



Sketching Cloquet's Future

A Community Revitalization Master Plan

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Business Enhancement Task Force
and
The City of Cloquet, Minnesota

Prepared by:
Hoisington Koegler Group Inc.
LHB Engineers and Architects
Ehlers and Associates, Inc.
Dale Helmich, Community and Economic Development

Credits

This plan was guided by the insights of the Business Enhancement Task Force, who volunteered countless hours of their time to ensure the intentions of this plan matched the needs and desires of the Cloquet community. Much credit must be given to the following individuals:

Joanne Buskala	Buskala Jewelry
Carl Dahlman	CJ's
Ron Dvorak	Potlatch
Paul Gassert	Carlton County Auditor
Keith Hanson	Cloquet Journal
Deb Hill, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Cloquet Planning Commission
Herb Johnson	Cloquet City Council
Wendy Johnson	Cloquet Journal
Kerry Karpinen	Northeastern Hotel
Don Loeb, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Edward Jones, Ltd.
Della Lynch	Cloquet Area Chamber of Commerce
Pat McDonald	McDonald Rental
Mike McKinney	Little Stores
Jim Prusak	Cloquet City Engineer
Bill Schlenvogt	Cloquet City Planner
Steve Sorenson	Northern Minnesota Utilities
Russ Smith	Independent School District #94
Linda Vuicich	Citizen
Randy Wagner	Damberg Scott Gerzina & Wagner

In addition, the planning process relied on the participation of the Cloquet community to review and evaluate directions and to provide critical balance to the formulation of the plan. Through workshops, interviews, focus groups and other methods, the people of Cloquet were asked to contribute their thoughts related to the revitalization of their community. Without their input, this plan would not have been possible.

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Master Plan Context

We might consider this master plan to be a process of sketching Cloquet's future — providing the rough outline for a more finished work. It provides direction for revitalization efforts that touch on many aspects of the Cloquet community, and its breadth includes more than the physical or designed elements of the area studied. Issues of economic viability, market factors and even social concerns are necessary elements of this plan; without them, a true revitalization will not occur.

The master plan is based on predictions leading to coherent development patterns for Cloquet's business districts and providing a framework for consistent decision making. The plan demonstrates how projects might fit into the larger picture of Cloquet, but it is meant to regulate only to a certain degree — maintaining a certain appropriate level of quality and consideration in every project. Rather than being limiting, it is intended to stretch people's imagination about what is possible.

As this master plan looks out over a period of twenty years or more of revitalization activity, interpretation will be critical. The plan cannot anticipate every change that might occur, but it can provide very good direction. Adjustment and redirection may be necessary, but it cannot be arbitrary; if needed, the change will be the result of an opportunity to make Cloquet a better community, not the result of accommodating a "hot" development project. That line may be thin, but the community must look to the principles of the plan first — the plan is meant to protect the values and character of the Cloquet community.

Two important points must be considered at the outset of this plan:

- that the structures that created the Cloquet we see today are not the ones that will solve the problems that exist.
- projects in Cloquet's business district can no longer be viewed as isolated elements without diminishing the intentions of the plan.

Aspects of the plan that require major change are dealt with in a conceptual nature in this plan; they identify areas of need for the community and suggest possible solutions through the application of sound directions. Prior to implementation, a more thorough study of the issue and appropriate solution will be required for elements that will result in significant change.



Concept

As we look forward to Cloquet's future, it might be wise to look back for just a moment. Consider the words of W. H. Skemp, recorded in the Pine Knot in 1919:

It was realized by the council that, as soon as the weather would permit, permanent building operations would be commenced, and consequently an ordinance establishing a fire zone in the city was passed, and also designating the character of buildings that might be constructed therein. Today we, looking at the fine bank buildings and business blocks in the course of construction and nearly completed, realize this was a wise provision.

Now again, nearly eighty years later, we are looking to the future of the community, and structuring a plan that might prove as wise a course of action as creation of an ordinance protecting the city from another devastating fire and ensuring a stock of buildings in which the community could take great pride. This plan is meant to encourage the development of sound and vital business districts, and looks to principles of design, economic viability and realistic implementation strategies as the desired result. Where illustrated in the plan, specific projects are intended to be conceptual in nature, and may require additional feasibility study before final designs are agreed upon.

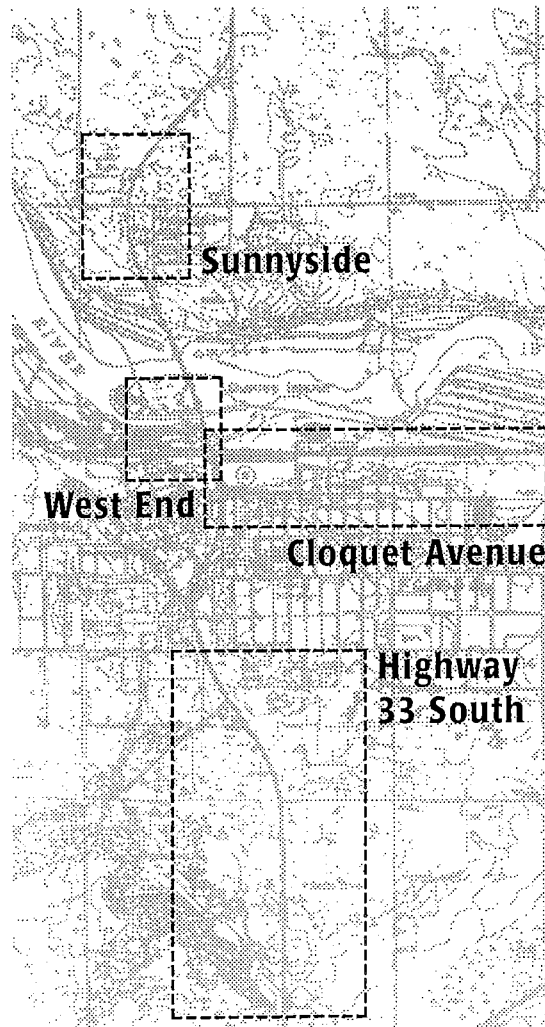
Cloquet's Business Districts

This plan addresses community revitalization of Cloquet's primary business districts. Each district has its own character, market forces and potential, and the strategies for revitalization will vary widely. The business districts and the directions for revitalization are addressed separately; as the intention of the plan is community revitalization, the futures of these districts must be tightly linked. The business districts considered in this plan are:

- Highway 33 South Highway 33 from approximately 1200 feet south of Stanley Avenue to Doddridge Avenue/Big Lake Road
- Sunnyside Highway 33 from the Skyline Boulevard to approximately 1000 feet north of North Road
- West End Avenue 'C' from Highway 33 to about Market Street, including areas along Avenue 'B' and Broadway Street
- Cloquet Avenue Cloquet Avenue from Highway 33 to 18th Street; Avenue 'B' from Highway 33 to 14th Street

A concentration of commercial and business activity can be seen in these areas. Scattered retail uses occur in other parts of Cloquet, but commercial and business activity should be focused within the business districts identified above.

Cloquet's four business districts are distributed through the community generally along Highway 33; district boundaries are described more definitively in the section on district plans.



Conditions and Community Input

Conditions affecting Cloquet's business districts are not unique. Many towns have issues related to highways bisecting the community or bypassing the downtown; many have downtowns that have been depleted by an expanding commercial strip along a highway; many have allowed new development to creep beyond the corporate limits to land that is vacant and more readily developable. The largest concern for Cloquet is also a concern for most communities its size: that patterns of commercial development have occurred without structure or coherency, and with an unintended disregard for the qualities that make a place special.



Cloquet residents participated in a series of workshops to provide insight and guidance in the creation of the master plan.

A community meeting held at the outset of the planning process identified several opportunities and constraints of Cloquet and its business districts in particular. The groups were asked to summarize their efforts by stating a few ideas that were most interesting or surprising. That list includes:

- Cloquet businesses have a poor service attitude, and the community in general needs a more positive attitude.
- Cloquet needs a "retail corridor".
- It is difficult to define the "center" of the community.
- There is a need for cultural components in a twenty year vision.
- Revitalization efforts will face challenges in zoning and wetland issues.
- Businesses need financial incentives to make changes.
- There is little retail diversity in Cloquet.
- The community needs to create a vision for competitiveness.
- Cloquet lacks adult recreation facilities.
- It is hard to acquire local financing.
- Cloquet could use a Finnish massage parlor.
- Traffic needs to be controlled better, with more attention for safe traffic crossings.
- Businesses should advertise jointly.
- Pedestrian linkages need to be improved.
- The community should shop Cloquet first.
- Cloquet should be a destination, not a gateway.
- Downtown needs to draw traffic from the highway.
- There is a need for an attraction in downtown — a hotel or a funky restaurant.



- The vision for Cloquet should include a skywalk and a riverwalk.
- Cloquet is a pleasant community.
- People are not sure of the role of the Chamber of Commerce.
- Cloquet should consider a bartering system.
- Computers will change the culture of shopping — creating “pleasure shopping” or “leisure shopping.”
- Cloquet needs to recognize the reality of being a bedroom community.
- The riverfront is underutilized and the potential for tourism needs to be considered.
- Transportation provides a great opportunity for Cloquet.
- There is a great opportunity within the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College.
- There is a need for youth activities, including a rollerblading park, but the community has to work together to make it happen.
- The city needs to provide services to prospective and community businesses.
- In order to make Cloquet a destination, a magnet (recreation or entertainment) must be created.

The list is broad in its interpretation of the issues concerning Cloquet’s business districts, but it does frame several important areas of investigation for a master plan:

- The community desires more and varied retail opportunities than what they might find in Cloquet today, and that they expect a high level of service from local merchants.
- The business community would like to make improvements, but needs assistance in order to realize any enhancements to their business or property.
- Cloquet Avenue needs more traffic in order to be viable as a business district, but pedestrian safety is also a concern.
- There is a need for Cloquet to become an attraction — a reason for people to come here.
- The St. Louis River is a valued community resource, but it is terribly underutilized.
- The built environment — the condition of buildings and storefronts, the sprawl of commercial activities, the lack of parking, and the absence of “green” areas in commercial areas — does not support the activities of business in Cloquet’s business districts.



This plan focuses on creating an understanding of the market needs and opportunities for Cloquet's business districts, rather than creating a comprehensive market analysis for the Cloquet trade area. As the community considers actions recommended in this plan, a more focused market assessment may be desirable.

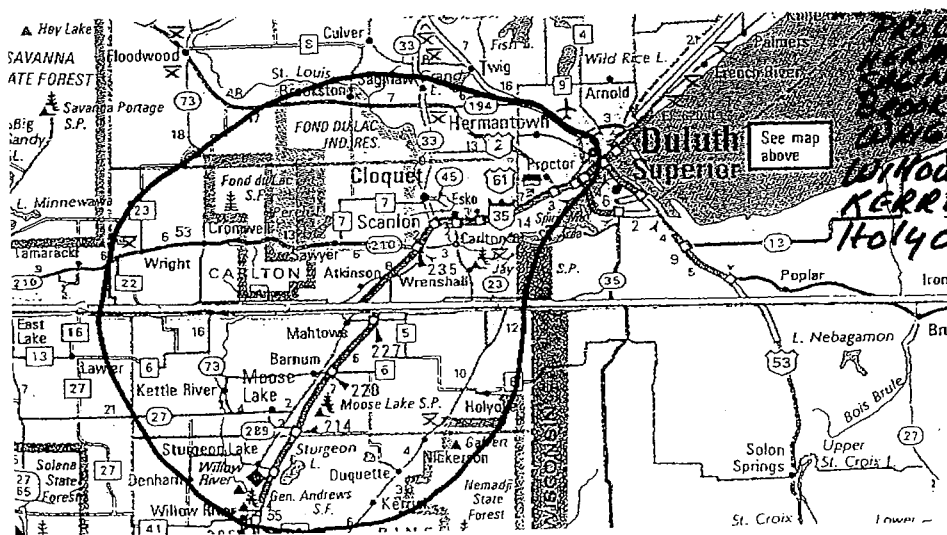
Market information for this plan was obtained from CACI Marketing Systems in Arlington, Virginia, which maintains an extensive library with a wide range of demographic information. As the community or individual businesses pursue revitalization, the information available through CACI may prove beneficial.

Market Area Description

As Cloquet becomes engaged in the process of revitalizing its business districts, it will be critical to have a strong understanding of what causes an area to be vital. An aesthetically pleasing and convenient retail environment is important, but renovated storefronts, enhanced streets and new amenities do not necessarily increase a customer's likelihood to buy. It is equally important to understand who that customer is and what he/she might be looking to purchase. The discussion of the Cloquet market begins with a definition of the "Cloquet customer."

The trade area, as defined in focus group sessions, is a polygon encompassing the majority of Carlton County and small portions of St. Louis and Pine Counties in northeastern Minnesota. The trade area extends approximately 35 miles to the southwest of Cloquet at its furthest boundary and five miles to the southeast of Cloquet at its nearest boundary. With the municipality of Cloquet located in the northeasterly region of the area, it includes the smaller communities of Kerrick and Yellow River to the south, Wright to the west, and Brookston to the north, and it encompasses the Fond du Lac Indian Reservation. The trade area ends just beyond Scanlon to the east due to Interstate 35, which provides direct and convenient access to shopping in the Duluth area.

A trade area was defined by local merchants during focus group sessions with representatives from each business district.



Demographic and Income Forecast

The current population of the trade area is 36,905, with total households (HH) of 13,754. Growth is anticipated in the trade area at a rate of 0.50% for population and 0.55% for households. This is somewhat less than the state and national forecasts by an average of 0.42%. The median age of 37.3 years is nearly the same as state and national comparisons, and is expected to increase to 39 years by 2002. Per capita income (PCI), which has increased substantially in the past, is anticipated to continue increasing at a rate of 0.75%. The PCI rate for the



Cloquet trade area is less than state-wide projections, but nearly 1% higher than related national figures. Household size, at 2.61 persons, is a constant historically and is expected to remain the same in the future.

During the next five years, low income categories (< \$15,000 to \$24,999 per HH) are forecasted to decrease from 33% in 1997 to 26% of the total households in the trade area; middle income (\$25,000 to \$74,999 per household) will increase from 56% in 1997 to 59%; and upper incomes (\$75,000 to > \$150,000 per household) will increase from 10% in 1997 to 17%. Income factors for the Cloquet trade area indicate favorable economic conditions as the turn of the century approaches. Currently, the largest percentage of household incomes in the trade area (22%) falls into the \$35,000 to \$49,999 category. By the year 2002, the forecast of the \$50,000 to \$74,999 category indicates growth by 3%, placing a total of 44% of the trade area households into these two categories. The prosperity of the area's population apparently is linked to the presence of legalized gambling in the immediate vicinity of Cloquet.

The composition of the trade area by age is projected to remain constant within the school-age, younger adult and middle-age populations. The largest growth (3%) appears to be in the 45 to 64 year age bracket. The ethnic make-up of the area will remain virtually unchanged with a 1% growth in the Hispanic population, 94 % White, and 5% other races.

In conclusion, the trade area shows potential for slow population growth, generally with a "familiar" but slightly aging consumer. It will, however, experience a healthy increase in buying power. Sales of goods may be flat unless merchandisers can target market segments and meet local consumer needs in terms of convenience, variety, price point and customer service, especially as competition from other sectors of retailing (mail order and Internet shopping) expands.

Consumer Summary

The groups which are represented in the population for the Cloquet trade area according to CACT's "ACORN" consumer classification system are as follows:

A classification of the trade area reveals information about the "Cloquet customer."

<u>Description</u>	<u>Number of Individuals/HH</u>	<u>Percent of trade area by population</u>
Semirural lifestyle These consumers are a prosperous population who have opted for semirural locales and lifestyles. They maintain their livelihood by self-employment -- many of them working at home. Although their residence is more rural, this older, married market has retained some urban preferences. Older and married, this market reads extensively with one-third being empty nesters.	778/261	2.1
Baby boomers with children This is a homogenous type who spend their time and money on home and family-oriented activities and goods. There is little time for civic activities. With a very high labor force participation rate, many are migrants and are still moving to find the best jobs or locations. Less likely to have completed a four year degree, their homes are owner-occupied and valued 20% below the U.S. average.	266/88	0.7
Older settled married couples These residents of established suburban neighborhoods are middle-aged and middle-income. They are upscale and domestic, but do not participate in civic groups, even though memberships in religious groups are popular. Many households include school-age children, with this group emphasizing savings over investments. Almost 20% are drawing retirement incomes.	1190/430	3.2



Prosperous older couples	975/343	3.2
<p>This largest of the retirement markets has suburban homes and lifestyles and are above the national average in age and income. Their spending is home-oriented, they travel abroad, dine out, watch their diets, take vitamins and prefer daily newspapers and senior magazines. Most are married, enjoy retirement and receive income from interest, dividends or rental properties.</p>		
Rural resort dwellers	3443/1307	9.3
<p>These are locals who live in rustic getaways; this consumer type includes retirees who have opted for fresh air and the great outdoors. Remote and rural, these communities depend upon seasonal trade to sustain the local economy. Many of the households are 55+ with families being predominately married couples. Most of the labor force is employed part-time.</p>		
Newly formed households	5144/1952	13.9
<p>This moderate income market is physically active. Most are one car households, but they are as likely to own a motorcycle as a hatchback. Unemployment and poverty are low with half the work force employed in manufacturing and service industries. Average home values are 40% below the national average with spending focused on home-oriented products and services.</p>		
Low income -- young and old	308/140	0.8
<p>This consumer type incorporates the extremes of the age distribution, the very young and the elderly -- which is reflected in their lifestyles: dancing, nightclubs, bowling, hunting and fishing. They own pets and buy baby products. Their expenses extend to low-income home repairs and footwear. Almost half the households are single parent or single-person.</p>		
Middle America	11,707/4128	31.7
<p>This rural, slightly older and family-oriented market is the largest consumer market. The neighborhoods are newer, owner-occupied, single family homes and the income is average. Active in civic affairs, their budget priorities are home oriented. Most of the work force is employed in manufacturing or farming with 25% having to commute to a different county to work.</p>		
Young frequent movers	837/265	2.3
<p>Typical of their youth, this population is mobile, including their homes. They are young families with a country style and a bit of wanderlust. They are more likely to have loans than investments or savings. Located in non-farm rural areas, mobile homes outnumber single family houses or homes in these neighborhoods. This is the second-ranked market for pet ownership.</p>		
Rural industrial workers	2124/741	5.8
<p>These stable, older families whose livelihood depends on manufacturing and farming are located primarily, but not exclusively, in the South. Commuting long distances to work is a way of life. Primarily older families with children, they are born and raised in the same state and are unlikely to even migrate to a different county. Nearly 50% have not completed high school.</p>		

The retail spending report for the Cloquet trade area provides expenditure data derived from the Consumer Expenditure Interview Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and purchase potential data derived from the Simmons Market Research Bureau, Inc. surveys. The information is reported by household (HH) figures representing 83% of the trade area. It is a comparison of anticipated demand and actual spending of the following consumer groups with overall national measurements for specific goods and services:

Retail Spending Summary

Middle America	<u>Demographics</u>	
Hearland Communities	Population/HH	36,905/13,754
Newly Formed Households	Families	9,817
Rural Resort Dwellers	Median Age	37.3
Rural Industrial Workers	Median HH Income	\$35,046

Cloquet consumers do not vary greatly from the national average (represented by 100) on the whole. Slightly significant (higher/>100 or lower/<100) Purchase Potential Index (PPI) and Spending Potential Index (SPI) items and point spreads of greater than 10 are:

A retail spending summary demonstrates areas of the market where demand is satisfied and where market potential might exist.	<u>Goods and Services</u>	<u>PPI</u>	<u>SPI</u>	<u>Annual spending per trade area HH</u>
	Womens apparel	101	89	\$632
	Childrens apparel	107	97	578
	Watches and jewelry	98	83	576
	Automotive aftermarket	104	82	547
	Barbers and hair salons	101	85	261
	Books and periodicals	102	91	197
	Cameras and equipment	100	87	86
	Theater and concerts	77	89 *	170
	Home loans	98	79	5706
	Remodeling	122	111	5126
	Maintenance and repairs	111	97	1470
	Paint	109	91	355
	Lawn and garden	117	94	403
	Audio equipment	95	110 *	395
	PC hardware and software	85	101 *	2152
	Furniture	101	86	994
	Home furnishings	102	85	406
	Vehicle insurance	106	90	1234
	Luggage	85	92 *	315
	Pets and supplies	114	97	263
	Sporting goods	109	94	614
	Telephone	104	92	574
	Air fare	68	95 *	1766
	Rental cars	58	102 *	806

In all categories (except those marked with an asterisk) trade area consumers are spending less than anticipated demand. Further study may find that consumers are buying lower-end merchandise and services, they are under-served, or local values are a factor. Given consumers access to Duluth, the under-served factor may be questionable.

The margin between PPI and SPI in any category is probably not enough to warrant the start up of a specialty business, however adding a line of moderately priced goods or services to an existing business would be a less risky means of meeting anticipated consumer needs. Marketing strategies (consumer focus groups and advertising campaigns) would be critical to the success of these expanded businesses.

The propensity to purchase in the remodeling category is significantly above average and apparently needs are close to being met. Other notably higher than average anticipated demands (lawn and garden and pets and supplies) are not.

Categories where actual spending out-distanced expected demands (categories marked with an asterisk) indicate that local consumers may be paying higher prices and/or purchasing with more frequency. The PPI and SPI do not demonstrate whether consumers are purchasing goods and services in or out of the Cloquet trade area.

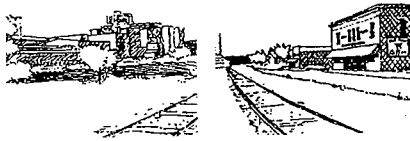


Local Character

As we look to revitalize Cloquet's business districts, one of the most important questions to be considered is the population that will be served by the community's efforts. Projects in other communities have reinforced the notion that revitalization efforts focused on the needs of the local community promote stronger bonds between local businesses and their customers, as well as providing a more authentic and inviting place for people from outside of the community.

The task before Cloquet is one that recognizes that some patterns are well established and will not change, but that there is a degree of control that can be exercised over many areas of development. If the community recognizes that there is a strong local character in Cloquet, then the process of defining patterns of development and change appropriate to Cloquet is more readily apparent. One of the key elements of the community's vision is the recognition that Cloquet is special — that the form of development that occurs through this plan is the result of a combination of *people* and *place* that could not happen anywhere else. A glance at Cloquet hints at patterns and features that might be appropriate for the community's business districts.

Industry in Cloquet is one of the community's most striking features, with a scale and presence that make these structures regional landmarks with definite local character.



As a single element, the Northeastern Hotel is a great community feature. Its relationship to the river, the railroad and nearby industry tells an even more fascinating story of Cloquet.

Cloquet has a great deal of character which can be used to form an identity that is unique to this community.

The relationship between commerce and industry along Avenue B reveals an active, diverse, working downtown. This area might be cleaned up, but the character should not be lost.



In every community, one seeks out its institutions. In Cloquet, we have to consider some long-time merchants as much of an institution as the community's churches and schools.

Entrances to the community focus on stands of pines or the river, framing views and recalling Cloquet's larger landscape. If we look for "themes," nature is a powerful source.



Opportunities abound in Cloquet. The critical decision in many cases is not how to rehabilitate the storefront, but how to breathe life into the building in its next use.

Some neighborhoods are as much a part of downtown as stores and offices. When planning enhancements for business areas, the vitality of the neighborhoods must be maintained.



The richness of Cloquet's architectural heritage is not lost, but it might have faded. All that is lacking in downtown is the life that people bring; restored buildings usually follow.



Guiding Principles

The community, through the planning process, framed a set of principles to guide revitalization of its business districts. The principles outline the most basic tenets of the master plan — those ideas that must hold fast, even as the details of the plan are adapted to meet changing or previously unknown conditions.

Guiding principles are not isolated rules; they are an integral set of directions that will guide the community forward. They are based on a shared understanding of Cloquet's desired future; they will be used to evaluate proposals and to determine new directions that support the master plan's intentions; and they will be a way of finding common ground and shared values during times of conflict.

The revitalization of the community, with a focus on its business districts, must be holistic in its approach — balancing desired aesthetics, economic viability and implementation potential across each district and in each project.

**Integrity must occur in buildings,
not just facades...**

There is no better theme for Cloquet than “integrity.” As buildings are renovated, they should consider what the building was meant to be — why it functioned well for its original purpose and how that level of integrity can be extended to its current use. While restoration is not always the answer, renovation that considers a structure's origins is critical.

Even new buildings can be built with a “Cloquet integrity.” While strict uniformity would be inappropriate, the use of forms and materials consistent with a “Cloquet palette” would yield a desirable image and a clear “Cloquet identity.”

Integrity might mean that a building has a life much longer than its original purpose. Development that allows flexibility for a range of uses results in a stock of buildings that have utility, longevity and, most of all, integrity.

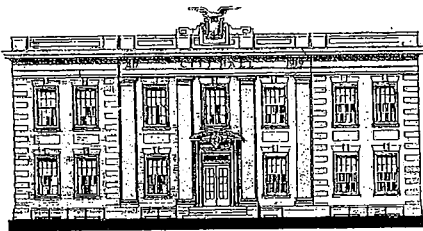
**Aesthetics alone cannot
create vitality for Cloquet...**

Cloquet's business districts should be a good place to do business — for businesses and customers. Districts must be organized to serve the needs of the community, and businesses should be recruited to fill gaps in the current mix of goods and services. Retail businesses that have a service component will be the most successful; they can add value to their goods by providing excellent service.

A key factor in Cloquet's vitality is an understanding of the market segment that a particular business serves. By recognizing that not everyone is a customer, a business can more directly target those who are most likely to become customers. By drawing people to Cloquet who have a defined purpose (that is, they are a very likely buyer), the market for ancillary businesses might be enhanced.

The best business areas are those serving a great mix of customers — arriving at different times for different purposes. It creates an active and lively place — one where people and their activity is the highlight. To draw this variety and to make certain that there is activity for a majority of the day, uses must be mixed to encourage those people who visit for any number of reasons.

A business district that has lost its vitality cannot heal itself. There needs to be a compelling reason for people to come — a center of activity (a business, a grouping of related businesses, a large employer, a civic facility or a unique attraction).



THE NEW CITY HALL AND JAIL.
Many Cloquet buildings built after the fire continue to serve the community well today, even though the original use may have been different.



It has taken a long time for Cloquet to evolve to the point where it is today. It is unreasonable for its business districts to change dramatically overnight. Moving forward in reasonable increments will allow the community to apply limited resources meaningfully, to build slowly during a longer period of time, and to adjust, as necessary, to ever-changing conditions as implementation proceeds.

Limited resources are available to make change happen...

A plan must be strategic in that it encourages further action with every step taken. As resources are applied, they must be seen as an investment, with a return that can be used to make the plan continue to happen. This series of sustained actions will be the fuel that keeps Cloquet moving forward to a more vibrant future.

The actions of this plan will be complex, costly and possibly controversial. The community must commit itself to a plan that creates a better business environment because the problems they see will not fix themselves. To be successful, this plan must be a partnership involving the community, businesses and the city.

It is nearly impossible to sense a relationship between Cloquet's business districts, or even between different businesses in the same district. In a revitalized Cloquet, each district and business should build on the energy of its neighbors. To achieve this connection, patterns of community circulation need to be integrated with the districts, and each district needs to be organized to accommodate the activities of the entire district — not just an individual business.

