

Downtown Monmouth Improvements Framework

City of Monmouth | 1/19/2016

Downtown Monmouth

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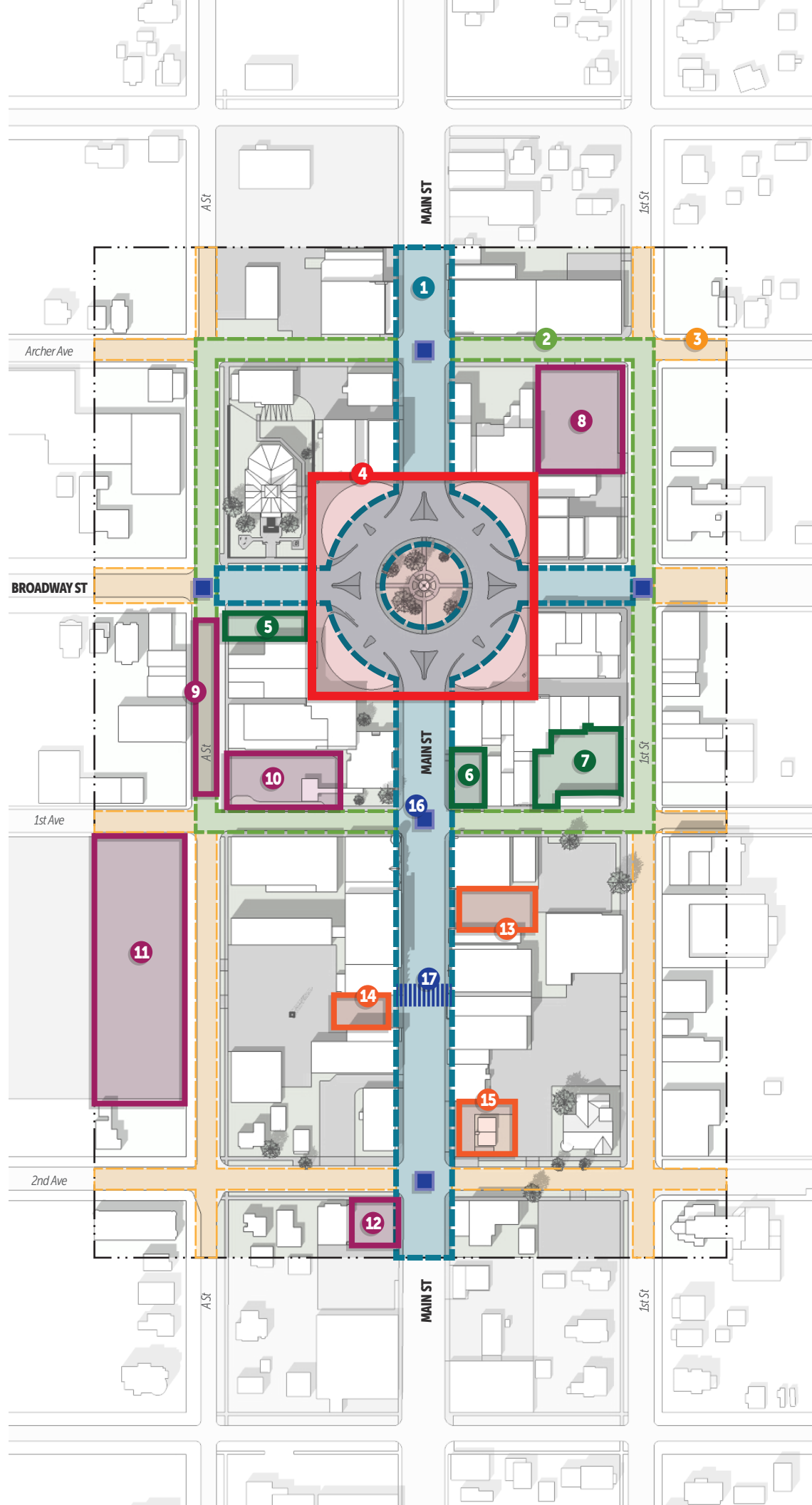
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Purpose of the Downtown Monmouth Visualizations

As the Monmouth community moves forward in its second five-year strategic plan for downtown revitalization, a key aspect of that plan is the beautification and improvement of the public spaces downtown.

