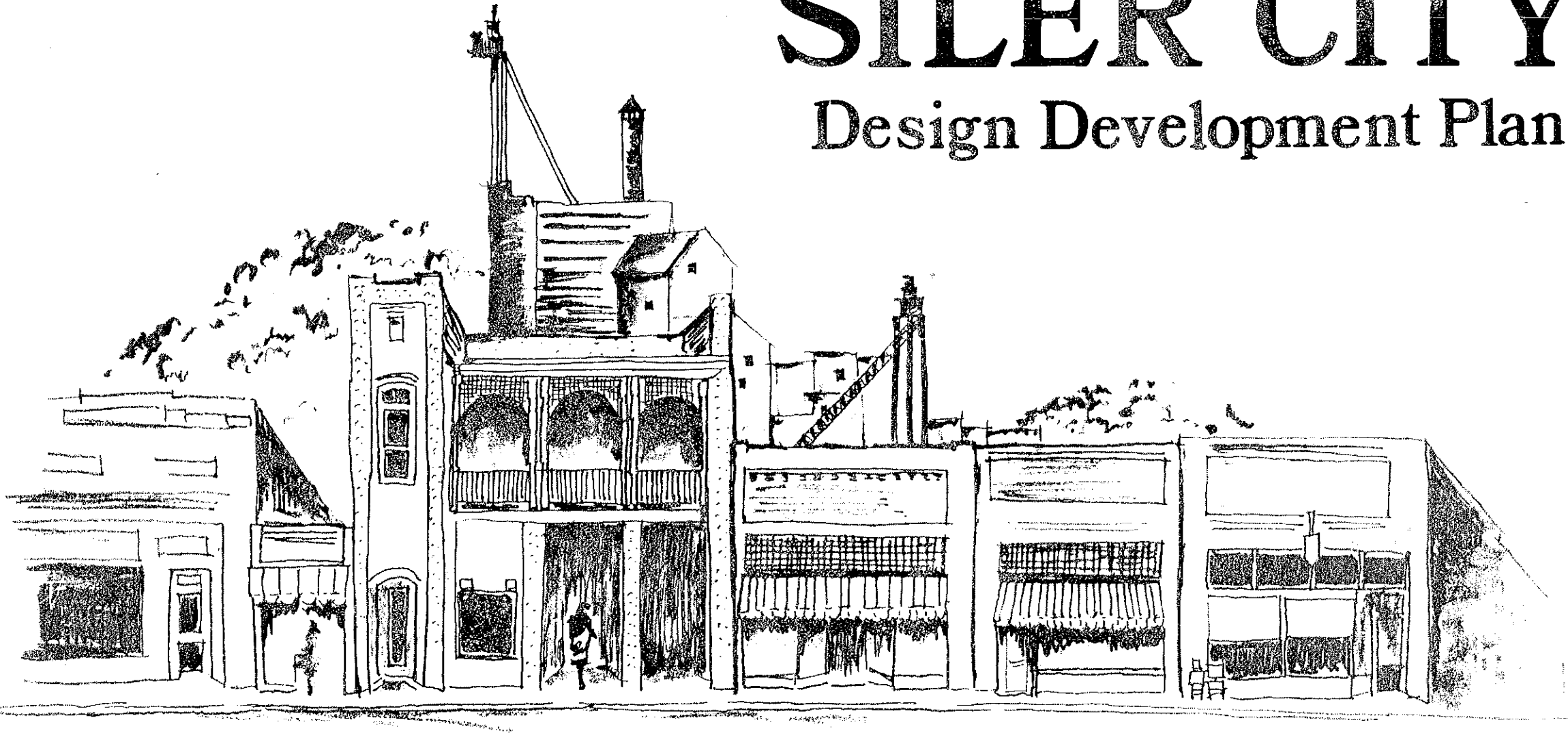


SILER CITY

Design Development Plan



SILER CITY

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
SCHOOL OF DESIGN
NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

DECEMBER 1980

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Acknowledgments

The authors owe many thanks to all those who have made the preparation of this development plan so pleasant and enjoyable. We wish to especially thank Mayor Obbie Budd; Town Manager, Jim Hipp; Don Tarkenton, Chairman of the Pathway of Progress Committee, (formally the Blue Ribbon Committee); and Mary Ann Frederick, Community Development Planner, North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Community Development. Many thanks also go to the citizens of Siler City who made the success of this project possible.

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North Carolina State University

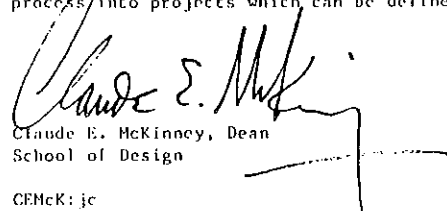
SCHOOL OF DESIGN
Architecture - Landscape Architecture - Product Design
P.O. Box 5998, Raleigh, North Carolina 27650

December 12, 1980

The relationship between the community of Siler City and the School of Design has grown out of our commitment to the Land Grant Charter of North Carolina State University. The concept of service to the communities of North Carolina while students are in a learning posture is one that we, wholeheartedly, embrace.

During the fall semester of 1980, Professor Angelo Abbate's graduate landscape design studio focused on the townscape of this small community in the southern piedmont of North Carolina-- a community which is rich in history, texture, and human aspirations. The students' design assessment has dealt with the social, economic, political, and historical issues in addition to those aspects of the environment which are visual, both built and natural. The studio has concentrated on the Town Hall green--a public space which can be developed for "the public good"--it is seen as an asset worthy of enrichment.

The students have learned from the direct contact with the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee and in working with their clients, the citizens, who now look at their townscape with heightened awareness. Now that our role has come to an end, the challenge is to the town's public and private leadership--to translate this conceptual process into projects which can be defined and implemented.


Claude E. McKinney, Dean
School of Design
CEMcK: jc

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Landscape Architecture at the North Carolina State University School of Design undertook the project to develop a comprehensive community development plan for the town of Siler City. The school was contacted by the town out of their concern for the uncoordinated growth of their community as well as the deterioration of the central business district. This study was funded by a grant from the town of Siler City. The study hopes to provide guidance for enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of Siler City. It will propose alternatives for achieving:

- 1) a balanced and steady economic growth;
- 2) an environmentally sound and visually attractive community
- 3) the conservation of small town character; and
- 4) the revitalization of the downtown.

The initial stage of the study was to gather data on existing conditions of the town and to analyze its significance. From this information, problem statements and goals were identified and conceptual solutions were developed. These concepts were then prioritized and developed into specific guidelines, suggestions and plans for the development of Siler City.

HISTORY

The area presently known as Chatham County was established as early as 1745 by settlers of English, Scottish, Irish and German descents. Most colonists arrived in the piedmont "back country" by way of a southern route up the Cape Fear Valley or from the Northern colonies of Pennsylvania and Virginia. The earliest settlers included Plikard and Elizabeth Siler, whose descendants later became the namesake for Siler City.

The land on which Siler City eventually appeared was first mentioned in a request for a deed in 1754 by Herman Husband, a resident of the Sandy Creek community of Randolph County. The deed awarded him in 1757, was for 640 acres in the fork of Love's Creek entitled "The Desolate Tract". In 1769, Henry Bray purchased the tract and unlike Husband, probably settled somewhere in the vicinity; the Bray name still exists today as a prominent family name in the Siler City area. In 1774, three years after Chatham County was officially formed from part of Orange County, William Ditto was appointed overseer of Marmon's Road between Love's Creek and Guilford to the north (now Alamance County). Its southern destination was Fayetteville and this route closely approximated the modern day highway, US 421. It is believed Ditto lived in the immediate vicinity of today's Siler City, for in 1794, we have records of his sale of a house and property to John Siler, son of Plikard and Elizabeth Siler.

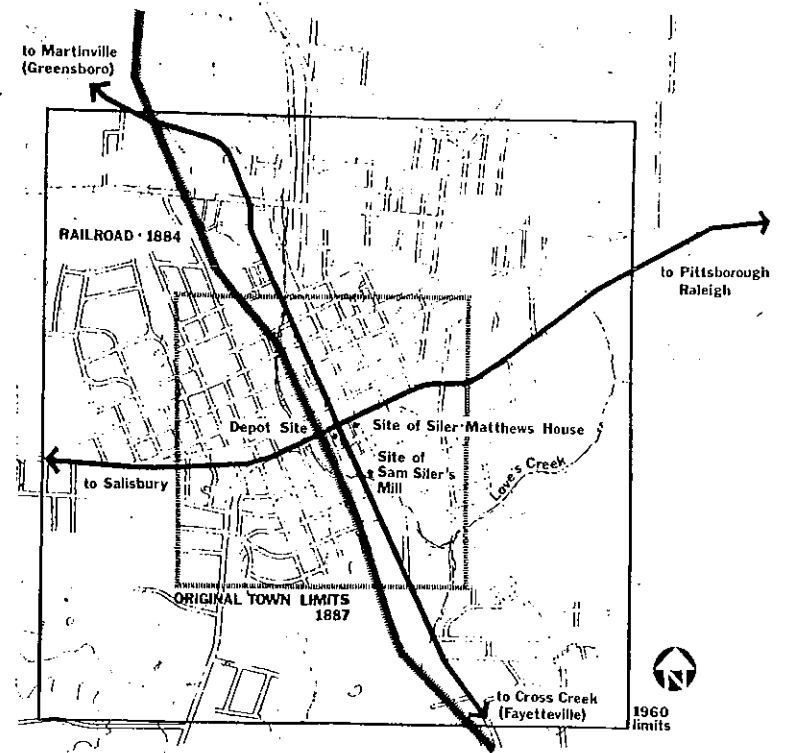
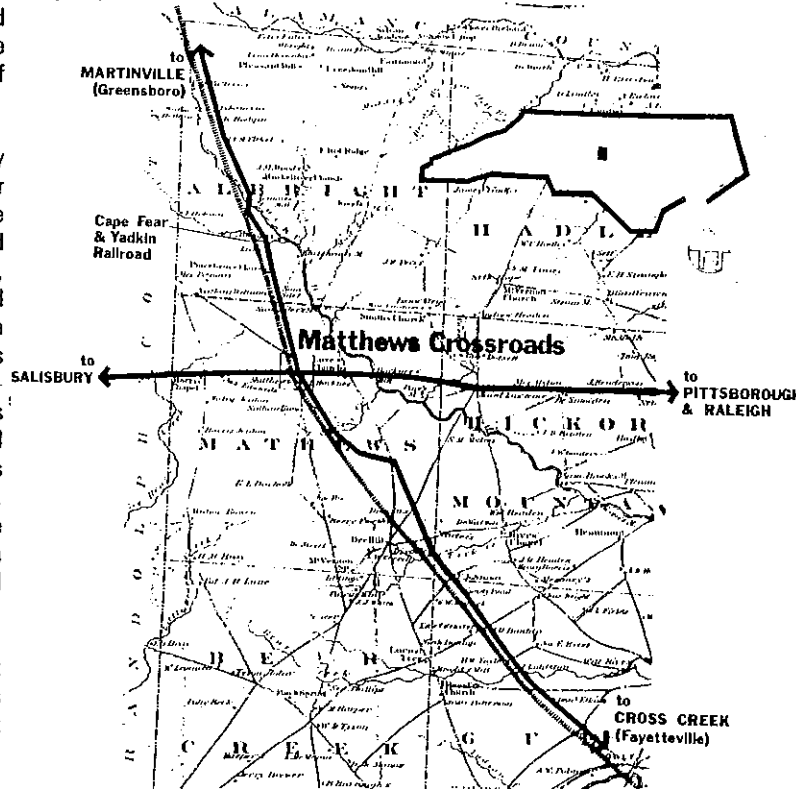
The elder Silers were married at a young age in 1741, shortly after arriving together in Pennsylvania from Germany. The Quaker influence there compelled them to seek religious freedom in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. The quest for sweet potatoes led them to the Lacy Creek area of Chatham County, North Carolina, in 1750. They settled about four miles northwest of Siler City and are buried near the Rocky River Church. John Siler soon built a house of his own around 1800. The home, whose later address was 116 E. Raleigh Street, was one of the finest in the area, the second in the county to have glass windows. In form, his home was otherwise typical of the vernacular architecture of the period and region. Dwellings of the time combined old and new world forms of the Georgian mode and modified them for North Carolina's hot, humid summers. These Georgian folk-dwellings reduced the typical two room deep plans to one room deep, still separated by a central hall, allowing better ventilation in the summer. A second story was added to the plan as a cool sleeping loft.

William Matthews purchased the Siler home in 1842 (probably at John Siler's death). During his ownership the nearby crossroads became known as Matthews Crossroads, assuming a prominent role in Western Chatham County. The home often served as an

overnight station for the two stage routes, one from Raleigh to Salisbury (east-west), and the second from Martinsborough (Greensboro) to Fayetteville (north-south).

Siler City's namesake, Samuel Siler, and his son, Cincinnatus, are mentioned in historical records around 1880. In that year Cincinnatus became the first postmaster and the postal service designated the town "Energy". Before that time the pair operated a mill on Love's Creek near its present junction with south Chatham Avenue and ran a dry goods store for a short time.

The year 1884, hailed the birth of the town in a regional center with the arrival of the railroad, the Cape Fear and Yadkin Line, which ran from Greensboro to Sanford. Sam Siler donated the land for a depot. He is said to have laid out the town street pattern on his land and offered to give land to people who would settle there and build homes. In honor of this contribution, the post office was renamed "Siler Station". Two of the earliest merchants at this time were Womble and Wren Brothers, and E. R. McLean Company.



The town was again renamed in 1886, with its present name "Siler City" after postal mixups with another town, Silver Station. Also, in that year the Methodist Church built its first building after holding services for years in a brush arbor. Siler City was incorporated in 1887, and its corporate limits were established as a mile square aligned north-south with the depot as its center. The railroad and established town grid ran at an angle to this orientation, northwest to southeast, and this relationship still exists.

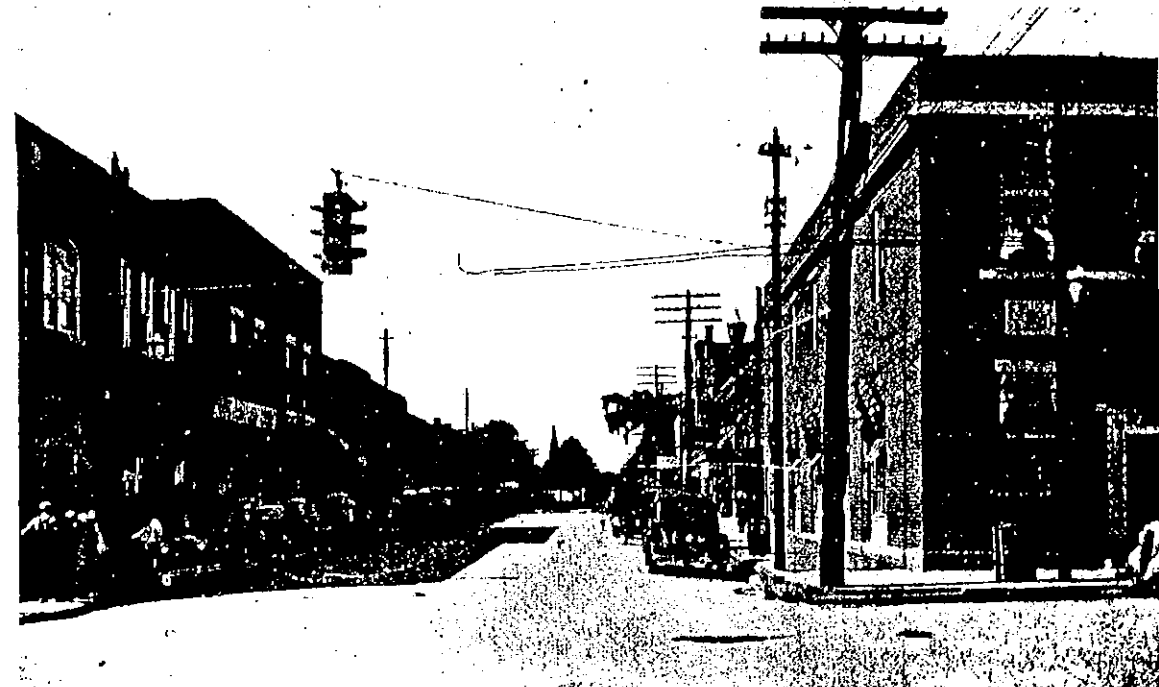
The railroad signaled a new era for the Siler area bringing an expansion of the local economy and subsequent enlargement of the town's physical size. The depot's daily passenger service fostered supportive services for travelers and Siler City assumed a role as regional shipping. In 1891, there were a number of enterprises dealing in general merchandise and transportation items, and several specialized services such as a photographer, druggist, a saw mill, a bakery, a shoe shop, a furniture shop, two cotton gins and two doctors. Siler City was Chatham County's "boom town" whose residents, numbering 254 in 1890, enjoyed relative wealth, prominence and sophistication as evidenced by the fine homes built and the successful businesses that originated there.

Business successes highlighted some of Siler City's subsequent growth. In 1895, W. S. Durham was a prominent dealer in poultry, eggs, and rabbits on what is the present site of Siler City Mills in the 100 block of Chatham Street. At 112 Chatham Avenue, Tod R. Edwards, a prominent black businessman owned a jewelry store.

The decade between 1900 and 1910 saw numerous "firsts" such as the first bank and local telephone company. The Siler City Grit appeared and became the first paper to endure any length of time. The Bending Chair Manufacturing Company and the Oval Oak Washboard Company were two of the most successful industries. In 1910 the population numbered 900.

The poultry business expanded in the following decade from 1910-20. During this period the first theater, ice and coal plant and electric plant were established. Other prominent dates include: 1925, the completion of the water/sewage treatment plant; 1937, the first hospital; 1939, a new town hall was built as a WPA project and in 1940, a new post office was built also as a WPA project in the site of the historic Siler-Matthews house.

Industry has always played an important role through the history of Siler City. There are presently three major types of industry supporting the town: food processing, furniture, and textiles. These all have precedents dating back to the last century and promise to be the building blocks of the future.





ANALYSIS

NATURAL FACTORS

Siler City is located in the Piedmont of North Carolina and has typical attributes of the region. Through history the character of the landscape has been changed greatly by man, however there are many aspects of the area that need to be investigated.

Climate

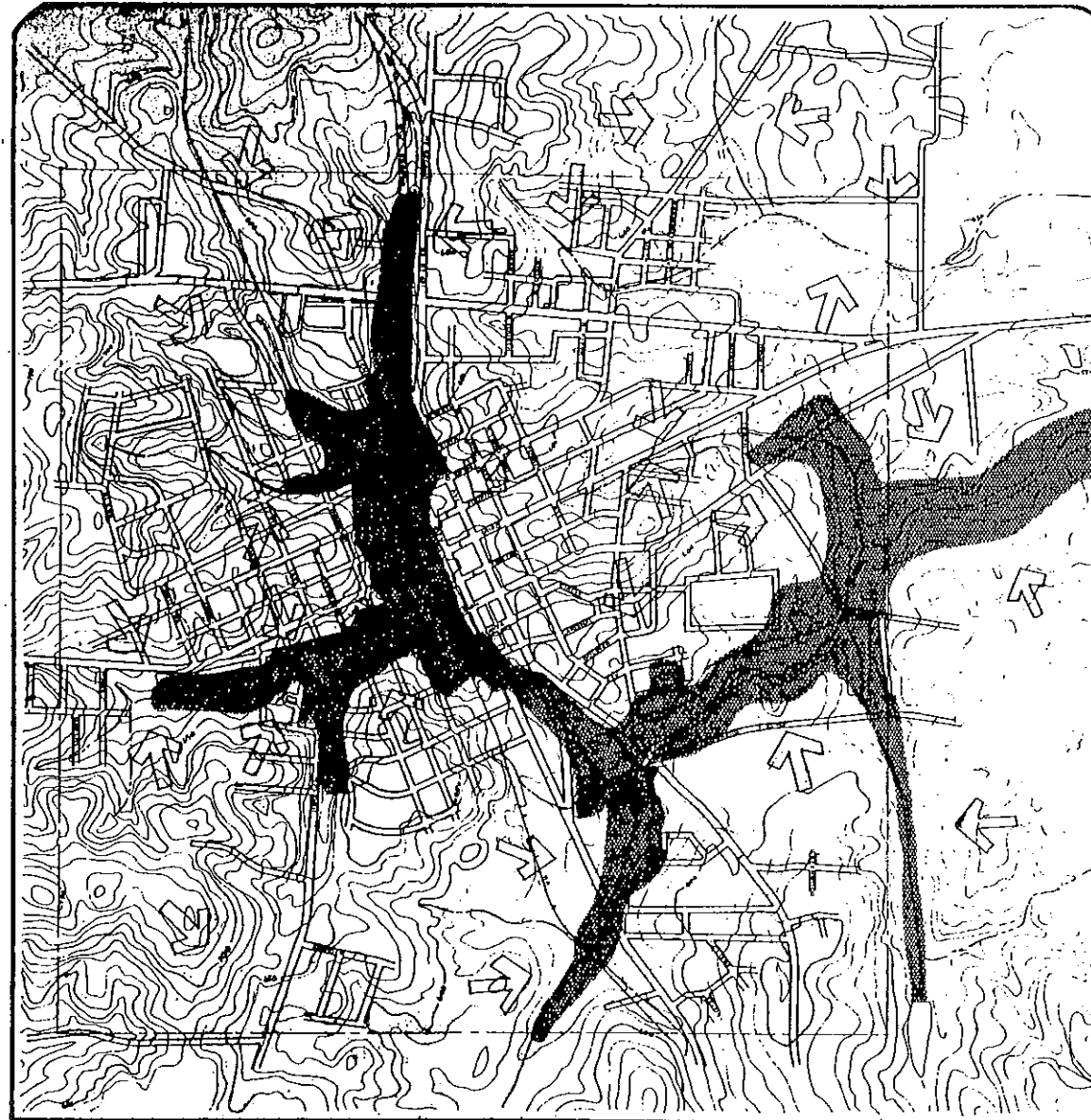
The climate of Chatham County is continental. The average date of the last killing frost is April 15 and the first is October 24. Rainfall is ample with the average annual amount being 44.23 inches. The average yearly snowfall is 6 inches. The average seasonal temperatures and amount of precipitation are as follows.

Winter	42.5°F	10.58"
Fall	61.0°	8.39"
Summer	77.0°	14.32"
Spring	59.3°	10.95"

Geology

The area was at one time at the bottom of a gentle sea, however, forces in the earth created volcanoes or cracks which spread forth molten lava. Over time the area built up above the sea on these lava rocks. The area is now composed of metamorphic rocks of predominantly volcanic sedimentary origins. The underlying base is the original rock sequence known as the Carolina Slate Belt.

There are four rock types found around the City. One is sedimentary in origin - floodplain alluvium which is unconsolidated sediment. The other three are metasedimentary and metavolcanic rocks. These include argillites - quartz, chlorite, and sercite, derived from positive areas of pre-existing volcanic flow and pyroclastic rocks which were weathered, eroded and then transported and deposited in a quiet-water environment. This creates a slightly undulating topography. This rock covers the original city boundary area. To the southeast are found mafic and andesitic crystal tuffs. These are subaerial and subaqueous in origin, and epiclastic - derived by weathering and erosion. These form northeast trending, discontinuous linear ridges. To the northwest and west are found graywackes. These are also epiclastic in formation and create discontinuous resistant northeast trending ridges.



SILER CITY

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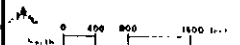
School of Design
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, North Carolina
Fall, 1980