Business districts must be united to make revitalization meaningful...

Downtown was once a place of life, with people living, working and playing. Today there is no sense of such life; the business districts have become areas of almost singular use. The patterns of a revitalized business district should encourage multiple use and life for more than eight hours in a day.

By establishing boundaries for the business districts, we can encourage the best use of limited land resources and reinvestment in areas that are currently underutilized. The result will be business districts that have been planned with foresight and an emphasis on long term value; an intensity that brings life and vitality; and preservation of features that lend character to the community.



Revitalization of Cloquet's business districts should also enhance the livability of neighborhoods surrounding each district.

The plan should aim to change Cloquet's business districts in increments, re-establishing logical patterns of use and character over a longer period of time, while striving to maintain the qualities that people desire. This would indicate a strategy that relies on incremental change, allowing one action to set the tone for any subsequent steps in the process of revitalizing Cloquet's business districts.

Healthy neighborhoods are a key to the revitalization of the business districts. Clear boundaries for the business areas will create stability for surrounding neighborhoods, maintain consistent property values and prevent negative influences of the businesses from diminishing the qualities of the neighborhood.

The St. Louis River in Cloquet is a blend of an industrial river (the catalyst for the development of the mills long ago) and a "wild" river (with the rock outcrops, backwaters and vegetation expected in a northern Minnesota river). These qualities must be captured as the river is made more a part of the community.

The River and Cloquet's heritage must be integrated into the life of the community...



The St. Louis River exhibits its "wild" and "working" qualities as it passes through Cloquet.

As we move into the next millennium, it might be easy to forget the evolution of Cloquet and the people and traditions that have long been the foundation of the community. In fact, these things should be remembered — even celebrated — in a place that is central and meaningful to the community.

The river, the natural landscape and Cloquet's heritage present opportunities for creating identity that is a direct reflection of the spirit and character of the community. While identity alone will not enhance the vitality of the community, the sense that Cloquet is special — that it has its own unique identity — will build the pride that is a critical component of the revitalization plan.

Streets are great meeting places. Streets are equally accessible to residents and visitors; streets never close; streets, in well considered business districts, are outdoor rooms. The streets become a stage for the activity of people, and the elements of the streets should tell a story about the community.



Master Plan

Naturalist John Muir said “When we try to pick out any one thing, we find that it is connected to everything else in the universe.” Cloquet could be more like Muir’s concept — where the parts are so related that they naturally fit, and in doing so, the entire community begins to work better.

The concept includes an idea of a center for the community and centers of activity; recognition of the forest and the river; the formation of connections between districts and the introduction of “Cloquet character” along those routes; the establishment of consistent patterns and qualities in the built environment; and the need for redevelopment as a tool for revitalization.

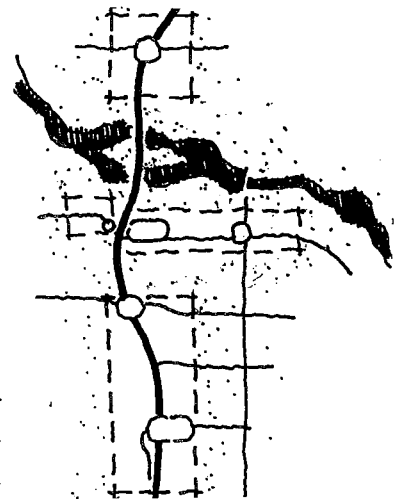
One of the first exercises of the community workshop process asked participants to draw a map of the community and to locate the “center.” For small towns, the notion of a center is essential to the place — it is the heart of the community, the place of community activity, and the place where the community gathers for events. Most groups at the workshop could not readily identify Cloquet’s center, and were satisfied with an intersection — a place where there is a lot of traffic — or a spot that seemed to be the geographic center.

A center should be more than a physical location or a traffic signal; it should be a place of recognizable community activity. The concept takes advantage of a location near the intersection of Highway 33 and Cloquet Avenue, where major circulation patterns converge and views of the river dominate the horizon. But it also encourages the development of activities here that reflect the people of Cloquet — a place of culture, recreation, gathering and sharing. This center might become the “magnet” that draws people to Cloquet Avenue, creating life for a part of the city that has lost its vitality. As it develops, it spurs activity in areas nearby — creating opportunities for reinvestment and filling gaps in the fabric of the city.

“Centers of activity” are needed in each district. By creating patterns in each district where buildings have a strong relationship to each other, and by encouraging development patterns that add depth to the district, a place with a more intentional sense of activity is created. “Centers” might logically be created where some activity already exists — encouraging other uses to enhance the activity in the immediate area and expanding over time to revitalize an entire district.

The riverfront becomes more important in the concept for the master plan, building on past projects and current efforts. A circuit of the river could include the undeveloped areas along the north bank of the river; historical interpretation of the community at Dunlap Island; cultural and social activities at or near the “center” described above; experiences of the “wild” river just above Knife Falls and views of the mills, Cloquet’s economic mainstay. This circuit would also be within walking distance of the West End, Sunnyside and Cloquet Avenue; and it would ultimately make connections to regional systems like the Munger Trail and the Lumberjack Trail.

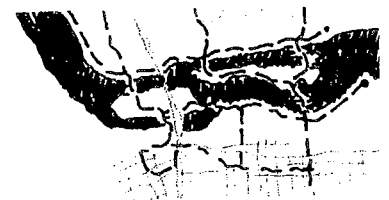
A "Center"



A “center” is defined at the intersection of Highway 33 and Cloquet Avenue, where activities of the community are highlighted. Centers of activity would occur in each district.

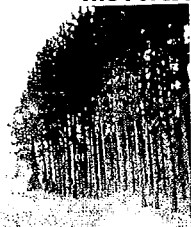
Centers of Activity

The River



A circuit of the riverfront touches both banks of the river and broad aspects of the community.

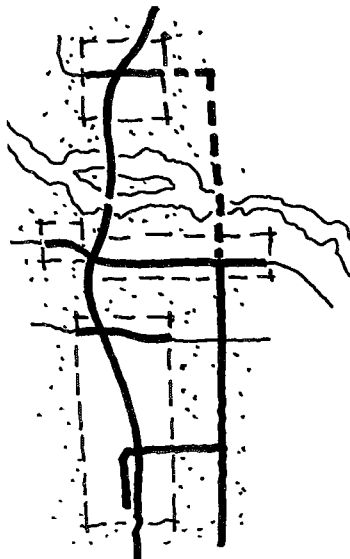
The Forest



Every aspect of the Cloquet community should feel as if it were carved from the forest.

The forest that surrounds Cloquet is also key to the concept. Highway business districts should feel as if they were carved from the forest, with trees close to areas where buildings and people would be. Important community streets, especially those that link Cloquet's business districts, are developed with a character reminiscent of the forest, using species and patterns that recall forest qualities. Remnant portions of developed sites and rights-of-way are treated more as "natural" areas, creating the sense that development spared the landscape rather than pushed it aside.

Circulation



Circulation routes should link Cloquet's business districts and reflect the community's forest qualities.

Certain routes through Cloquet are emphasized for local traffic, providing alternatives for residents that may not require them to use Highway 33. A new river crossing is created to link Cloquet's north neighborhoods to the rest of the community; Stanley Avenue is recognized as a major intersection with Highway 33 South; and 14th Street forms an alternative north/south route connecting Cloquet Avenue to Highway 33 South. Traffic signals are introduced at intersections that will promote business district growth.

The most obvious component of the master plan is the pattern of circulation. In Cloquet, the connection between districts will almost always occur on a roadway. The plan envisions a circulation pattern that recognizes Highway 33 and enhances its visual character, but also indicates other routes which will gain importance through the process of revitalization and as stronger connections are formed between business districts and neighborhoods. Ultimately, the circulation pattern will focus on north/south connections using Highway 33 and 14th Street, with east/west connections between Highway 33 and 14th Street using Stanley Avenue, Washington Avenue, Doddridge Avenue, Cloquet Avenue and North Road. This pattern creates a hierarchy of circulation in the community; links the various districts along routes that are familiar to the community; and provides alternatives for movement that do not necessarily rely on Highway 33.

The Built Environment

Patterns and materials of the natural Cloquet landscape are used along major vehicle and pedestrian routes to form visual and physical connections between districts. This might also have the benefit of making these routes more like streets that are a part of the community than just a place for cars. Signage should be an important element of these routes — directing people to community features and providing identification of each district.

In the master plan, business districts become more unified through the use of common patterns and elements, although the built forms of each district will bear a stronger relation to each district's immediate context. Development should have a consistent orientation to public spaces within districts; parking areas and landscaped portions of sites should work in harmony between sites, allowing buildings to be the highlight; the buildings themselves should share a certain level of quality and create a sense of permanence.

Tools Areas of each business district that might not seem to fit could be reshaped to become more integral to the qualities of the district. Infill (filling gaps in the



patterns of each district), development (encouraging new uses on vacant land within the boundaries of a district), and redevelopment (replacing an undesirable, obsolete or underutilized use) are all key parts of the revitalization concept. Areas where these tools are employed should result in uses that are viable, valued and lively.

As with the guiding principles, the elements of the concept cannot be implemented in isolation. The concept only has meaning when its components are considered as a unit. The definition of the concept in each district becomes evident in the master plan.

The master plan advocates the establishment of and adherence to a boundary for each business district -- a line beyond which commercial development will not occur. This action serves to protect neighbors and forces the wise use of land resources with the bounds of the district.

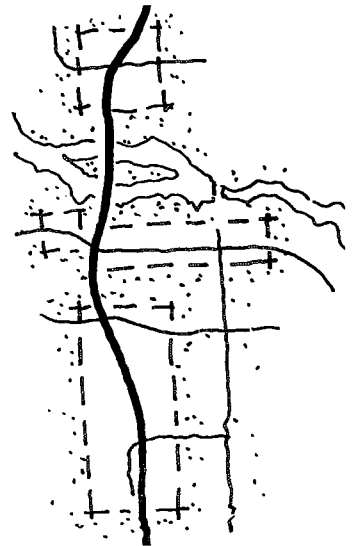
As the business districts revitalize, the goal is that activity levels would increase. With more activity, it is likely that traffic and related demand for parking space would increase. The framework for the plan encourages the creation of parking to adequately serve commercial uses without intruding on surrounding neighborhoods. If problems with parking arise in peripheral areas, the creation of preferential parking zones might be warranted.

Land is a resource for Cloquet's business districts and for the community in general. Across the country, urban planners and theorists are recognizing the relationship between compact communities and quality of life. For Cloquet, other issues also come into play: the expansion of the city consumes the landscape the community cherishes. To indiscriminately expand without fully utilizing land within the city consumes financial resources in the extension of infrastructure, while allowing areas already served by infrastructure to diminish in value. Boundaries will encourage activity within business districts that results in best use of the land, districts that are alive as a result of their intensity and compactness, generation of maximum tax revenue from all parcels, and the sense of place that our society is trying so hard to achieve.

In development that has occurred across the country in the last half century, sites have nearly always been subordinated to buildings. Certainly sites must function for traffic movement, access, drainage and visibility, but aesthetics do not need to be compromised for function. With care, sites in Cloquet can integrate a building with the community; they can temper effects of the environment; and they can afford comfort and safety for people using all modes of transportation.

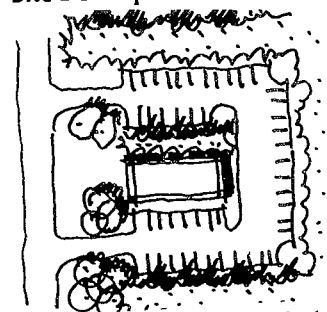
Landscape features are, for Cloquet, the most powerful of unifying elements. This community was carved from the forest, and remnants of that landscape remain prominent. The introduction of forest species as the dominant landscape of developed sites will bring consistency and coherency to these separate districts. Instead of a lonely crabapple in a parking lot island, there might be a stand of aspen; a row of lindens in a boulevard might instead be a magnificent stand of red pine. Business districts must be developed with the same attention

Boundaries



Each district must have a well-defined boundary, beyond which commercial activities will not expand.

Site Development



Even simple changes to typical site development patterns can dramatically effect how each site forms connections to larger patterns of the community.

to the site as is typically given to a building, recognizing that the site has a great ability to build character for the community as it matures.

A casual inspection of the districts reveals a wide array of light poles, light types and lighting effects — on the streets and on the sites. The development of consistent lighting standards — for parking areas and streets — will lend a sense of unity and also provide a sense of hierarchy at street level (defining streets as spaces distinct from parking lots).

While it may be true that people generally do not walk to stores in Cloquet, it is true that parking areas are extremely unfriendly for pedestrians. As sidewalks are implemented in business districts, the connection between sidewalks and front doors of businesses becomes important. For those who point out that parking areas are not places for pedestrians in the first place, it is important to point out the everyone who walks from their cars to a store is a pedestrian. With very little change to even the most basic site development plan, people who are not in cars can be more comfortably accommodated.

Regulation and Investment Policy

This plan is formulated to encourage creativity and to allow some latitude for individual expression. There is a need for this plan to have “teeth” — to provide for a high degree of consistency over the term of plan implementation. Some Cloquet residents and business people likely believe there are too many rules already. Without some level of regulation, however, the intent of this plan will never be realized.

Specific action must be taken to encourage the creation of higher quality, more permanent buildings based as much on the qualities of Cloquet as the desires of developers. Adoption of the design guidelines and codification of appropriate sections is critical; adherence to the design guidelines for any project receiving public assistance should be mandatory. The result should be buildings of lasting community value, a less generic appearance and a consistent level of quality throughout Cloquet's business districts

The community should use this master plan to guide decision-making related to Cloquet's business districts to create consistency over an implementation period likely to last as long as twenty years. This plan might become city policy, in effect becoming an element of the community's comprehensive plan.

There will be no lack of projects resulting from this plan, but there will be limited public funds to put toward those projects. Any funds brought to the implementation of any aspect of this plan must be used wisely in order to gain the most from limited resources. Investment of public funds should leverage non-public funds or activities in the same project or in the district and demonstrate a tangible return for the community. Developers must realize their role in this plan, and bring their own capital as a primary funding source; this allows public funds to be used to achieve community goals that cannot be reasonably provided by a developer. Ultimately, what is desired is a series of strategic and sustained public investments in the future of Cloquet's business districts and the community as a whole



Marked physical change supporting the revitalization effort is possible — even necessary and desirable — in each of Cloquet's business districts. Depending on the district, the term of these improvements will vary. Some of the actions may be costly or controversial, but they must be seen as steps critical to the enhancement of the community.

Vitality

This plan aims at creating vitality for Cloquet's business districts. Physical enhancements and functional improvements cannot achieve the full purpose of this plan. A great deal of the responsibility will fall to the businesses of Cloquet, and they will have to make some measure of investment in their enterprise to see positive change. The city will be responsible for many aspects of change, but through a real partnership with the business community, more complete change will result.

This plan promotes viability by investing in business owners and/or managers to create the best possible atmosphere of service and professionalism. The Chamber of Commerce or some other local group may have to provide low cost or no cost educational opportunities for business owners related to marketing, understanding of local trade area, merchandising and display, customer relations, employee relations, and other critical business factors. Businesses that are responsive to local needs and desires and businesses that grow by the strength of the local market (not just as individual businesses) will be central to Cloquet's vitality.

Districts and Features

Cloquet is composed of four areas where commercial activity is concentrated to some degree. Each is distinct, characterized by different forms of development, different general building types and qualities, and varying market focus. What is important is that the districts co-exist — that they recognize each other's strengths and the role that each plays in the community. It is also important to note that each district has deficiencies and that each will undergo some change regardless of this plan. One of the master plan's underlying intentions is to define a way for the four districts to work together, and to ensure that inevitable change occurs in ways that are meaningful to the community.

Other areas that are central to the master plan are the major circulation routes, the St. Louis River, and Veterans Park. While they are not places where business activity occurs, their integration into the master plan will form connections to important elements of the community and build a stronger image and identity for Cloquet.

Recognizing the potential of the market is certainly one way in which the business districts can maintain some sense of distinction while creating vitality. Not all the businesses in Cloquet serve every market sector; not every sector of the market will be served in Cloquet. But by understanding who the "Cloquet customer" is, businesses have a better chance of meeting their needs and creating opportunities to better serve the local market. Likely market directions for each district are defined in this part of the master plan.

The master plan also describes the general character of each district according to use; patterns of movement; market focus; development character; and probable strategies for revitalization. Together with strategies, actions and first steps, these ideas form the basis of the plan for revitalizing Cloquet's business districts.

The fun part of a revitalization project is the implementation of those elements that people come to enjoy, those that make the environment more attractive, or provide a use that is not currently available. They are often considered the "frills," but the community expressed repeatedly the desire to have something "like Canal Park in Duluth." Even though the benefit of these "frills" cannot be measured, they become integral to the experience and a very necessary piece of the revitalization puzzle. These are the features of the master plan.

Finally, this section begins to address some of the logistics necessary for the master plan to succeed. Elements such as recognizing the need for regulation and the role of the plan in city policy are discussed as they are critical components of the plan.

Highway 33 South

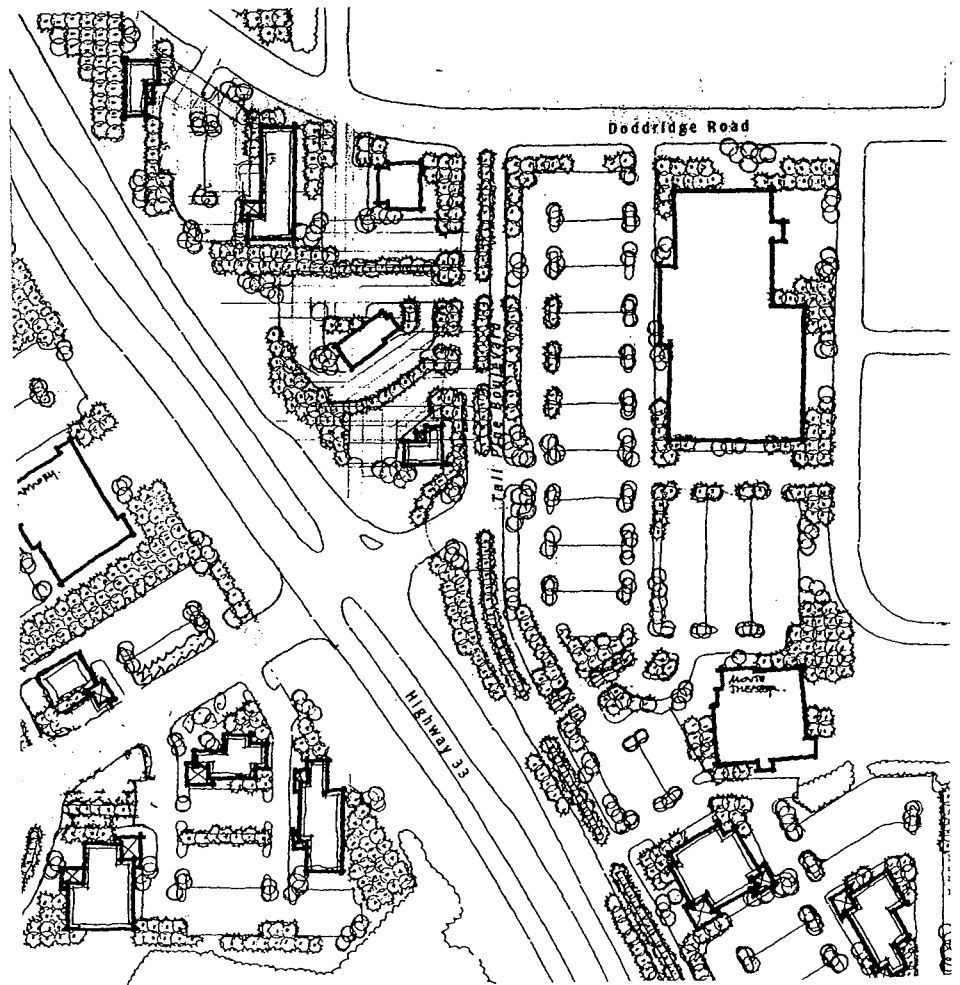
The patterns of development for Highway 33 South have been set by the presence of Highway 33. To change those patterns would be to move against compelling market forces, and could easily consume all of the financial resources available. The master plan allows for this district to build from the patterns that exist while integrating bits of “Cloquet” where opportunities present themselves.

Frontage Roads and Extensions into the Community

To gain some sense that this area has a connection to the community, and to organize patterns of development more directly to streets, the master plan demonstrates the creation of continuous frontage roads that parallel Highway 33. The frontage roads will help to structure traffic flow, eliminating or reinforcing connection points to Highway 33, and offering an opportunity to introduce a landscape character that is more fitting of Cloquet.

In the plan, frontage roads make connections to community features or important activity zones, and bear a name that reinforces that connection. The east frontage road — between Doddridge Avenue and the industrial park — might be named Tall Pine Boulevard, as it makes a direct connection to Tall Pine Lane in the industrial area and to make a connection to the character of Cloquet’s forest. In a similar way, the west frontage road might become Pine Valley Boulevard — recalling the forest and Pine Valley Park which lies at its south terminus.

An east frontage road to Highway 33 might provide stronger connections through the district, organize development to create a stronger focus, and form a part of an identity derived from Cloquet’s forest qualities.



The master plan encourages new development that leads away from Highway 33, especially along Stanley Avenue, creating depth for a district that has become a typical “strip commercial” district.

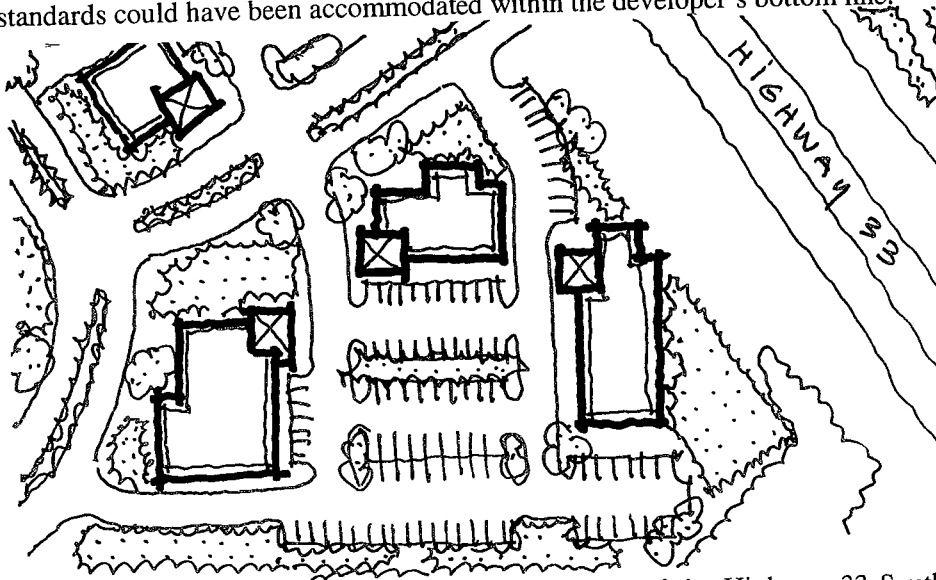


In the master plan, two activity clusters appear — along Doddridge Avenue and at Stanley Avenue. Focal intersections are created at the intersection of these streets with the east and west frontage roads, where enhanced landscaping, signage (perhaps with a character similar to the signs marking the ends of Cloquet Avenue) and lighting would occur. These points serve as the introduction to the district, rather than relying on a state highway to signal a Cloquet commercial district.

Activity Clusters

There are opportunities for redevelopment with vacant parcels along Stanley Avenue and with uses that will someday have difficulty operating in a constrained area (like the block plant). Redevelopment of these areas should be great opportunities for reinforcing the district in accordance with the framework. The character of development must receive careful attention, and a project's developer must be held to high standards to ensure adherence to key points of the master plan. For example, the plan advocates the creation of landscape patterns that echo the forest (ideas easily accomplished if sites are not overdeveloped or developed without regard for the aesthetics of the site). The recent redevelopment of the Pine Tree Plaza mall could have been accomplished with conditions relating to site development, requiring the use of landscape materials in the parking lot and preventing the complete paving of the site. Surely, if this development was a good enough opportunity for a developer, the imposition of a few standards could have been accommodated within the developer's bottom line.

Redevelopment



Over time, parcels in the Highway 33 South district are likely to redevelop. The block plant property will become a great opportunity for the district and the community.

The following chart summarizes the basic directions of the Highway 33 South district:

Pattern Summary

Use:	destination retail; larger scale/volume commercial and service; auto-oriented commercial; drive-through service establishments; convenience retail; lodging; multi-family residential; franchises
Market:	primary
Buildings:	contemporary construction; two story encouraged
Orientation:	primary building axis perpendicular to "boulevard"
Circulation:	vehicular; pedestrian accommodated

Strategies, Actions and Outcomes

The following strategies are recommended for the Highway 33 South district:

- Strategy:** Create connections along the length of the Highway 33 South business district to facilitate traffic flow without reliance on Highway 33 for traffic movement.
- Actions:** Realign and extend the roads to create a more convenient and interesting connection parallel to Highway 33 on each side.
Develop a character for roads and adjacent development that follows the patterns of a business district carved from the forest.
Encourage redevelopment of underutilized parcels along the frontage roads.
Accommodate pedestrian access on frontage roads and within business districts.
Rename the roads to form a stronger connection to the community.
- Outcome:** Frontage roads that improve vehicle and pedestrian access, create development opportunities and enhance the appeal of the public spaces (the streets) of the district.
- Strategy:** Make the Highway 33 South district a stronger reflection of the surrounding natural landscape of the community in order to create a more appropriate and inviting commercial environment.
- Actions:** Plant remnant right-of-way and leftover portions of developed parcels with trees indigenous to Cloquet.
Require significant planting (especially trees) for new development.
Encourage planting of trees around buildings and in planting islands in parking lots.
Require landscaped boulevard separation between the major frontage roads and commercial developments.
- Outcome:** Business districts that have the sense of being carved from the forest rather than being created at the expense of the forest.
- Strategy:** Identify prime opportunities for development and redevelopment activity and work with land owners to facilitate development in keeping with the plan.
- Actions:** Review the plan with large land owners, business owners and owners of properties that are for sale or susceptible to change.
Acquire properties where imminent development will conflict with plan directions and hold them for redevelopment at opportune times.
Encourage aggregation of smaller parcels to enhance redevelopment opportunities.
- Outcome:** Active encouragement of development projects that benefit the district and the community.
- Strategy:** Develop buildings and sites that have a character that invites activity and complements the community.
- Actions:** Require new development to be consistent with the directions of the master plan and the design guidelines.
Encourage upgrades to existing structures that will not likely be affected by future larger scale development activities; require upgrades to conform to the design guidelines.
- Outcome:** Consistent quality and character for a district that is either undeveloped, underdeveloped or in the process of change.










The development framework for the Highway 33 South district demonstrates land uses and patterns that are central to its long term vitality and integration with the community.

