



Vision for the Future

Section 2

Introduction

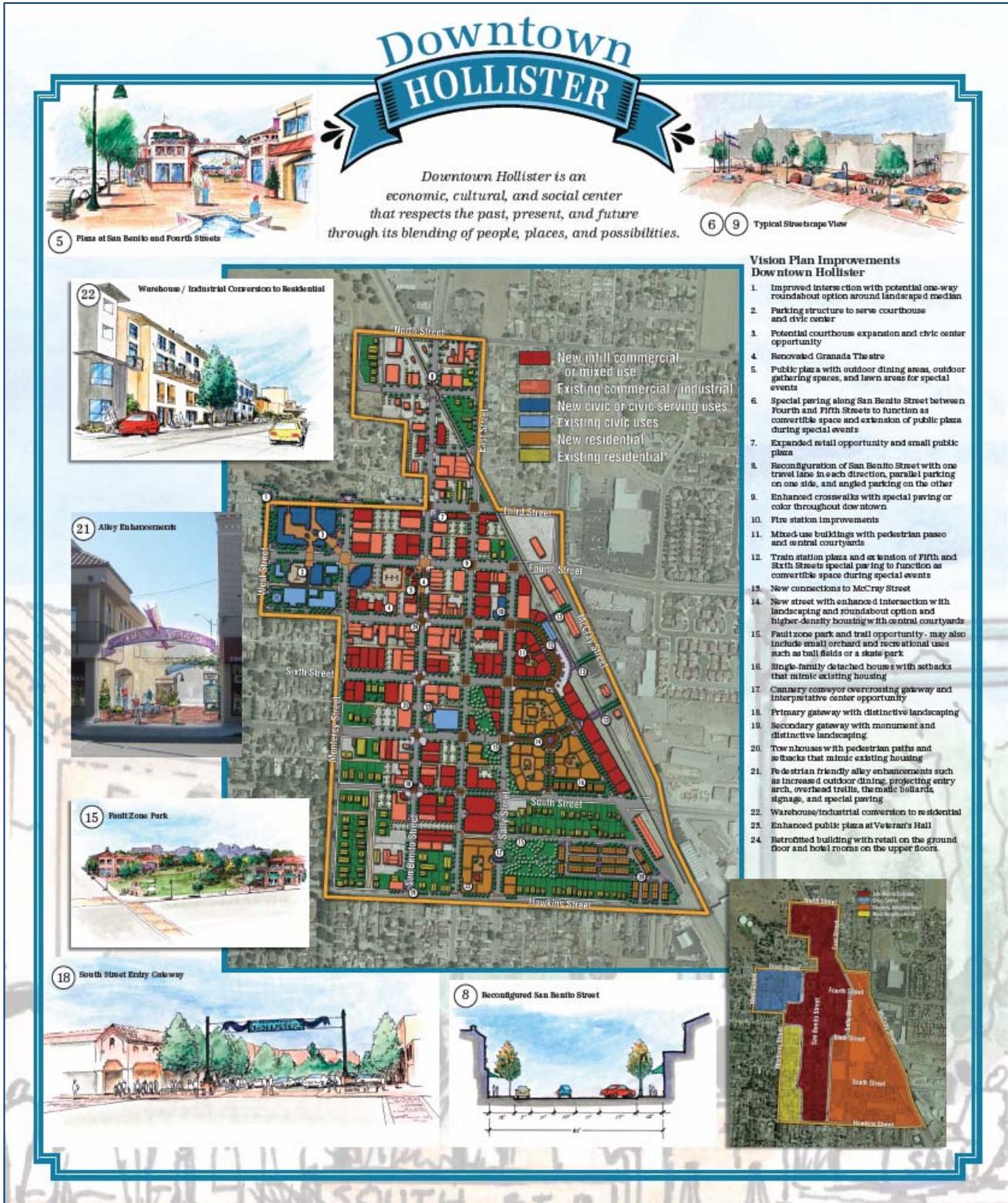
A vision for the future is a critically important part of a downtown revitalization plan as it defines the desired outcome for the future of the community and provides a basis for community leaders to make rational decisions regarding improvement projects. The vision for Downtown Hollister is described and illustrated in a poster that was prepared for this Downtown Plan (see Figure 2-1). This vision plan divides Downtown Hollister into four districts:

- San Benito Corridor
- Civic Center
- Cannery Neighborhood
- West Neighborhood

Specific recommendations for each district are addressed in the vision plan and described below. Section 6 discusses some of the streetscape and alley improvements in greater detail.