SURFACE HYDROLOGY

← DRAINAGE

— CREEKS

~~~~~ FLOODPLAIN



## Soils

The soils in Chatham County are products of the three major geological divisions mentioned above along with the floodplain soils found along Love's creek. The soils as shown on the soils map are described as follows.

**Davidson Soils** - These are deep, well drained upland soils. They are well suited for dwellings and for septic tanks; and moderately suited for industry and street development.

**Georgeville Soils** - These are deep to moderately deep, well drained upland soils. They are well suited for dwellings, and moderately suited for septic fields, light industry, and street installation.

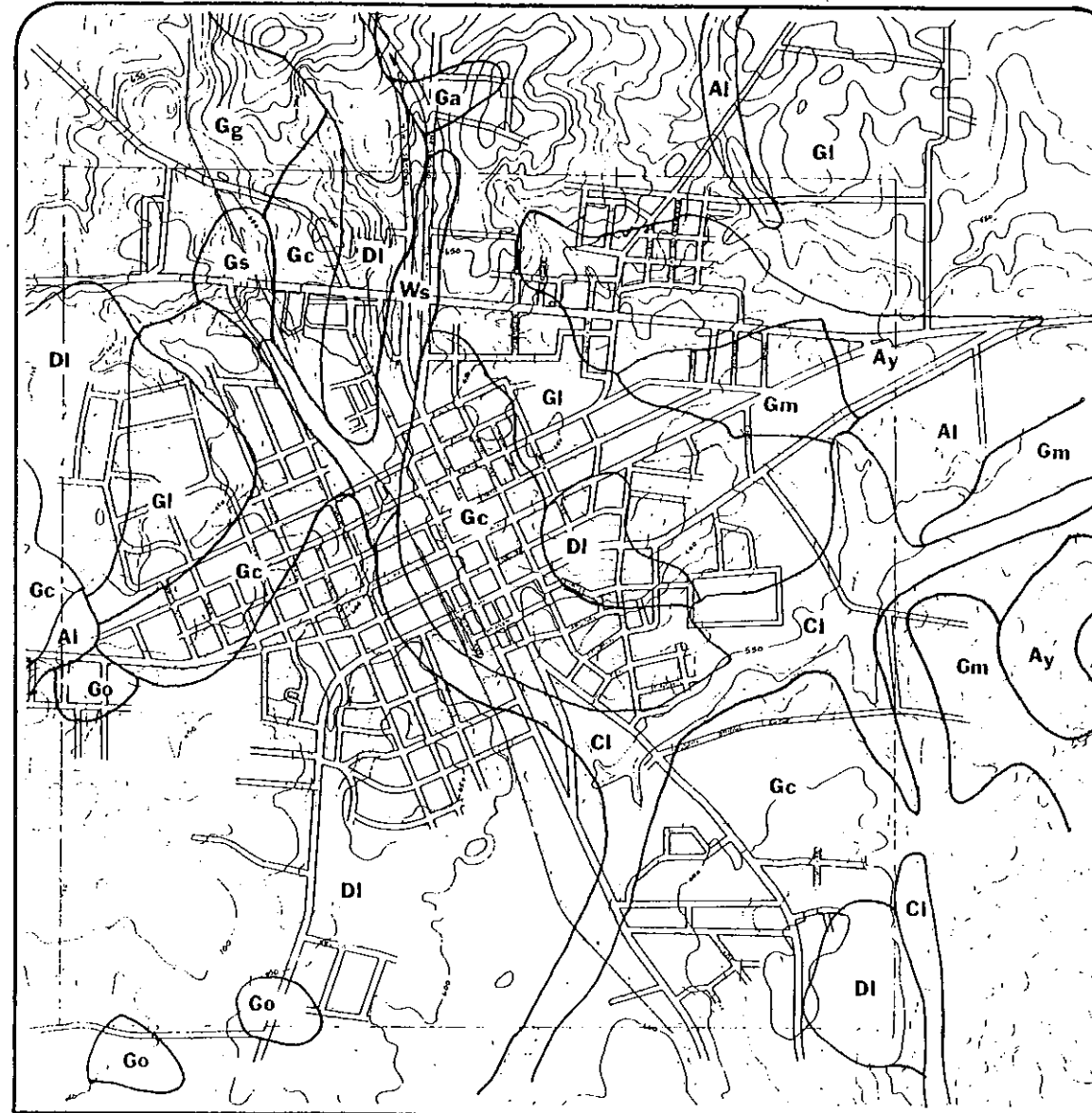
**Goldston Soils** - These are well drained, shallow upland soils. These are moderately suited for the installation of dwellings, industry, and roads; and limited for the installation of septic fields.

**Alamance Soils** - These are moderately deep, well drained soils with gray silt loam topsoils where uneroded. They are well suited for the development of dwellings, moderately suited for industry and roads, and limited for septic tanks.

**Congaree and White Stone** - This is alluvial land, poorly drained soils on stream flood plains. They are severely limited for dwellings and septic tanks, and moderately suited for light industry and roads.

## Elevation/Slope

The elevation (as seen on the adjacent map) ranges from a low of 540 feet above sea level to a high of 760 feet above sea level. The change in elevation is caused by the geologic formation, weathering, and erosion by Love's Creek and its tributaries. The slopes add character to the town, but do create some problem areas. The steepest slopes, those over 25%, are found on the western side of town.



## SILER CITY

Graduate Design Studio  
Landscape Architecture

School of Design  
North Carolina State University

1959

### SOILS

|    |                                               |
|----|-----------------------------------------------|
| DI | DAVIDSON CLAY LOAM                            |
| GI | GEORGEVILLE SILT LOAM                         |
| Gs | GEORGEVILLE SILT LOAM-<br>GRAVELLY PHASE      |
| Gm | GEORGEVILLE GRAVELLY<br>SILT LOAM             |
| Gg | GEORGEVILLE GRAVELLY<br>SILTY CLAY LOAM       |
| Gc | GEORGEVILLE SILTY CLAY<br>LOAM                |
| Go | GOLSTON GRAVELLY SILT<br>LOAM                 |
| AI | ALAMANCE SILT LOAM                            |
| Ay | ALAMANCE GRAVELLY SILT<br>LOAM                |
| CI | CONGAREE SILT LOAM                            |
| Ws | WHITE STONE FINE SANDY<br>LOAM-GRAVELLY PHASE |

0 400 800 1600 Feet

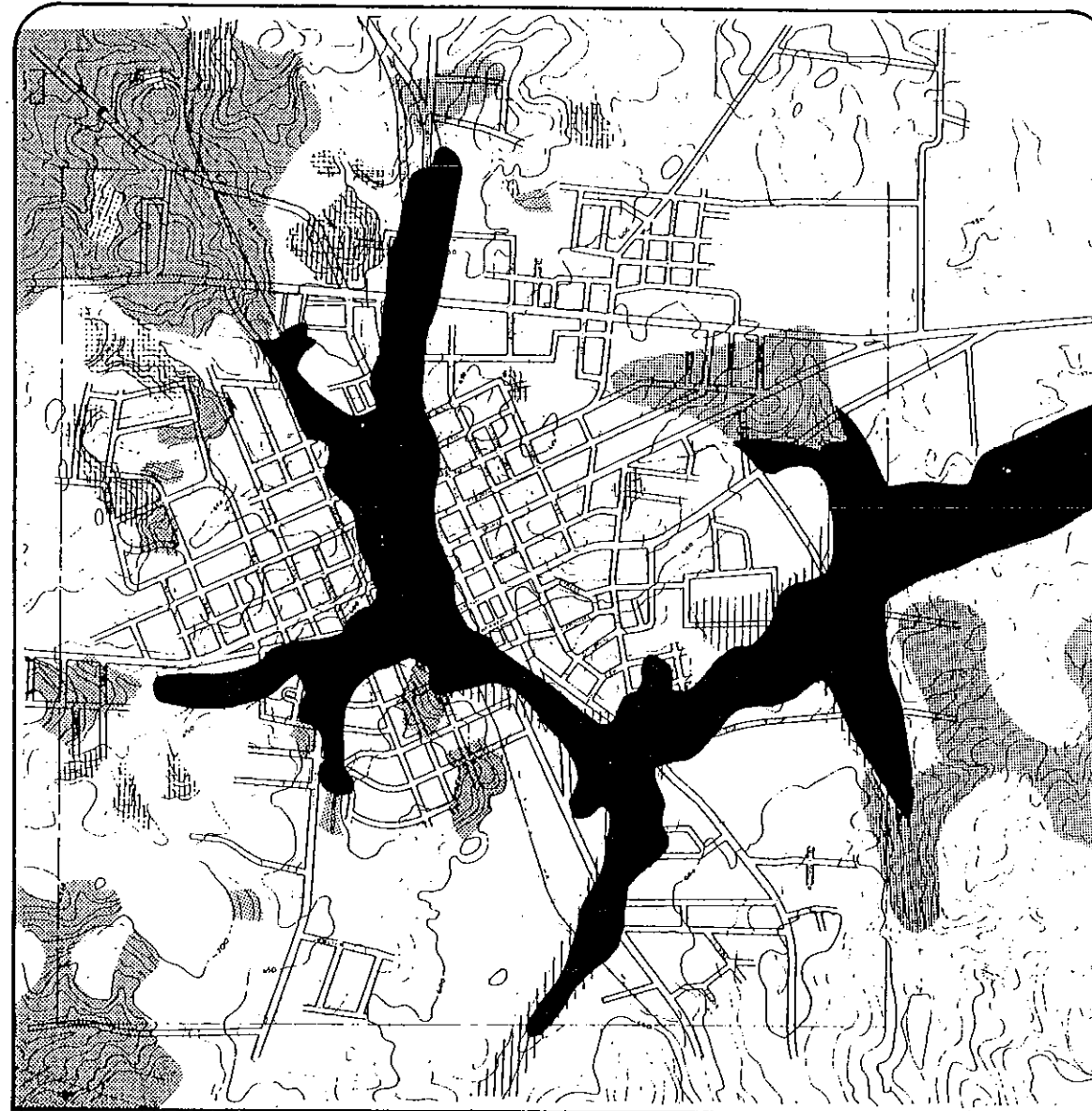
## Vegetation

Chatham County was originally covered with stands of pines and oaks. Most of the original timber has been removed for lumber and agricultural uses. The present forests consist of second growth of pines and oaks, with pines predominating.

Short-leaf pine predominates in the eastern, south-central, and southern sections of the county. Other important trees are oaks, especially white, red, and black oaks on the rolling upper country, and post and blackjack on the flat interstream areas. Red cedar is also very common. Along the streams the tree growth consists of black gum, sycamore, beech, birch, ironwood, slash pine, and water oak. Other trees found in the area are hickory, dogwood, walnut, persimmon, maple, sourwood, and locust. The undergrowth consists of small pines, cedars, oaks, dogwood, red-bud, yellow jasmine, azaleas, and various briars and vines.

## Natural Factor Limitations

There are a number of natural factors which affect the development of Siler City. For this report the following have been found to be restrictions. These are also indicated on the adjacent map. Floodplains are, of course, an obvious constraint. Slopes over 25% are severe and over 15% are moderate limitations to development. The other factor is soils. Severe limitations include shallow depth to bedrock, high shrink/swell potential, highly erodable soils, and poor permeability.



## SILER CITY

Planning and Design Studio  
Department of Architecture

1980  
by the University of North Carolina  
at Chapel Hill, North Carolina  
July 1980

### NATURAL FACTORS LIMITATIONS

#### SEVERE LIMITATIONS

SOIL [Solid Black Box]

SLOPE [Steeple Pattern]

#### MODERATE LIMITATIONS

SOIL [Cross-hatch Pattern]

SLOPE [Dotted Pattern]

FLOODPLAIN [Vertical Line Pattern]

0 400 800

## LAND USE

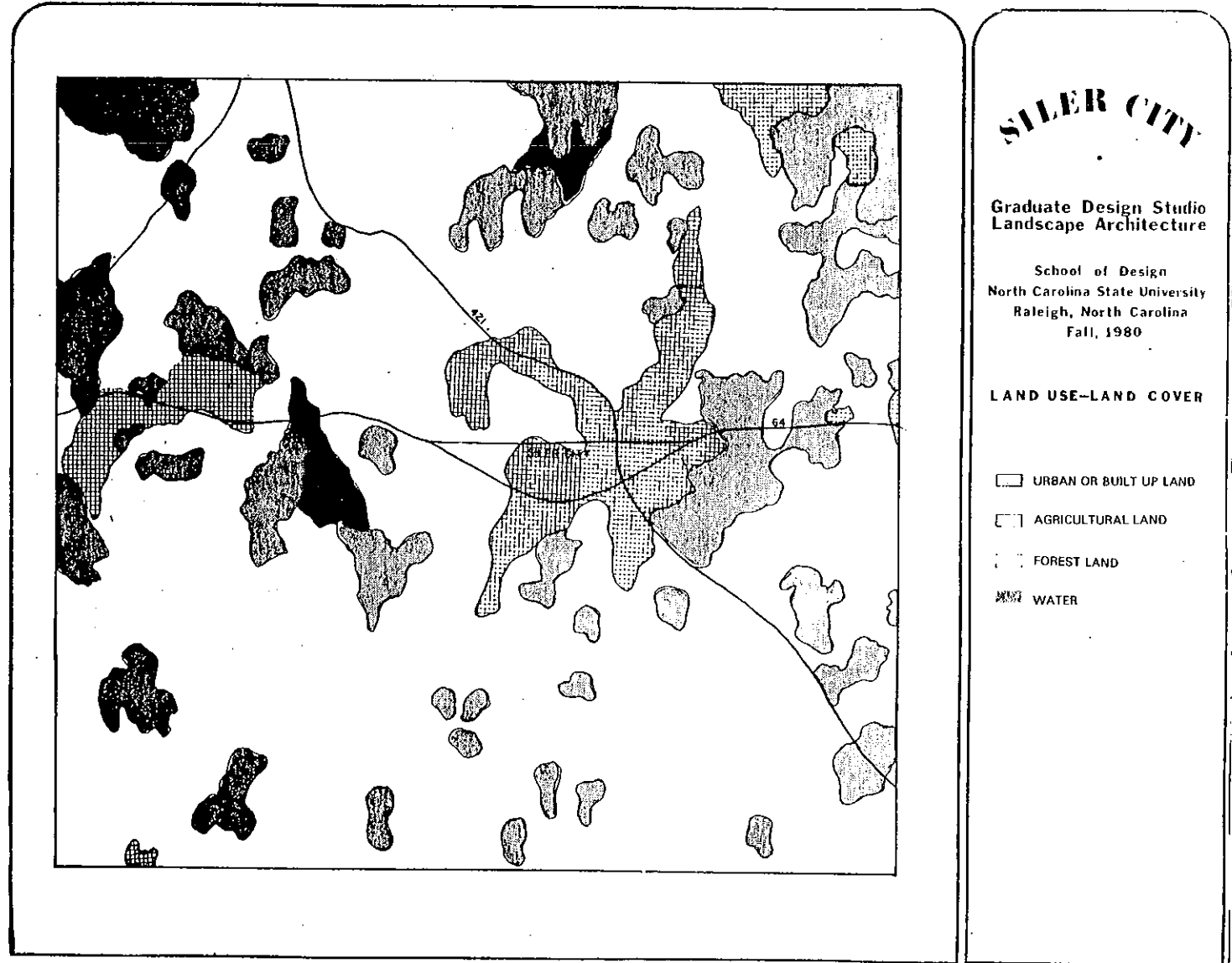
The town of Siler City originated as a crossroads community at the intersection of major transportation routes. The downtown developed as a classic urban retail center but elsewhere, development occurred in an unstructured, haphazard manner. For instance, this unstructured development has resulted in the conglomeration of commercial establishments along highway 64. This is commonly known as strip development and without policies to control future development, the same sort of sprawling growth may be expected to occur along the 421 bypass currently under construction.

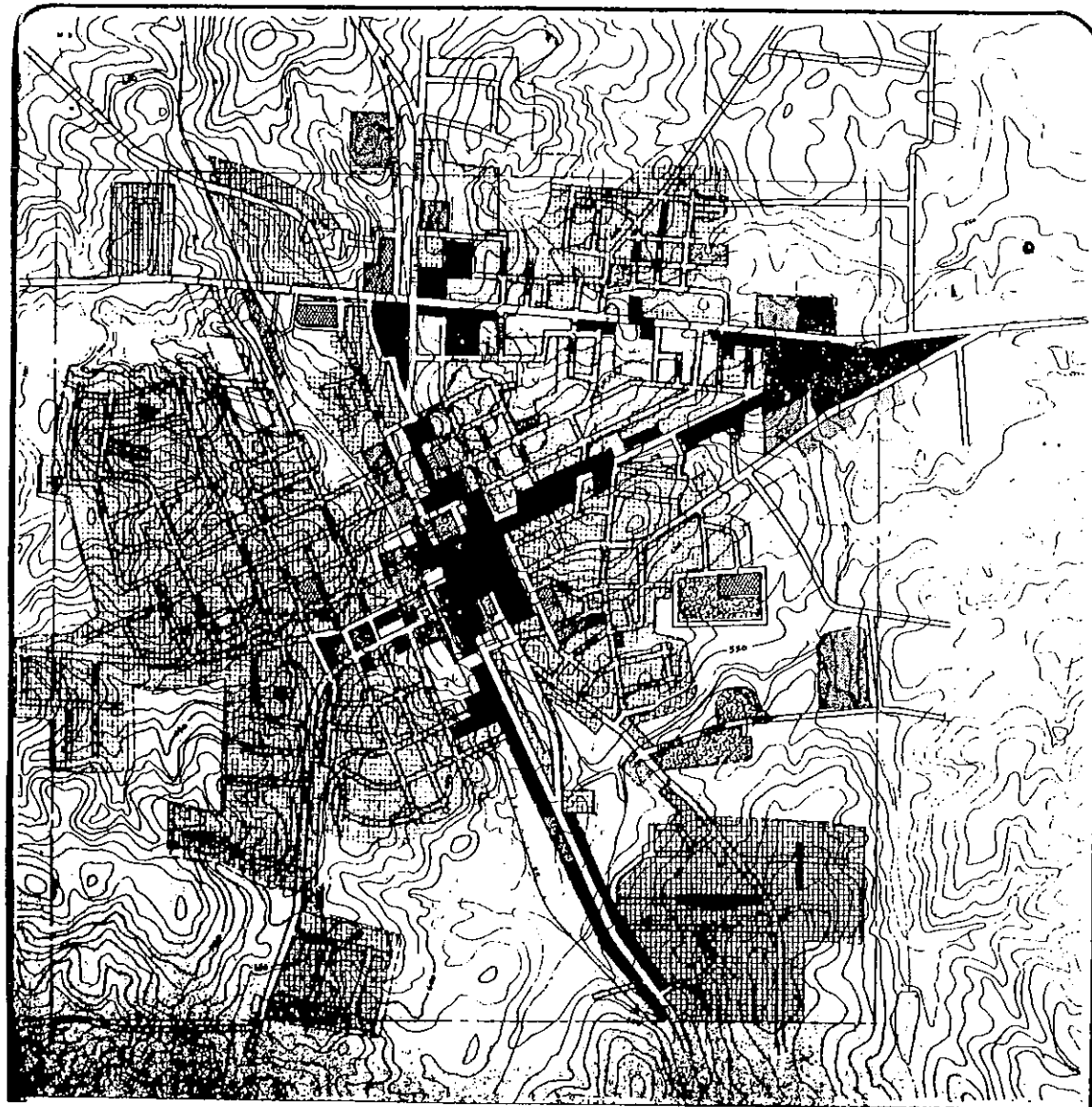
The sprawl of fringe development will continue to affect the central business district by draining it of its most vital asset, the consumer, unless revitalization efforts and policy changes are geared toward reversing the trend.

A survey of land use in the downtown area indicated a possible lack of variety in merchandizing as well as a lack of the centralization of community services. These services are scattered throughout the community.

The amount of land allotted to existing industry as well as the amount zoned for future development indicates the interest the town has in economic development and growth. Projections for future development may be somewhat unrealistic in terms of population and projected growth. Locations of areas for future industrial development are suggested in the overall conceptual plan for Siler City.

In spite of vacant land within the corporate limits of Siler City, residential development is occurring largely outside the city limits. If this continues it will become increasingly more expensive for the local government to provide adequate services to its citizens as the town grows.



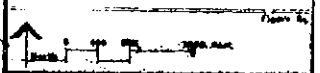


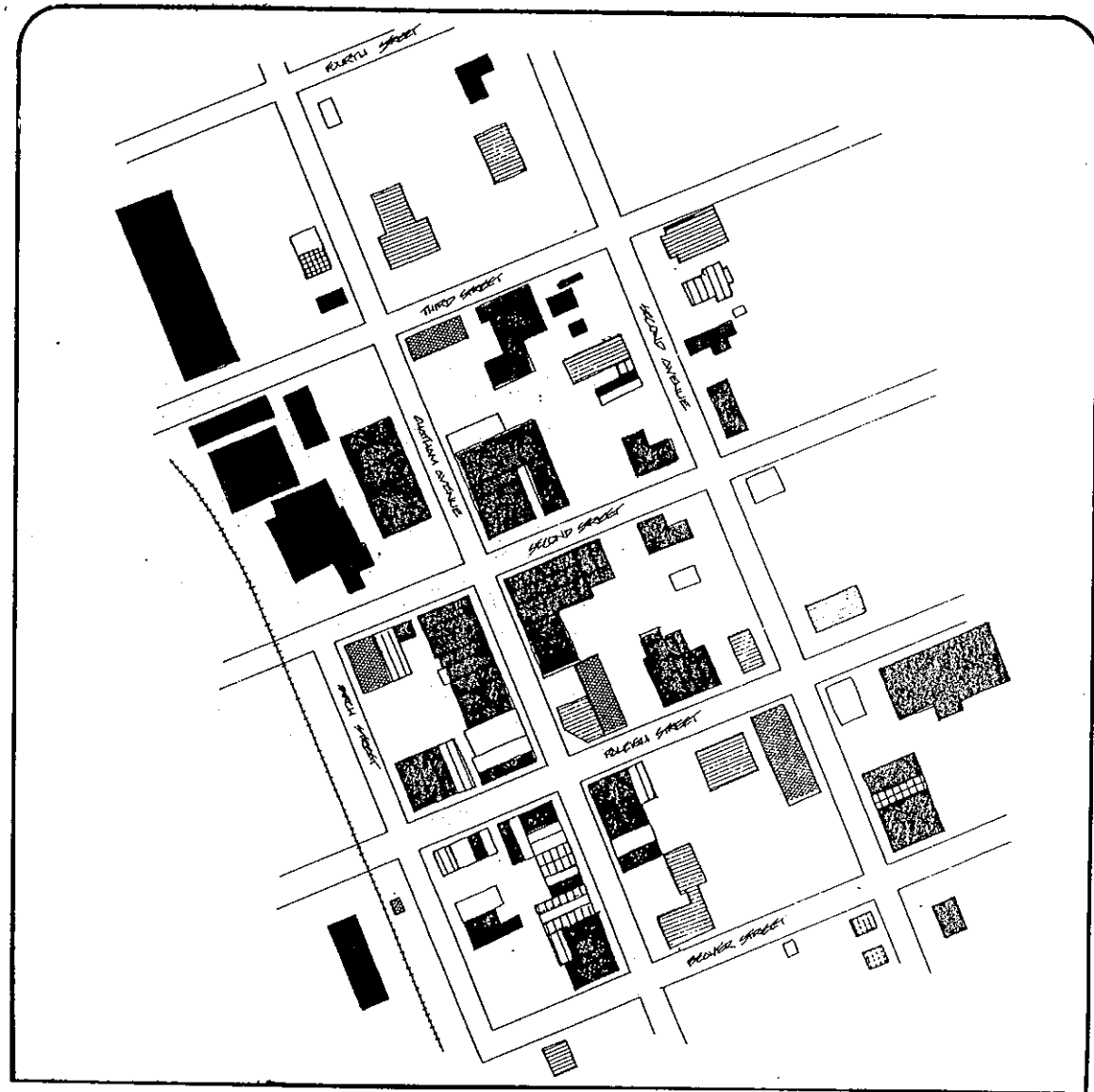
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North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
Fall, 1980

**LAND USE MAP**

-  RESIDENTIAL
-  COMMERCIAL
-  INDUSTRIAL
-  INSTITUTIONAL
-  PUBLIC BLDGS, OPEN SPACE
-  TRANSPORTATION
-  VACANT OR RURAL





# SILER CITY

## Graduate Design Studio Landscape Architecture

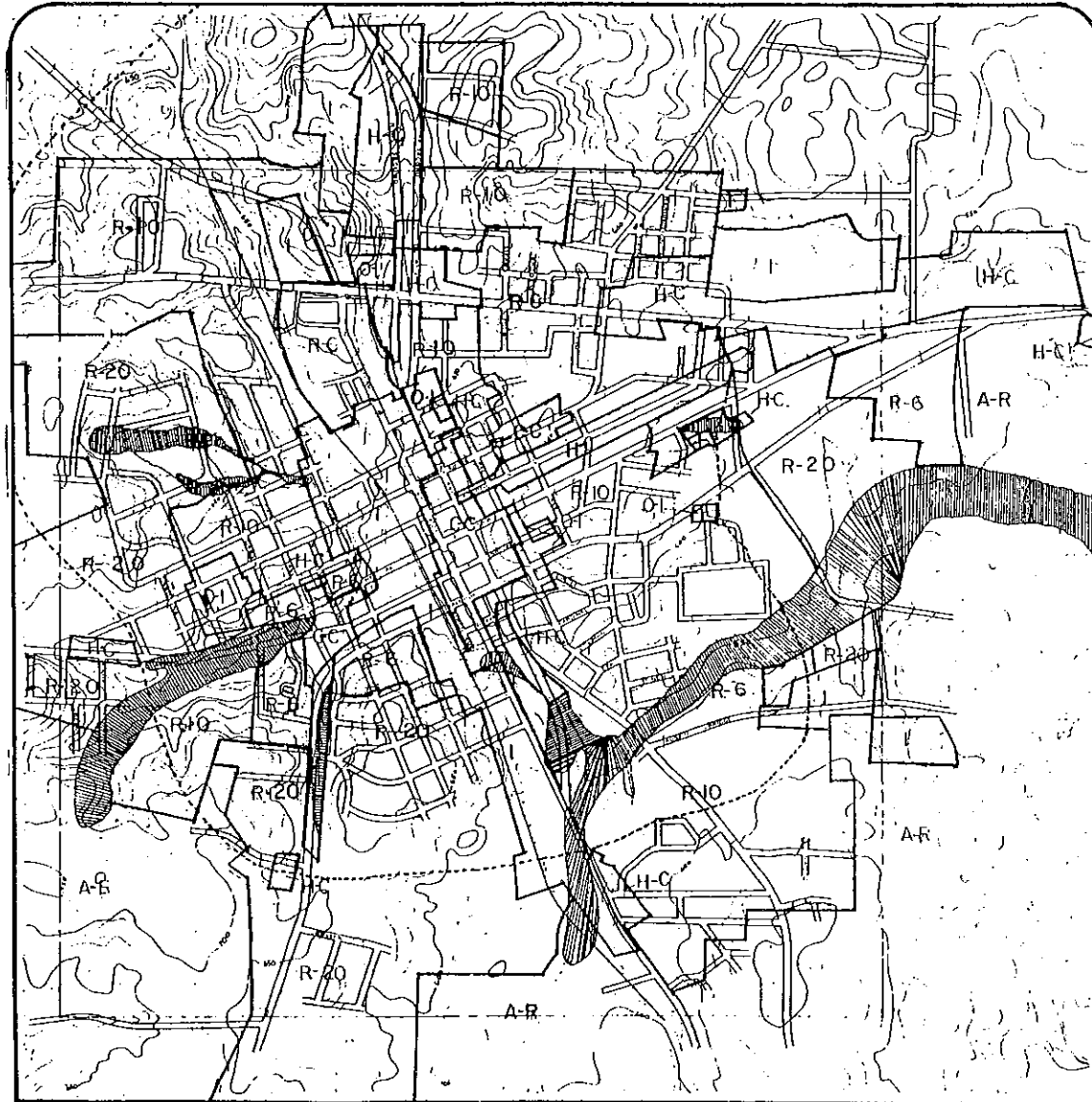
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Raleigh, North Carolina  
Fall, 1980

### BUILDING USE

- HOUSING
- OFFICE
- STORAGE
- RETAIL
- RESTAURANT
- RECREATION
- INDUSTRIAL/MANUFACTURING
- BANKS & OTHER SERVICES
- VACANT



Figure 10



**Graduate Design Studio  
Landscape Architecture**

School of Design  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
Fall, 1980

**ZONING**

- R-20 RESIDENTIAL
- R-10 RESIDENTIAL
- R-6 RESIDENTIAL
- A-R AGRICULTURE-RESIDENTIAL
- C-C CENTRAL COMMERCIAL
- H-C HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
- I OFFICE INSTITUTIONAL
- I INDUSTRIAL
- FLOODWAY
- PROPOSED LOOP ROAD

0 400 800 1600 Feet

## BUILDING SURVEY/ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Urban character is the sum total of all the sites, sounds, smells, and images which make up the city. Siler City has a unique urban character which deserves study and recognition. In order to improve a community's visual character, it is first necessary to survey and analyze the existing visual resources, and then take advantage of them in generating new plans for the city. In viewing the visual quality of a place, a determination is made of what enhances the existing visual quality, and what should be conserved to maintain these assets.

Many communities have discovered that positive images are created by the older buildings, in their locale, and that the conservation of these resources has retained the more pleasing elements of the community's character. Siler City contains a sizable number of older buildings which contribute to its visual quality in a positive way. These are buildings which embody distinctive characteristics of a style or method of construction no longer produced in today's market, or they are buildings which are associated with events or people who have made important contributions to the town's development.

The buildings survey has determined that Siler City's architectural history spans about 90 years, and that the town contains some characteristic styles of architecture associated with various periods of architectural taste and construction techniques found elsewhere during this time frame. The earliest of these are buildings of slight variation from the original, vernacular methods of construction which evolved in the Piedmont region of North Carolina from old world styles to adaptations more suitable to the climate of the area. Tall, narrow, two-story frame dwellings with single pile plans (one room deep) characterize the earliest building forms existing in Siler City and the surrounding area. Two such buildings are extant in the Mortgage Hill area: The Wren House on Dolphin Street and The Lamb-Fox House on Dogwood Avenue.

A preliminary historic buildings survey has suggested that approximately 20 buildings may meet the criteria for local historic designation as specified in the state enabling legislation for such purposes, and that a number of buildings which collectively form a cohesive unit of architectural significance deserve some attention in the City's planning process.

Examples of these victorian styles, sometimes called I-Houses include the following: Jenkins House on East Raleigh Street, the Hadley House also on East Raleigh Street, and the Boling House on West Third Street. The Neo-Classical Revival represented by Mathews-Wren House on East Fourth Street.

A number of other buildings of the period between 1890 and 1912 are extant and collectively important as units of architectural significance, especially in the central business district and immediate area. A building which exerts a strong image in the downtown is the Hotel Hadley (ca. 1905), which is noted as a

significant resource of its own merit at the North Carolina Division of Archives and History. Another building of some significance which is representative of the period, is the Gregson Building on North Chatham Avenue.

The Siler City Mill, a landmark in the town's central business district, and the cotton mill with its associated residential village, represent tangible evidence of the town's industrial development. These are structures of historical and architectural significance which provide a sense of importance and reason for being to the community.

After World War I, and until 1930, Siler City experienced a period of growth unlike any previous on. Residential dwellings here, as elsewhere, reflected the nation's renewed interest in its recreational areas and national parks. Bungalow cottages, styled with low slung roofs with wide overhangs, and large supporting eave brackets, constructed in natural environments in the 1920's, became the popular style of the first subdivisions developing around the cities in country settings. Siler City has a number of fine bungalows located along many of the streets established in 1927 with the concrete road surface and curbing. A particularly nice concentration of these can be found in the neighborhoods east of downtown.



The commercial and institutional buildings of the 1920's possess some of the finer architectural details now found in the downtown area. Buildings of significance here include the hardware store and vacant auto garage on East Raleigh Street, the Siler City School at the end of Beaver Street, and the Methodist and Baptist Churches. Two other commercial buildings outside the central business district which are significant architecturally are the castellated gas station at the intersection of US 421 and US 64 by-pass.

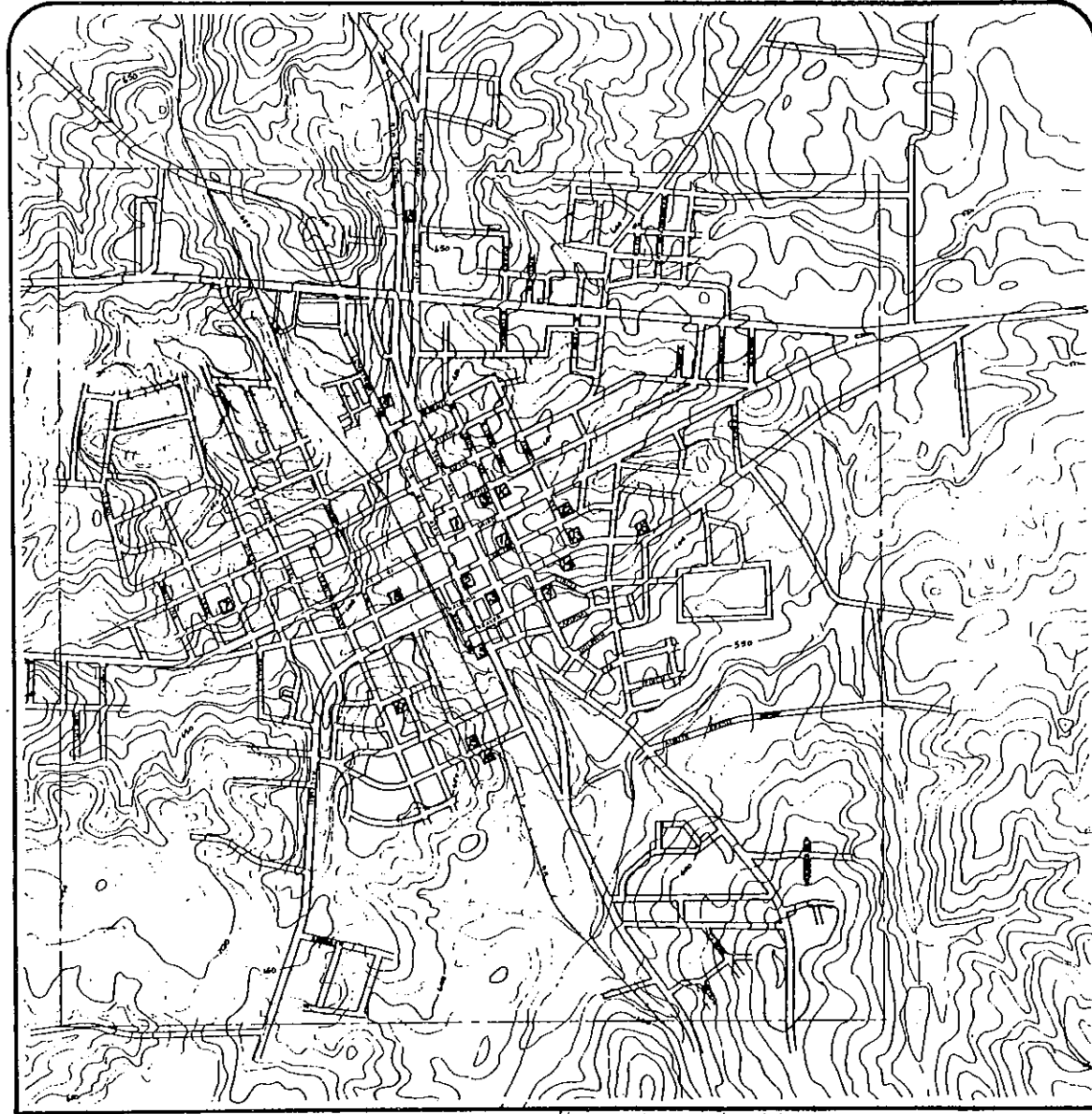
After 1930, three buildings of significance were constructed in Siler City. One of these, of particularly handsome construction, is the City Hall, built in 1939 under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration. The building is a landmark and it deserves this legal status. Another stone building is the Post Office, also constructed by the Works Progress Administration in 1940. It too is a town landmark. The Siler City Hospital, built about 1935 also deserves some recognition.

Following World War II, the more familiar construction of the present generations have appeared in the town but increasingly farther out of the central area. Few innovative or especially interesting structures of this period are evident, except for a few contemporary residential designs of the past ten years or the recently completed banking institution at the corner of Chatham Avenue and Raleigh Street downtown.

This survey has suggested that a possible historic district may be created in the area west of downtown roughly bounded by Second Avenue, Fifth Street, Fourth Avenue, and East Raleigh Street.

Although further study of this proposal would be needed, such a district adjacent to the central business district could be beneficial to the revitalization of the business area. Many other preservation related programs and incentives now exist which also compliment downtown improvement efforts, and these will be discussed in this study as possible functions of the City's planning operations.





# SILER CITY

Graduate Design Studio  
Landscape Architecture

School of Design  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
Fall, 1980

## HISTORIC BUILDINGS

1. CITY HALL
2. HOTEL HADLEY
3. U. S. POST OFFICE
4. SILER CITY SCHOOL
5. T. F. EDWARDS HOUSE
6. M. J. BOLING HOUSE
7. SILER CITY HOSPITAL
8. MILL VILLAGE
9. MATTHEWS-WREN HOUSE
10. L. L. WREN HOUSE
11. C. H. BRAY HOUSE
12. N. B. BRAY HOUSE
13. J. J. JENKINS HOUSE
14. GREGGSON-HADLEY HOUSE
15. WREN HOUSE
16. WREN HOUSE
17. LAMB-FOX HOUSE
18. HOUSE
19. FILLING STATION



Figure 24

## POPULATION AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

### Demographic Survey

Population in Siler City for 1970 was 4700 according to 1980 census reports, a 6.3% decline in population is expected. The majority of the population fall in the 0-19 age bracket, the second largest group being the 40-50 age bracket. The city has a 94% housing occupancy rate. 67% of the population are home owners. Out of a working population of 2,247, 660 people are employed in the manufacturing industries. The second largest group is managers and administrators. The number of people employed in these two groups is 250 and 260 respectively. The education level for the medium population is the 10th grade, although 35% of the population has received a high school diploma. All of these figures (with noted exceptions) are from the 1970 census report.

Siler City is at a turning point in its history. The potential for growth exists and is encouraged by most of the citizens and their government representatives. However, there are a number of existing problems the city needs to deal with in order to once again grow to its potential.

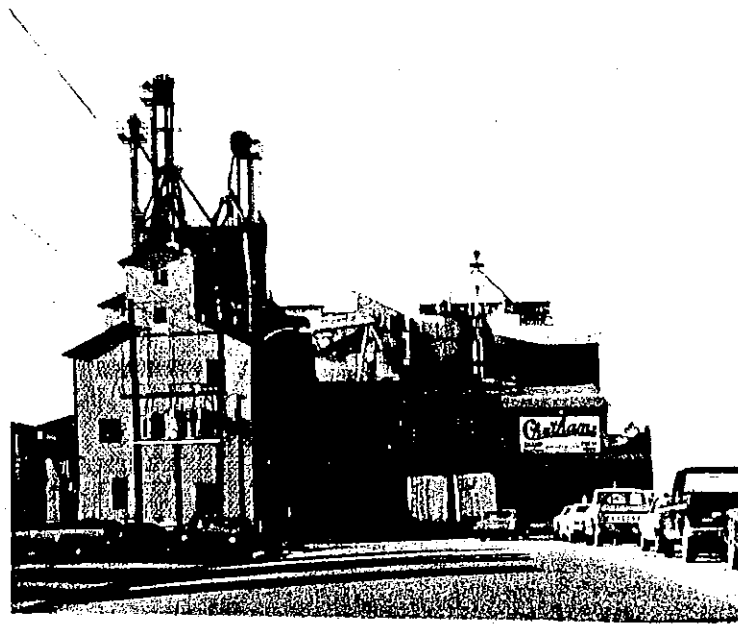
### Marketing Survey

The results of a marketing survey conducted by the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Community Development are as follows for the Central Business District:

- 82%-wanted better service of merchandise and better service
- 57%-wanted more theatres and entertainment
- 50%-wanted more parking
- 50%-wanted more department stores and clothing stores
- 36%-said the buildings need painting, cleaning and fixing
- 31%-wanted more restaurants
- 23%-wanted longer store hours
- 15%-wanted more landscaping, trees, and small parks

The participants mentioned a desire to see the following stores:

- Shoe store
- Western Sizzler
- Ice cream shop
- Sandwich shop
- Dime store
- K-Mart



### Economic Characteristics

Very little growth or development has occurred in Siler City in recent years. The pressure for growth has occurred outside of the City's limits. Siler City's population has been decreasing at a rate of 6% since 1970. Individuals are educating themselves out of a community which offers most jobs in industry related occupations.

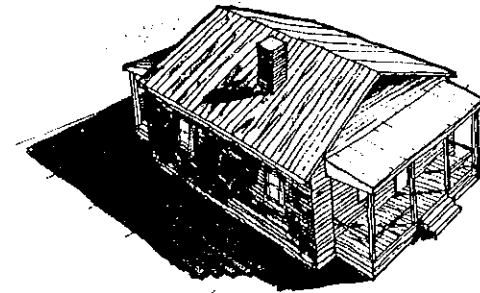
Over the years, the output from industry has been relatively steady. During this same period, as previously mentioned, population has been dropping coupled with declining retail sales. The design team feels that this trend of a population decrease with steady industry output could be due to the increased use of automated methods of manufacture and processing which reduces the number of people to perform manual tasks. The automobile in 1970 accounted for the second largest retail income, slightly behind the sales of foodstuffs. Due to the recent rise in fuel costs, a general decline in the auto industry, and inflation, retail sales have dropped.

The need for new jobs is apparent from the population decline and the significant amount of substandard housing (approximately 10%). New industry would help this situation particularly if it was diversified.

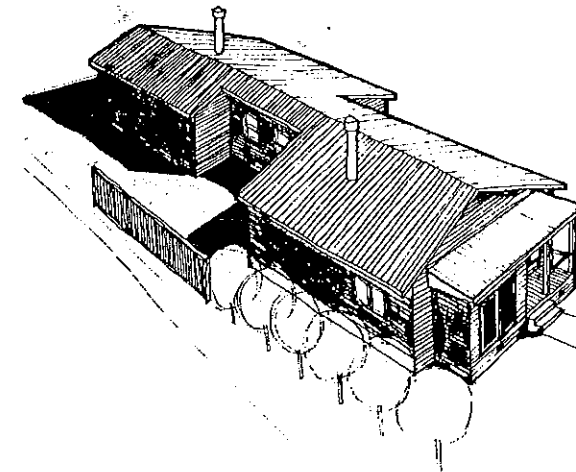
Siler City has had a higher mean family income and a larger percentage of people who own homes than in Chatham County and this will probably continue to be the case. Siler City having a larger portion of its population involved in both industrial and administrative jobs, could explain this present trend.

Chatham County Hospital is located in Siler City, which accounts for a large percentage of people who are employed in technical trades.

To remedy some of these general problems which this design team has identified, we can suggest a shift in retail business orientation with the creation of business opportunities to attract higher educated individuals, such as an expansion of white collar occupations.



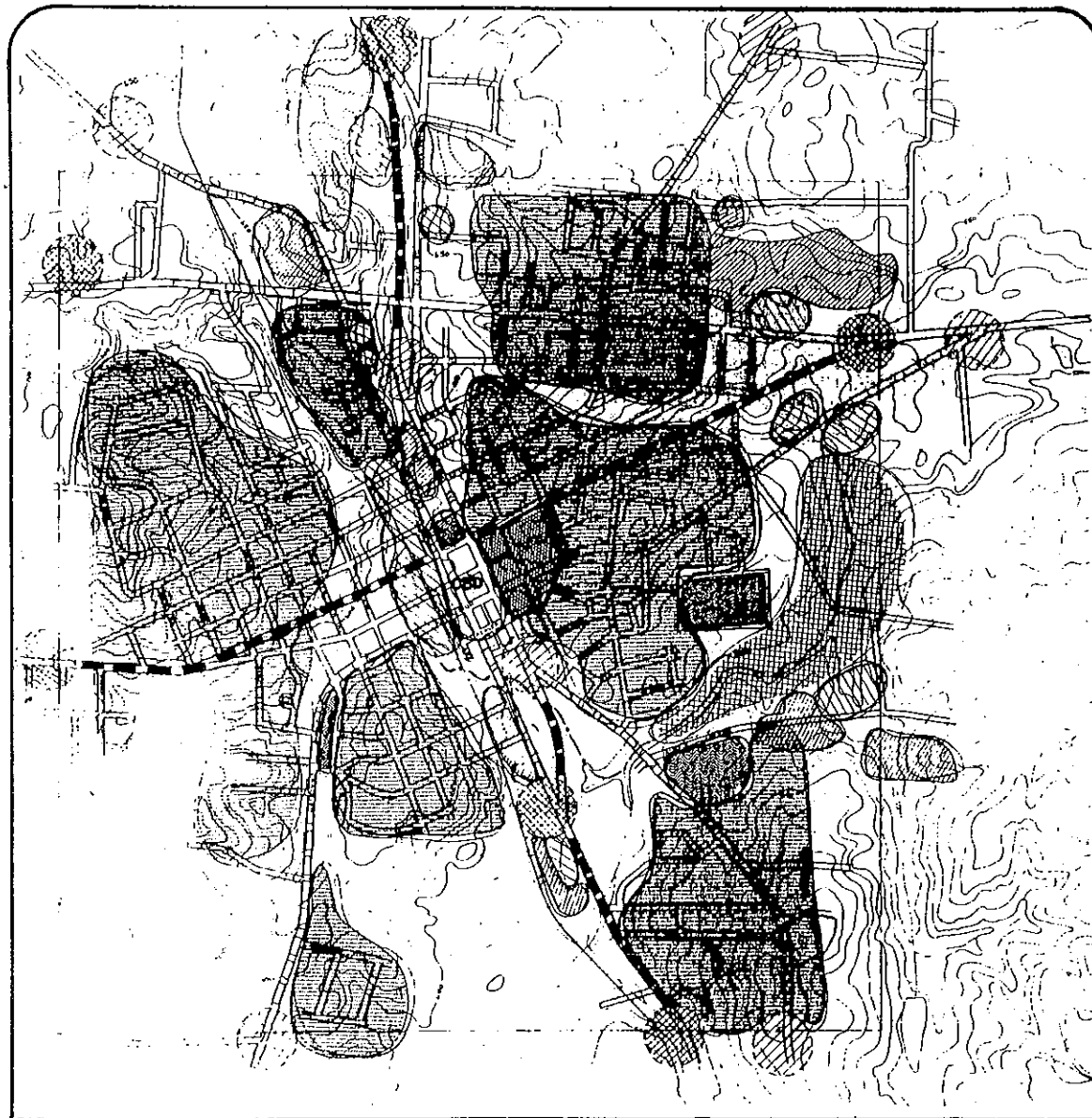
EXISTING CONDITION



PROPOSAL