These are spaces shared by all of us: downtown residents, shop keepers, consumers, community members and visitors. A visual design with an eye towards public safety, community engagement and creating the feeling that our downtown is one coherent place is the goal of these visualizations.

In the pages that follow, we will explore what our downtown can be, from the focal center of the Public Square to the flow of people and cars in and out of public parking lots. The old adage that “a picture is worth a thousand words” is certainly true here. We start by visualizing the component projects and how they fit together - to see the “end game” as the first steps in the process.



Existing Streetscape

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Downtown Monmouth sits at the intersection of Main Street and Broadway, with Public Square in the dead center. The streets provide an avenue for vehicular traffic, each bordered by public sidewalks that extend to the edge of the downtown buildings. Many years ago, the streets were made as wide as possible to facilitate maximum traffic flow (back then, Main Street was Route 34).

Now, with new businesses and residences calling downtown home, our goal shifts to pedestrian safety and traffic calming - slowing the vehicular traffic down, not only for safety, but also to allow motorists passing through to see and enjoy what downtown has to offer (and hopefully stop).

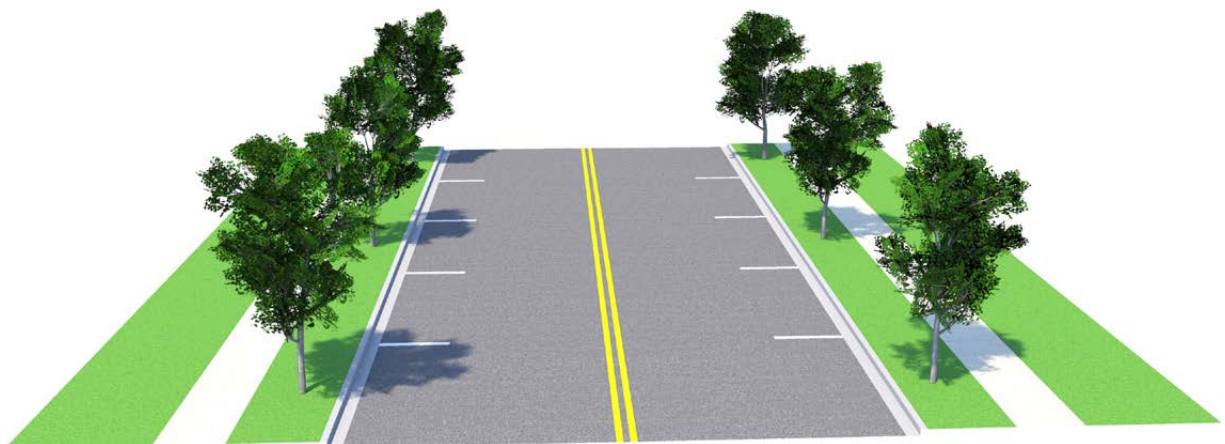
We seek look to condense South Main Street to two traffic lanes, while adding a boulevard (both for the pedestrians and to assist in drainage) and bike lanes - and to balance the traffic flow with the surround streets.



Main St./Broadway St.



Perimeter Streets



Residential Streets



Existing Town Square

PUBLIC SQUARE REIMAGINED

Monmouth's Public Square roundabout sits at the very heart of our community. In the center of the roundabout is Rotary Park, and each quadrant of the Square features a curved parking area for roughly 18 cars. Currently, two lanes of traffic enter the roundabout, making it uncomfortable and unsafe for pedestrians and drivers alike. There is no legal way for a pedestrian to follow crosswalks into Rotary Park. Also, the curved parking areas create large surface areas of uninviting concrete.

The goals for the reimagining of the Public Square are five-fold: single lane traffic entry into the roundabout, slowing down the vehicular traffic, shorter and safer pedestrian crossings (across the streets and to Rotary Park), adding public green space and increasing the number of parking spaces.



Town Square – Option 1



Town Square – Option 2



Existing Opportunities for Plazas or Open Space

DOWNTOWN PLAZA & OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

It is a long-held community priority to save mature downtown buildings whenever possible, and to this end, 16 buildings have been renovated over the last five years. At times, however, the state of disrepair for an old building is so great that demolishing the building is the only viable option.