Figure 2-1: Vision Plan



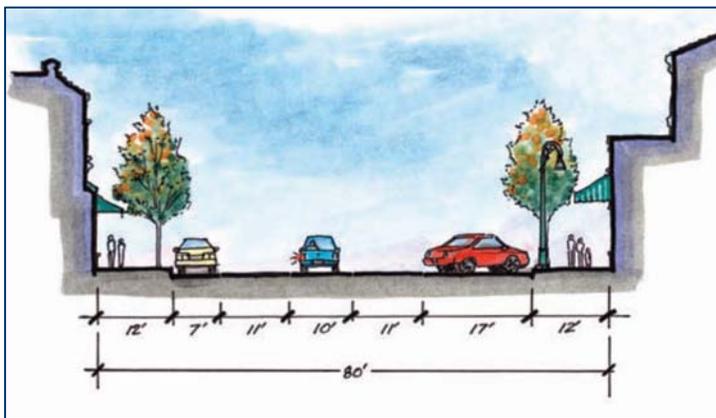
San Benito Corridor

San Benito Street is the main street that runs through Downtown Hollister. As a state highway, this street carries a large volume of traffic. Once the Highway 25 bypass is complete, San Benito Street will be relinquished by Caltrans to the City as a locally-controlled street and will likely carry much fewer vehicles, while still serving as a main street. This district contains San Benito Street and generally one or two blocks to the east and west. San Benito Street has the greatest opportunity for improvements because of its regional significance, wide right-of-way, existing retail development, and the future bypass. Specific improvements for San Benito Street and the rest of the San Benito Corridor district are provided below.

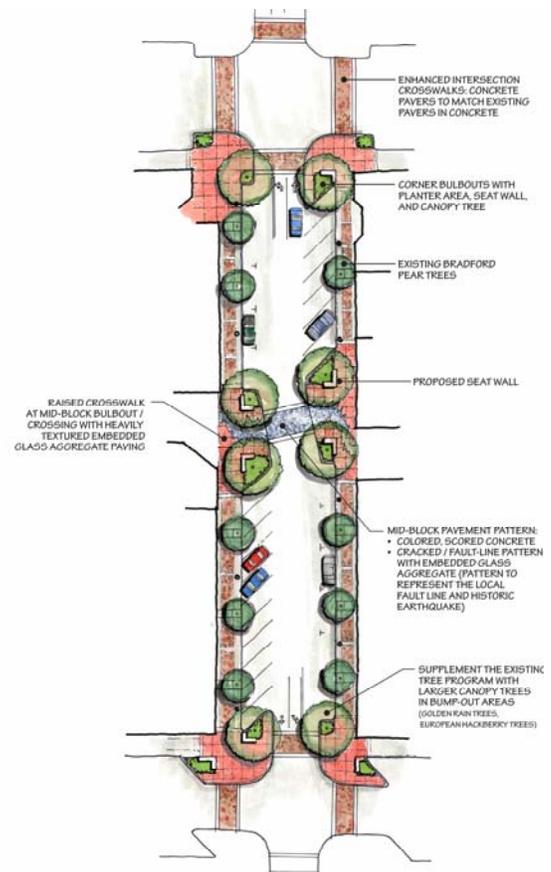
On-Street Parking Reconfiguration

After the Highway 25 bypass is complete, San Benito Street should be redesigned to calm traffic and improve the pedestrian environment. The street should be narrowed to include one lane in each direction, a center left turn lane, parallel parking along one side of the street, and angled parking along the other side. Angled parking would provide more parking spaces than parallel parking. The parking configuration should change at the mid-block crossing so each side of San Benito Street will benefit from increased on-street parking (right image).

Bulbouts (extensions of sidewalks) should be provided at all intersections and mid-block crossings along San Benito Street generally between Third Street and South Street. Bulbouts are designed to minimize the length of the crosswalk and the distance pedestrians must walk to cross the street. Bulbouts should be constructed of colored and scored concrete (bottom left image). Bulbout areas should include amenities, such as seat walls, landscaping and street trees, newspaper racks, streetlights, and trash and recycle receptacles.