# CONCEPTUAL PLAN














# SILER CITY

Graduate Design Studio  
Landscape Architecture

School of Design  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
Fall, 1980

## CONCEPTUAL PLAN

-  PRIMARY ENTRANCES
-  SECONDARY ENTRANCES
-  PRIMARY PATHWAYS
-  SECONDARY PATHWAYS
-  RESIDENTIAL
-  EXISTING INDUSTRY
-  PROPOSED INDUSTRY
-  PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
-  HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  GREENWAY
-  FLOODPLAIN

0 400 800 1600 1:2400

## GOALS

The purpose of this study is to develop a comprehensive redevelopment plan for Siler City which will examine all segments of the community, and will provide guidelines for enhancing the quality of life in Siler City. This study will propose alternatives for achieving an environmentally sound and visually attractive place in which to live while conserving the small town character. Special emphasis will be placed on the revitalization of the Central Business District.

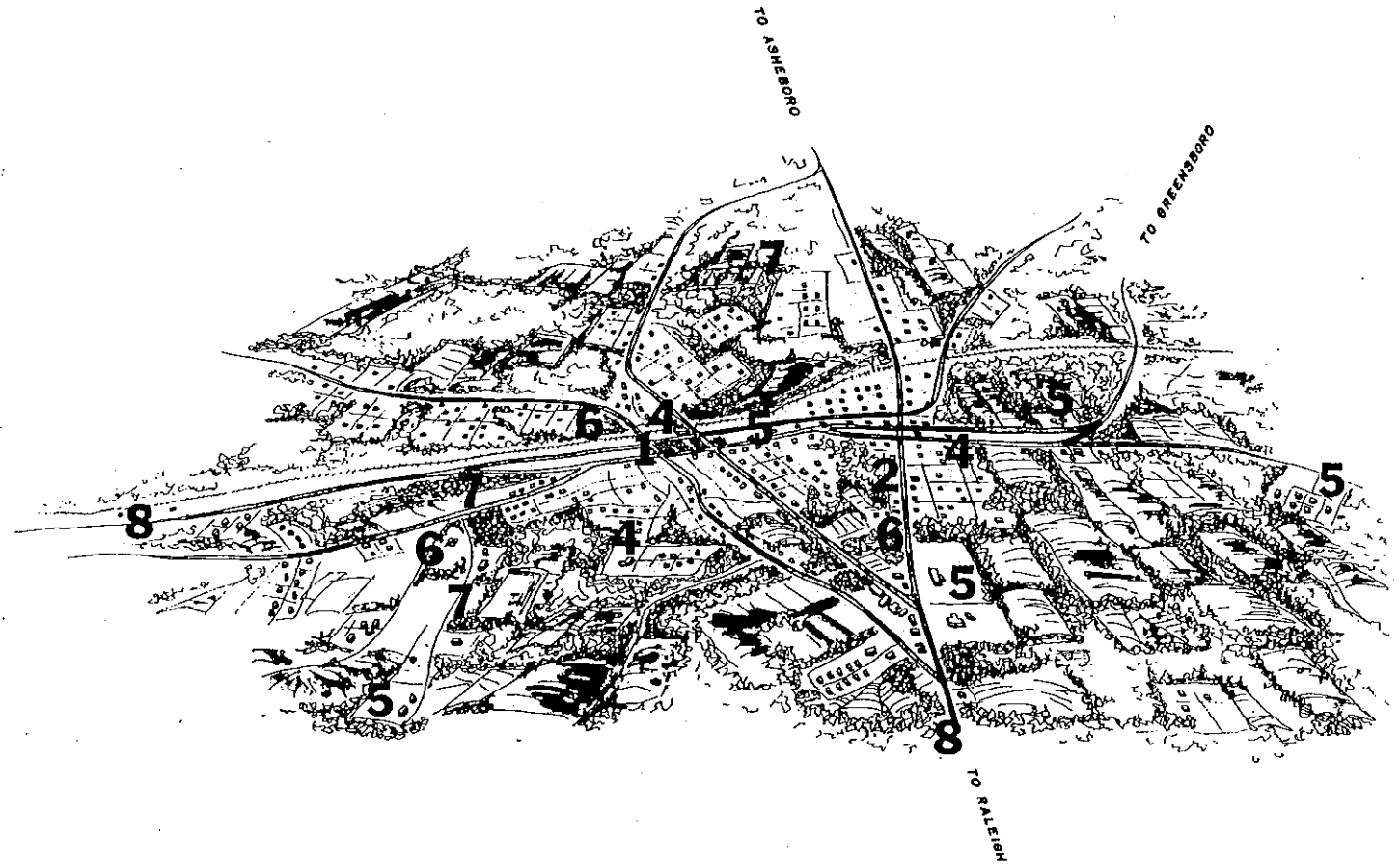
In order to accomplish this the following goals were established:

1. develop entrances which offer an invitation to the town, and, pathways which clearly define the links in the town;
2. maintain and enhance the character of existing residential neighborhoods and insure adequate housing for all the citizens of the town;
3. improve existing recreational area and facilities, develop new sites in appropriate locations, and introduce a greenway system around and through Siler City;
4. examine industrial and commercial areas in order to improve appearance, circulation, and development patterns;
5. revitalize the Central Business District through the reorganization of open space and the improvement of pedestrian and vehicular circulation, streetscapes, building facades, and the Town Hall area.

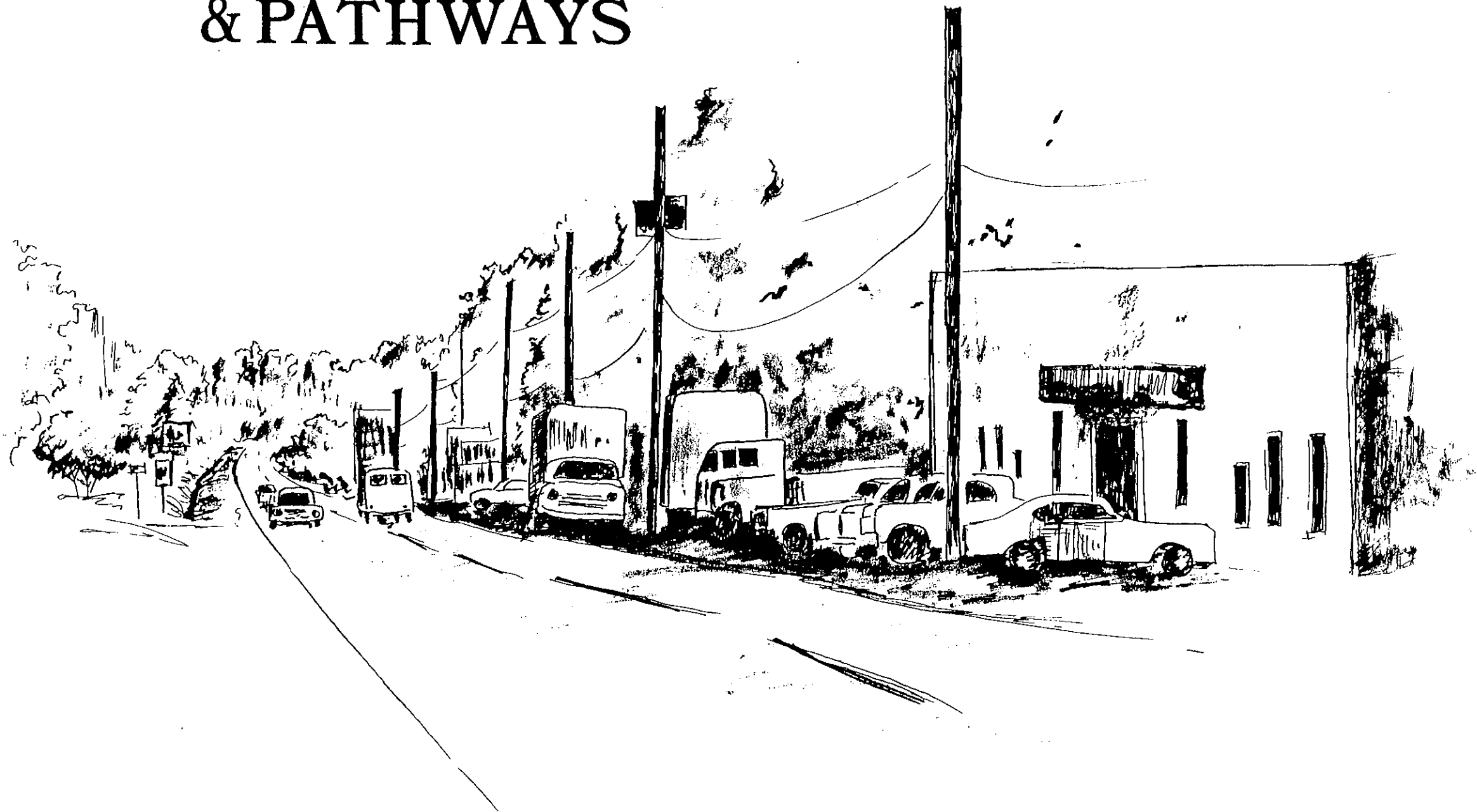
## REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

### KEY

1. Downtown Siler City should be considered as the center of the community, serving the citizens through a wide range of activities, services, and commerce.
2. The existing highway commercial strip should be restricted with controlled access to reduce traffic congestion. Landscaping is proposed to buffer as well as unify these areas.
3. Proposed improvements in the residential areas include landscaping and improvement of other elements to add to the visual quality and character of the neighborhoods.
4. The existing industrial area should be landscaped to blend with the surrounding environment.
5. New industrial development should receive high priority as it will necessarily improve the Town's economic situation and support the future development of the town.
6. Parks and recreation should be developed in various areas to more adequately serve a wider number of citizens.
7. A greenway system will utilize the flood plain area for recreation purposes while providing pedestrian links between neighborhoods, parks, and the Central Business District.
8. Entrances should be developed to welcome visitors to Siler City.



# ENTRANCES & PATHWAYS



## PATHWAYS AND ENTRANCES

In the landscape of a community, pathways and entrances are important elements. They are channels along which both pedestrian and vehicular traffic move. Visitors and citizens alike draw their images and impressions of a community as they move through it. Cluttered confusing pathways and entrances can form an undesirable impression of a community while tree lined, well defined streets create a desirable image. Underestimating the importance of pathways and entrances to the visual appeal of a community, many towns have allowed their roads and highways to develop on their own without thought or plan.

The goal in designing a desirable path or entrance is to create a memorable experience for the person who uses it. The spatial characteristics and structure determine the strength of the image created by the path. The stronger the image, the more likely the path will be remembered. Careful thoughtful design can create positive images and impressions.

## PATHWAYS AND ENTRANCES

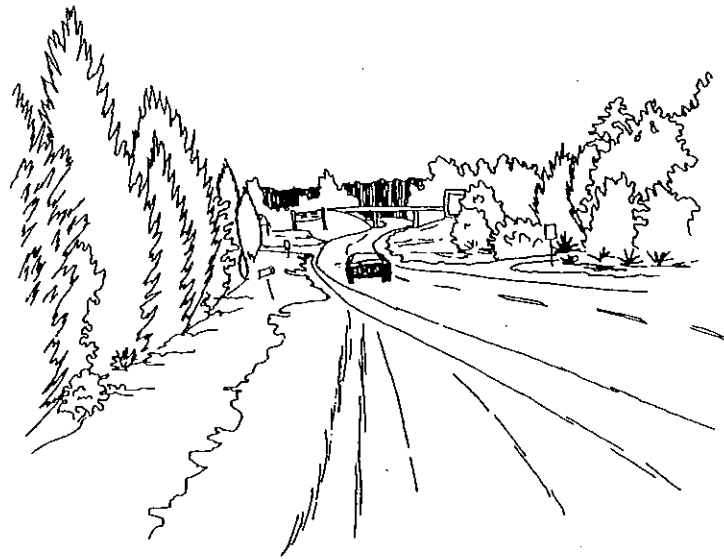
### VISUAL QUALITY

The discussion which follows and the graphic examples are designed to aid the community of Siler City in the determination of what elements make a desirable pathway or entrance. Ideas resulting from this study can be applied to other pathways and entrances in Siler City.

Pathways are characterized by several spacial or physical characteristics. Each of these determines part of the collective image. The diminution of one or more results in the diminution of the total image.

First, the relative width of the path suggests the nature of the path. Wide roads are characteristic of heavily used public paths, while narrow roads suggest an atmosphere of privacy. Extremes of either attract attention and, if thoughtfully used, can strengthen the positive image of the path.

Second, the facade characteristics of the buildings and residences along a path effect the image created. Consistency of use, repair, or appearance, adds strength to the image. The quiet bungalows along North Raleigh Street describe a homespun character for that path. In many towns, a mixture of uses such as commercial and residential have developed along paths. The example, East US 64 Business, demonstrates this situation. Through the use of plantings and front entrance designs, the apparent conflict between the two uses can be reduced and thus increase consistency. Facades uniformly close to a path create an image of urban life which one might want. Also, a more casual flowing from close to



far and back again can create a dynamic sense along the path. For pathways such as those of Siler City, the flowing design is most optimum. Which ever is chosen, care should be taken to avoid both harsh abrupt changes in distance and a feeling of indeterminate distance where there is no distinguishable horizon.

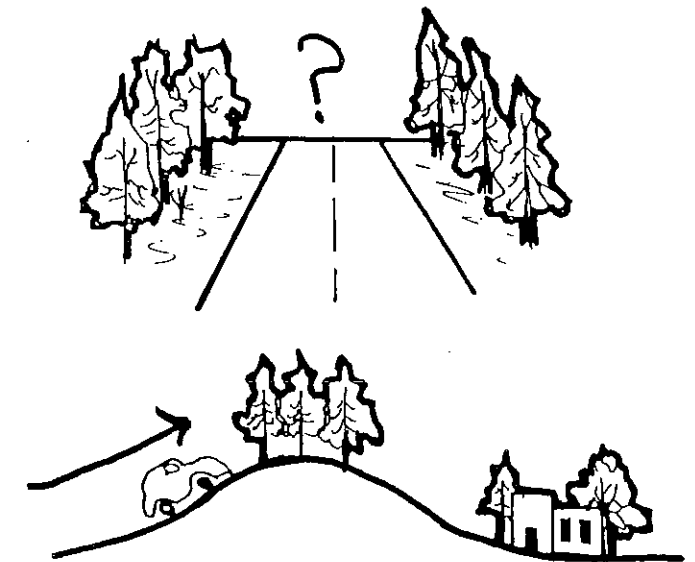
Third, the use of plantings of various kinds and sizes increases the positive image of a path. Trees and shrubs can soften harsh environments and screen a multitude of evils. In the graphic example, plantings are used as buffers and definitions of the edges.

Fourth, the visual exposure of the path and from the path is very important. Residential streets can blend quietly into the landscape while highways, because of their size and frequent use, have a high degree of visibility. Greater visibility increases the importance of creating a positive nature in the image. In this respect, US 64 and US 421 greatly influence the image of Siler City. Viewing is often a two way action, therefore, the view from the road is as important as the view of the road. Distinctive homes and other architectural features can create visual focal points along the road. The farms and woods along US 64 Business are pleasant interludes in the urban landscape. As further development occurs along the road, the quality of the view can and should be retained through the use of buffers, and sign design control and landscaping.

Several structural qualities should be considered to enhance the image of the path. Structural qualities refer to the overall design of the pathway.

Secondly, a directional quality should be easily distinguishable. Several structural elements can be used to achieve this effect. A clearly defined beginning and end are the most important features. Changes in use or elevation can be designed to be definitions of beginning or end points. The Central Business District marks the end of US 64 East through a change in use. The slight hill shortly before the end can be used to create a 'gate' or entrance into a new path and area. Most elevation changes are unpreceptable to the driver, however, those that are perceived often cause a discernable effect upon the observer. The rise and hill crest which was just mentioned and the rise out of the Rocky River basin are demonstrated in the graphic example. These are strong visual elements and, therefore, cause strong images. As with the other elements, the image formed by them should be carefully considered to insure a positive impression.

Finally, any discussion of pathways should include a description of the physical edge of the path. Edges which flow randomly away from the main path may or may not be desirable. While this may be desirable in a residential path, in a commercial path it leads to confusion. Well defined edges using curb and gutter can greatly enhance the image of the urban path. Caution, curbing stone can add a harsh effect to the image when used carelessly or in excess thus causing a negative impression. Plants and other buffer elements can soften the harsh effects.



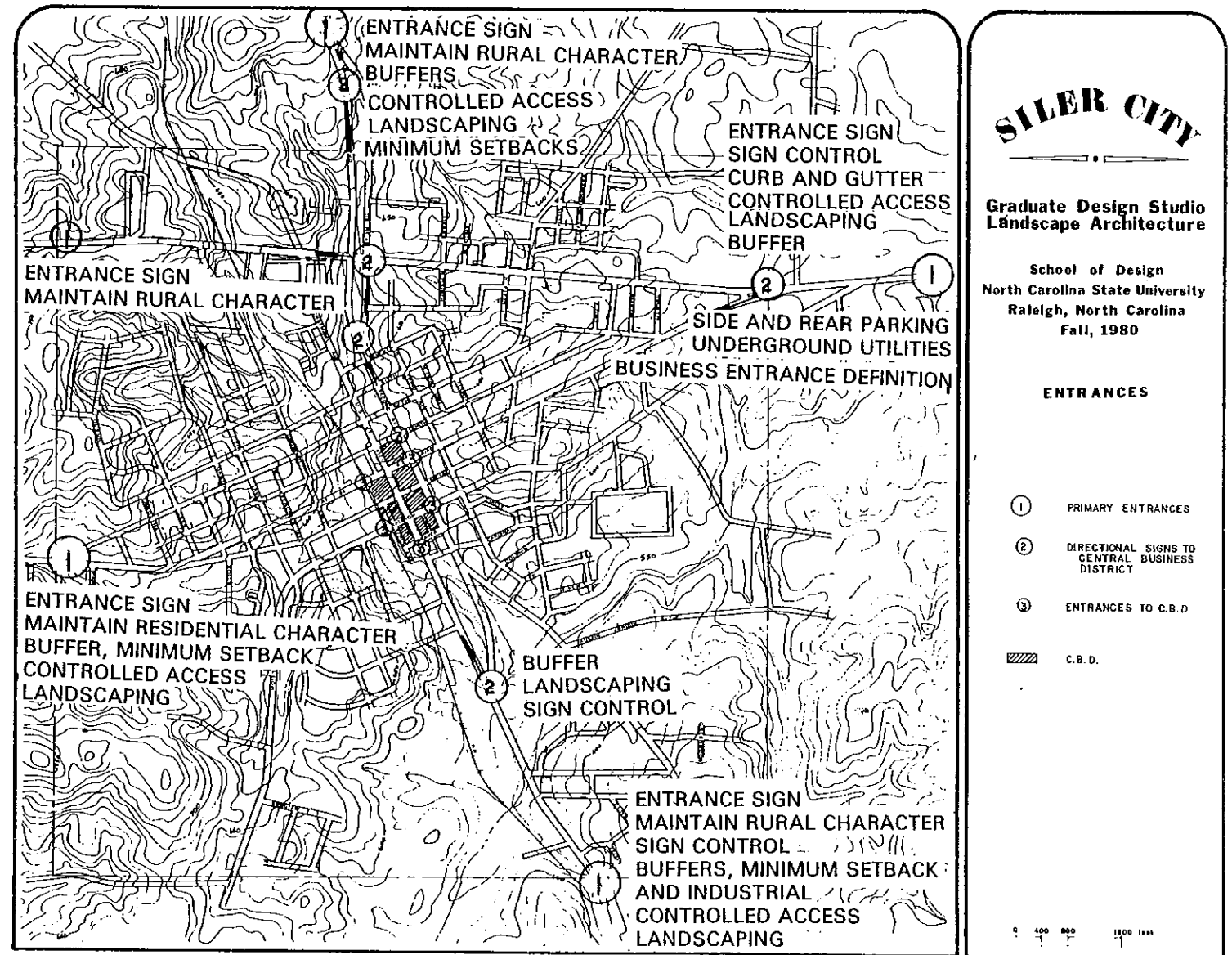
One of the important roles of a pathway is to lead people into the community. The image set by the experience of entering can be one of the strongest. In this respect the ability of the path to create the sense of arrival will influence most of the other images of the Town. The spatial characteristics of space and structure which apply to the pathway can be used to create an inviting entrance. The entrance of US 42I from the south is a gentle sweeping invitation. On US 64 East, however, the traveller flows out the surrounding farmlands and forest of Chatham County, mounts a hill and, then is surrounded with uncontrolled strip development. For some people this is the only image which they have of Siler City and it is not a pleasant one. Concern and consideration for the elements which make the entrance and path can improve the visual quality of this area. Improved visual quality is good for business and the image of Siler City.

### PATHWAYS AND ENTRANCES: THE TOWN OF SILER CITY

There are five primary vehicular entrances to Siler City: US 64 East Business, US 64 East By-pass, US 64 West Business, US 42I North and US 42I South. In examining these approaches, methods for improving and/or preserving the visual quality of these entrances have been suggested. They are important in conveying an identity and sense of pride for Siler City.

The primary routes to the Central Business District (C.B.D.) have been identified on the maps. Signs that clearly identify the streets leading the C.B.D. are essential in revitalizing the downtown area. The more oriented the shopper is to the location of the C.B.D., and the easier it is for him to get there, the more likely it is that he will spend time and money in downtown Siler City.

Finally, major entrances into the C.B.D. were examined. Signs identifying the C.B.D. at these points are needed along with information on the locations of parking lots and pedestrian paths. Again, the downtown experience can become a much more enjoyable event for the shopper if he is clearly oriented.



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### ENTRANCES

- ① PRIMARY ENTRANCES
- ② DIRECTIONAL SIGNS TO CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
- ③ ENTRANCES TO C.B.D.
- ▨ C.B.D.

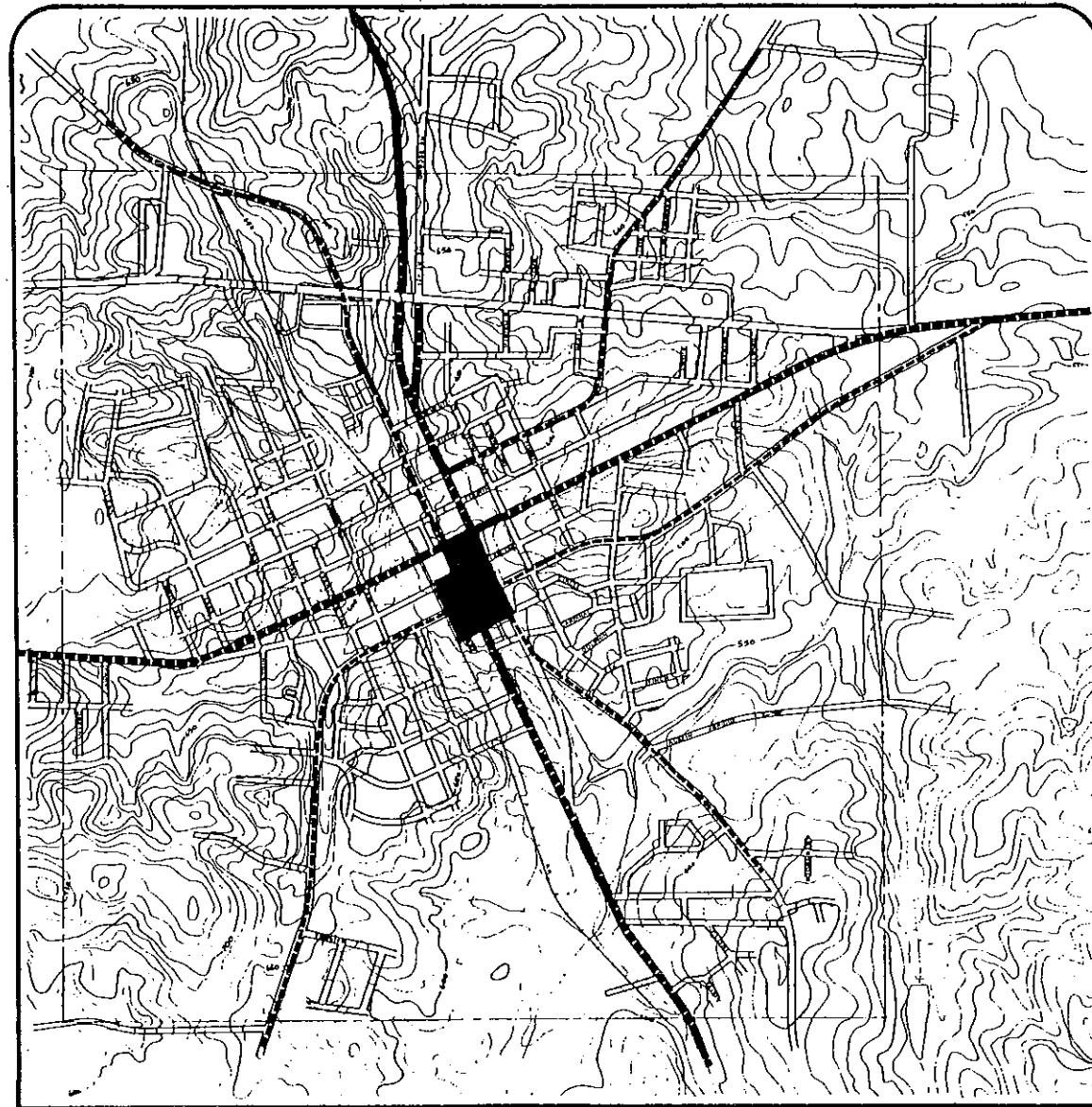
0 400 800 1600 feet



Pathways are given relatively arbitrary designation according to volume and type of use. Pathways serve both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

In Siler City, vehicular traffic can be divided into primary, secondary, and residential streets. Primary streets are the most heavily used carrying both local and transient traffic into the Central Business District. Secondary roads are less heavily used yet also bring people into the Central Business District. Residential roads are small semi-private roads carrying primarily local traffic. The designation of roads helps to determine the design and character of the pathways as well as necessary safety considerations.

Pedestrian pathways range from poorly defined paths through fields and woods to sidewalks and malls. In Siler City, sidewalks are scarce and foot-worn paths indicate the desire and need of the people for better pedestrian pathways.



## SILER CITY

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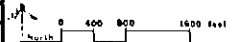
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Raleigh, North Carolina  
Fall, 1980

### PATHWAYS

PRIMARY

■■■■■ PRIMARY PATHWAYS

----- SECONDARY PATHWAYS



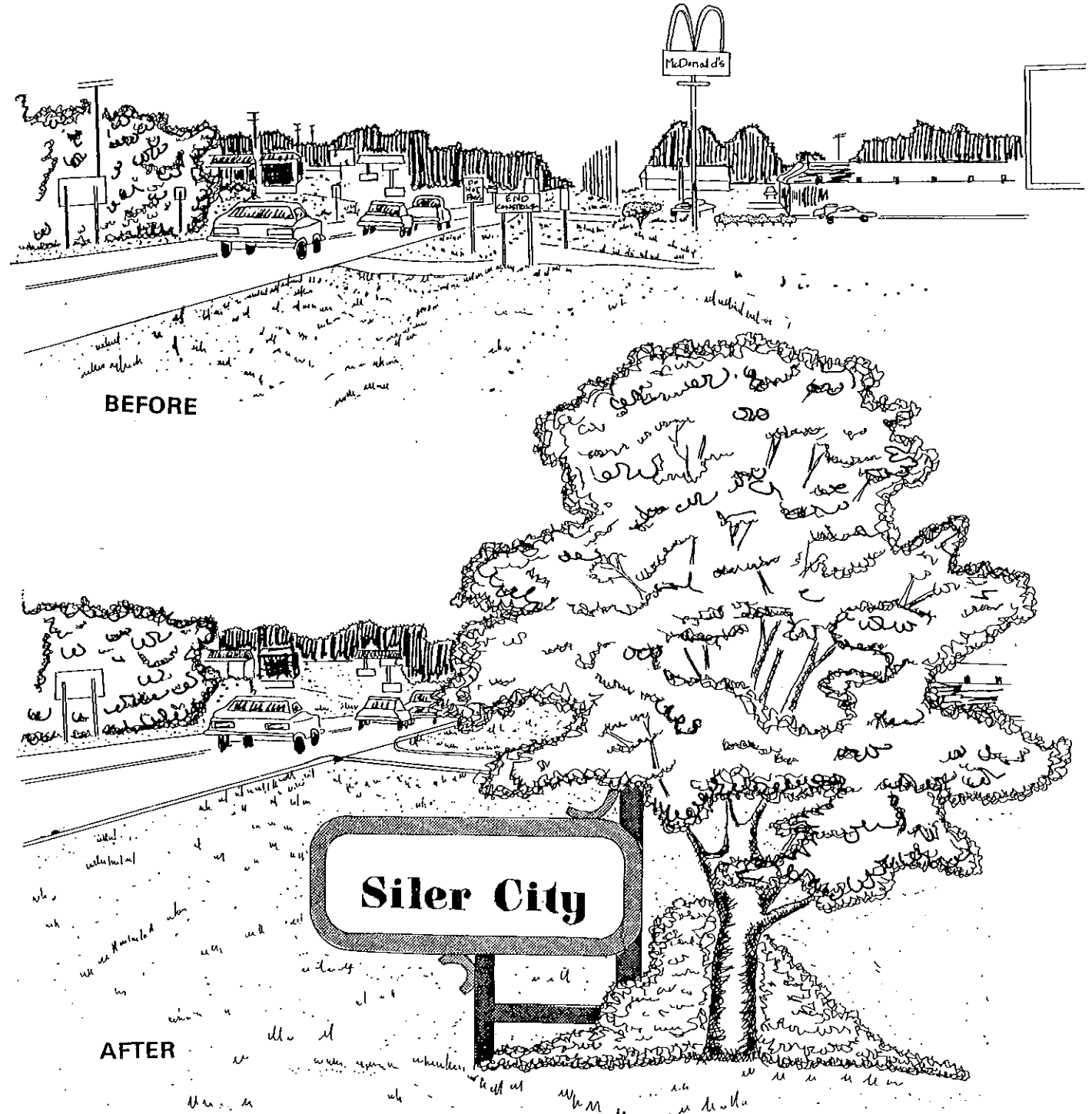
## PATHWAYS AND ENTRANCES:

### SUGGESTIONS AND GUIDELINES

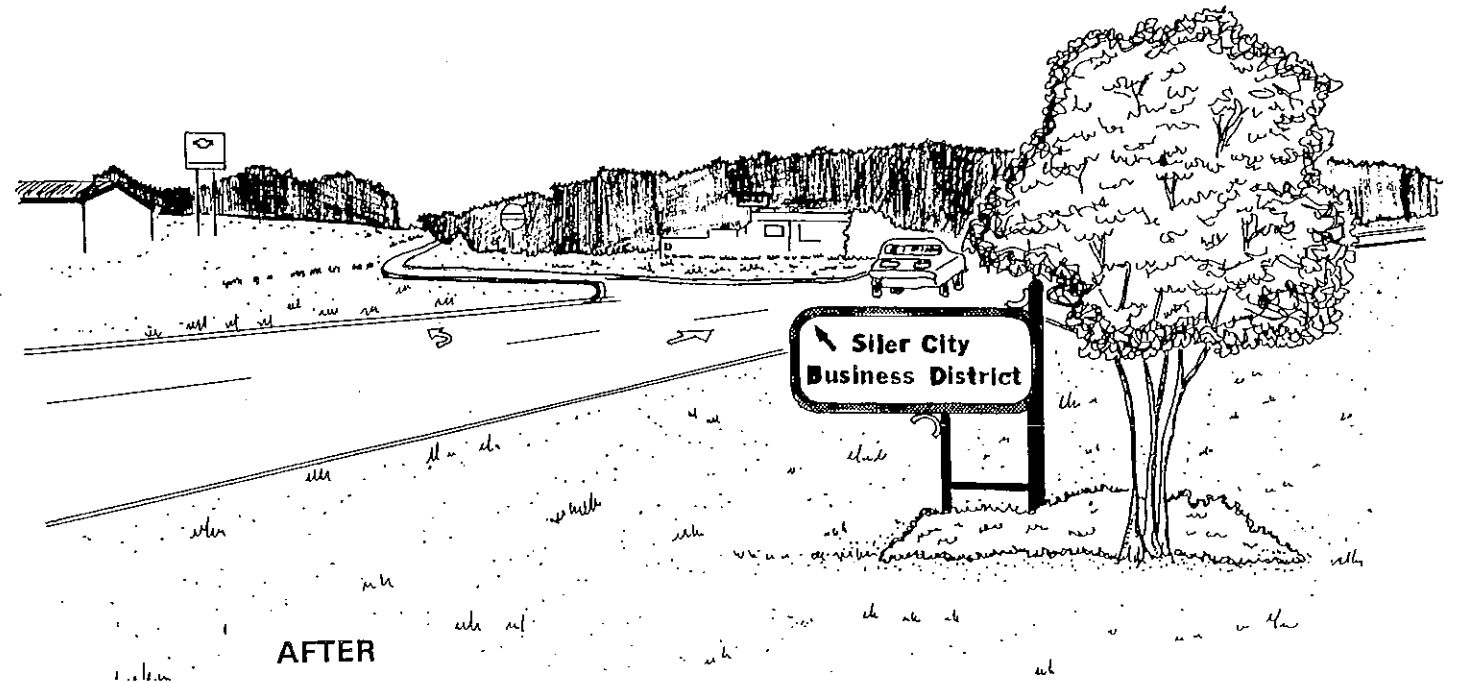
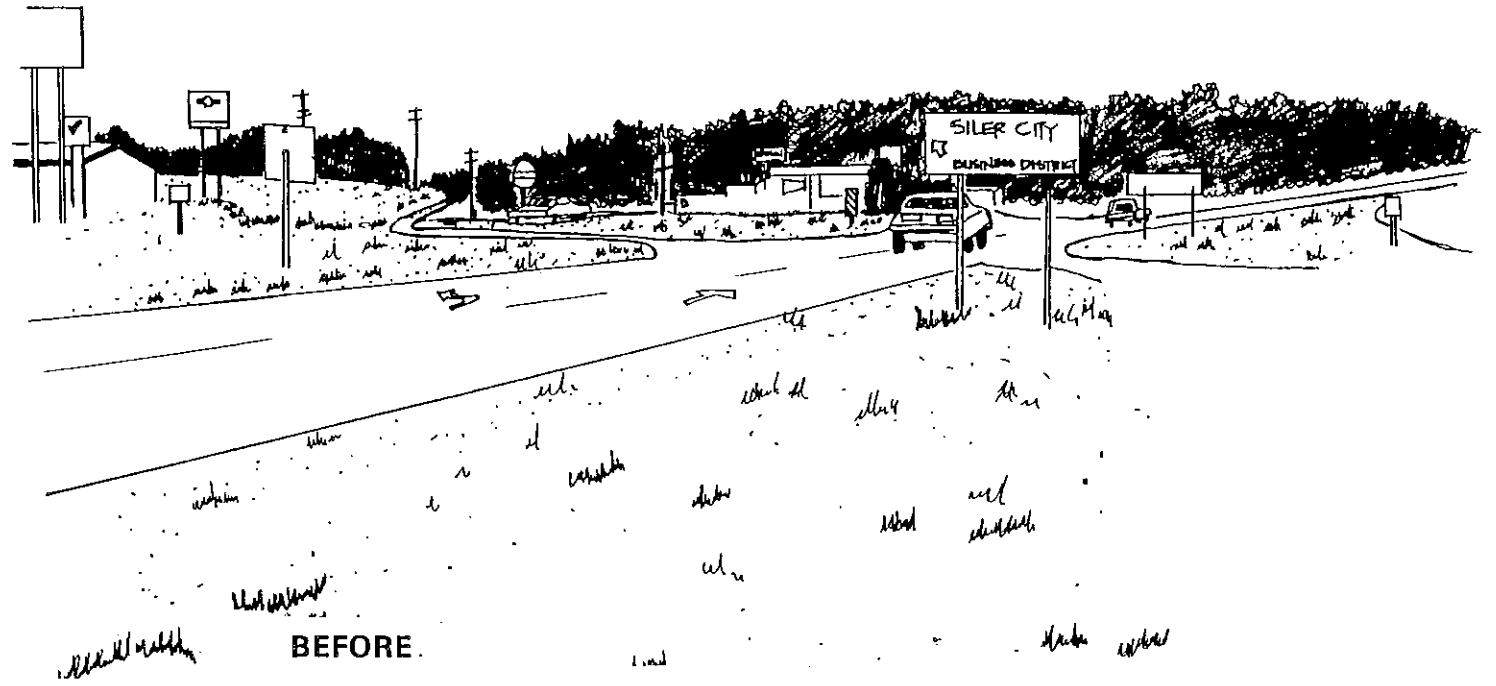
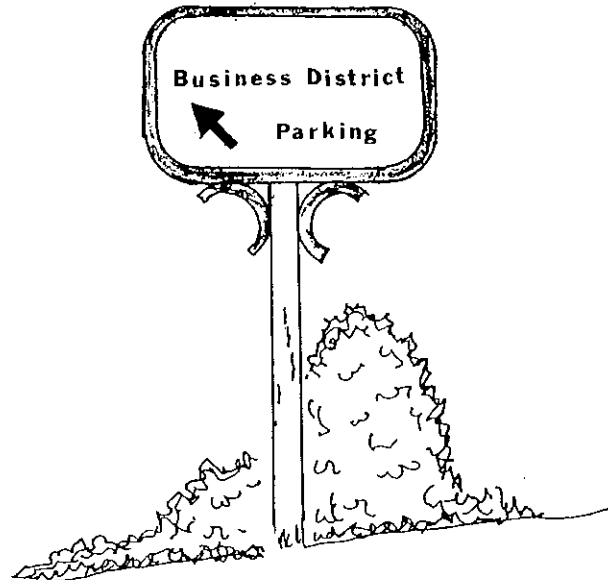
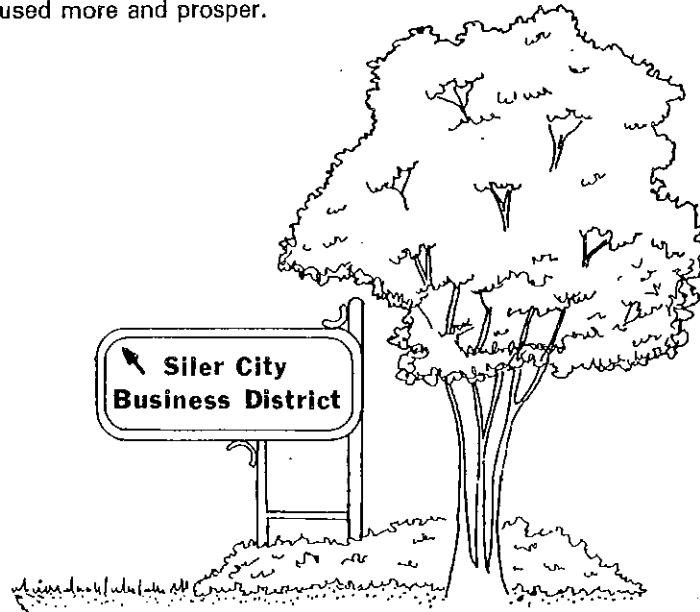
#### Entrance Signs

A system of signage to identify Siler City and the Central Business District (CBD) is needed. Although currently, small green and white signs do demark the town's limits, they do not portray the unique personality of Siler City. There are also several of these signs guiding traffic to the CBD but none to denote the limits of the CBD.

A hierarchy of signs is needed not only to express the identity of Siler City but to provide a clear orientation for the potential shopper; they should show where goods and services are located. The proposed sign for the primary entrances not only lets the motorist know that he is in or approaching Siler City but also that the Town has pride, originality, and civic interest.



After the entrance signs, there should follow signs which will direct the traveller to the Central Business District, where there will be directional signs for parking and pedestrian pathways. Siler City will have a clear identity due to these signs. As it becomes easier for people to orient themselves within Siler City, the town will be used more and prosper.



## Sign Control

Regulations of existing and proposed commercial, industrial, and institutional signage is also needed. Although signage in Siler City is not a severe problem, the potential for a great problem exists. Signs inform people about the environment around them and are important elements of everyday life. However, signs are often misused, and instead of being helpful, become confusing and distracting. If the environment becomes overloaded with signs, the affect is negative. Signage guidelines are needed that will allow each establishment to express itself uniquely yet exist within and ordered framework that enhances rather than distracts from communication.

These guidelines are based on limits of visual perception in terms of what the eye can see and the mind can process. From the motorist's point-of-view, the faster he is travelling, the less detail he can discern along the edges of the street. If the signage is not comprehensible, driving becomes unpleasant, fatiguing, and subsequently dangerous. The idea that less is more is relevant in this situation.

The limits of what a person can see and remember while driving become the basis for sign design in terms of letter size, sign size, and the number of items being communicated. According to Ewald and Mandelken's STREET GRAPHICS, the following chart should be used to determine letter and sign size according to highway speed and number of traffic lanes.

| DESIGN FACTORS AND RESULTING DESIGN ELEMENTS |             |                         |                        |                               |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| NUMBER OF LANES                              | SPEED (MPH) | REACTION TIME (SECONDS) | LETTER HEIGHT (INCHES) | TOTAL AREA OF SIGNS (SQ. FT.) |
| Two                                          | 15          | 8                       | 4                      | 6                             |
|                                              | 30          |                         | 7                      | 18                            |
|                                              | 45          |                         | 10                     | 36                            |
|                                              | 60          |                         | 14                     | 70                            |
| Four                                         | 15          | 10                      | 4                      | 6                             |
|                                              | 30          |                         | 9                      | 28                            |
|                                              | 45          |                         | 13                     | 64                            |
|                                              | 60          |                         | 17                     | 106                           |
| Six                                          | 15          | 11                      | 5                      | 10                            |
|                                              | 30          |                         | 9                      | 28                            |
|                                              | 45          |                         | 14                     | 70                            |
|                                              | 60          |                         | 19                     | 134                           |

**SILER CITY DOUGHNUTS**

Each establishment, also, should be restricted to the number of items that can be displayed on its sign. STREET GRAPHICS recommends a maximum of ten (10) items be allowed per sign. An item is defined as:

- 1) one syllable
- 2) one symbol
- 3) an abbreviation
- 4) broken plane

Industrial and commercial areas need larger backgrounds so a relationship of forty percent lettering space to sixty percent background is proposed. Residential and rural areas may use sixty percent letter and forty percent background relationship. Lighting should be controlled by not allowing bare light bulbs, flashing lights, or moving lights. Internal illumination and indirect illumination is allowed.

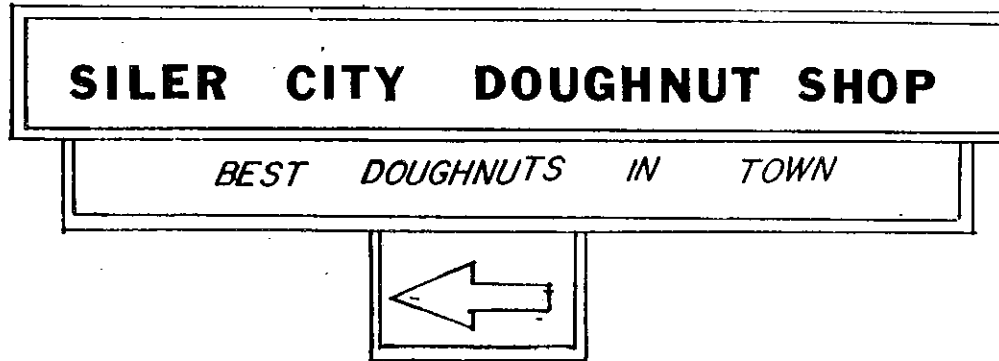
One good tool to help create a good sign image for a community is the zoning ordinance. In order to implement guidelines, a signage review board is needed to evaluate new signs. Specific guidelines for the review board should be developed along with a method to amortize signs in violation of the ordinance. Also, a policing program that can adequately enforce the ordinance should be established.