Four such buildings have been demolished in the core downtown area, and this creates an opportunity. Rather than leave the empty lots fallow with gravel, we can create public spaces to improve the versatility and enjoyment of the downtown area.

One project is already underway: Pattee Plaza on the southwest quadrant of the Square. Two buildings have been demolished and will give way to a pedestrian plaza in Spring 2016. The plaza will be owned and maintained by the Buchanan Center for the Arts.

Two buildings have been demolished at the corner of 1st Street and First Avenue, allowing the opportunity for a mixed-use space combining parking and pedestrian plaza space.



Pattee Plaza (Under Construction) – Southeast Corner of Broadway St & A St



Potential Plaza & Parking – Northwest Corner of 1st Ave & 1st St



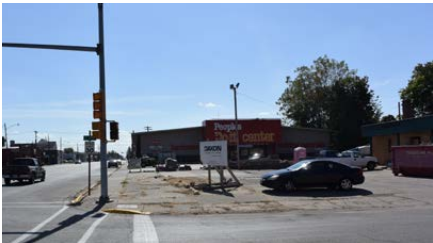
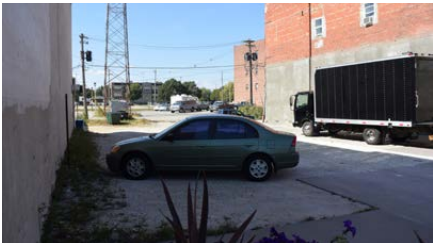
Existing Parking Lot Conditions

PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS

Downtown Monmouth has numerous public (as well as private) parking lots that provide ample parking spaces for visitors, shoppers, residents and employees. These parking lots also share several common traits - they are all disjointed, non-unified and ugly.

One aspect of creating a unified downtown environment is a continuity of design, from sidewalks to crosswalks to landscaping - and this is even more essential in open and visible parking areas.

Often, a parking lot is a visitor's first connection with the downtown area, and Monmouth's parking lots should feel like they are gateways to the downtown experience. To that end, improvements are recommended to several key downtown lots.