Examples of an envisioned typical street section for San Benito Street with a reduction of travel lanes and on-street parking reconfiguration (top), colored and scored concrete for bulbouts (bottom left), and changing parking configuration (right).





San Benito Street / Fourth Street Plaza

The vacant lot at the corner of San Benito Street and Fourth Street is envisioned as a public plaza with retail uses, outdoor dining and seating areas, and outdoor gathering or lawn spaces for community events. Public art and other interpretive features that highlight the industrial and agricultural history and other historical people, places, and events are strongly encouraged throughout the plaza. This space is centrally located and has been used for several community events. Development near the intersection should be designed to serve as a gateway into the main retail core of Downtown Hollister. Refer to Appendices B and C for more information on project feasibility and implementation.



Example of the plaza looking south from the intersection of San Benito Street / Fourth Street. Fountain and building orientation are inviting and serve as a gateway into the retail core of Downtown.

Transit Service and Bicycle Facilities

Existing bus routes should be maintained and improved as necessary. A detour route for the bus route running along San Benito Street should be considered to accommodate street closures. Detour routes could occur along Monterey Street or East Street. A Downtown loop trolley could be considered to provide access to throughout Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods and shopping centers.

Bike routes should be established along all streets throughout Downtown. Bike routes are established with signage and markings on the street. Bike routes alert motorists that the lane should be shared by bicyclists and motorists and are often safer than bike lanes in downtown areas with high on-street parking rates and turnover. Bike routes could also be considered along alleys throughout Downtown and in the nearby neighborhoods.

Convertible Street

The portion of San Benito Street from Fourth Street to Fifth Street, and/or from Sixth Street to Seventh street (or portions of both sections) should be reconfigured as a convertible street. Convertible streets may be designed in a variety of ways, but the main concept is to design a street that can “convert” from a vehicular street to a pedestrian street during special events. Both locations would also serve to extend a plaza (San Benito Street / Fourth Street Plaza and/or the Veterans’ Memorial Building Plaza). The street should be designed with decorative paving materials (similar to sidewalks, bulbouts, and crosswalks) and reconfigured to include rolled curbs instead of the existing curbs.



Convertible Street



Convertible Street

Example of a convertible street adjacent to a public plaza that can be open to vehicular traffic (above) or closed for special events (right).



Gateways

Primary gateway features should be located at the intersections of San Benito Street / Third Street and San Benito Street / South Street. Secondary gateway features should be located at the intersections of San Benito / First Street, San Benito / Hawkins Street, Fourth Street / West Street, and Fourth Street / Sally Street. Primary gateways are larger in size and indicate a major transition, while secondary gateways are smaller and indicate less dramatic transitions. The primary gateways are envisioned with a gateway arch, bulbouts with seat walls and signage, distinctive landscaping treatments, and interpretive features that represent the railroad history, earthquake fault, and/or canning industry. The secondary gateways are envisioned with smaller gateway signage at the sidewalk corners and distinctive landscaping treatments, similar to the primary gateways. Gateway intersections and crosswalks should incorporate special paving treatments to compliment other gateway features.



Example of gateway features at the intersection of San Benito San Benito / South Street.

Alley Enhancements

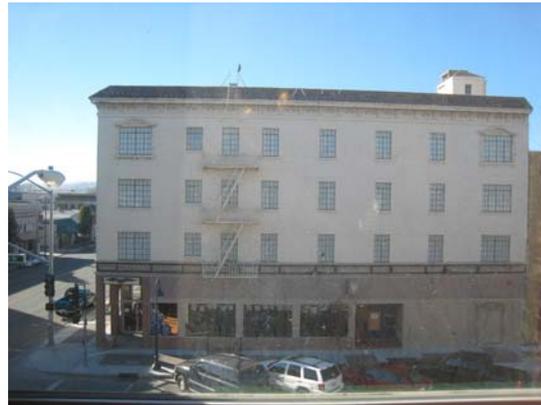
Several alleys along San Benito Street are constructed of similar paving treatments as the sidewalks. Alleys adjacent to restaurants and public spaces should be designed to accommodate outdoor dining or serve as pedestrian connections between uses. Such alleys are envisioned to include special signage, landscaping, and lighting treatments to signify these areas as public gathering and dining spaces.