A person wishing to erect a new sign would determine the activity of his establishment, the character of the surrounding environment, the speed and number of lanes on the street, and, then, get information on the parameters of his sign. With this information, a sign that uniquely identifies the business can be developed within the given controls. The review board would approve the plans for the sign and register it. All signs within the community would eventually be registered.

The system will be flexible so as to encourage variety and originality yet have enough control to keep the overall effect of street signs from becoming overbearing. Sign regulations alone will not create an attractive community but is one small step which may lead to others, all of which eventually will.

2 syllables + 2 syllables + 1 symbol  
 2 syllables } 7 items of information

ACCEPTABLE



7 syllables

5 syllables  
 1 new typeface

1 symbol

2 new planes

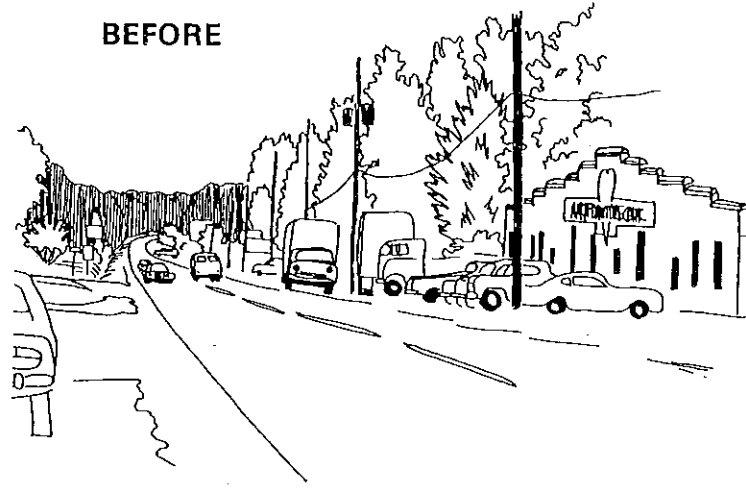
16 items of information

NOT ACCEPTABLE

EXAMPLES OF HOW TO COUNT ITEMS OF INFORMATION

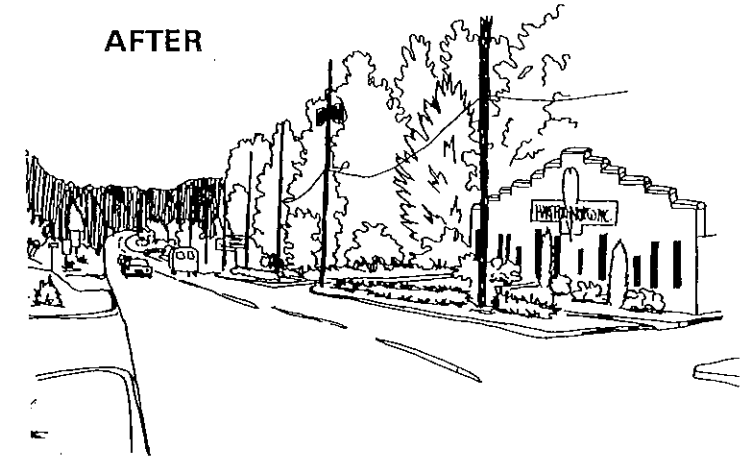
### Curb and Gutter

An important step toward improving US 64 East Business should be the installation of curb and gutter. The improved definition combined with enforced sign control would immensely improve the visual quality and safety of the road. To have the road curbed and guttered, city officials should present a plan and sufficient justification to the local member of the Bureau of Transportation for submission to the Transportation Improvement Program. Funding would be provided by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.



Existing: Uncontrolled access makes this a confusing and cluttered site

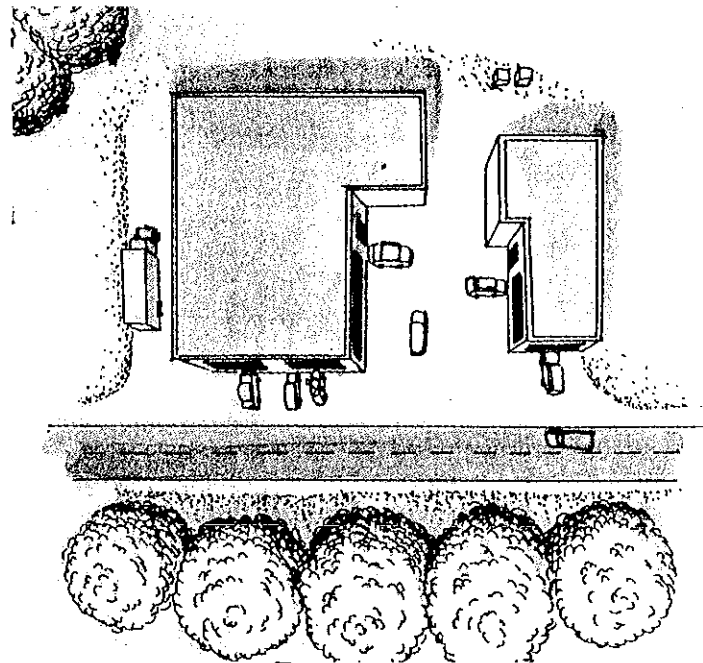
Figure 1



Proposed: Side and Rear Parking coupled with curb and gutter and landscaping improve the facade of this business

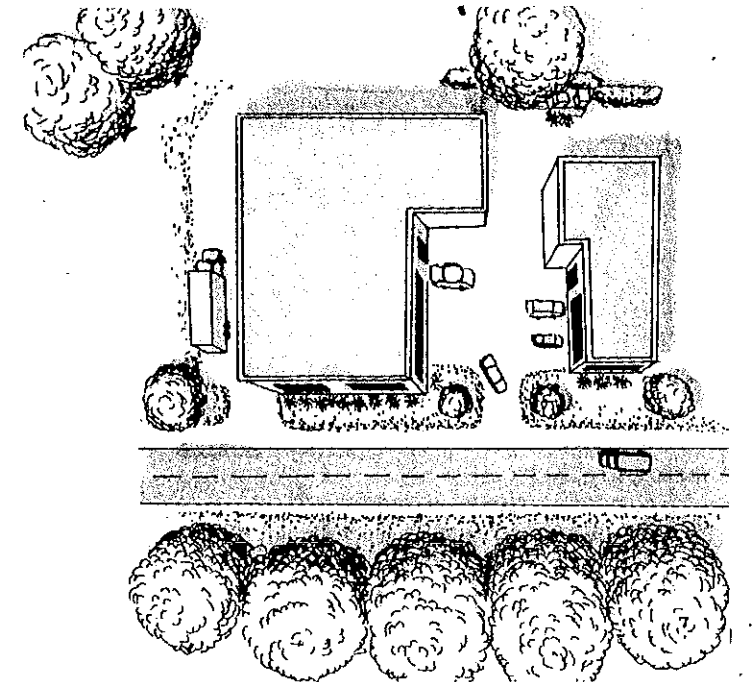
### Controlled Areas

Until the road is improved, city officials should encourage businessmen to control the access to their establishments by providing side or rear parking rather than on the street parking. Indiscriminate ingress and egress is not only visually unpleasant, it is unsafe. Better business entrance definition can be developed by the use of planting material and fences as well.



Existing plan for Western Auto on US 64 East

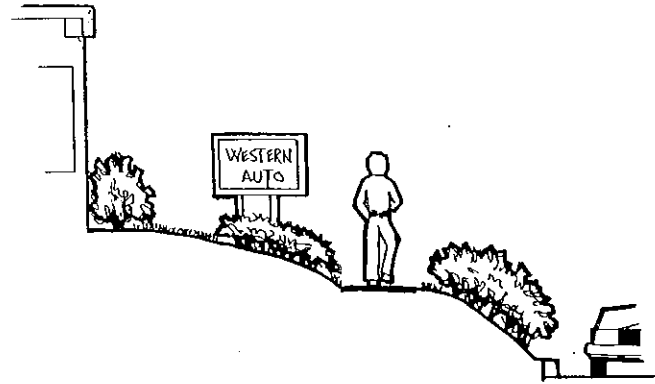
Figure 2



Proposed plan including landscaping, controlled access, and side parking.

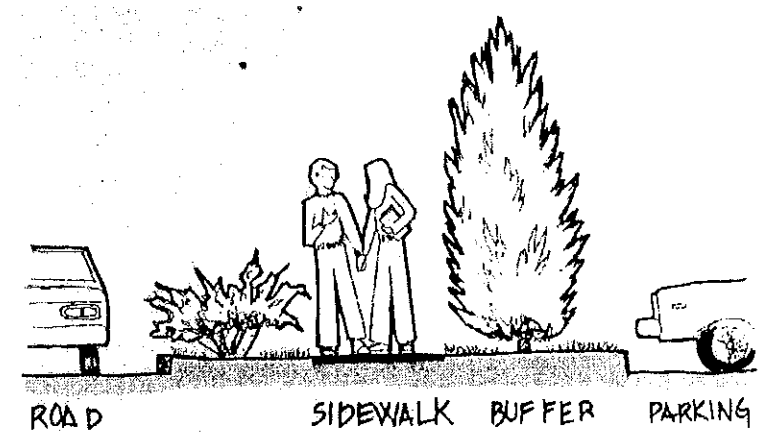
### Buffers/Landscaping

The use of buffers along industrial and commercial streets is important for the improvement of visual quality. Tall buffers should be used to block such unpleasant views as storage, trash and extensive parking. Low buffers can be used to improve the definition of entrances and businesses. Facades should be framed by planting not blocked by it. Buffers may also provide space for pedestrian sidewalks in front of the businesses. For information concerning planting within the right-of-way contact the local district engineer.



Sidewalk and shrubbery added to enhance visual appeal

Figure 3



### Underground Utilities

When possible, the placement of utilities underground decreases the visual clutter and confusion. It can also bring the scale of the town to the pedestrian level by lowering the visual ceiling.

### Pedestrian Links and Pathways

Since Park Shopping Center and Lomark Foods are in such close proximity to the Central Business District, a new design calls for the intergration of these two commercial areas. A pedestrian has a difficult time walking along Raleigh Street to the CBD because of the lack of sidewalks. By proposing a sidewalk lined with street trees, a visual, as well as physical link can be established. Vacant lots along the commercial area of Raleigh Street should be sold for commercial purposes, preferably for a group of stores rather than a single enterprise so to concentrate commercial growth around the CBD.



BEFORE



AFTER

## Pathway Consistency

### LEGEND

This graphic example is designed to be a flexible tool for the community leaders to use in determining the problem spots along their roads. In spite of what may appear to be overwhelming complexity, the tool does two simple things: 1. it locates missing edges and vague horizons, and 2. it locates high points which have potential visual significance. The first two of the four graphs work together and are based upon the presence and careful consideration of the edges which define the road. Two elements, edge and horizon, should be present on both sides of the road. Edges physically define the road such as curb and gutter or drainage ditches. Horizons define the visual space of the road by limiting and defining the scope of vision. Trees and building facades act in this capacity. Figure 4 and Figure 5 demonstrate the concept. Figure 2 "Proposed" is the ideal situation having an edge and horizon on both sides of the road. Figure 2 "Existing" lacks the right hand side edge. This can be corrected through the addition of several elements including curbing, bollards, or plant material. The presence of both edges and horizons are necessary for the creation of congruent pathways and entrances. Congruency is the first step toward a strong positive image.

To read the graph, place yourself in the shoes of a traveler coming from Pittsboro along US 64. The graph begins on the right hand side of page at the Rocky River and continues in a westward movement. The path turns slightly southward to follow US 64 Business becoming East Third St. The pathway ends shortly before the Central Business District. The graph is made up of four parts. Any point on one of the graphs matches the points directly above or below it on the other graphs.

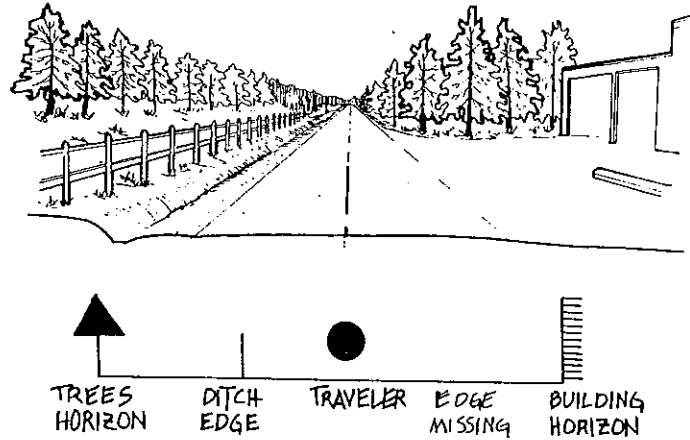


Figure 4

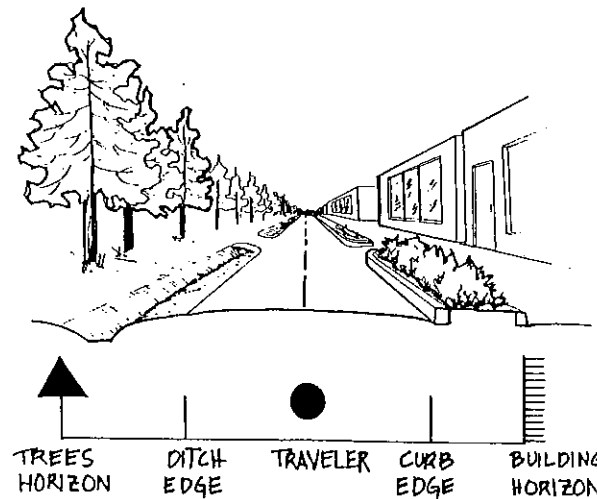


Figure 5

## PATHWAY GRAPH

Part I: A plan view of existing conditions

Part II. As demonstrated in figs. 4 and 5, and in the section A-A' in the sample, the symbol is a cross-section through the plan Part I. Variations in the distance between the edge and horizon corresponds to variations in the distance between the edge and horizon in the plan view.

- The traveler
- | Edge
- |█ Horizon, buildings
- |▲ Horizon, trees

Part III. Relative elevation of pathway to point out and locate significant hill crests. (see fig. )

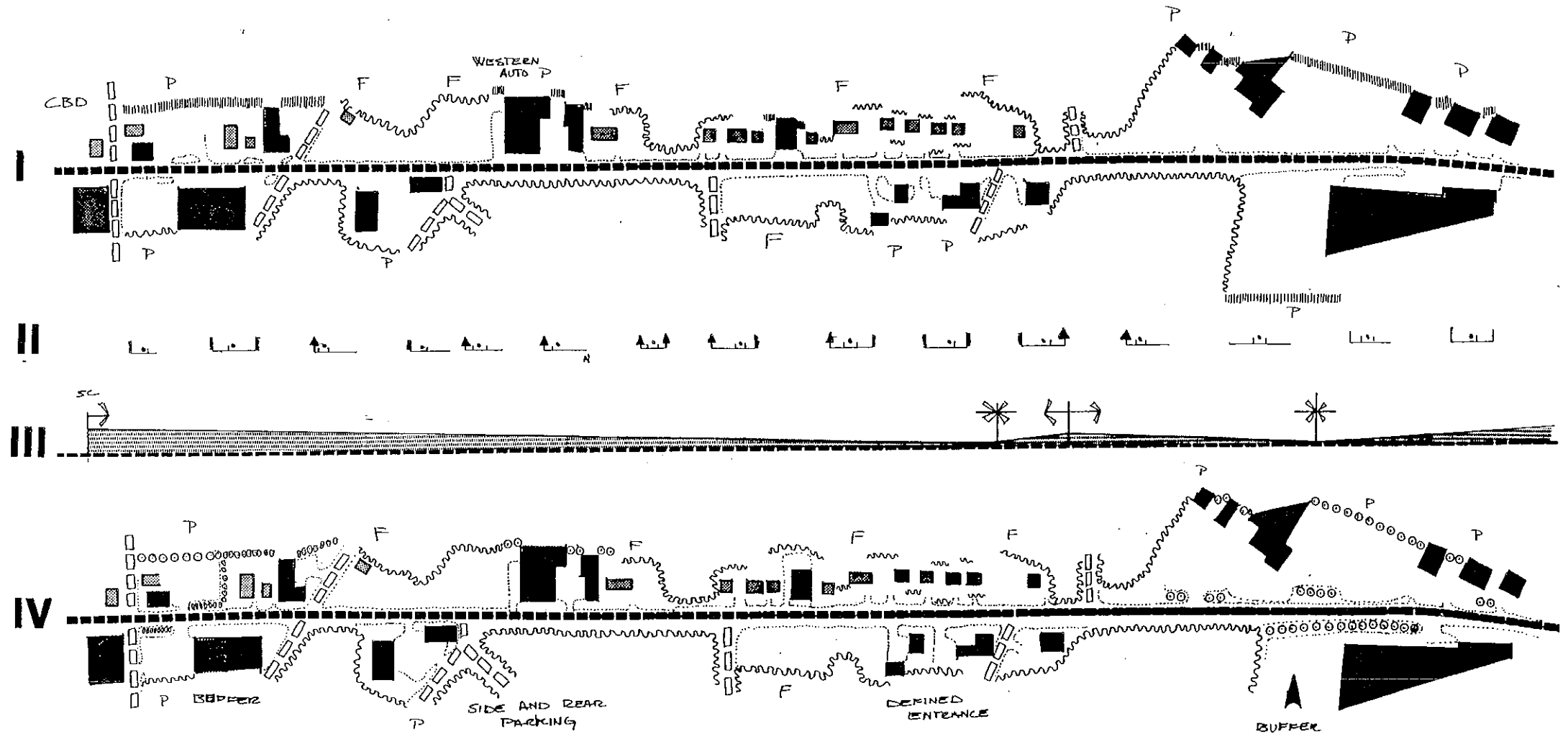
- SC Significant crest
- ⌘ Trough
- ↔ crest

Part IV: Part IV offers a possible solution for improvement of the pathway. It is important to consider the discussion from the written material when developing the changes suggested by the graph. To find the solutions, fill in the missing elements in Part II such that at any point along the pathway edges and horizons exist on both sides. With the addition of shrubbery and sign control, an attractive commercially active pathway will emerge.

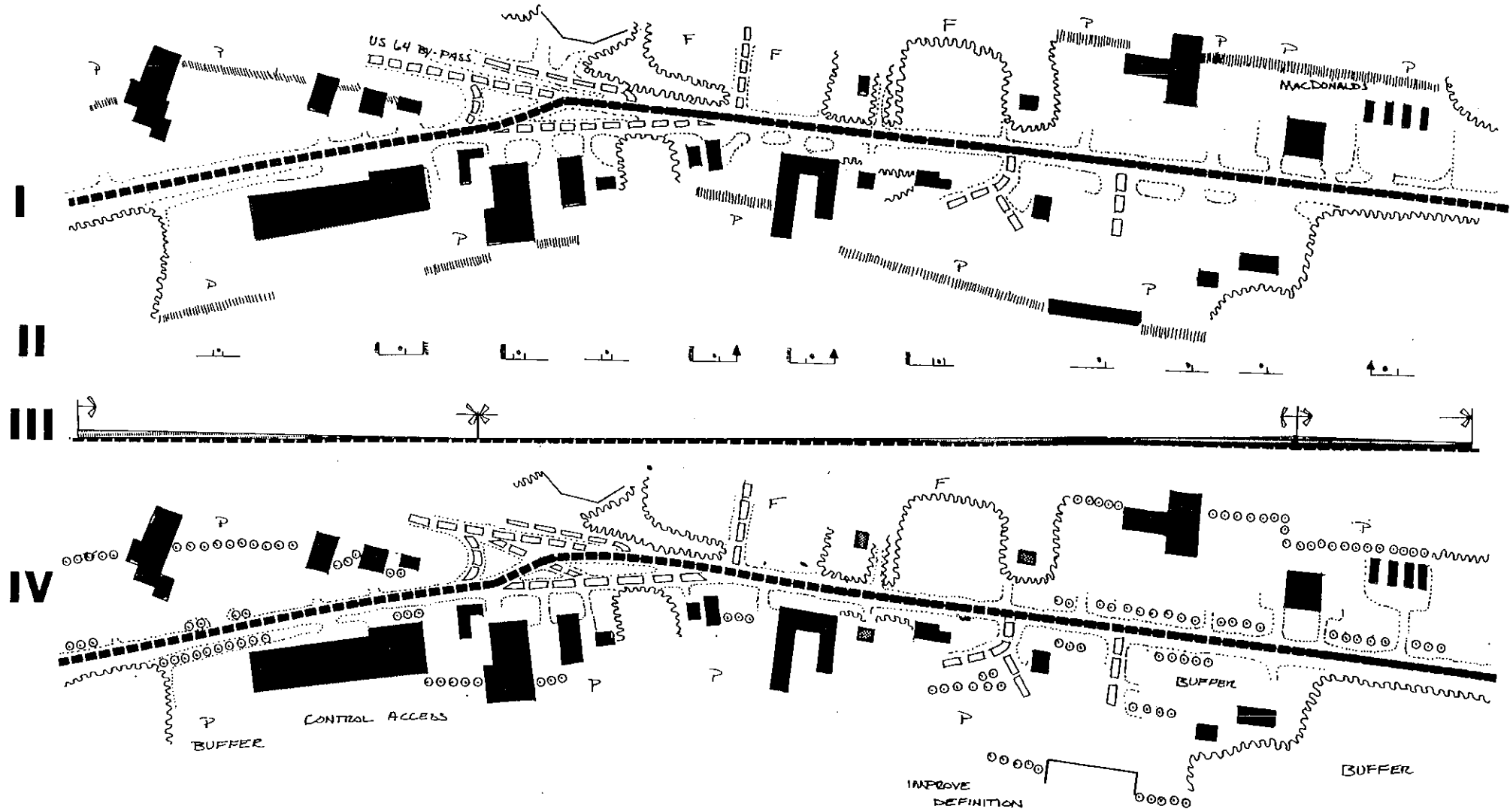
- Defined entrances (see fig. 1 )
- Side and rear parking (see fig. 2 )
- Buffers (see fig. 3 )
- Major pathway
- ▬ Secondary pathways
- ▨ Commercial buildings
- ▧ Residential buildings
- ~ Forest
- Ditch or curb and gutter
- ▭ Vague horizon, parking and storage areas
- ▭ Parking (use between edge and horizon)
- ▭ Field (use between edge and horizon)



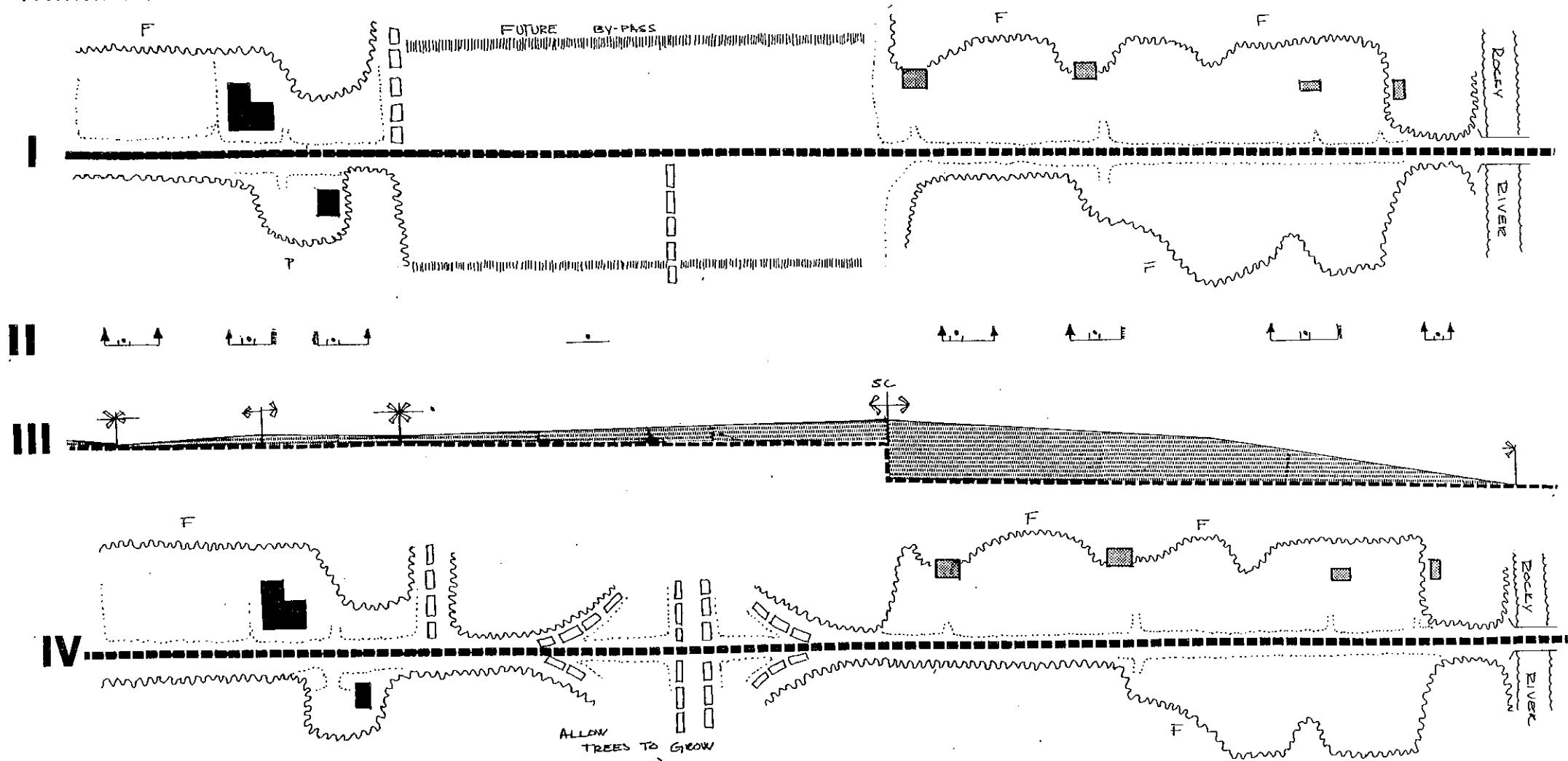
# PATHWAY GRAPH



PATHWAY GRAPH



## PATHWAY GRAPH



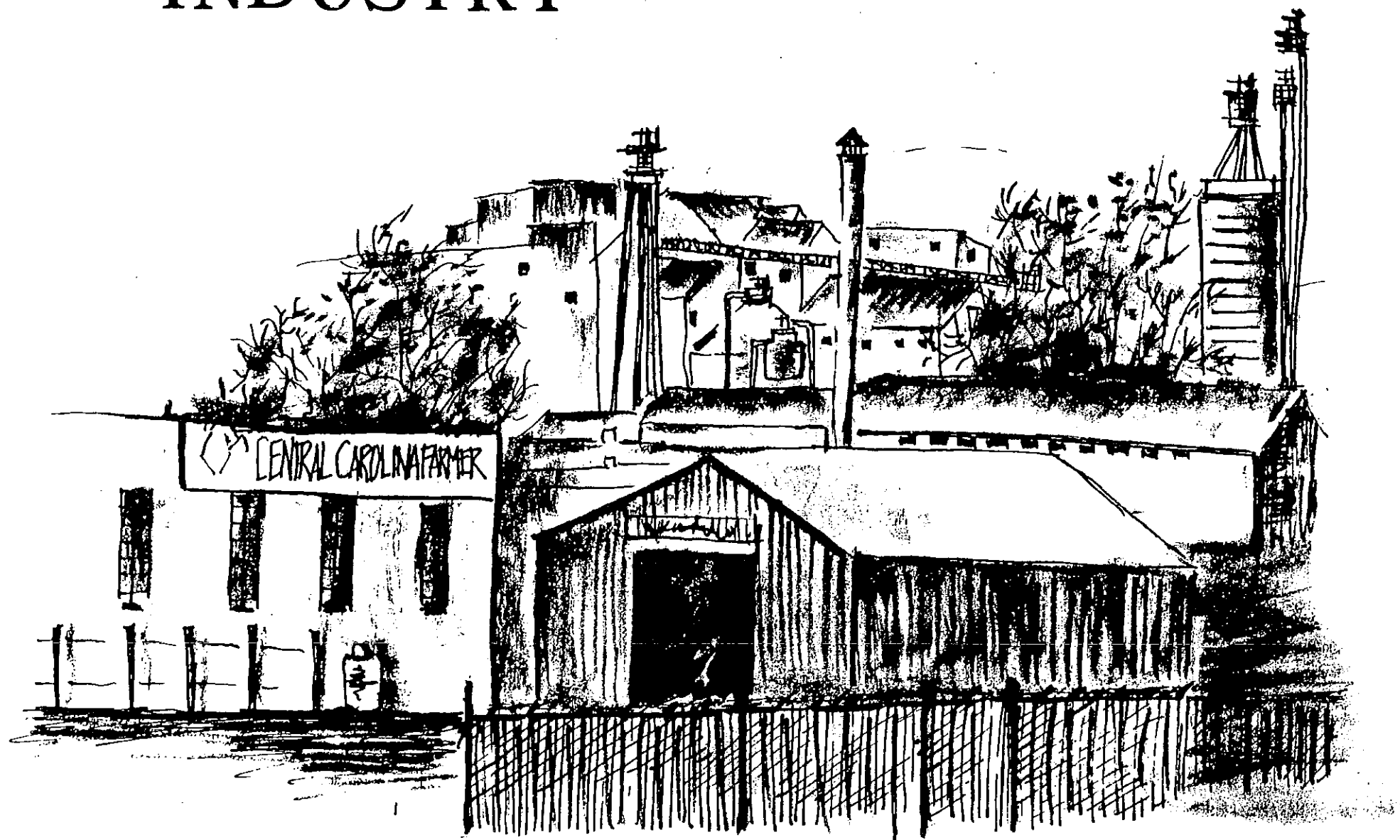
## PATHWAYS AND ENTRANCES:

### CONCLUSION

In summary, each element is a part of the whole image. Careful plans must include a consideration of the total visual image and how each part fits. Paths which enter through vague entrances have no beginning, while entrances leading to unsightly paths are hollow. Each pathway and entrance is different, varying with the needs, topography, and use. To achieve a congruent appealing im-

pression, a desired visual image should be decided upon, the existing elements assessed, and a determination made of the changes which are necessary to create the desired image. All of this can be achieved only through the mutual effort and cooperation of the city officials, business leaders, and local citizens.

# INDUSTRY

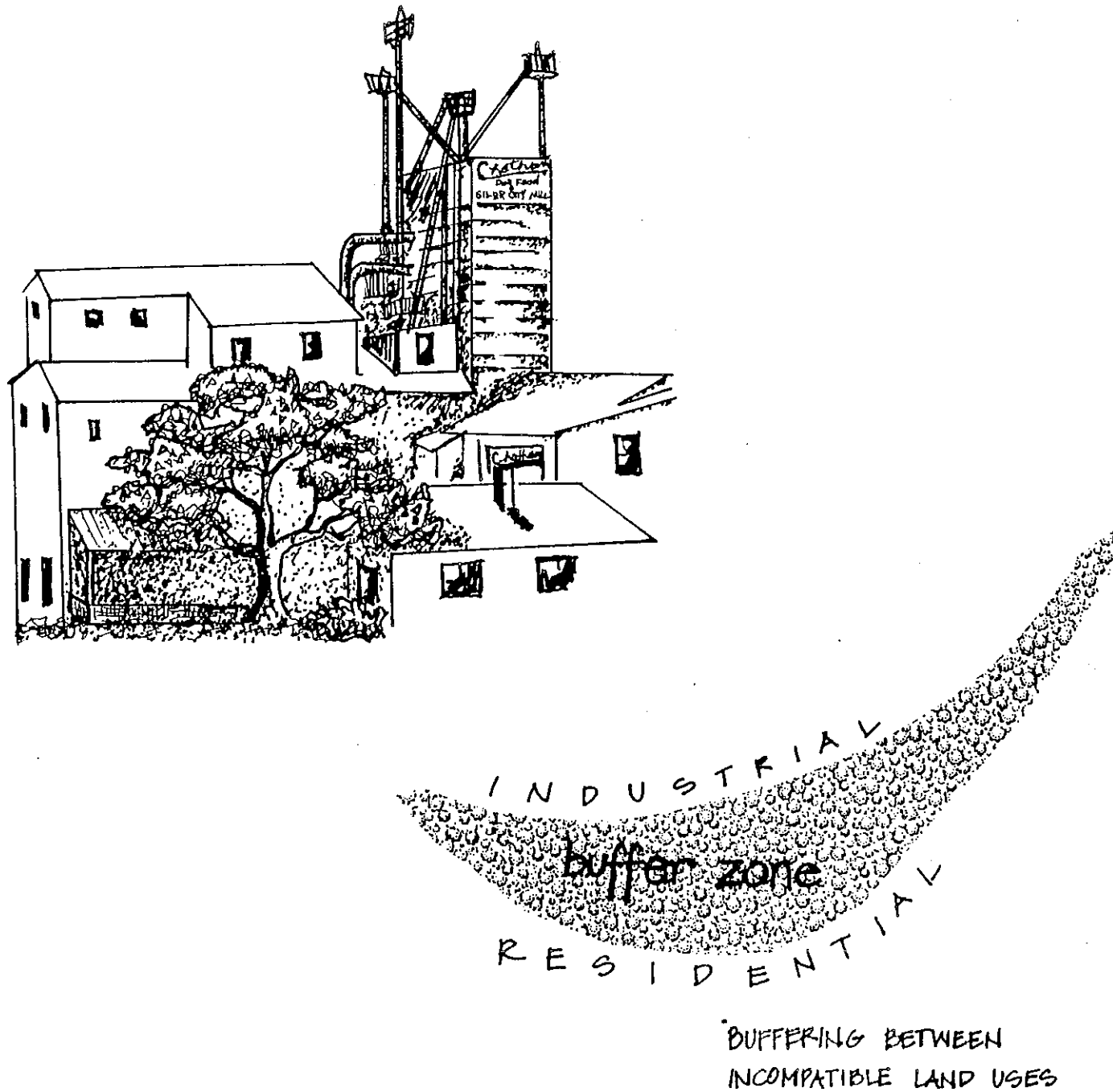


## RESIDENTIAL AND INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

Siler City has followed traditional growth patterns of an active industrial town. Located at the historic crossroads of stage coach travel, the city was quickly established as a town of commerce. The town grew around these crossroads and with the advent of the railroad, industry developed. Mill housing, subsequently, located about the industry as did more commercial establishments and services. These patterns of growth still exist today as Siler City continues its development as an economically viable town.

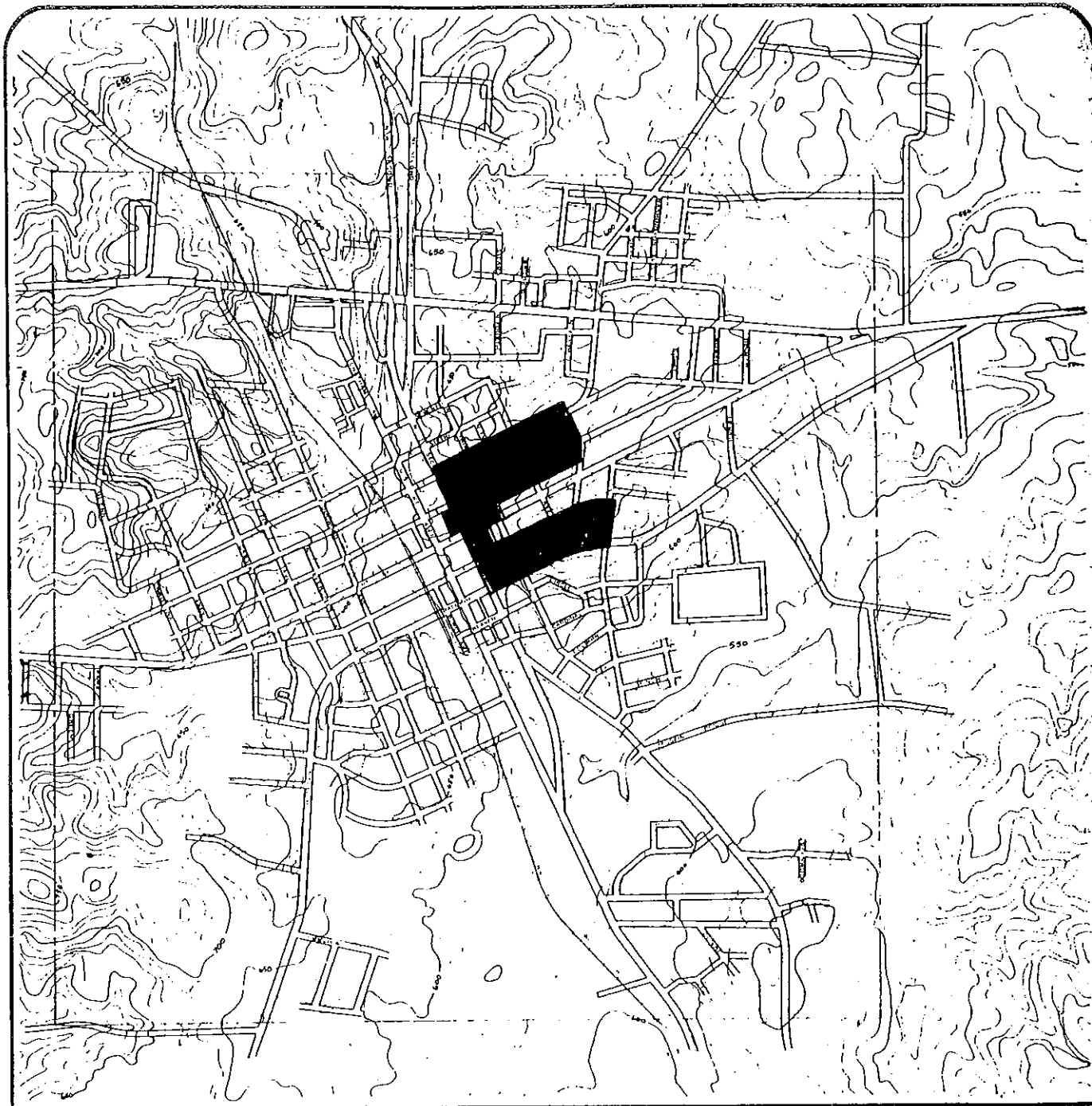
With the introduction of new industry into Siler City, the amount of housing, community facilities and services will continue to increase. It is essential to identify those sites suitable for both industrial and residential growth, incorporate them into a development plan and begin to consider zoning changes and new policy implementation. Industrial areas are now concentrated along the railroad tracks, in the northeastern edge of town and in the industrial park located on U.S. 421 North. In the determination of a future land use pattern for Siler City, soils and topographic information, availability of municipal utilities, availability of land and its relationship to major thoroughfares must all be taken into account. An industrial site must be relatively flat and readily served by utilities. If there is to be expansion of the industry, the tract of land should be large enough so that relocation is unnecessary. Growth about major thoroughfares is inevitable. It is imperative that industry has easy access to some type of freight whether it be highways or railroads.

The US 421 bypass will attract industry as well as residential and commercial expansion. Since the choice of an industrial site directly affects its employees in terms of social and economic costs, it is not unusual to find residential site selection corresponding to the selection of industrial sites. Soils and topographic conditions are most important in determining the residential site as it affects drainage and sewerage system installation. Easy access to employment, shopping and cultural activities are an essential determinant. At this time, it would be most desirable to locate residential development within the city limits, infilling in vacant lots where possible. Most intensive development, however, is expected to occur in fringe area subdivisions, in the vicinity of the industrial park and around the proposed bypass. There should be a continuing program for sidewalk, curbs and gutters and a program for the placement of utilities underground. With residential and industrial development occurring in the same areas, special zoning issues dealing with property set aside as buffer between incompatible land uses would be beneficial, especially in the face of continued town growth.



# RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT





## INTRODUCTION

One of Siler City's oldest and most architecturally significant neighborhoods lies just east of the CBD. This area is generally bounded by Fifth and East Raleigh St. and Third. and Fifth. Historical evidence indicates that this was once a viable part of town. During the turn of the century, large Victorian frame dwellings were constructed to house a growing class of industrialists who found Siler City a lucrative place to live. Today, however, the encroachment of commercial establishments and the dominance of automobile traffic seriously threatens the stability and residential character of this area.

The design team has compiled an analysis of existing neighborhood conditions and a series of design proposals. These address the district's need for a more cohesive visual and historic image, a more useable streetscape, and a stronger relationship with the CBD and its ongoing revitalization efforts. In addition, protection of the area's historic character has been encouraged through designation of the neighborhood as a local historic district. These design proposals are intended to act as a catalyst for community response and participation in the development of this historically significant area.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Improve the visual quality and encourage pedestrian use of area streets.
  - Add vegetation where necessary and develop street tree ordinance
  - Place utility lines underground
  - Develop appropriate lighting schemes
  - Encourage construction of sidewalks where necessary, strengthen links to CBD
2. Strengthen and clarify the historic image of the district.
  - Encourage the designation of the area as a local historic district
  - Design the streetscape to repond to the historic character of the area
  - Create a focal point which serves as a locus of community activity
3. Provide for a more cohesive district image.
  - Design street signs which are unique to the district
  - Encourage consistent themes in planting, paving and lighting.
  - Provide recommendations for housing infill in the district.

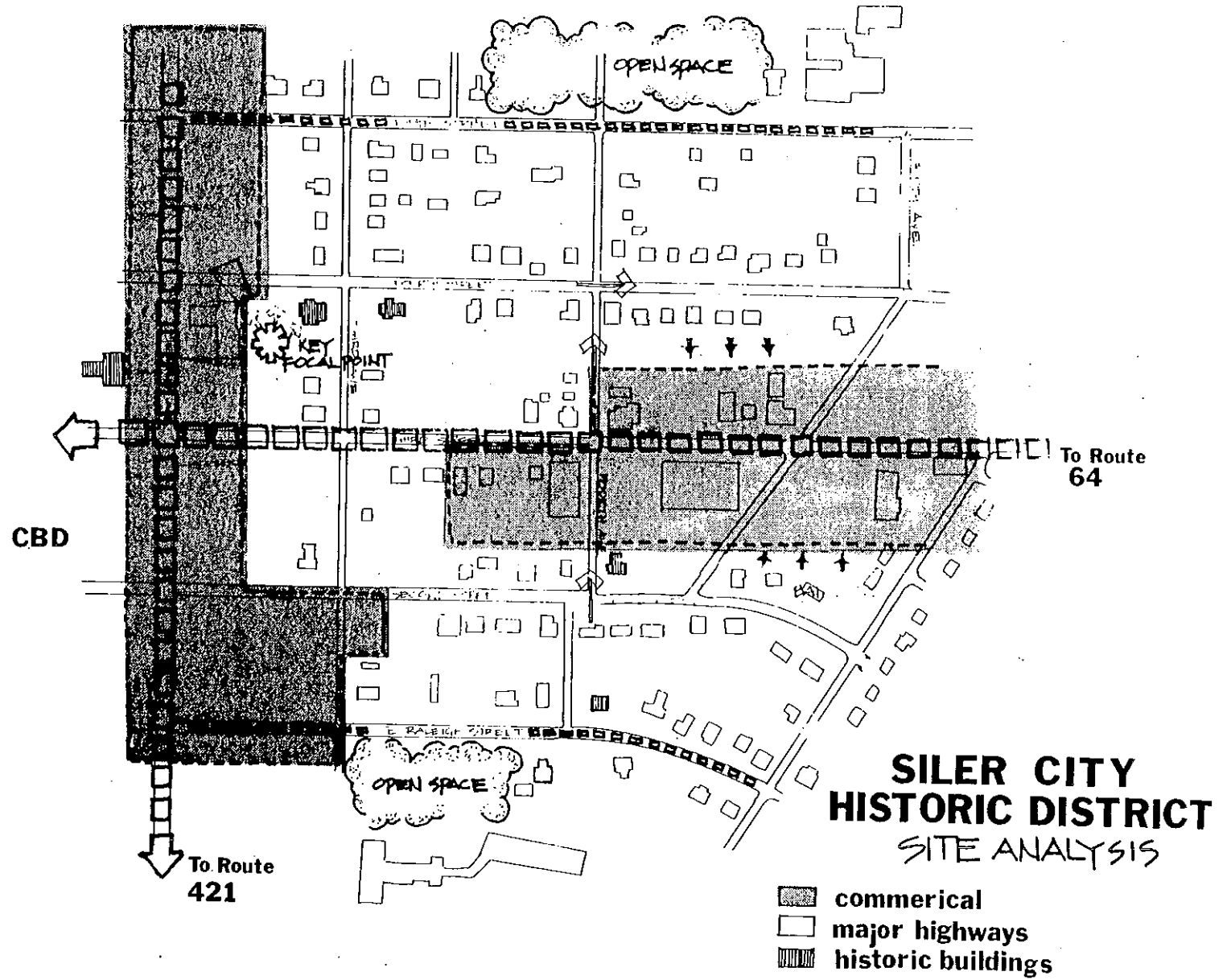
## SITE ANALYSIS

**Land Use:** There are 3 primary uses of land in the area—residential, commercial and industrial. At least 3/4 of the district consists of single family housing, although multi-family dwellings are evident in at least one section of the neighborhood. Commercial, and industrial concerns occupy the strip along Third St. as well as the areas between the neighborhood and the CBD. The combination and proximity of the land uses make it difficult to distinguish the district from its surroundings.

**Circulation:** Vehicular traffic dominates and divides the neighborhood. Third and Second cut through the district forming the major arteries to and from the CBD. Moderate traffic occurs on Fifth and East Raleigh Sts. The lack of sidewalks on many of the streets discourage pedestrian traffic within the neighborhood. Pedestrian links to the CBD should be created to take advantage of the districts central location.

**Architecture:** During the early 20th century the predominant style of architecture was the I-House. These were the homes of successful business and professional people who embraced the tastes of the era. They constructed large frame dwellings consisting of numerous styles of architecture. Transitional styles leading to the Colonial Revival and neo-Classical Revival periods in architecture were also evident. Examples of these in the district are: the Jenkins and the Hadley houses both on East Raleigh St., the Bray house on E. Second St. and the Wren house on Third Ave. The Neo-Classical style is most excellently represented by the Mathews-Wren house also on Third Ave. This appears to be the finest example of this style in Siler City. After W.W. I. and until 1930, Siler City experienced a period of growth unlike previous eras. Bungalow Cottages, styled with low-slung roofs and wide overhangs supported by large eave brackets, became the popular architectural style. The district contains a number of Bungalow Cottages, particularly along Fourth. St.

**Streetscape:** Although some areas, such as Fourth. St. maintain a visually cohesive and attractive streetscape, many areas within the district suffer from a multitude of visual problems. Entrances to the neighborhood do not provide a sense of arrival and the streetscape continuity is not such that it makes the district a recognizable entity. One's vista is allowed to drift with little direction or focus. Trees and other vegetation are not consistent throughout the district. Utility poles and wires are an intrusion, as are the abutting commercial establishments. New housing has been constructed in some areas without consideration of existing architecture or landscape features, appearing out of scale and context with the rest of the district.





DESIGN PROPOSALS

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

What is a historic district?

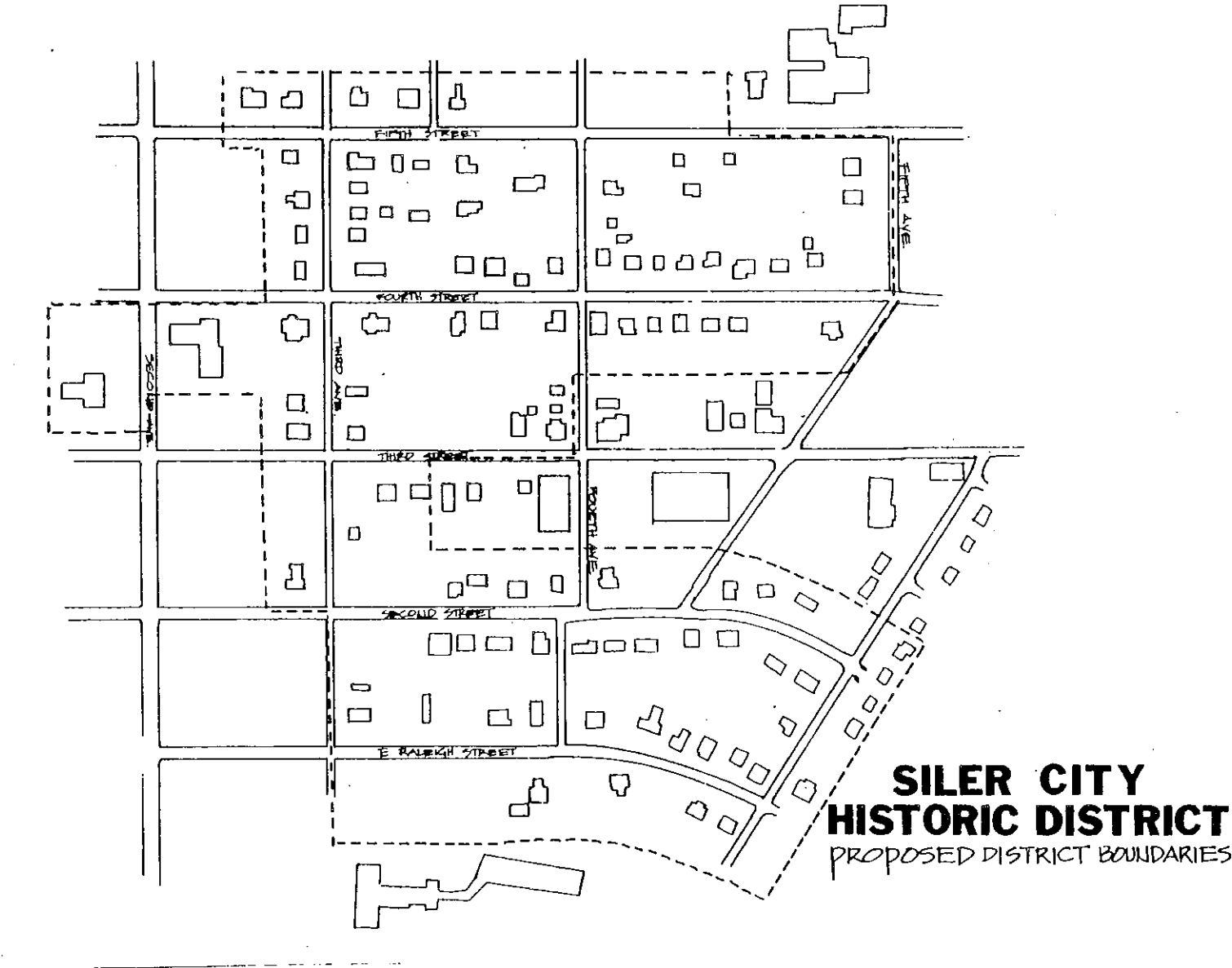
A local historic district is one which is designated by a local legislative body (city council, county commissioners, etc.) as part of a zoning ordinance. It is a legal means of guiding the quality of design in a district by encouraging consistency with the historic character. A historic district commission is appointed to act as review board for any proposed design changes within the district. Property owners are required to submit for the commissioners approval any plans for future construction or changes in existing structures. This process is designed to preserve the appearance and exterior relationships of buildings and sites without changing their ownership or curtailing their use.

Why have a historic district?

- Historic districts reflect a sense of continuity of time and place. They provide us with a cultural identity.
- They stabilize property values and stimulate new investment in older neighborhoods
- Improve civic image and provide a climate for expanded economic or commercial activity
- They can be useful in implementing planning goals such as housing improvement, and street repair and maintenance.

Proposed district boundaries

Establishing boundaries is one of the first steps in the process of local historic district designation. Boundaries should coincide as much as possible with established legal or natural boundaries. They should include minimal buffer areas which should also include major entry points to distinguish the district from its surroundings. Historically significant buildings and landmarks should be included where possible. Boundaries for the Siler City Historic District have been based on the land-use patterns of the area as well as the above criteria.



## STREETSCAPE

### Utilities:

The district is adequately served by utilities. The wooden poles and wires, however, present a cluttered and temporary appearance in the streetscape. It is recommended that they be placed underground.



