

Town of New Castle, New York  
Chappaqua Hamlet Streetscape  
Draft Concept Plan  
September 8, 2008



**pouder design group**  
landscape architecture + environmental planning



**Institute for Human Centered Design**  
[Adaptive Environments]

**STUDIO RAI**  
Architectural Designs, P.C.

# CHAPPAQUA HAMLET STREETScape REVITALIZATION

## CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

### A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

In August 2008, The Town of New Castle retained a team of design consultants (Pouder Team) to advance a vision for the revitalization of the streetscape within the Hamlet of Chappaqua. Building upon previous studies of the area, the Town directed the consulting team to create a plan for the public areas based on these guiding principles:

- Improve, enhance and revitalize downtown Chappaqua to create a vibrant community destination and economically viable downtown district.
- Encourage excellence in creative landscape design and programming in consideration with the distinct character, connections and small town charm of Chappaqua.
- Create linkages between the architectural features, streetscape, and pedestrian elements and encourage the creation of public open spaces.
- Improve the aesthetics and functionality of public ways and sidewalks for directing the circulation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Encourage the use of Low impact Design tools and Integrated Management Practices.

The Study Area consists of the core of the Chappaqua Hamlet. Its southern edge is the intersection of South Greeley Avenue and Washington Avenue and it extends northward to the intersection of North Greeley Avenue and Bischoff Avenue (See Figure 1). The project area also includes several adjacent streets namely Woodburn Avenue, Upper and Lower King Street and a portion of Senter Street.

#### Previous Studies

At least two previous studies of the project area have been conducted. The *Hamlet of Chappaqua Comprehensive Plan* was prepared by Vollmer Associates in March 2003 and the Project for Public Spaces prepared a followup study entitled *Downtown Chappaqua, A Placemaking Strategy for Revitalization* in June 2007.

The Vollmer Report evaluated and compared a range of alternatives to improve traffic operations, pedestrian circulation and parking. Long term recommendations included traffic lights and various traffic calming strategies for Greeley Avenue, an intersection gateway to the hamlet at Quaker Road, widening Woodburn Avenue, and some parking structures. Streetscape improvements identified included sidewalks, street trees, crosswalks, walkways, and some redevelopment recommendations. Short term recommendations included reconfiguring parking areas, vehicular entrances, and modifying the parking permit system.

Vollmer identified the most serious traffic congestion problems at the Quaker Road triangle, the Greeley / King Street intersection, the Bell School drop off, and the intersection of Woodburn and South Greeley Avenues. An insufficient sight distance was also noted for the westbound King Street approach to the King St/ North Greeley intersection. The report evaluated several alternatives for alleviating this traffic, particularly various options for the reconfiguration of the Quaker Road triangle. One recommendation, the reconfiguration of the parking access near Citibank is currently under construction.

The Vollmer Report also contains several recommendations for parking improvements. These included revised parking configurations at the train station and Allen Place and parking structures at the North Greeley Avenue parking lot and the train station south lot.

# **CHAPPAQUA HAMLET STREETScape REVITALIZATION**

## **CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION**

Pedestrian improvements identified by the Vollmer study included crosswalks for intersections of South Greeley with Woodburn, King, and Quaker Road, as well as King and Senter Street. Wider sidewalks and new pedestrian connections to the school, the train platforms, and parking lots were also recommended.

Chappaqua's public space needs were further studied by the Project for Public Spaces team. Their report focused on specific ways to undertake general goals and to strengthen the quality of life for pedestrians. Recommendations included encouraging ground level retail, creating a new cultural center anchor, improvements for pedestrian destinations, safety, and amenities, creating usable public spaces, and enhancing downtown activity with creative programming. The Project for Public Spaces study included design concepts for the major intersections, the civic center, train station, triangle, and upper King Street.



# CHAPPAQUA HAMLET STREETSCAPE REVITALIZATION

## CHAPTER 2 – DRAFT EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

### A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the existing conditions of the landscape features in the Hamlet of Chappaqua in the Town of New Castle, New York. To aid in this discussion, a field assessment and inventory was conducted by Pouder Design during the summer of 2008. The field team identified, mapped and documented the current landscape of the Hamlet. The team annotated plans of the area to record and depict the location and character of both cultural and natural landscape features. The plans were augmented with fieldwork to create a map of Existing Conditions, which shows the landscape in its current condition. Field investigations, photography, recent maps, plans, and aerial photographs all contribute to the following illustrated narrative and plan of the existing landscape.

For purposes of this study, the design team evaluated the tangible and intangible attributes of the area and classified the hamlet into areas of unique and distinctive character. These 'character districts' are loosely organized along a central spine created by Greeley Avenue.

### B. OVERVIEW

The study area contains varied remnants of past land uses evident in its topography and the constructed landscape. Located within the Saw Mill River Valley, and in fact partially within the floodplain of the river itself, the hamlet is the commercial hub of the community and contains a variety of land uses including retail, office, institutional, municipal, recreational, and transportation.

The overall character of the project area is of a small town center intertwined with several significant open space parcels within it. These include two recreational ball fields, a forested area which is a remnant of Horace Greeley's estate, two small streams and associated riparian wetlands, large lawn areas at the Town Hall and Church, and several small pocket parks, outdoor cafes, and plazas.

#### Soils

The *Soil Survey of Westchester and Putnam Counties, New York* describes the soils within the Hamlet as Udorthents – Smoothed, Udorthents - Wet Substratum, and Urban Land. Udorthents - Smoothed is a highly variable soil type which has been altered by cutting and filling. Udorthents - Wet Substratum is also a highly variable soil type that has been altered, mainly by filling. Urban Lands are soils where at least 60 percent of the area is covered by buildings or other structures. Since these soil types vary so significantly, it is not possible to predict the actual site-specific soils underlying the project area without field sampling. It is assumed, however, that the base soils are alluvial or hydric since adjacent soils are Fredon Silt Loams and much of the project area is within the floodplain of the Saw Mill River and it is at the base of a hill where one would expect these types of soils to accumulate. Anecdotal reports indicate that the soils are generally of low bearing capacity. Further on-site exploration of soils is recommended prior to any construction of buildings or structures.

#### Landform

Slopes within the study area vary widely. North and South Greeley Avenues are located at the base of a hill in what was once a marsh or wet meadow and are fairly level and ADA compliant (for slope). The steepest portions of the study area are found on upper King Street where slopes exceed ten percent.

A goal for the Hamlet is to provide a universally accessible route along North/South Greeley Avenues. The Americans with Disabilities Act (28 CFR part 36), commonly referred to as the ADA, is the enforceable standard for an 'accessible route'. ADA rules specify several parameters for sidewalk slope, cross slope, width, passing and resting spaces, and others. Other standards include a minimum clear



## **CHAPPAQUA HAMLET STREETSCAPE**

### **CHAPTER 2 – EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT**

tread width of 3 ft., a stable, firm and slip-resistant surface. Standards for resting and passing spaces at certain intervals are also provided and are dependent on walk gradient. Slopes on upper King Street are greater than those allowed under ADA guidelines.

In many cases, the sole source of access into stores along the street is via steps which are not wheelchair accessible. Ramps or lifts to serve these buildings would be required if wheelchair access is to be provided from South Greeley Avenue.

#### **Pedestrian and Bike Circulation**

Pedestrian circulation routes are shown on Figure 3. There are no dedicated bike paths within the study area. The North County Bikeway is located to the west of the project area and portions of the connecting roadway are marked with "Shared Roadway" signs.

#### **Lighting**

Two types of light fixtures – a Cobra head style street light and a historic pedestrian scale lamp - are found in the study area. The historic lamp has been adopted as a standard fixture for the Town and is based on an antique fixture found on the existing railroad bridge. It is recommended that the fixture be modified to reduce fugitive light. Discussions with the Town's Electrical Engineering consultant indicate that this could likely be accomplished by applying a reflective surface within the interior of the lamp head to direct light downward without altering the appearance of the fixture.

#### **Benches**

The Town has a standard for a decorative metal bench. An analysis of the benches currently in use indicates that there is considerable deterioration of the bench surface on the arms and legs. It is recommended that the specification for the finish of all new benches be altered to avoid similar problems with future installations.

#### **Civic District**

The transition into the core of the hamlet from the adjoining residential neighborhood is first sensed at the South Greeley/Washington Avenue intersection. The block from this intersection to Woodburn Avenue is characterized by the design team as a "Civic District". Land uses in this district include a Town Hall, library, church, school, and sports fields. An undeveloped wooded area is known locally as the "Greeley Woods" and is reportedly a remnant of Horace Greeley's former farm/estate. The transition between this district and the adjoining residential district is reinforced by the presence of the Library and Town Hall both of which are clearly visible from the street. The overall shift from neighborhood to commercial center, however, is gradual rather than abrupt as all buildings are set back at considerable distances from property lines and the edge of the roadway and the landscape is forested and quite bucolic. The juxtaposition of open space and recreational facilities within the downtown area provides a pleasant mix of views and offers a wide variety of activities for visitors. The library and Town Hall, however, are somewhat spatially disconnected from remainder of the hamlet.

An unnamed tributary stream to the Saw Mill River crosses South Greeley Avenue between the gazebo and gas station. Views of the stream are obscured by dense vegetation. A second unnamed stream flows from Greeley Woods under the roadway and alongside the Town Hall entry drive. The two streams support fish populations. A significant portion of this district – and a significant portion of the entire downtown area – is within a 100-year floodplain. Investigations at the Historical Society revealed several major and destructive floods in the downtown.