Examples of alley enhancements adjacent to a Downtown Hollister restaurant (left) and an alley gateway arch with special lighting from another downtown (right).

Theater and Hotel Preservation

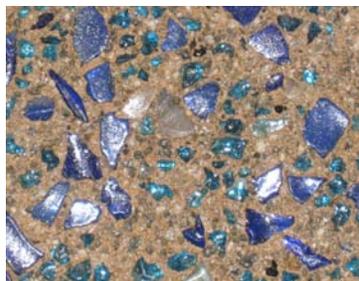
The Granada Theatre and the Pendergrass Hotel should be preserved and are envisioned to be restored to their original use. Entertainment uses, such as theaters, attract people to downtowns during evenings and on weekends and can generate business for nearby establishments, such as restaurants and bars. The Granada Theatre could include a stage for live performances, with a screen for film performances, or designed to adapt to various uses. Hotels attract visitors to downtowns and can generate business for nearby establishments, such as shops, restaurants, and bars. Both of these buildings are centrally located and close to a variety of supportive businesses. Refer to Appendices B and C for more information on project feasibility and implementation.



Images of the Granada Theatre (left) and Pendergrass Hotel (right).

Crosswalk Enhancements

The existing crosswalks should be replaced with pavers similar to those used on sidewalks throughout Downtown. The pavement within the center of the intersections (between crosswalks) could also be enhanced with decorative pavement or special design features. Mid-block crosswalks may also be appropriate on certain blocks along San Benito Street to better link both sides of the street. Mid-block crosswalks on San Benito Street should have a unique design that symbolizes the presence of the local earthquake fault by incorporating a jagged edge treatment and by using embedded glass aggregate pavement (see design details provided in Section 6).



Examples of sidewalk paving treatment used at an intersection crosswalk (left) and tumbled glass aggregate used at a mid-block crosswalk (right).



Civic Center

The Civic Center district encompasses the blocks with the San Benito County government center, the Fremont School, and portions of the blocks to the east. This area should include additional civic buildings (i.e. courthouse or community center) and public gathering spaces. This area would serve as a gateway to those traveling from the west and also serve as a transition between the establish neighborhood and the retail core of Downtown Hollister. Some areas outside of the Civic Center district may be appropriate for additional government offices or courthouse expansion based on market conditions.

Courthouse Expansion and Civic Center Opportunity

The former Fremont School building is envisioned to be renovated or redeveloped with additional San Benito County government buildings, such as administrative offices or courthouse facilities. Additional buildings should be constructed around this building to create a plaza space. Other uses, such as a community center, professional offices, or other similar uses, are also envisioned to compliment the government buildings and civic center plaza.

Civic Center Parking Structure

To accommodate the increased office and government building space in the Civic Center, a parking structure should be provided. On-street parking should be encouraged for short-term parking, while the parking structure should accommodate parking for employees and others needing longer-term parking. This parking structure is envisioned to alleviate some of the on-street parking impacts, reduce the need for surface parking lots, and allow for additional building space.

Vista Park Hill Connection

Enhancements to the trail leading up to Vista Park Hill are envisioned to encourage more people to walk between the park and Downtown. Attractive landscaping and special signage should be placed at the trailhead on Third Street and an improved crosswalk should be provided to allow for safer pedestrian crossing. The park area should include additional recreational facilities of interest to residents, employees, or visitors in Downtown Hollister.

Intersection Improvement

The intersection of West Street / Third Street / Virginia Drive should be enhanced with a one-way modified roundabout and landscaping. This area could also be considered for a new pedestrian connection to Vista Park Hill.

Crosswalk Enhancements

The existing crosswalks should be replaced with pavers similar to those used on sidewalks throughout Downtown. The space between these crosswalks should also include special pavement treatments to highlight the intersection and make pedestrian crossing areas more visible to motorists. Mid-block crosswalks may also be appropriate on certain blocks to link civic buildings and/or plazas on opposite sides of the street. Mid-block crosswalks should be constructed of pavers similar to the sidewalks.

Cannery Neighborhood

Much of the eastern portion of Downtown is developed with active industrial uses. If these uses are no longer viable, this area is envisioned to redevelop with non-industrial uses. The vision plan identifies various enhancements to this district should industrial uses leave Downtown Hollister.