### Infill housing

Architectural consistency is a major contributing factor to the streetscape. The repeated mass and scale of buildings is important to the overall image of the district. New housing construction should pay attention to the existing elements in the landscape such as building heights and set backs, construction materials, patterns of vegetation etc. New dwellings should be built to fit the existing conditions as much as possible.



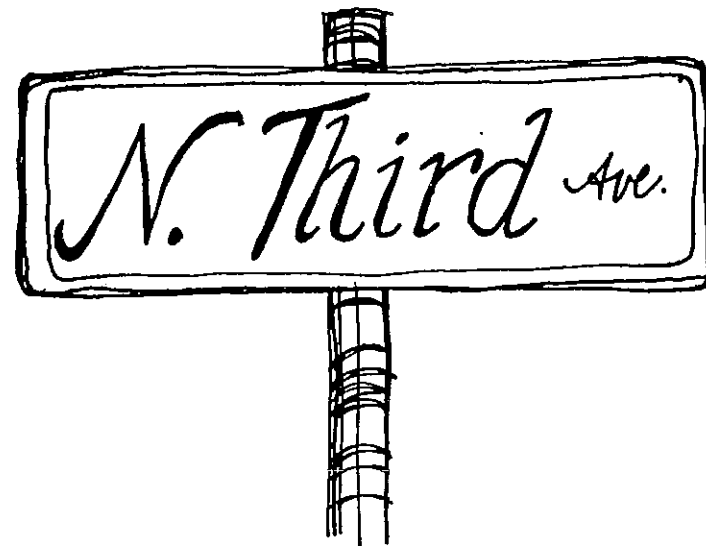
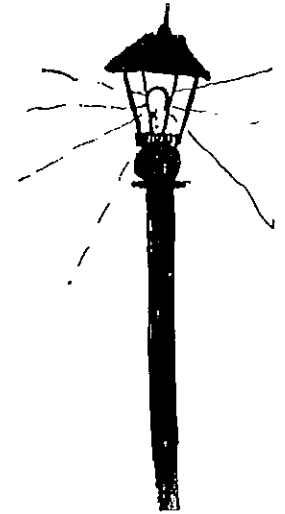
### Signage

It is recommended that Siler City follow sign guidelines in the placement and design of signs throughout the neighborhood. Three types of signs are of importance: street signs, signs located at points of entry into the district, and signs designating buildings of historical interest. As unobtrusively as possible, all signs should be;

- simple and easily read
- coordinated according to size and location
- have a spotlight, but not be internally illuminated or flashing.

### Lighting:

The distinctive character of the historic district can be reinforced by the design of an appropriate lighting scheme. The lighting must be adequate for illumination of street activities and for neighborhood safety. A lighting feature mounted at approximately 12-18 feet can cast the proper type of light for both pedestrian and automobile movement. Lights located at the edge of properties near the sidewalk will be necessary for safety. This particular placement of lights will also aid in the definition of spaces and can draw attention to focal points. Lighting should also be used to accentuate vegetation and signs. A uniform style of fixture is necessary to provide a distinctive district image.



### Street trees:

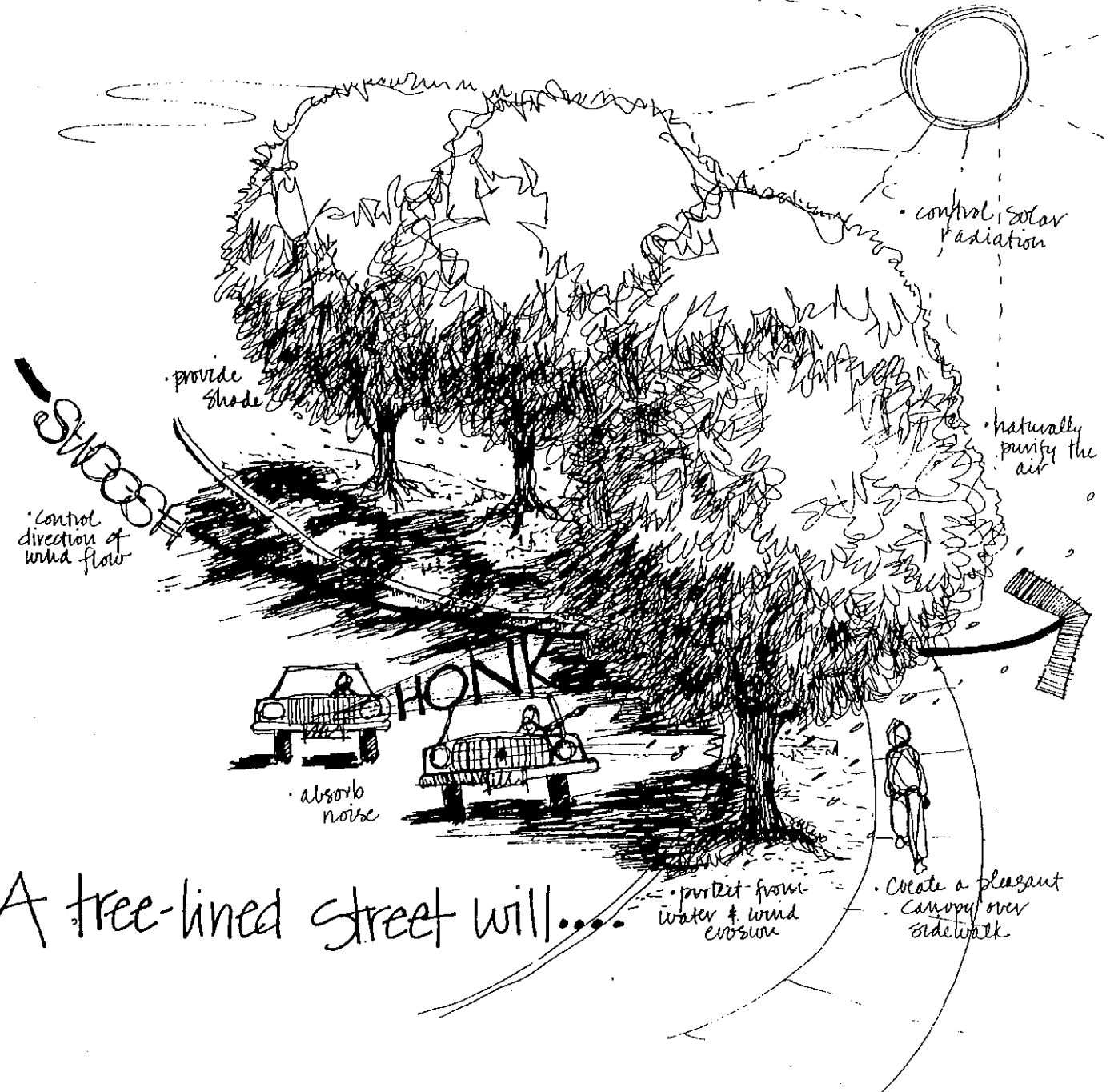
At one time, all streets and highways of this country were lined with trees, for it was the intention to replace, to some extent, the forests that had once covered the area. Today trees are carefully selected to serve both an aesthetic and practical function and to fit existing environmental conditions. Several ways of providing a pleasant and visually cohesive streetscape through the use of vegetation include the following:

- plant vegetation to soften hard architectural lines
- enhance views by framing the streetscape with a tree canopy
- use vegetation to screen unsightly areas and to provide privacy
- modify wind and water erosion, noise levels and climate through appropriate planting of vegetation
- develop a street-tree ordinance

### Street-tree ordinance

Although trees from the important part of many Siler City streetscapes, planting inconsistency occurs throughout various neighborhoods. The CBD and the proposed historic district are two such areas that would especially benefit by a tree planting program. A city wide street-tree ordinance would prove valuable to Siler City and its future development. The ordinance would establish a tree commission or tree committee made up of concerned citizens to assess and develop the street tree program. The position of arborist, forestor or landscape supervisor should also be created. A tree survey should be conducted in order to specify trees to be removed or that need special attention, as well as pinpointing those locations where new trees should be planted. All tree planting and maintenance specifications and design construction standards to protect vegetation should be administered through the street-tree program. The Division of Forest Resources has an Urban Forestry Program which will assist towns, cities and communities that wish to establish a street-tree program.

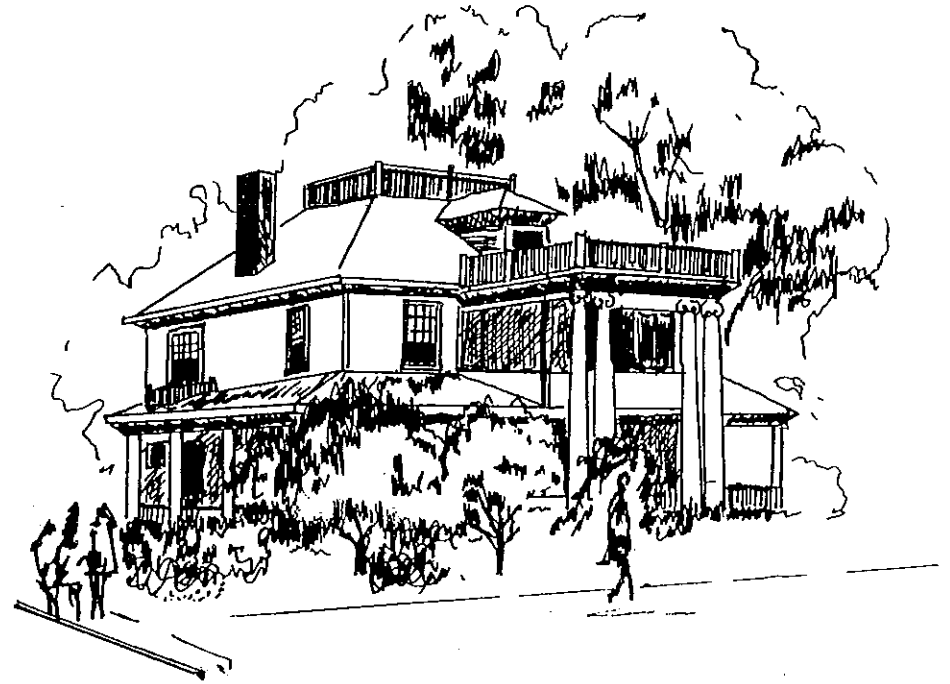
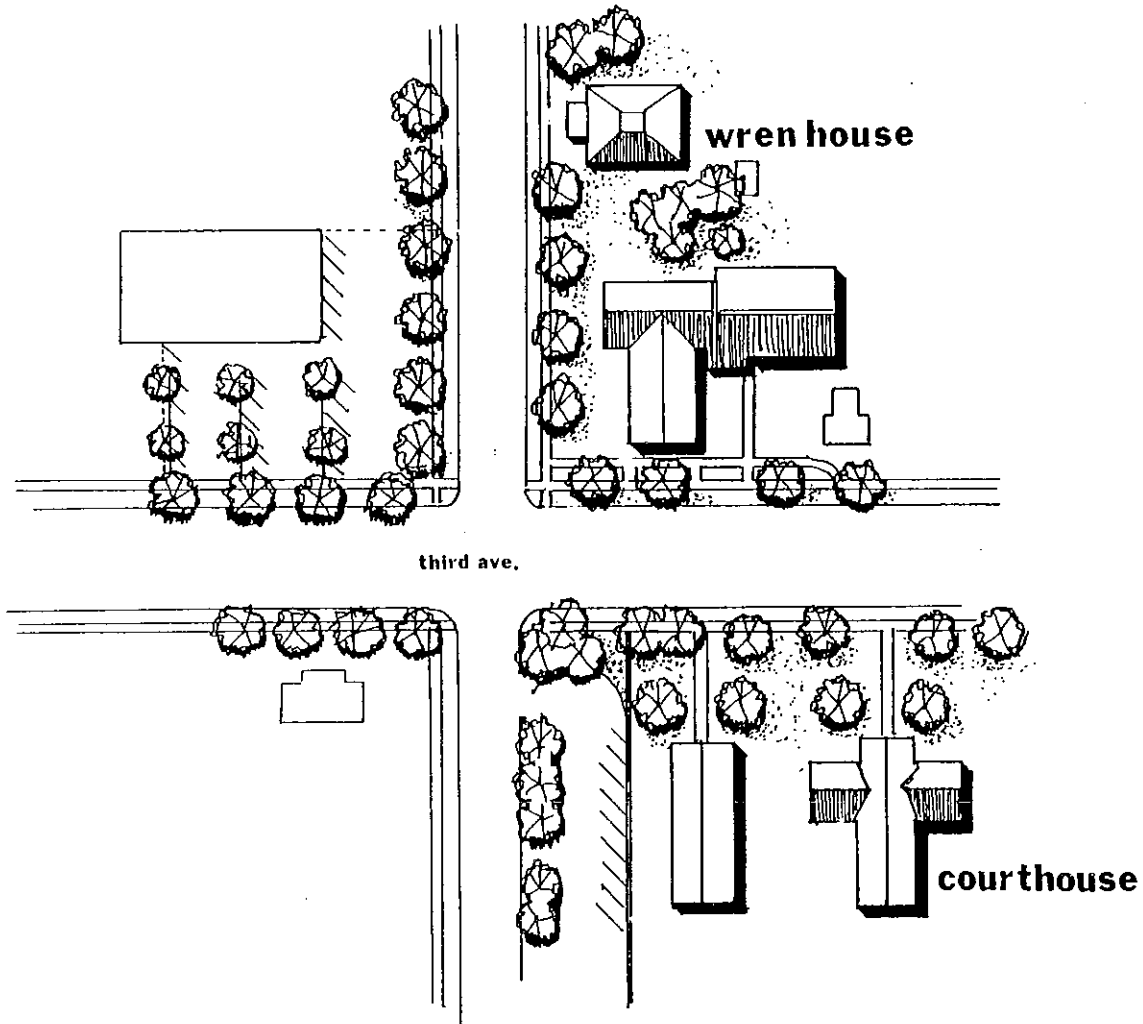
A tree-lined street will....



## MATTHEWS-WREN HOUSE:

The Wren house is excellently located with respect to the CBD and the courthouse. An allee of trees along Third St. would help to define the entrances to the district, as well as provide a pedestrian oriented link to town.

Vegetation should be planted along the sides as well as in planting strips in large parking lots. Such plantings may act as climate modifiers as well as provide a more visually cohesive Streetscapes.



The Matthews-Wren house represents one of Siler City's most architecturally significant buildings. Its central location with respect to city hall, inclusion in the proposed historic district and the fact that it has been recently acquired by the city, make revitalization efforts an attractive possibility. The design team recommends that the building be adaptive to serve as a focal point and locus of community oriented activities. Rehabilitation of the Matthews-Wren house would not only improve the historic image of the district, but it could provide the impetus for further rehabilitation in the district as well as in the CBD. Some possible uses of the building could include the following:

- historic district foundation
- community arts center
- chamber of commerce
- museum

# RECREATION



## PARKS AND RECREATION

As part of the overall plan to revitalize Siler City, a comprehensive "green space" or park design is proposed to enhance the town's visual image and provide recreational activities for all citizens within walking distance of their own neighborhoods. The two major components of the plan to conserve the landscape and provide recreational facilities are the parks and the greenway system. New facilities and upgrading existing sites are recommended for the parks. The greenway system would utilize the natural areas that line the flood plain of Love's Creek as a recreational trail. In addition, the greenway "strings" the parks and greenspace areas together into an "emerald necklace of scenic beauty."

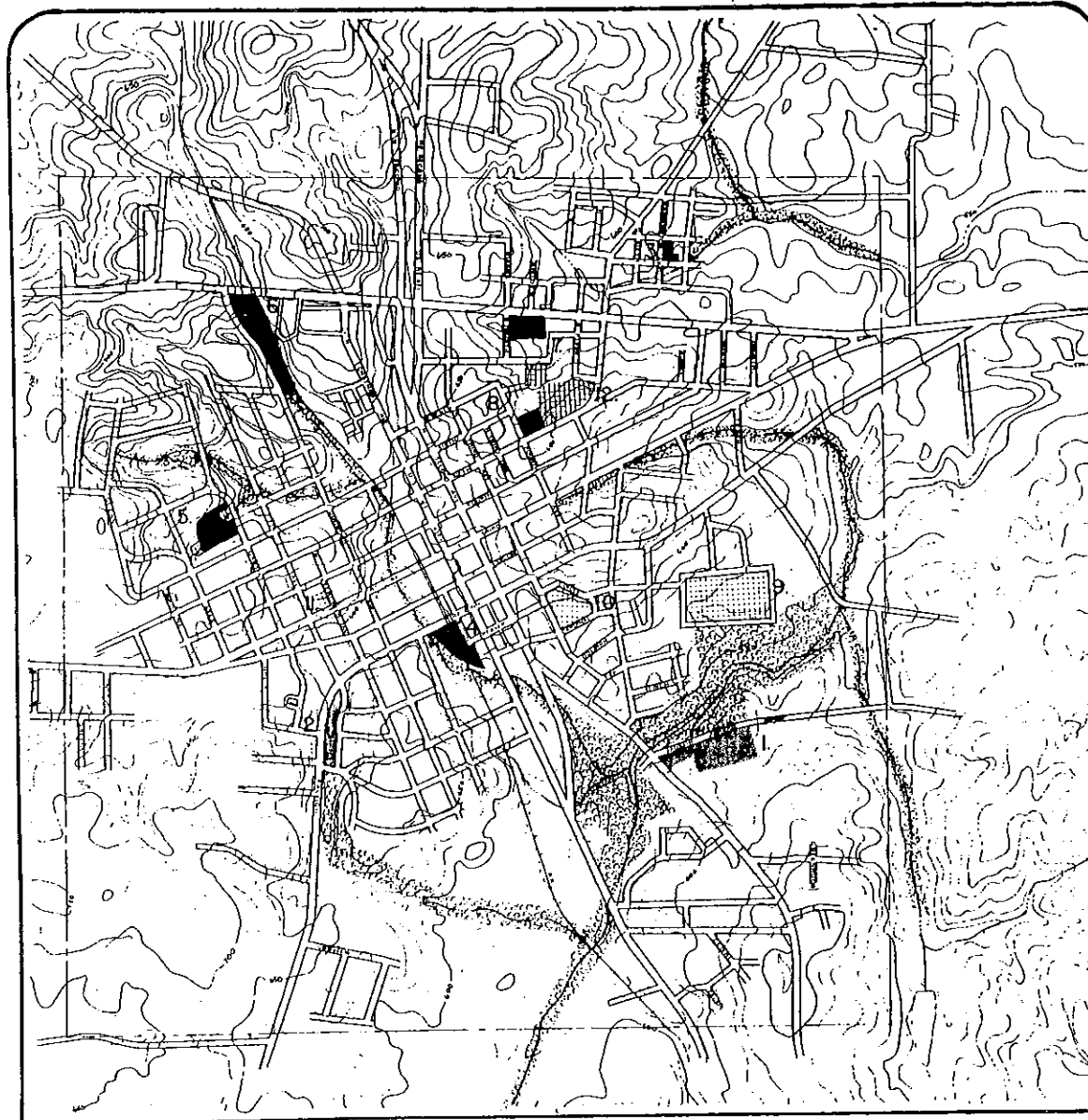
The greenway concept proposes the use of Love's Creek and its flood plain district as the basis for a linear park system. Love's Creek is the major drainage stream for Siler City and it extends into almost every neighborhood within the city limits. Approximately 95 acres are included in the flood plain district and these lands are not suitable for dwellings or other permanent structures because of the danger of flooding. Since these lands are most amenable to outdoor recreation, public parks, forest and floodable structures, the greenway plan intends to utilize the flood plain as long continuous parks which would extend into almost every neighborhood. It must be noted that the greenway would not remove productive land, nor would it lessen the amount of land suitable for urban development.

The greenway system would provide benefits to public organizations and the general public of Siler City. Recreation and the existing and proposed parks would be enhanced; pedestrian connections between neighborhoods, parks and schools would be established. Comprehensive city planning and new development could be coordinated with the greenway and many environmental benefits would follow the implementation of the greenway system.

Land bordering Love's Creek should be left primarily in its natural state except for the introduction of a system of pedestrian trails. The greenway would introduce an entirely different kind of park atmosphere to Siler City and create a variety of recreational activities that do not lend themselves to organized programming. The recreational activities which are to be used in conjunction with the greenway system would be very accessible to many families since the greenway would extend into almost every neighborhood. The pedestrian trails within the greenway could be used for walking, jogging, roller skating and bicycling and could serve as pedestrian connector links between neighborhoods, parks and schools.

The greenway system would complement the existing and proposed parks by providing open space for activities that could occur year round without any special equipment or supervision. It could also be used for nature trails and natural science study.

A number of environmental benefits would be gained with the implementation of the greenway system. By maintaining the







## SILER CITY

Graduate Design Studio  
Landscape Architecture

School of Design  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
Fall, 1980

### PARKS AND RECREATION

#### KEY

-  GREENWAY
-  EXISTING PARKS
- 1. BRAY PARK
- 2. BOLING PARK
- 3. LINCOLN HEIGHTS
-  PROPOSED PARKS
- 4. CBD
- 5. HOMEWOOD ACRES
- 6. HOMEWOOD ACRES
- 7. LINCOLN HEIGHTS
- 8. LINCOLN HEIGHTS
-  SCHOOLS
- 9. JORDAN-MATHEWS
- 10. PAUL BRAXTON
- 11. HENRY SILER
- 12. CHATHAM MIDDLE

0 400 800 1600 3200





RESIDENTIAL

JORDAN - MATHEWS  
HIGH SCHOOL

GREENWAY

BRAY PARK

AGRICULTURE

CARDINAL ST.

AUSTIN BRIDGE RD.

TRAIL

LOVE'S CREEK TRAIL



## ELEVATION OF GREENWAY

natural, meandering flow of Love's Creek and the natural vegetation along its bank, the damage and risk of flooding would be minimized. The non-developed greenway edges would increase the absorptive water capacity and reduce the amount of water run off. This would help reduce the erosion and siltation of areas downstream.

Some forested lands would also be preserved as part of the greening system. These forested lands are valuable scenic assets for Siler City and provide an important function for ground water storage and they also reduce run off from heavy rainfall. They also form an impressive backdrop to the built up areas, furnish pleasant views of the community and provide open space for passive recreation like bird watching and nature study.

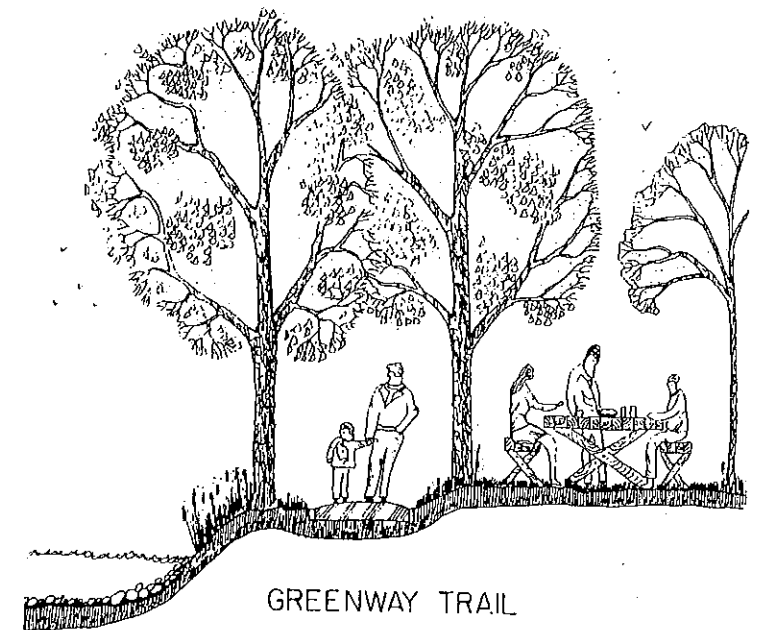
The greenway would also benefit Siler City in terms of future planning. New developments could be coordinated with the intention of establishing the greenway in conjunction with the sanitary sewer system. Since this particular system is designed to be a gravity flow system, it follows the natural drainage flow of Love's Creek. The greenway and sewer system right of ways will occupy roughly the same areas and if these systems could be coordinated at the beginning of new developments it would considerably reduce the cost as well as provide recreational space for the developments. The city could also use the greenway in its planning process to buffer conflicting land uses. This would be particularly

important when an industrial complex is planning to locate near a residential area.

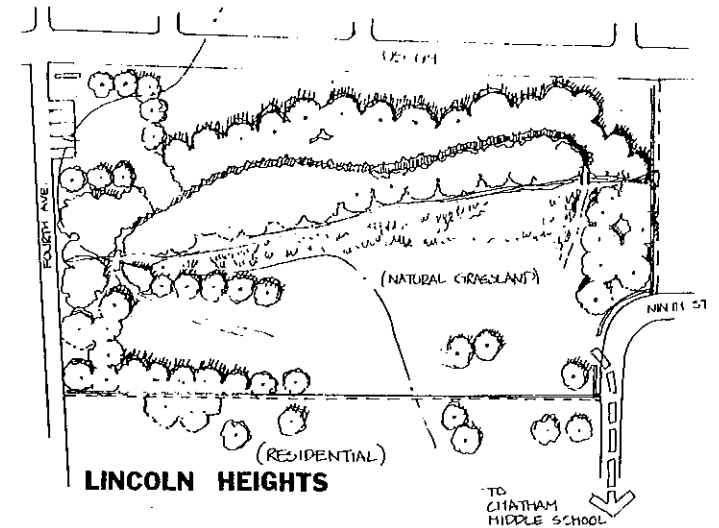
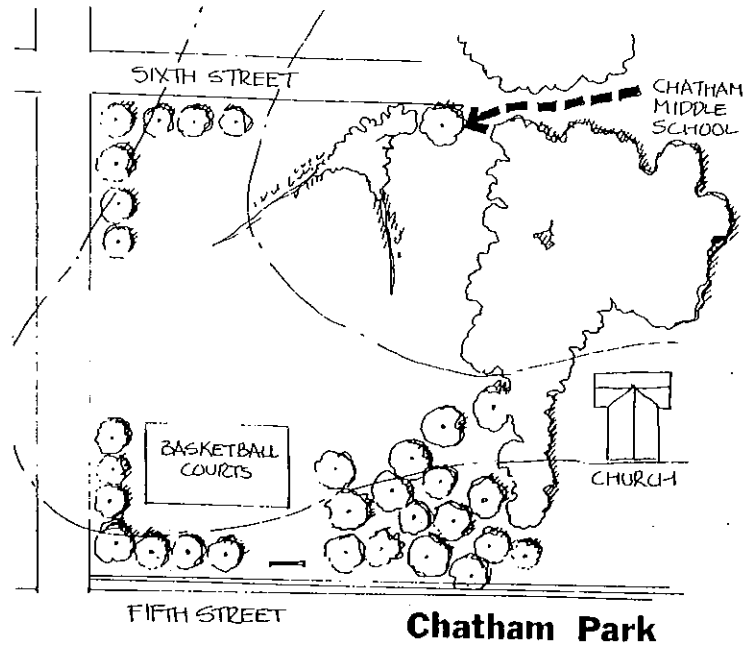
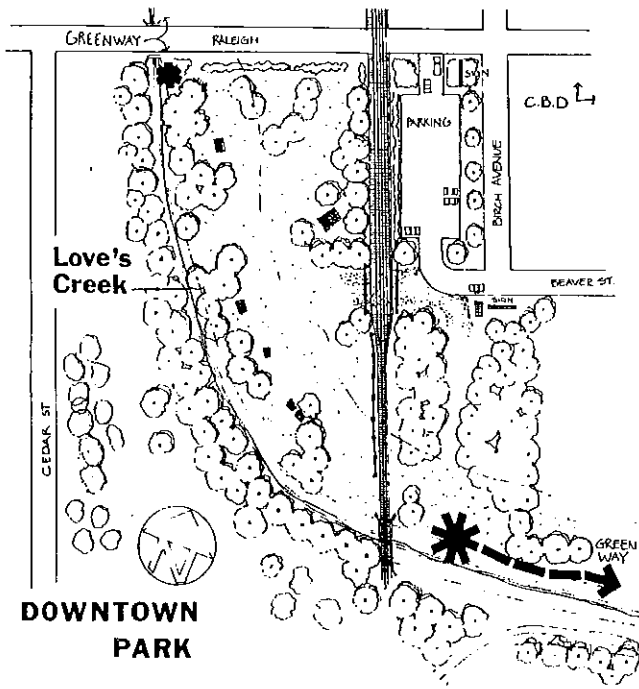
The greenway system would help meet the need for additional lands for parks and recreation and provide a variety of recreational alternatives for the citizens of Siler City. It would also aid in the regulation of flood control; protect critical natural areas and provide visual amenities for present and future generations.

### Guidelines

1. Establish a right of way for the greenway system
2. Connect public schools, parks and neighborhoods along the greenway with pedestrian trails
3. Establish connections between the greenway and neighborhoods that are not penetrated by Love's Creek by the use of street tree planting
4. Buffer conflicting land uses with the greenway
5. Require new developments to have open space set aside for parks and connections to the greenway where appropriate.
6. Cooperate with Chatham County School system and encourage them to assist in the acquisition and conservation of greenway acreage near schools sites to be used for natural science education programs.



GREENWAY TRAIL  
AND PICNIC AREA



**PROPOSED PARKS**

Four new parks are proposed for development in Siler City. One park is intended for the site bounded by Raleigh Road and Birch Avenue, one block from the downtown area. It would be a scenic park intended for passive recreation. Another new park would be located in Lincoln Heights south of US 64 on the corner of Fourth Avenue. This park would be a nature preserve and forest park intended for use by the residents as well as the students at Chatham Middle School. Also near Chatham Middle School on the corner of Fifth Street and Fourth Avenue another park would be located. This park would be an open grassy area to be used for general recreation with basketball courts. In the Homewood Acres subdivision, the interior of the residential block bounded by Sixth Ivey and Woodland Streets and fronting on Gordon Avenue, could become a public park which would utilize an existing lake and scenic, natural woodlands.

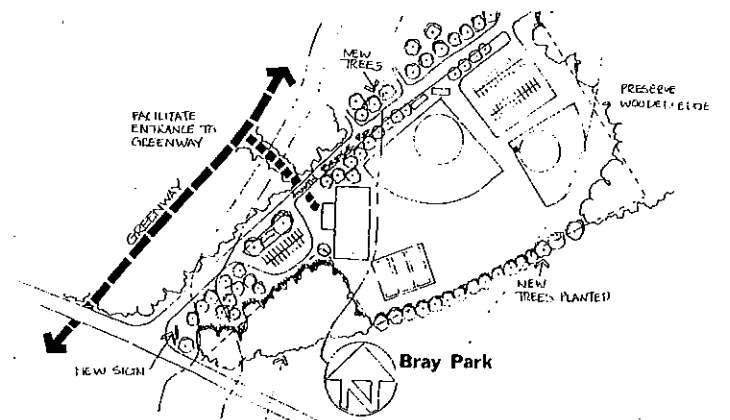
The incorporation of school grounds with activity nodes for the citizens as well as the school kids would enable the school grounds to be accessible to the general public. Chatham Middle School will be enhanced by the location of two parks nearby, but serious attention by school board officials needs to be given to the playing fields which have drainage problems. The play ground at Henry Siler School should be open to the general public after school hours. Proposals for Jordan-Mathews High School simply intend

to maintain the surrounding woodlands, integrate a nature trail with the greenway and provide access to Bray Park with the pedestrian trails along the greenway. The grounds and the gym at Paul Braxton School are used by the city and the outdoor facilities need some maintenance to make the facilities function in a more viable way. Existing basketball courts need repair and pedestrian networks need definition.

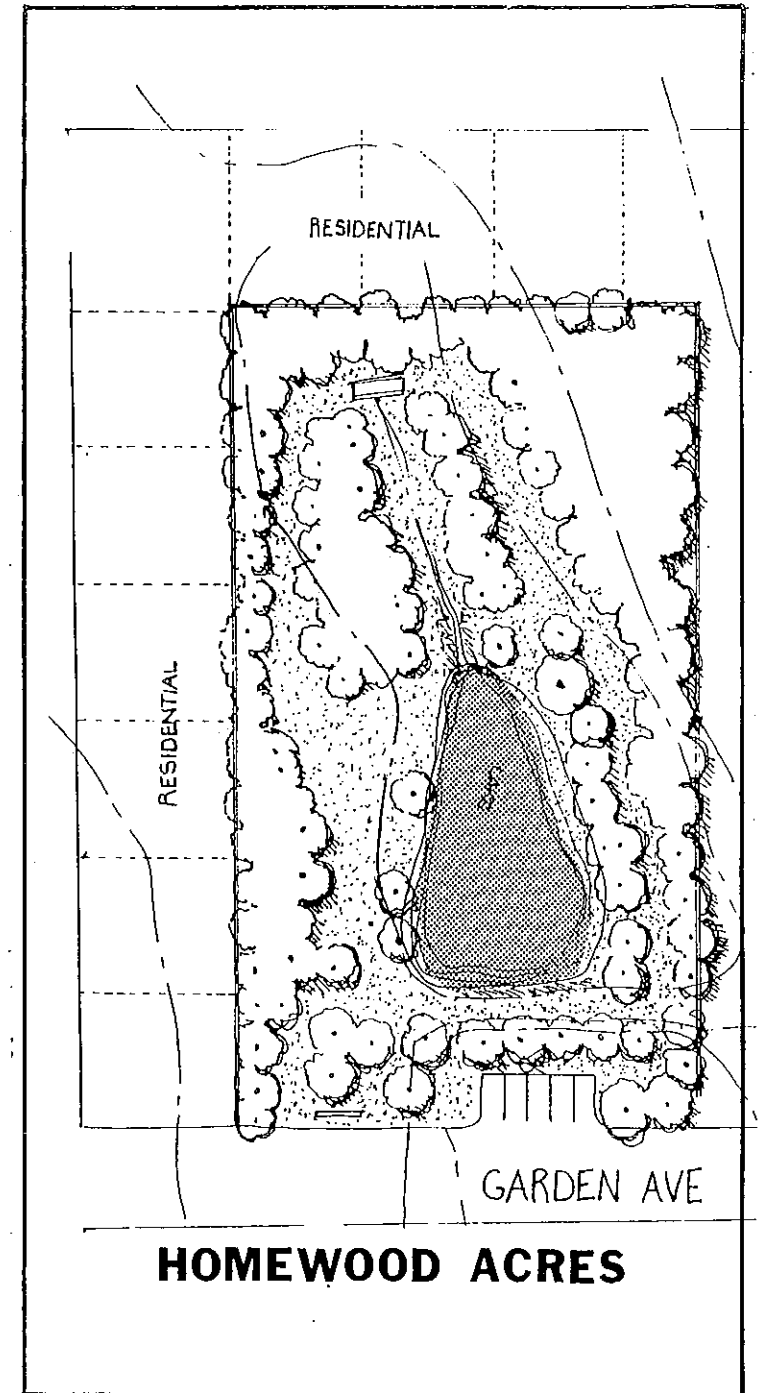
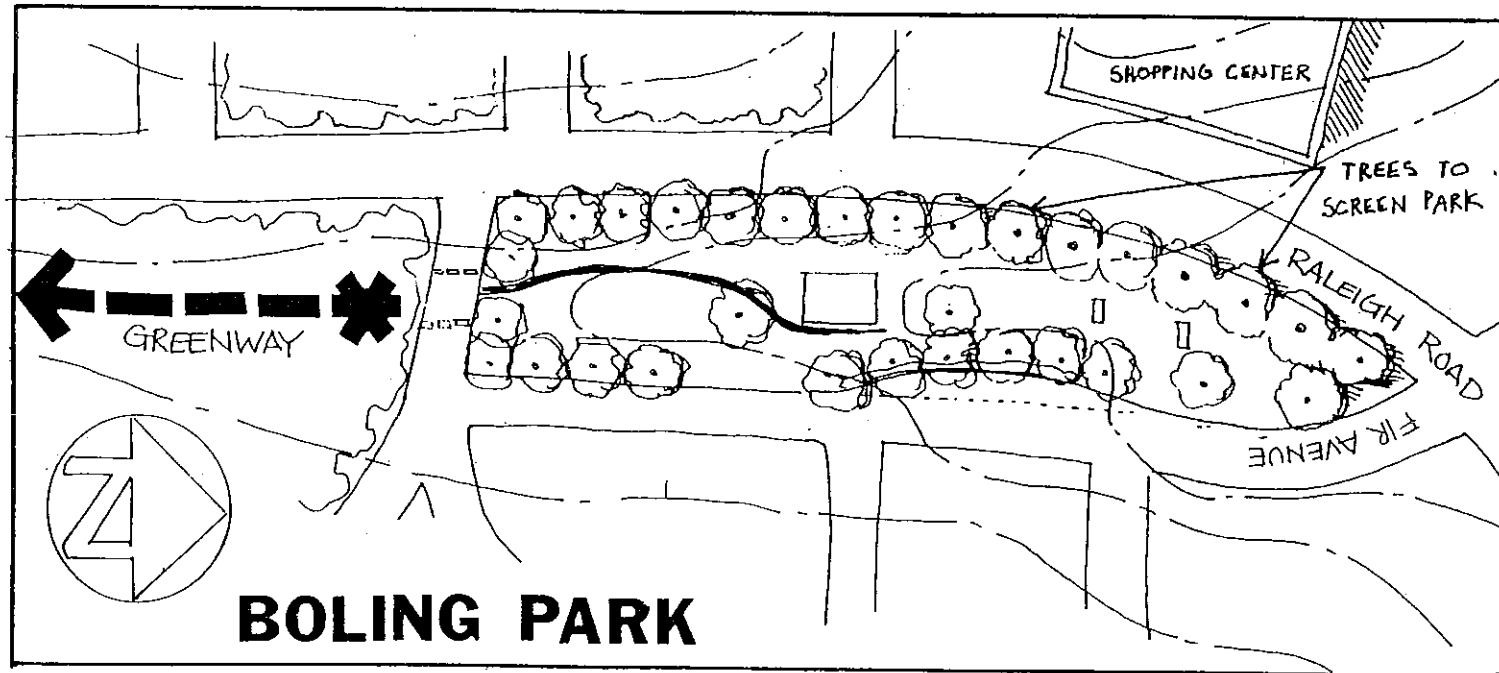
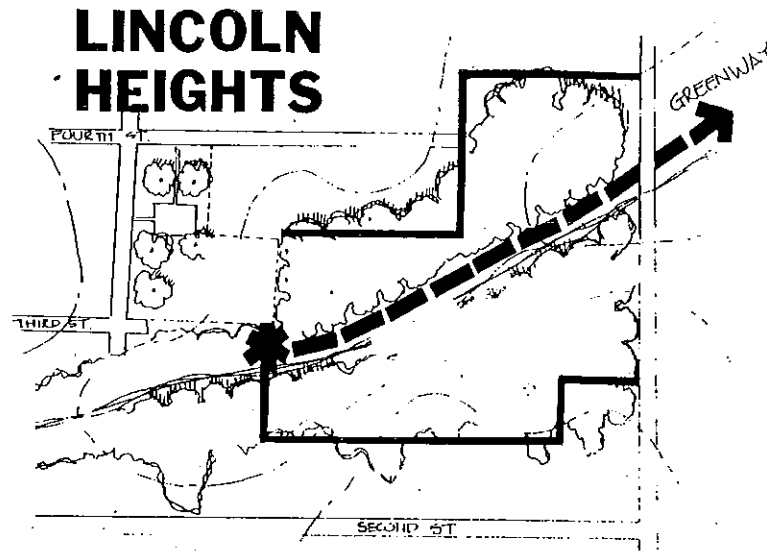
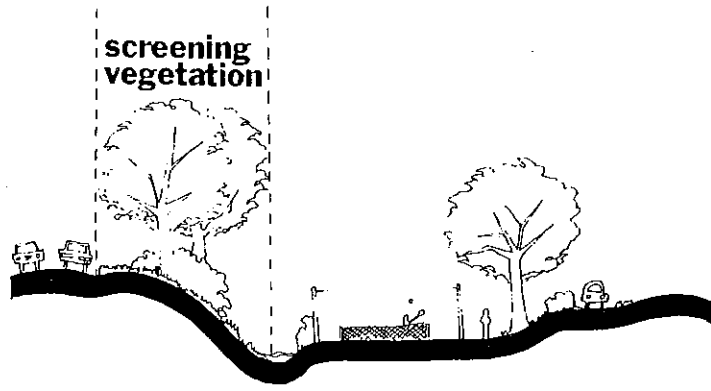
Existing city owned facilities include Bray and Boling Parks. The program for Bray Park advocates the maintenance of the existing facilities, and preservation of the wooded perimeter, and general landscaping. Boling Park needs to be screened from the highway and commercial districts across Raleigh Street. Its small jogging trail could be integrated with the greenway and greatly extend its limits.

Currently a park is under construction in Lincoln Heights which will contain tennis courts and basketball courts. In addition to these activities, park furniture, ornamental plantings and connections to the greenway on Blood Run Creek are needed.

The intensive use of Siler City's existing recreational facilities creates demands for additional park construction and rehabilitation and continued maintenance of the present park systems. The greenway would utilize the otherwise unusable flood plain of Love's Creek, connect many of the parks, and of Love's Creek whose existence was so vital to Siler City's early history. The ex-



isting and proposed park systems would greatly benefit the citizens of Siler City and enhance the quality of life for present and future generations.





**CENTRAL  
BUSINESS  
DISTRICT**















# SILER CITY

## Graduate Design Studio Landscape Architecture

School of Design  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
Fall, 1980

### CONCEPTUAL PLAN

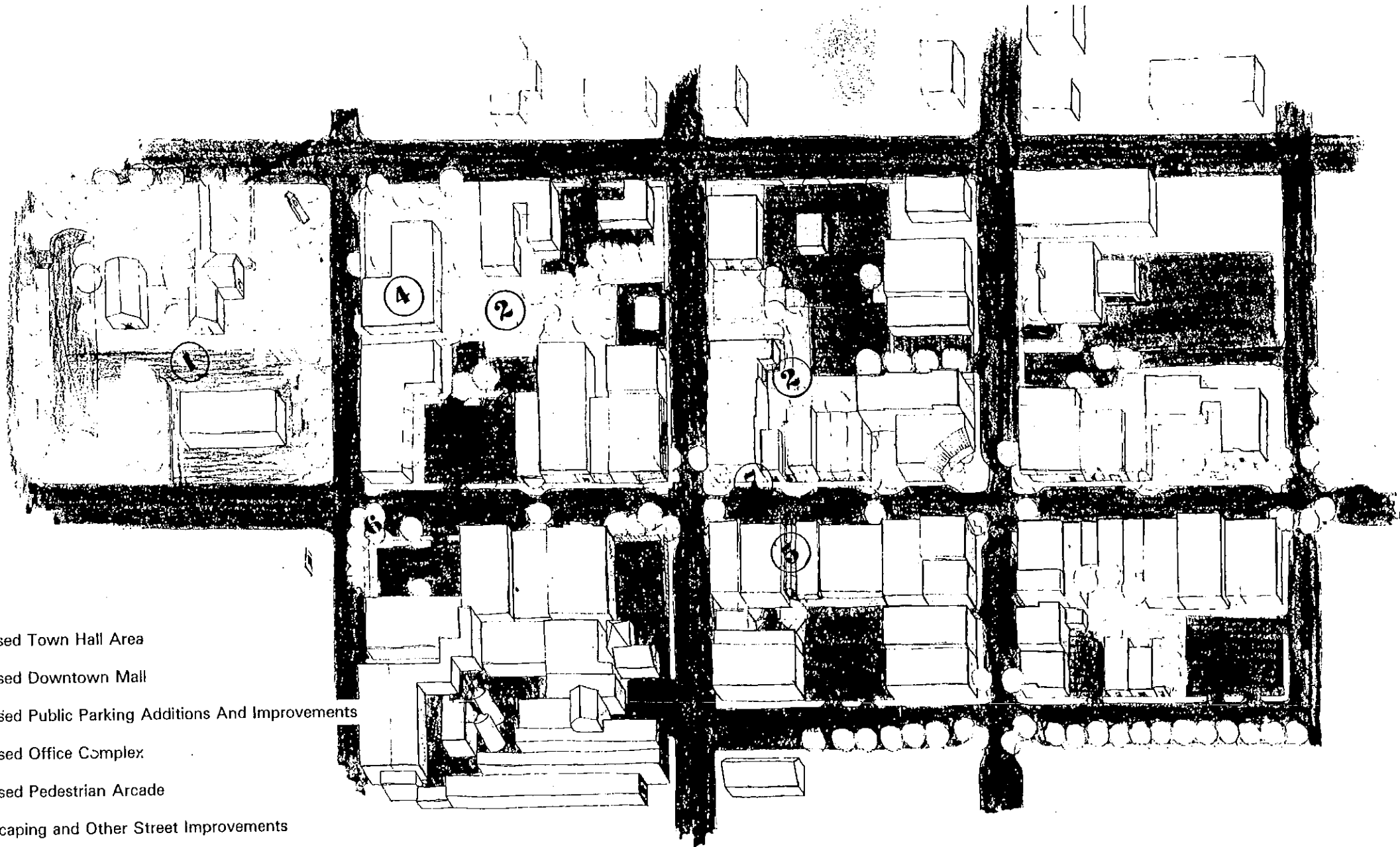
-  PRIMARY ENTRANCES
-  SECONDARY ENTRANCES
-  PRIMARY PATHWAYS
-  SECONDARY PATHWAYS
-  EXISTING INDUSTRY
-  PROPOSED INDUSTRY
-  PARKS / GATHERING AREAS
-  PEDESTRIAN WAYS
-  PARKING AREAS
-  CONSERVATION / HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  BUFFER ZONES
-  NEW BUILDING USE



## GOALS

1. Improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation by proposing:
    - Rear building access
    - Pedestrian mall, plazas, and/or arcades
    - Rear building access
    - Pedestrian malls, plazas, and/or arcades
    - Well defined long and short term parking areas
    - Lighting, seating, signage
    - Crosswalks and handicapped ramps
    - Sidewalk repair
    - Links to neighborhoods and greenway
    - Focal points
  
  2. Improve the visual quality by proposing:
    - Store front restoration/renovation
    - Rear facade restoration/renovation
    - Street trees
    - Sign controls and building maintenance
    - Parking lot landscaping and screening
    - Focal points (Town Hall, mill)
    - Street furniture, new paving
    - Underground utilities
    - Landscaped plazas, malls
  
  3. Improve the utilization of existing buildings and open space by proposing:
    - Pedestrian mall, integrated with well defined parking areas
    - Green spaces
    - Uses for vacant buildings
- Encourage continued participation in downtown revitalization.

# DOWNTOWN SILER CITY



## KEY

1. Proposed Town Hall Area
2. Proposed Downtown Mall
3. Proposed Public Parking Additions And Improvements
4. Proposed Office Complex
5. Proposed Pedestrian Arcade
6. Landscaping and Other Street Improvements
7. Proposed Facade Improvements

## SILER CITY MUNICIPAL BLOCK

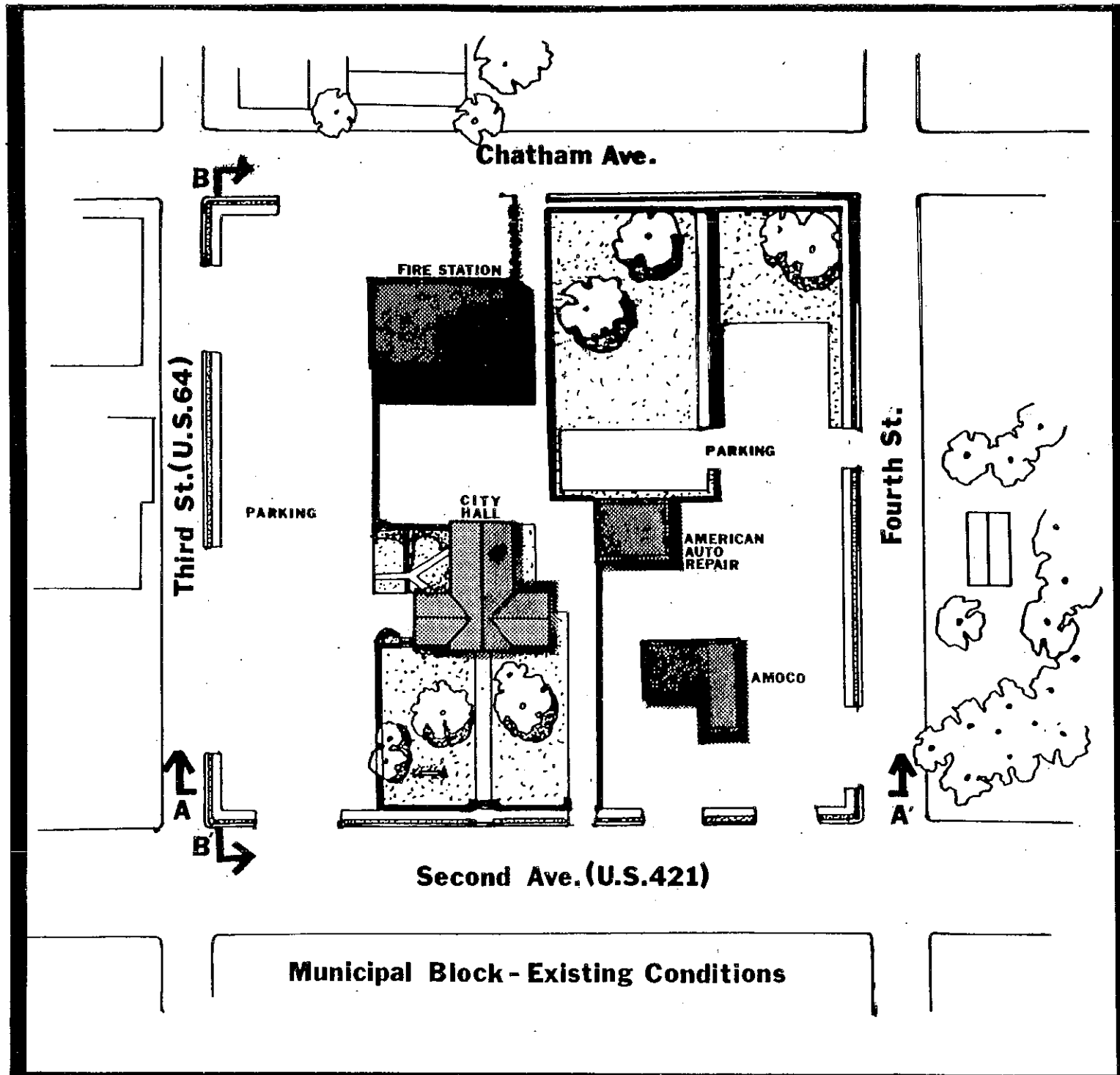
### Existing Conditions:

Built in the 1930's, Siler City's Town Hall is an imposing stone structure which houses a wide variety of city services. It is indeed the focal point in a block containing the smaller, less dominant Fire Department, and two basically rectangular automobile service stations. The Town Hall faces Second Avenue (U.S. 421) with adjacent parking accessible from Third Street (U.S. 64).

The recently expanded Fire Department is located immediately behind the Town Hall parking lot at the corner of Third Street and Chatham Avenue. Almost completely surrounded by parking, the red brick structure lacks exterior landscaping. This absence of vegetation around the building is partially due to recent construction. Also, excess vegetation might possibly hinder fire engine access to major thoroughfares.

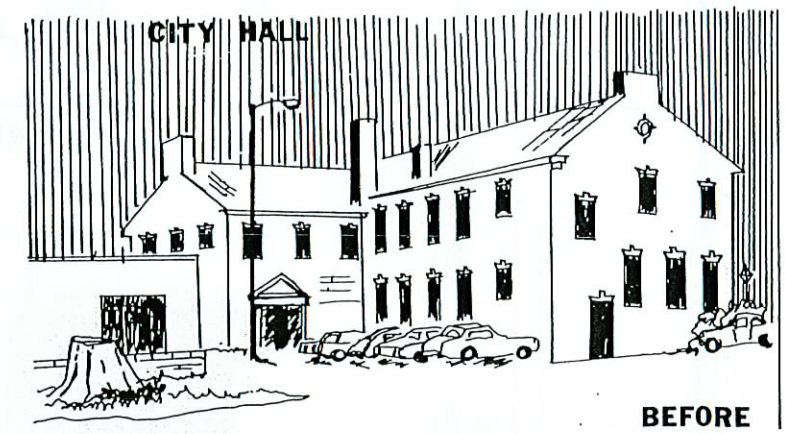
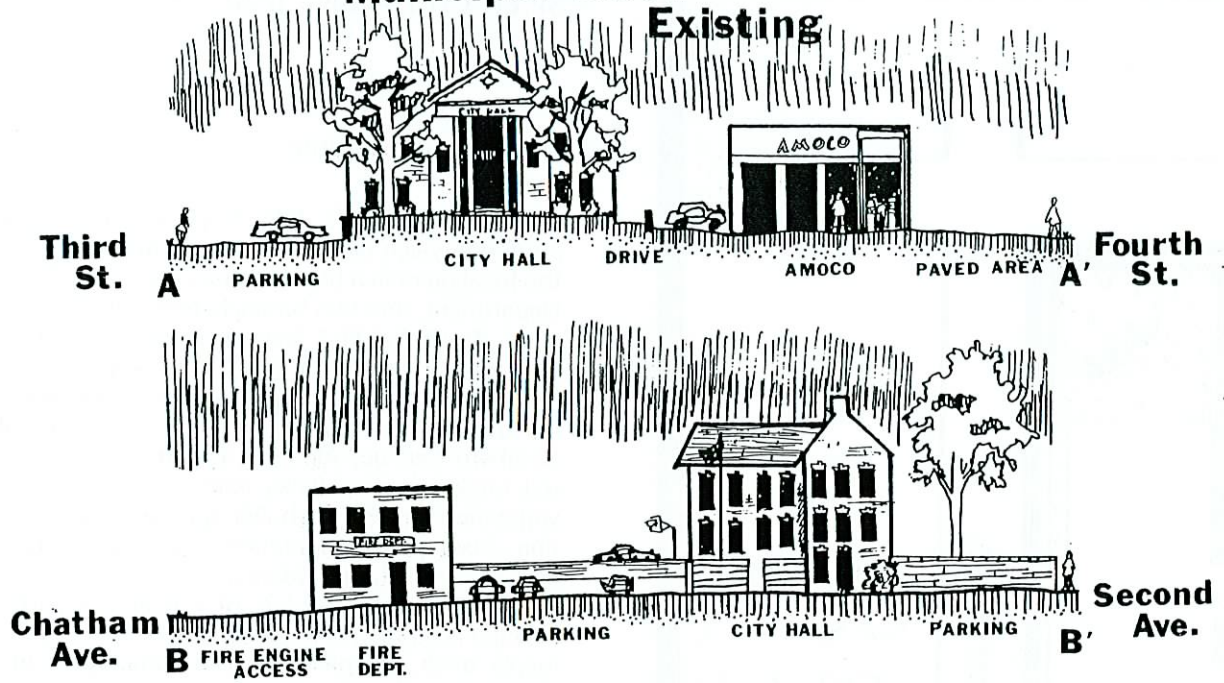
Immediately to the left of the Fire Department on Chatham Avenue is a green area presently occupied by several beautiful old maple trees. On pleasant days, employees of the Boling Chair Company utilize this as a picnic and lounge area. A stone wall separates this park-like space from an area now used for parking.

At present, the only section of the block not owned by the city is the lot adjacent to the Town Hall on the corner of Fourth Street and Second Avenue. The lot is almost completely paved at this time and occupied by American Auto Repair and Amoco.

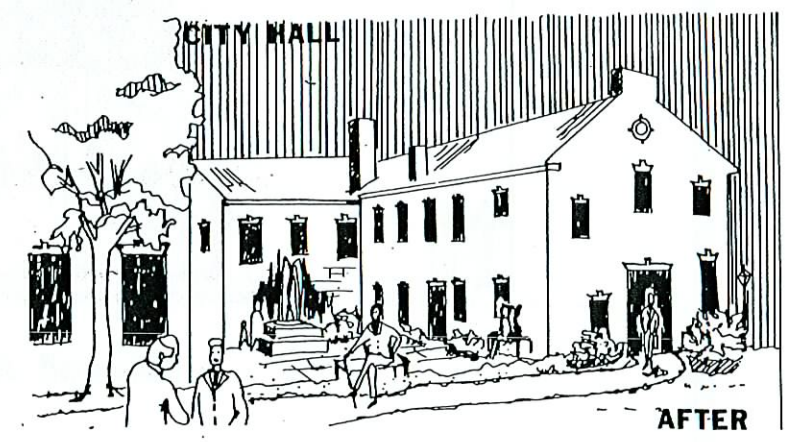
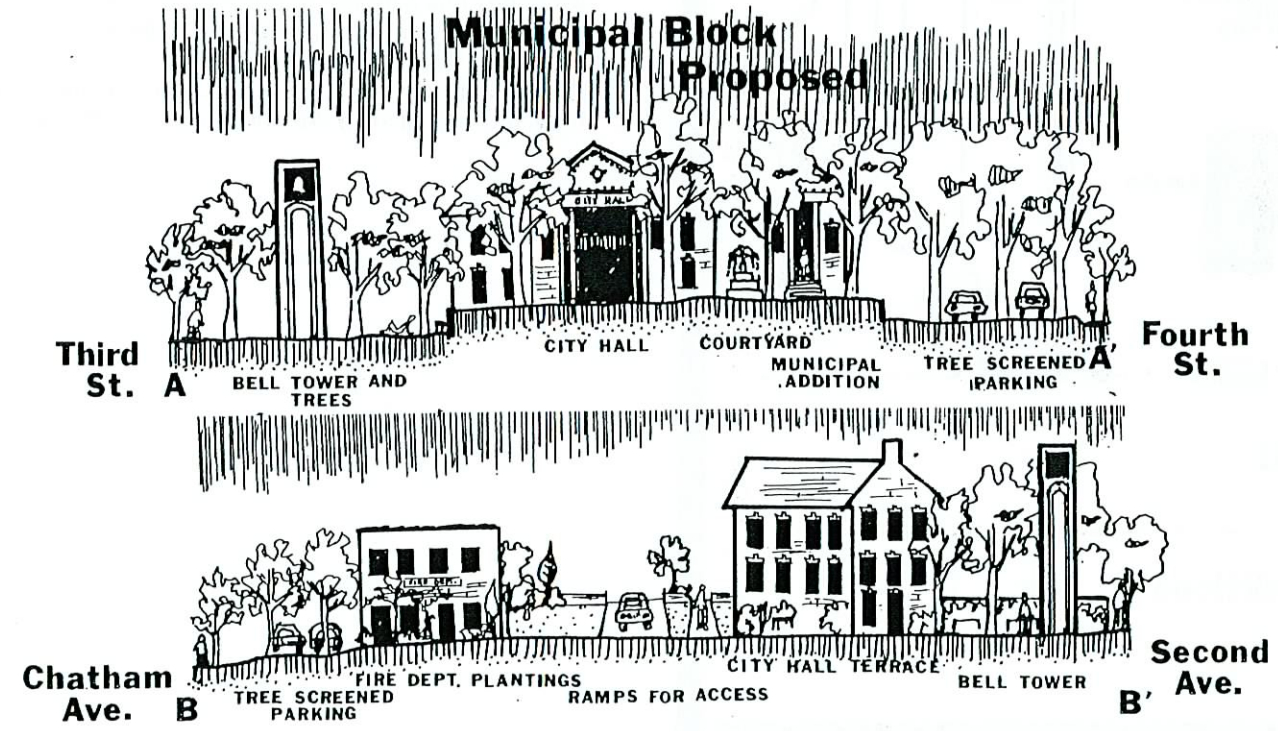


Municipal Block - Existing Conditions