## CHAPPAQUA HAMLET STREETScape

### CHAPTER 2 – EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

A gazebo used for civic functions is located at the northeast corner of the baseball field directly adjacent to the brook. The gazebo is set within a paved area several feet below the grade of the roadway and has little if any relationship to the street and sidewalks, or to the fields. This structure offers an opportunity to serve as a significant public feature, if better sited with a clearer connection to the street.

South Greeley Avenue from Washington Ave to Woodburn Ave is a two-lane road with limited parallel parking on the east side consisting of six-hour spaces (near Washington Ave) and four-hour spaces (near Woodburn Ave). Roadway width is 33 ft. Curbing is concrete in good condition with drop curbs at crossings. No sidewalk is located between the Town Hall access drive and Washington Avenue. Five-ft wide concrete sidewalks are located on each side of the road. The sidewalks are separated from the roadway by a thin grass strip. A pedestrian crosswalk is located in the middle of the block and connects the Bell School with the Town's recreational facility.

Street trees are found on both sides of the roadway. Other vegetation includes riparian forests adjacent to the streams. Invasive Norway Maple saplings are throughout the area. A bus stop is located in front of the Town Hall and Library. A second bus stop is located at the Woodburn/South Greeley intersection.

Site furniture consists of Town standard benches at the bus stop. Signs are standard-issue on punched posts.

Public spaces include Town recreation fields and a gazebo as well as a library plaza, an open lawn in front of the Church and the school's fields.

#### **Central Business District**

The core of the downtown business center extends from the intersection of South Greeley and Woodburn Avenues to the North Greeley Avenue/ Maple Avenue intersection. The district also includes Lower King Street, Allen Place, Senter Street and the lower portion of Upper King Street. A clear roadway hierarchy is evident. The design team observed the highest level of pedestrian and vehicular use in this district, particularly the block from Quaker Road to King Street.

Land uses include retail stores and offices. Buildings are attached, with little or no yard setbacks and are generally one to two-stories in height. Many of the buildings in this area lack architectural merit and are of various architectural styles, though several signature buildings are found here.

For many visitors the view of the Quaker Road Triangle defines the most iconic gateway into the hamlet and defines the center of this business district. The triangle contains a large flagpole, ornamental plantings, a vintage steel silhouette sign and benches. A second node of significance is the intersection of North Greeley Avenue and King Street where several restaurants are clustered and a small pocket park are found.

Some pedestrian connections allow movement between the street and rear-yard parking lots. These include several alleyways and a through-building corridor. Though functional, none of these are particularly inviting.

#### **South Greeley Avenue**

The streetscape character is quite different in this portion of the study area when compared to the Civic District. This block from Woodburn Ave to King Street is the most active and vibrant portion of the district with a high density of buildings and people. Buildings on the east side of the street are attached.



## CHAPPAQUA HAMLET STREETSCAPE

### CHAPTER 2 – EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Roadway width varies and is 36 feet wide near King Street, 37 feet near the Quaker Triangle, and 43 feet wide south of the Quaker Road triangle. Portions of this roadway section do not appear to conform to the 42 ft wide Town standard (two 12 ft wide travel lanes and two 9 ft wide parking stalls). However, many cities throughout the nation permit this width or even allow a smaller standard).

A dedicated southbound right turn lane facilitates vehicular movement into Woodburn Avenue. Parallel parking occurs on the east side with several spaces in the Quaker Road triangle. Sidewalks are wider and are directly abutting the roadway. A typical sidewalk width is seven or eight feet but in some places it widens to 17 ft. Many of the sidewalks are broken or in poor condition. Utility poles are located within the sidewalk and partially obstruct pedestrian movement. Several mid-block pedestrian connections provide access either through or between buildings and connect parking areas with the storefronts. One of these has a stairway and is not ADA compliant.

Lighting consists of larger overhead Cobra style fixtures as well as several town standard fixtures present. Trees, where present are planted in planter pits encircled with Belgian block. The pits are of small size and may limit the plant's growth potential. There are no trees on the eastern side of the street.

A small outdoor café is located at the Pizza Station on the corner of Woodburn Ave and South Greeley Ave. A second outdoor pocket park is under construction at the corner of South Greeley Ave and Quaker Road. Chairs and umbrella are also located at Penelope's and a raised patio currently used for display of goods is located at hardware store. All of these spaces liven the street.

#### North Greeley Avenue

The atmosphere of the North Greeley streetscape is noticeably less intense than that of South Greeley Avenue. Buildings are detached and spaced far apart. The continuity of the street is disrupted by the presence of several large surface parking areas including Rite Aid, a public lot, the Post Office's service drive and their customer parking lot. Another gravel parking area is found on the west side of the road adjacent to several buildings which appear to be unoccupied. Roadway width between King Street and Maple Avenue is 33 feet, measured near Susan Lawrence. This roadway consists of two travel lanes and two parallel parking stalls. This roadway section does not appear to conform to the 42 ft wide Town standard (two 12 ft wide travel lanes and two 9 ft wide parking stalls).

A small, recently constructed pocket park provides a quiet and pleasant space for outdoor use. Another pleasant outdoor seating area is also located at Susan Lawrence and this café is a popular destination.

Sidewalks are directly adjacent to the roadway surface. Sidewalk width varies and is 9 ft wide near the King Street intersection, 20 ft wide at Susan Lawrence and 6 ft wide near the Town parking lot. The walkways are in generally poor condition. The western walkway terminates halfway down the block.

Mature street trees are located in small planter pits with stone cobble edges. A lush planting of perennials, shrubs and trees are found in the pocket park. Street trees are also located in a grass strip in front of the Town parking lot.

#### Lower King Street

Lower King Street is a 33 ft wide, one-way westbound road with diagonal parking on one side. Concrete sidewalks range from seven to eight feet wide and are in fair condition, some patches. Mature street trees are planted in pits on the south side of the road. Other trees are planted in brick raised planters at

## CHAPPAQUA HAMLET STREETScape

### CHAPTER 2 – EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Marmalades. A small pocket park with plants in railroad tie planters is located at the intersection of King Street and Allen Place. A 12 ft wide driveway provides a mid-block connection to a parking lot for cars and pedestrians.

#### Upper King Street

Upper King Street from Greeley Avenue to Senter Street and beyond is a steep roadway of varying width. Roadway grade is approximately ten-percent and roadway width ranges from 33 feet to 76 feet. One-hour parking is allowed on both sides of the street. There is no stop sign or light at the King Street/ Greeley Ave intersection to control westbound traffic and sight distances for this traffic are substandard (Vollmer Report). The King Street/ Senter Street intersection is extremely wide and it appears that substantial portions of the pavement could be removed to create a safer and more pleasant pedestrian environment without negatively impacting traffic operations.

Sidewalks are also wide and range from 13 to 19 feet. The sidewalk abuts the roadway and the southern sidewalk terminates just above the Historical Society building.

A bus stop is located at the Greeley/ King Street intersection.

Mature street trees are found with pits. Several stores have gardens and entry plantings. Utilities poles are found within the sidewalk.

Several outdoor seating areas and gardens are located along this section. Buildings at the base of the hill are attached and buildings farther up the hill are detached, often with pleasant outdoor spaces associated with them.

#### **Train Station District:**

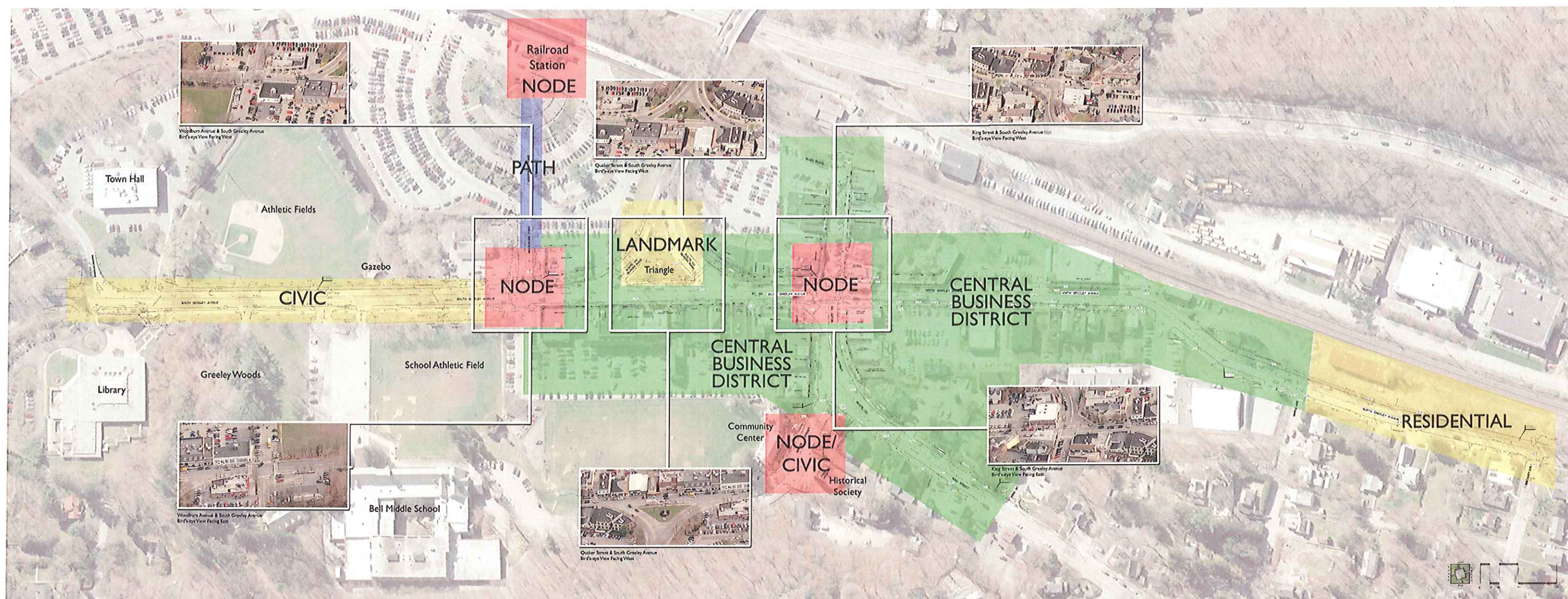
The train station district directly abuts the central business district, however its canopy of large shade trees and lower density of buildings creates an entirely different spatial character. The recently restored Chappaqua train station is an iconic building and a fine example of historic restoration. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century building serves as a visual terminus to an axial view from Woodburn Avenue and is flanked by large, mature shade trees. A portion of a piped stream daylights from a headwall at Woodburn Avenue and flows south to the Saw Mill River.