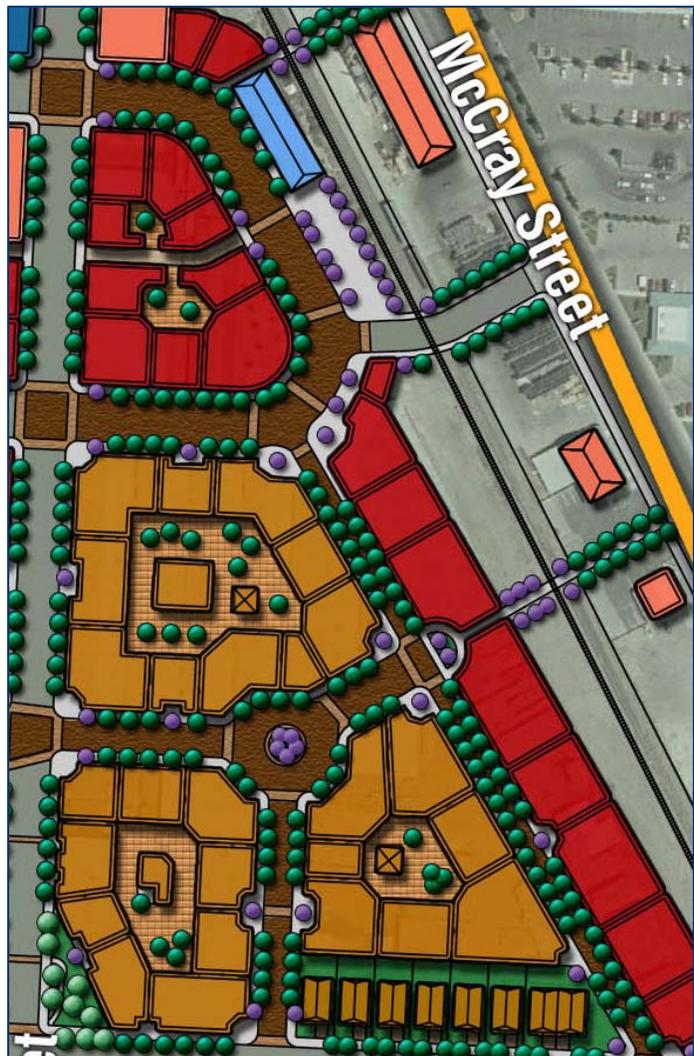
New Street Connections

New street connections should be provided to help inter-connect this area and break up the large “super blocks”. Fifth Street and Sixth Street should be connected with a loop street that provides a direct connection to the train station and potential plaza. This loop street should connect to South Street through an extension of Prospect Avenue. A new street with a roundabout should connect to the Prospect Avenue extension, Seventh Street, and South Street. Hazel Street should be extended to connect to East Street or an alley may be created here to provide additional vehicular and/or pedestrian links.

Train Station Plaza and Convertible Street

A plaza south of the train station building is envisioned as a public gathering space for special events. This would be adjacent to the Fifth Street / Sixth Street connection, which should be designed as a convertible street. Convertible streets may be designed in a variety of ways, but the main concept is to design a street that can “convert” from a vehicular street to a pedestrian street during special events. The street should be designed with decorative paving materials (similar to sidewalks, bulbouts, and crosswalks) and reconfigured to include rolled curbs instead of the existing curbs.

The train station and existing railroad tracks should be considered for passenger rail service. If rail service is not feasible, the right-of-way should be considered for use as a recreational trail for pedestrian and bicyclists.



Proposed new streets, train station plaza, and convertible street concept.



Mixed-Use and Residential Redevelopment

The Cannery Neighborhood district is envisioned to redevelop with non-industrial uses, such as residential and mixed-use developments. The area between Sally Street and the Fifth Street / Sixth Street connection is envisioned to include a mixed-use development with ground-floor retail uses fronting Fifth Street and the train station plaza and residential or offices on upper floors. This development should have a central courtyard for residents or tenants and should provide podium parking (parking on the ground floor behind retail uses). The area between Sixth Street and South Street is envisioned to be redeveloped with high-density residential apartments and/or condominiums. This development should also include central courtyards and podium parking. These buildings should have a strong relationship to the new street connection and roundabout.