# Municipal Block Existing



# Municipal Block Proposed





## Proposals:

Acquisition of the land presently occupied by American Auto Repair and Amoco is proposed. Siler City will then possess the entire block, thus enabling it to be dedicated totally to city and governmental functions. Demolition of the two existing structures is recommended, allowing for construction of a new building for city use. This building, perhaps utilized as a new Police Station or Chamber of Commerce, will be constructed from the same building material as Town Hall and be of a compatible architectural style. Trees and shrubs will be planted along the Second Avenue side of the block, providing a park-like space and visually uniting the two civic structures.

The corner of Second Avenue and Third Street is the major intersection in Siler City. It is also the corner adjacent to the present Town Hall grounds. The planting of trees, grass and the erection of a bell tower will give this corner new status. Originally, Thompson School was located on the site of the present Town Hall. The bell from this building could be utilized in the tower.

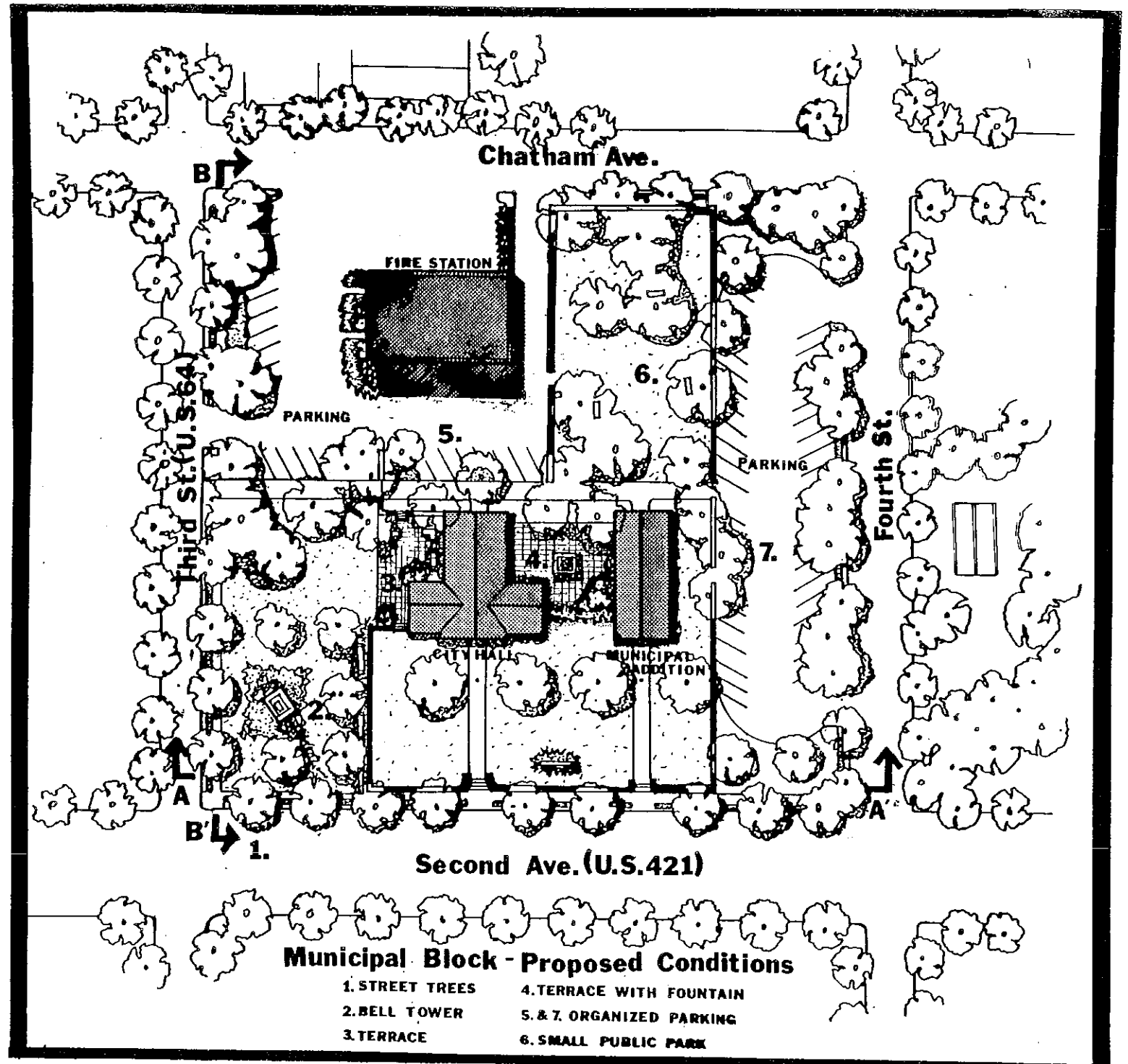
Parking is important since the Town Hall is inundated with people when court is in session. Such parking should be provided in the area behind the Fire Department, extending into the center of the block with additional parking adjacent to Fourth Street. It is suggested that access to this parking lot be provided from Fourth Street. Parking should be screened from the view of individuals in adjacent buildings by appropriate tree and shrub plantings. The parking lot should be constructed so that it can also be utilized for outdoor assemblies and civic functions.

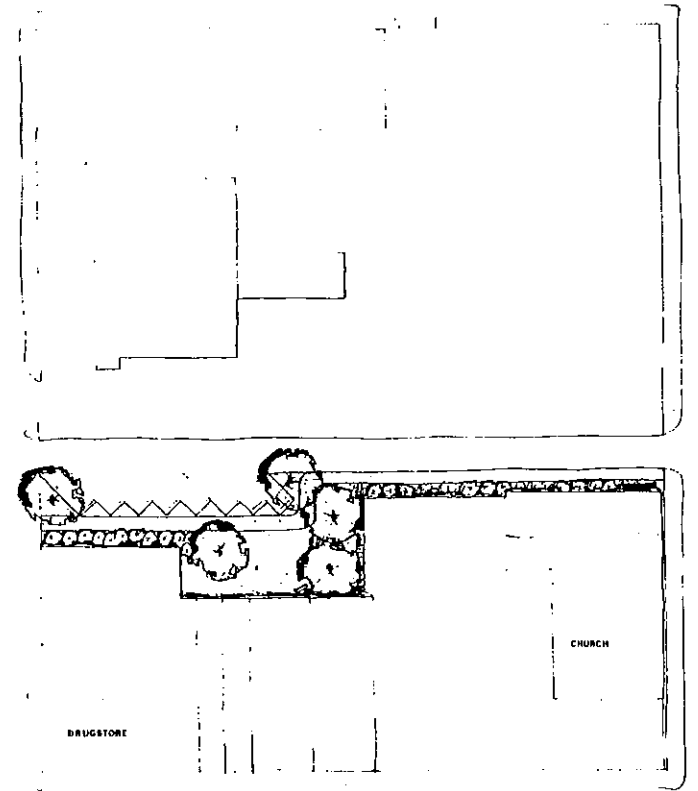
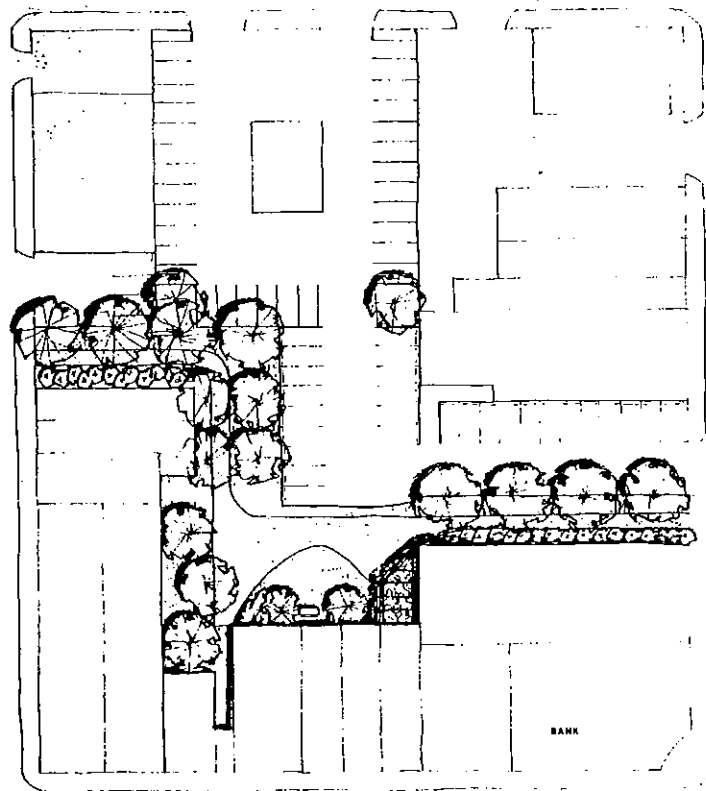
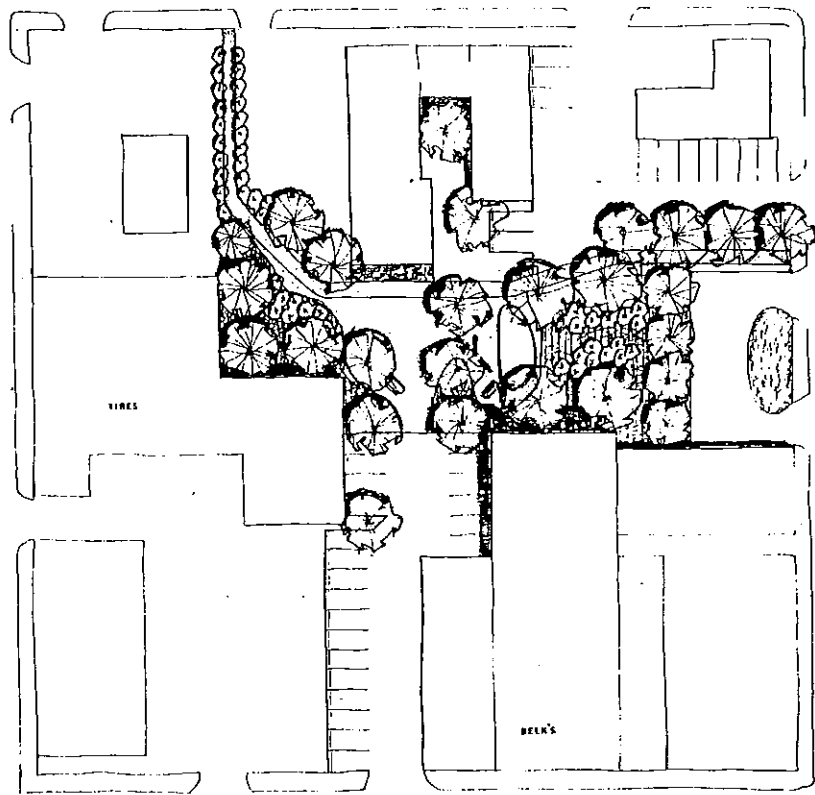
The starkness of the area surrounding the Fire Department should be de-emphasized by planting strips containing flowers and shrubs. It is proposed that these planting strips will be constructed so that they will not impede engine access to Third Street and Chatham Avenue.

Because employees from Boling Chair Company already use the lot adjacent to the Fire Department as a small park, an effort should be made to enhance the park-like atmosphere. The park will extend to the corner of Chatham Avenue and Fourth Street into the areas not utilized for parking. City and factory employees will find this space conducive to picnics and an attractive place to go during coffee breaks.

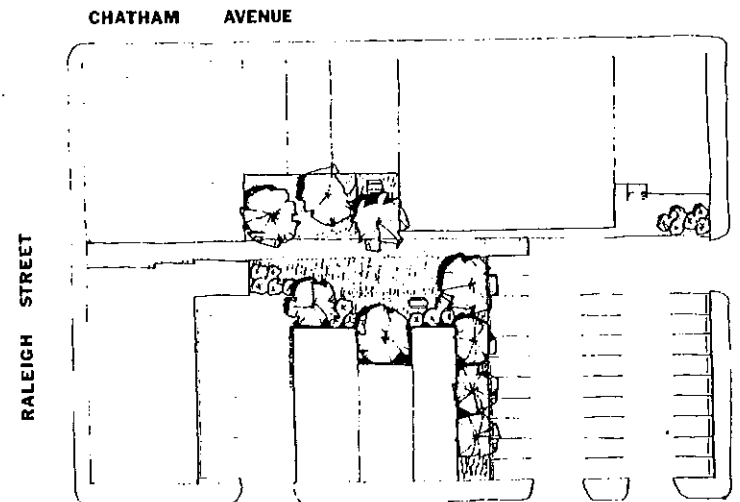
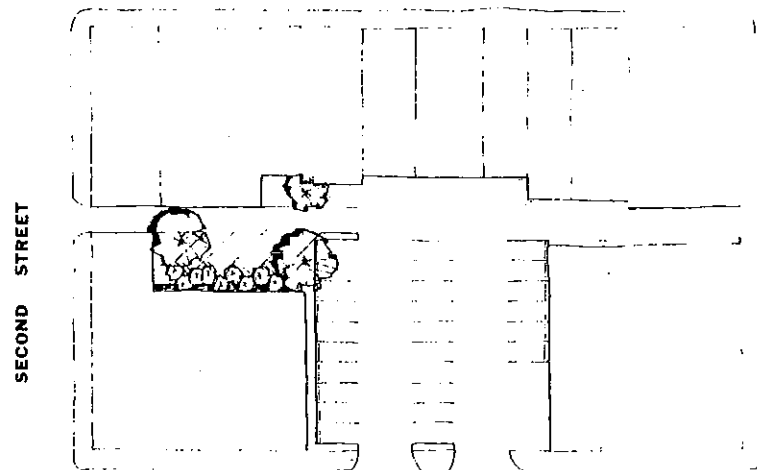
Handicapped access is important in all public structures and should be implemented as required, providing citizen access to all municipal block facilities.

The new municipal block of Siler City will serve as a new focus for the town and its functions, as well as provide a pleasant outdoor atmosphere for any individual frequenting the area. Visitors passing through town in their automobiles will realize that the center of city government is located in this block and that the citizens of Siler City take pride in their community.





**Downtown Mall  
Phase 1**

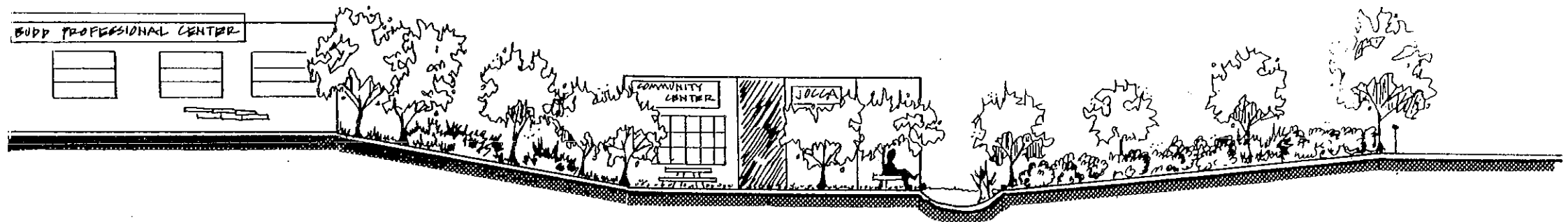
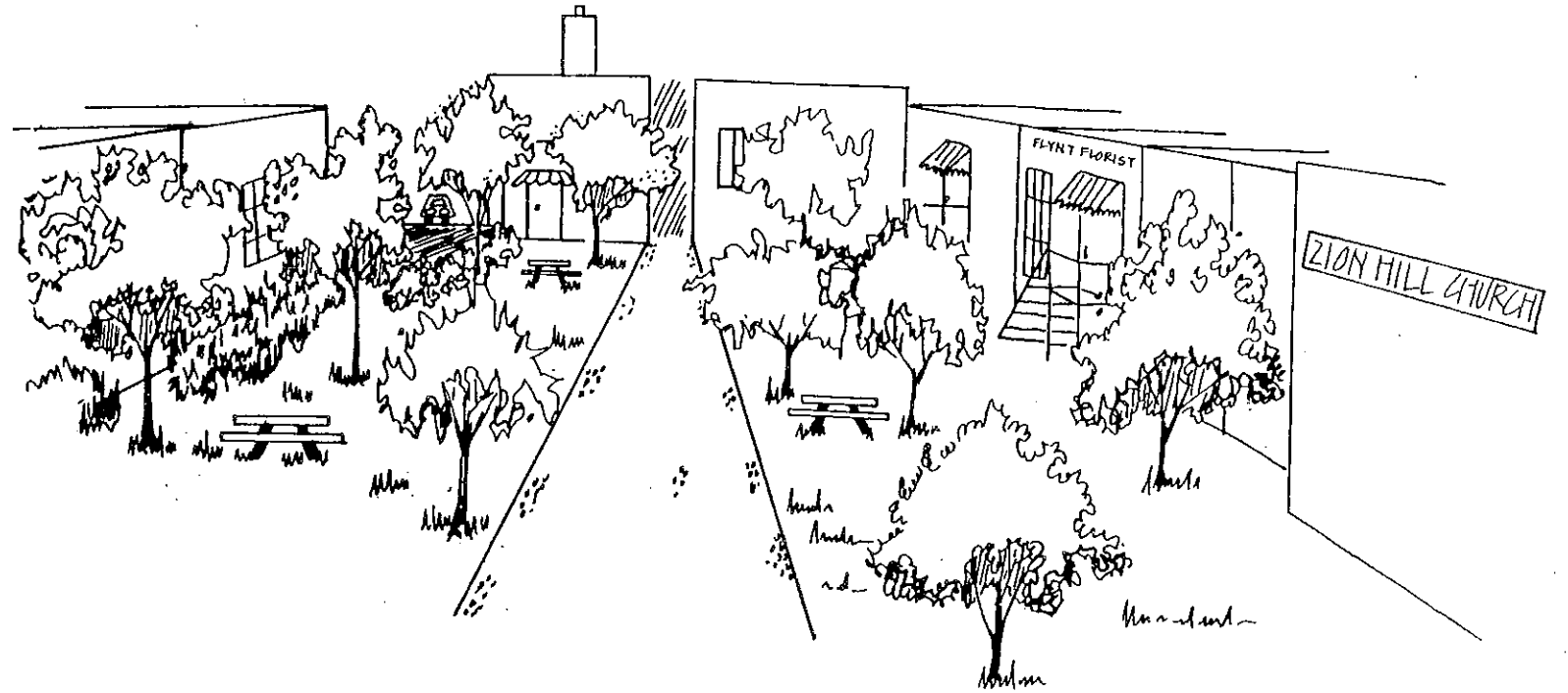


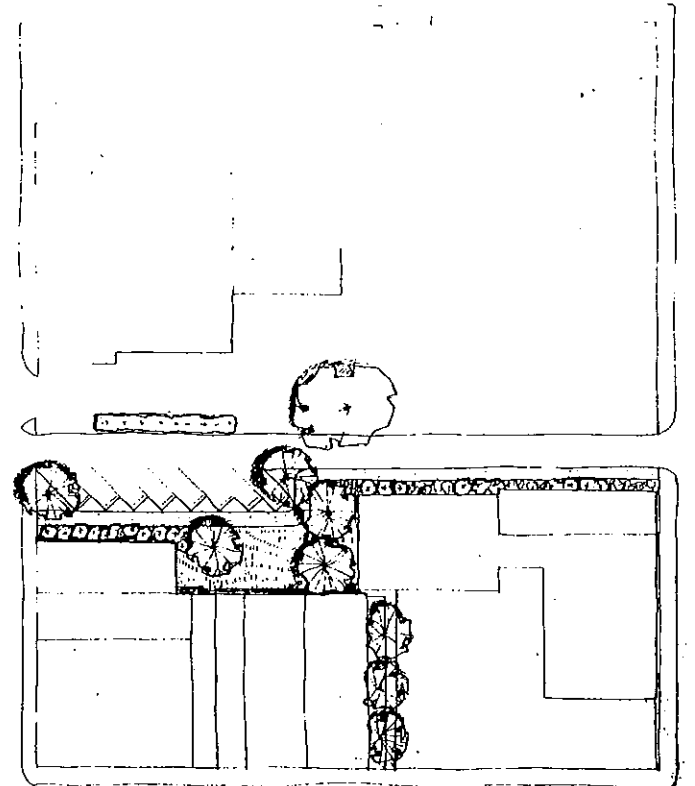
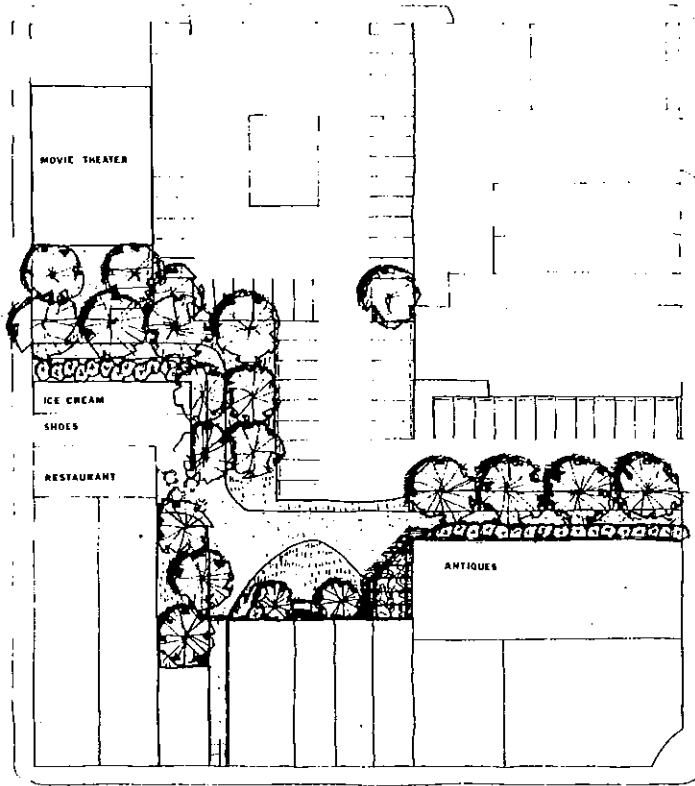
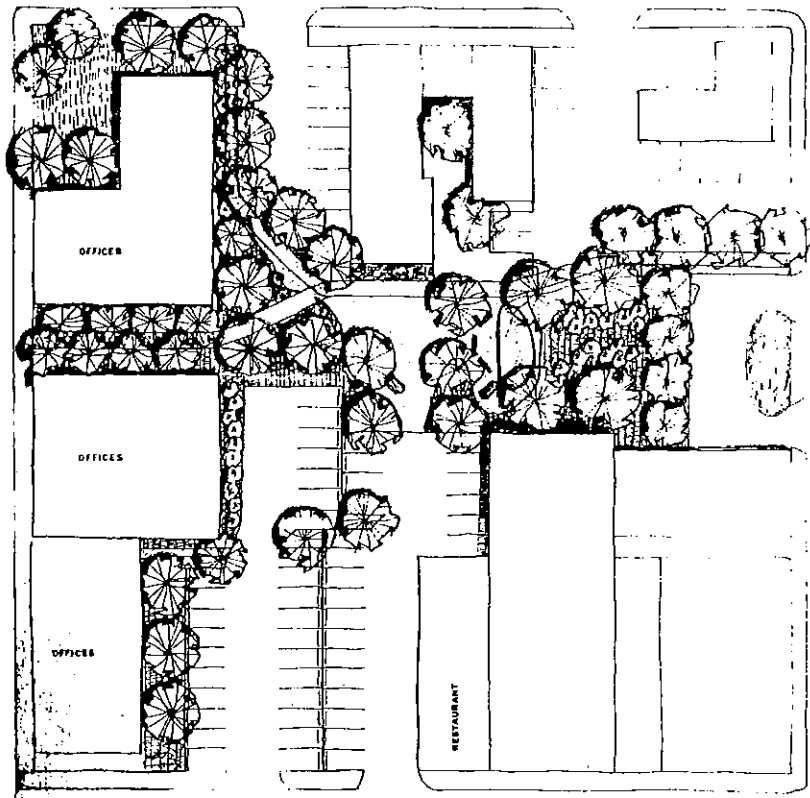
## REAR BUILDING AREAS

The plan for the rear, inner block areas shows what could be done if the area is taken over by the city through lease or purchase. Two plans are proposed; the first shows what could be done without changing any buildings or their uses. The other is a future master plan which consolidates various offices near town hall and suggests locations for new businesses.

The concept of the plan is to provide open gathering spaces for a variety of uses compatible to the surrounding businesses. The spaces should be comfortable areas for shoppers and employees to sit, talk, eat and walk. The major space in the central block (surrounded by Second Avenue, Raleigh, Chatham and Second Street) is designed to accommodate several other activities. These could include restaurant outdoor eating, and with the cars removed, the area could be used for community events.

The backs of businesses and restaurants should be opened so the mall area can be utilized to its fullest extent. An arcade is proposed to cut through one of the buildings on Chatham Street to another building on Beaver Street. This will facilitate pedestrian traffic in between blocks and provide better access to stores on both sides of the street. Parking will be more organized, and circulation to and from each lot will become more efficient through the use of signs and plantings. It is hoped that through the addition of the downtown mall and other street amenities, more people will be encouraged to shop in downtown Siler City.

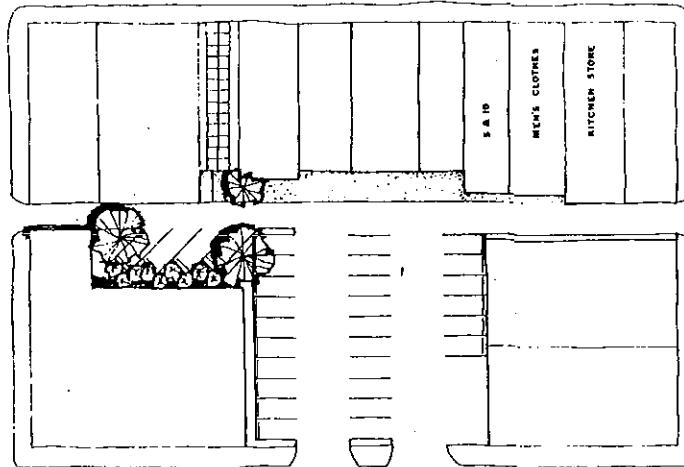




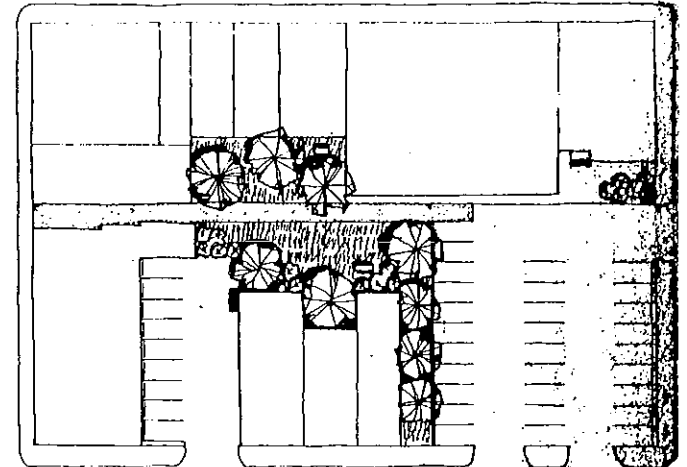
CHATHAM AVENUE

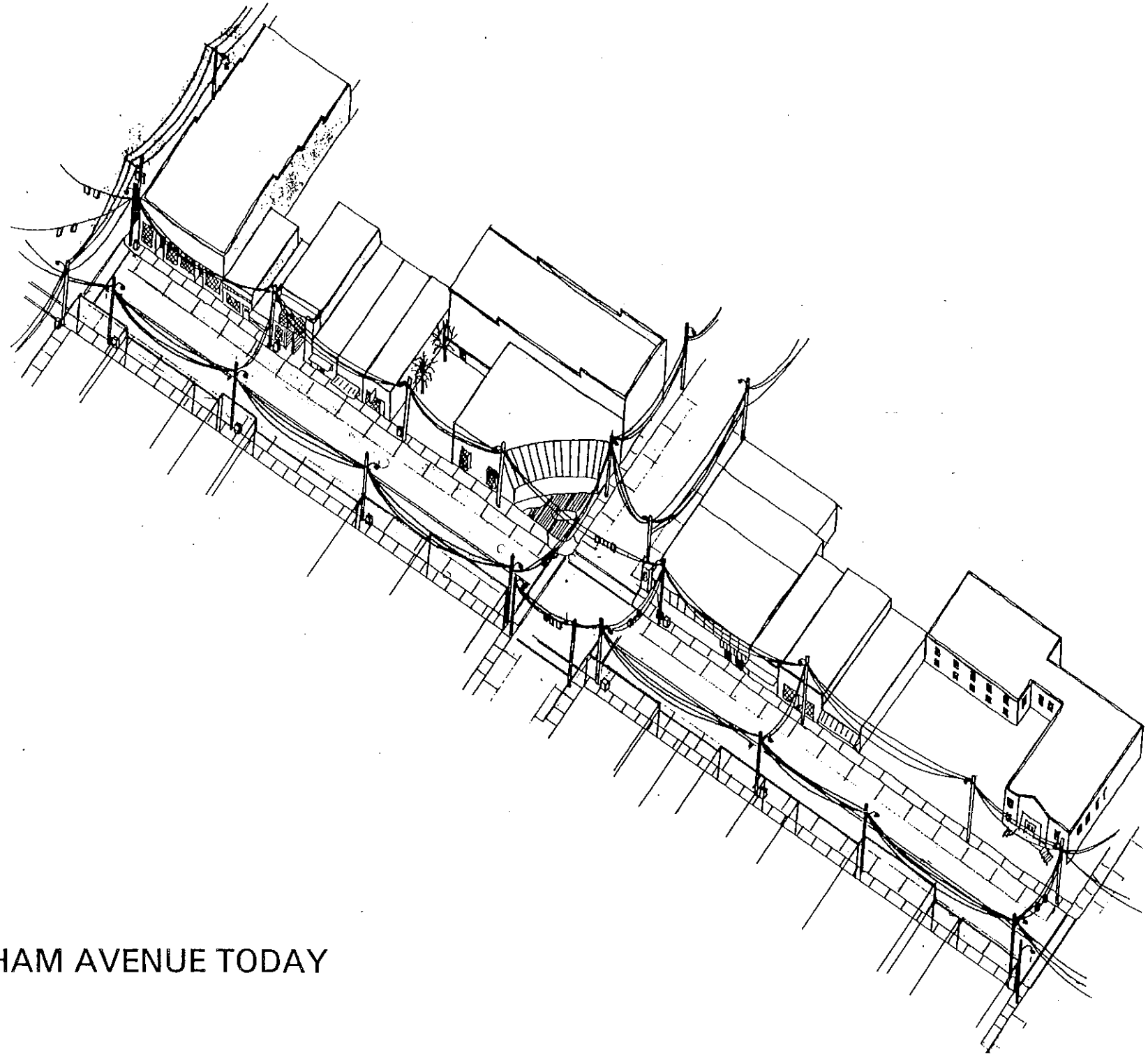
**Downtown Mall  
Phase 2**

SECOND STREET



RALEIGH STREET





CHATHAM AVENUE TODAY

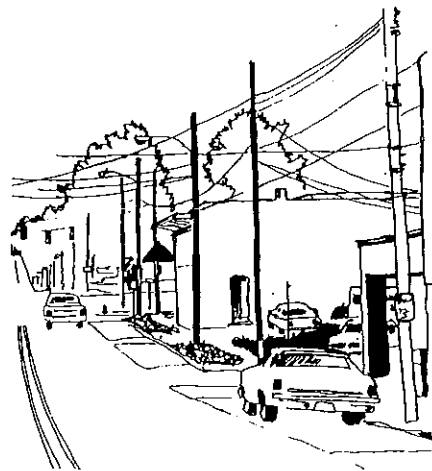
## STREETSCAPE

The character and quality of the streets of downtown can have a great effect on the downtown's viability and vitality. There are several basic issues involved in planning for the revitalization of this aspect of downtown.

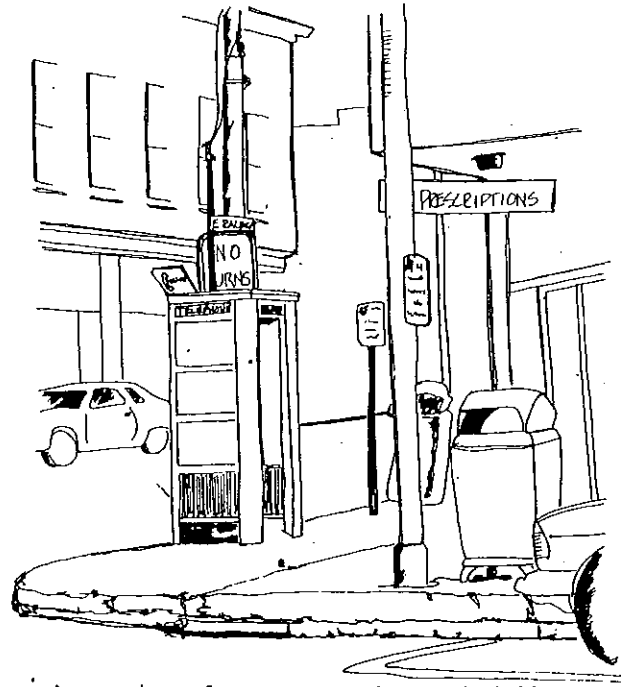
## PLANNING ISSUES

The issue of **physical appearance** extends from lack of pride in the appearance of store fronts and rears, to cracked sidewalks, unattractive awnings, excessive poles and wires, and misplaced and excessive numbers of trash receptacles. Most people are conscious of their surroundings and pleasing spaces engender a feeling of comfort.

The **use of downtown spaces** is another vital planning issue. Spatial enclosure is formed by filling in the gaps on Chatham Avenue, and by framing or defining entrances to the retail area with landscaping. In addition, emphasizing approaches to the central business district can heighten the sense of entry.



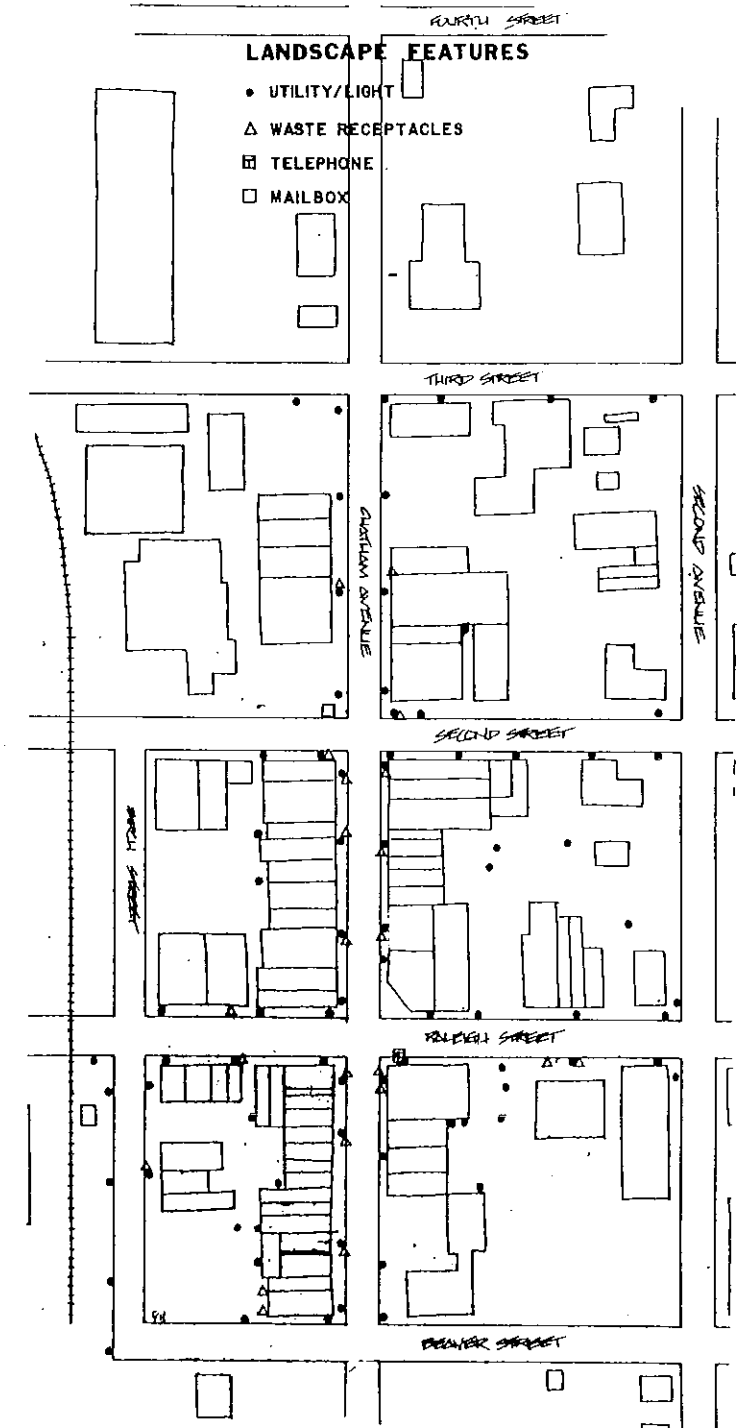
Enclosure



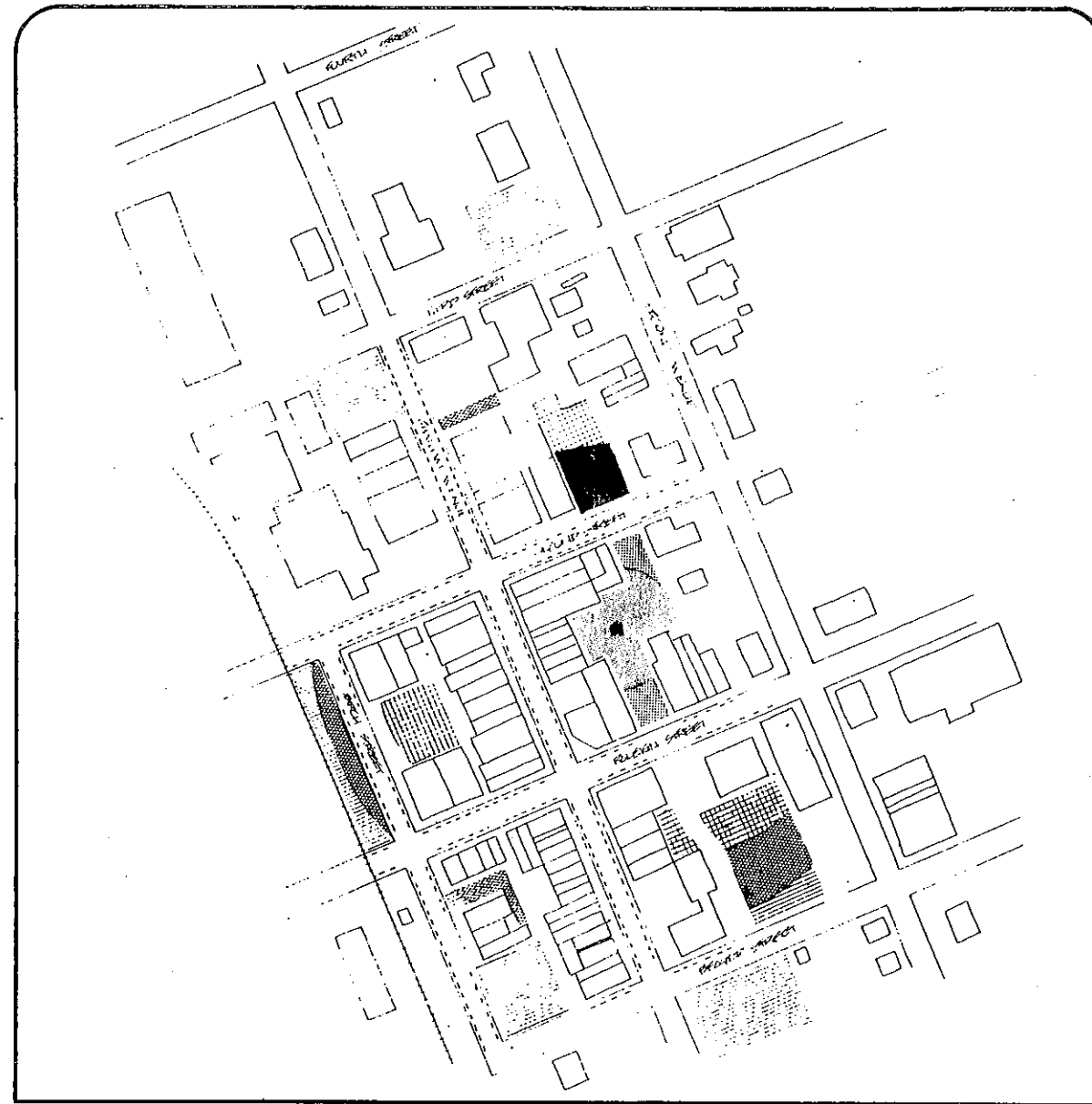
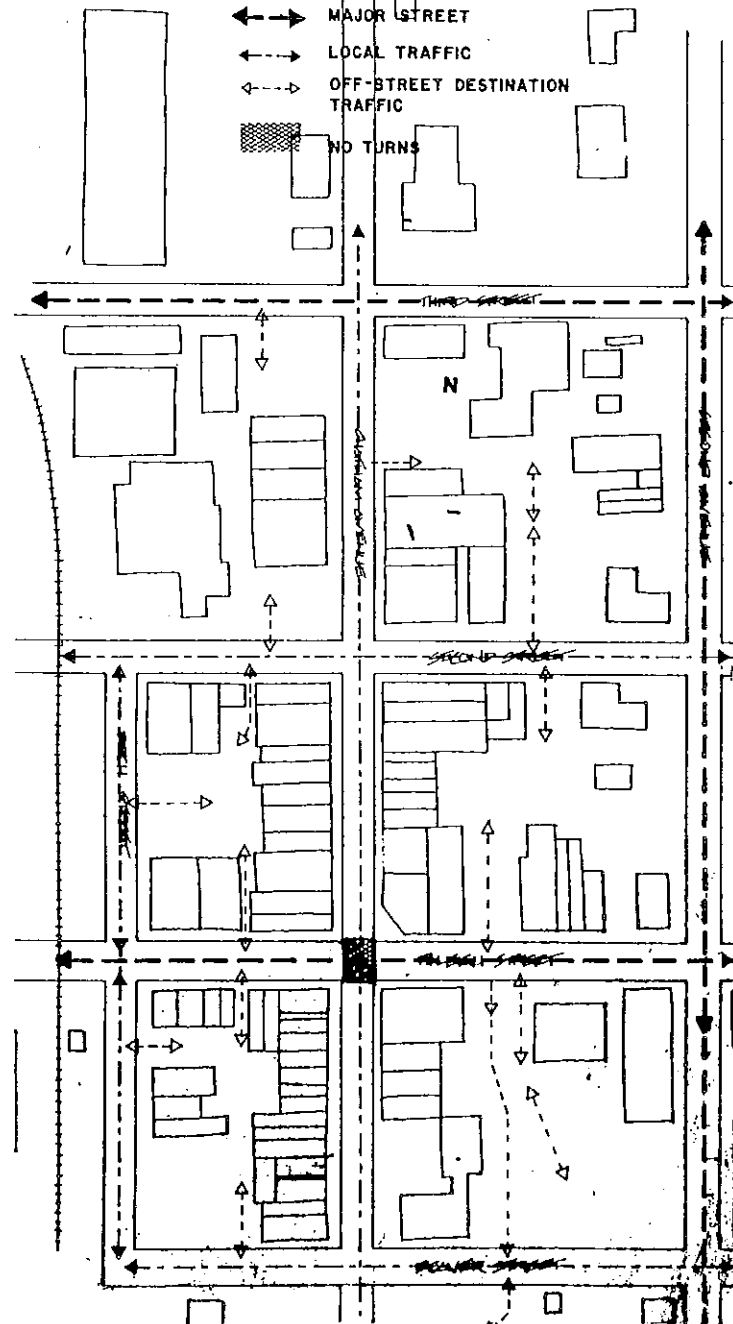
Excessive numbers of waste receptacles, cracked sidewalks



Overhead wires contribute to visual clutter



Vehicular movement through downtown is generally free flowing and causes no particular problems for motorists. There are streets with heavy through-town traffic but the retail area of Chatham Avenue carries basically local or traffic.



# SILER CITY

Graduate Design Studio  
Landscape Architecture

School of Design  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, North Carolina  
Fall, 1980

## DOWNTOWN PARKING LOCATION

- \* APPROXIMATE DOWNTOWN CENTRAL POINT
- 0-100 FOOT RADIUS
- 100-200 FOOT RADIUS
- 200-300 FOOT RADIUS
- 300-400 FOOT RADIUS
- 400-500 FOOT RADIUS
- 500+
- STREET PARKING

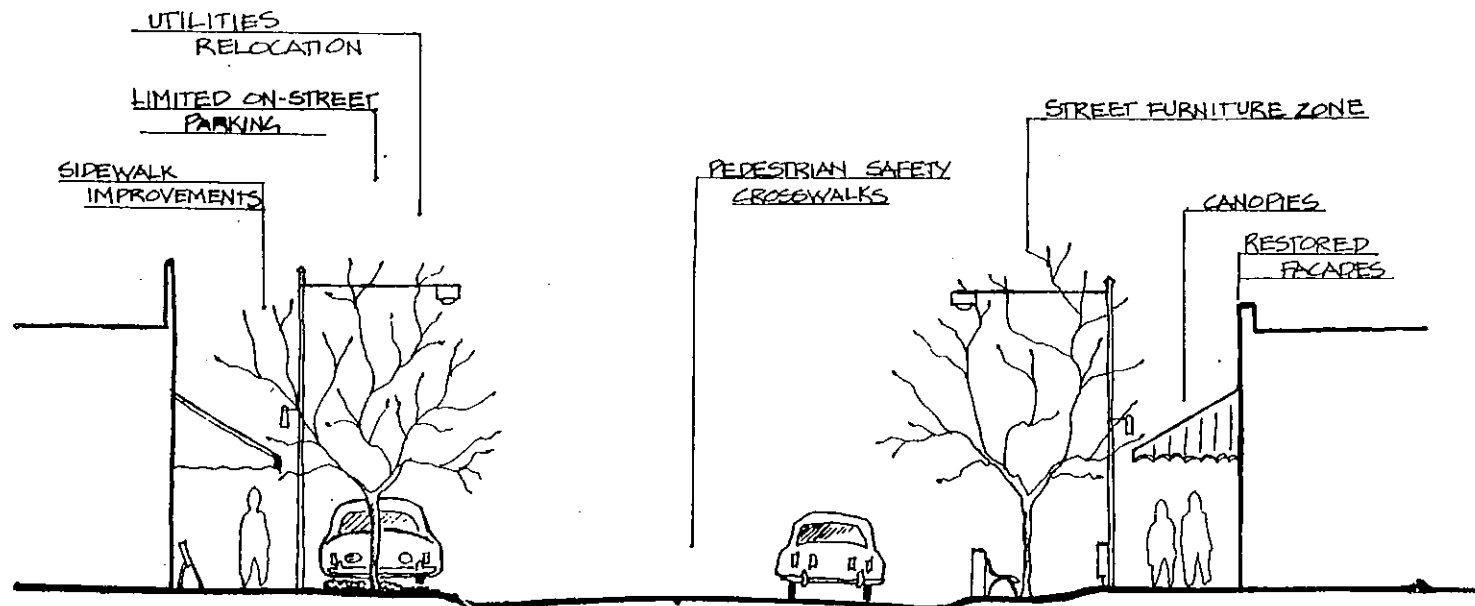
Pedestrian movement is a neglected aspect of downtown and is a fundamental planning issue. The success of the commercial area depends on the enjoyment that the pedestrian gets from seeking out and purchasing merchandise. A responsive physical environment makes it possible for free movement from one business to another. This implies then that reducing the pedestrian reliance on his automobile is an important issue.

Customers in the downtown area complain of a lack of parking ; however, studies show parking areas within a reasonable walking distance of the center of the retail area (500 feet). This tends to support the idea that easy access, or linkage, (eg. walkways, alleys, etc.) to the main retail area is not adequate. Pedestrian access to the retail area is not directed from the parking areas and the use of landscape elements is non-existent.

## DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES FOR REVITALIZING THE STREETScape

Initial development action for the redesign of pedestrian facilities in downtown Siler City should involve those elements with a high level of visibility and rapid execution. These include the elimination of overhead utilities, visual reinforcement of street crossings, sidewalk and street furniture improvements (seating, lighting, waste receptacles etc.) enclosure and continuity, vegetation, and location and coordination of signs.

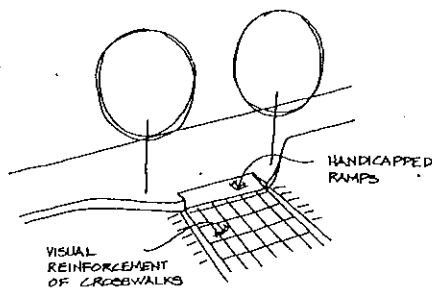
In terms of pedestrian ways, one city block has the greatest potential for linkage from all directions, and therefore the highest potential for development.



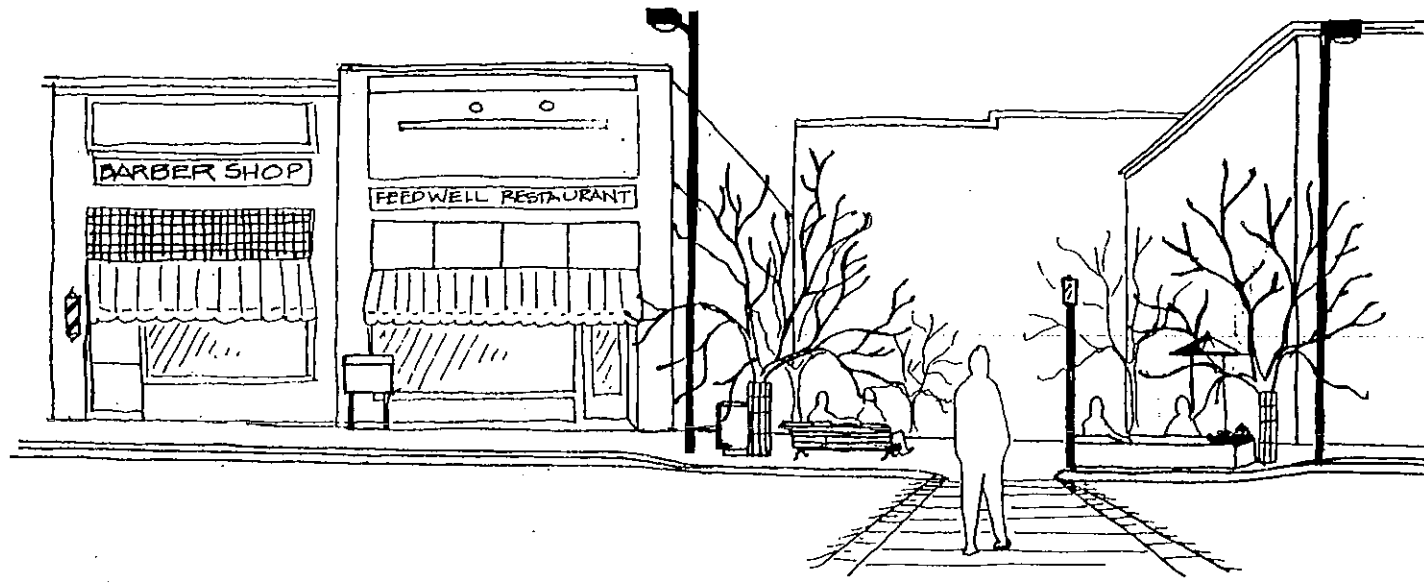
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

## NEW LIFE FOR CHATHAM AVE: STREET IMPROVEMENTS

A successful streetscape revitalization must promote pedestrian safety by clearly separating pedestrian traffic from vehicular circulation. Where these two forms of circulation cross at intersections or at midblock, the sidewalks can be projected into the street forming small promontories facilitating easy crossovers for the pedestrian. **Reinforcement of street crossings** involves surfacing the crosswalk to contrast with the street asphalt. Timing traffic signals to pedestrian use, in addition to warning signals reinforce the safety crosswalk system.



Barrier free design



Visual Reinforcement of Street Crossings



The sidewalks should be functional and pleasing to the eye. Paving material can be used to provide various textures, or color, escaping the monotony of concrete and asphalt. Paving material should conform in color and character with the buildings and usually simplicity of pattern is best. Where existing sidewalks are to remain, a program of repair and maintenance should be established.

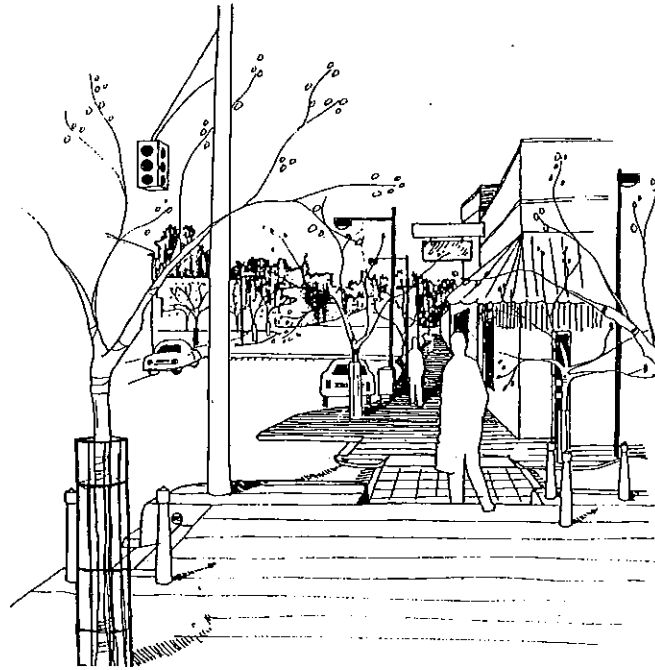
Street furniture is almost always an afterthought in urban spaces but the choice of elements and the manner in which they are sited are primary considerations in the success or failure of a downtown streetscape. Street furniture includes all the man-made objects placed on the street—mailboxes, street lights, telephones, waste receptacles, benches, etc. Consolidating these elements in specific areas allows for free movement of pedestrians and allows for more efficient circulation in areas where the sidewalk necessarily remains narrow. In addition to providing important utilitarian functions the landscaped and furnished sidewalk extensions separate stretches of on-street parking spaces, minimizing the visual impact of autos lined up on the curb.

Elements of specific concern regarding street furniture in Siler City include but are not limited to the seating, lighting, and waste receptacles.

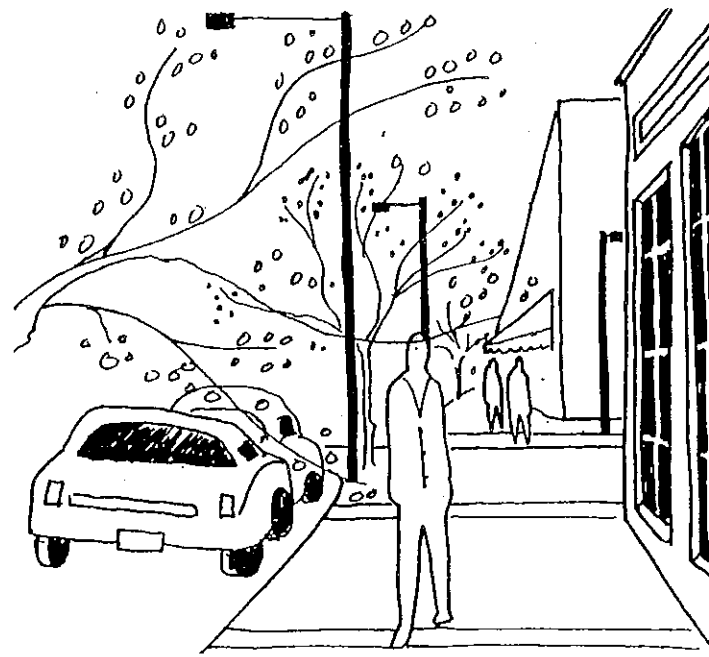
Seating needs to be sited according to the types of activity taking place and as to how people will enjoy the place.

Lighting is perhaps the most difficult single element in street furniture selection and siting. Lighting in downtown Siler City takes the form of the high-mounted, high intensity lights completely out of scale with the pedestrian environment. Lower intensity lamps, on shorter posts, and spaced closer together are an alternative. Supplemental lighting sources within the larger illumination scheme should be positioned to accentuate special things or areas. Special lighting should be used to identify important pedestrian areas such as steps or sitting areas. By day, the lamps and posts add to the surrounding street furniture and building facades and by night transform the street into a memorable place.

Waste receptacles in Siler City contribute to the overall visual clutter present in the downtown area. They should be integrated with other elements of street furniture and sited in zones of slow movement of pedestrians where litter may be produced such as near a restaurant or sitting area.



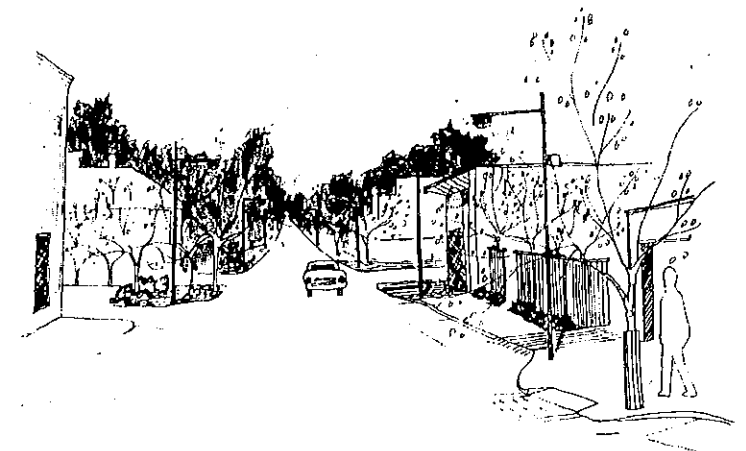
Sidewalk and Street Furniture Improvements



Landscaping and Street trees

Landscaping is an essential part of any revitalization plan, and its effective use can provide continuity to downtown by connecting corner to corner as well as connecting downtown to the rest of the community. Landscaping serves many utilitarian functions such as shielding storefronts from wind or sun thus serving an important function in our energy conscious environment. Pedestrians as well as stores benefit from deciduous trees that provide cooling shade in summer and allow the warmth of the sun to come through in winter. Evergreens serve to screen areas requiring enclosure such as parking lots, or work areas. Landscaping also serves to define spaces or entrances.

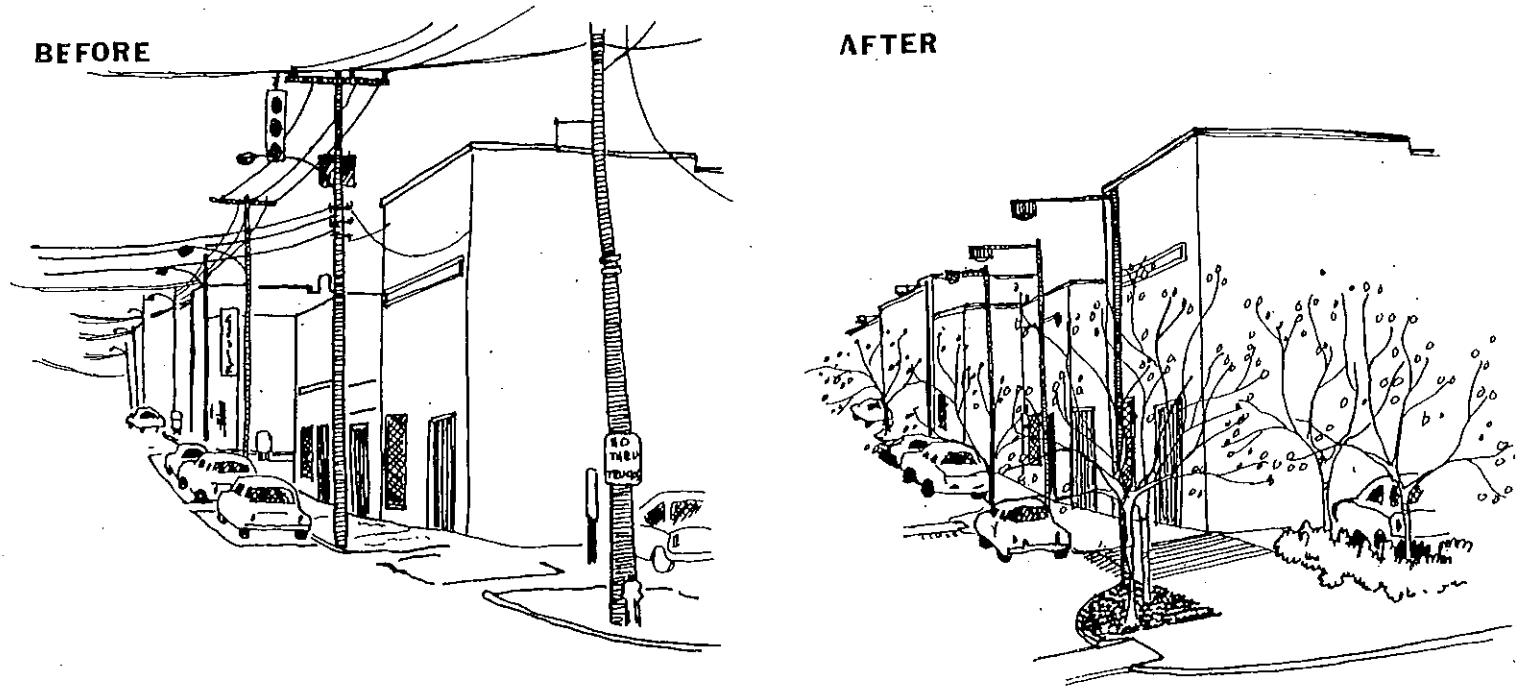
When actually developing a landscape plan for downtown, a professional arboriculturist should be consulted; however, in terms of the overall scheme of landscaping, street corners which provide the most space can accommodate medium sized trees. In midblock areas and areas where enclosure is needed, smaller trees may be used. Consideration should be given to trees providing seasonal interest such as flowering fruit trees. Areas requiring screening need evergreens, perhaps combined with walls or fencing.



Continuity and Enclosure

The preponderance of poles including light, utility, and sign posts, and the abundance of overhead wires creates a sea of visual clutter in addition to obscuring buildings and signs. The **elimination of overhead wires** should be an initial development consideration as the utilities could be fed into the backs of buildings from underground conduits.

Signs that direct traffic and convey public information should be considered as elements in the total streetscape. Several signs can be grouped on a single structure and the possibilities of displaying public notices and information on a centrally located kiosk should be considered. The principal criterion of signage is clarity of command—not more signs.



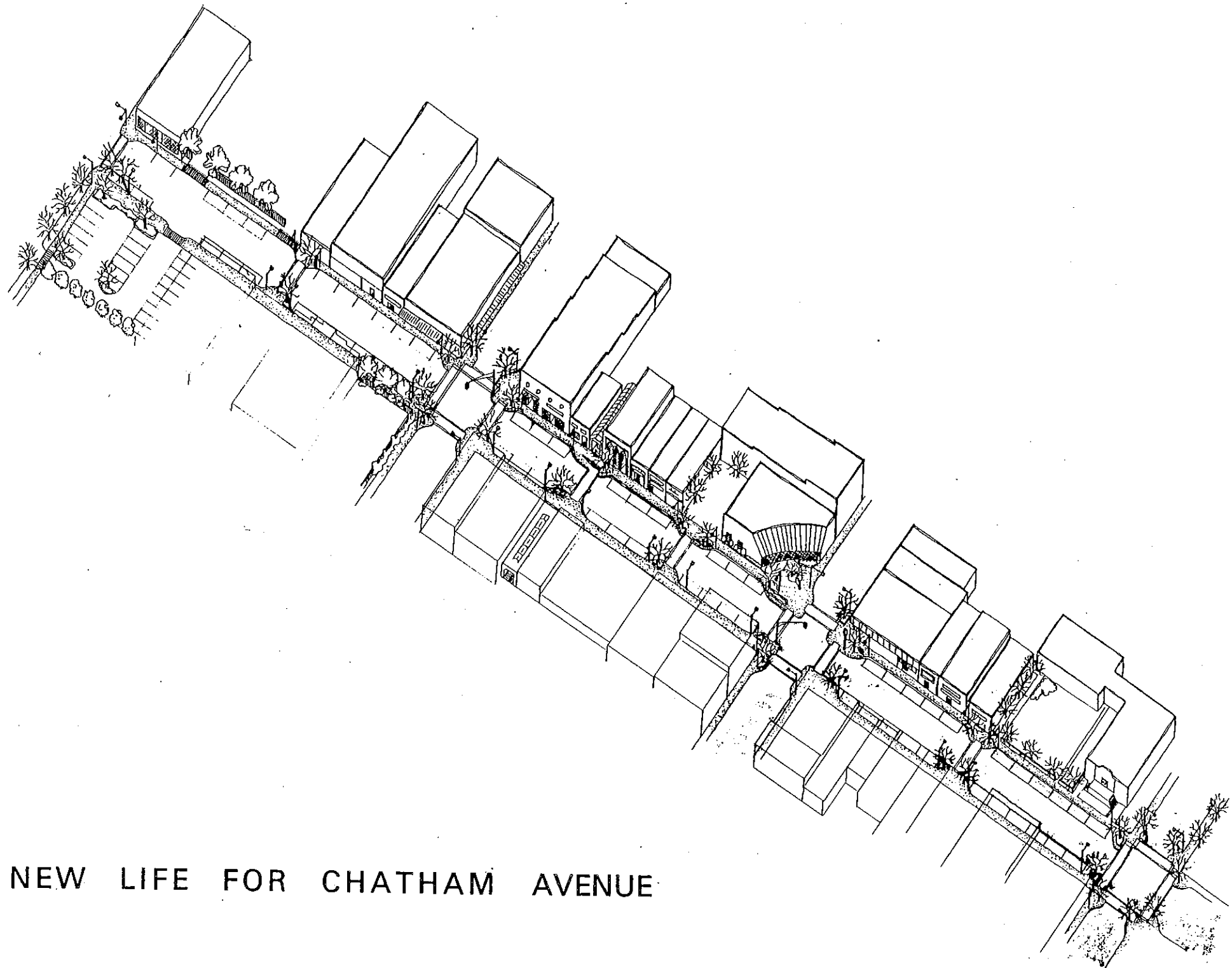
Elimination of Overhead Wires

The development of the pedestrian system includes **pedestrian access to the interior of the blocks**. These areas include the landscaped walkways, alleys, and arcades. The arcades serve as important connections to the street from parking as well as providing a shelter for pedestrians.

The important points to remember in development of a revitalization plan incorporating the elements discussed and proposed is that all of these contribute to the streetscape as a total. Thus each element should be considered as part of the whole, not as individual elements to be selected and purchased at different times by different people.



Pedestrian Access to Interior of Blocks



NEW LIFE FOR CHATHAM AVENUE

## FACADES

### GUIDELINES

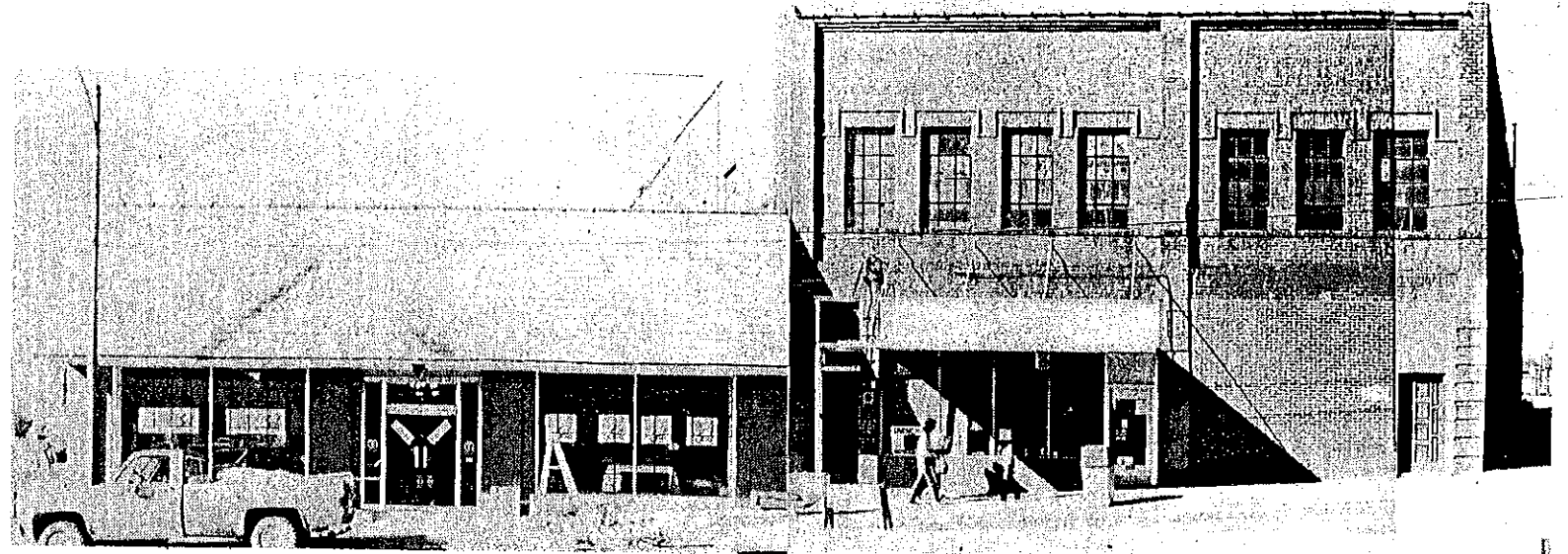
The majority of Siler City's downtown buildings were built between 1900 and 1929. Typical of commercial architecture in Piedmont North Carolina during this period, these buildings are constructed of brick and display architectural details of brick patterns and features found primarily above the first floor display front. In most cases, the area above the display zone has escaped the insensitive "modernizations" found frequently in other communities, and many of these interesting details are still visible. But some problems do exist in this area.

Signs which are oversized, deteriorated and projecting from the facade detract from building appearance. Windows are often covered with paint, plywood or sheet metal, or their frames have peeling paint. Open windows sometimes show the upper floors are empty, or used for storage. This gives the downtown an image of vacancy and decline.

At the ground floor display zone, many of the buildings have been altered more drastically than on the upper floors. These alterations have been executed by owners or tenants who have attempted to update the building appearance, or to reduce maintenance. In this latter case, store keepers have introduced "maintenance free" materials. Aluminum awnings, canopies, window and door frames, or plastic panels or tiles are incongruous with the organic materials of construction (brick, wood, stone, mortar).

Before presenting some specific renovation recommendations for the downtown building facades, several guidelines need to be established for the proper handling of the architectural features of the buildings. These guidelines will not explicitly state that authentic restoration be done for every building in the downtown area, although this would be the most desirable alternative for enhancing the visual quality and character of the downtown. Rather, these guidelines will suggest that renovations be made sensitively to its existing fabric. This includes scale and massing, original openings in the facade, and basic materials and color of the buildings.

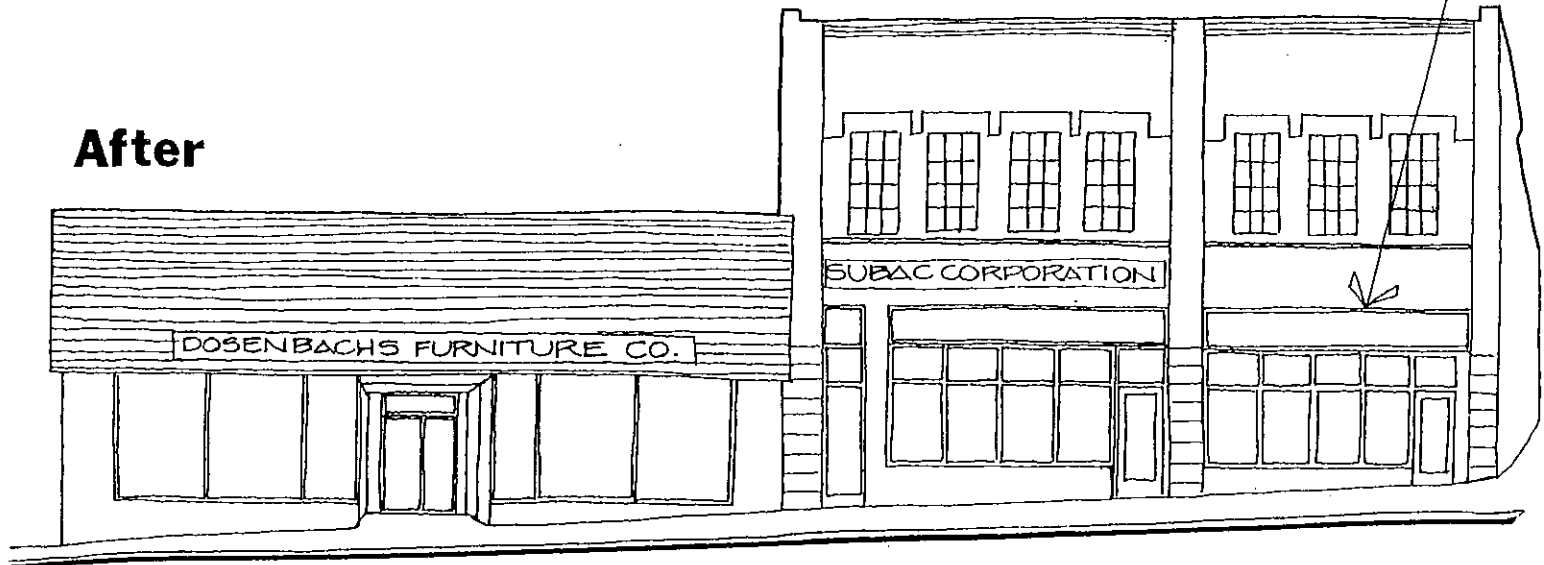
## Raleigh Street

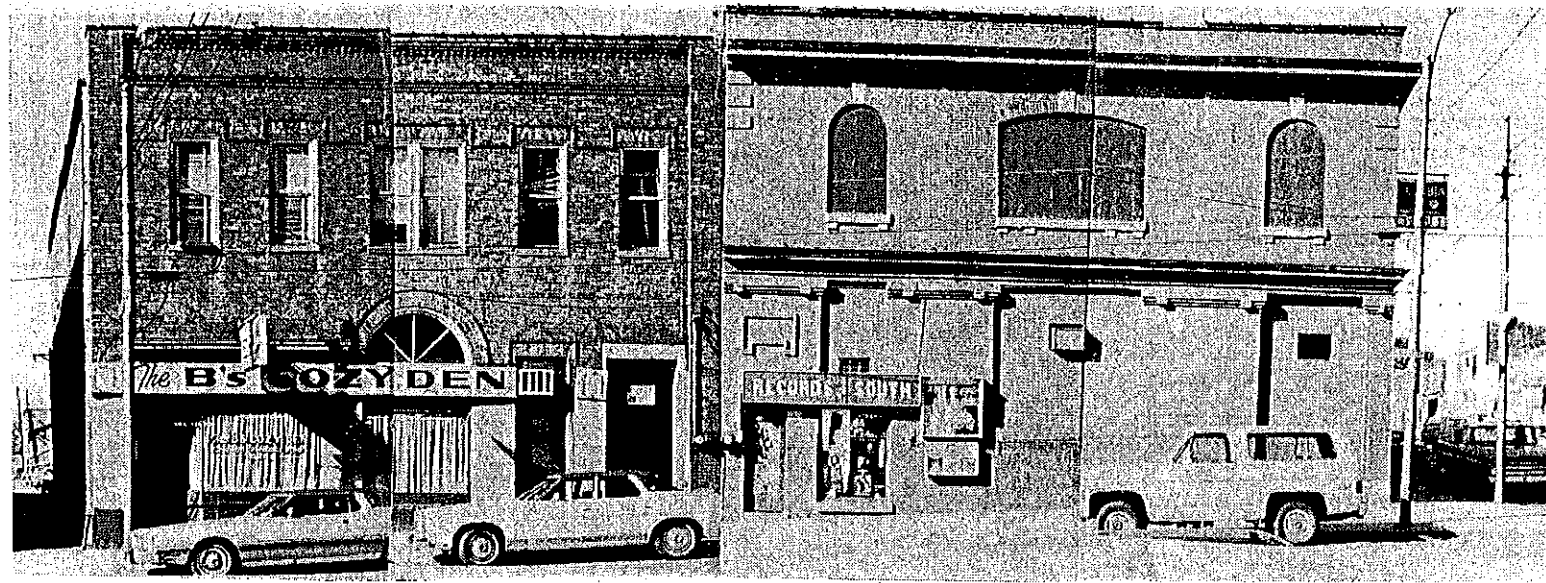


**Before**

RESTORE DISPLAY WINDOWS

**After**





## BUILDING DETAILS

Most of the buildings in the downtown area were constructed during an era when architectural details were used to express a particular building style. The apparent original details such as brick and stone patterns, cornices, moldings, pilasters, lintels, key stones, transoms and clerestories represent Siler City's architectural legacy. These details should be respected, not only for their educational contribution but because they are a vital part of the downtown's character. When these details are hidden by modernizations, removing a portion of the covering material will reveal several things: details which remain intact, the condition of the original facade, and the amount of rehabilitation work necessary to restore the facade to an appearance which is harmonious with the original intent of the builder. Where the original details have been altered beyond recognition, old photographs of the buildings can often be found and studied to reconstruct the facade, or a facade could be designed which would contain elements similar to the neighboring buildings. This could be effectively accomplished with a compatible modern design.