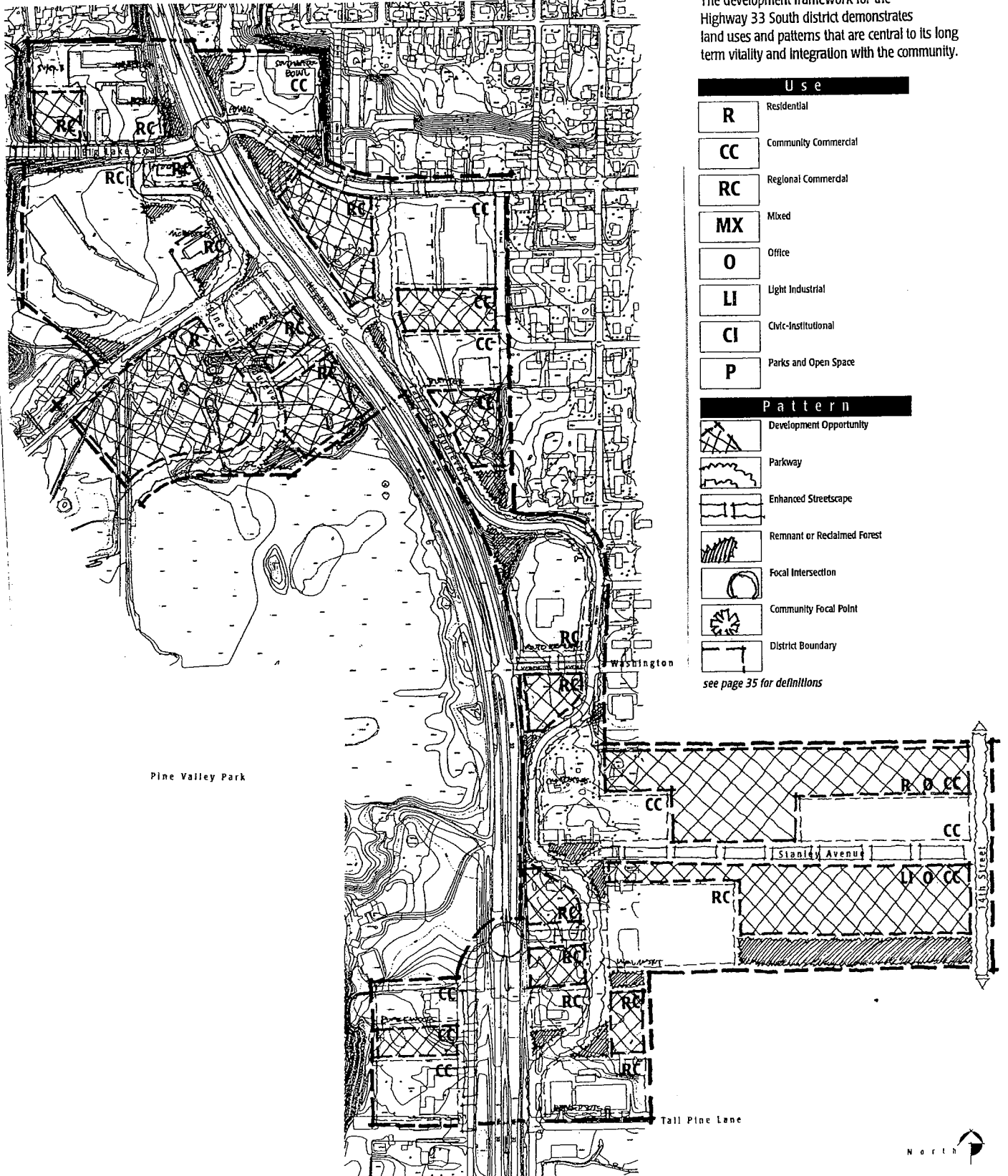
Use

- R** Residential
- CC** Community Commercial
- RC** Regional Commercial
- MX** Mixed
- O** Office
- LI** Light Industrial
- CI** Civic-Institutional
- P** Parks and Open Space

Pattern

-  Development Opportunity
-  Parkway
-  Enhanced Streetscape
-  Remnant or Reclaimed Forest
-  Focal Intersection
-  Community Focal Point
-  District Boundary

see page 35 for definitions



Sunnyside

Like Highway 33 South, the forces that will cause a change in Sunnyside are market related — a result of the highway. Seeing no apparent development opportunities in other areas along the highway, developers will begin to focus on underutilized or low value properties in the Sunnyside district. Sites may be aggregated to create larger development parcels, or larger tracts may be redeveloped with entirely new uses. Without city influence, patterns will still have a highway orientation, so it will be important to instill some sense of Cloquet character to mitigate the tendency toward a strip commercial appearance.

Access Providing access for development is a key aspect of Sunnyside's revitalization, but the presence of signals will allow easier (and safer) access to the highway for all development in the northerly portions of the community. The master plan encourages the restriction of access points at commercial development sites along Highway 33 to reduce the number of driveways, turning movements and safety conflicts. As in the Highway 33 South district, the plan demonstrates the use of frontage roads to facilitate traffic movement and to clarify movement patterns. Right in/out access may be appropriate at individual sites, but full access to all sites will cause concerns for safety as traffic volumes and speeds on the highway increase.

The primary intersections in the Sunnyside district will be at Skyline Boulevard/Boulder Drive and at North Road. These locations are central to potential development sites or form connections to areas east and west of Highway 33 that will eliminate conflicts on Highway 33. From the point where a car would leave Highway 33, they would be following a "backage" road (the development of a frontage road is limited by the amount of existing development). The "backage" road concept allows for safe access to sites that front Highway 33 by using Adams Street on the east and a new road on the west.

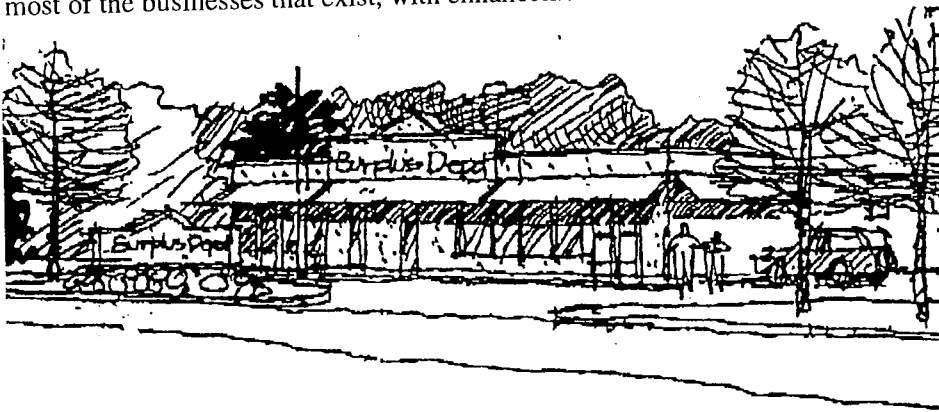
To complete the backage road concept, traffic signals would be placed at the intersections of Highway 33 with North Road and Skyline Boulevard/Boulder Drive. With signals in place, the evolution of uses will likely occur more rapidly, but uses in the Sunnyside district will maintain their focus on commercial activities. Smaller sites, those generally between Skyline Boulevard and North Road will likely maintain an orientation to the local community or be operations that are locally-owned. Areas north of North Road, through redevelopment, have the potential for accommodating larger scale users. Residential uses might be developed on some of the land north of North Road (in areas that are not immediately adjacent to the highway) or to the west of the west "backage" road.

Character Activity levels of Sunnyside will be typical of a highway commercial district, but the patterns and character of Sunnyside will be more consistent with the community's image. This will involve conformance with design guidelines (especially for projects that receive city assistance) that specify certain aspects of site and building development. The prospects for change on a site-by-site basis are greater here than in Highway 33 South, making consideration of design guidelines even more important here.

Incremental change will result in new buildings or updated facilities for most of what exists in Sunnyside today. This might involve modifications to access, signage or a building on a given site, or the creation of a new building as an infill



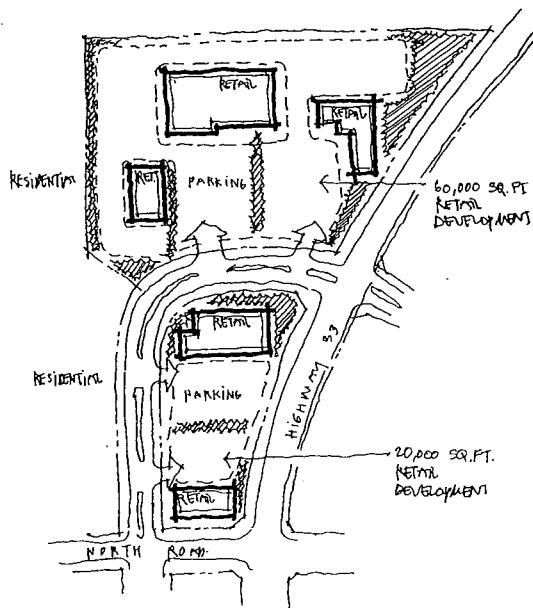
project. For smaller sites, the framework would encourage the continuance of most of the businesses that exist, with enhancement for function and aesthetics.



Renovation of existing structures in conformance with the design guidelines will direct revitalization activities in Sunnyside with consistency and maintain continuity with the community's goals.

Larger scale redevelopment might be envisioned for some of the larger parcels. This would involve, for instance, the possible relocation or elimination of the mobile home park, and the creation of a larger commercial use. It is impossible to predict when this might occur, but it will certainly not occur before a traffic signal is implemented. Construction of the intersection at North Road (concurrent with reconstruction of the highway) must accommodate this level of development.

Redevelopment



As full development of the Highway 33 South district occurs, redevelopment pressures in Sunnyside will be increased; the addition of traffic signals at Highway 33 and North Road will also encourage development activities.

The tendency for commercial development, especially for large uses, is to move beyond currently developed land, building instead on land that has never been developed or on land that is used for some lower intensity use (like agriculture). The continued sprawl pattern is contrary to the framework for Cloquet's business districts, but the re-use of developed land might be viewed as expensive in comparison. However, the full cost of sprawling commercial development is not often recognized: the extension of urban services, the dilution of existing commercial areas, a diminished value (and tax base) for remaining commercial uses, and the loss of community character are less quantifiable, but equally important in a community revitalization sense. Implications for Sunnyside, like Highway 33 South, would favor the re-use of developed land for higher intensity uses, even if it is immediately more expensive. Re-use also has the benefit of forcing more creative responses and wiser use of limited land resources.

Compactness

Landscape The highway should be enhanced as described for Highway 33 South. The introduction of pine and aspen plantings on left-over portions of sites or remnant right-of-way will reinforce Sunnyside's connection to the Cloquet landscape.

Pattern Summary Patterns of Sunnyside might be summarized as follows:

Use:	Current to mid-term: small to mid-sized retail; specialty retail; convenience retail; eating establishments Long-term (after development of Highway 33 South): destination retail; large volume commercial/service; auto-oriented commercial; drive-through establishments; convenience retail; lodging; multi-family residential; franchises
Market:	primary and secondary
Buildings:	contemporary construction; residential conversion to commercial; two story encouraged
Orientation:	primary building axis perpendicular to Highway 33 or frontage road
Circulation:	vehicular; pedestrian accommodated

Strategies, Actions and Outcomes The following strategies are recommended for the revitalization of Sunnyside:

Strategy: Facilitate traffic flow out of the north neighborhoods and in the Sunnyside district to create a more conducive business environment.

Actions: Investigate warrants for traffic signal at Highway 33 and North Road; implement concurrent with Highway 33 reconstruction.
Plan access improvements to Sunnyside businesses that do not rely on direct access to the highway, with particular attention given to "backage" roads paralleling Highway 33.
Plan for the eventual implementation of a traffic signal at Highway 33 and Skyline Boulevard /Boulder Drive (the west "backage" road).
Explore the most feasible alignment for another roadway crossing of the river (possibly at 14th Street), connecting the north neighborhoods more directly and conveniently to community resources.

Outcome: Safer, more efficient traffic patterns in a developing part of Cloquet.

Strategy: Make Cloquet a stronger reflection of its surrounding landscape to create a more appropriate and inviting commercial environment.

Actions: Plant remnant right-of-way and leftover portions of developed parcels with trees indigenous to Cloquet.
Require significant planting (especially trees) for new development.
Encourage tree planting around buildings and in parking lots.
Require landscaped boulevard separation between major frontage roads and commercial developments.

Outcome: Business districts that have the sense of being carved from the forest rather than being created at the expense of the forest.

Strategy: Redevelop sites with opportunities for significant new activity.

Actions: Review master plan with owners of significant parcels or parcels that are susceptible to change.

Work with property owners to facilitate relocation of residential uses for properties that abut or are in close proximity to Highway 33.



Acquire properties where imminent development conflicts with directions of the master plan; hold them for opportune development.

Outcome: Opportunities for planned growth and redevelopment of a district with significant commercial opportunities in the longer term.

Strategy: Develop buildings and sites that have a character that invites activity and complements the community.

Actions: Require new development to be consistent with the directions of the master plan and the design guidelines.

Encourage upgrades to existing structures that will not likely be affected by future larger scale development activities.

Outcome: Consistent quality and character for a district that is either undeveloped, underdeveloped or in the process of change.

Strategy: Establish boundaries for the district and future expansion.

Actions: Agree upon boundaries suggested by the plan and amend the city's comprehensive plan to reflect any changes in land use. Enact zoning ordinances to support the land use changes.

Outcome: Coordinated development of commercial uses in the district, with boundaries set for long-term protection of adjacent neighborhoods.

Strategy: Identify locations for future intersections with Highway 33 North to be included in the Official Map of the City.

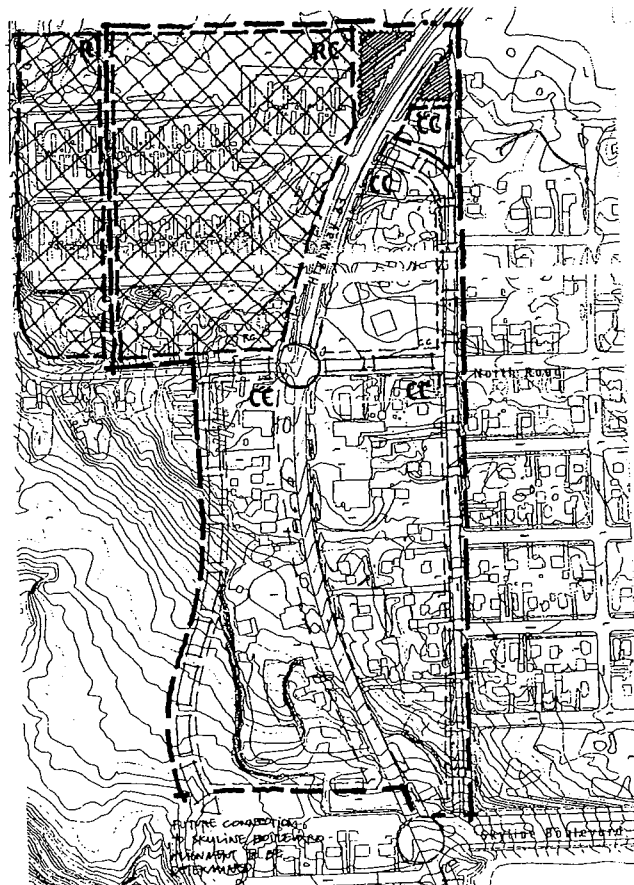
Actions: Study future land use and traffic patterns to identify intersections. Coordinate local development and traffic plans with MnDOT.

Outcome: Planned access and traffic patterns that are coordinated with land uses (avoiding the problems evidenced in Highway 33 South).

Use	
R	Residential
CC	Community Commercial
RC	Regional Commercial
MX	Mixed
O	Office
LI	Light Industrial
CI	Civic-Institutional
P	Parks and Open Space
Pattern	
	Development Opportunity
	Parkway
	Enhanced Streetscape
	Remnant or Redeemed Forest
	Focal Intersection
	Community Focal Point
	District Boundary

see page 35 for definitions

The development framework for Sunnyside illustrates a combination of new development opportunities and enhanced existing activities.



Cloquet Avenue

The Cloquet Avenue district is basically a long street, with no real depth beyond one-half block north or south, and no real levels of activity as a result of the lack of concentration of development. The master plan recognizes the lack of people as a concern, and restructures the district to bring more people to Cloquet Avenue on a daily basis. While a strong sense of built character is not evident along Cloquet Avenue, some elements speak to the notion of this area being a “downtown.” Through renovation, redevelopment and new uses, life can be brought to Cloquet Avenue.

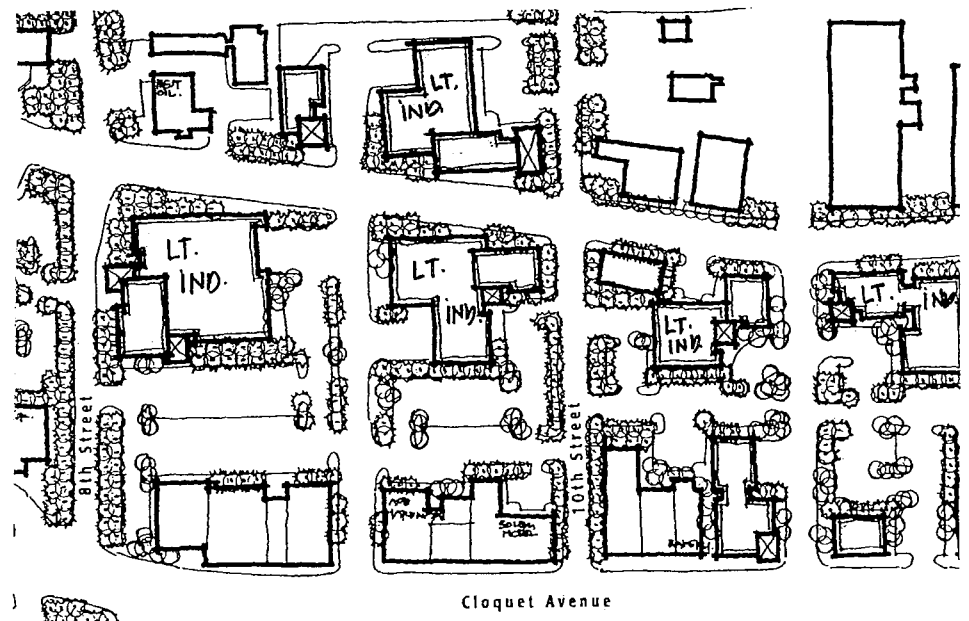
Cloquet Avenue, as a “downtown” type of district, will have a mixed-use character — that is, uses here might include commercial, office and residential uses, mixed horizontally and vertically. This pattern works well for properties that abut Cloquet Avenue, but reinforcement of that pattern will not guarantee a greater sense of life for the district.

Light Industrial Redevelopment

Avenue ‘B’ is one block north of Cloquet Avenue, and it is generally industrial in character. The land between Cloquet Avenue includes single family residential and other less discernible uses. To most effectively utilize the limited available land in the district, the master plan illustrates light industrial uses immediately north of the buildings on the north side of Cloquet Avenue. Light industrial space is needed in Cloquet (given that the existing industrial park is at capacity), and having underutilized or undervalued land in proximity to an area where change is needed could be a strong catalyst for change. These uses could be developed in character with Cloquet Avenue, while providing a population that might utilize existing Cloquet Avenue businesses or spur the creation of new ones. In addition, it enhances a large area of the district that detracts from the district as a whole. Light industrial uses might also be extended to the north side of Avenue ‘B’ resulting in improved aesthetics for that part of the district.

It will be important to establish zoning across the areas where light industrial uses might occur. The city's current classification for light industry is not appropriate as it allows outdoor storage. An examination and possible modifications to other existing zoning classifications might be a more direct approach, and it might allow for uses that include a wider variety of opportunities for the district.

Light industrial uses will enhance aesthetics and the community's tax base, as well as providing a base of customers for some downtown businesses. Parking for these uses might also serve the needs of commercial uses in the district.



As light industrial uses are implemented, the parking that serves the new facility should be organized to be shared with businesses on the north side of Cloquet Avenue. This would encourage clean up of the back sides of buildings and the enhancement of existing parking areas. As the district is revitalized, convenient and attractive parking will be needed; creating new parking to serve 110% of anticipated light industrial demand will provide some flexibility for accommodating the parking needs of existing Cloquet Avenue businesses.

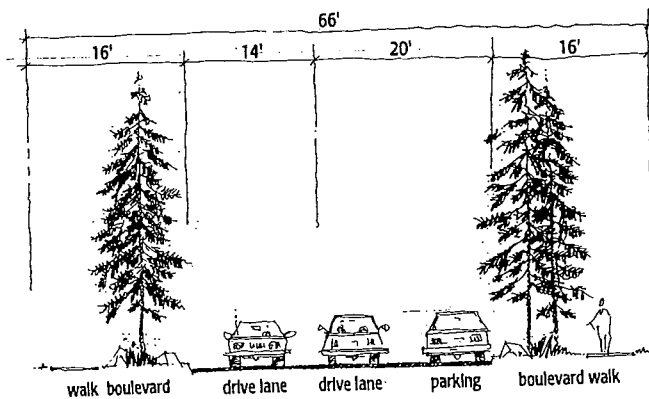
Parking

One of the plan's underlying goals is the creation of healthy neighborhoods that have a strong connection to the community's business districts. The plan encourages the retention of residential uses on the south side of Cloquet Avenue — an area that should find new value as the district revitalizes. Key to this is the limitation of the spread of commercial uses to the south, especially expansion of parking facilities without simultaneous buffering of the negative impacts of parking. Any parking area that occurs between the district and the surrounding residential uses should be screened with vegetation and fencing such that views of the parking area are 80 percent obscured from an adjacent first floor and illumination of the parking area is contained on the site and is 50% obscured from first and second floors of adjacent residential uses.

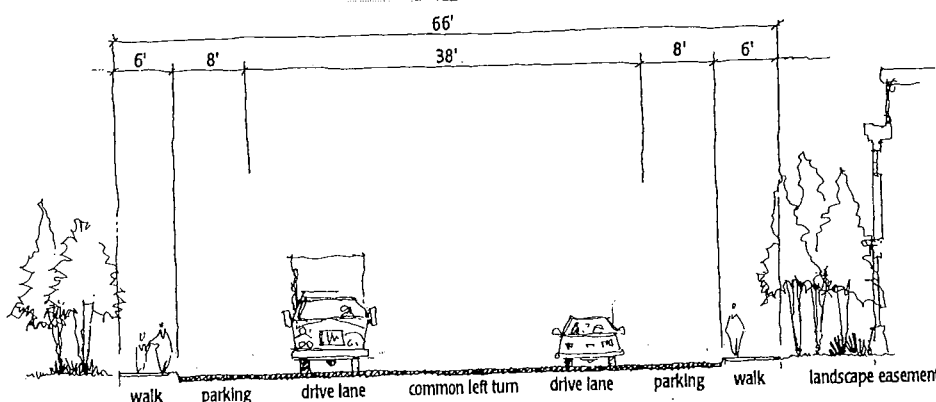
Neighbors

The Cloquet Avenue district, a link between Highway 33 and Interstate 35, is as well-connected as any district in Cloquet. It suffers from the lack of activity more than a lack of good transportation routes, but the introduction of new uses will bring a greater intensity of activity. As properties along Avenue 'B' redevelop, however, they will need to be more directly integrated with Cloquet Avenue. Streetscape improvements on 8th Street, 10 Street and 12th Street (the front door streets for new light industrial uses) will form that connection without major changes to existing circulation patterns.

Streets



Cross streets, enhanced with lighting, sidewalks and landscaping, will connect Cloquet Avenue with Avenue 'B' and provide a "front door" for new light industrial uses.



Avenue 'B' will always carry the truck traffic, but with streetscape enhancements — it might someday do so in ways that better fit the Cloquet Avenue district.



Avenue 'B' will remain an important traffic corridor for trucks serving existing and new industry. Between 8th Street and 14th Street, several existing businesses create significant conflicts with heavy commercial traffic (Wood Service, Viking Lumber, Carlton County Office Building, Cars Towing). These conflicts will worsen, particularly as Potlatch nears completion of its pulpmill expansion. Future developments along Avenue 'B' must avoid similar traffic conflicts and solutions should be investigated to eliminate existing conflicts. As traffic improvements are implemented, it will also be important to instill a character for Avenue 'B' that is more in keeping with a "downtown" environment.

Cloquet Avenue was recently reconstructed, but its width is an impediment to pedestrian activity. Consideration, in the long term, should be given to the introduction of planted median for portions of its length, enhancing aesthetics of the district as well as providing a "refuge" for pedestrians crossing the street.

Existing Structures The revitalization of Cloquet Avenue only depends in part on new light industrial activities. If light industry creates a new population from which the existing Cloquet Avenue businesses can draw, then the businesses must take steps to make themselves attractive to these customers. Renovation of existing structures, targeted redevelopment along Cloquet Avenue and infill will be the tools used to improve the aesthetics of Cloquet Avenue itself.

Anchors The district might also be enhanced by activities that are more public. The use of Veterans Park as a significant community gathering space is discussed later. It must become one of the anchors of the Cloquet Avenue district.

City Hall is the other anchor. It will always be a place of activity and importance for the community. To bolster this end of Cloquet Avenue, a civic business core might be established. This might dictate that the city's presence be augmented with county functions, if the need for expanded county services in Cloquet becomes necessary.

Pattern Summary The character and uses of the Cloquet Avenue district are as follows:

Use:	Cloquet Avenue: small/specialty retail; convenience retail (provided it properly addresses the street); personal and business services; business support services; professional services; eating establishments; lodging; office; upper level residential; civic and institutional Avenue B: light industry; office
Market:	primary
Buildings:	Cloquet Avenue: historical restoration encouraged; historically (and/or community) sensitive infill; two story required Avenue B: contemporary construction; two story mass required; two story use encouraged
Orientation:	primary building axis perpendicular to street
Circulation:	pedestrian and vehicle balanced

Strategies, Actions and Outcomes The following strategies are recommended for the Cloquet Avenue district:

Strategy: Acquire properties that are underutilized or undervalued and estab-



lish them as redevelopment projects in order to raise the standards of the district or to provide new opportunities for business.

Actions: Identify key sites for reinvestment and/or acquisition by the city according to the patterns of the plan.

Establish finance tools to aid redevelopment/renovation of key sites. Market sites or buildings to parties interested in fulfilling aspects of this revitalization plan.

Outcome: Highly valued and productive uses on all land in the district.

Strategy: Redevelop underutilized or undervalued parcels and properties to ensure the highest and best use of limited available land.

Actions: Clarify land use conflicts, resolve aesthetic concerns, increase tax base and provide land for light industrial use by redeveloping residential uses in areas between Cloquet Avenue and Avenue 'B'. Monitor property conditions to ensure maximum use of the land.

Outcome: Productive, attractive and valuable use of all land in the district, and an attitude of development that postpones peripheral development until no other practical options are available.

Strategy: Redevelop cross streets to create stronger connections between Cloquet Avenue and Avenue 'B' and a "front door" for new light industrial uses along those streets.

Actions: Implement streetscape improvements to highlight this connection using elements that recall the forest and the river. Renovate the building between 8th Street and 9th Street facing Cloquet Avenue to create a more significant "anchor" for the south end of the redeveloped street.

Enhance landscape for parking areas at buildings that will remain.