Woodburn Avenue is a 30-ft wide patched asphalt with one travel lane in each direction. Curbs are concrete and are in poor condition. Except for a plaza on the south side of the Pizza Station (aka Citibank) building, there are no existing sidewalks connecting South Greeley Ave to the station, however, a small segment of new sidewalk is being constructed on the north side.

#### **Residential District**

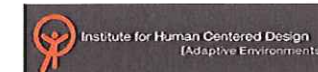
The northernmost section of the Study Area along North Greeley Avenue is residential in character and extends from Maple Ave to Bischoff Ave. The western side of the street is forested. Several homes are located on the eastern side. There are no sidewalks in this short block, however, a sidewalk is located on the eastern side of the road farther north on North Greeley Ave. The design team observed some of the fastest traffic speeds in this section of the study area. Overhead utilities are located on the west side of the roadway.



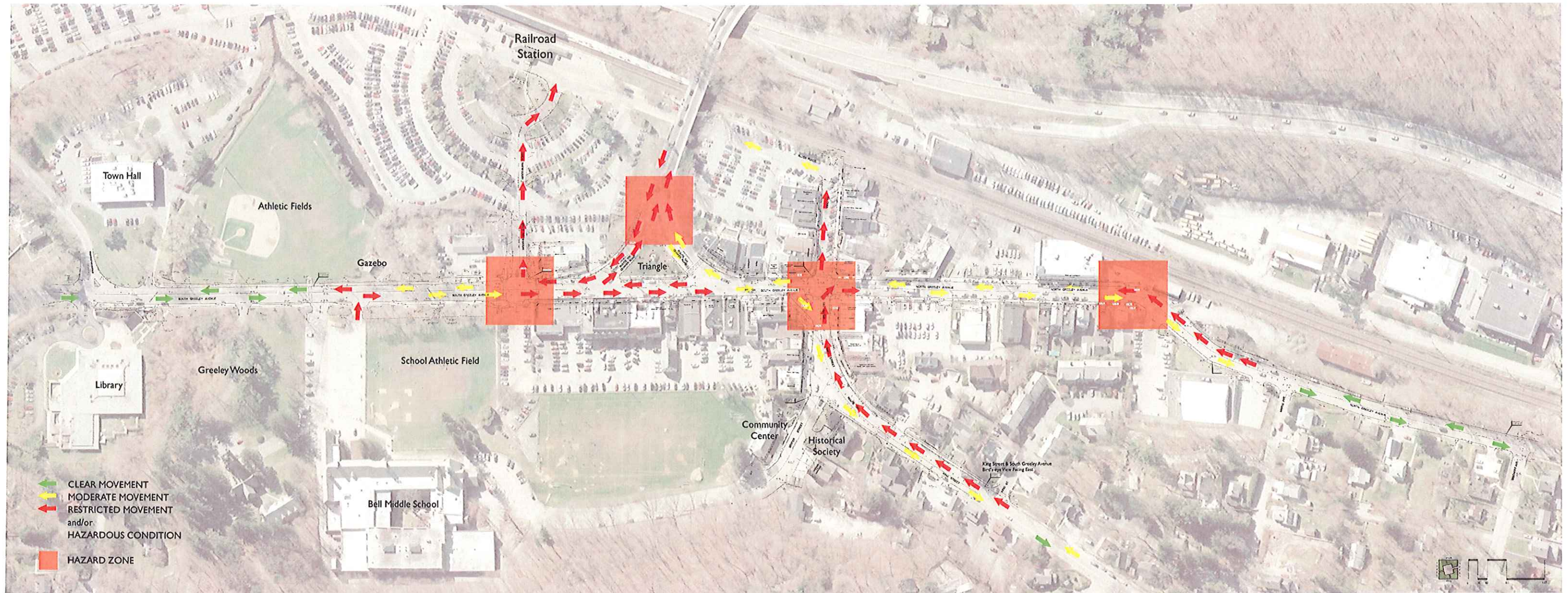


**EXISTING CONDITIONS/ CHARACTER DISTRICTS** September 2008  
 Hamlet of Chappaqua - Streetscape  
 Town of New Castle, New York

**FIGURE I**



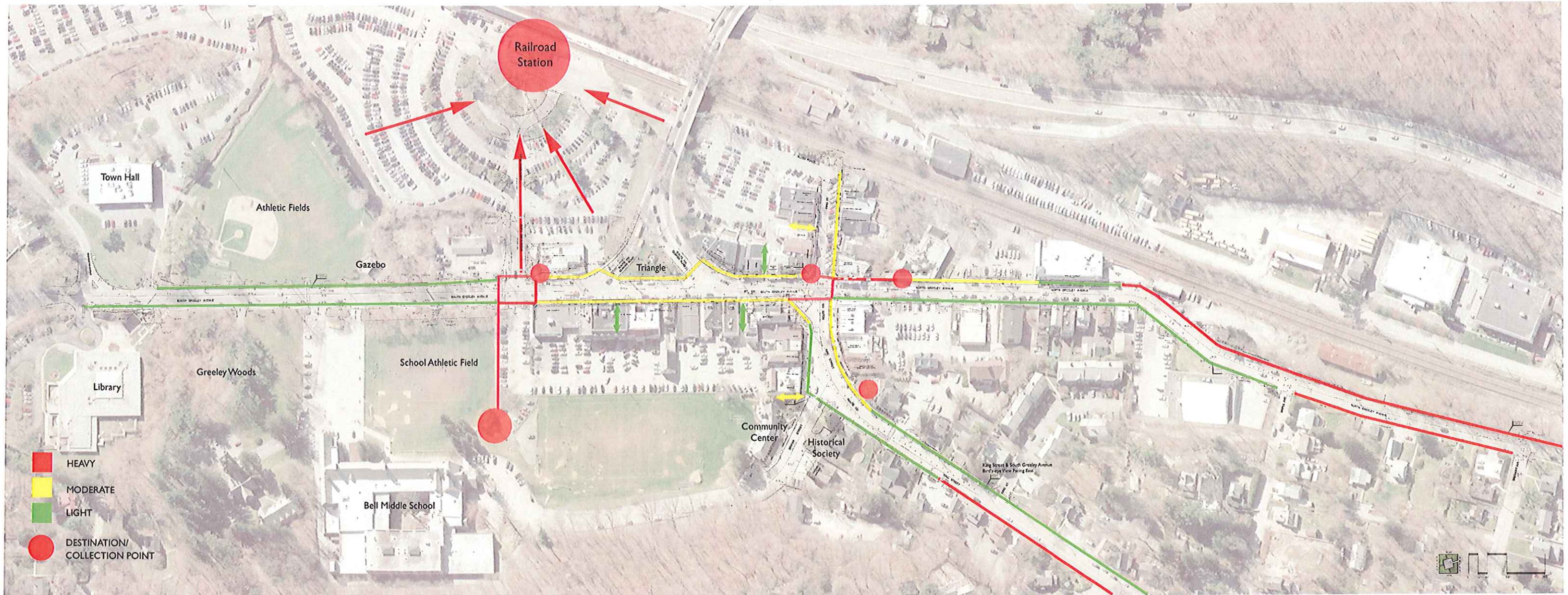




**VEHICULAR CONGESTION & HAZARD ZONES** September 2008  
 Hamlet of Chappaqua - Streetscape  
 Town of New Castle, New York