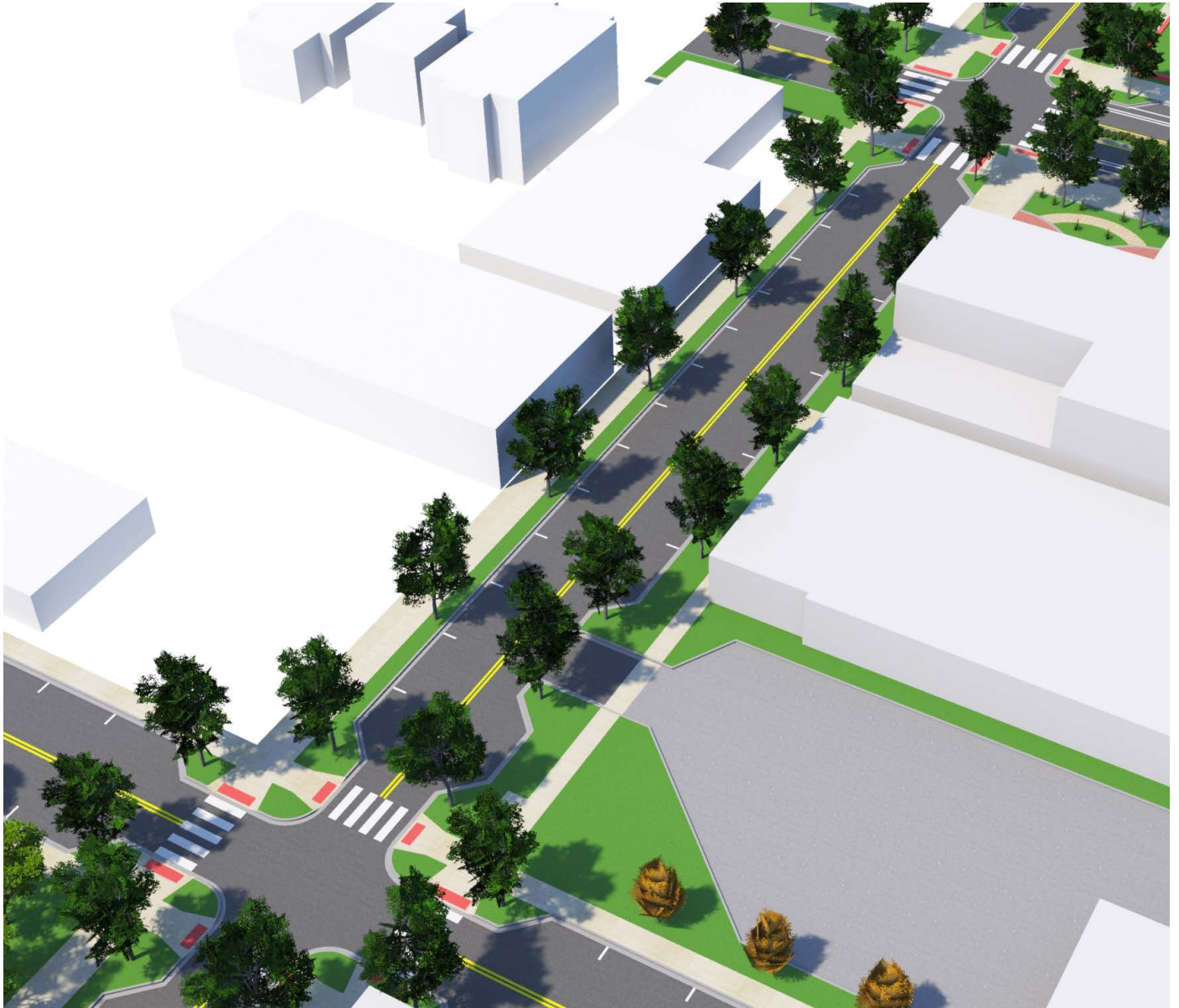




ARCHER AVE / 1ST ST PLAZA & PARKING LOT

The public parking lot behind City Hall provides both open and reserved parking spaces (for downtown employees and residents of the Maple City Apartments). This is a high activity area that is used constantly throughout the day. Most often, pedestrians leave the lot through the gap into the northeast quadrant of Public Square or walk along 1st Street. Landscaping this lot provides visual congruity with the Public Square, and also provides substantial run-off water retention.