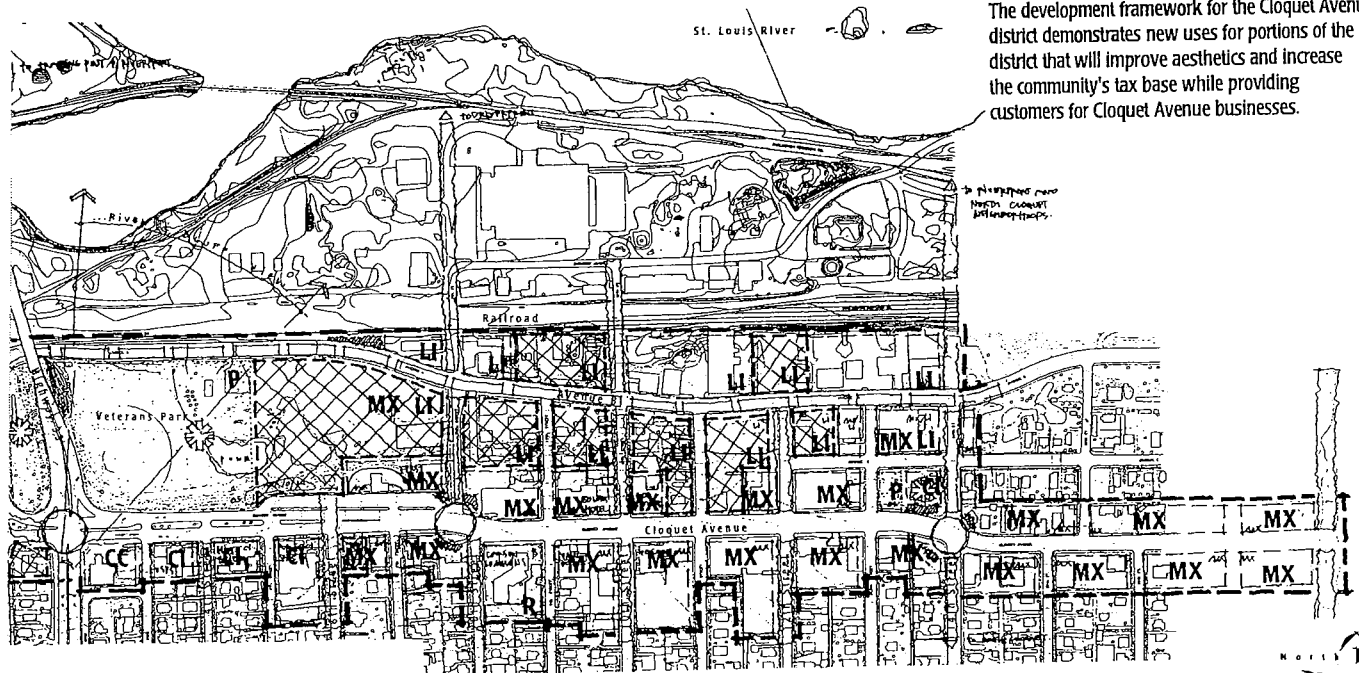
Outcome: Streets that invite vehicle and pedestrian traffic to move between Cloquet Avenue and Avenue 'B' and highlights the west end of the Cloquet Avenue business area.

Use	
R	Residential
CC	Community Commercial
RC	Regional Commercial
MX	Mixed
O	Office
LI	Light Industrial
CI	Civic-Institutional
P	Parks and Open Space

Pattern	
	Development Opportunity
	Parkway
	Enhanced Streetscape
	Remnant or Redaimed Forest
	Focal Intersection
	Community Focal Point
	District Boundary

see page 35 for definitions

The development framework for the Cloquet Avenue district demonstrates new uses for portions of the district that will improve aesthetics and increase the community's tax base while providing customers for Cloquet Avenue businesses.



West End

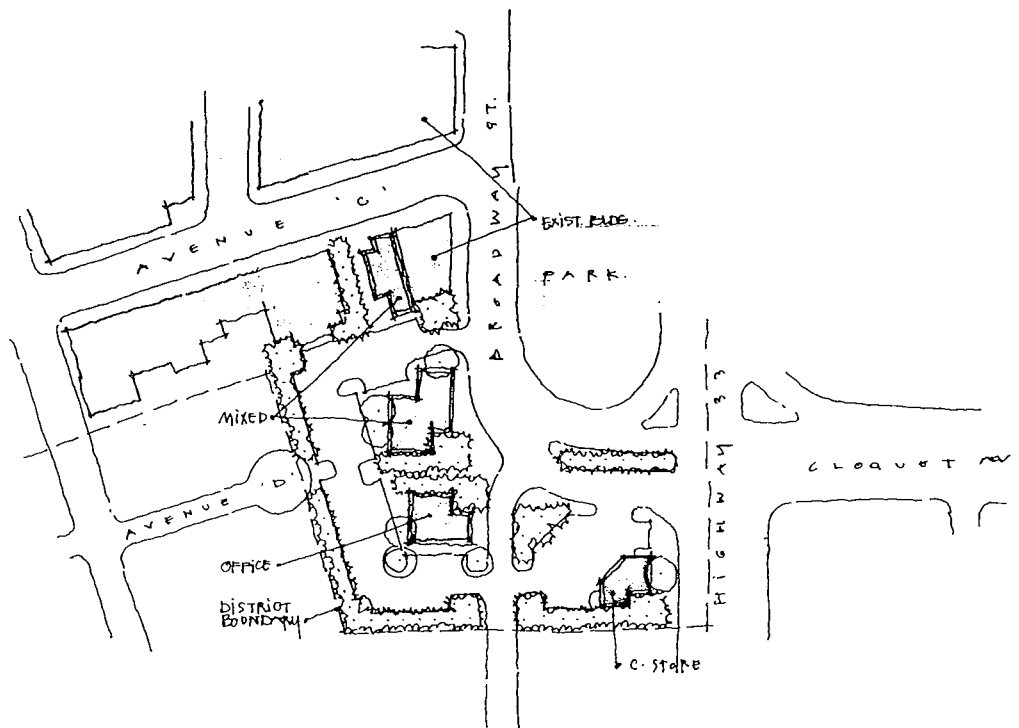
As much as this plan advocates for the introduction of character elements into Cloquet's business districts, it is the West End where real character already exists. The patterns of development have the look and feel of a traditional downtown — true business district. Historic buildings, a discernible “urban” pattern, and local enterprises all come together in the West End. The master plan naturally accepts these features as positive elements, and looks to ways of enhancing activity levels to maintain the district's vitality. Some elements will change, but the change focuses on the replacement of elements that should be there, rather than bringing in many new elements.

Avenue 'D' and Broadway Street

The West End's major disadvantage is that it is not well connected to traffic patterns of the community. The streets exist, but the aesthetics of the entry to the district diminish its qualities and do not present an invitation to move off Highway 33 or to continue along Cloquet Avenue into the district. Enhancement of the intersection of Avenue 'D' and Broadway Street have been initiated for the public portions, but do not really go far enough.

Avenue 'D' forms one leg of an awkward intersection as one enters the West End from the east. It serves as a connection to the neighborhood to the west, but it carries relatively low volumes of traffic. Vacation of a portion of this street and subsequent development of the site (if combined with some of the property on each side of the former street), could provide a great focal point and terminus to Cloquet Avenue, and it would begin to screen the back sides of Avenue 'C' development (which is the most distracting part of the West End entry sequence). A building placed on this site must be seen as something special: to create a parking lot on the old right-of-way would waste a tremendous opportunity. Under the plan, not all of the street is vacated; from the west, the street could terminate in a parking lot or a cul-de-sac.

Reconfiguration of the entry to the West End will focus attention toward Avenue 'C', and provide opportunities for aesthetic enhancement and redevelopment.



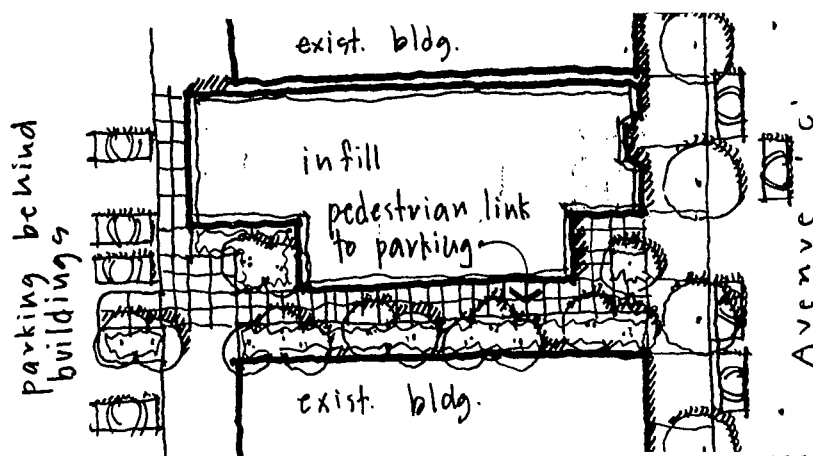
Redevelopment of a part of Avenue 'D' is not the only action needed to enhance the entry to the West End. The necessary improvements to the backs and sides



of buildings surrounding this intersection, as well as the expedited renovation of the Chief Theater, are encouraged by this plan.

Patterns of land use in the West End are typical of a traditional downtown. Of all the business districts in Cloquet, this is where activities should be most mixed; therefore, any number of uses might be a part of the street experience. No change to this pattern is needed, but the encouragement of upper level residential uses will add vibrancy to the district. The introduction of galleries, small specialty shops and eating establishments will also bring life to the district at times when normal professional and business services (a mainstay of the district) are not at their peak. **Mix of Uses**

Since Avenue 'C' is so well defined by buildings in the West End, the lack of a building anywhere along its length in the district detracts significantly from the district as a whole. At the east end of the district, a white metal panel separates the street from an "empty" lot. This site should be redeveloped with a building that fits the character of the West End, but the opportunities presented by the gap that exists must not be overlooked. Parking developed at the rear of the buildings in this area could be accessed by a walkway alongside the new infill development. **Infill**



Buildings in the West End should be continuous and immediately behind the sidewalk. Gaps might occur where pedestrian connections are made between sidewalks and parking areas behind buildings.

To initiate the plan for the West End, business and property owners should be encouraged to invest in this stock of buildings, upgrading building infrastructure and the facades. Rather than redevelopment, the creation of infill and renovation projects is more appropriate — matching the urban pattern and character of the district instead of attempting to replicate the contemporary development patterns found along the highway.

The West End, according to this plan, will include the following patterns:

Pattern Summary

- Use: small/specialty retail; personal and business services; galleries, crafts and decorative arts; home furnishings and decorating; eating establishments; lodging; office; upper level residential
- Market: primary and secondary
- Buildings: historical restoration and preservation encouraged; two story required
- Orientation: primary building axis perpendicular to street
- Circulation: pedestrian



Strategies, Actions and Outcomes The following strategies are recommended for the West End's revitalization according to this plan:

Strategy: Invest in properties that are underutilized or undervalued to raise the standards of the district or to provide new opportunities for business.

Actions: Identify key sites for reinvestment and/or acquisition according to the patterns of the plan.
Establish financial tools to aid in the redevelopment or renovation of the key sites.

Outcome: Highly valued and productive uses on all available land in the West End district.

Strategy: Invest in existing buildings to create space for new businesses or to help existing businesses prosper.

Actions: Adopt the design guidelines portion of the community revitalization master plan.
Require that developers seeking public assistance in their projects meet the intentions of the design guidelines.
Establish a loan program to assist developers in storefront and building infrastructure renovations.
Establish a review process to ensure compliance with the design guidelines.

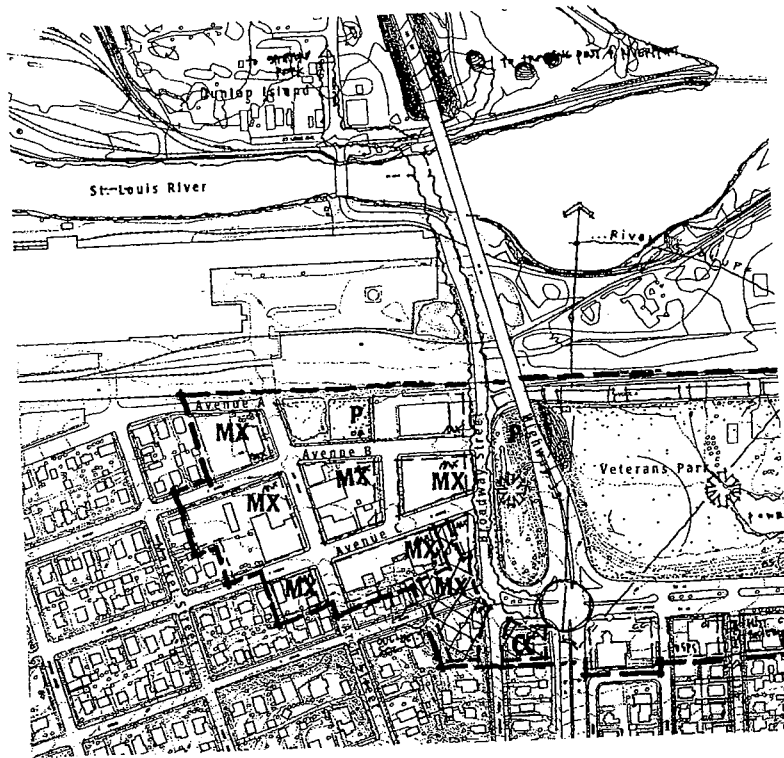
Outcome: Preservation of Cloquet's older buildings in a well-maintained condition suitable for conduct of a contemporary, productive business.

Strategy: Enhance the entry to the West End from Highway 33 to be more attractive and inviting.

Actions: Vacate a portion of the Avenue 'D' right-of-way and restructure traffic movement with a cul-de-sac approached from the west.
Combine the vacated right-of-way with adjacent parcels to create a significant development opportunity.
Market the combined site to a developer willing to create a building of substance and character.
Assist, to the degree possible, in the expedited renovation of the Chief Theater.

Outcome: An entry to the West End that is active (not parking lots) and attractive, using buildings to screen the back sides of existing buildings.





The development framework for the West End district shows an enhanced entry from Highway 33 and intends a nearly continuous wall of buildings at the edge of the sidewalk.

Use	
R	Residential
CC	Community Commercial
RC	Regional Commercial
MX	Mixed
O	Office
LI	Light Industrial
CI	Civic-Institutional
P	Parks and Open Space
Pattern	
	Development Opportunity
	Parkway
	Enhanced Streetscape
	Remnant or Reclaimed Forest
	Focal Intersection
	Community Focal Point
	District Boundary

see page 35 for definitions

FRAMEWORK DEFINITIONS

Use	Pattern
<p>Residential Single or multiple family dwellings</p>	<p>Development Opportunity Underutilized sites; sites with use conflicts; high community value sites; sites that may change as a result of the actions of this plan</p>
<p>Community Commercial Commercial and service activities focused on local market; locally-owned or operated enterprises (including franchises)</p>	<p>Parkway Streets that reflect the larger Cloquet landscape, create continuity through a district, or form connections to significant community features</p>
<p>Regional Commercial Commercial and service activities focused on regional market; franchises, chain stores (including corporate and locally-operated enterprises)</p>	<p>Enhanced Streetscape Urban features (street trees, lighting, signage, sidewalks) to create continuity and definition of a district</p>
<p>Mixed Retail or office at street level, with office or residential occupying upper levels</p>	<p>Remnant or Reclaimed Forest Landscape features (especially pines and aspen) on unused or un-useable portions of a site or right-of-way</p>
<p>Office Office or professional services</p>	<p>Focal Intersection Locations of enhanced landscaping, signage or other features at significant crossing or intersections, typically at a signalized intersection</p>
<p>Light Industrial Smaller scale "clean" production activities, no outside storage, limited large vehicle deliveries, a portion of the building dedicated to office use</p>	<p>Community Focal Point Sites or facilities that are recognized as true community resources or features</p>
<p>Civic-Institutional municipal, county, regional, state or federal agencies; schools, churches, museums</p>	<p>District Boundary Design Guidelines apply to new development and changes to existing development within each District Boundary</p>
<p>Parks and Open Space parks and public gathering spaces</p>	

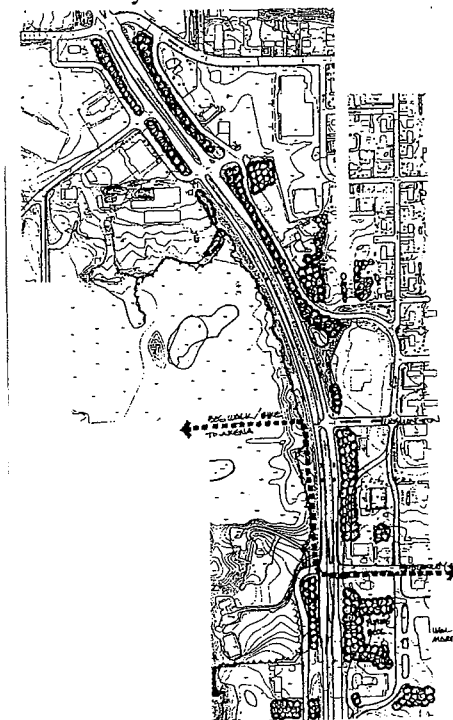
Highway 33

Highway 33 is Cloquet's main artery, connecting or touching each of the four districts. Parts of Highway 33 exhibit great beauty — tall pines, expansive views; others are nearly void of the character that really makes Cloquet special, especially large parts of Highway 33 within the South Highway 33 district and parts of Sunnyside.

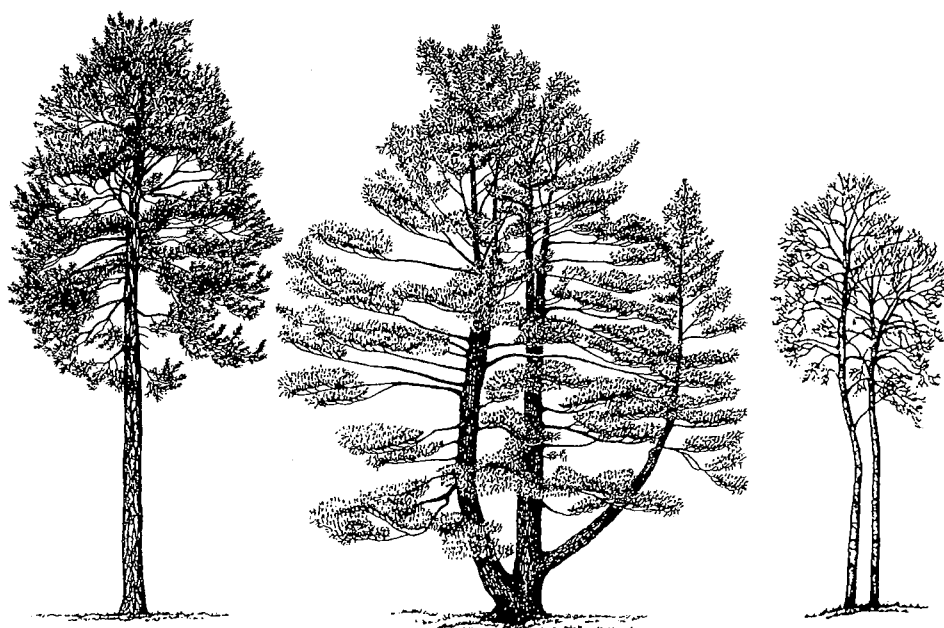
Landscape

The plan encourages the incorporation of remnant right-of-way pieces and leftover portions of developed parcels with aspen, red pine and white pine in order to make the Highway feel as if it is an important part of the fabric of the Cloquet community.

Remnant portions of Highway 33 right-of-way and leftover parts of developed sites might be used to establish a stronger sense that Cloquet was carved from the forest.



Red pine, white pine and aspen might form the basic palette of planting that ties Highway 33 together and forms connections to underlying Cloquet landscape.



Lighting

Highway 33 would also benefit from consistent treatment of the utilitarian functions of the roadway. Lighting, especially, could be a particularly important element for the highway, but it does not need to be unique or even a highlight. The key will be the use of functional light fixtures that become background elements, with special lighting occurring as a complement to landscape features. Even at sites within the Highway 33 viewshed, the lighting fixtures should be consistent in form, fixture color, style and light color used on the highway. This allows development along the highway and its foundation in the landscape to be the focus of the district.

Frontage roads in the Highway 33 district might utilize a more unique streetlight — establishing a sense of hierarchy between the highway and the local streets. While the color of the light might be the same, the fixture might portray a character that is more consistent with other commercial streets in Cloquet (a pedestrian-scale fixture, for instance, that might recall but not copy the streetlights on Cloquet Avenue).

In this plan, the following Strategies are recommended for Highway 33:

Strategies, Actions and Outcomes

- Strategy:** Develop a "streetscape" for Highway 33 that is more integrated with the landscape of Cloquet.
- Actions:** Plant aspen, red pine and white pine in "forest" patterns in remnant right-of-way and undeveloped portions of sites along the Highway. Install streetlights that build consistency while providing inviting nighttime character. Encourage re-lighting of outdated parking lot lighting and require new lighting in redevelopment projects that are consistent with the patterns of lighting established by the city.
- Outcome:** A highway that reflects the character of the Cloquet landscape and does not unnecessarily compete with private sector development.



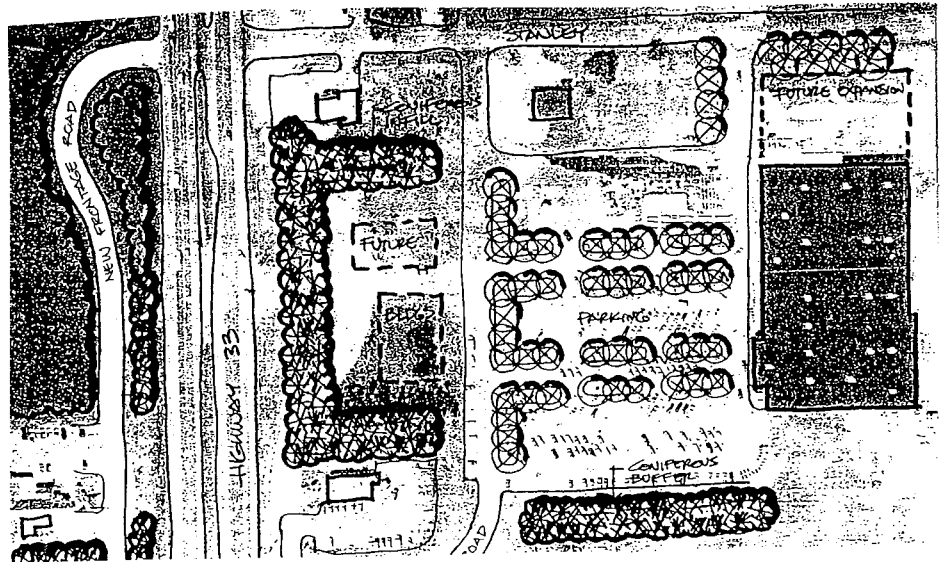
Stanley Avenue

There is a series of signalized intersections along Highway 33 that allow for traffic to move off the highway and into business districts. Development near these intersections should happen in patterns that encourage development that has more depth than typical highway development. If development along Stanley Avenue, Washington Avenue and Doddridge Avenue recognized those streets as their "front door," the patterns of development in the Highway 33 south district would immediately bear a stronger relationship to Cloquet than to the highway.

Access In 1995 and 1996, several accidents at the Wal-mart access onto Highway 33 triggered cries from the community for MnDOT to install a traffic signal at this location. Although a temporary signal was installed at that location in 1997, questions were raised as to whether its location at the existing Wal-Mart cross-over would be the best choice in the long run. Keeping in mind that only one signal in this quarter-mile stretch of highway would likely be approved by MnDOT, two other locations were considered at the time. The first alternate involved a signal at Washington Avenue and the extension of the frontage road from Blackwoods. Because this would do little to immediately deal with the Wal-Mart accident problem, this option was dropped. The second alternative sited a permanent signal at Stanley Avenue and the subsequent closing of the Wal-Mart cross-over.

A signalized intersection at Stanley Avenue will provide direct access to Wal-mart and to future developments that will one day take place along Stanley Avenue. It will also provide a more direct connection to 14th Street. This option, however, does not come without problems; of immediate concern would be the impact to Lemon Tree Liquors and other properties that would be affected by the realignment of the frontage roads in this area.

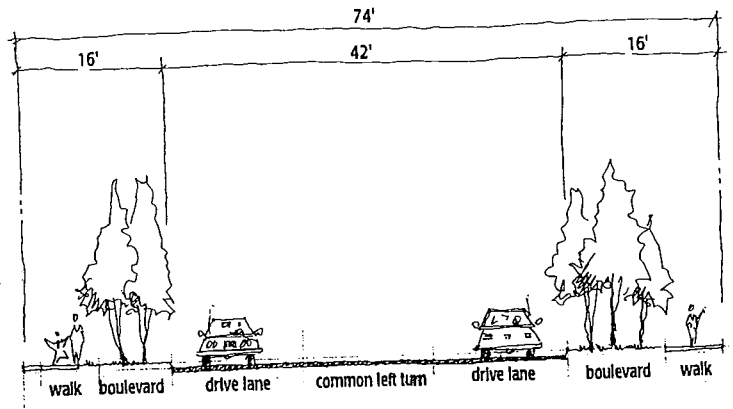
Stanley Avenue forms a connection to 14th Street and large areas of undeveloped land close to Highway 33. It also accommodates access to Wal-Mart without having a traffic signal at Highway 33 lead directly to its front door.



In any event, the strategic location of signalized intersections and the development of an adequate road system must consider more than the traffic needs of strip development along the length of the highway.

Like the frontage roads described for Highway 33, Stanley Avenue, Washington Avenue and Doddridge Avenue might have streetlights, landscape elements and pedestrian facilities that make them a more connected part of the the Cloquet environment.





Traffic on Stanley Avenue will increase as development occurs along its length. As it is reconfigured to accommodate traffic, streetscape enhancements should be considered to make it a more inviting route.

One of the most important aspects of Stanley Avenue is the amount of undeveloped land along its length between Highway 33 and 14th Street. The siting of a permanent traffic signal in this area and the construction of an adequate and efficient frontage road system is necessary to facilitate future development of this land.