**FIGURE 2**

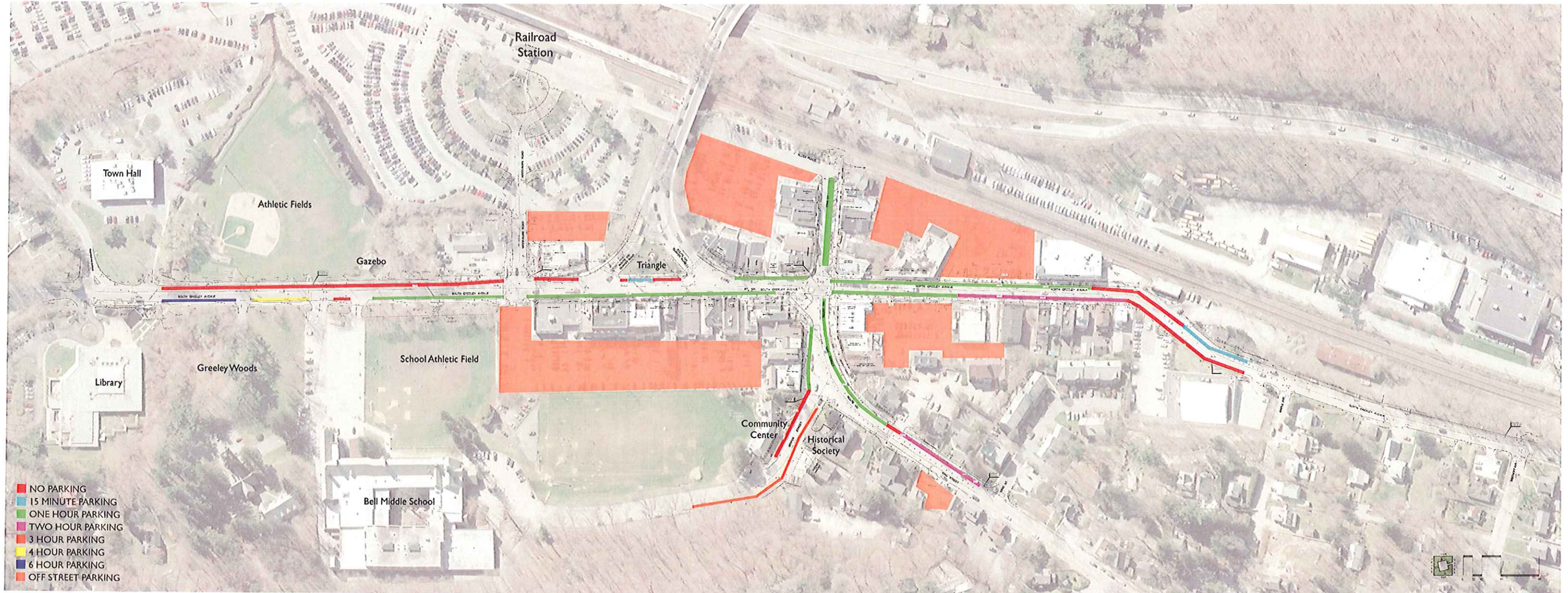




**PEDESTRIAN FLOW** September 2008  
 Hamlet of Chappaqua - Streetscape  
 Town of New Castle, New York

**FIGURE 3**



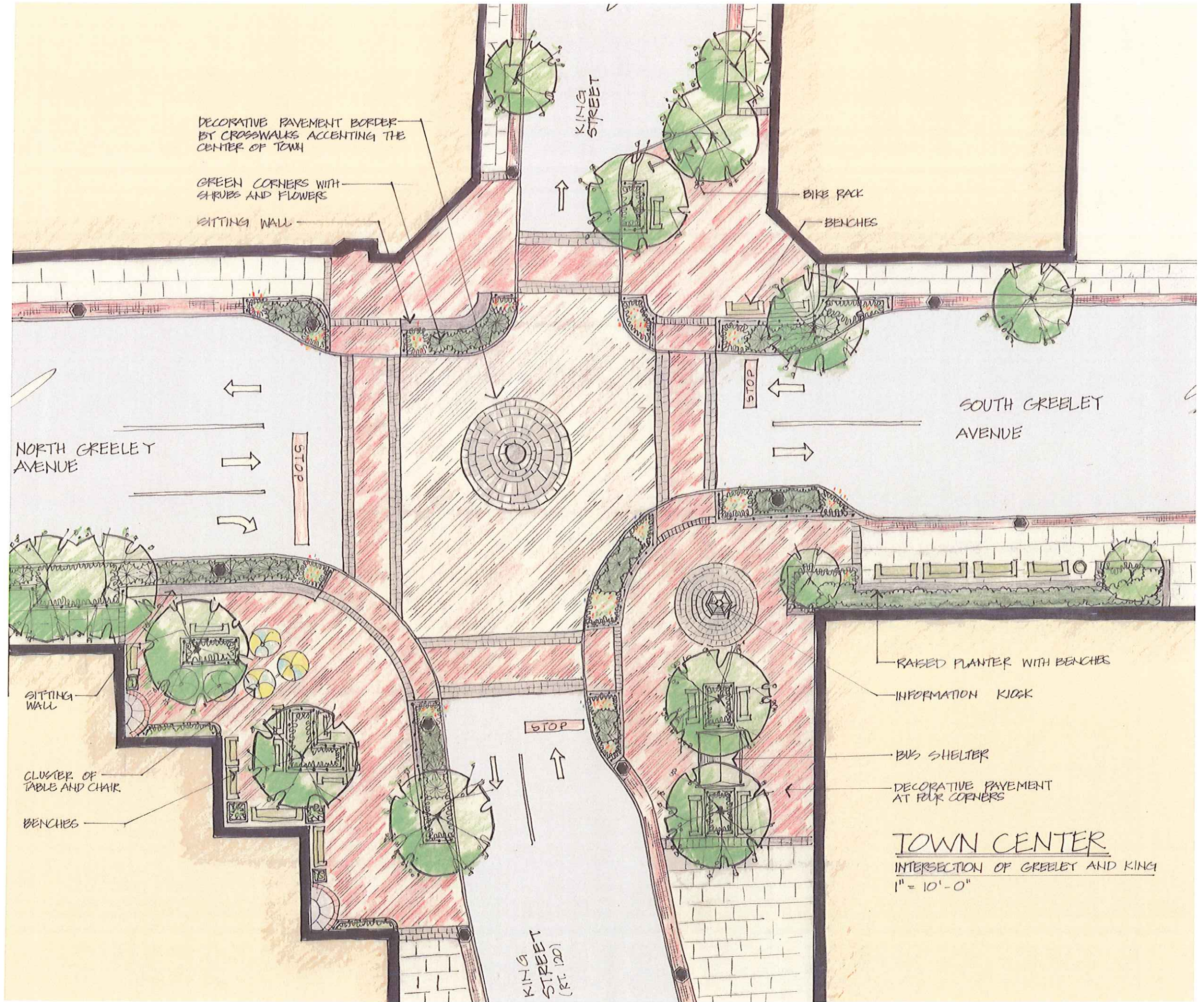


**EXISTING PARKING ANALYSIS** September 2008  
 Hamlet of Chappaqua - Streetscape  
 Town of New Castle, New York

**FIGURE 4**







DECORATIVE PAVEMENT BORDER  
BY CROSSWALKS ACCENTING THE  
CENTER OF TOWN

GREEN CORNERS WITH  
SHRUBS AND FLOWERS

SITTING WALL

KING  
STREET

BIKE RACK  
BENCHES

NORTH GREELEY  
AVENUE

SOUTH GREELEY  
AVENUE

SITTING  
WALL

CLUSTER OF  
TABLE AND CHAIR

BENCHES

STOP

RAISED PLANTER WITH BENCHES

INFORMATION KIOSK

BUS SHELTER

DECORATIVE PAVEMENT  
AT FOUR CORNERS

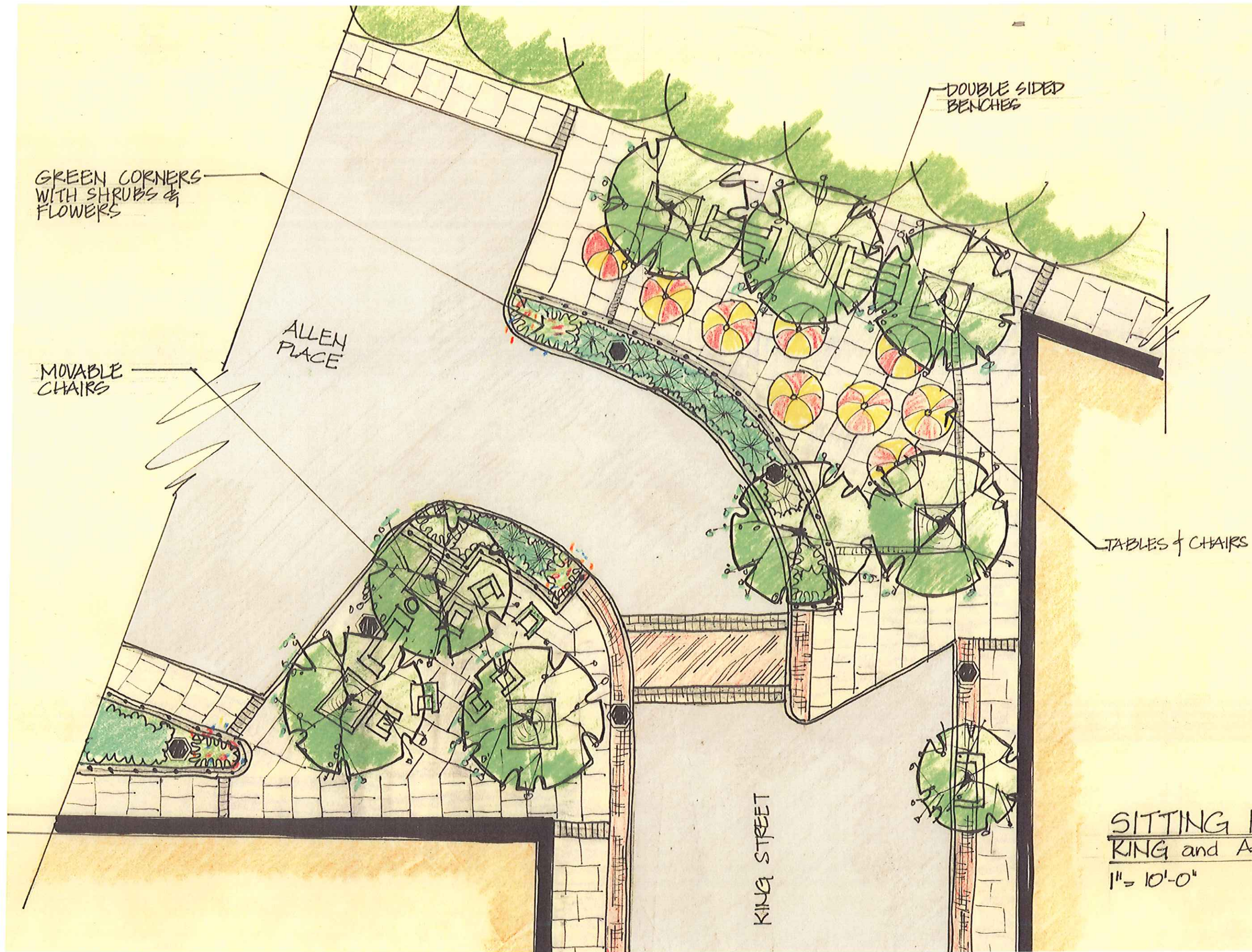
TOWN CENTER

INTERSECTION OF GREELEY AND KING

1" = 10'-0"

