safe.
- Street trees should be used to offer visual relief from long, uninterrupted views of utilities and light poles. To be effective, however, street trees must not be located where they will grow to interfere with utility lines at maturity. Trees which have been pruned and cut back around utility lines are eyesores; even though they are better than no trees at all.
- Trees which produce a messy fruit and attract bird droppings should be avoided near paved areas.
- Landscaping should emphasize simple design and quality materials. Easy maintenance should be a prime consideration. Residential designs and materials such as timbers should be avoided.
 - Lawn areas should have defined edges. Use concrete walks, steel edging, or curbing for permanent edging.
 - Different planting areas in the corridor call for different types of plant materials:
 - Building and driveway entrances call for special treatment; more elaborate landscaping should be used to attract attention. Ornamental plantings are appropriate to highlight these areas. Low evergreen shrubs or ground covers and larger street trees will also help to provide definition in summer and winter.

- Foundation plantings should make use of evergreens for year-round interest, as well as other low shrubs or small trees. It is important to consider what the mature size of any plant used at a foundation location. Plants that grow tall will require regular pruning to keep them in line.
- Parking lot islands and medians should include shade or street trees, low shrubs, and natural ground covers (not rocks), and grass. Security is important and tall shrubs can provide a hiding place for potential assailants.
- Curbed planting strips between the roadway and the development should be kept simple but more formal. Regularly spaced street trees will provide shade, order, and rhythm to the development, and low shrubs, ground covers, and grass will help to define the roadway edge.
- Landscape screens around the perimeter of the development can be more natural and use a wider variety of types, sizes, and shapes of plant materials. Screens to block views are typically best achieved with thick, full evergreen plants. Depending on how much space is available, the screen may consist of a pruned hedge or a natural stand of evergreen trees. More natural buffers may be composed of evergreen trees and shrubs mixed with deciduous ones.
 - Plant species native to Southeast Michigan are the best choices. Avoid plants which are susceptible to the salt used on the roads, pollution produced by cars and trucks, and wind.
 - As a submittal requirement for site plan review, building elevations should show proposed plant materials at maturity.
 - Artificial plantings should be avoided and rocks, boulders, wood chips, etc. should not be used as a replacement for landscaping.

Objective. *Incorporate lighting into site design which will make the area more attractive and safe after dark.*

Lighting is obviously important to businesses with a nighttime trade such as restaurants, theaters, or bowling alleys. But other retail operations such as grocery or convenience stores typically also keep later hours. With sunset being very early in winter and during peak Christmas shopping time, other retail operations may want to consider lighting their store fronts and parking areas to attract shoppers.

- Lighting of off-street parking areas should be designed to reflect light away from adjacent residential properties and road rights-of-way, with a maximum intensity of one foot candle at the property line for residential uses.
- Lighting of parking lots should provide illumination adequate for security, typically at an overall intensity ratio of ten to one throughout the site.
- A shoe box or domed fixture with a recessed element is preferable to the cobra head design for appearance.
- In general, pole-mounted overhead lighting should be used for parking lots, as opposed to building-mounted lighting. Building-mounted lighting may be used to illuminate storage and loading/unloading areas but must utilize shoebox fixtures, be directed downward, and have a maximum intensity of one foot candle at any property line. Except in the case of ornamental entrance fixtures, building-mounted lighting should not be used on the front of a building.
- Lighting location and levels should respond to site features such as steps, ramps, walkways and building entrances.
- Light posts should be placed so that they do not create hazards for pedestrians or vehicles.
- The design of exterior building illumination should avoid exposed light fixtures. Flashing or moving lights are not permitted.
- The use of neon should be kept to a minimum, preferably as an architectural detail only.

Objective. *Establish a uniform signing system that effectively provides essential information to approaching motorists/pedestrians and draws people into the shopping areas.*

Of all the design elements found in commercial corridors, signs have one of the strongest impacts on the perceived quality and appearance of the individual businesses and the commercial area as a whole. Careful consideration is necessary to ensure that signage provides a positive identity for the North Leroy Street commercial corridor.

Signage is the first piece of information that tells motorists what businesses can be found on North Leroy Street. Driving at a potential speed of 35 miles per

hour, the motorist needs time to read the sign, make a decision to stop, slow the car down, and then locate and make the turn into the appropriate driveway. Once in the driveway, directional signage or pavements markings can guide the motorist to the appropriate entrance.

Business-related signs should be restricted to two types of identification signs. The first is a main identification sign for each lot or development which identifies the development from the street. The second type of sign is a smaller, building-mounted identification sign which identifies individual businesses from the parking area.