Development

The following strategies are recommended by this plan for Stanley Avenue and the immediate area:

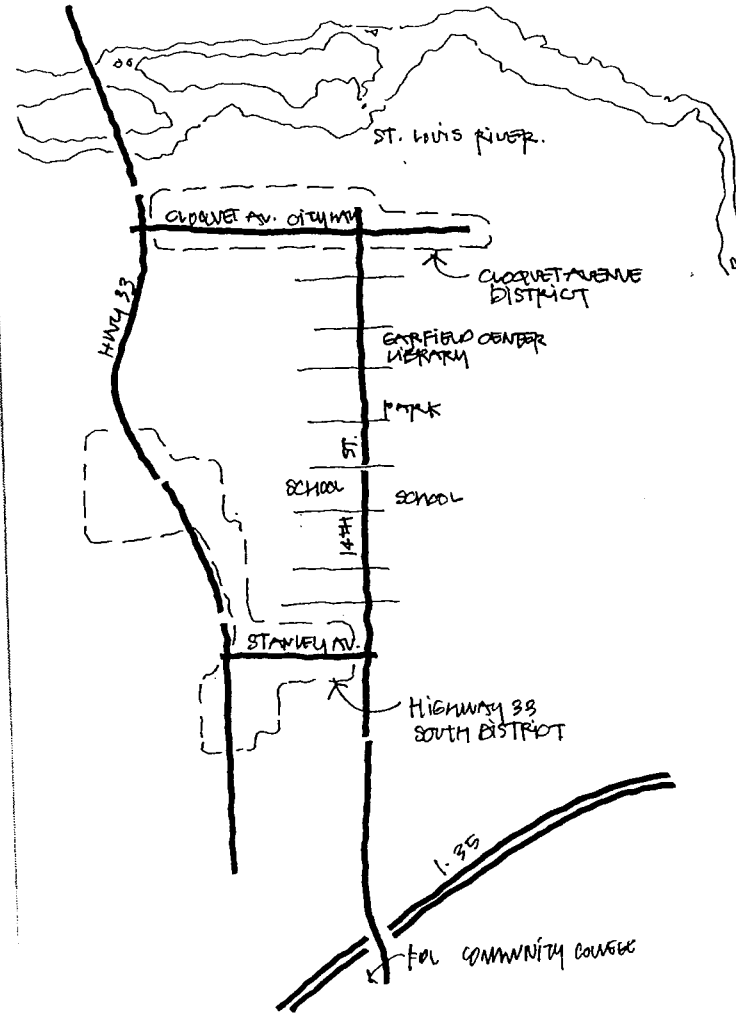
Strategies, Actions and Outcomes

- Strategy:** Use Stanley Avenue as a commercial connection between Highway 33 and Fourteenth Street to create more depth in the district and greater opportunities for new business development beyond Wal-Mart.
- Actions:** Investigate and determine the ultimate siting of a permanent traffic signal onto Highway 33 in this area and the alignment of an efficient roadway system to accommodate future development.
 Develop an appropriate streetscape for Stanley Avenue and other frontage roads in the area using elements that recall the forest.
 Advocate similar landscape improvements for commercial sites, particularly around and within larger parking lots.
 Integrate pedestrian and bicycle circulation into the right-of-way as redevelopment occurs.
- Outcome:** An expansion of the Highway 33 South business district using vacant or underutilized land, creating depth for the business district (not more strip development patterns) and connections to the "interior" of the Cloquet community.

14th Street

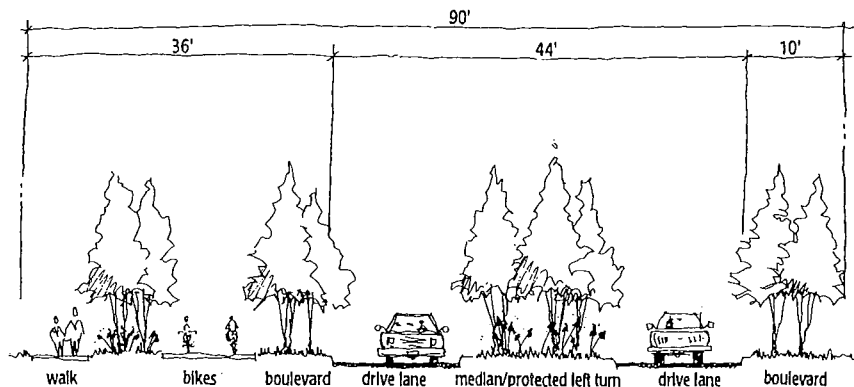
Fourteenth Street does not provide a direct connection between all districts, but it does form an alternative north/south route through Cloquet and provide a means for local traffic to reach Cloquet Avenue and South Highway 33 without using Highway 33. Uses along its length are also significant: City Hall, churches, schools and the community college.

14th Street forms a logical north-south alternative to Highway 33, providing a local route that connects Cloquet's major business districts and links Cloquet to the Munger Trail to the south.



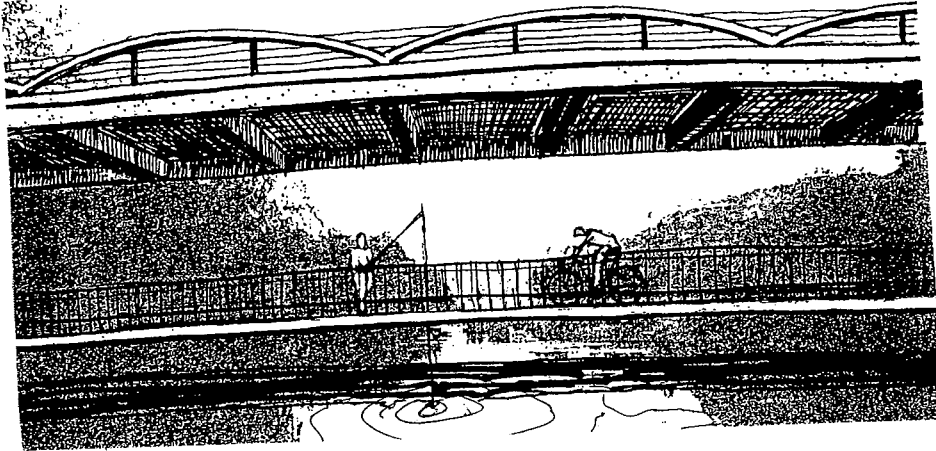
Character Fourteenth Street, as it is controlled locally, also has the potential for being developed with a character that is much more fitting of the community. At the same time that it fulfills an important transportation function, it might be enhanced with a streetscape that makes it a distinct community street.

Someday, 14th Street might be reconfigured to accommodate bike lanes and boulevard plantings. In the short term, re-striping might reasonably accommodate a bike lane connection to the Munger Trail; acquisition of right-of-way should be an on-going effort in advance of complete reconstruction.



River Crossing

In the future, 14th Street might be considered as a logical alignment for another river crossing. Although this plan cannot be specific to its alignment as it crosses the St. Louis River, the south touchdown point logically occurs at 14th Street and Avenue 'B.' By crossing the river, the expanding residential neighborhoods to the north are provided with a realistic option for direct access to the Cloquet Avenue district and the Highway 33 South district.



The river is a barrier to a complete north-south route through Cloquet that does not rely on Highway 33; someday, when the link across the river is made, it will be important to recognize the recreation value of that connection.

This plan recommends the following strategies for 14th Street:

Strategies, Actions and Outcome

- Strategy:** Establish Fourteenth Street as an important community connection to create a local north-south route between business districts for Cloquet residents.
- Actions:** Re-stripe the roadway to create bike lanes.
Plant street trees and install street lights to create a consistent boulevard feel between Cloquet Avenue and Stanley Avenue.
Consider reconfiguration of the roadway (concurrent with its next major maintenance operation) to make it consistent with the directions of the Community Revitalization Master Plan.
Investigate the possibility of a second river crossing (with an alignment that meets Avenue 'B' at 14th Street as one option) to connect neighborhoods to the north to the rest of the community without reliance on Highway 33; locations for a "touchdown" on the north bank of the river require further study; the feasibility of such a crossing also requires much further study.
- Outcome:** A connection through Cloquet that accommodates vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians on a street that is a "Cloquet street."



St. Louis River

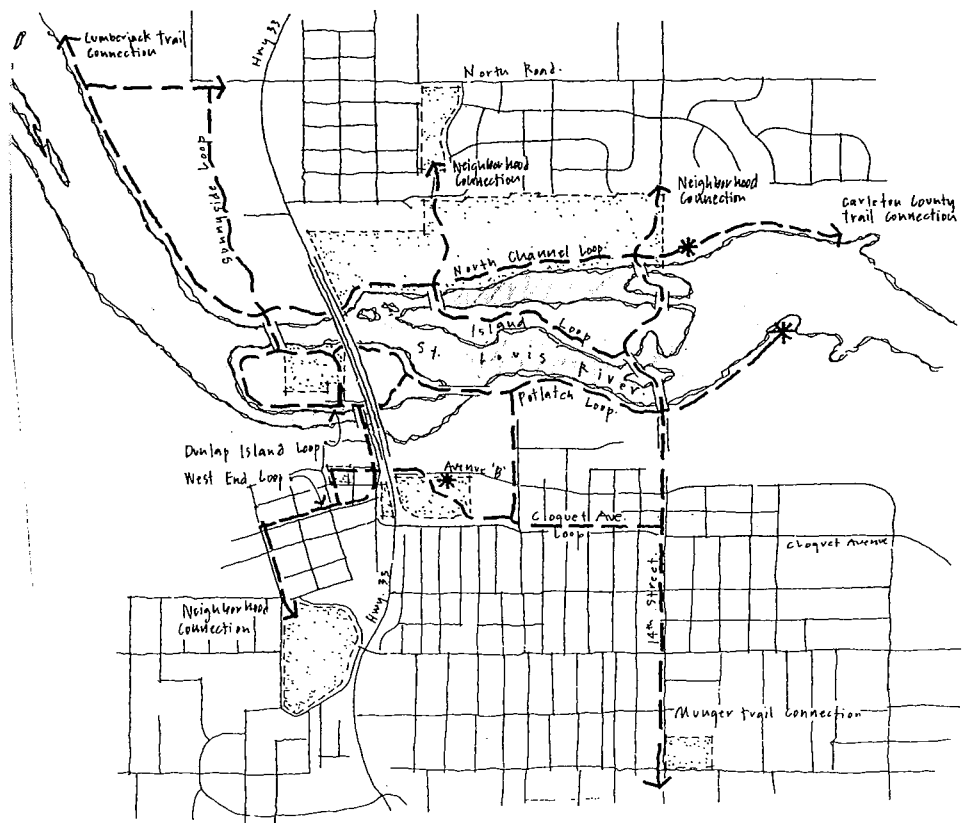
There is nothing in Cloquet that the community values more than the St. Louis River. While the focus of this plan is the revitalization of the community through its business districts, the plan must accommodate a stronger sense of connection between the community and its river.

"Events" The development of social, cultural, recreational and natural "events" along the river is integral to this plan. The river, while difficult to access, is the central element of the community, and it has the potential to provide an attraction for the community and for visitors that does not currently exist. Development that engages the river must occur to support the revitalization of the West End and Cloquet Avenue, but also to provide a focus for historic features like the Northeastern Hotel. When development of the riverfront occurs, it must be sensitive to its place, ensuring that the river maintains the respect that it deserves.

The riverfront walk system is composed of a series of "loops," implemented over a period of time, taking advantage of a range of river environments and qualities, linking business districts and neighborhoods, and reaching beyond Cloquet to regional recreation systems.

KEY IDEAS FOR RIVERFRONT TRAILS

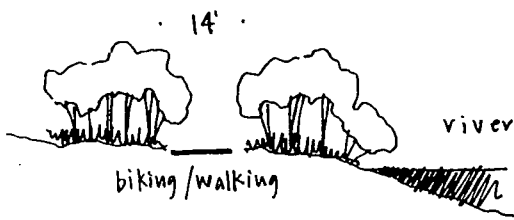
- The trails will be a series of loops implemented over a period of years; dead ends are acceptable in early phases, as long as loops are ultimately formed; dead ends in the final layout should be terminated at focal features or elements such as trailheads or significant overlooks.
- A variety of experiences is critical: on-street and off-street trails are acceptable; "wild" and "working" qualities of the riverfront are expressed; natural and "downtown" character are part of the journey; and portions of the trail being seasonally inaccessible is acceptable.
- Connections to regional systems are necessary; logical connections to local parks and community facilities are mandatory.
- While combination walking and biking trails are acceptable, separated path systems are preferred.
- Features such as Veterans Park and Knife Falls should be early considerations for overlooks or more extensive trail facilities.



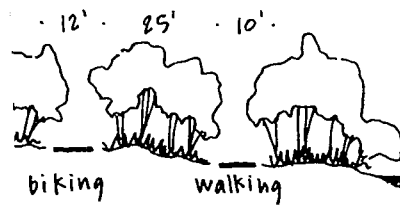
Connections

Connections to the river are difficult due to land ownership and the presence of the railroad. One of the most likely and achievable access points occurs along 8th Street. A connection from Cloquet Avenue, to Avenue 'B,' crossing in front of Upper Lakes Foods, would facilitate a connection between the Cloquet Avenue district and the river, and also nearly touch the park to the west of 8th Street (where it would be important to reach to 8th Street to form a connection to the river link). The portion of this connection at Upper Lakes Foods is not a public right-of-way, but the notion of the connection occurring at this point is important enough to engage Upper Lakes Foods in a discussion. One of the less tangible benefits might be that it brings Upper Lakes Foods more directly into the Cloquet Avenue district, and makes that operation a neighbor to light industrial uses proposed for Avenue 'B.'



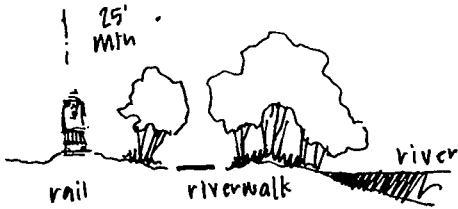


combination bike/walk path is 14'; 5' clear provided at each side of path

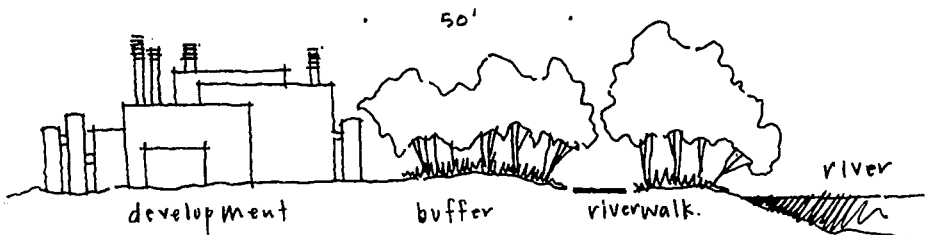


separated paths are 12' and 10', with substantial separation between; 5' clear provided at each side of path

Key cross-sections indicate the vital relationship between the St. Louis River, the walking and biking trails, and the elements of the Cloquet community that exist in proximity to the river.



maintain 25' separation to railroad; clear vegetation at river to create selected views



desired separation at industry is 50'; selected views might be cleared to highlight the "working" qualities of the riverfront

For the St. Louis River, the following strategies are recommended:

Strategies, Actions and Outcomes

- Strategy:** Make the St. Louis River and other local features focal points of the community to create a strong local attraction.
- Action:** Plan for logical and natural extensions of pathways that connect the riverfront with the West End, Sunnyside and Cloquet Avenue. Encourage development of the site between Highway 33 and Eighth Street, Cloquet Avenue and Avenue "B" for uses that make strong connections to the river and utilize the site for community purposes. Create physical connections between Cloquet Avenue and the river, using natural features when possible. Develop amenities for the riverfront that reflect both its "wild" and its "working" qualities. Establish points of interest along the riverfront that characterize the Cloquet community (the island for history, the falls for nature and the northeast corner of Highway 33 and Cloquet Avenue for culture and community). Anticipate the extension of the riverfront walkways and bike trails to regional facilities such as the Lumberjack Trail, the Munger Trail and the Carlton County trail that connects to Jay Cooke State Park.
- Outcome:** A river that is strongly integrated into the life of the community, becoming a centerpiece for events and reflecting the unique character of Cloquet.

Veterans Park

One of the first questions asked of the community related to the identification of a “center” for Cloquet. Responses varied widely, indicating that there was no strong sense of a center for the community. For Cloquet, as a small town, the idea of a center is vital.

A "Center" The plan recommends that the area surrounding the intersection of Highway 33 and Cloquet Avenue be defined as the “center.” This place holds special meaning in the patterns of Cloquet development: two business districts come together at this point; views to the river and north bluff are most prominent here; a culturally significant building (Frank Lloyd Wright gas station) occupies one quadrant of the intersection; community open spaces occupy two other quadrants; and the community has determined this to be an appropriate location for an identification sign.

Activity In addition to new light industrial uses and enhancement of existing buildings in the Cloquet Avenue district, other features of the district will serve as “activity generators.” The intersection of Highway 33 and Cloquet Avenue has been noted as a critical intersection in the patterns of the Cloquet community — a site that merits the “activity generator” label. The park offers the opportunity to develop a space for visible community activities, but a ball diamond does not serve that purpose well. A park that functions as a community event and gathering space, with amenities that suggest life even when people are not present, is needed. This site, as it affords views of the river valley, might also be a point of connection to the river itself; even though separated from the river by streets and rail lines, it could easily become a trailhead for riverfront pathways.

Landscape As this part of the Cloquet Avenue district was likely a part of the river at some point in Cloquet’s history, restoration of some aspects of the original landscape of the site would begin to form meaningful connections to the river — even though the river is remote from this site. Pursuit of this idea would dictate a planting palette of species native to the river, with introduced species being used as a strong counterpoint.

Development The easterly end of this site, near 8th Street, should be considered for development. The market might not immediately support development here, but the site is visible from Highway 33 and integral to the Cloquet Avenue district. It should be dedicated to commercially-oriented uses that complement both the park and the commercial and light industrial uses of the Cloquet Avenue district.

As this intersection evolves with civic uses as the focus, the remaining commercial development must exhibit similar improvements. As this location becomes the center, it must be framed with uses that are active and attractive.

Strategies, Actions and Outcomes The following strategies are recommended for Veterans Park:

Strategy: Enhance the northeast corner of Highway 33 and Cloquet Avenue to create a significant community gathering space and to preserve the view across the river to the bluff.

Actions: Allow development on this site (between Highway 33 and Eighth Street) that does not limit views of the river or the bluff.
Plan for use of this site with activities that are meant to support and



build a stronger sense of community for Cloquet and at the same time maintain and enhance the Veterans Memorial.

Create a stronger — if only mental — connection between this site and the river.

Extend the riverfront walking paths to this site, integrating it with the Island and the falls.

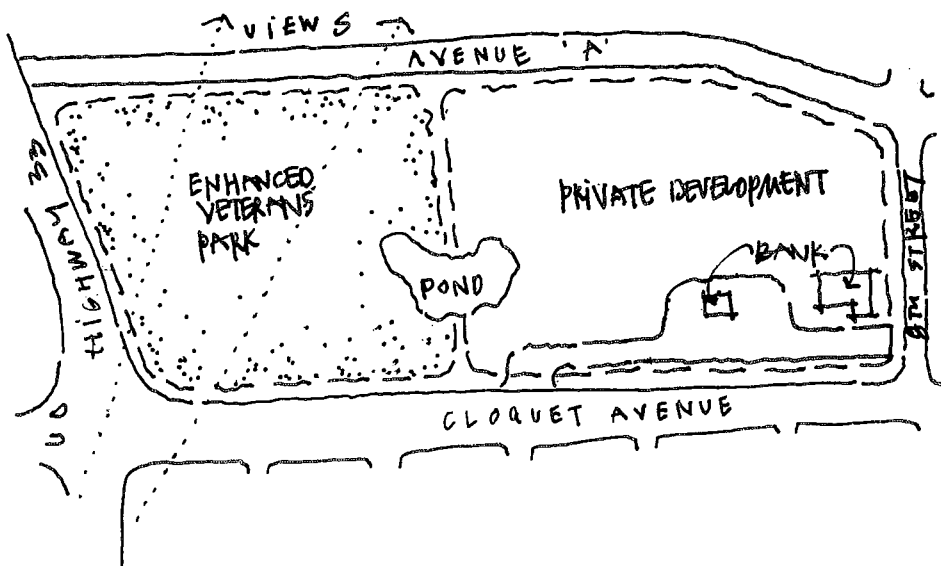
Outcome: A gathering space and centerpiece of “community” at a site that is the center of the Cloquet community with a direct connection to its most important natural resource.

Strategy: Explore the creation of a significant commercial development toward the eastern end of the site to create a center of activity for the Cloquet Avenue district.

Action: Establish control over private parcels located in this block of land, and assign a zoning designation that conforms to this plan. Initiate events and activities that establish a strong community presence on this site.

Investigate the development of a commercial use on the eastern end of this site when the opportunity seems appropriate.

Outcome: A place that comes to symbolize the center of the Cloquet community and a facility that attracts people to the Cloquet Avenue district.



Development of Veterans Park should be well-integrated with appropriate private development and must be designed to be flexible for significant community events and, at the same time, serve smaller more casual gatherings which preserve the importance of the Veterans Memorial. This block will be divided between park use on the west end and private development on the east end, with the character of the block as a whole providing a sense of integration.

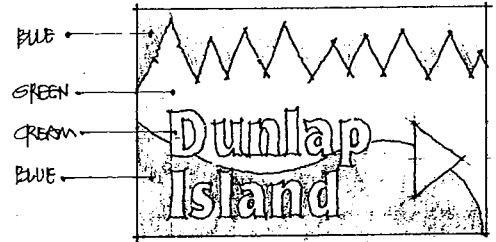
Signage

Cloquet has invested in significant signs to mark the ends of Cloquet Avenue. But there is no sense of Cloquet identity that reaches beyond these signs. Consideration of signs in both the public and private realm could do much to enhance the aesthetics and image of Cloquet's business districts. If all signs are designed with the same goals and follow the same basic standards, no sign will call out for more attention that it is due, and the built and natural environment will be allowed to be the focus of Cloquet's business districts.

Public Signs Business district markers, street signs and "trailblazer" (directional) signs will be used to support the framework — reinforcing the existing Cloquet Avenue signs, identifying each district in a similar way, and creating a consistent image at the entries to each district.

Public informational and directional signs will be as important as signs required of the private sector.

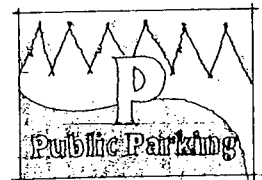
Sign Type: Trailblazer
Purpose: to direct to features, districts, significant public places
Location: along major routes
Orientation: vehicles, pedestrians
Examples: Dunlap Island (feature)
 Veterans Park (feature)
 West End (district)
 Sunnyside (district)
 Historical Society (public use)
 City Hall (public use)
Size: 18 inches x 30 inches
Faces: single-sided
Mounting: mount to existing poles or posts



Sign Type: Street Identification
Purpose: to identify major streets within business districts
Location: opposite: corners of intersections of major streets
Orientation: vehicles, pedestrians
Examples: Cloquet Av.
 Avenue B
 North Road
Size: 9 inches x 42 inches
Faces: double-sided
Mounting: replaces standard street identification signs

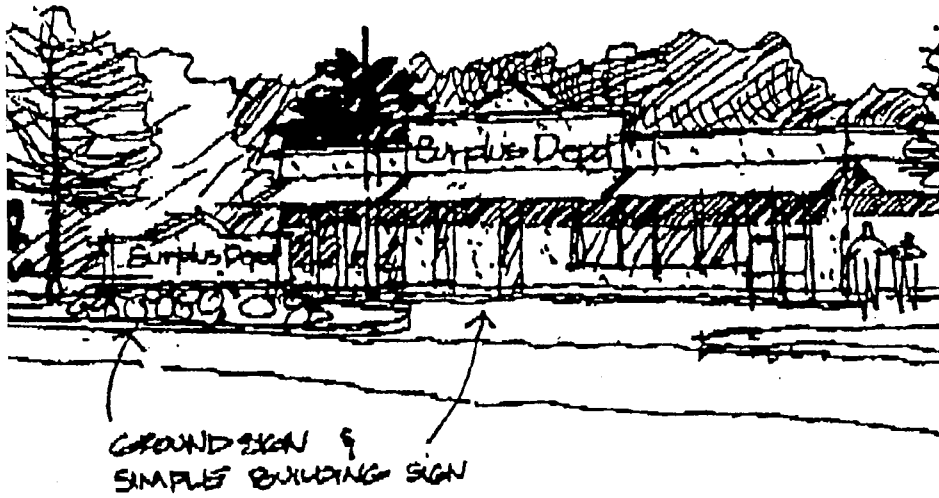


Sign Type: Parking
Purpose: to mark public parking areas
Location: at public parking lots
Orientation: vehicles
Examples: Public Parking
Size: 14 inches x 20 inches
Faces: single sided
Mounting: mount to existing poles or structures, or free-standing post at parking lot entry



Private Signs Ground mounted signs should be strongly encouraged for private development. Signs that "hug" the ground are immediately in the view of drivers and pedestrians, and they will allow the elements of the forest to reach to the sky. Directions for other private sector signs are described in the Design Guidelines section.





Well-designed ground signs identify commercial activities in ways that do not compete with Cloquet's forest qualities, remain in the view of the driver, and complement Cloquet's newly installed marker signs at the ends of Cloquet Avenue.

Strategies, Actions and Outcomes

The following strategies and actions are recommended for signage:

- Strategy:** Develop signs for public and private needs that create identity, inform the public, and maintain the character of elements central to the community.
- Actions:** Agree upon a design for a system of signs to mark streets and provide direction and information for public areas.
 Implement the public sign system (using existing structures wherever possible) throughout Cloquet's business districts and in other areas where directional or informational signs are needed.
 Require new development and redevelopment projects to utilize ground-mounted signs.
- Outcome:** A coordinated and consistent system of designed elements meant to inform the public and reflect bits of Cloquet character in establishing identity for its business districts.



Design Guidelines

While the picture we have created for Cloquet's business districts might seem like a pretty good sketch, it can never be considered to be exactly what will happen. Communities evolve slowly, over many years; the changes we anticipate for Cloquet will occur on a similar timeline. This is the master plan's intention: to allow Cloquet's business districts to grow and change in ways that are dynamic and responsive rather than ways that are prescriptive. Every project must be considered as a part of the whole to ensure it fits the patterns of its district, but some latitude should be afforded the individual or group that is undertaking the project. This is where we ultimately develop a richness and character reminiscent of the great places we all know.

So even as the picture seems so real, it can only be a guide. New buildings will be built that fit overall patterns but still express their own individuality; old buildings will be restored to mark the West End and Cloquet Avenue with the integrity of early Cloquet; and the community will have a life that springs from the way people do business here.

While not every aspect of development is controlled, and rightly so, one aim of this plan is to restore authenticity to the community's business districts. The need for rules must be recognized, however; this plan establishes "rules" that must be interpreted by the community. In "enforcing" rules, the most important are those inherent in the Guiding Principles and Community Palette. In reviewing proposals for change, the first criteria is whether the proposal meets the community's intentions as gauged by this plan. Ultimately, design guidelines are used to direct a proposal to the best possible "fit." These "rules" might be codified; but to begin, the plan expects the business districts to evolve based on the sensibilities of a small town rather than by legislation.

Not every building in Cloquet is old, or is worthy of rehabilitation. Those that are worthy should be viewed as community assets and required to conform to the design guidelines. But new buildings must also respect the design guidelines in order to maintain the sense of connection to the district and the community. In the design guidelines that follow, patterns for creating new buildings and preserving the character of older buildings can be found.

Design Strategies

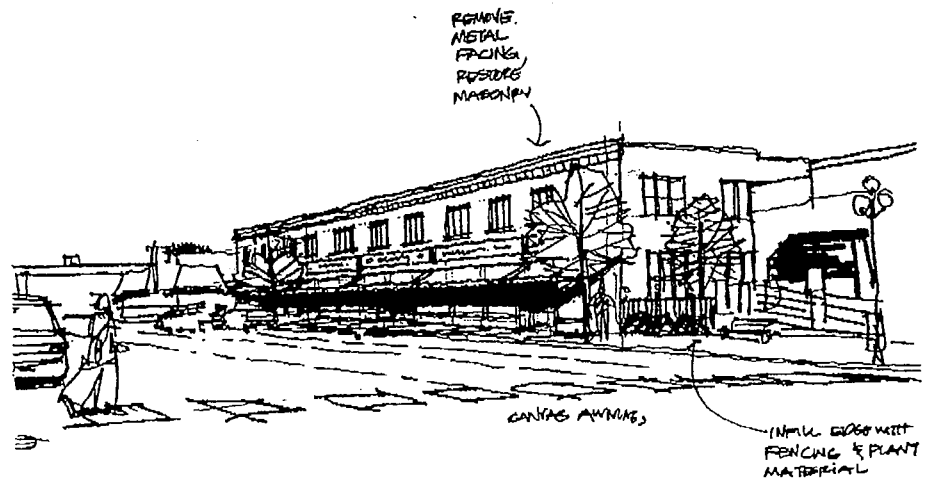
It might be said that a community's heritage is tied to its buildings, and that these buildings contribute significantly to a community's image and identity. In Cloquet's case, no other community has exactly this mix of buildings, and that begins to differentiate Cloquet. Marketing experts say that product differentiation is a critical element for success; in this case, Cloquet may have something of value in its current mix of buildings. There is, however, far to go before the community's vision for its business districts is realized. The design of buildings will be an aspect of the work that must be accomplished.