KING  
STREET  
(RT. 120)





GREEN CORNERS  
WITH SHRUBS &  
FLOWERS

MOVABLE  
CHAIRS

ALLEN  
PLACE

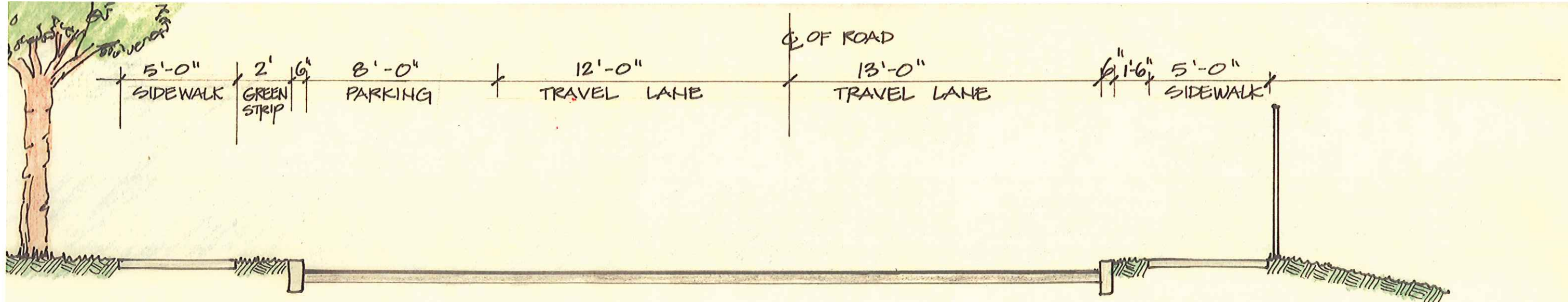
DOUBLE SIDED  
BENCHES

TABLES & CHAIRS

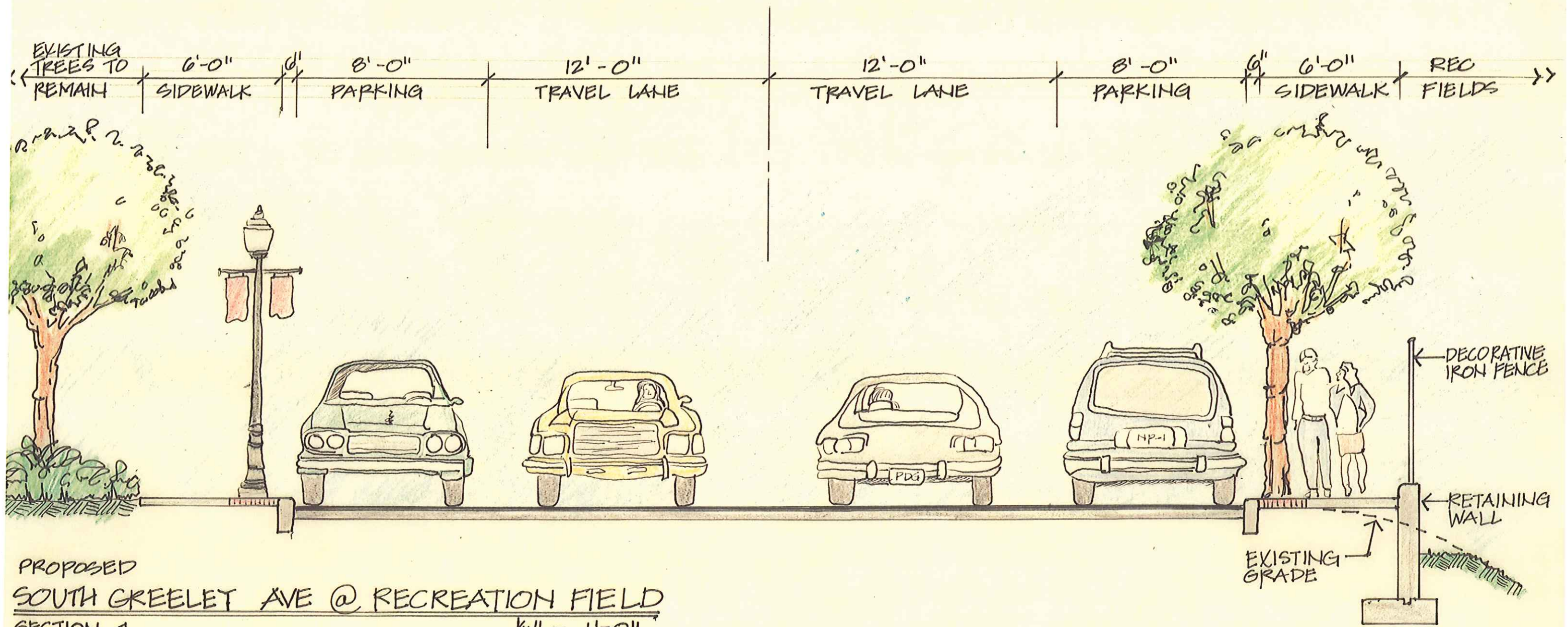
KING STREET

SITTING PLAZAS  
KING and ALLEN ST.  
1" = 10'-0"



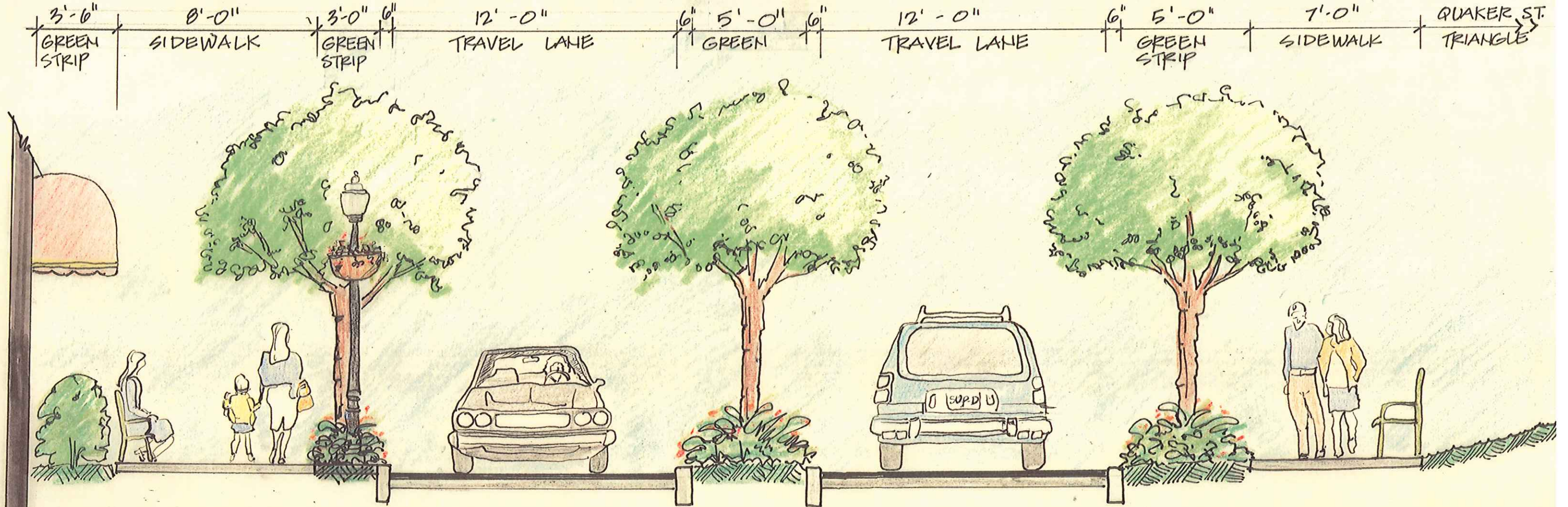
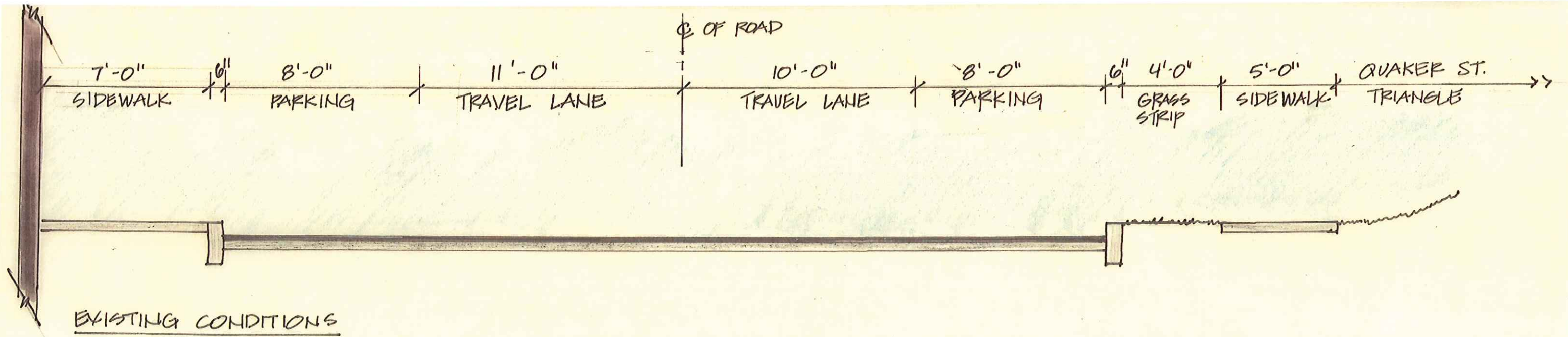