Main Identification Signs

Graphic simplicity for main identification signs is crucial. They need to be simple and legible to the motorist for safe and ample reaction time.

- Main identification signs should be located as close to the main entrance serving the development identified as reasonable. This will help motorists find their way and also help to highlight the driveway. The location of the sign, however, should in no way obscure sight lines needed by drivers to safely exit and enter the site.
- Generally only one main identification sign should be allowed per development. If a development has more than one driveway entrance, or if a group of parcels share two driveways, one driveway should be designated as the main entry and receive the main identification sign. Smaller signs of similar design may be placed at other driveways serving the development.
- Where the building façade is close to the roadway, a freestanding sign may not be needed or practical.
- The information included on the main identification sign should be restricted to the minimum needed for business identity. Signs for developments with only one business should contain only the business name and address. Signs for developments with more than one business should include the name and

address of the overall development, if there is one, and then in smaller text, a listing of the names of individual businesses found in the development.

- If permitted, illustrations and symbols should be created specifically for outdoor use and not merely enlarged from other media. For example, a logo used effectively on business letterhead may be too intricate for an exterior sign.
- Main identification signs should be of the monument style with a decorative masonry block base that matches the architecture of the building. They should be a minimum of three and a maximum of six feet high, with a total

sign face area no larger than seventy-two square feet. Sign thickness should not exceed eighteen inches, but should not be so thin as to appear flimsy.

- Signs should not have information located less than three feet off the ground to allow for snow accumulation in winter.
- The sign shape should be kept simple and regular.
- Text should be written in a style that is simple and easy to read. Avoid script and complicated lettering styles.
- Signs should include no more than three colors and two lettering styles. At least one of the sign's colors should be coordinated with the predominant building color in the development.
- Signs should be composed of durable, weather resistant, architectural-quality materials with a long life-span. Avoid signs which look home-made or have a residential character.
- Sign fabrication and installation should be by a qualified, experienced professional.
- Internal illumination is preferred for main identification signs because it creates less glare and stray light shining over or around the sign.
- Indirect lighting should be shielded or directed so that it does not adversely affect surrounding properties or the vision of motorists and pedestrians.
- Signs with moving parts or blinking, flashing, or fluttering lights or parts are not allowed, except for time or temperature signs.
- Electrical elements such as wires, conduits, junction boxes, transformers, ballasts, switches, and panel boxes should be concealed from view.
- Structural supports should be enclosed and not visible.
 - All visible sides and edges should be finished.
 - Signs which advertise businesses and services no longer available should be removed.
 - Gasoline service stations should be permitted to display rate and price information on the main identification sign, providing that the area displaying prices does not exceed 30% of the total permitted sign face area.
 - Temporary or portable signs are prohibited in the North Leroy Street corridor.

Building-Mounted Business Identification Signs

Once the motorist has successfully turned off the highway at the appropriate location, he or she must then be directed to individual businesses. Building-mounted signage should be used to identify each business and its entrance from the driveway, parking area, and walkways.

- When more than one business occupies a building, individual signage is essential to identify which entrances lead to which businesses.
- Since it is viewed from much closer distances and at much slower speeds, building sign design can be more personal and slightly more elaborate.
- Only one projecting sign per business should be permitted.
- Flat signs should be placed parallel to the face of the building and allowed to project no more than eighteen inches beyond the primary surface of the building.
- Separate internally illuminated letters/logos are preferred over internally illuminated box signs. Signs painted directly on the building or applied to a building surface should be discouraged and in all cases be subject to the same regulations as mounted signs.
- Awning signs and symbols which are designed, painted, or sewn onto awnings should be permitted. Internally illuminated canopies or awnings should be avoided since they have a bright, overpowering appearance.
- Signs should be no lower than the top of a display window head or an eight foot height, whichever is lower. Signs should not be located on the roofs or on the side walls of buildings.
- All proposed signs should be reviewed in conjunction with the architecture to ensure compatibility with the building's overall architectural character.

General

- Discourage signs that are significantly larger than, or out of proportion with those on adjacent or nearby properties.
- An integrated sign design scheme should be required for all shopping centers.
- Billboards should be prohibited.
- Temporary signs, plastic flagging and other advertising paraphernalia should be discouraged. If allowed for temporary events such as a grand opening, a permit procedure with a time limit should be strictly enforced by the City.