Existing Building Renovation

In general, a great deal of architectural character exists in the structures on Cloquet Avenue and the West End. The most significant improvement that can be made is to remove inappropriate later facade additions such as:

- wood siding cover-ups
- ribbed steel siding overlays
- large signs, sized to be read at 60 miles per hour
- wood shake mansard roofs
- plastic or oddly shaped awnings
- window opening infills or surrounds designed to reduce the size of window openings
- lighting fixtures inconsistent to the era and style of architecture

Renovation of existing storefronts may have more to do with removal of inappropriate elements rather than complete reconstruction of storefronts.



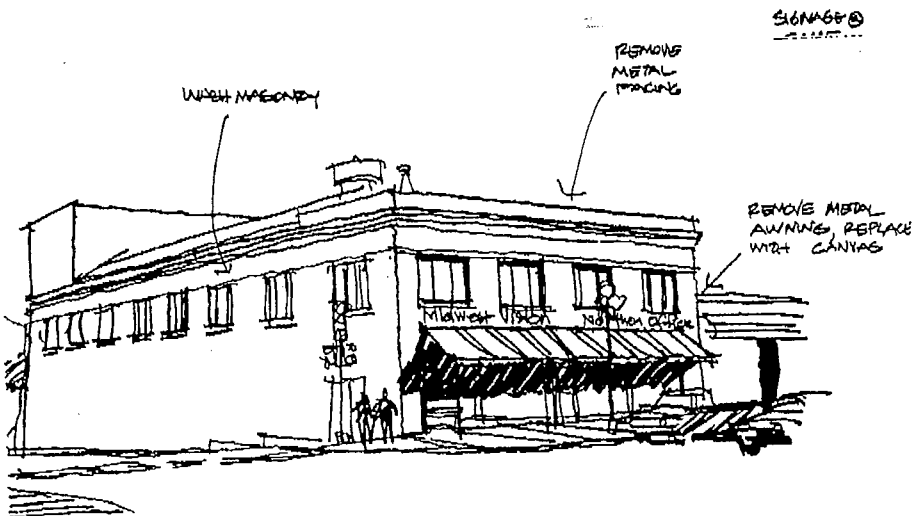
Most structures worthy of being renovated are of brick or brick and stone masonry, built in the 1920s. Quite often a window replacement has happened in the life of the building that detracts from its original character. Eighty percent of the visual focus and impact of a masonry building is achieved with twenty percent window area of the facade. Attention to detail and color of window framing can add dramatically to a rather plain masonry building.

Windows at the street level should be large and transparent to depict activity to the street, typically with glass transoms above and paneled lower transoms below.





Street level windows should be large to allow the activities and goods of a store to be seen from the street.

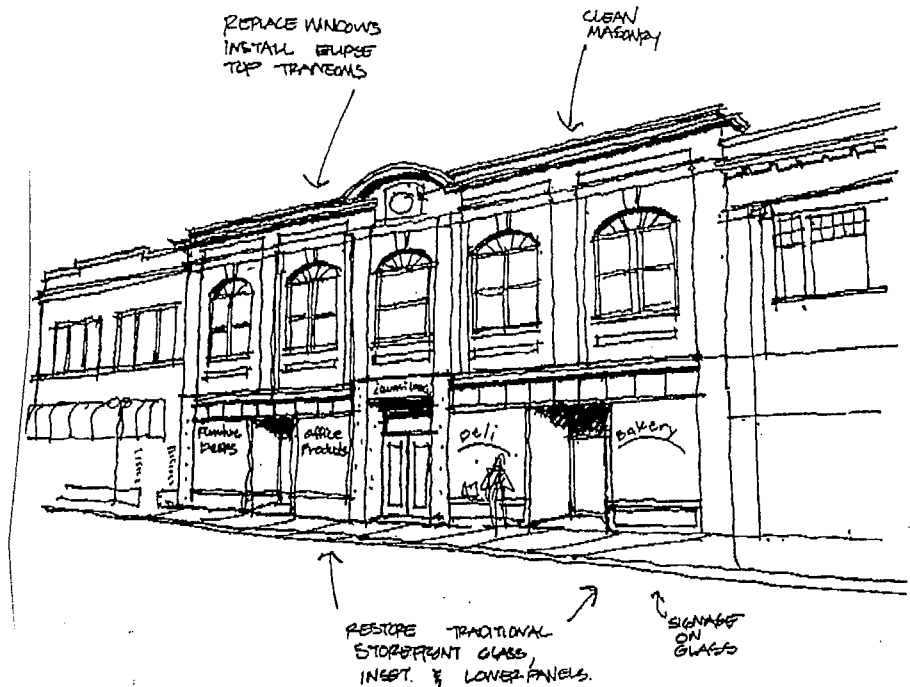


Boarded-up windows should be uncovered and opened. Large expanses of blank lower level walls are to be avoided. Windows are important to the vitality of the street, and even businesses that are not as naturally related to viewing (law, medical and other professional offices) still need a visual connection to the street. Windows should also respect the lines of the masonry structure with window and masonry infill. A “main street” relies on the sense of transparency with people able to walk or drive by, look in and see activity inside, see products for sale and see business being transacted. Ground floor retail, service and restaurants should use large pane windows framed by walls.



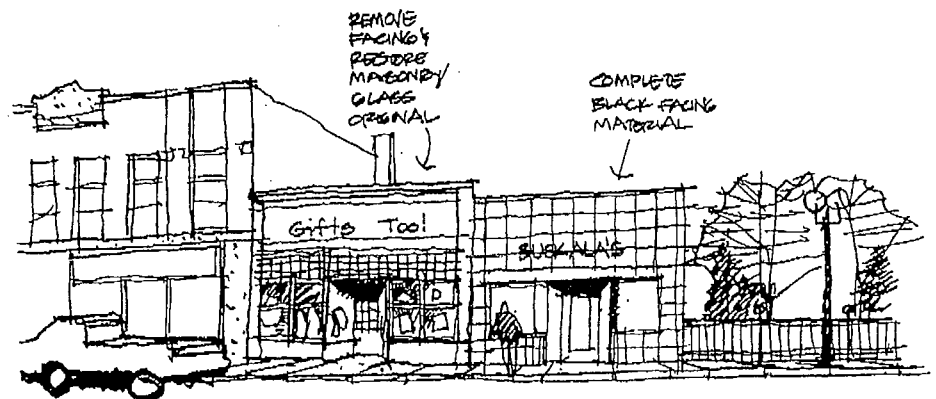
The base of the building below the windows should be treated with stone, paneled wood or brick, all of which are typical of the era of these buildings.

Renovation of upper levels of storefronts should occur when the street level facade is considered. In many cases, this part of a building will be more intact than street level portions.



Building color consistent to the building era is very important. Large expanses of white are inappropriate for buildings of this era. Window colors have an enormous effect on how one views a masonry facade. Window colors should avoid white and tend toward more muted colors such as warm gray or gray-green.

When buildings and shops are owned and operated by the same proprietors, the storefronts should maintain the integrity of the individual structures.



Replacement windows should be of the same style as the original windows; typically this would include double-hung or transom lite type windows.

Buildings Masonry buildings should be cleaned to lighten their overall color. A stunning result can often be obtained by combining masonry cleaning with window replacement that uses color sensitively.

New masonry work should match the color and materials of the original construction. If the building's upper floor is brick, the lower floor should also be brick (not painted concrete block).



Awnings

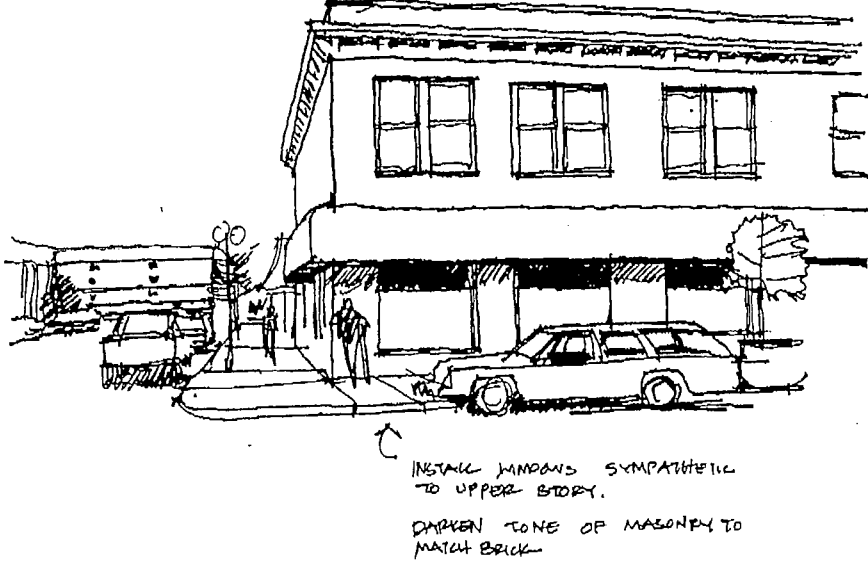
Awnings should be permitted where appropriate and complementary to the style of a building. Canvas awnings are most desirable, especially on the sides of a street where sunlight control is a significant problem. Retractable canvas awnings create a variable facade, which creates more interest in even the most simple buildings. Graphics and signage on awnings should be modest in size, with proportions appropriate to the size of the awning.

The form of the awning should be a simple "shed" form; metal awnings should be avoided.

Operable, color-stabilized canvas awnings are intrinsic to many Cloquet buildings; while they might help unite buildings, they should also be used to individualize buildings and distinct storefronts.



Upper floors must bear a strong relationship to the design of the street level portion of a building, a point which must especially be considered when the street level facade is altered.



Upper Floors

The upper and lower floor must look like they are a part of the same building. Materials, color, texture and form should show continuity.

Entrances

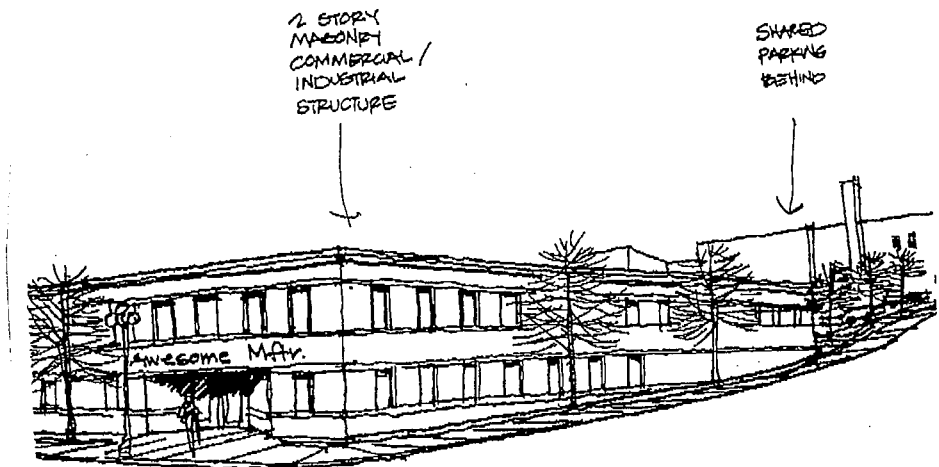
The entry points should be articulated with trim and detail to make them obvious and the highlight of a building's facade.

New Building Construction in Cloquet Avenue and the West End

The siting and massing of new structures should seek to fill gaps left in the continuum of facades where they exist — in effect, filling in the “empty teeth” between existing buildings with new construction. If buildings are not used to fill the space, fences with appropriate style should be used to complete the line of the street wall.

The infill building should reflect the design of adjacent structures in height, materials and style wherever possible. Most infill structures in these areas would tend to be two story buildings.

The design of new buildings must be considered carefully and integrated deftly into the existing downtown fabric, regardless of the use.



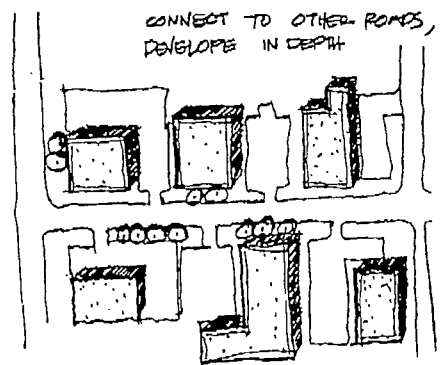
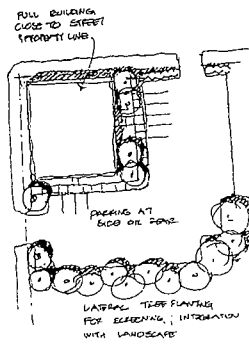
Blank walls where visible to the public should be articulated with panels, pilasters or similar architectural elements to establish rhythm and relief.

New Building Construction in Highway 33 South and Sunnyside

Buildings in these areas should be sited relatively close to the street and property line to define the street edge, and utilize dense plant material buffers along the sides. Parking should be located at the sides or rear, with limited parking occurring in the front yard.

Fencing or dense hedges should be utilized to connect buildings wherever possible.

The design of the site becomes equal in importance to the design of the building in the Highway 33 South and Sunnyside districts.



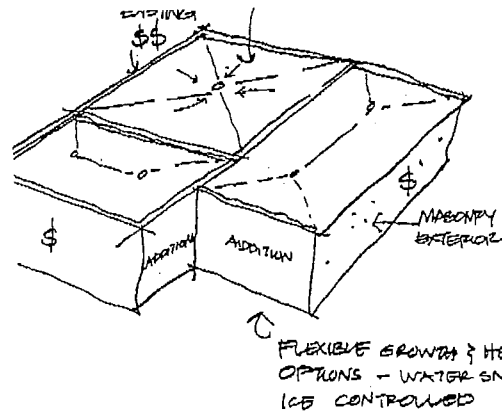
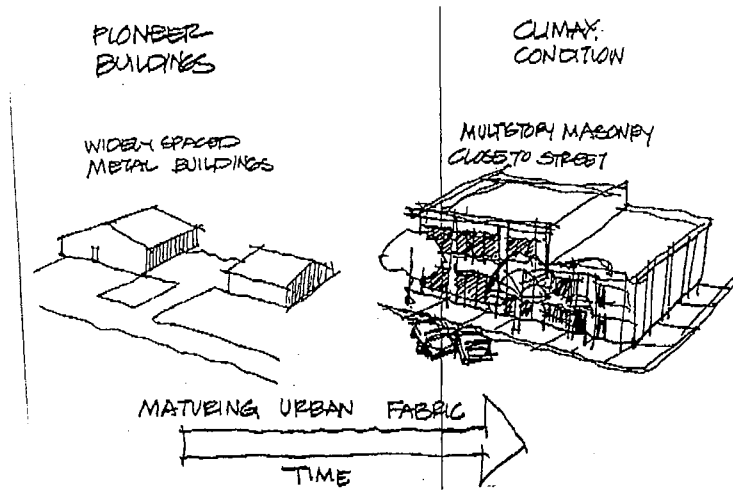
Building Form Metal-faced buildings should be phased out and discouraged. Typically, these structures are most suitable for pioneer or start-up enterprises or large warehouse or manufacturing uses. New buildings should be constructed of masonry or con-



crete with metal trim. These new structures should be "high bay" or two story whenever possible to maximize land utilization.

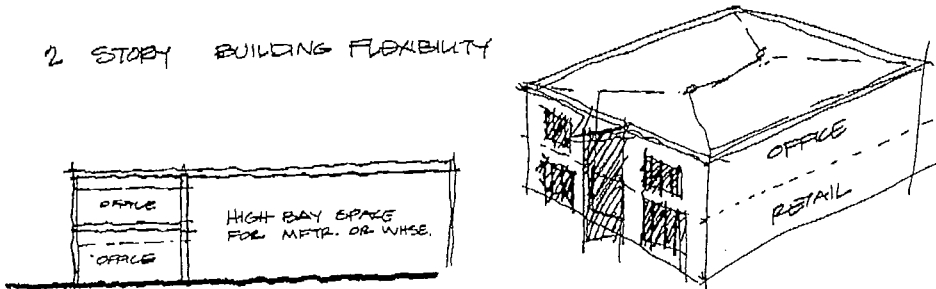
Low sloped roofs (almost flat) are the most appropriate roof form for flexibility of use or later additions. Steeply pitched roofs might also be appropriate in some cases to create a more unique building.

Built forms in Cloquet should evolve under this plan to those that lend a greater sense of permanence to the business districts.



LOW SLOPE ROOF GROWTH OPTIONS

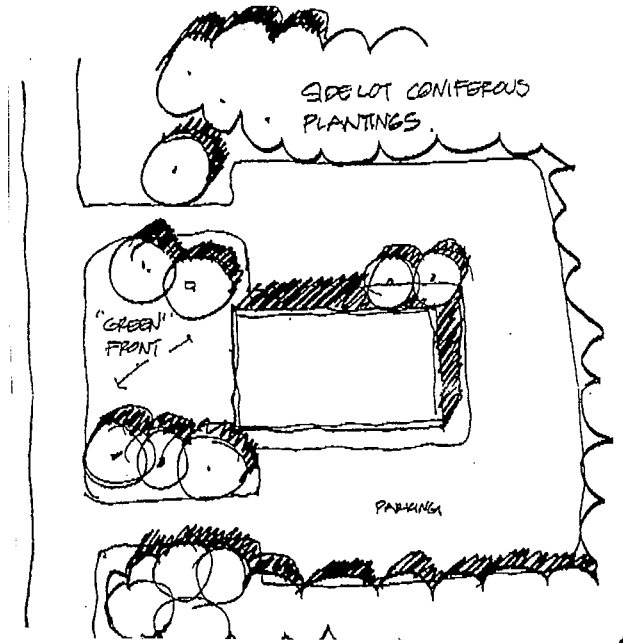
2 STORY BUILDING FLEXIBILITY



Existing Buildings in Highway 33 South and Sunnyside

Site plantings of coniferous trees at the sides of lots should be encouraged to develop an appearance of development "carved from the forest." The front yards should be well landscaped with parking and service areas developed at the sides and rear of a building, with limited parking in front.

Development in Highway 33 South and Sunnyside should appear to have been carved from the forest.

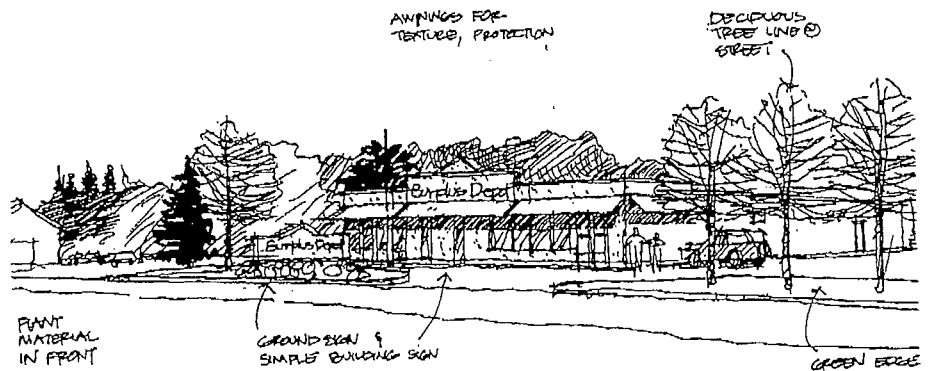


Buildings Building facades should avoid the "white concrete block" look and multiple signage elements should be replaced with one medium building sign and one well-located ground sign.

Single block-form buildings should be avoided; instead, the forms should be broken up into smaller increments. Exterior materials should be muted in color, and of brick, stone or other long lasting materials (rather than vinyl or metal siding). Canvas awnings should be considered to add detail and interest to the facade.

Windows are vitally important to these building types and should be positioned to allow views into and out of the building. The concrete block or metal building "pillbox" must be avoided.

Even "plain" buildings can be upgraded with elements that add interest and a greater sensitivity for a district as a whole.



Signage in Cloquet Avenue and the West End

Projecting signage should be allowed and even encouraged as long as it is well designed and relates to the pedestrian scale of the street. Mounting brackets must be as artfully designed as the sign itself, as it becomes an element of both the sign and the building. Backlit and flashing projecting signs should be prohibited.



One medium sized sign depicting the activity of the premises should be allowed on the main facade and one on the side wall if the building is on a corner. Letter height should be limited to 12 inches. Signage is best illuminated with incandescent lamps directed onto the sign from above or below. Backlit building facade lighting should be discouraged.

Signage on canopies or awnings should be fairly small and scaled to the pedestrian on the sidewalk. Ground or sidewalk signs should be encouraged to help define for the pedestrian where the place of business is located.

Signage in Highway 33 South and Sunnyside

Tall post or pylon signs should be discouraged. Cloquet has set the tone for signage with well designed ground signs at the ends of Cloquet Avenue. Ground signs, if properly designed and adequately illuminated, remain in the view of both drivers and pedestrians, and reduce the amount of overhead clutter that conflicts with the view of the forest. Ground mounted signs have proven to be very effective in directing drivers to the place of business, and the need for each business owner to have progressively taller signs is eliminated.

Building signs should be limited to one sign on the facade and smaller signage near the primary entry. Billboard type signage and extra news advertising signage should be prohibited.

Billboards, especially new billboards, should be restricted from the entries to the community. A quick review of the existing billboards at the south end of Highway 33 reveals that several do not comply with existing ordinances, but more importantly, the limitation of billboards promotes views of the forest, one of the main aesthetic goals of the master plan.

Standards should be developed for new signs and consideration should be given to eliminating those billboards that are currently non-conforming. In addition, the current conforming billboards on the south end of Highway 33 might be effectively converted to quality ground signs grouped together, setting the tone for a more subdued and organized type of signage in the business districts.



Guidelines

Patterns described for the business districts provide strong direction for the growth and evolution of the district as a whole. To make each project more meaningful to the community — building a stronger image and identity for the business districts and the community, design guidelines are illustrated. For projects that receive any level of community support, these design guidelines described in the following section will be one measure of adherence to the plan. For all projects, they provide direction that builds value and authenticity for the community.

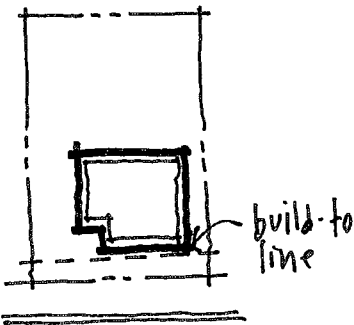
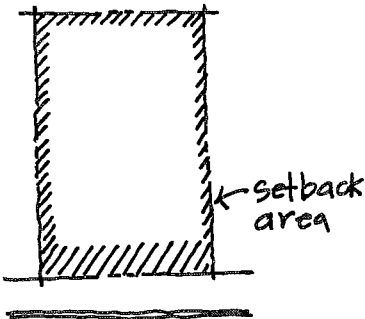
Site Design Guidelines 1.1.00

Establish common setback and lot coverage standards to ensure compatible and maximum development in each business “district”.

1.1.01

Setbacks (minimum distance from a right-of-way in which no structure may encroach) and build-to lines (a line measured from the right-of-way which at least 70 percent of the primary structure must touch) for districts are established as follows:

- Highway 33 South
Setback at front yard: 20 feet for buildings under 20,000 square feet; 145 feet for buildings 20,000 square feet and larger
- Sunnyside
Setback at front yard: 20 feet for buildings under 20,000 square feet; 145 feet for buildings 20,000 square feet and larger
- West End
Build-to line: 0 feet
- Cloquet Avenue
Build-to line: 0 feet at Cloquet Avenue; 10 feet at Avenue 'B' and cross streets

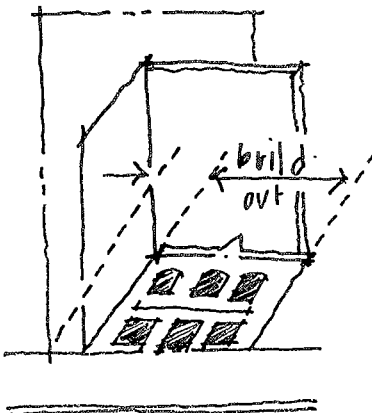


Establish setbacks and build-to lines for development in each business district (Guideline 1.1.01)

1.1.02

Minimum street frontage “build-out” (that portion of the primary street frontage which must be occupied by the primary structure at the build-to line or which must have a majority of the primary structure touching the setback line) is established for each district as follows:

- Highway 33 South 30 percent
- Sunnyside 40 percent
- West End 100 percent, except that pedestrian passages and plaza spaces developed in concert with buildings are exempt
- Cloquet Avenue 100 percent, except that pedestrian passages and plaza spaces developed in concert with buildings are exempt; 60 percent for Avenue 'B'; 30 percent for cross streets



Establish requirements for street frontage build-out (Guideline 1.1.02)

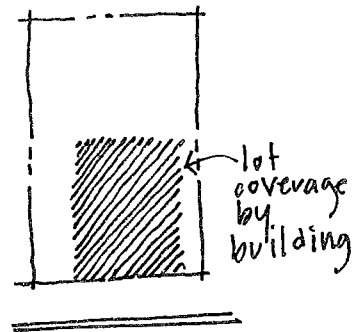
1.1.03

Standards for minimum lot coverage by structures, in order to ensure the best use of limited available land, are established as follows



(plazas, outdoor gathering or sales area are not included in minimum coverage calculation):

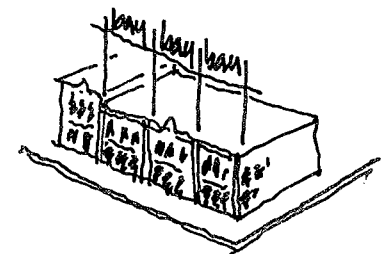
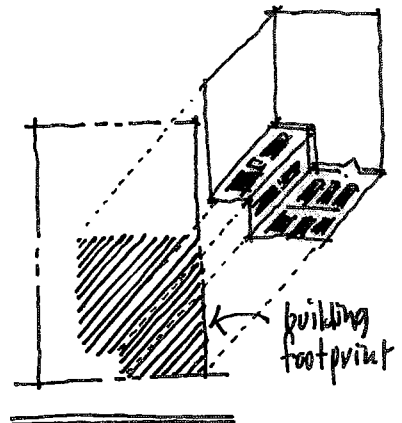
- Highway 33 South 20 percent
- Sunnyside 30 percent
- West End 40 percent, except that pedestrian passages and plaza spaces developed in concert with buildings are exempt
- Cloquet Avenue 30 percent, except that pedestrian passages and plaza spaces developed in concert with buildings are exempt



Establish requirements for minimum lot coverage (Guideline 1.1.03)

1.1.04 Building footprint size and “bay width” (the width of a storefront or segment of a continuous facade at which building must be divided) for the primary structure on each site is as follows (larger footprint may be allowed as a conditional use):

- Highway 33 South 3,500 square feet minimum, 70,000 square feet maximum; requirement for bay width does not apply
- Sunnyside 3,500 square feet minimum, 70,000 square feet maximum; requirement for bay width does not apply
- West End 2,000 square feet minimum, 10,000 square feet maximum; 20 to 40 foot bays
- Cloquet Avenue 2,000 square feet minimum, 10,000 square feet maximum, except that buildings fronting Avenue 'B' may be up to 30,000 square feet maximum; 20 to 40 foot bays, except that buildings fronting Avenue 'B' may have bays up to 60 feet



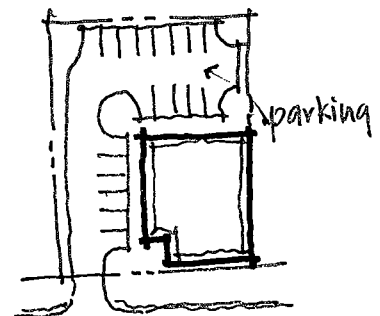
Establish requirements for building footprint and bay width (Guideline 1.1.04)

1.2 Make buildings the focus of Cloquet's business districts, not parking areas.

1.2.01 Locate parking behind or beside buildings, with no more than 25 percent of required parking in a side yard in the West End and Cloquet Avenue districts; locate parking with no more than 50 percent in a front yard in the Highway 33 South and Sunnyside districts.