EXISTING CONDITIONS



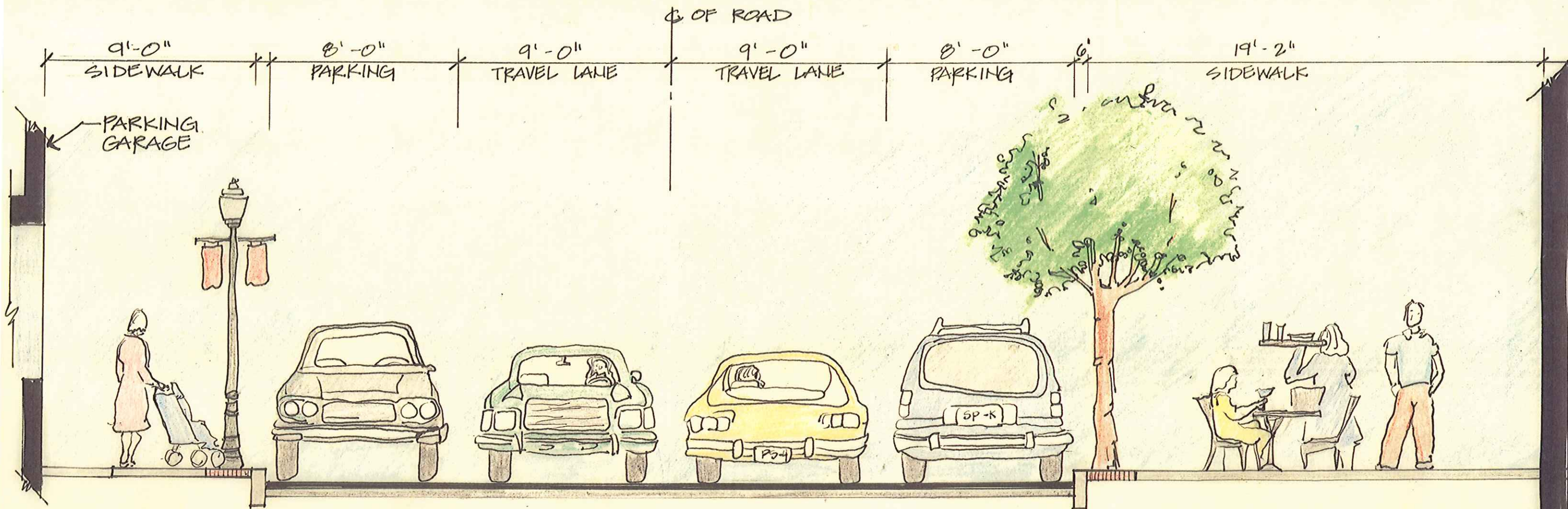
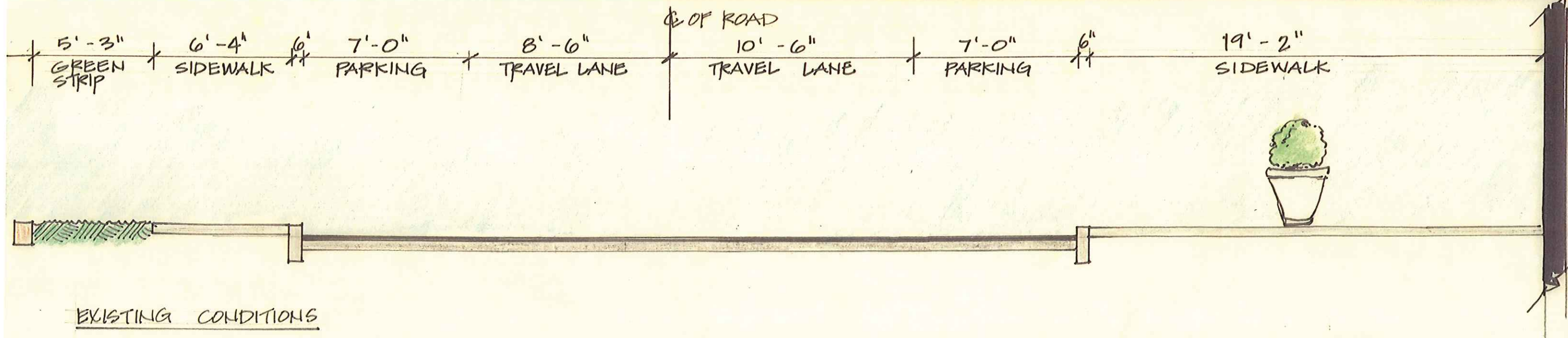
PROPOSED  
SOUTH GREELEY AVE @ RECREATION FIELD  
SECTION 1  
1/4" = 1'-0"





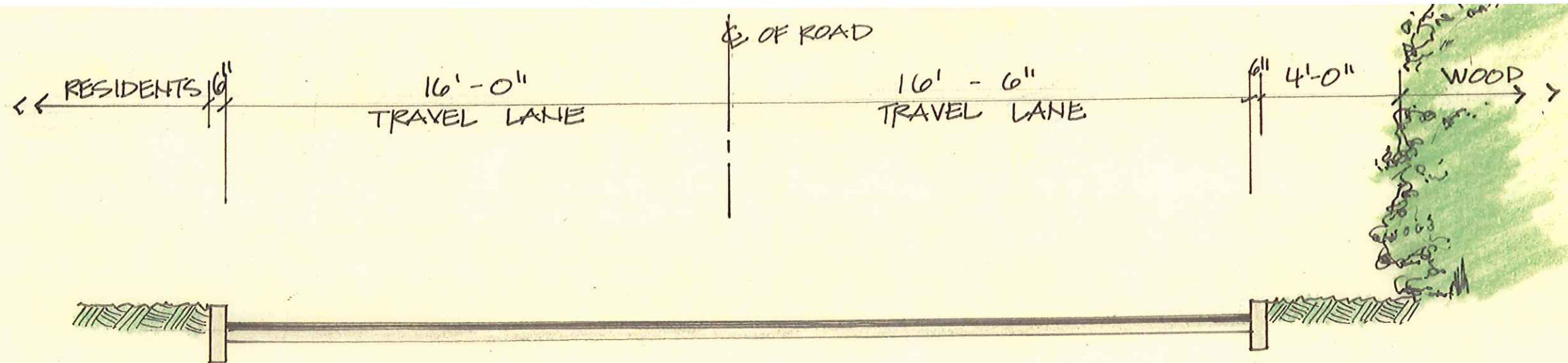
PROPOSED  
SOUTH GREELEY AVE @ QUAKER ST. TRIANGLE  
 SECTION 2  
 1/4" = 1'-0"