New detailing applied to the upper portion of the building facade restores the building to a human scale and integrates it into the block face. The individuality of store fronts can be accommodated at the ground floor display zone where appropriate construction materials can be arranged to form different entrances and display window treatments, and where attractive signage or window dressing can express the uniqueness of the establishment. When a building's original facade has been obscured, in most cases little or no change has resulted to the details. By exposing the vertical elements such as pilasters and windows, the building does not appear to be floating within the overall block face, but rather anchored to the ground and tied into the other buildings on the block. The exposure or the reconstruction of the cornice line is important to give the building definition to its upper edge, a horizontal feature which visually concludes the building and also ties it into the other buildings on the block.

## WINDOWS AND DOORS

Most buildings in the downtown area have a large opening in the brick face at the ground floor display level. This opening allows for the insertion of an entry and display windows. The use of the building often dictates the kind of entry and display window treatments the building has received. The various recommendations for window and door arrangements in the design portion of this section do not necessarily accommodate the current building use, but are intended to present a range of ideas which could be adapted to a number of business situations. The design of the entry, display windows, and the method of merchandise display within the store front are important considerations for attracting customers into the building.



Display windows should be framed with wood and broken into smaller sections or panes of glass. The wood is more compatible with the early 20th century facade, and it can be painted to add color to what is now a bleak series of plate glass windows. The panes of glass add interest and provide more rhythm to the display level along a block.

A rhythm of upper story windows exist which is formed by a pattern of solids and voids. These windows originally lighted the interior spaces of professional offices which once occupied the upper floors of downtown buildings. Today most of these areas are vacant or they are used for storage.

Since the upper floor windows are still important in maintaining the building's integrity, these should be retained, exposed and restored. If the old window frames have been discarded, new ones in a style appropriate to the building should be installed. Where windows cannot be exposed closed louvered shutters can be installed to fit the opening, or where windows exist, but where the area is used for storage, a dark shade can be placed in the window to block unpleasant views into the buildings or to conceal a vacancy.

## CANOPIES

Many of Siler City's downtown buildings have a flat metal covering at or just above the ground floor display level which extends from the building facade to a point over the sidewalk. There are also aluminum awnings which hang out and down over the upper portion of entries and display windows. Several visual problems are inherent in these canopy arrangements.

Metal canopies are not in keeping with the organic materials (brick, wood, stone, mortar) of the building, nor do they respect the architectural lines of the building. The flat canopies require numerous supporting members which are attached to the facade above them. These conflict with the building's architectural details and add to the visual confusion of a whole block face. These canopies permanently obscure the views of the upper portion of the facade and they interrupt important design features such as signage areas, clerestories, transoms and vertical elements. The metal awnings appear to be fixed and rigid on a facade and their

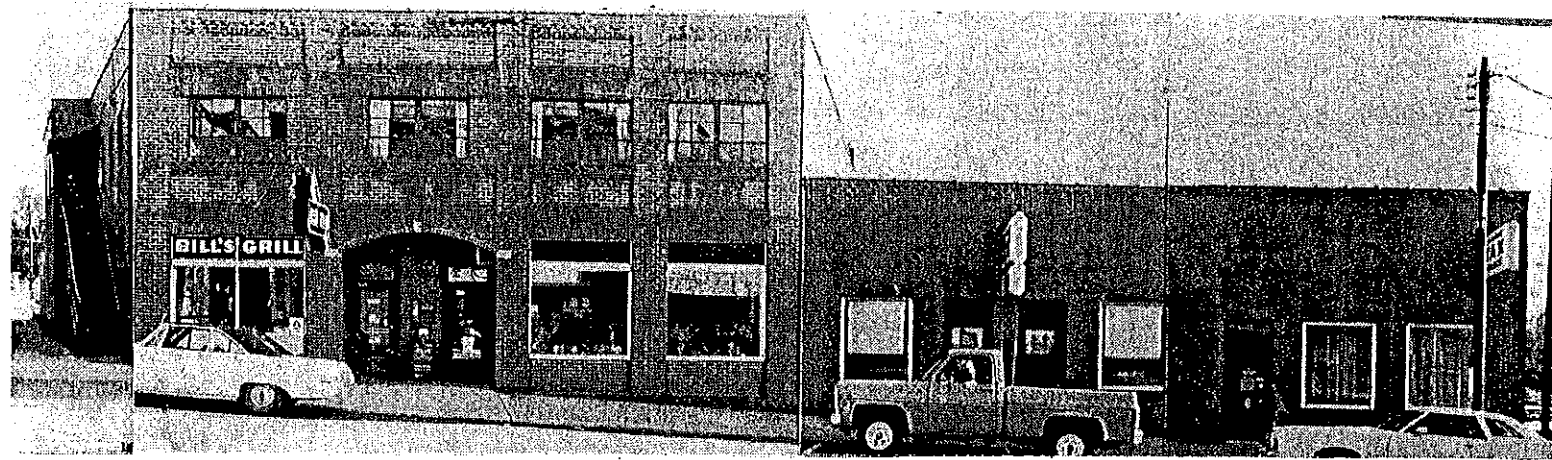


BEFORE



AFTER

# Raleigh Street



white baked finish is too glaring and contrasting with the color of the buildings. Both types of metal canopies should be replaced with canvas awnings of subdued "earth-tone" colors which match or compliment the trim or brick color of the building.

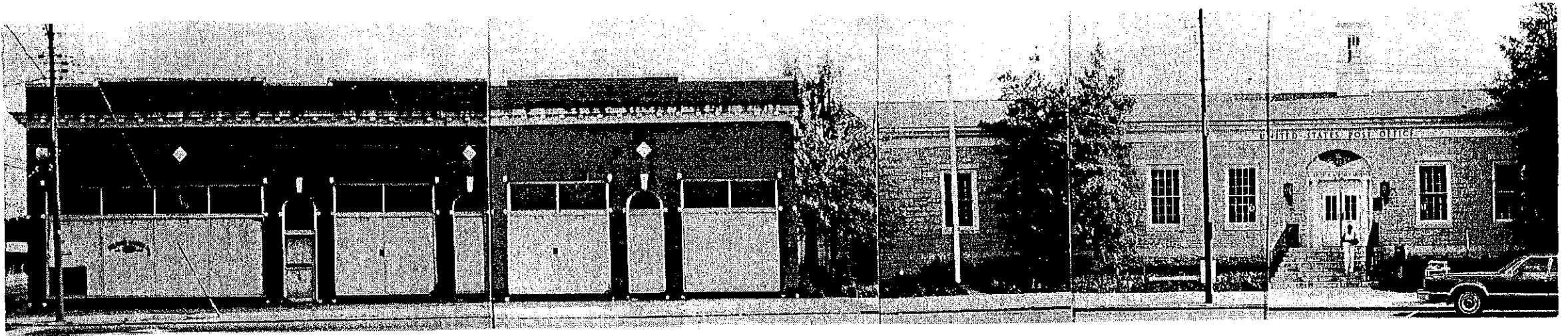
## SIGNS

Signs in Siler City's downtown are used for indexing various aspects of the environment or for the purpose of selling products. They attempt to convey information to motorists and pedestrians, but most of the signs are poorly designed, deteriorated, and unrelated to the building on which they are placed or to other buildings. Some signs indicate businesses which no longer exist even when another business occupies the site. These kinds of problems indicate that a more ordered and pleasing visual communicative system is needed.

Signs are important visual elements for conveying information, but they can also enhance a business district if attention is given to their design, placement and level of maintenance. These concerns are manifested if a community's attitude toward its visual quality and its level of pride in its downtown is substantial.

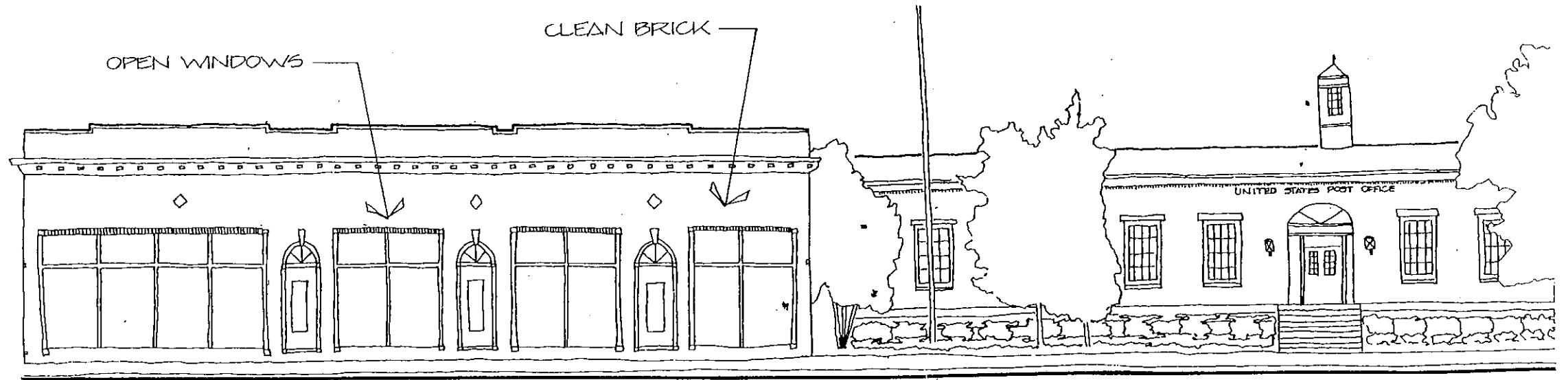
Factors to consider in sign design are: the architectural style of the building and surrounding buildings, the message to convey, the lettering, the color, the style and detail, the lighting and the size and shape of the sign. The sign size and shape relates to its placement on the building. A signage area is evident on most facades in the downtown, and the sign should fit harmoniously into this space. Other factors to consider in placement are: the orientation to pedestrians and vehicles and the level of attention sought for the business. Most businesses in Siler City are known well enough to warrant a subdued indication of its existence, either with lettering on the display window or awning, a symbol, a window display or a small sign under the canopy. The businesses in Siler City which have taken these signage approaches have found these alternatives to be less costly initially (and in the longer terms of maintenance), and to be more attractive than internally illuminated flat or projecting signs. Where larger frontage signs are felt to be necessary, these should be mounted flat against the facade and should be constructed of materials which are consistent with other materials used on early 20th century commercial buildings. These signs should display attention to detail and craftsmanship. Plastic and aluminum should be avoided, however, some attractive contemporary letters of these materials might be appropriate in some instances. Product advertising should not be permitted in conjunction with the name of the business. Specific guidelines or ordinances which could be developed for the downtown are:





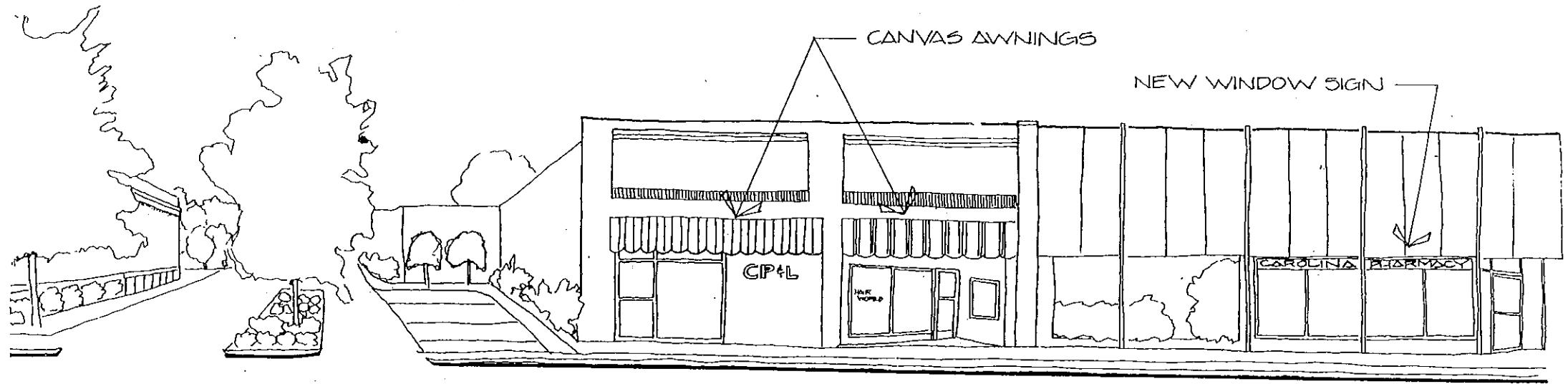
BEFORE

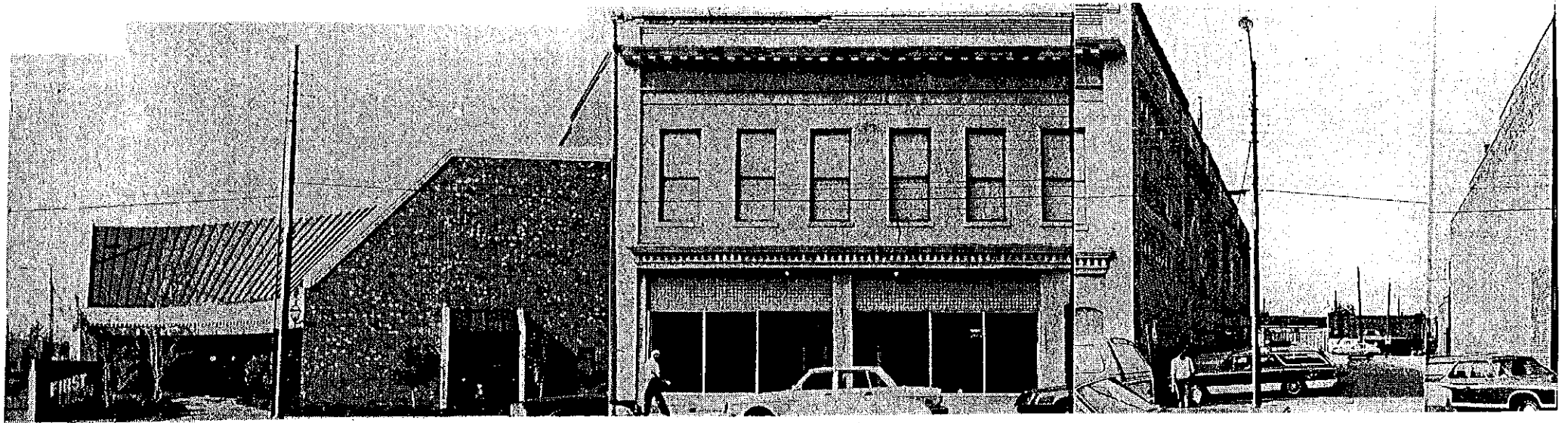
## Raleigh Street



AFTER







BEFORE

# Raleigh Street

REMOVE PAINT FROM WINDOWS & CLERESTORY



AFTER



1. Each establishment should be permitted one sign oriented to the motorist and one to the pedestrian.
2. Signs oriented to the motorist should ideally be located 12 feet above the sidewalk (10 to 14 feet is acceptable).
3. Signs oriented to the pedestrian should be located either projecting beneath the awning, or on the display window, on the awning flap, or as a symbol sign.
4. Signs should be located within a signable area which is a continuous portion of the facade, unbroken by doors, windows or architectural elements.
5. The sign should have a well defined border.
6. Letters should take up no more than 40% of the defined sign area.
7. The message should be limited to the name of the business.



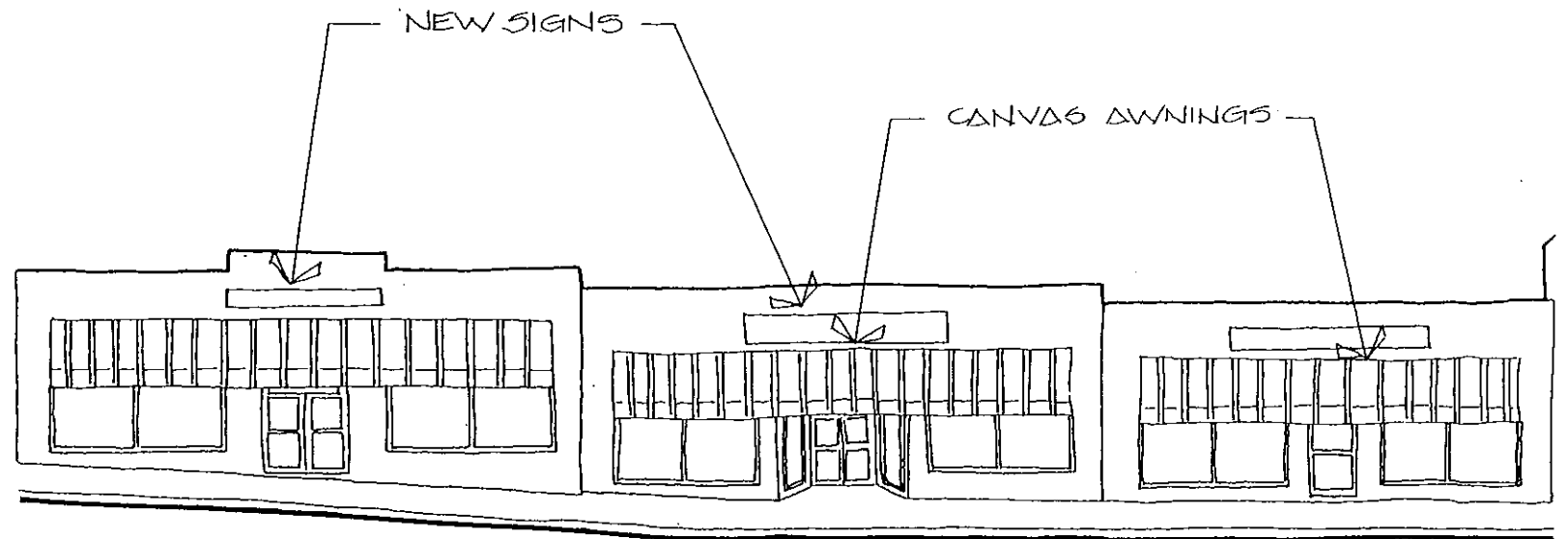
### Pedestrian Signs

1. Projecting signs should be located approximately 50 feet apart.
2. Projecting signs should extend at a 90 degree angle from the building.
3. Letters should be 1 to 4 inches (1 inch letters are legible at 50 feet; 4 inch letters are legible at 200 feet).
4. Symbols can be used effectively as pedestrian signs.
5. A logo or store name can be painted or screened on the awning.

### Motorist Signs

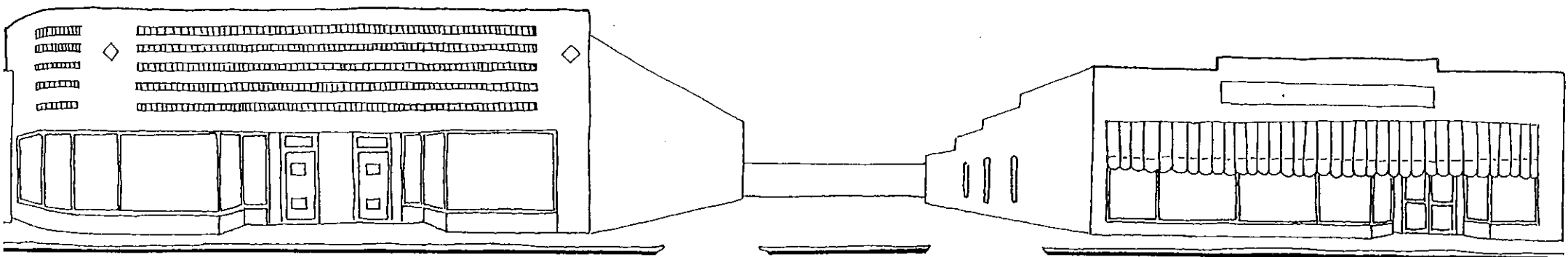
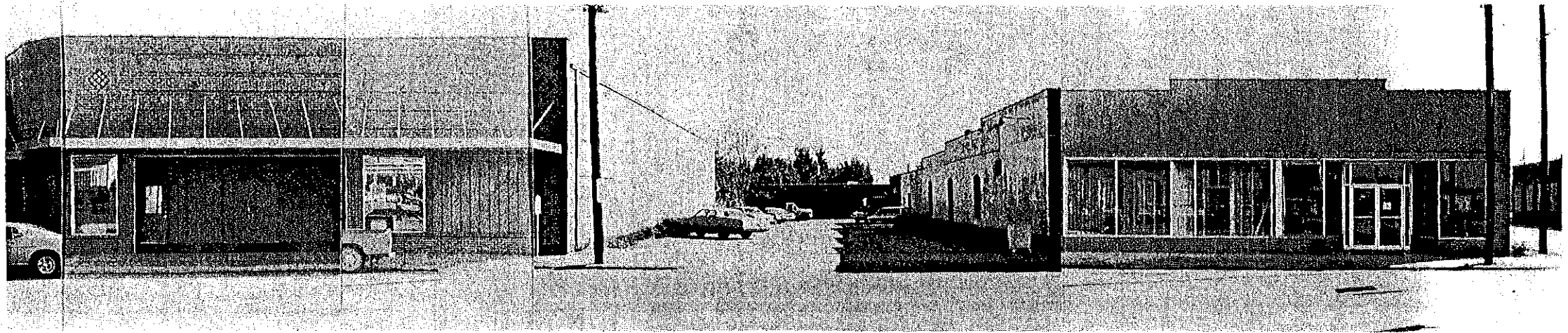
1. Letters on signs oriented to the motorist should be between 8 inches and 18 inches high.
2. 8 inches is the minimum size to allow for reaction and turning time at 20 mph.
3. 18 inches can be easily read from 900 feet which is the distance

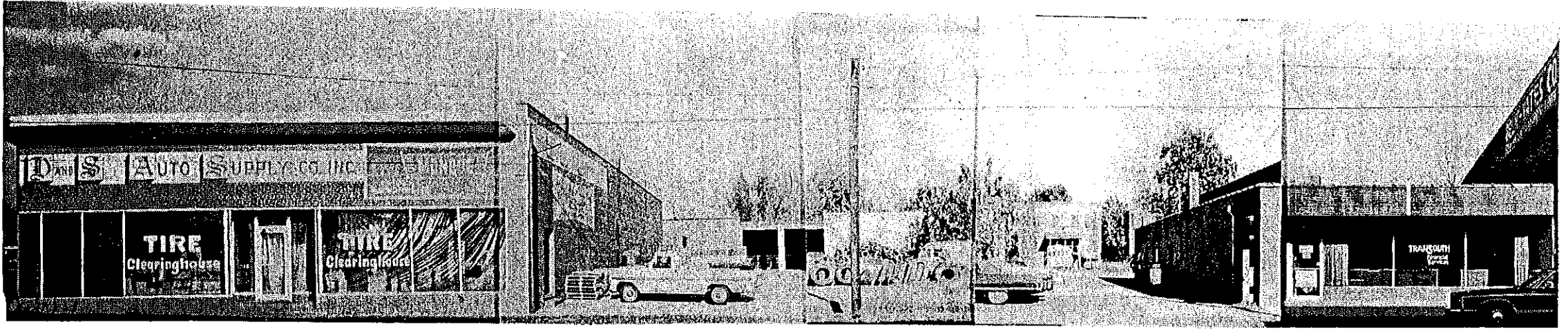
BEFORE



AFTER

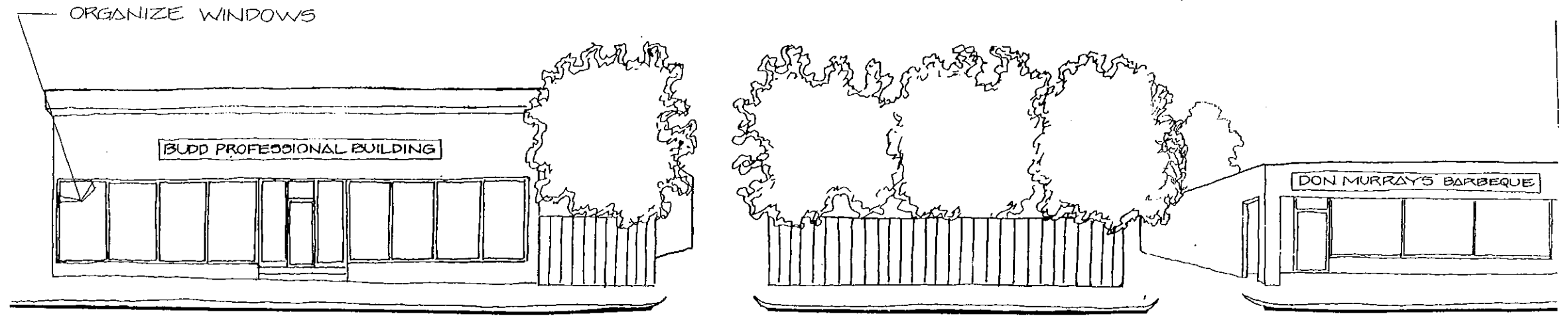
# Raleigh Street



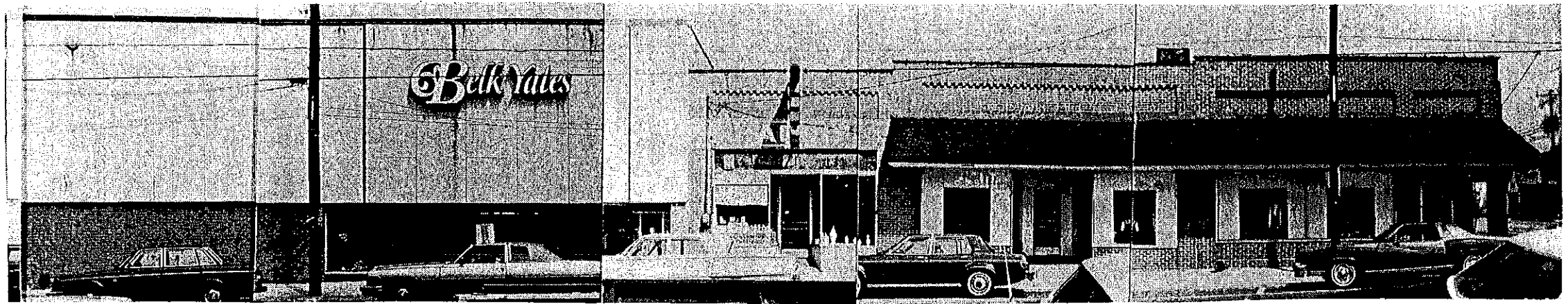


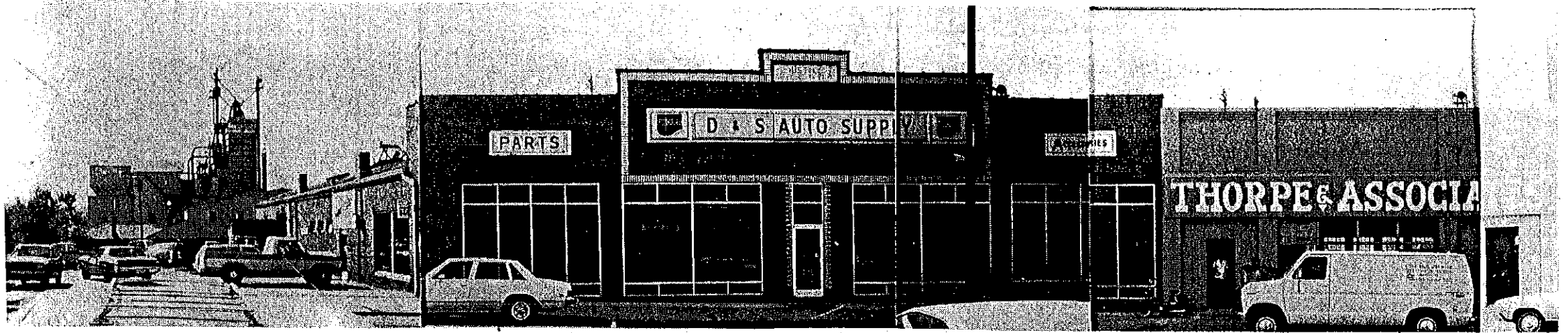
BEFORE

## Chatham Avenue



AFTER





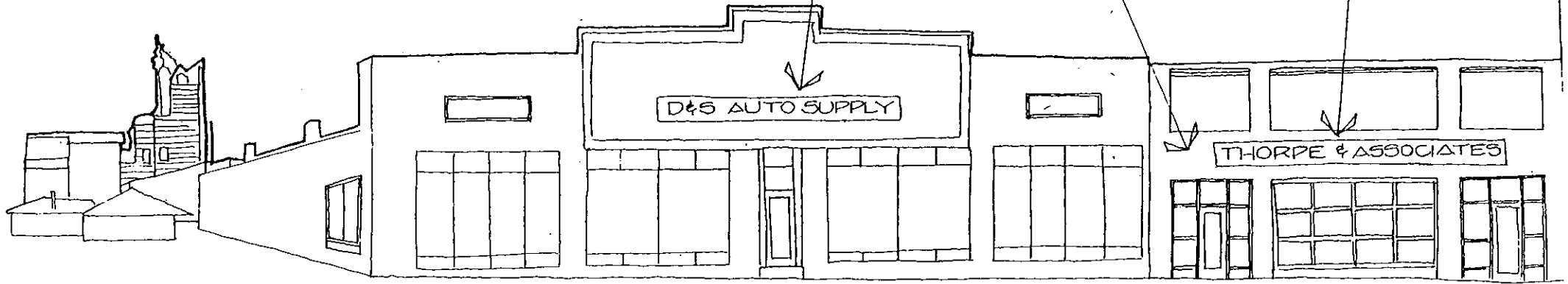
BEFORE

## Chatham Avenue

NEW SIGN W/O PRODUCT ADVERTISING

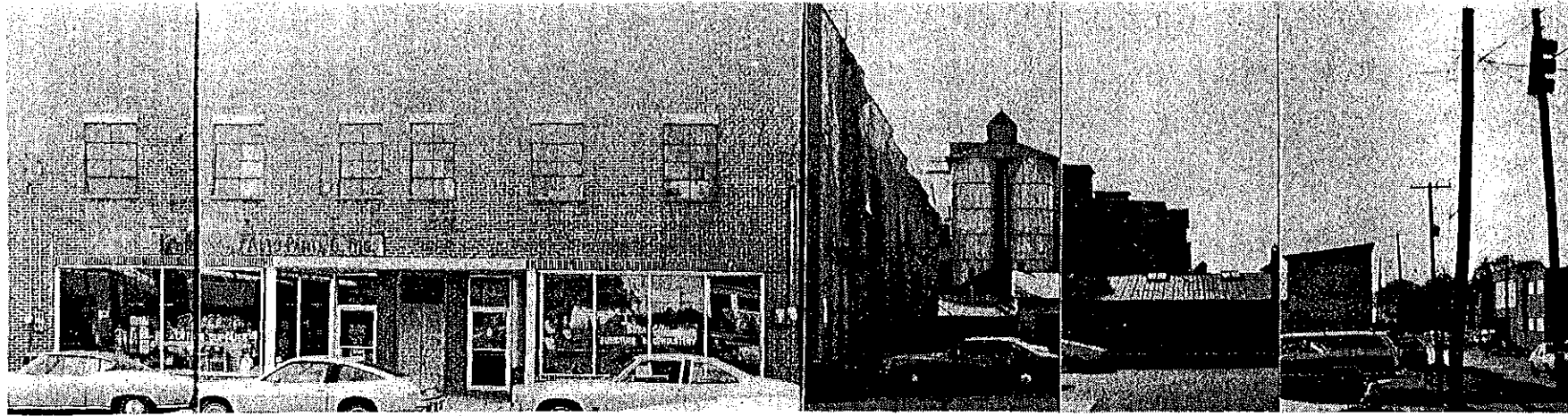
REPAINT

NEW SIGN



AFTER





WOOD FRAME  
DOUBLE-HUNG SASH WINDOWS



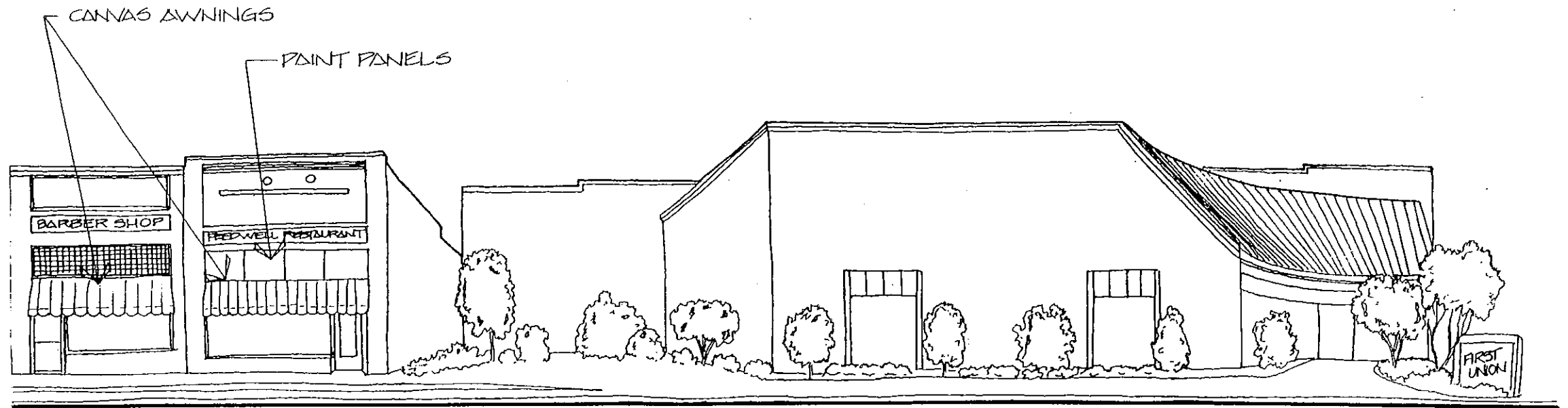


BEFORE

## Chatham Avenue



AFTER



## Items Of Information

Each sign should be limited to 10 items of information since this is a number easily retained by a shopper. An item of information is a syllable, a change in type face, a symbol, a shape, a change in the plane or letter orientation.

## Color and Contrast

Colors should be selected to harmonize with the other building features. A high contrast in tones between background and lettering is desirable for greatest legibility.

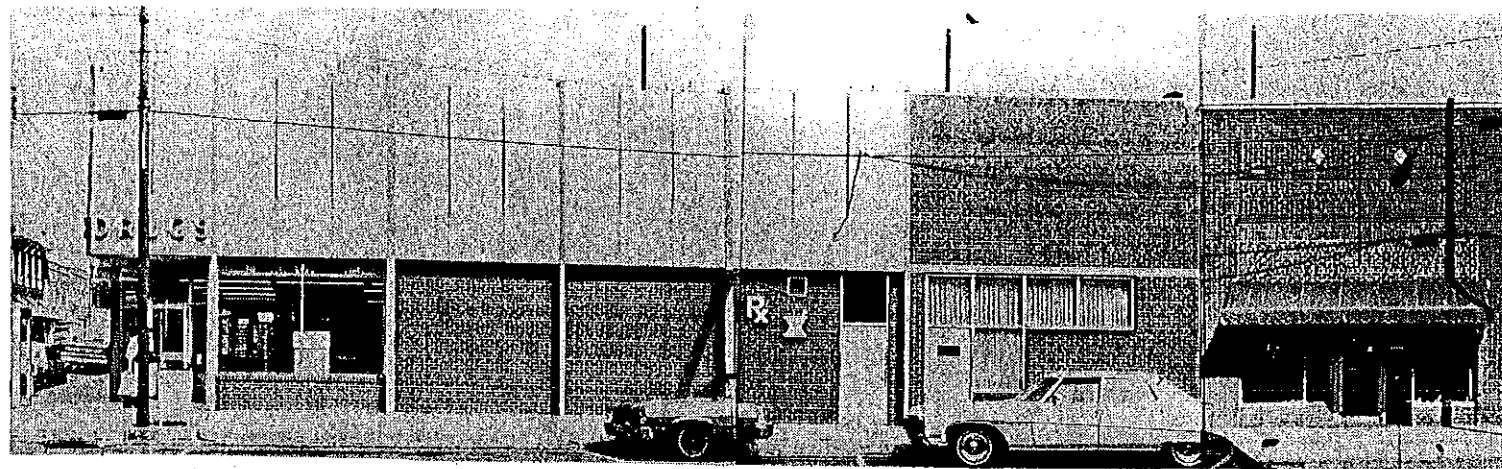
## Selection of Type

The type face should be simple and bold reflecting the building style. For early 20th century buildings a simple serif would be appropriate.

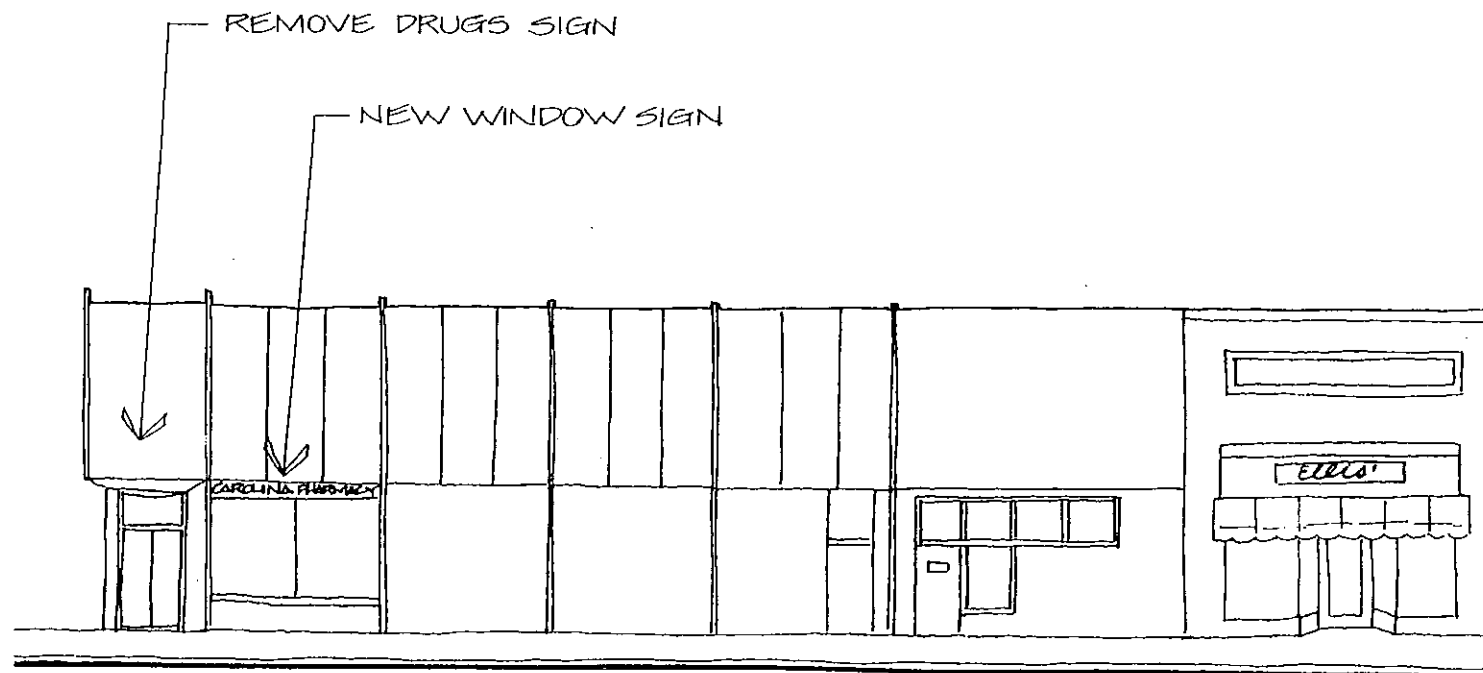
## PAINTING AND CLEANING

Few buildings in the downtown area require complete paint jobs since most of the facades are in their natural brick state as originally constructed. Painting of entire facades is only recommended for those facades which are in poor condition, where numerous patches or alterations have been made with newer brick, or if a facade has been previously painted. In the case of previously painted buildings precautions should be taken to insure the taking of a new paint surface particularly on peeling, flaking surfaces or where rust stains or discolorations originating from the brick is evident. Wood trim and pressed metal architectural details should be painted for their preservation and for highlighting the facade. In general, buildings that are to be painted should receive subtle treatments of slightly contrasting colors of base and trim to emphasize facade details. These colors should blend well with the surrounding buildings.

The original beauty of many of the brick commercial buildings is now masked behind accumulation of carbon and dirt or blemished with poorly maintained painted surfaces, stains, or other discolorations. The most popular methods for alleviating these problems are with chemical solvents, steam, sand blasting, high pressure cold water and various combinations of these methods. Cleaning buildings with chemical solvents is inexpensive and they can be applied with brush or spray according to the directions for their use. Removal of the chemical along with the dirt is accomplished using high pressure cold water. For completely removing painted surfaces down to the bare masonry, a combination of chemicals and high pressure steam is commonly used. Sandblasting as a method

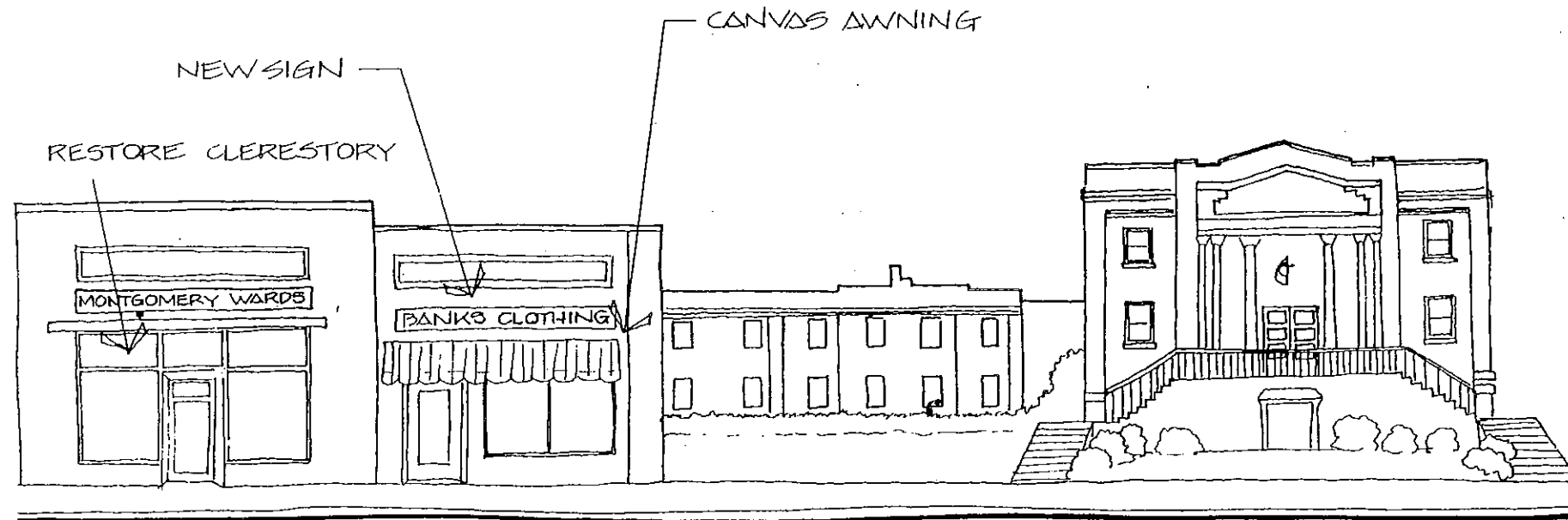


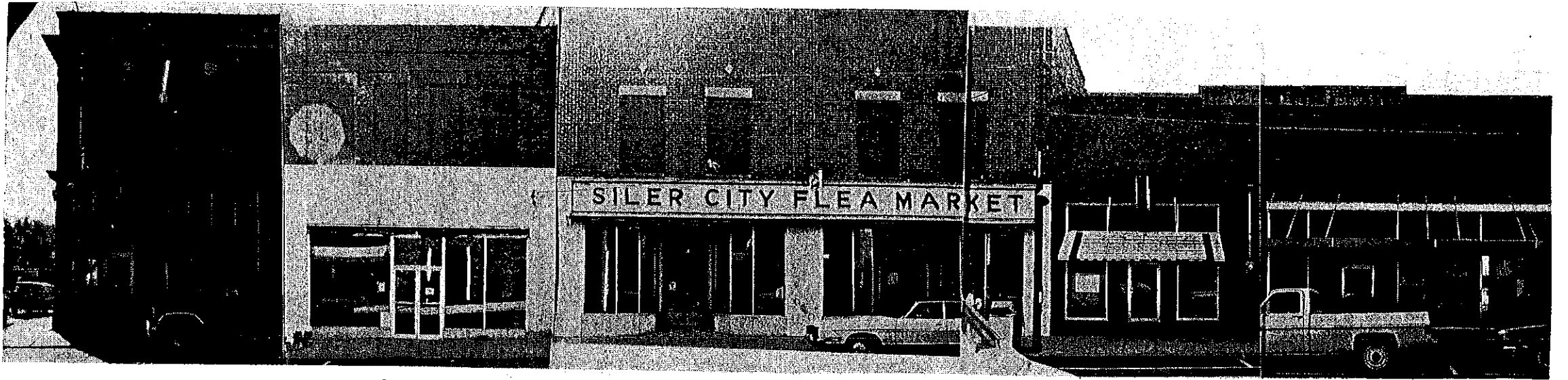
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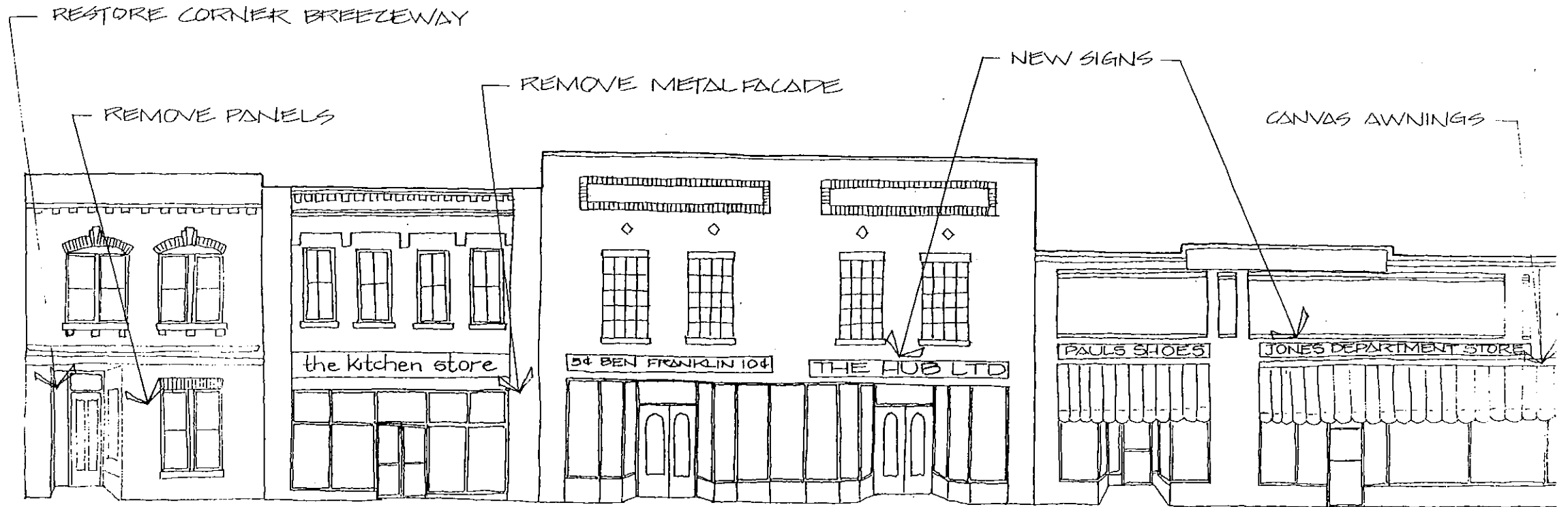
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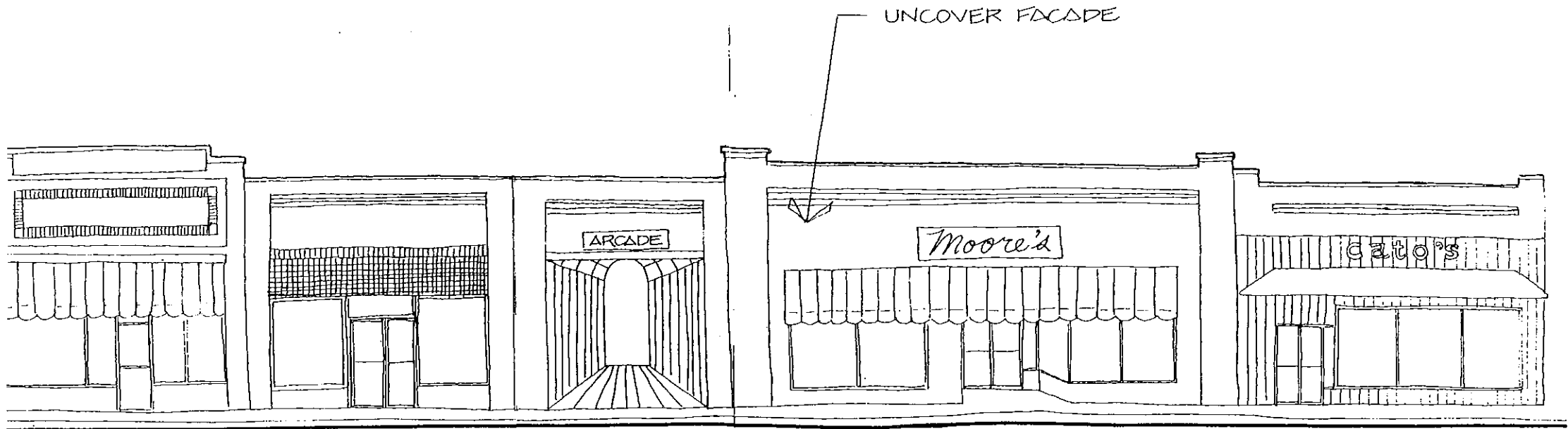
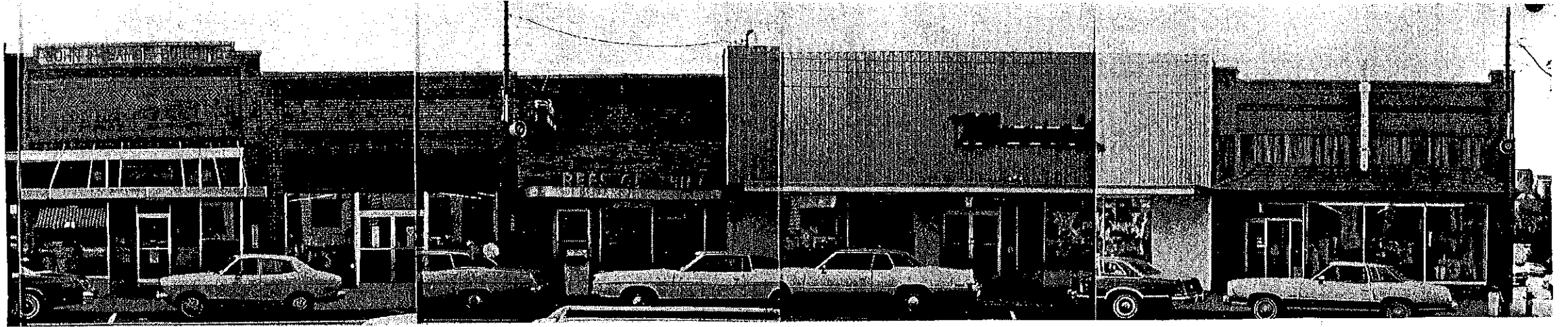


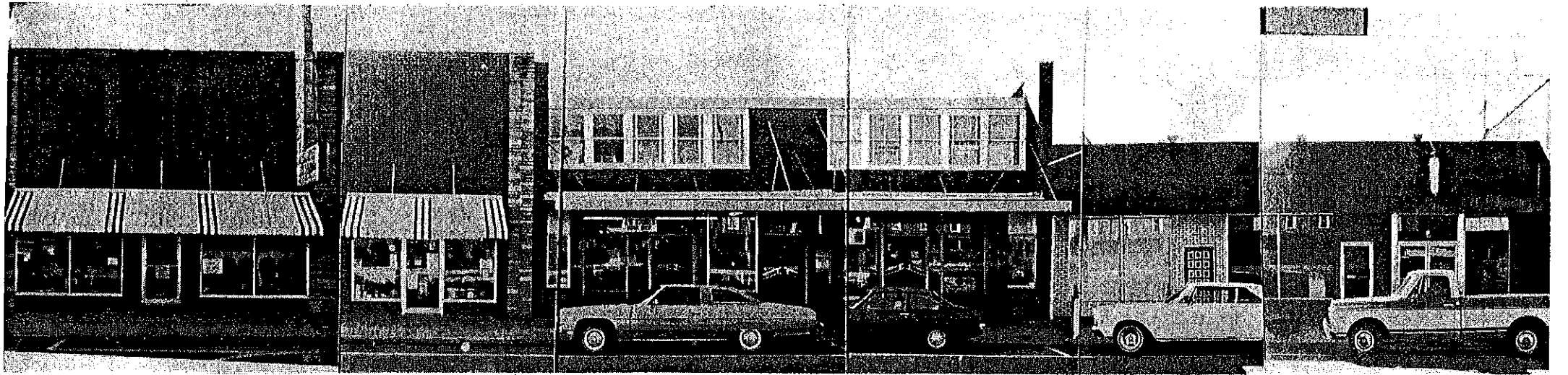
BEFORE

# Chatham Avenue



AFTER





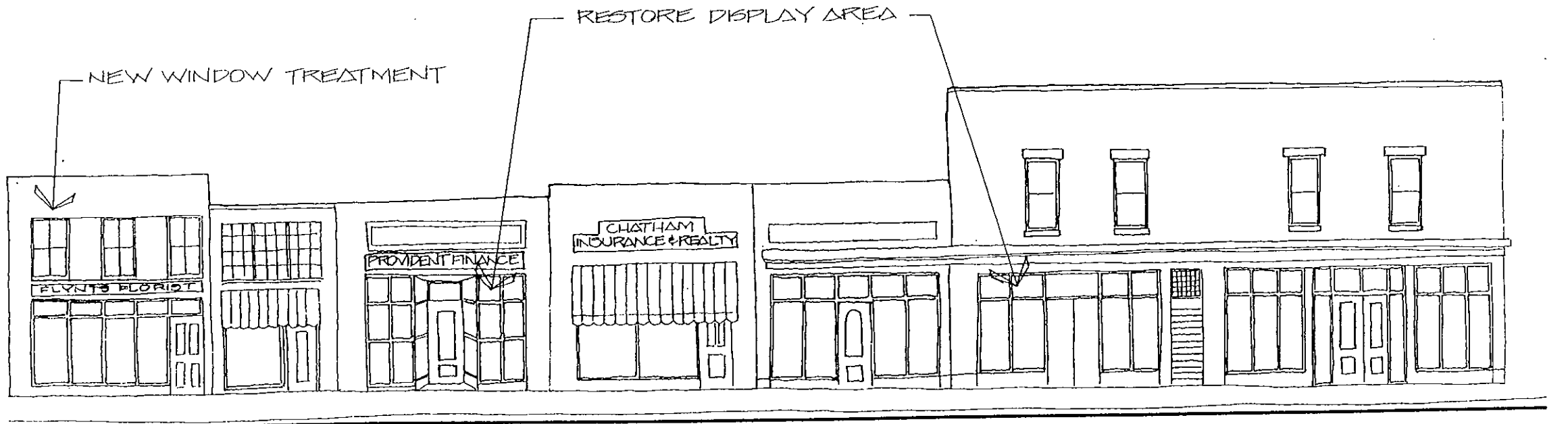
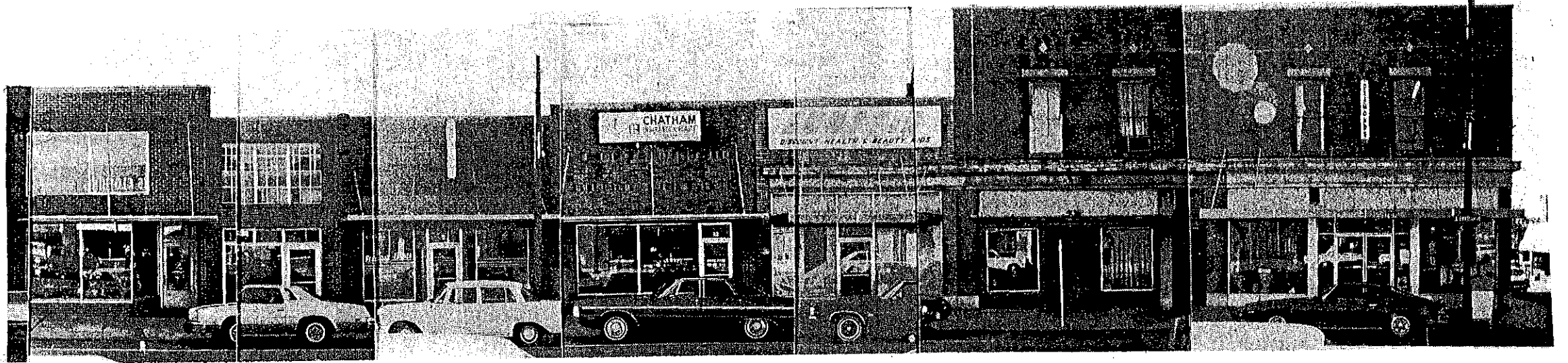
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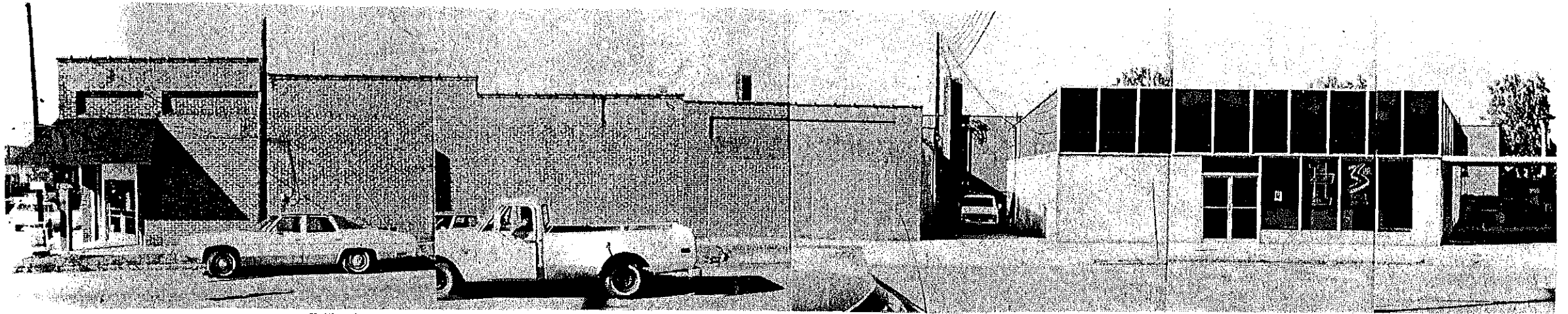
# Chatham Avenue



AFTER

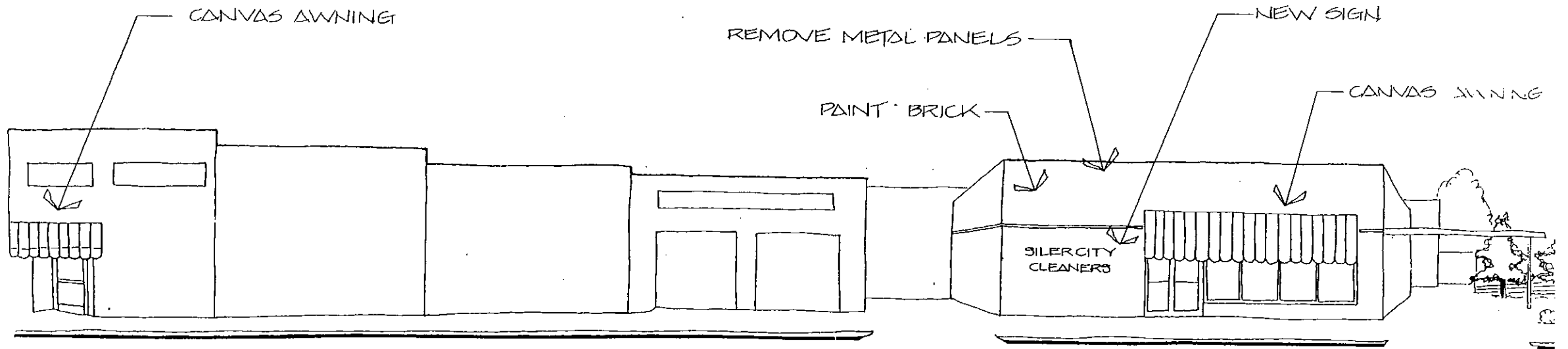




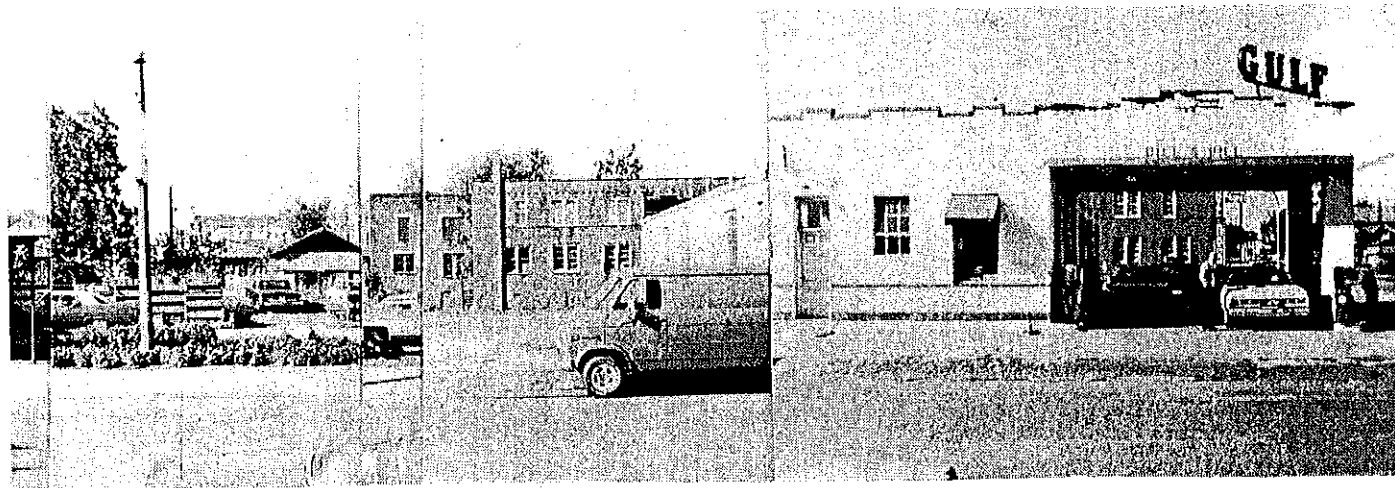


BEFORE

## Second Street



AFTER

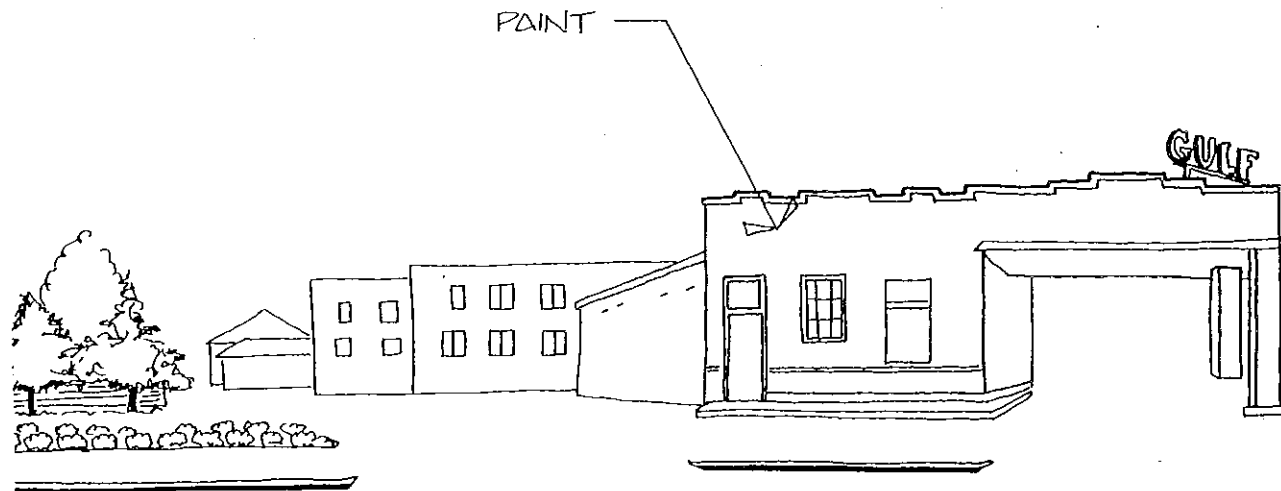


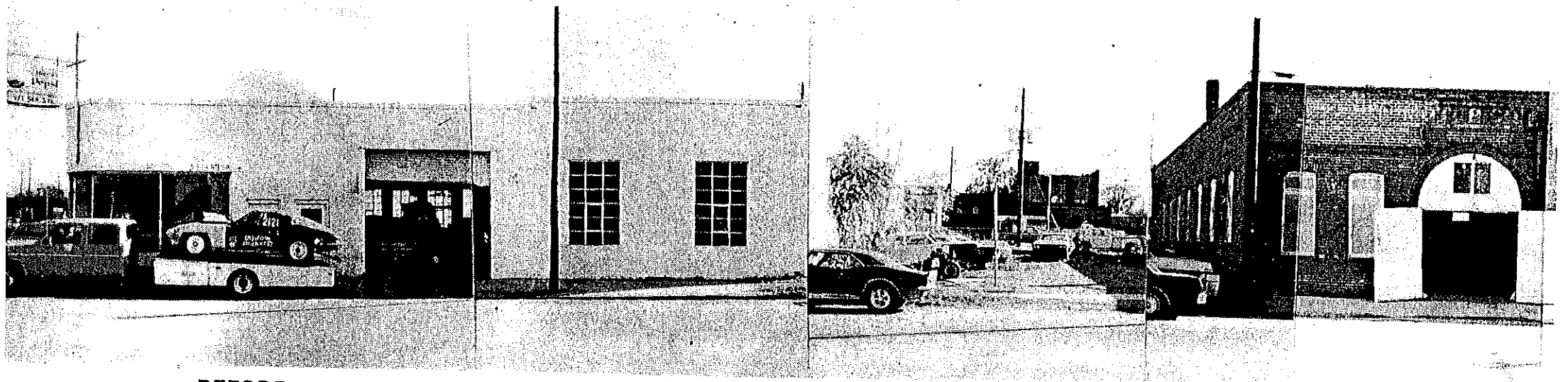
of cleaning should never be used since it removes the protective outer coating of brick and opens it to moisture which freezes and thaws causing the brick to crumble. Older brick deteriorates rapidly after sandblasting and requires eventual replacement by some other material. The other cleaning processes can also be damaging to fragile older surfaces, so it is necessary to be sure that the cleaning process will not inflict permanent damage to the building.

## ADMINISTRATION

The formation of a Downtown Design Review Committee could insure that appropriate renovations are made as proposed by the facade improvement guidelines in this study. This group could be a committee of a downtown redevelopment organization which would be comprised of representatives of government, banking, industry, and downtown merchants. It could also be a Community Appearance Commission which has power under the state enabling legislation to effect the appearance guidelines at the local level.

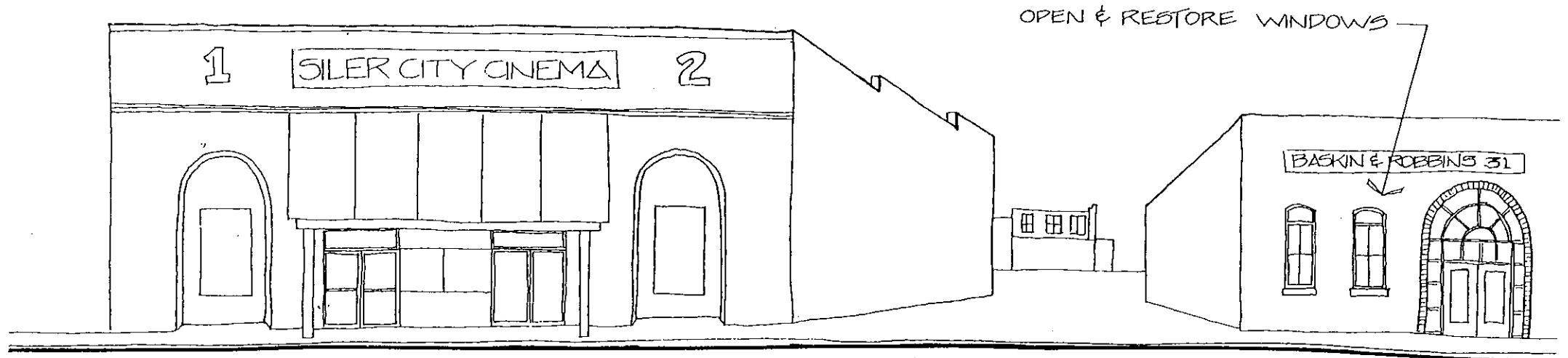
This Downtown Design Review Committee should have a member with design training or one who is engaged in a design profession. This committee would review any changes to be made to the facades, then recommend and approve the course of action to be taken by building owners or tenants.



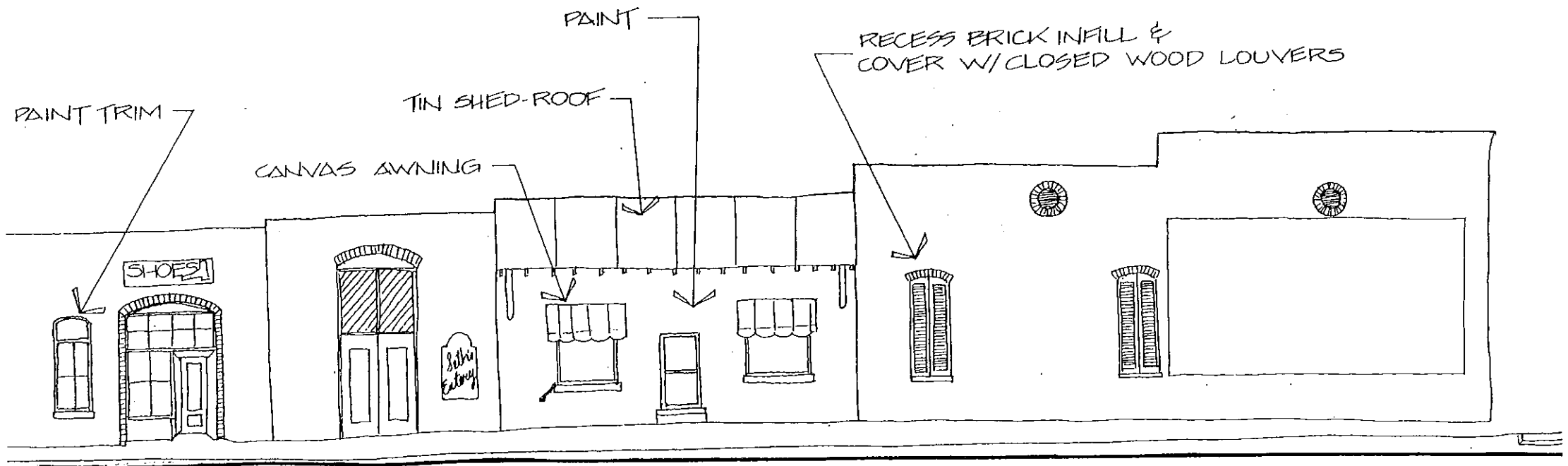


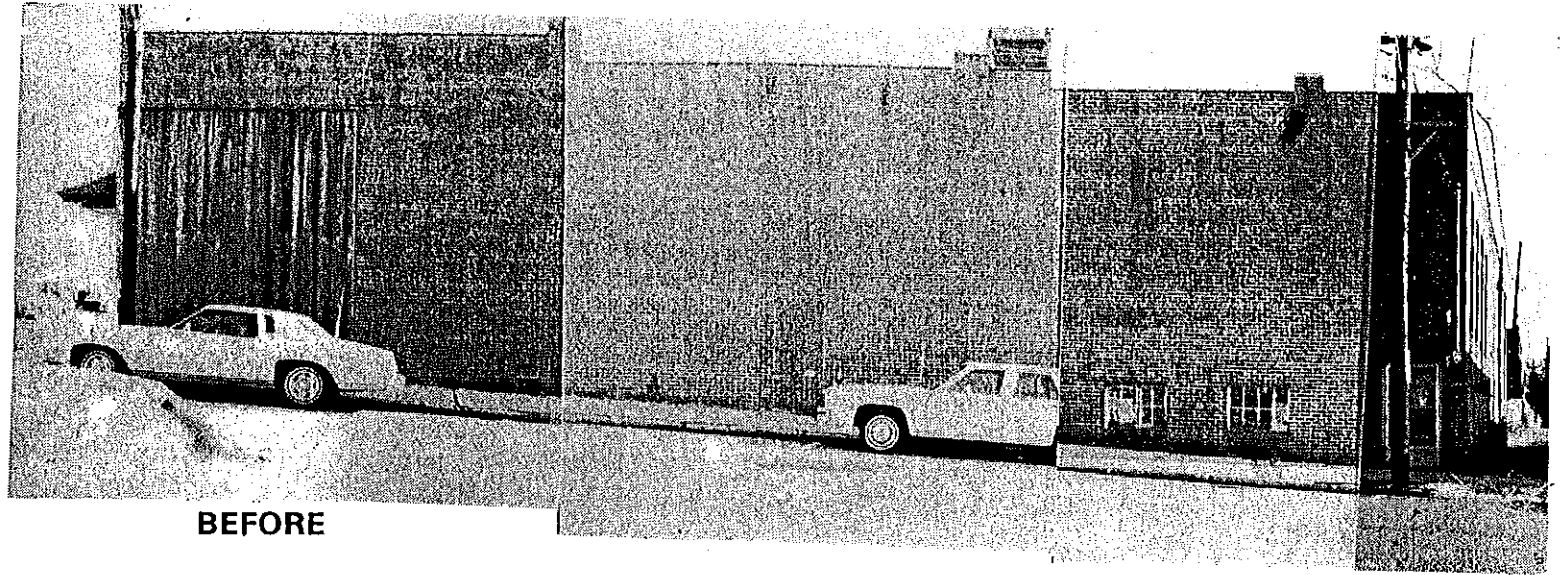
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## Second Street

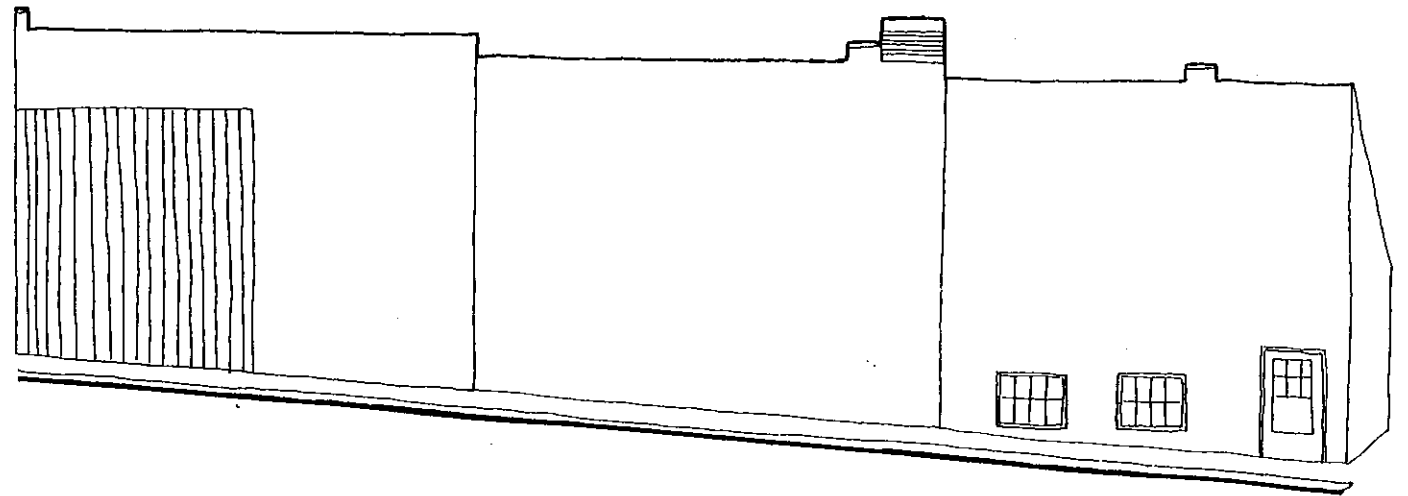


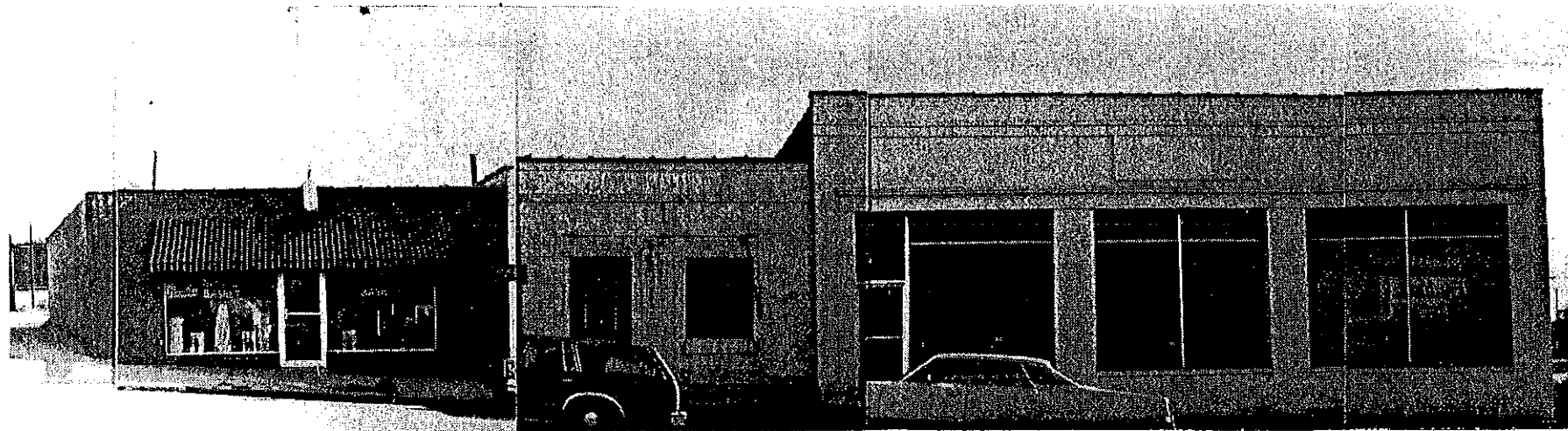
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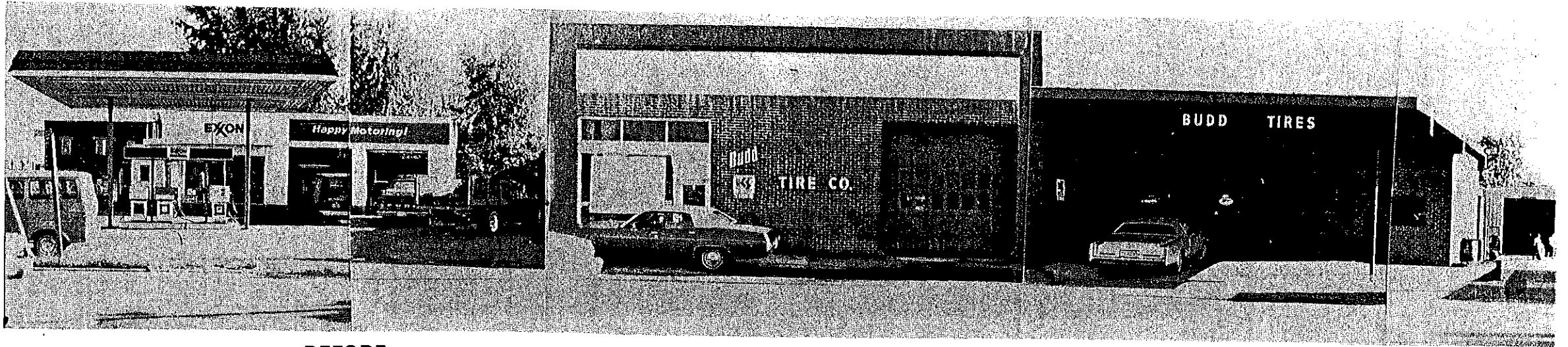




## Second Street

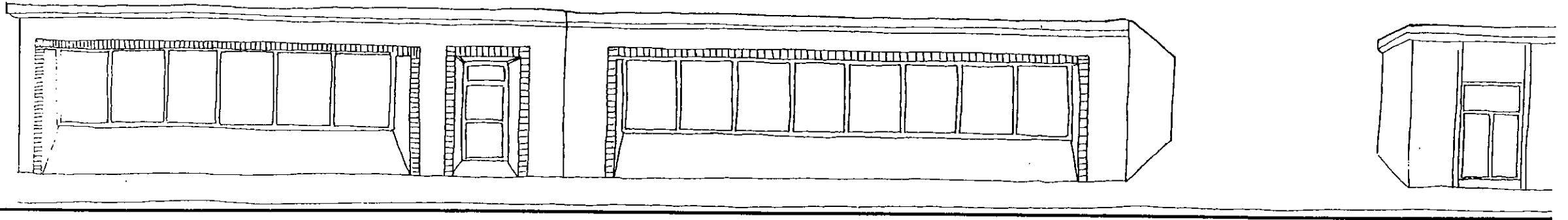






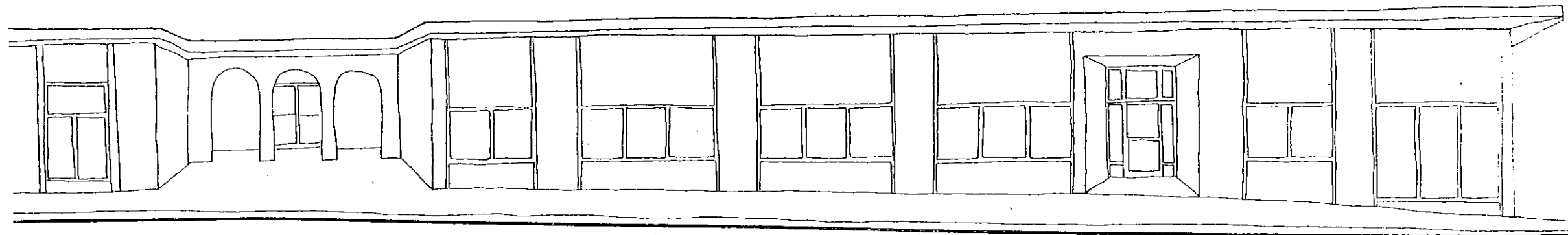
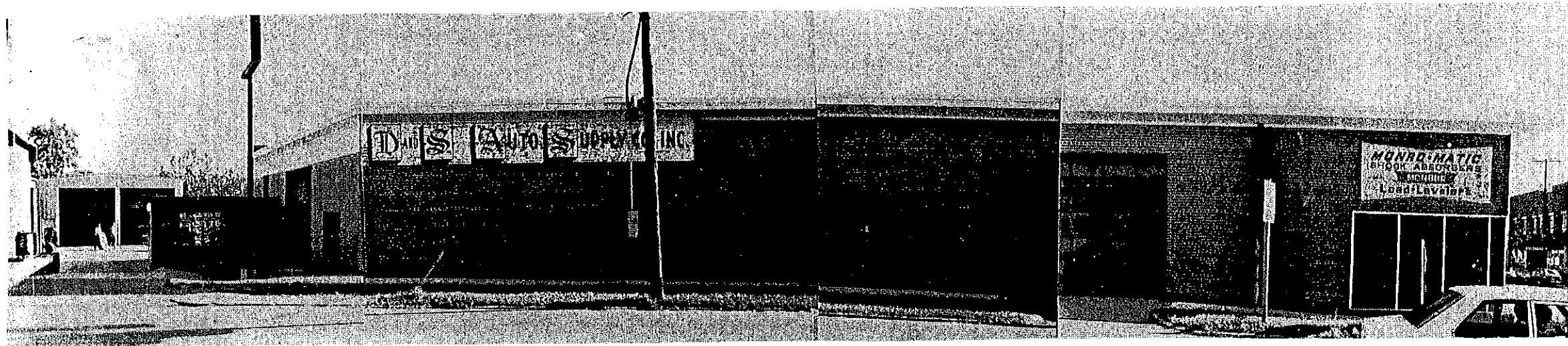
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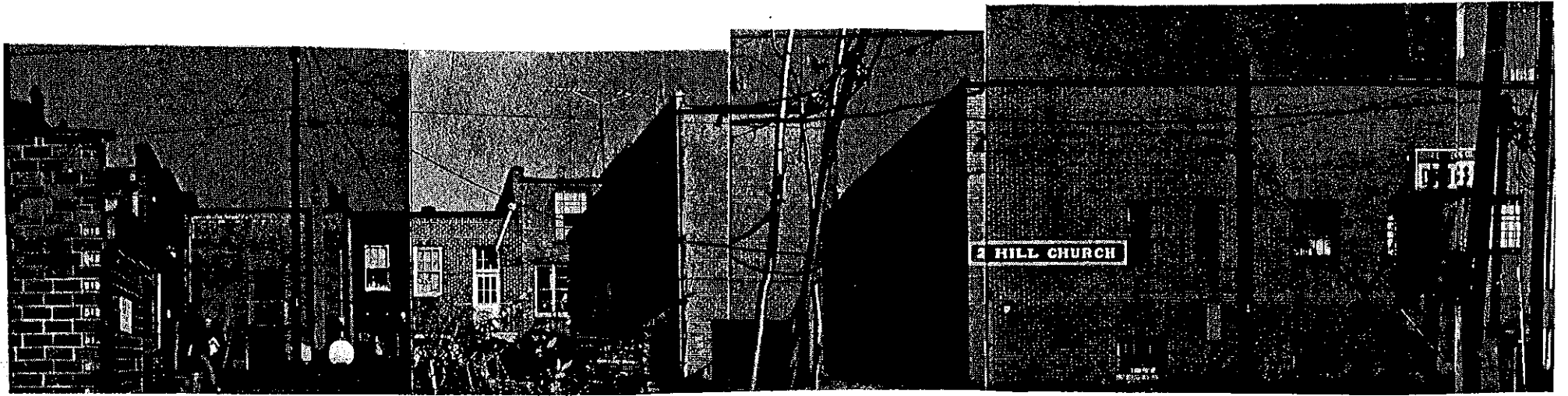
## Third Street



AFTER

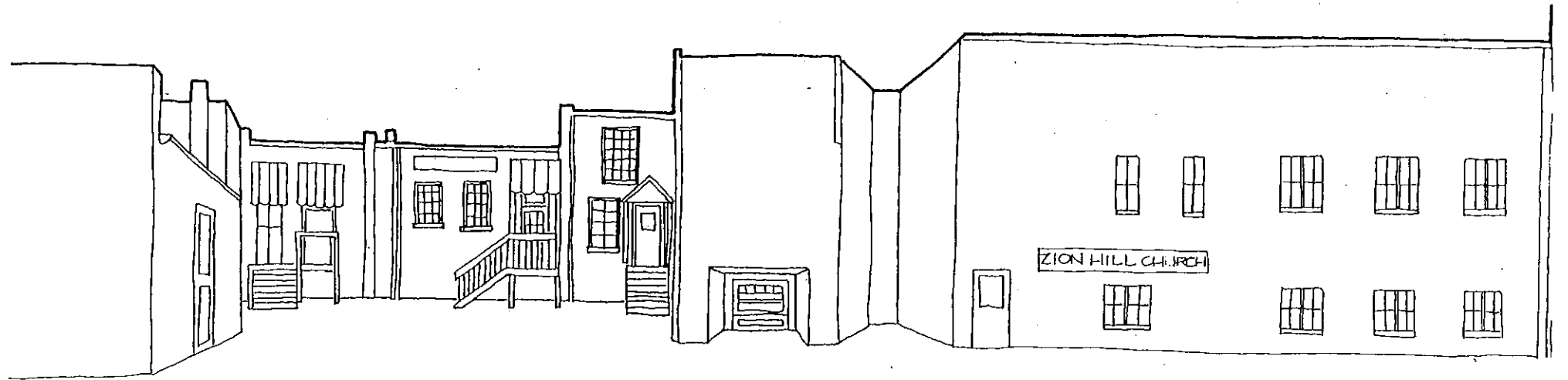




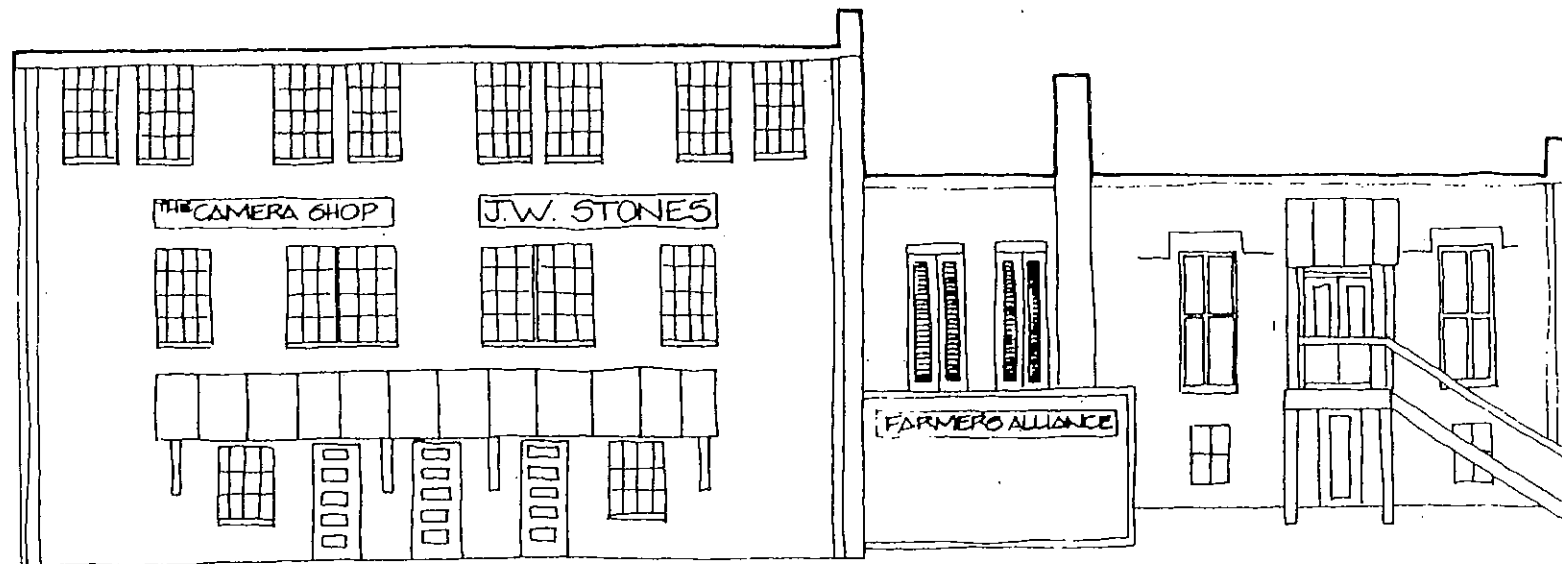
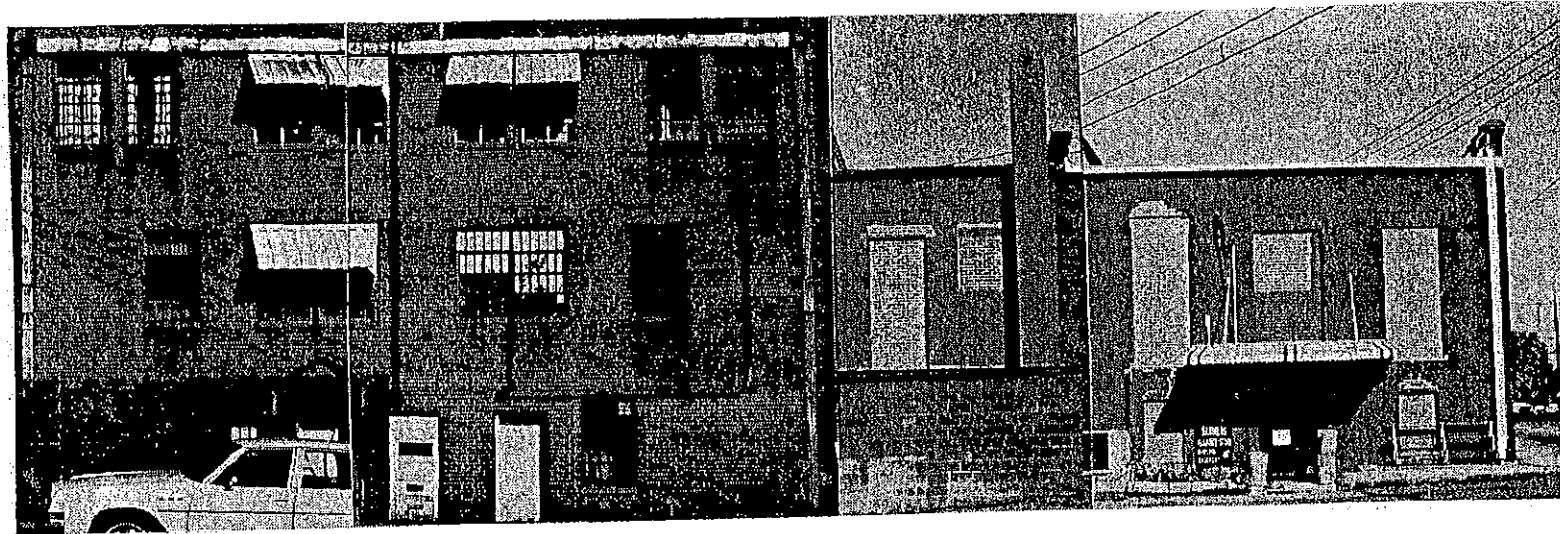


BEFORE

# Alley



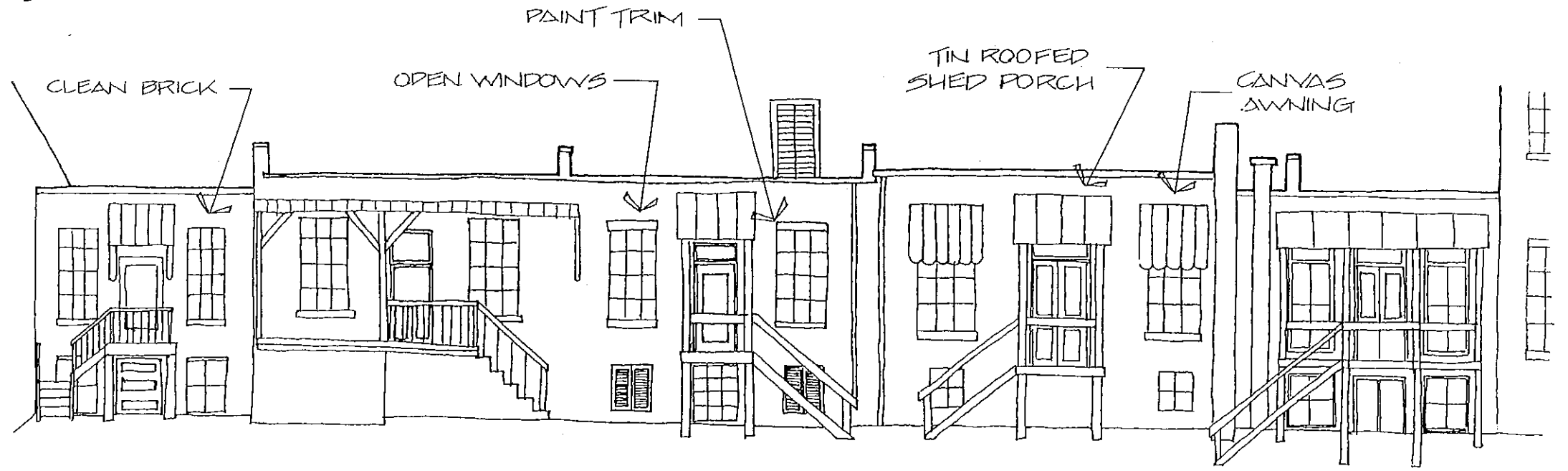
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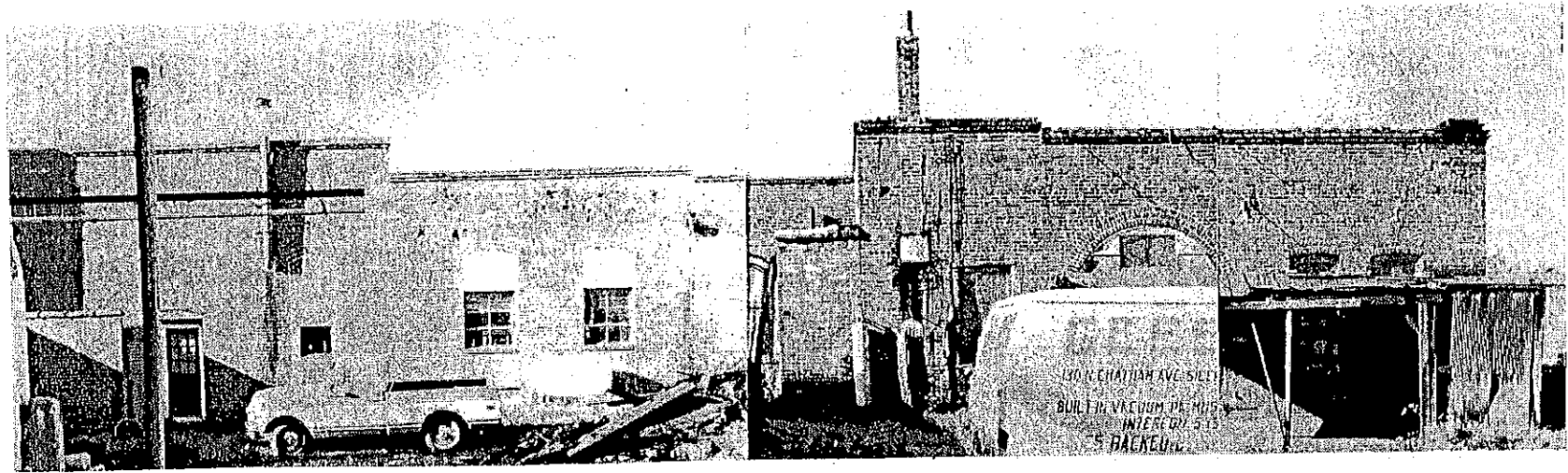




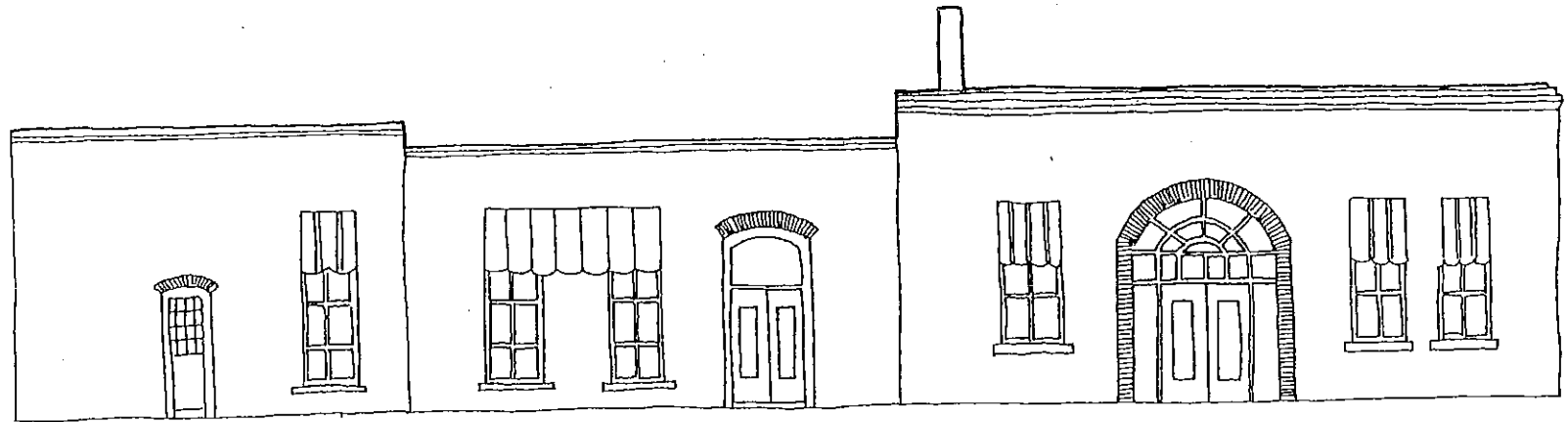
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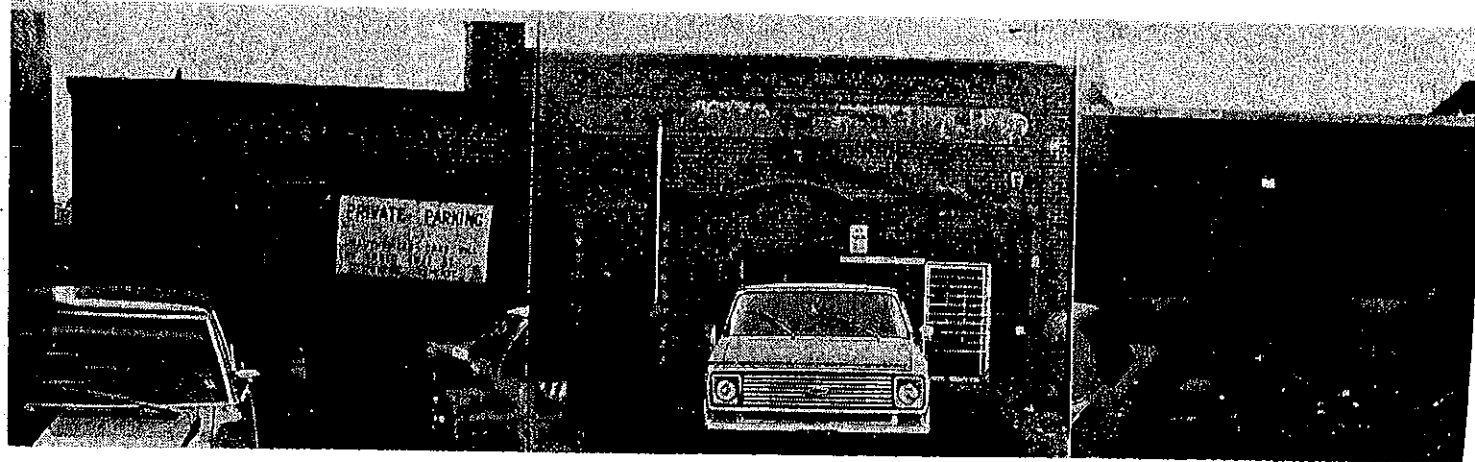
# Alley





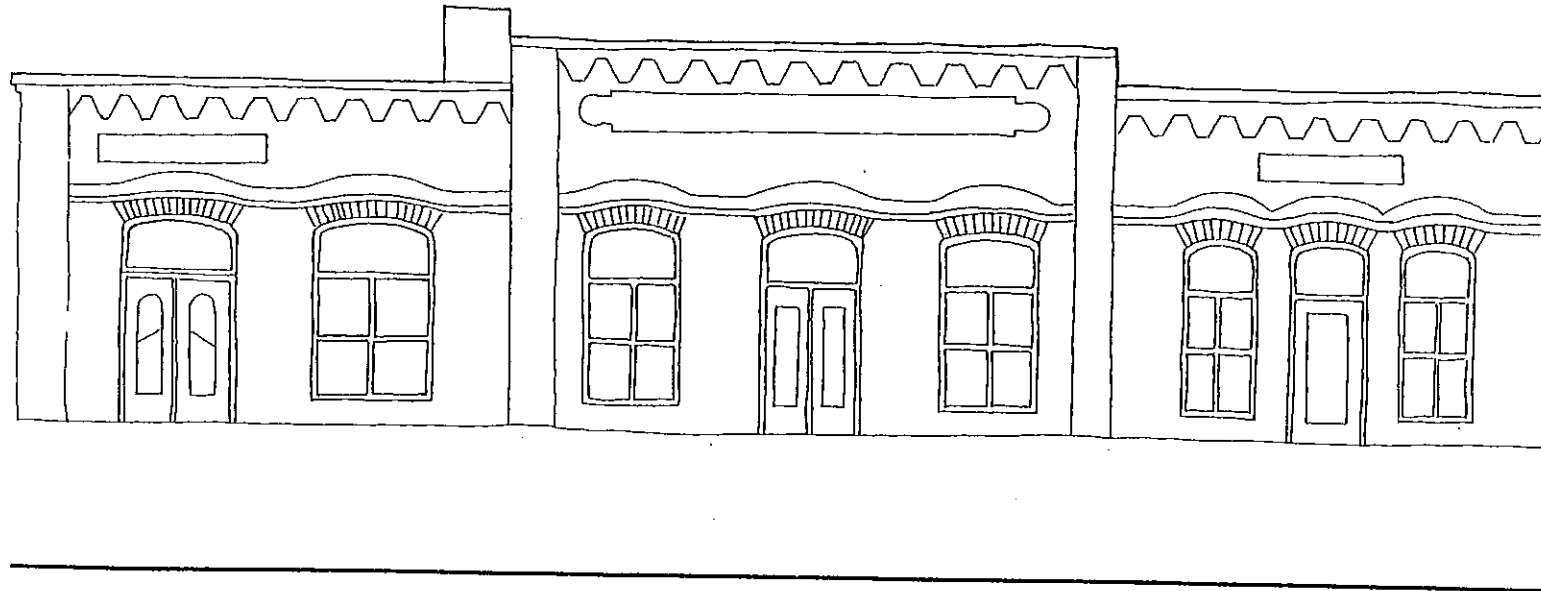
# Alley





BEFORE

# Alley



AFTER

# APPENDIX

ANALYSIS OF MARKET SURVEY

SILER CITY, NORTH CAROLINA

November, 1980

Prepared for the Town of Siler City, North Carolina  
by the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources & Community  
Development, Division of Community Assistance.



This report is an analysis of the results of a market survey questionnaire which was distributed by mail in Siler City and the surrounding area in August, 1980 by the Siler City Blue Ribbon Committee.

The committee mailed 3458 surveys and received 746 responses which were usable for purposes of this analysis. The survey was not intended to be a scientific random sample, but was intended to give the committee some indication of the concerns of citizens in the area, particularly those sufficiently interested in the subject matter to return the questionnaire. It was felt that such a questionnaire could elicit the concerns of a much larger group of citizens than would a public meeting. However, care should be taken not to generalize the results to the entire population of the area, as would be possible with a random sample survey.

The respondents who answered this question was 44% male and 56% female; and were predominantly in the age range of 25-54 as can be seen from the following table.

TABLE 1  
AGE OF RESPONDENTS

|          |               |
|----------|---------------|
| Under 18 | 1.1%          |
| 18-24    | 4.7%          |
| 25-39    | 31.9%         |
| 40-54    | 29.8%         |
| 55-64    | 17.5%         |
| Over 65  | 15.0%         |
|          | <u>100.0%</u> |

Percentages based on 739 persons who responded to this question.

The respondents' income distribution was as follows:

TABLE 2  
INCOME OF RESPONDENTS

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| \$ 0- 4,999     | 7.2%  |
| 5,000- 8,999    | 10.8% |
| 9,000-11,999    | 9.8%  |
| 12,000-14,999   | 10.9% |
| 15,000-19,999   | 15.2% |
| 20,000-24,999   | 17.5% |
| 25,000-29,999   | 9.8%  |
| 30,000 and over | 18.8% |

Percentages based on 685 persons who responded to this question.

From Table 2, it can be seen that 61.3% of those responding to the income question had incomes of \$15,000 and over.

The survey had a question concerning how far the respondent lived from Siler City. The results of this question are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3  
RESIDENCE

How far do you live from Siler City?

|                                            |       |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|
| within city limits                         | 44.4% |
| outside city limits, but within<br>2 miles | 21.7% |
| between 2 and 5 miles                      | 14.5% |
| between 5 and 10 miles                     | 16.0% |
| over 10 miles                              | 3.5%  |

Percentages based on 739 persons who responded to this question.

A question was asked concerning how often the respondent shopped in a number of locations. Table 4 shows the results of this question for Downtown Siler City, while Table 5 compares that data for all locations.

TABLE 4

SHOPPING FREQUENCY IN DOWNTOWN SILER CITY

|                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| Seldom or never     | 12.8% |
| Once a month        | 28.6% |
| Twice a month       | 15.2% |
| Three times a month | 7.6%  |
| Once a week         | 21.6% |
| Over once a week    | 14.3% |

Percentages based on 672 persons who answered this question.

From Table 4, it can be seen that a substantial percent of respondents shop in downtown Siler City at least once a month.

Table 5 compares a large number of shopping locations. The percentages in this table include all 746 respondents, rather than being based only on those who responded to the item. This is because people frequently will leave a box blank if they don't shop in a particular location, rather than placing a number in the box in accordance with the directions, and comparing the figures in the no response column for the various locations is, therefore, useful.