When properly planned, the varied and various buildings that comprise the North Leroy Street corridor can create the visual unity which will help symbolize the strong development and growth of this area. Sensitive design and building site planning will enhance the corridor and community image. On the other hand, improperly designed/planned building development can hinder the goal of creating an attractive commercial corridor.

Compatibility with the existing architecture is the basic principle of good design necessary in achieving an attractive and cohesive corridor. Requiring the use of appropriate and durable materials for construction will add to their longevity and appearance while helping to reinforce the importance of their use. A description of key architectural factors are offered as a frame of reference for property owners and their design professionals in making decisions that effect both the visual as well as physical aspects of the development. These include the following:

- **Scale.** Except for a few small buildings, new construction should be one story and a maximum of two stories in height.
- **Mass.** Simple massing which reflects the vernacular style should be used. Steeper roof pitches with well defined stepping facades and recesses will add interest and unity.
- **Form.** Small and medium sized structures should express the prevalent gable and hip pitched roof lines. With larger buildings, consideration should be given to using design elements which achieve the appearance of a complex of smaller buildings.
- **Proportions.** The proportions of new construction should follow the guidelines associated with scale, mass, and form. Any large-scale buildings, however, should be primarily horizontal in emphasis.
- **Openings.** When the building design supports their use, windows should be articulated by a series of separate single openings or a group of multiple openings.
 - **Entrances.** Recessed or projected vestibules with suitable overhead weather protection should be utilized. Canopy and entrance elements should have steeply pitched roofs.
 - **Materials.** Durable building materials which provide an attractive, quality appearance should be chosen. Earth-toned brick, decorative masonry block, or a combination the two materials is preferred. ADryvit® surfacing should be avoided as a primary material and should only be used as an accent material.
 - **Colors.** Color selection should be made on the basis of aesthetic unity and to articulate special elements of design. Bright, offensive colors such as florescent yellow should be avoided, especially as the primary color of the building.

General

- Display windows oriented to the public right-of-way should be incorporated into the building's form and architectural style for retail uses.
- Avoid improperly detailed or out-of-scale materials which cheapen the appearance of the establishment and lower the overall standards of the corridor.
- Encourage single story covered walkways and/or entries to form an appropriate pedestrian scale for small retail centers.
- Of all the design elements discussed here, individual building design, maintenance and durability have the strongest impact on the perceived quality and appearance of the corridor as a whole.
- Orient entrances perpendicular to parking. Define and accent entrances.
- Buffer the building from parking by a grade separated sidewalk or a concrete curb.
- Exterior night lighting of buildings and parking lots should provide illumination adequate for security and enhance the architectural theme of the building.
- Locating buildings close to the roadway will contain views and provide a sense of place from North Leroy Street.

Objective. *Establish entryways into the North Leroy Street commercial area which let motorists know that they have indeed arrived in a commercial district that is worthy of slowing down for and visiting.*

As one of the primary entrance routes into the City, the North Leroy Street area has an important role in conveying first impressions to visitors and in shaping community identity for local residents.

- Attractive welcome signs which identify the shopping district should be installed at both the north and south ends of the area.
- The welcome signs should be designed with community character in mind.

- Welcome signs should be composed of natural, architectural-quality materials set in an attractive planting design.
- The name of the area, a brief statement or message, and perhaps a logo or symbol should be the only information on the welcome sign. Directional or traffic information should be located on other signs.

Planning

A more detailed streetscape and architectural plan should be developed for the corridor. This plan will give better direction to the City for streetscape improvements and to property owners and the Planning Commission for improvements to individual sites and buildings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish a Street Tree Program

The City should develop a tree planting program and plan that will identify the species of street trees that are most appropriate for the North Leroy Street corridor.

Retail Marketing and Promotion Program

The merchants in the North Leroy Street corridor should consider establishing a joint marketing and promotional program. Larger malls and shopping centers collect a portion of their rent for media ads and special events. This promotes the cumulative attraction of all the stores and actually brings in more shoppers. A similar effort on a voluntary basis would give the corridor better public recognition while making efficient use of limited dollars.

Opportunities to attract people and make them familiar with the area should be considered through the use of special events such as sidewalk sales. These promotions can be held in conjunction with other larger events including the Fourth of July Celebration or Applefest. Businesses offer in-store specials as incentives to attract customers. A special assessment district should be considered to fund public improvements such as uniform decorative street lighting, street trees, entry signage, etc.

Access Management Plan

The City should prepare an access management plan for the corridor. This will give more specific direction on future curb cut consolidation and cross-access connections.