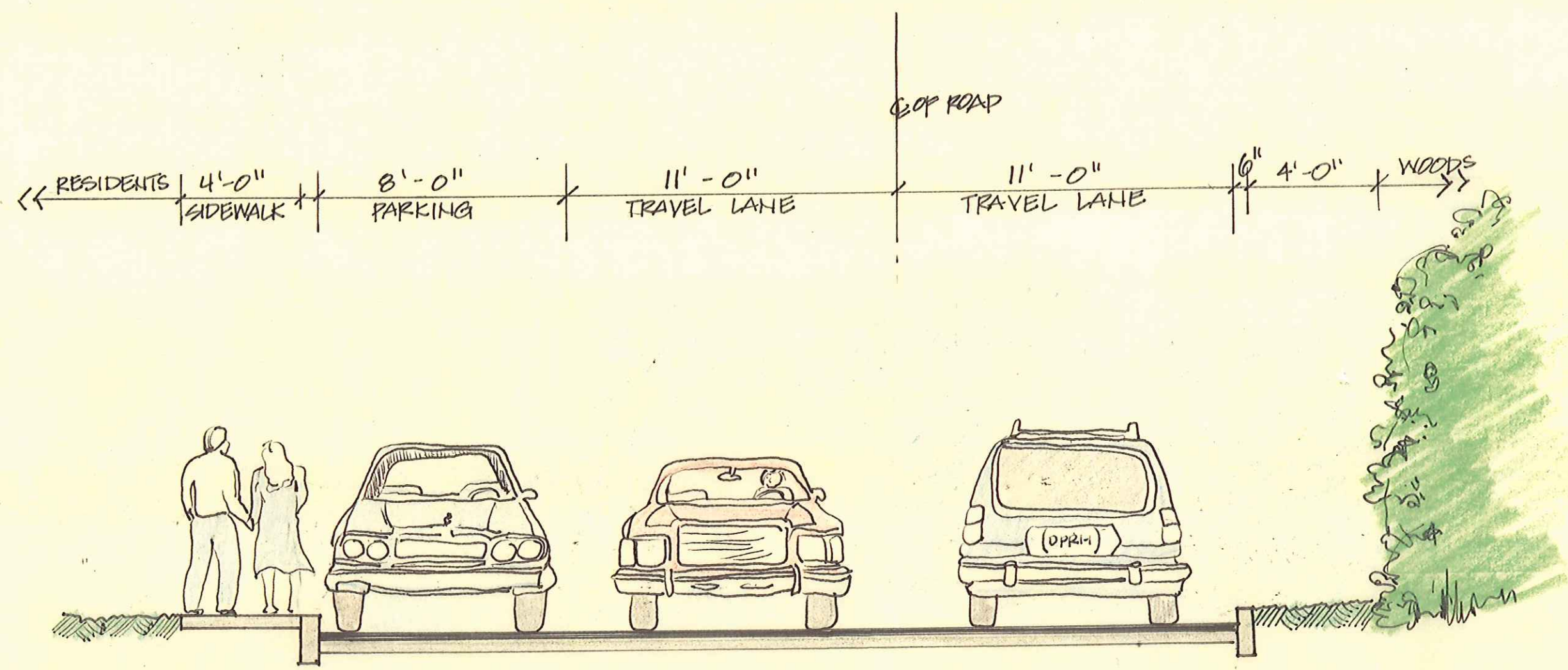


PROPOSED  
NORTH GREELEY AVE @ SUSAN LAWRENCE  
SECTION 3  
 $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'-0"$



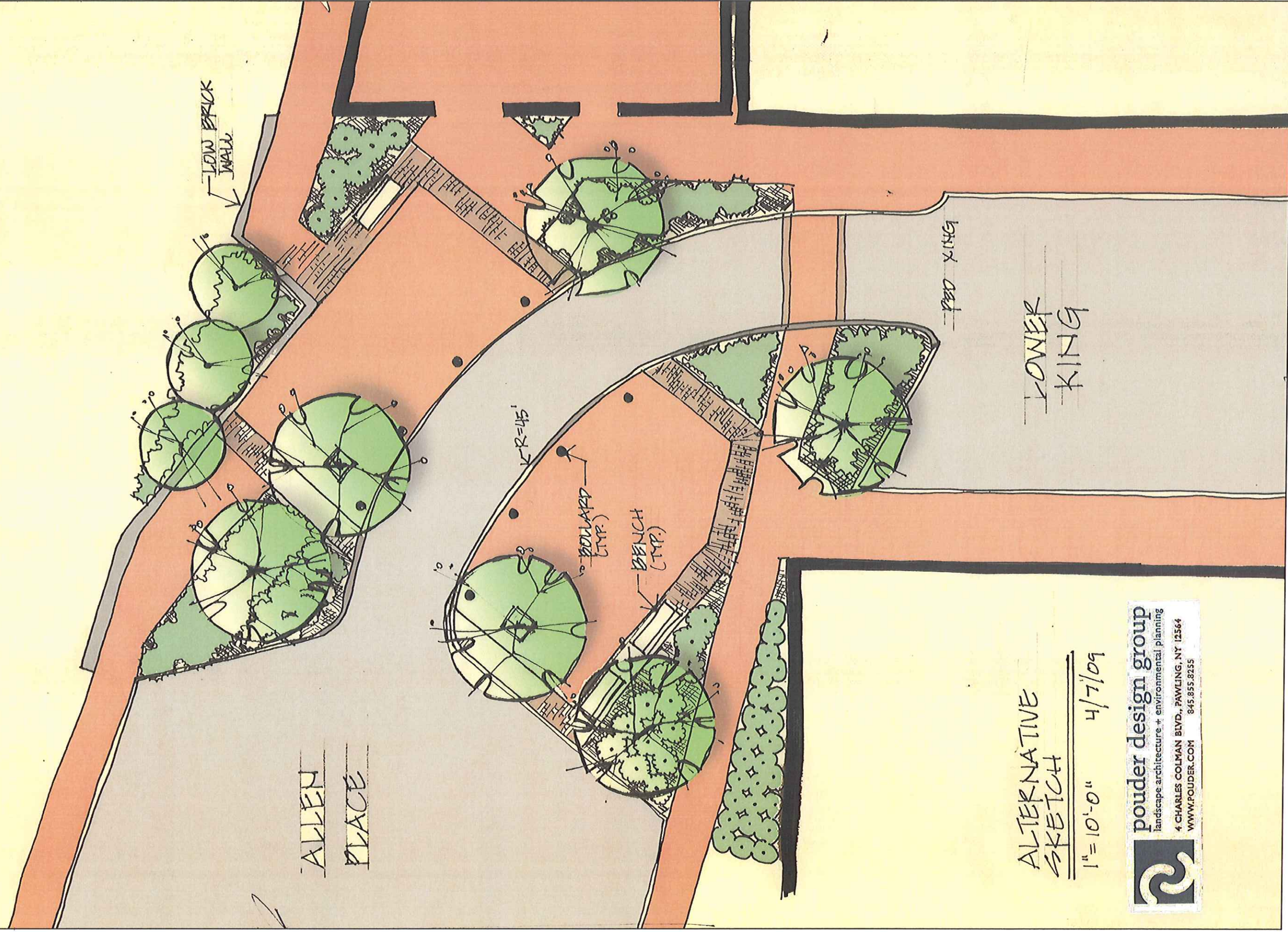


EXISTING CONDITIONS



PROPOSED  
NORTH GREELEY AVE  
 SECTION 4      1/4" = 1'-0"