Additional mixed-use, apartment and/or condominium, townhouse, and single-family development projects are envisioned throughout the Cannery Neighborhood should industrial uses leave Downtown Hollister. New mixed-use and residential developments should incorporate design features to reflect the industrial character of this area and distinctive architectural elements should be maintained. Refer to Appendices B and C for more information on project feasibility and implementation for the project bounded by Sally Street and the Fifth Street / Sixth Street connection.

If the train station and existing railroad tracks function with passenger rail service, nearby development should be designed as a transit-orient development (TOD). TODs often have strong connections to nearby transit service and are generally located within a five to ten minute walk (approximately a quarter-to half-mile) from transit stops. Much of Downtown is within a quarter-mile of the train station and the entire Downtown is within a half-mile. Residential, restaurant, and other transit-serving uses should be strongly encouraged near the train station and throughout transit-oriented developments.



Example of a new residential building with industrial features and materials incorporated.

Connections to McCray Street

There are limited connections to McCray Street from Downtown Hollister between Fourth Street and South Street. Pedestrian and bicycle paths, as extensions of Fifth Street and Seventh Street, are envisioned to bridge the gap between these two areas. These paths should include shade trees and incorporate special signage and landscaping features at path entrances. These paths would further connect Downtown to the commercial centers along McCray Street and Fourth Street.

Crosswalk Enhancements

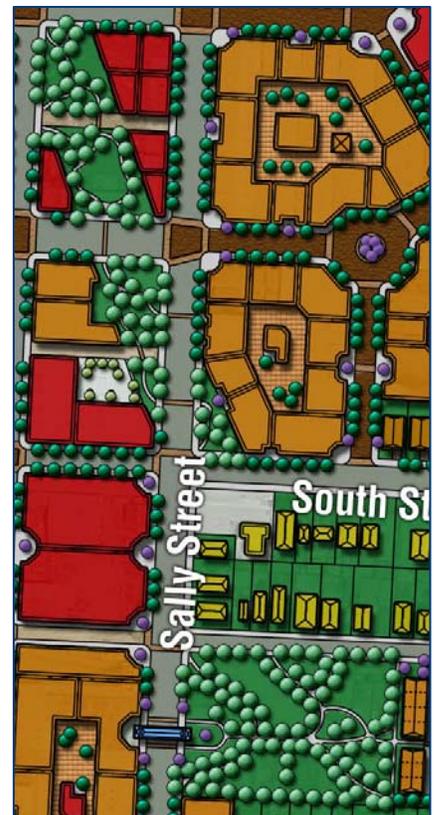
The existing crosswalks should be replaced with pavers similar to those used on sidewalks throughout Downtown. The space between these crosswalks should also include special pavement treatments to highlight the intersection and make pedestrian crossing areas more visible to motorists. Mid-block crosswalks are envisioned on certain blocks to connect the fault zone park and trail. Mid-block crosswalks should be constructed of pavers similar to the sidewalks.

Fault Zone Park and Trail

The earthquake fault line running through Downtown Hollister is a constraint to new development and redevelopment projects. In general, development should not occur within 100 feet of a fault line. Should industrial uses leave Downtown, some areas may have redevelopment restrictions. In these areas, a park and trail is envisioned to provide recreational facilities and linkages for residents and visitors. A larger park is envisioned near the existing neighborhood that should incorporate the cannery conveyor, an orchard, skate park, sports fields, and other recreational facilities.



Example of the fault zone park and trail looking south from the intersection of Sixth Street / East Street (above) and proposed location of fault zone park and trail (right).





West Neighborhood

The West Neighborhood district should be maintained as a residential neighborhood. Existing single-family houses may be converted to office uses, especially near the San Benito County government center. All new development and redevelopment should reflect the existing residential character of this neighborhood and be designed with compatible sidewalks, parkways, setbacks, landscaping, and lighting as the existing development.

Office Conversion

Some single-family houses have been converted into offices, especially near the San Benito County government center. This trend is envisioned to continue as more government buildings are added to the Civic Center. Office conversions should respect the residential character of this neighborhood and follow the design guidelines for detached house buildings in this plan. Landscaped setbacks should be maintained, signs should be subdued and reflect the architecture of the building, and parking should be located behind the buildings and screened with landscaping.



Examples of office conversions that maintain the residential character of the existing neighborhood.