The data in Table 5 indicates that approximately one-third of the respondents shop in downtown Siler City once a week or more, compared to approximately 40% each for Park and Chatham Square Shopping Centers. The neighboring small towns of Pittsboro and Ramseur do not seem to be capturing the respondents' market. The larger cities of Greensboro, and, to a lesser extent Burlington, Sanford, Chapel Hill, and Asheboro are capturing some of the market in the once-twice a month frequency range.

TABLE 5

| Location                          | Seldom or Never | Once a Month | Twice a Month | Three Times a Month | Once a Week | More Than Once a Week | No Response | Total |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------|
| Downtown Siler City (Siler City)  | 11.5%           | 25.7%        | 13.7%         | 6.8%                | 19.4%       | 12.9%                 | 9.9%        | 100%  |
| Park Shopping Center (Siler City) | 11.4%           | 19.6%        | 11.5%         | 6.4%                | 23.6%       | 15.8%                 | 11.7%       | 100%  |
| Chatham Square Shopping Center    | 7.6%            | 17.0%        | 13.0%         | 11.8%               | 24.8%       | 13.4%                 | 12.3%       | 100%  |
| Pittsboro                         | 74.4%           | 2.1%         | 0.5%          | 0.3%                | 0.5%        | 0.5%                  | 21.6%       | 100%  |
| Ramseur                           | 77.6%           | 0.9%         | 0.3%          | 0.0%                | 0.0%        | 0.0%                  | 21.2%       | 100%  |
| Asheboro                          | 61.9%           | 14.2%        | 2.3%          | 0.8%                | 0.1%        | 0.1%                  | 20.5%       | 100%  |
| Sanford                           | 60.9%           | 13.9%        | 2.4%          | 1.2%                | 0.4%        | 0.1%                  | 21.0%       | 100%  |
| Greensboro                        | 26.8%           | 32.3%        | 14.1%         | 6.3%                | 2.8%        | 0.4%                  | 17.3%       | 100%  |
| Burlington                        | 57.2%           | 16.5%        | 4.6%          | 1.5%                | 0.7%        | 0.1%                  | 19.4%       | 100%  |
| Raleigh                           | 69.6%           | 7.9%         | 1.1%          | 0.5%                | 0.0%        | 0.0%                  | 20.9%       | 100%  |
| Durham                            | 73.2%           | 4.4%         | 0.4%          | 0.3%                | 0.4%        | 0.0%                  | 21.3%       | 100%  |
| Chapel Hill                       | 60.5%           | 13.9%        | 3.2%          | 1.2%                | 0.3%        | 0.5%                  | 20.4%       | 100%  |
| Carrboro                          | 76.8%           | 0.5%         | 0.8%          | 0.1%                | 0.1%        | 0.1%                  | 21.4%       | 100%  |

One question listed a number of goods and services and asked the respondents to indicate the one place where they would most frequently buy that item. Downtown Siler City came out first on all items, except groceries, where the shopping centers are capturing a large market share, and movies and other entertainment, where Greensboro is in the lead. The percentages listing downtown Siler City ranged to above 70% for hardware, gasoline, and banking services to around 40% for furniture and appliances, and men's clothing to around 35% and less for women's and children's clothing, and for shoes. Greensboro seems to present very strong competition for the clothing market. Greensboro is also presenting strong competition in the areas of restaurants and, as noted above, entertainment.

Another question which is very useful asked:

Compared to a year ago, are you shopping in downtown Siler City?

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| More frequently          | 10.6% |
| About the same frequency | 65.8% |
| Less frequently          | 23.6% |

Percentages based on 736 persons who answered this question.

While it is encouraging that 65.8% of the respondents are stable in their shopping habits in regard to downtown Siler City, it should not be ignored that there has been a 13% erosion in regard to shopping frequency in downtown Siler City compared to a year ago. This figure is derived by subtracting those who are shopping more frequently from those who are shopping less frequently in downtown Siler City.

Also useful in the question which asked:

What percent of your total shopping dollar do you spend in downtown Siler City?

| <u>Percent of Shopping Dollar</u> | <u>Percent of Respondents</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0-25%                             | 42.3%                         |
| 26-50%                            | 26.4%                         |
| 51-75%                            | 19.8%                         |
| 76-100%                           | 11.5%                         |

Percentages based on 707 persons who answered this question.

Even though earlier questions indicate that a high percent of the respondents shop in downtown Siler City and most frequently buy many items there, it can be seen that almost 70% spend less than 50% of their total shopping dollar in downtown Siler City. The draw of the shopping centers in regard to grocery purchases and of Greensboro for clothing items, both of which take substantial portions of consumer shopping dollars, probably accounts for much of this result.

A follow-up question to that discussed above was:

What changes/improvements would cause you to spend a greater percentage of your shopping dollar in downtown Siler City?

The results of this question, in rank order were:

|                                       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| More selection of goods and services  | 76.5% |
| More theaters and other entertainment | 60.7% |
| More department stores                | 42.6% |
| More clothing stores                  | 42.6% |
| Painting, cleanup, fix-up of stores   | 42.6% |
| More parking                          | 41.2% |
| More restaurants                      | 38.2% |
| Longer store hours                    | 25.2% |
| Street and traffic flow improvements  | 19.2% |
| Landscaping, trees, small parks       | 16.0% |
| More helpful salespeople              | 13.8% |
| Better security                       | 10.9% |
| Availability of housing in downtown   | 5.4%  |
| More credit                           | 3.6%  |

The results seem to indicate that the downtown could capture a larger percent of the respondents' shopping dollar if existing merchants would provide more selection of goods and services, and if new entertainment facilities, department and clothing stores were recruited to come into the downtown. Painting, cleanup and fix-up of stores in the downtown area, more parking and restaurants would also cause many of the respondents to spend more of their money downtown. Siler City merchants might want to investigate the possibility of having some marketing and merchandizing workshops.

In addition, assistance in marketing the downtown to new businesses would be beneficial. The current work being done by the N. C. State School of Design should be of great assistance in painting and fix-up of stores in the downtown area and in providing more parking.

The results of several of the questions in the survey were cross-tabulated to see if relationships existed between age, income or distance of residence from Siler City, and percent of dollars spent and shopping frequency. There was an inverse correlation between high income and spending 76-100% of one's shopping dollar in downtown Siler City. 23.9% of those having income of less than \$5000 spent 76-100% of their shopping dollar downtown, whereas only 4.8% of those having incomes of \$30,000 and over spent this much of their shopping dollar downtown. Downtown does poorly with those respondents in the 18-39 age bracket in percent of shopping dollar spent. There seems to be no consistent relationship between distance and percent of dollars spent. This may be because those at greater distances who took time to fill out the questionnaire are those who shop more frequently in downtown Siler City.

The relationship between age and shopping in downtown when looked at in terms of frequency rather than in percent of dollars spent also shows downtown Siler City doing poorly with the 18-39 age group, as compared with the older respondents. There seems to be no definite relationship between

income and shopping frequency in downtown Siler City. The inverse correlation which showed up in the income-percent of dollar spent question did not show up here.

Chatham Square Shopping Center seems to be particularly popular with those having income over \$9000 in terms of shopping frequency, peaking with the \$15-19,999 category, while Park Shopping Center is most popular with those having incomes of \$30,000 and over as well as those in the \$12,000-19,999 brackets. Chatham Square Shopping Center seems to be more popular with younger shoppers, while Park Shopping Center and downtown Siler City are more popular with older shoppers.

In addition to the information obtained from the market survey, some general information based on published data is presented to provide a framework in which to view the market survey results.

Siler City is situated near the intersection of two major transportation routes, U.S. 64 between Raleigh and Asheboro and U.S. 421 between Sanford and Greensboro.

Using Reilly's Law of Retail Gravitation, approximate breakpoints where trade should flow in opposite directions between Siler City and neighboring cities can be identified and connected to form an approximation to Siler City's trade area. The results have been depicted on the maps on the following pages. The smaller area is formed with the larger cities of Greensboro, Asheboro, Sanford, Raleigh-Cary-Garner, Chapel Hill, Durham, Burlington and Southern Pines, while the larger area is formed with the smaller cities of Pittsboro, Ramseur, Goldston and Liberty. Goods and services are normally grouped into two categories:

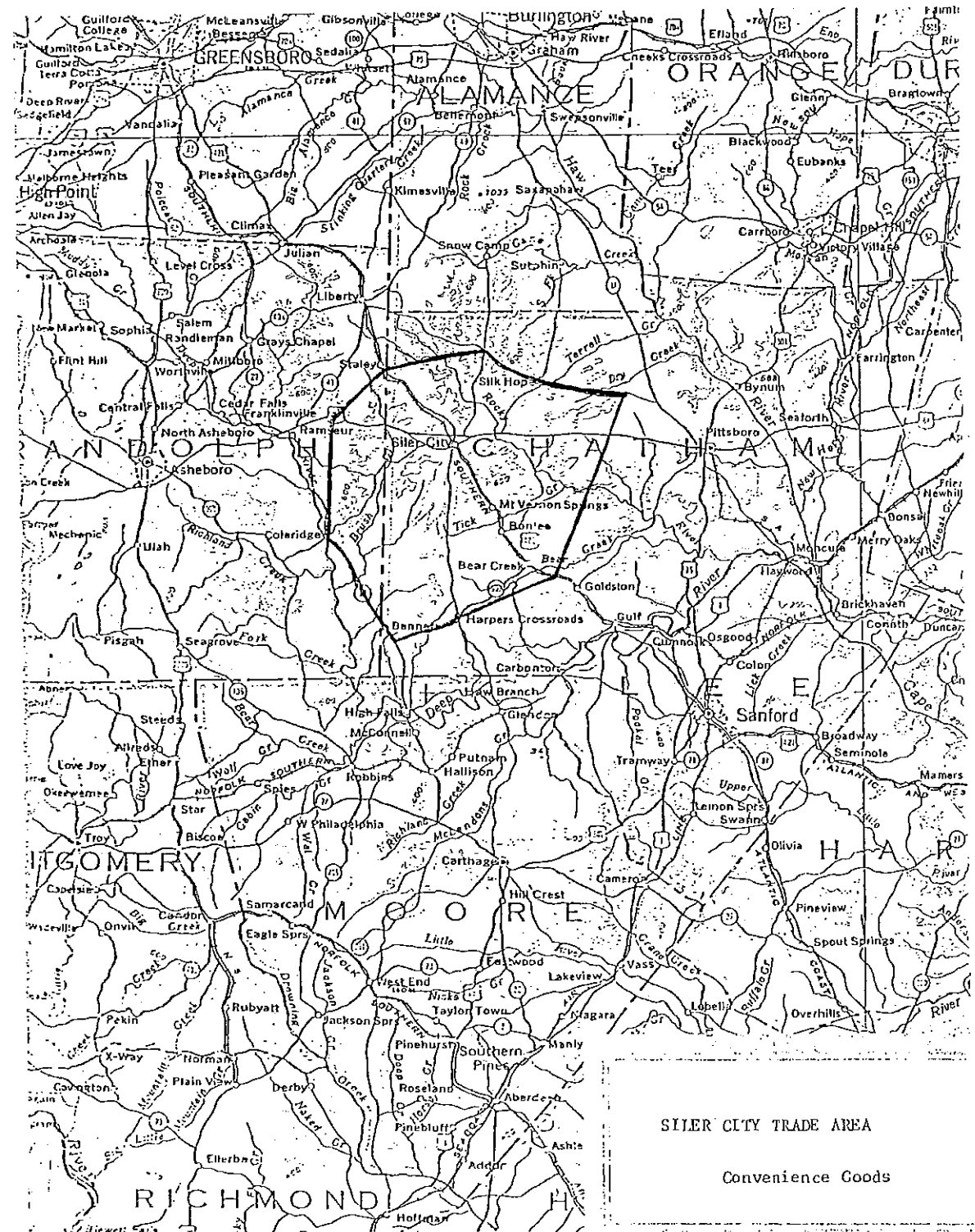
"Convenience goods are merchandise of daily consumption and purchase, such as food and drugstore items. Also included in this category are eating and drinking establishments."<sup>1</sup>

Shopper or "comparison goods are merchandise subject to longer term consumption as opposed to daily consumption...."<sup>1</sup>

Some studies include a third category called intermediate goods.

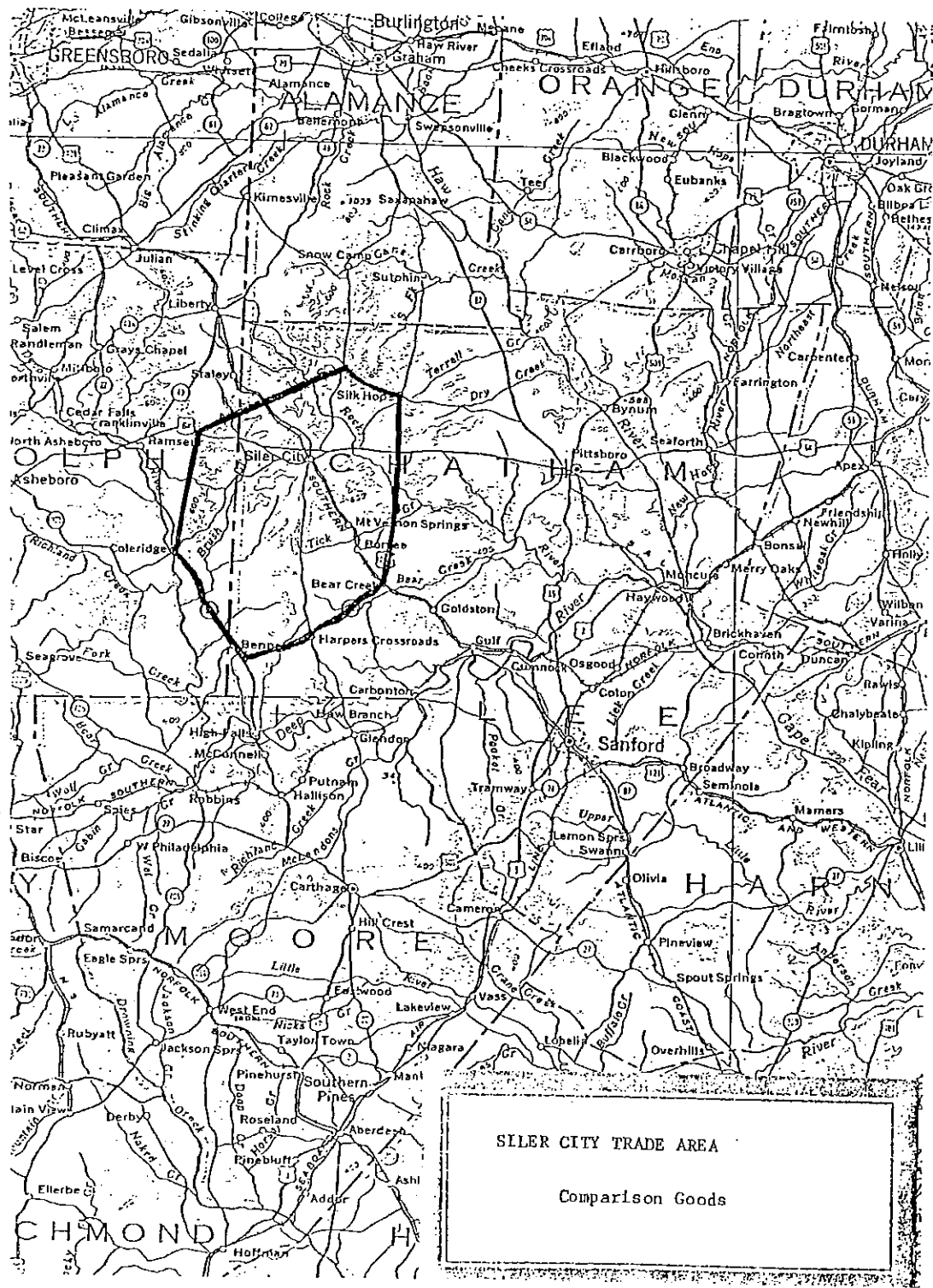
"This category lies on a continuum between the convenience and shopper goods categories, not because these are particular goods or services, but because of the amount of time expended in their procurement and the fact that the purchases are often made nearer the consumer's home (than shopper goods). These items include purchases of household appliances, hardware items, and more specialized patronage including banking services and services offered by insurance agents."<sup>2</sup>

The smaller trade area is probably a close approximation to Siler City's trade area for shopper goods, while the larger trade area would be an approximation of Siler City's trade area for convenience goods.



<sup>1</sup> Downtown Improvement Manual. ASPO. p. 22-4

<sup>2</sup> Market Potential--Its Theory and Application, The University of Wisconsin. p.9



Within Siler City's trade area, the market survey results would tend to indicate that the shopping centers are capturing a large percent of convenience goods purchases, while downtown Siler City is gaining a large percent of some of the intermediate goods. Greensboro presents strong competition for the comparison goods market.

While no published figures exist which would allow the population of Siler City's trade area, as defined above, to be determined exactly, the Trade Area for shopper goods closely approximates Matthews and Bear Creek Townships in Chatham County which together had a 1975 estimated population of 12,072 and a 1985 projected population of 13,350. The larger area would also include about half of Hickory Mountain Township. with a 1975 estimated population of 1370 and a 1985 projected population of 1449.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, Siler City's expected trade area will have about 14,000 people by 1985.

The 1972 and 1977 Censuses of Business provide information on trends concerning retail trade and services in Siler City.

TABLE 6  
NUMBER OF RETAIL TRADE ESTABLISHMENTS IN SILER CITY 1972, 1977

|      | <u>All Establishments</u> | <u>Establishments with Payroll</u> |
|------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
|      | <u>Number</u>             | <u>Number</u>                      |
| 1972 | 146                       | 110                                |
| 1977 | 147                       | 107                                |

Source: 1972 and 1977 Census of Retail Trade

As can be seen from Table 6, the number of retail establishments in Siler City did not increase significantly between 1972 and 1977, and the number of establishments with payroll actually decreased slightly.

The distribution of establishments between types did change slightly between 1972 and 1977.

<sup>3</sup>Land Classification Plan, Region J, North Carolina.

TABLE 7

RETAIL TRADE ESTABLISHMENTS IN SILER CITY BY TYPE,  
1972, 1977

| <u>Type of Establishment</u>                                         | <u>1972</u> | <u>1977</u> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers | 8           | 7           |
| General merchandise group stores                                     | 4           | 6           |
| Food stores                                                          | 17          | 21          |
| Automotive dealers                                                   | 19          | 18          |
| Gasoline service stations                                            | 20          | 15          |
| Apparel and accessory stores                                         | 19          | 17          |
| Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores                    | 13          | 13          |
| Eating and drinking places                                           | 15          | 17          |
| Drug and proprietary stores                                          | 3           | 4           |
| Miscellaneous retail stores                                          | 28          | 29          |

Source: 1972 and 1977 Census of Retail Trade

Retail sales in Siler City increased from \$22,842,000 in 1972 to \$35,009,000 in 1977, a 53.3% increase, compared to a 46.2% increase for Chatham County and a 58.5% increase for the State of North Carolina. Increases in real dollars, if inflation was considered, would obviously be considerably less.

Siler City has experienced a greater increase in selected service industries than retail trade establishments as can be seen from Table 8. However, the number of establishments with payroll has decreased.

TABLE 8

NUMBER OF SELECTED SERVICE INDUSTRIES IN SILER CITY  
1972, 1977

|      | <u>All Establishments</u> | <u>Establishments with Payroll</u> |
|------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
|      | <u>Number</u>             | <u>Number</u>                      |
| 1972 | 90                        | 43                                 |
| 1977 | 108                       | 40                                 |

Source: 1972 and 1977 Census of Selected Service Industries

There has also been a slight change in the distribution of establishments.

TABLE 9

SELECTED SERVICE INDUSTRIES IN SILER CITY BY TYPE  
1972, 1977

| <u>Type of Establishment</u>                | <u>1972</u> | <u>1977</u> |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Hotels, motels, trailering parks, and camps | 2           | 3           |
| Automotive repair, services and garages     | 17          | 18          |
| Miscellaneous repair services               | 12          | 10          |
| Amusement and recreation services           | 7           | 6           |
| Legal services                              | 8           | 10          |

Source: 1972 and 1977 Census of Selected Service Industries

Receipts from selected service industries in Siler City increased from \$2,268,000 in 1972 to \$2,706,000 in 1977, an increase of 19.3% for Siler City compared to a 63.1% increase for the State of North Carolina and a 29% increase for Chatham County.

According to the North Carolina Atlas, Chatham County had both a total and a per capita retail sales surplus over what would be expected to serve the needs of the resident population in 1970. Much of this surplus was probably due to travelers on the major highway routes.

When the U.S. Highway 421 by-pass is completed, this traffic will no longer be channeled through downtown Siler City. The town should look carefully at steps to take to minimize the impact of the by-pass on the downtown.

In conclusion, it is hoped that the information in this report will prove useful to the Town of Siler City in the following ways:

- 1) Although not based on a scientific random sample, survey respondents do highlight current problems with and present suggestions on ways to improve Siler City's downtown. This information can be combined with the perceptions of the N. C. State Design students in formulating a plan for downtown Siler City.
- 2) The information concerning Siler City's trade area and the general statistics from the Census of Business when combined with the specific information on Siler City's downtown which is being collected by the design students can be used to make projections concerning future retail and office space demands in relation to space currently available in Siler City and to begin to determine what additional facilities it would be feasible to provide to meet the needs of the trade area population, and capture the maximum amount of traveler's expenditures.