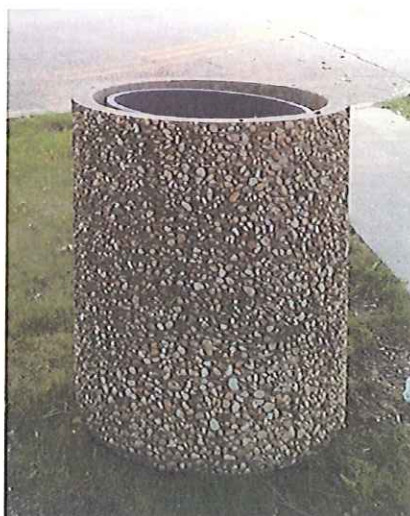




Bench, Stone Wall & Chainlink Fence



Standard Receptacle



Non-Standard, Receptacle



Typical Concrete Pavement



Concrete Pavement



Existing Curb



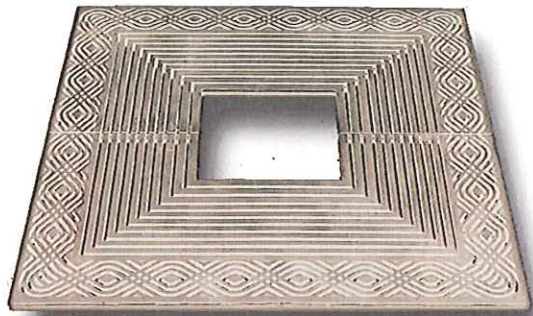
Existing Granite Curb



Stone Wall at Culvert



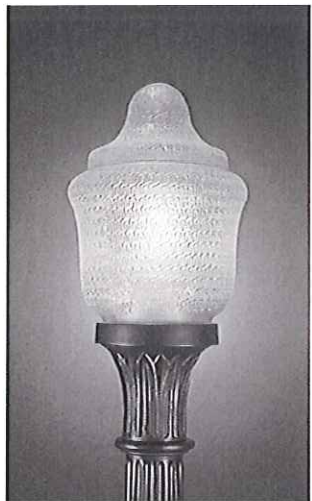
Planter



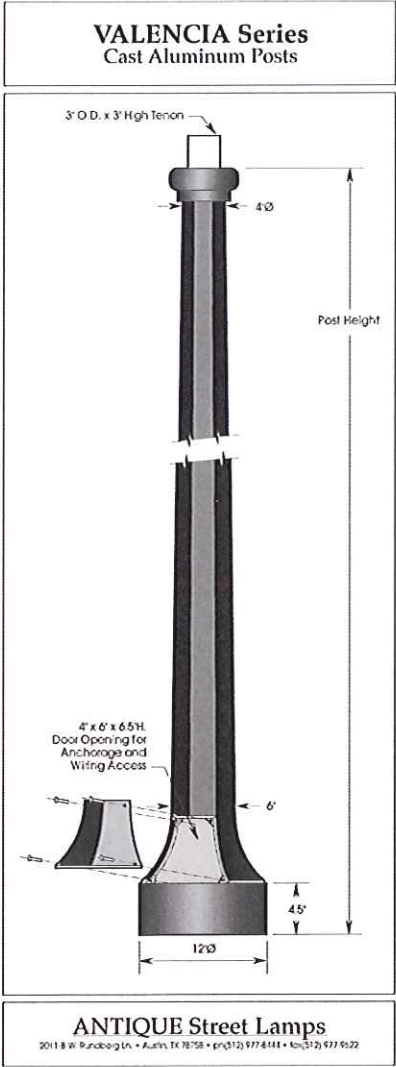
Tree Grate



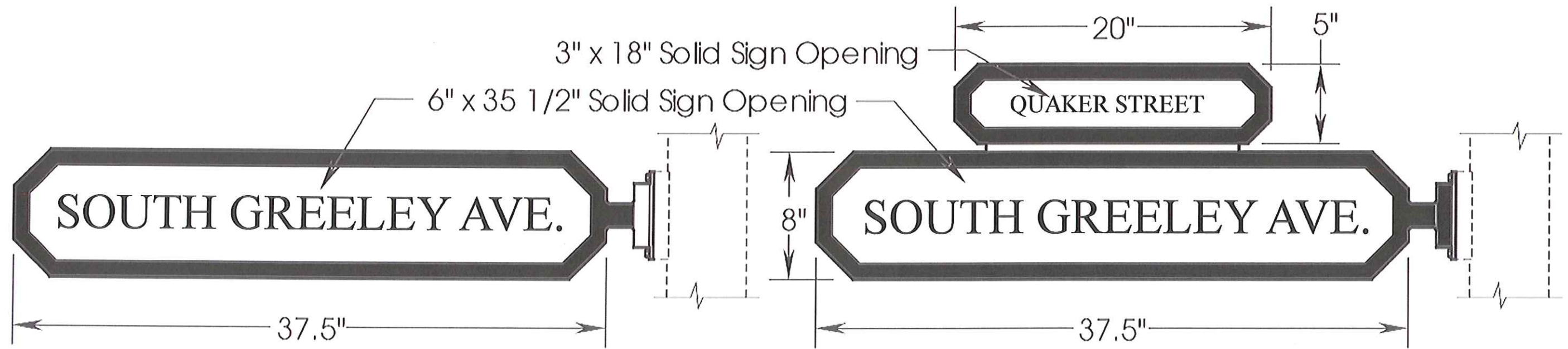
Bollard



Luminaire







**SS1OB**  
*(single sign frame  
w/ bolt-on mounting)*

**SS2OB**  
*(double sign frame  
w/ bolt-on mounting)*



Integrated Street and Stop Signs



Combined Signage and Lighting





Gay Feather



Black Eyed Susan



Shasta Daisy



Liriope



Dwarf Fountain Grass



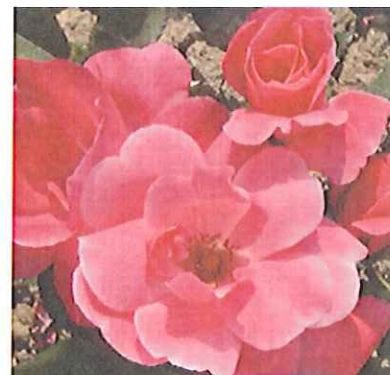
Autumn Joy Sedum



Inkberry Holly



Knockout Shrub Rose



Knockout Shrub Rose



Bronx Forsythia



“Low Grow” Fragrant Sumac



Winter King Hawthorn



Yoshino Cherry



Red Maple



American Sycamore



Pin Oak





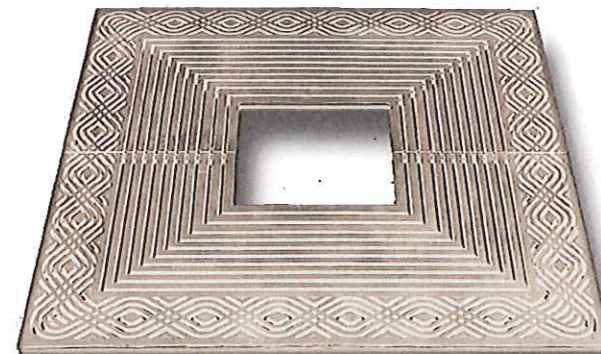
Bench



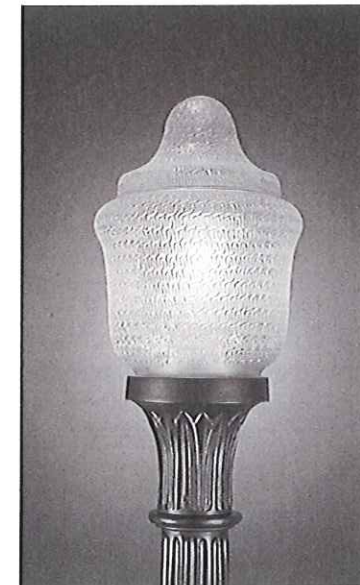
Trash Receptacle



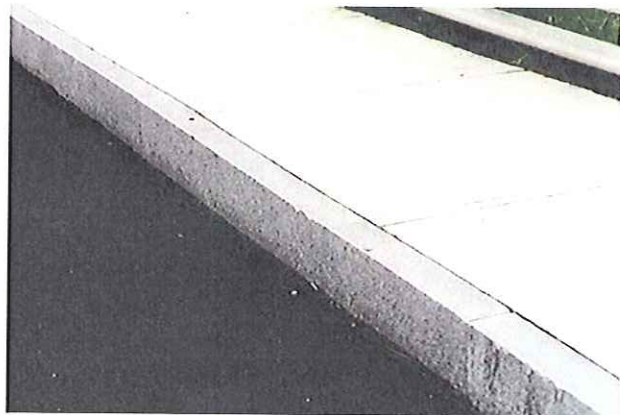
Steel Fence



Tree Grate



Luminaire



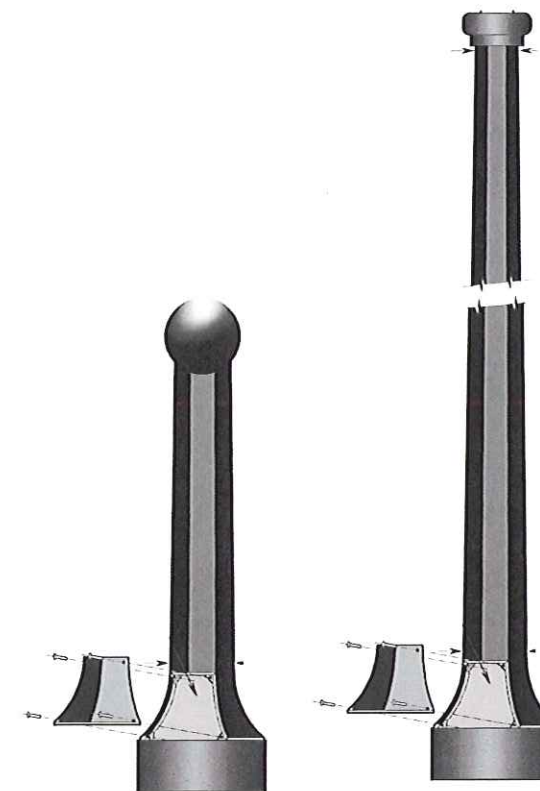
Granite Curb



Brick Paving



Ashlar Stone Wall



Custom Bollard

Lamp Pole





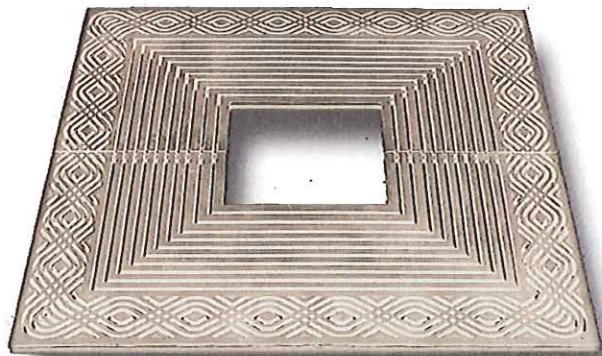
Bench



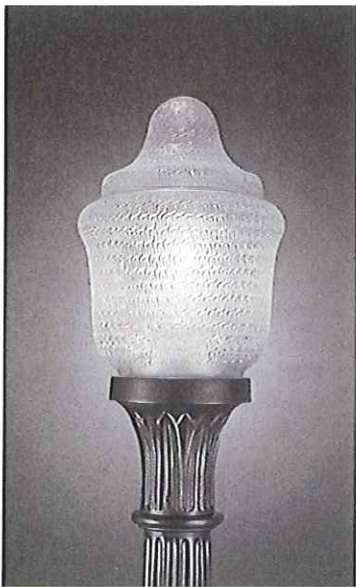
Trash Receptacle



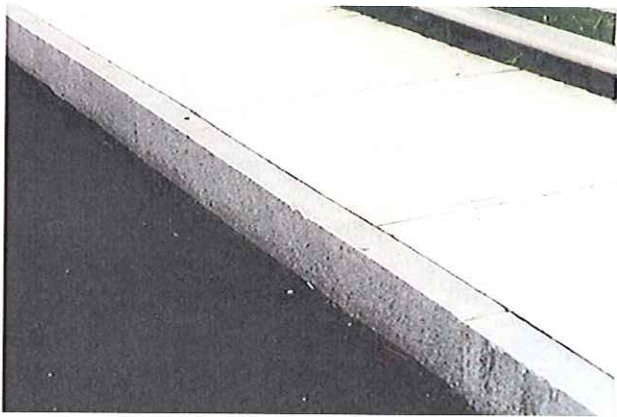
Steel Fence



Tree Grate



Luminaire



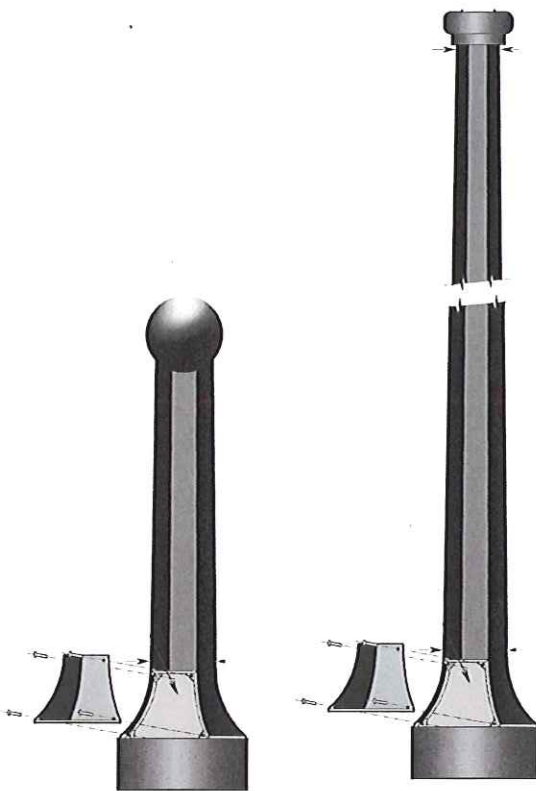
Granite Curb



Brick Paving



Ashlar Stone Wall



Custom Bollard

Lamp Pole