1.2.02 Prohibit parking areas adjacent to intersections of streets.

1.2.03 Require 12 feet of horizontal separation between parking areas (and drive lanes in parking areas) and buildings for walks and landscaping; require 10 feet of horizontal separation between parking areas and public sidewalks, with an additional 5 feet for every parking bay greater than one (for large parking areas, the accumulated additional feet may be required to be located in a median between two rows of parking, at the discretion of the Planning Commission).



Locate parking behind or beside buildings (Guideline 1.2.01)

- 1.2.04 Visual separation between parking areas and public rights-of-way shall use landscape materials or ornamental fences (no berms) such that a screen that is at least 50 opaque is present in all seasons to a height of 28 inches to 36 inches.
- 1.3 Create parking to accommodate anticipated and realistic demands, without overbuilding parking facilities.**
 - 1.3.01 Encourage development of joint-use parking facilities, balancing use on a day-today and hour-to-hour basis to achieve the highest possible use of each parking space created.
 - 1.3.02 Create on-site parking for office uses at a rate of 4 spaces per 1000 square feet gross floor area; create parking for retail uses at rates between 4 and 5 spaces per 1000 square feet gross floor area.
 - 1.3.03 Discourage development with excessive normal peak parking demand or development with a high peak parking demand that is not offset by joint-use parking in order to keep development density intense (for example, require that a movie theater's parking be available to serve a nearby office use during the theater's non-peak hours).
 - 1.3.04 In the Cloquet Avenue and West End districts, include on-street parking that fronts each site in the calculation of parking provided for that site (allow only parking in front of a building, not at a side of a building)
 - 1.3.05 Provide employee parking in remote areas to allow customer parking nearest to the destination; prohibit employees from parking on downtown streets.
 - 1.3.06 Create preferential parking zones in neighborhoods, if necessary.
- 1.4 Develop each site to facilitate traffic movement and reduce conflict points.**
 - 1.4.01 Where possible, provide full access to sites using cross streets rather than main streets in each district; where options exist, limit access to sites in Sunnyside to right in/out.
- 1.5 Establish continuity in the patterns of site development to maintain coherency and cohesiveness in downtown.**
 - 1.5.01 Establish a common palette of materials for sites in each district

Lighting	parking lot lighting of same height, pole type and color, same fixture type and wattage, same mounting height and light levels
Paving	Similar pavement materials and patterns for pedestrian ways, with variations allowed at areas immediately at storefront or in pedestrian



Landscape	plaza areas Similar requirements for plant type, installed size, planting patterns and planting intensity; reflect "forest" qualities in planting layout
Signs	Limit number, size and placement of signs for a given parcel or building



Reflect "forest" qualities in planting patterns (Guideline 1.5.01)

1.5.02 Require that parking lots be 25 percent shaded by trees within 10 years of development.

1.5.03 Use indigenous and or proven native plant materials, focusing on species related to the forest environments (especially white pine, red pine and aspen).

1.5.04 Encourage signs to be a part of the building rather than the site; allow pylon signs on Highway 33 frontage only for developments larger than 50,000 gross square feet (aggregate of all buildings on a site).

2.1 Develop a unified character for all built elements of Cloquet's business districts to yield a greater sense of Cloquet character.

Building Design Guidelines

2.1.01 For the West End and Cloquet Avenue, formula and "corporate" architecture, franchise patterns and buildings that are designed as signs shall be prohibited; building design shall rely on "found" character rather than introduced character; for Highway 33 South and Sunnyside, formula and "corporate" architecture, franchise patterns and buildings that are designed as signs shall be discouraged.

2.1.02 New development shall be compatible with existing development in its district, achieving compatibility through similar scale, massing, bulk and detail.

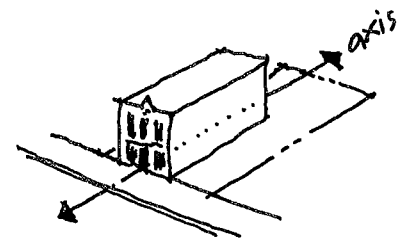
2.1.03 Buildings shall be organized with primary axis perpendicular to streets.

2.1.04 Each building shall be encouraged to explore some level of individual expression in order to reflect the sense of a district rather than a strip center.

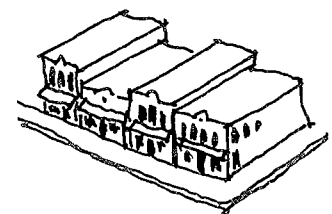
2.1.06 No commercial or office building shall exceed a height greater than three stories plus the roof, except that civic or institutional buildings may have elements that exceed three stories.

2.1.07 Awnings shall be allowed to be continuous only across "storefronts" occupied by a single tenant; awnings shall not be allowed to extend across the face of more than one building, even if the buildings are occupied by the same tenant.

2.1.08 Detail shall be integral to the building, not elements that are applied to a standard building shell (such as a clock tower or dormers with



Align primary building axis to be perpendicular to the street (Guideline 2.1.03)



Awnings shall cover the storefront of a single tenant; awnings shall not be continuous across more than one building (Guideline 2.1.07)

no usable space behind).

2.2 Require the use of quality building materials and methods to create an enduring stock of buildings.

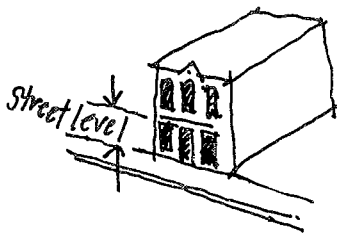
2.2.01 Materials shall be durable, easily maintained, attractive at close distances (for people walking on sidewalks or driving slowly on the street, for example); materials shall be scaled to pedestrians when structures are within 10 feet of a public right-of-way or a walkway that is intended for public use (avoiding the use of “jumbo” brick in these circumstances).

2.2.02 Brick, stone, wood, EIFS (exterior insulating finish system) or high quality precast concrete are acceptable finish materials; high quality metal (matte finish preferred) or synthetic siding may be acceptable if used in combination with other acceptable materials; wood frame or masonry construction is acceptable.

2.2.03 Transparent glass shall be used at the majority of street level windows; mirrored glass at street level is not acceptable.

2.2.04 Canvas awnings or extension of the roof material for awnings is encouraged; nylon awnings or other synthetic materials, as well as those awning structures meant to be illuminated from within, are not acceptable in the West End or Cloquet Avenue.

2.3 Develop buildings that relate to people at all publicly visible sides; eliminate a “back door” appearance for service areas and rear entrances from parking lots.



2.3.01 Facades facing streets or public walkways shall be articulated with windows and doors resulting in a minimum of 40 percent window or door area at street level (sidewalk to 12 feet high); windows shall have a generally vertical orientation.

Provide a minimum of 40 per cent transparent window and door area at street level of the street sides of buildings (Guideline 2.3.01)

2.3.02 Entries shall be designed to be the highlight of the building.

2.3.03 Mechanical systems shall be integrated into the design of the building.

2.3.04 Trash storage areas shall be completely enclosed and incorporated as a part of the building.

2.3.05 Only those entrances that are unlocked during regular business hours may be considered public entrances.

2.3.06 Signs shall be incorporated into the building facade, windows or awnings up to a maximum of 1 square foot of sign area per linear foot of street facade (at the front yard); signs that extend more than 12” beyond the plane of the building facade or signs that extend beyond the roof line are not allowed, except that signs that project



over the sidewalk are allowed up to a maximum size of six square feet (marquis excepted); signs that are within or a part of a window must maintain 70 percent clear area in the surface of the window; one sign will be allowed for each usable public entry (signs that are a part of an awning or within or part of a window are encouraged and shall not be counted in determining the number of signs allowed).

- 2.3.07 Tenant signage for multi-tenant buildings shall occupy an area no larger than 3 square feet per tenant at each public entrance.
- 2.3.08 Non-illuminated temporary signage shall be permitted for any tenant of a building up to 6 square feet of sign face per tenant. Temporary signage shall not be attached to the building and, if placed in a public right-of-way, shall maintain a minimum of 8 feet clearance for pedestrians and shall be no closer than 10 feet from a public right-of-way. Such temporary signage shall be placed only during operating hours for that business.
- 2.3.09 Temporary signage may be attached to the inside face of any window at street level, provided that such signage does not obscure more than 50 percent of the total window area and does not remain in place longer than 21 days (leasing or for sale signs exempt from time limitations).
- 2.3.10 All buildings must be identified at each public entrance with its full street address, in numbers and letters no smaller than 2 inches in height and no larger than 4 inches in height. This signage shall not be included in the total signage allowed.
- 2.3.11 Ground signs shall be encouraged in lieu of pylon signs, with size limited to 1/2 square foot of sign per linear foot of street facing facade on each of two sign faces. Ground sign height shall not exceed seven feet.

3.1 The Department of Interior "Standards for Rehabilitation," which are universally recognized as guides for the conservation and preservation of the heritage of a place, shall apply to the re-use of any structure within the West End or Cloquet Avenue which dates to within 10 years of the fire of 1918. The re-use and rehabilitation of a structure shall be measured for appropriateness by means of the following tests, and may apply equally to the development of new buildings in these districts: Historic Design Guidelines

- 3.1.01 Use: A property should be re-used in ways that require minimal change to its character defining elements.
- 3.1.02 Character: Historic character should be preserved by retaining historic architectural features, rather than altering or replacing them.
- 3.1.03 Authenticity: Changes that create a false sense of history, or copy

elements from nearby or similar buildings shall not be undertaken. Each property is a unique example of physical features, time and use.

- 3.1.04 Evolution: Changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
 - 3.1.05 Distinctive features, finishes and craftsmanship that characterize the property shall be preserved.
 - 3.1.06 Preservation: Deteriorated features shall be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary, it should be selective rather than total, and be substantiated by documented evidence of what was authentically present.
 - 3.1.07 Cleaning: Use the gentlest means possible, avoiding chemical treatments and absolutely avoiding any sandblasting.
 - 3.1.08 Archeological resources shall be protected and preserved, with mitigation techniques employed if resources must be disturbed.
 - 3.1.09 New work: Additions or alterations shall not destroy the historic materials that characterize the property, and shall be differentiated from the old, and yet be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of the original structure.
 - 3.1.10 Reversibility: New work shall be applied such that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and environment will be maintained.
- 3.2 The Department of Interior "Standards for Rehabilitation" and the Guidelines which accompany them are the starting point for storefront and downtown building design. However, in terms of an approach (for example, "where does one start?"), a process might be defined for re-use. Restoration and renewal work shall follow these steps:**
- 3.2.01 Historic pictures and/or research to determine authenticity of work is the most important starting point, thus avoiding guesswork, false application of history or a restoration theme. It also helps all parties visualize what is possible.
 - 3.2.02 In some cases, apply for Historic Structures Report grant to do a complete analysis.
 - 3.2.03 Study and articulate what is original, what is not, what should be retained and what is the character of the place.
 - 3.2.04 Develop a design concept based on this data and the use/re-use.
 - 3.2.05 Deal with code and technical matters as required using the appropriate specialists.



- 3.3 In the West End and Cloquet Avenue, the two-level, two-use nature of some buildings is important, thus each can be thought of as a “storefront” and an “upstairs,” which may require dual re-use considerations, accessibility solutions and other factors that might affect the re-use. Frequently the second level fronts are less changed or easier to restore than the storefronts below.**
- 3.3.01 Image: The whole building works as the signature of the business(es) present, and is one large “sign” of its presence, nature and viability.
- 3.3.02 Storefronts: Maximize transparency, remembering that this is the advertising of the inside, it is inviting and provides light outward in the evenings.
- 3.3.03 Signboards: Typically signboards are located just above the transparent storefronts. Small and interesting is better, with small spotlights for illumination. No backlighted plastic signs shall be allowed as they conflict with the historic qualities of buildings covered by this section of the design guidelines. Projecting signs (those that overhang sidewalks) are acceptable as described in Section 2.3.06.
- 3.3.04 Awnings: Real, operable, fabric (canvas or stabilized natural fabric) are encouraged if originally present or on new construction. They provide shade, rain protection, assist in store/business recognition and sign locations, and are a variable that is visually interesting. Awnings must not be regularized too much, nor become fixed or backlighted as this tends to diminish the original (historic) intentions of the awnings as described above in this paragraph. Awnings on re-use projects shall conform to the description in Section 2.1 and 2.2.
- 3.3.05 Upper facade: Restore typical historic window patterns discovered in old photos, restore top of wall detail or overhanging cornice work which acts as the eye-catching finale to the storefront.
- 3.3.06 Windows: Restore original (in whole or in part) or replicated windows by conforming to sizes, profiles, color and divisions as observed from historic photographs or drawings.
- 3.3.07 Backsides of buildings: The aesthetic is different from the front, but no less important. Usually simple and direct, this look, when carefully maintained, provides more of sculptural interest and intrigue (with many ups and downs, ins and outs) than the street side.
- 3.3.08 Energy conservation: Much restoration is also good for utility reasons as well as for energy conservation. Window work is a first priority, especially to reduce leaky conditions (infiltration). Frequently, existing windows can be rebuilt and refitted with weatherstripping and will have years of good service. Attic or roof spaces are the other high priority. Wall areas may not have a high proportion of exposure to the outside, so may not require as much attention.

- 3.3.09 Airlock/vestibules: These are good for energy conservation and comfort reasons, but can be poorly designed with the facade or storefront restoration. Airlocks and vestibules require extra care and consideration.
- 3.3.10 Authentic materials: The very same materials as used originally are best, but door and window materials may be painted metal instead of wood so long as the size, shape and placement in opening are kept as original. This is not automatic, and should be reviewed critically for approval.
- 3.3.11 Paint colors: Even though changeable, colors ought to be selected from historic analysis of what is found at each site and architectural feature. If not, then district trends will develop, or it will become only a matter of individual (or committee) taste, rather than being based on understandable principles. It is possible to develop a downtown “palette” of colors, from which owners can make selections (thus being “pre-approved”); such colors might include base colors that are earth tones with accent colors that are earth tones or complementary highlights. Large expanses of white or light colored walls shall be avoided.

3.4 In the event that a historic building is relocated into the West End or Cloquet Avenue, care should be exercised to make it fit the patterns of its new district.

- 3.4.01 These districts should never become the home for any old building from the area which might face extinction. Buildings must fit the use and character of downtown; therefore the “zoo effect” of orphan old buildings must be avoided.
- 3.4.02 If buildings are relocated into the West End or Cloquet Avenue, they shall conform the the patterns of the underlying district (as described above).

Oversight of Design Guidelines 4.1 In order for these Design Guidelines to be effective in maintaining consistency with the community’s visions for its business district, a body must be charged with their oversight.

- 4.1.01 The Planning Commission shall be charged with further shaping and refinement of the Design Guidelines, and the codification of appropriate sections of the Design Guidelines. Interpretation of the intent of the Design Guidelines shall be the sole responsibility of the Planning Commission.
- 4.1.02 The Design Guidelines shall apply to all parcels and projects within the boundaries of the business districts defined by this master plan.
- 4.1.03 As the City considers assistance to developers of projects within



downtown, the Planning Commission could act as an advisory body to City authorities having jurisdiction over the assistance that might be provided. Assistance shall be tied to satisfaction of the Design Guidelines (as well as conformance to the master plan as a whole).

- 4.2.01 Prior to review of any proposal which will be evaluated by use of the Design Guidelines, the city planner (and Planning Commission if necessary in the opinion of the city planner) will meet with the proposer to review the project and how the Design Guidelines might apply to the proposed work.
- 4.2.02 Review of development proposals for conformance with the Design Guidelines shall be triggered by a building permit application or a site plan/zoning review, or for any project that requests any form of city assistance. The city may require additional material from a proposer to fully understand the intentions and result of a proposal.
- 4.3.03 Review shall be performed by the city planner, unless the city planner determines that the complexity of the proposal is such that review by the Planning Commission is warranted.
- 4.3.04 The city planner and/or planning commission may request additional technical assistance for review of complex or controversial proposals. Such technical assistance shall be advisory only; the final determination for conformance with the Design Guidelines in such cases shall be by the Planning Commission.
- 4.3.05 Review of conformance with the Design Guidelines by the city planner or the Planning Commission shall not require a public hearing. Approval of a proposal shall not require any further approvals; a denial may be appealed to the Planning Commission (if the denial was made by the city planner) or to the City Council (if the denial was made by the Planning Commission).
- 4.4.01 Failure to adhere to documents submitted for review of conformance with the Design Guidelines shall carry the same penalties as lack of conformance with plans submitted for other city reviews.
- 4.3.02 Any change in the proposal after an initial approval shall be submitted for review by the city planner or Planning Commission. The process for re-evaluation shall follow the format described above.





First Steps

It will take years to fully implement this master plan. Broad strategies for its implementation were provided in the previous section. Those strategies provide a long term program of activities -- some specific and some that will have to have details filled in as the community implements the plan. All are critical to making this plan become real.

Several actions will initiate the revitalization process. Those actions -- "first step projects" -- are provided in the plan with a description of purpose, intent, desired outcome and likely timeline. This leaves the community with an immediate course of action upon adoption of the revitalization plan. While some actions are focused on particular districts, some have application across all districts. Some are physical actions; equally important are those actions which are less tangible but speak very directly to the long term viability of Cloquet's business districts.

Light Industrial Redevelopment in Cloquet Avenue district

One of the key aspects of a vital downtown is life and activity. A captive downtown population would be created through the development of light industrial uses between Cloquet Avenue and Avenue 'B.' These uses would replace underutilized or low value properties, eliminate land use conflicts, upgrade the image of the "back side" of Cloquet Avenue, and provide opportunities for light industrial development in areas already served by urban services. Parking would be developed to serve light industrial users and update and expand parking located behind Cloquet Avenue businesses. New buildings would follow the design guidelines, resulting in two story masses and some two level uses.

- Actions**
 - Establish a TIF District encompassing redevelopment area
 - Adopt design guidelines for the downtown area
 - Create a new designation for light industrial uses in the downtown area
 - Acquire properties and prepare sites for development
 - Market prepared sites to developers or light industrial users
 - Pursue development of a light industrial business incubator for one site
 - Purchase properties as they become available (to the extent that resources are available and redevelopment is supported by the plan). This will be an ongoing task to ensure the best use of land in Cloquet's business districts occurs.

- Related Actions**
 - Design and implement streetscape improvements for "front door" streets serving new light industrial uses (8th Street, 10th Street and 12th Street)
 - Design and implement streetscape improvements for Avenue 'B'

- Responsible Parties**
 - Establishment of TIF District, adoption of design guidelines and creation of appropriate zoning designation by the City Council and Planning Commission
 - Acquisition of properties and preparation of sites by City Council
 - Marketing of prepared sites by CDIC

- Affected Parties**
 - Residents of single family homes and existing businesses on blocks between Cloquet Avenue and Avenue 'B' (from 8th Street to 14th Street)
 - Major industries that utilize Avenue 'B' for truck access

- Potential Funding**
 - Tax Increment Financing
 - City Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund
 - Private investment/developer capital

- Anticipated Public Costs**
 - Costs will vary with the specific boundary of the redevelopment site and the appraised value of parcels and buildings that comprise the site
 - Costs include acquisition, relocation/removal of existing improvements, relocation benefits, preparing the site for development, participation in joint benefit activities (joint-use parking development), plus "soft" costs (appraisal, survey, soils investigations, legal, administrative, design/engineering fees)
 - Costs of loan programs, abated taxes or TIF should be considered

- Strategic Outcome**
 - An environment that results in activity in downtown for a variety of uses, without reliance on added commercial development for new activity
 - Existing land resources utilized to its highest and best use considering adjacent uses, existing infrastructure and likely market interest

- Strategic Goal**
 - Initiation of a light industrial redevelopment project in 1998, with occupancy by Fall 1999



14th Street

Highway 33 is the north/south route through Cloquet for most traffic, but 14th Street is the local connection between business districts, community institutions and neighborhoods. It deserves a character that makes it distinct from other streets, and builds a character that strongly reflects the community. As an alternate to Highway 33 for at least some Cloquet residents, this street should be more about Cloquet than traffic speeds or volume; the resulting character might be more of a parkway than a thorough fare.

As this street gains importance as a community connection, there may be a desire for development of new commercial uses that serve the community. Zoning needs to be strengthened to stop the "creep" of commercial activities, and keep those uses within the boundaries of the various business districts. Uses that would be appropriate here would be those that relate to Cloquet -- the institutions and facilities that directly serve the community without concern for profit.

This street also serves as a logical connection to the Munger Trail, and might be a way of drawing users of the trail into Cloquet. This provides another compelling reason for the development of 14th Street with a "parkway" character -- one that invites trail users into Cloquet and introduces them to the community. While this will certainly provide adequate facilities for bikers and hikers, facilities for snowmobilers may need to be accommodated elsewhere to capture the economic potential of that recreation group.

- Analyze zoning and reinforce ordinances to limit commercial development along 14th Street outside of business district boundaries set by this plan
- Define an appropriate cross-section and begin planning for implementation
- Establish a signed connection to the Munger Trail using 14th Street; restripe the roadway to accommodate a bicycle lane in each direction
- City Public Works and County Highway Department
- Park Board
- Local bike and snowmobiles clubs
- Homeowners, business owners and utility companies along 14th Street
- General City Revenue
- Grants (ISTEA) or state funding (for bike trail connection to Munger Trail)
- Initial costs for restriping a bike lane might be minimal; in the longer term, costs will include right-of-way acquisition and reconstruction of the roadway (including "soft costs"), which could be significant.
- Enhancement of a major community circulation route, providing a reasonable alternative to Highway 33 and an image that creates continuity between Cloquet Avenue/downtown and Stanley Avenue/South Highway 33
- A connection to the Munger Trail as a recreation and tourism resource
- Restripe 14th with bike lanes in 1998
- Initiate consistent boulevard plantings (where they will not be affected by later reconfiguration of the roadway) in 1999.
- Establish 14th Street in the C.I.P. for 2002 construction

Actions

Responsible Parties

Affected Parties

Potential Funding

Anticipated Public Costs

Strategic Outcome

Strategic Goal



Highway 33, Cloquet Avenue, Avenue 'D' and Broadway Street

This intersection is the most important in Cloquet. At this point, two business districts meet and the view to the river and bluffs for northbound traffic opens. However, several elements detract from the image of this intersection. The dry cleaners is not a sympathetic addition to the Frank Lloyd Wright gas station, and the bulk tanks detract from the architecture of this building as well. The park is a great open space, but it bears little relationship to the community or its resources in its activity or patterns. The connection to the West End seems circuitous and focuses immediately on buildings that diminish the historic qualities and character of the West End. To make strong connections to the West End, Cloquet Avenue and the great resource of the St. Louis River, the buildings, streets and open spaces that form this intersection must work as a unit, recognizing that the weakest element greatly diminishes the whole.

- Actions**
- Initiate vacation of the Avenue 'D' right-of-way and promote redevelopment.
 - Encourage restoration of the Frank Lloyd Wright gas station and the development and/or renovation of surrounding buildings and uses to create a compliment to the architectural resources of the original structure (with particular attention given to the dry cleaning operation to create a more sympathetic relationship to the architecture of the gas station; re-painting the building in colors that complement the gas station would be a good first step)
 - Establish a visitor information center or kiosk that is integral to the gas station site (a community events calendar or self-service information booth operated by the chamber or city, but in a secured space)
 - Expedite the renovation of the Chief Theater
 - Renovate or update the facades of buildings facing Broadway and the parking area at the entry to the West End
 - Plant trees to frame the view of the river and bluffs from the south, and especially to screen the metal buildings near the river
 - Plan a series of recurring community events for Veterans Park

- Responsible Parties**
- Building awareness of plan directions with individual owners by the Chamber of Commerce and the City Council
 - Provision of finance strategies to interested owners by the City of Cloquet and Cloquet Business Alliance
 - Renovation or updating of structures by individual owners
 - Establishment of a visitors center or information kiosk by the Chamber of Commerce
 - Enhancement of Veterans Park by the City of Cloquet through the Park Board

- Affected Parties**
- Best Oil (operator of convenience store)
 - D's Fabric Care
 - Private businesses and land owners in the area
 - Special interest sports groups
 - Veterans groups

- Potential Funding**
- Tax Increment Financing
 - Tax Abatement
 - Private investment
 - General City Revenue

- Anticipated Public Costs**
- Costs for acquisition and preparation of sites for redevelopment (see discussion on redevelopment costs on page 68 under "Anticipated Public Costs").



- Roadway and infrastructure reconstruction costs, plus "soft" costs (survey, design/engineering, legal and administrative)
- The costs of low interest loans made to encourage private sector development interests.

Strategic Outcome

- Enhanced activity and aesthetics at Cloquet's most important intersection, with an emphasis on patterns that are meaningful to the community and the surrounding landscape and buildings

Strategic Goal

- Vacation of Avenue 'D' and preparation of development site by 2000
- Frank Lloyd Wright gas station and Chief Theater complete by 2002
- Building facade improvements initiated in 1998
- Park planting enhancements initiated in 1999; amenities in 2000
- Relocate ball field by 1999/2000

Storefront and Building Infrastructure Rehabilitation

The plan encourages the development of higher quality buildings as commercial areas of Cloquet grow and change. It also encourages retention of worthy structures in each business district, allowing the community to possess both newer and older that suit the purposes of contemporary commercial and office activities. This is especially true in the West End and Cloquet Avenue, where buildings of some history form an integral part of the fabric of the district. What becomes most critical is that the renovation of these structures occurs with respect for the original building and its neighbors, lending a sense of permanence and renewal at the same time. The design guidelines are essential to this process.

It will be of little value if storefronts are rehabilitated without consideration of building function. If the infrastructure of the building is inadequate, there will be little hope of a new front creating vitality for the uses within the building or long term enhancement and stability for the district as a whole. This plan encourages the creation of buildings of integrity -- both in aesthetics (storefronts) and in function (building systems).

To encourage owners to pursue rehabilitation, the plan advises the creation of a loan and/or grant program aimed at storefront and infrastructure investment. Separate programs will ensure that facade changes are matched by investment in the hidden but critical components of a well-functioning building.