A ST / 1ST AVE ON-STREET PARKING

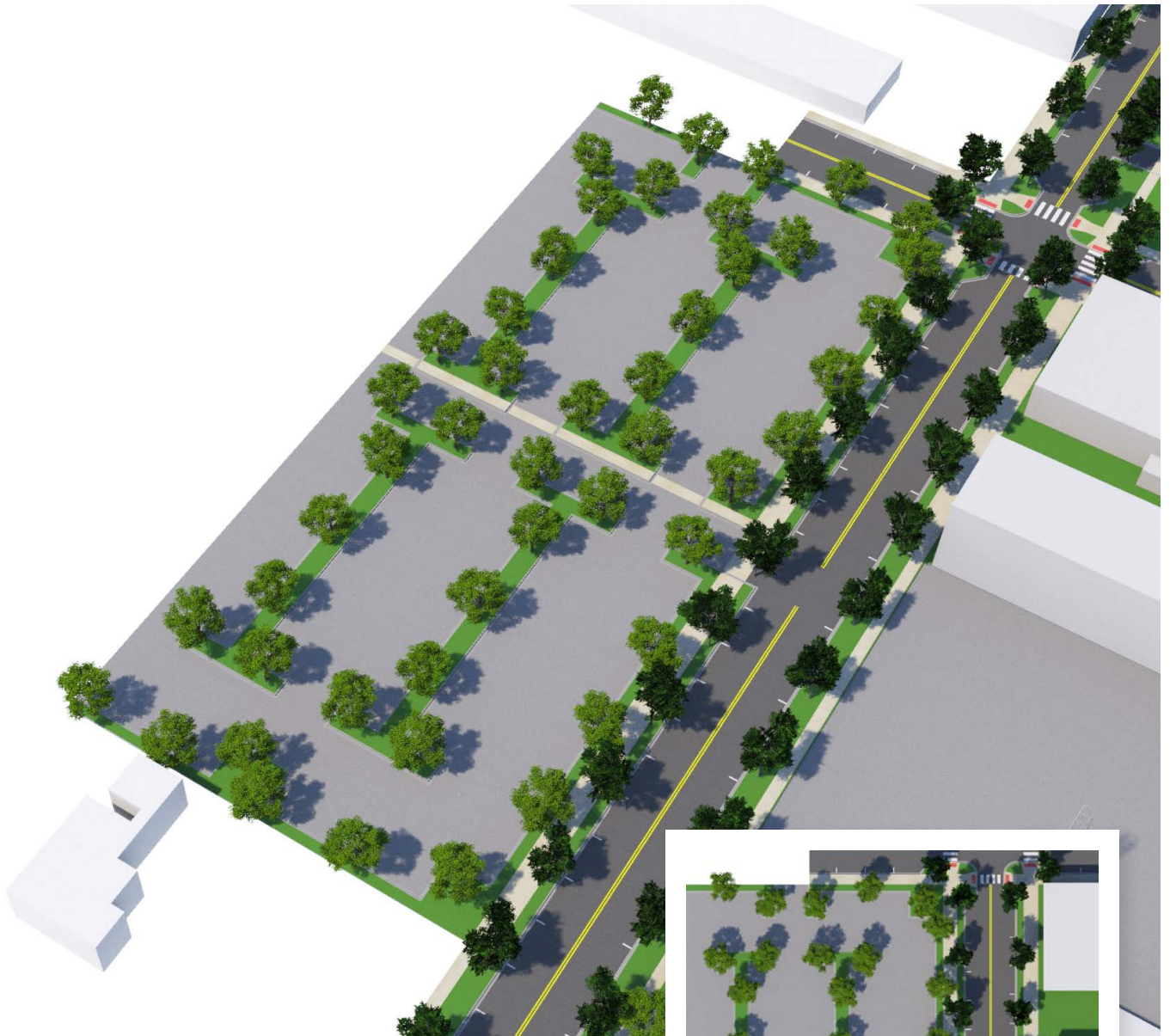
Downtown parking on A Street is currently the only public parking in Monmouth that is diagonal parking in the middle of the street. Since it is a unique parking alignment, the spaces are often used improperly, and pedestrian safety is questionable (especially for patrons of the Public Library and the Buchanan Center for the Arts). The redesign will include parallel parking like the rest of the downtown, plus off street parking where the Monmouth Dairy building is located (soon to be demolished).



A ST / 1ST AVE PARKING LOT

This parking lot serves the Wells Fargo bank, located on the Public Square. This redesign improves the pedestrian crosswalks at the intersection and allows for a more manageable single lane entry off of A Street. With the previous redesigned parking, drivers heading both north and south on A Street can enter this parking lot.





HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT

The large parking lot to the east of the Monmouth-Roseville High School is oversized for the high school's needs. This redesign landscapes the eastern edge of the parking lot, to make it feel more of a part of downtown Monmouth, and also to allow for overflow parking for downtown visitors.





INFILL THE STREETWALL ALONG MAIN STREET

The first block of South Main Street has a number of “missing teeth” properties that break up the flow of the streetwall on both sides of the street. By infilling these properties (which are currently utilized as parking lots) with new construction (with facades matching the historical feel of the downtown), the streetwall will feel more complete and there will be more locations for street level retail and upper floor residential living.



CROSSWALK IMPROVEMENTS

Pedestrian safety is one of the primary reasons for downtown streetscaping. With the four quadrants of the Public Square and businesses on both sides of South Main Street, a pedestrian will likely have several street crossings during a visit downtown.

The primary goal of the redesigned crosswalks is to make them clearly marked (for drivers, especially) and to shorten the distance the pedestrian is in the middle of the street.



Secondary Intersection



Residential Intersection



POTENTIAL MIDBLOCK CROSSING

The first block of South Main Street will be the area of the most retail and residential growth downtown in the next 5 years. The block is extra-long and currently has no midblock pedestrian crossings.

Anticipating retail growth, it is essential that we add a pedestrian crossing in the middle of the block. This crossing will also enhance the traffic calming efforts on South Main, as well as provide further run-off retention and green space areas.