To encourage building owners to pursue renovation, a grant program for the purposes of obtaining professional design expertise might also be appropriate. This would allow an owner to put a more substantial part of their own money into the "bricks and mortar" without sacrificing design quality.

- Actions**
- Adopt design guidelines and a design guidelines overlay district encompassing all business districts; establish a review process to ensure conformance (especially for projects utilizing public funding or tax abatement)
 - Update appropriate sections of the zoning ordinance to mandate adherence to certain aspects of the design guidelines
 - Establish separate loan/grant programs for storefront rehabilitation (for visible facades) and for building infrastructure
 - Establish a tax abatement policy for storefront and building infrastructure improvements
 - Market the loan/grant program and tax abatement opportunities to building owners; establish an understanding of the intentions of the design guidelines with building owners to encourage conformance
 - Establish a grant program to allow building owners to "hire" a registered architect to develop a design for storefront or building infrastructure improvements; cap grants at \$2000 — an amount that should result in a significant impact on the renovation of a building; ultimately, the owner may see value in allotting additional funds for this type of technical expertise, but without the exposure to the assistance provider allowed by the grant, it would be unlikely that an architect would be brought into the project.
Establish a pool of three to five architecture firms to allow owners to solicit proposals from various firms, and utilize the services of the firm the owner feels is most capable of performing the work.
 - Consider making technical assistance available in the form of architectural expertise on a more limited basis; the city might commission an architect to be available in Cloquet for a part of a day (for instance, six hours in a confer-



ence room at City Hall). Owners could schedule appointments with the architect for 30 minute blocks of time, and be allowed to get initial input into projects being considered by the owner. If the program shows signs of success, it might be implemented on a regular basis.

- Establish policies for consistent maintenance of public spaces and improvements in business districts **Related Actions**
- Adoption of design guidelines, overlay district and review format for development and renovation by the city **Responsible Parties**
- Establishment of a loan/grant program , technical assistance programs and tax abatement policy by the city
- Marketing of the finance programs and design guidelines by the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Cloquet
- Commercial building owners **Affected Parties**
- New Loan and/or Grant Program initiated by the city **Potential Funding**
- Tax Abatement
- Private investment
- The public costs for renovation of a building's storefront or infrastructure will be the costs of initiating and implementing a loan and/or grant program funded by the city. The extent of funding will be determined by the city, but a cap of \$20,000 for each type of loan might be appropriate (an owner could apply for a storefront enhancement loan and a building infrastructure loan). Grants for architectural services would be an additional cost, but it might be seen as security for maintaining quality design for building renovation in which the city is financially participating. **Anticipated Public Costs**
- Additional "costs" might be seen in the process of tax abatement if that funding source is applied to this aspect of the plan.
- Reuse of existing building stock and maintaining a sense of connection with Cloquet's history associated with those buildings **Strategic Outcome**
- Enhancement of storefronts with a consistent level of quality and intention
- Maintenance of buildings in a condition that prolongs their useful life
- Adoption of guidelines concurrent with adoption of the plan **Strategic Goal**
- Update of zoning ordinances in 1998
- Establishment of loan/grant program and tax abatement procedures in 1998
- Six buildings participating in loan/grant or tax abatement programs in 1998, with rehabilitation work complete by Fall 1999

Stanley Avenue

The strategic location of signalized intersections and the development of an adequate roadway system must consider more than the traffic needs of strip development along Highway 33. The plan encourages development with depth -- reaching into the community from Highway 33. This pattern diminishes the "strip" character of Highway 33 to some extent, and creates more sensitive ties to the local community.

One of the great features of Stanley Avenue might be that it forms a connection between Highway 33 and 14th Street, much like Cloquet Avenue connects those same streets. Development along Stanley Avenue might take cues from the intensity of development in downtown to shape an important street in the South Highway 33 business district.

While activity along Stanley Avenue might mimic Cloquet Avenue, its character -- like other streets described in this plan -- must somehow more strongly reflect Cloquet. To simply relocate the traffic signal will only encourage some development to occur; the plan aims to use Stanley Avenue as an integral part of a vital commercial area in Cloquet. The siting of a permanent traffic signal to serve the Stanley Avenue area will require a great deal of consideration and a feasibility study prior to implementation.

- Actions**
 - Work with MnDOT to define a permanent location for a traffic signal that would serve the Stanley Avenue area and realign the frontage road to create proper stacking distance at Highway 33
 - Prepare plans for upgrading Stanley Avenue between Highway 33 and 14th Street, including right-of-way acquisition to accommodate the cross-section.
 - Build awareness of plan directions with property owners along this part of Stanley Avenue

- Responsible Parties**
 - City of Cloquet
 - MnDOT

- Affected Parties**
 - Business and property owners along the length of Stanley Avenue

- Potential Funding**
 - State funds
 - Special Assessments
 - General City Revenue

- Anticipated Public Costs**
 - Costs will include right-of-way acquisition, traffic signal construction, modification of frontage road and reconstruction of Stanley Avenue (including "soft costs"), which could be significant.

- Strategic Outcome**
 - Commercial development patterns that can build from Highway 33 traffic but create more depth to the South Highway 33 district than the current "strip" orientation
 - Provision of opportunities for new development in an underutilized part of Cloquet

- Strategic Goal**
 - Siting of permanent traffic signal on Highway 33 and realignment of frontage road by 2000
 - Streetscape enhancements beginning in 2000



Highway 33 Plantings

The plan aims at creating character for Cloquet's business districts, in part by making connections to features of the larger Cloquet landscape. Along Highway 33, private sector development and some public actions have eliminated the forest qualities of the environment in many places. Actions that begin to reclaim the forest are warranted.

Remnant right-of-way (those portions of the right-of-way which serve no traffic purpose and are clear of sight distance concerns) might be targeted to "reforestation." Even though these actions might seem to be minor interventions in a strip commercial environment, the sum total of the reclaimed remnants might someday begin to shape a new character for Highway 33.

The patterns and species used should emulate the natural forest surrounding Cloquet. Stands of red and white pines and colonies of aspen could be used, in groupings that reflect naturally propagated woodlands, to effect a significant change along the highway.

These practices might be extended to sites in two ways: leftover portions of sites might be planted much as the remnant right-of way pieces were planted; and the palette of plant materials used on sites might be focused on the same species of pine and aspen.

Protection and preservation of existing forest areas along Highway 33 is a paramount concern. Wherever such stands exist, steps should be taken to ensure their long-term presence.

- Identify remnant portions of rights-of-way and sites, and obtain permits and easements for reforestation activities **Actions**
- Establish a plan for reforestation in areas that are acceptable for planting
- Plant trees

- City of Cloquet must initiate the program **Responsible Parties**
- Land and business owners might be partners in the project
- Implementation (planting) could be accomplished by the city or in combination with local volunteers

- Land and business owners along Highway 33 **Affected Parties**

- General City Revenue **Potential Funding**
- Donations of plant material and equipment and labor for installation
- DNR grants

- Tree planting is an activity for which donations of material and labor might be expected (if promoted correctly). This project might be initiated and coordinated by city staff, with implementation overseen by a volunteer task force. Costs might be minimal if this course of action is followed. **Anticipated Public Costs**

- An environment along the highway and extending to sites adjacent or near the highway that yields a strong identity and character -- all derived from an idea that Cloquet was carved from the forest **Strategic Outcome**

- Initial plantings in the spring of 1999 **Strategic Goal**

Retail Business Development

The plan has indicated the importance of viable businesses as the critical component of the revitalization. For businesses that need additional support, and to aid in attracting new businesses, a number of business development and enhancement strategies might be undertaken as a first step.

Components could be added to the market analysis included in this plan, with a goal of thoroughly understanding the local consumers so that Cloquet businesses can saturate the primary market and begin to penetrate the secondary trade area. A consumer survey and a business survey should be used to identify the needs of each group and lead businesses to a more competitive, market-driven retail environment. The Chamber might also offer individualized consultations to aid local businesses in interpretation of the data.

Based on the business survey, a retention program should be established for existing independent businesses. Seminars addressing topics identified in the survey would be aimed at enhancing practices and increasing profitability.

The retail community should take steps to market commercial aspects of Cloquet collectively. A unified, city-wide campaign designed to attract customers, new businesses and developers might be undertaken. A position statement might be adopted to distinguish Cloquet shopping opportunities from those in surrounding areas. The statement should be used in marketing materials (business recruitment literature, joint advertising). Existing special events, celebrations and sales might be modified to reinforce the collective position statement. It will be important to market the goods and services available in Cloquet based on substance rather than slogan.

The marketing campaign should encompass the following factors:

- a description of the type of retail mix
- a reference to the primary trade area
- an indication of the target customer markets
- a defense of the choice of market (based on a market analysis)

A draft position statement (that works with the current slogan --"Come grow with us") for the collective business districts is offered as a part of this plan:

Cloquet's distinctive business districts offer moderately priced goods and service to an increasingly prosperous community with a growing trade area. Value conscious customers find a broad selection of establishments -- from locally-owned businesses to national chains -- among its four accessible and attractive commercial districts. The Cloquet community is an accommodating, convenient alternative to urban venues.

Cloquet's business districts could be further unified by the creation of a business directory or a common celebration with an authentic theme. Gaining insight into current retail trends and fresh ideas for promotions might also be useful for existing businesses. A newsletter or technical bulletin highlighting business practices might be valuable for keeping current with the retail world outside of Cloquet.



Finally, it is important that new businesses continue to be recruited to fill vacancies as they occur. Emphasis should be placed on targeting businesses to an appropriate context, recognizing the complementary, competitive or compatible nature of retail and service business types.

- Conduct consumer and business surveys; analyze and disseminate results **Actions**
- Establish a business enhancement program for independent businesses
- Undertake a unified marketing campaign for Cloquet's business districts
- Publish a retail/service business directory
- Celebrate Cloquet's uniqueness with an authentic event, and link this event to retail promotions
- Enhance businesses practices through educational newsletters or bulletins
- Target appropriate businesses for recruitment
- Create business development tools that are aligned with the directions of the revitalization plan

- Encourage upgrades of storefronts and building infrastructure related to upgrades of business practices and marketing efforts. **Related Actions**

- Chamber of Commerce is the logical lead party for all retail business development activities. **Responsible Parties**

- Merchants and business operators in all districts, regardless of affiliation with any organized local group. **Affected Parties**

- Chamber of Commerce **Potential Funding**
- General City Revenue

- Public costs might be very limited depending on activities undertaken; it would be advantageous to allow merchants to participate in any educational activities for a limited fee to encourage attendance **Anticipated Public Costs**
- Costs for a market study vary with the information needed to support desired activities, but the costs might be seen as a good investment and a needed element of a comprehensive economic development program

- A thriving, business community with a strong emphasis on collective success **Strategic Outcome**
- Merchants with a thorough understanding of their market and customers, and a consistent professional attitude toward their enterprise

- Conduct business survey in 1998 **Strategic Goal**
- Initiation of an accepted marketing campaign in 1999.
- Present seminars on topics identified in business survey in 1999
- Hold a major, well supported event in 2000
-

Signage

Signs in both the private and public sector are critical elements of the revitalization plan. For the private sector, signs must reasonably address the nature of the enterprise being signed, but the signs must respect the character of the community, the business district and the immediate vicinity. This plan encourages signs that do not create competition for the "biggest and brightest;" rather, it advocates for creative and appropriate signs for businesses in each business district.

Signs in the public sector are important for information and identity. A family of signs implemented consistently through Cloquet's business districts will direct people to districts and features of the community, let them know where public parking is located, and identify streets in business districts in ways that form continuity among the various districts. The community has already invested in significant marker signs at the ends of Cloquet Avenue; the logical extension of that work is the broader implementation of a public signage program.

Implementation of a signage program can be accomplished over a period of time. Street signs in the business districts could be replaced on a programmed basis so that after a period of years, that part of an overall program is complete. More aggressive implementation measures might be pursued if resources are available.

Whenever a new sign is considered for a private enterprise, it should follow the directives of the design guidelines. When a new building is erected, or when a building is renovated, the opportunity for implementing the private sector aspects of a signage program should be grasped. While large scale change will not likely occur overnight, an incremental process can yield tremendous results.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt design guidelines and codify appropriate sections; review signs in the community and consider creation of a comprehensive sign ordinance• Program implementation of a public signage program• Require recipients of financial assistance from the city to adhere to the requirements of the design guidelines |
| Responsible Parties | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning Commission should be charged with review of existing signs and the creation of a new signage ordinance based on the design guidelines• Businesses must be aware of requirements of the design guidelines and any signage ordinances that might stem from the guidelines• City of Cloquet (Public Works) would be responsible for implementing the signs for the public portion of a signage program. |
| Affected Parties | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building and business owners |
| Potential Funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Private sector capital for private signs• General City revenue for public sector signs |
| Anticipated Public Costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Costs for public sector signs should be programmed for implementation over a period of years to keep investment manageable |
| Strategic Outcome | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A coordinated public signage program• An appropriate and consistent level of quality in private sector signs |
| Strategic Goal | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adoption of design guidelines and codification in 1998• Initiation of a public signage program in 2000 |



Cloquet Avenue and West End Special Service District

The best efforts of any actions will be diminished or lost if the environment is not well cared for. Consistent cleaning of streets and sidewalks and timely removal of snow, unified seasonal decorations and other maintenance practices, and even the creation and maintenance of common parking areas, are often best conducted through a vehicle such as a special service district. Even if most businesses are dedicated and follow through consistently in these areas, it is the one or two businesses that never perform these tasks that detract from the whole. It will take a united effort on the part of business and land owners to initiate a special service district; the owners impose this practice on themselves (it cannot be forced upon the owners by the city).

Many downtown areas have realized the benefit of a special service district, and many cities have supported businesses in their efforts in establishing these districts. The businesses enjoy more attentive maintenance that is guided by their needs, and cities may be relieved of the more intensive maintenance these areas require. Citizens also enjoy benefits from a special service district created for maintenance of a downtown area: the costs to the city's general fund are typically eliminated or dedicated to other purposes.

The details of such a district are discussed in the section on "Tools."





Tools

For some of Cloquet's business districts, market forces are a powerful tool for creating vitality. In the Highway 33 South and Sunnyside districts, the highway provides opportunities not present in the West End or Cloquet Avenue districts. Market forces will be the catalyst for the evolution of these areas, but the community still has the opportunity to shape what evolves. There may be a need for public action to guide the market to the community's vision.

In the West End and Cloquet Avenue business districts, the ability for the market to shape development is limited. In these cases, the playing field is not necessarily level — traffic as found on Highway 33 is absent; development sites are not readily available; building infrastructure may not always suit contemporary market standards; parking is not always obvious. Here, the role of the city in implementing the revitalization plan will be critical; the city will have to "tip the scales" to make things happen.

Every project undertaken by the private sector or by the community provides an opportunity to make Cloquet a better place. It is the community's responsibility to adhere to the principles of the revitalization plan, and to balance private development objectives with the goals of the community. Not every action of the revitalization plan will be an obvious benefit for a business, but every action of this plan should be a benefit for the Cloquet community.

One of the first questions posed by the action indicated in this plan will be that of the dollar cost of implementation. The plan identifies the finance tools and resources that are most commonly available to communities, and attempts to illustrate how those resources might best be used. Two key points of finance are worth noting at the outset: that financial resources are limited, and that when applied to a project, those resources must be employed wisely; and that every private sector project undertaken must have some level of commitment demonstrated by the private sector developer -- that individual or group must bring their own capital to the project.

Finally, this plan can only be a best guess at what might happen in Cloquet's future -- based on community desires and an ability to make the plan happen. If change becomes necessary, the plan must be adjusted to ensure the process of revitalization continues. A series of indicators are listed in order to provide a baseline for determining when -- or if -- change is required.

Finance Tools and Resources

The implementation of the revitalization plan will involve four broad areas of activity:

- Construction of public improvements and facilities.
- Acquisition of land and preparation of sites for development.
- Enhancement of existing properties.
- Assistance to specific development projects.

State Law gives cities, housing and redevelopment authorities (HRA) and economic development authorities (EDA) a variety of tools to finance these activities. The following descriptions summarize the basic options available to finance activities related to plan implementation.

Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing (TIF) is the primary development finance tool available to Minnesota cities (Minnesota Statutes, Sections 469.174 through 469.179). In concept, tax increment financing is simple: the property taxes created by new development (or redevelopment) are captured and used to finance activities needed to encourage the development. In practice, TIF is governed by complex statutory limitations (which are frequently amended by the State Legislature). The rules that govern the use of TIF in 1997 may not apply to projects occurring in the future.

These complexities make it impractical to provide a thorough explanation of tax increment financing as part of this plan. Instead, this section highlights the use of TIF as it relates to the implementation of the revitalization plan.

The use of tax increment financing is essential to implementation. It provides the financial resources needed to perform several critical revitalization actions:

- Acquire property and assemble suitable development sites.
- Remove barriers to redevelopment, including structurally substandard buildings.
- Make development sites in the downtown area economically competitive with more traditional development locations in Cloquet and the surrounding communities.
- Make the public improvements outlined in the plan more affordable.
- Provide an economic incentive for existing businesses to reinvest in buildings.

Tax Abatement

In 1997, the State Legislature gave local governments the ability to abate property taxes. Minnesota Statutes, Sections 469.1812 through 469.1815 describes the powers and process for tax abatement. Some highlights of the abatement authority include:

- The abatement is granted individually by each political subdivision (city, county, school district).
- Compared with TIF, the process to grant an abatement is simple. The basic process requirement is a public hearing. Following the hearing, the governing body adopts a resolution specifying the terms



of the abatement.

- Abatements may be granted for no longer than ten years. Abatements by school districts are subject to annual reauthorization.
- Unless the authorizing resolution prohibits change, the abatement may be reviewed and modified every second year after its approval. Abatements pledged to pay bonds are not subject to periodic review.
- In any year, the total taxes abated by a political subdivision may not exceed the greater of 5% of the current levy or \$100,000.
- Taxes cannot be abated for property located within a tax increment financing district.
- The statute grants the authority to issue general obligation bonds supported by the collection of abated taxes. The proceeds of the bonds may be used to pay for public improvements that benefit the property, land acquisition, reimbursement to the property owner for improvements to the property, and the costs of issuing the bonds.

The bonding authority should be approached carefully. It may be possible to pledge abated property taxes as revenue to another type of debt. The abatement will function more like a rebate: a property owner's taxes will not be reduced. The amount abated is included in the tax levy, collected, and paid to the property owner or used by the political subdivision pursuant to the statute and the enabling resolution.

This process makes timing an important factor. Since the estimated total abatement must be added to the proposed and final tax levy for the political subdivision, abatements become tied to the general levy process. You must understand the levy process to know when abatement revenue will first become available.

Public improvements are often financed using the power to levy special assessments (Minnesota Statutes Chapter 429). A special assessment is a means for benefiting properties to pay for all or part of the costs associated with improvements and to spread the impact over a period of years. From a city perspective, this authority provides an important means of raising capital.

Special Assessments

- Special assessments can be used to finance a wide range of public improvements, including all of the public improvements needed to implement the revitalization plan. The following list indicates the types of improvements that can be financed with special assessments:
 - To acquire, open and widen any street, and to improve the same by constructing, reconstructing and maintaining sidewalks, pavement, gutters, curbs and vehicle parking strips of any material, or by grading, graveling, oiling or otherwise improving the same, including beautification thereof and including storm sewers or other street drainage and connections from sewer, water or similar mains to curb lines.
 - To acquire, develop, construct, extend and maintain storm and sanitary sewers and systems, including outlets, holding areas and ponds, treatment plants, pumps, lift stations, service connections, and other appurtenances of a sewer system, within and without the



corporate limits.

- To construct, reconstruct, extend and maintain steam heating mains.
 - To install, replace, extend and maintain street lights and street lighting systems and special lighting systems.
 - To acquire, improve, construct, reconstruct, extend and maintain water works systems, including mains, valves, hydrants, service connections, wells, pumps, reservoirs, tanks, treatment plants and other appurtenances of a water works system, within and without the corporate limits.
 - To acquire, improve and equip parks, open space areas, playgrounds and recreational facilities within and without the corporate limits.
 - To plant trees on streets and provide for their trimming, care and removal.
 - To abate nuisances and to drain swamps, marshes and ponds on public and private property and to fill the same.
 - To construct, reconstruct, extend and maintain dikes and other flood control works.
 - To construct, reconstruct, extend and maintain retaining walls and area walls.
 - To acquire, construct, reconstruct, improve, alter, extend, operate, maintain and promote a pedestrian skyway system.
 - To acquire, construct, reconstruct, extend, operate, maintain and promote underground pedestrian concourses.
 - To acquire, construct, improve, alter, extend, operate, maintain and promote public malls, plazas or courtyards.
 - To construct, reconstruct, extend and maintain district heating systems.
 - To construct, reconstruct, alter, extend, operate, maintain and promote fire protection systems in existing buildings, but only upon a petition pursuant to section 429.031, subdivision 3.
 - To acquire, construct, reconstruct, improve, alter, extend and maintain freeway sound barriers.
 - To improve, construct, reconstruct, extend and maintain gas and electric distribution facilities owned by a municipal gas or electric utility.
- Special assessments provide a means to borrow money to finance public improvements.
Chapter 429 conveys the power to issue “general obligation improvement bonds” to finance the design and construction of public improvements. Important factors in the use of improvement bonds include:
 - A minimum of 20% of the cost of the improvement must be assessed against benefited properties.
 - Beyond the 20% threshold, any other legally available source of municipal revenue may be used to pay debt service on improvement bonds.
 - Improvements bonds are not subject to any statutory debt limit.
 - Improvement bonds may be issued without voter approval.



- Careful consideration must be given to setting the amount of the assessment.

State Law sets one important limit on the amount of a special assessment. The amount of an assessment cannot exceed benefit to property as measured by increased market value. Within this limitation, several factors will shape the amount of the assessment:

- Reducing the amount of the assessment below 20% of the improvement cost impairs the ability to issue bonds.
- Local improvement policies and/or decisions made on previous projects often create parameters for assessments.
- The assessment must strike a balance between equity and feasibility. Properties that benefit from improvements should pay a fair share of the costs. The assessment must be affordable for both the property owner and the City. Reducing the assessment to the property requires the City to allocate other revenues to the project.

A special service district is a tool for financing the construction and maintenance of public improvements within a defined area. Special legislation is required to access these powers in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 428A. This legislation also defines the nature of special services that can be provided and financed. The nature of the applicable services can be tailored to meet the needs of the community.

Special Service District

A special service district has several applications for the revitalization plan. The district provides an alternative means of financing the construction of any of the public improvements discussed previously with special assessments. The service district approach avoids the “benefits” test imposed by special assessments. The test for the district is that the amount of service charges imposed must be “reasonably related” to the special services provided. The costs of parking improvements, for example, may be better spread across a district than through assessments to individual properties.

An important use of the special service district is the maintenance of public improvements. Some of the improvements described in the revitalization plan require a level of maintenance above the typical public improvement. Items such as banners and planted materials must be maintained and replaced. Higher levels of cleaning and snow removal may be needed. Without a special service district, these costs are borne through the General Fund of the City.

The use of a special service district is subject to some important constraints:

- Process to create district and to levy taxes to use must be initiated by petition of property owners and is subject to owner veto.

The use of a special service district requires a collaboration of property owners and the City. There are two separate steps in the process: (1) adoption of an ordinance establishing the service district and (2) adoption of a resolution imposing the service charges.

Neither step can be initiated by the City. The City must be petitioned to undertake the processes to create a special service district and to impose service charges. At a minimum, the petitions must be signed by owners representing 25% of the area that would be included in the district and 25% of the tax capacity subject to the service charge.

The actions of the City Council to adopt the ordinance and the resolution are subject to veto of the property owners. To veto the ordinance or the resolution, objections must be filed with the City Clerk within 45 days of initial Council action to approve. The objections must exceed 35% of area, tax capacity or individual/business organizations in the proposed district.

- The service charge applies solely to non-residential property.

State Law limits the application of a service charge to only property that is classified for property taxation and used for commercial, industrial, or public utility purposes, or is vacant land zoned or designated on a land use plan for commercial or industrial use. Other types of property may be part of the service district, but may not be subject to the service charge.

General Property Taxes General property taxes can be used to finance many of the services, improvements, facilities and development activities needed to implement the revitalization plan. Taxes may be levied through the General Fund, to pay debt service on G.O. Improvement or G.O. Tax Increment Bonds, and as a levy for an Economic Development Authority or Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

The appeal of the property tax is its ability to generate revenues. Property taxes could play an important role in implementing the plan. The use of property taxes must be approached carefully:

- The property tax is the primary source of revenue for financing city services. The use of property taxes on the revitalization plan must be weighed against other competing funding needs.
- In 1997, the State Legislature established levy limits for fiscal years 1998 and 1999. Levy limits will cap the levy for general government purposes. A levy for debt service can be made outside of the levy limit restrictions.
- The property tax system is in a state of change. In 1997, the State Legislature reduced the tax rates for all major classifications of real property. The Legislature not only made immediate changes in class rates, but also set a process for achieving future targeted reductions. Among the targeted reductions are the second tier for commercial-industrial from 4.0% to 3.5% and market rate apartments from 2.9% to 2.5%.

Commercial Rehabilitation Loans and Grants Through HRA's and EDA's, cities have broad powers to facilitate the revitalization of existing buildings. There is also specific statutory authority for loans by



cities. The city may establish a program to make loans to finance the rehabilitation of small and medium sized commercial buildings (M.S. Section 469.184). The program can be funded through the issuance of bonds. Other revenues of the City (i.e., tax increment) could be used to assist the program. The creation of a loan/grant program will focus more on uses and funding than on the underlying authority.

Sales Tax

Some Minnesota cities have sought and obtained special legislative authority for a local sales tax. The funding potential of a local sales tax would depend on its rate and application.

In addition to its funding capacity, a sales tax offers other positive factors. Depending on the enabling legislation, it could be used to finance any implementation action for the plan. The availability of this revenue would lessen the burden on more traditional funding sources, such as property taxes and special assessments. This tax also passes a portion of costs on to non-residents.

A local sales tax produces concerns about placing the community at an economic disadvantage. If the cost is passed on to the customer, they may choose to shop outside of the community. If the business absorbs the tax, then it may impair business development.

Evaluation Tools and Indicators

As we look forward we can envision the changes that result from this plan for Cloquet's business districts. It will be useful also to look back as we proceed, understanding what change has occurred and how successful we have been in this endeavor — and even when a change in course might be required. The following list of indicators will demonstrate the incremental change from 1998's business district conditions:

- Attendance estimates for downtown events
- Sales receipts for downtown entertainment venues
- Numbers of out-of-town visitors at downtown businesses (recorded by zip codes at point of sale)
- Downtown traffic and pedestrian counts after 6 p.m. weekdays and all day on weekends
- Record of all new activities and events each year
- Assessed and taxable valuation of downtown as a whole and by area
- Employment by S.I.C. code
- Absorption rates for office and retail use
- Vacancy rates for office and retail use
- Business expansions and businesses attracted
- Lease rates for retail and office use
- Demographic data for draw area and for downtown neighborhoods
- Number and type of downtown dwelling units
- Assessed valuation and sale prices of homes in downtown neighborhoods

One of the key first steps will be to establish base line data for each of the indicators listed above. The development and maintenance of this information is a task well-suited to an organization such as the Chamber of Commerce or CDIC, or a city agency charged with economic development.

