
OLD TOWN / CHINATOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

(PART 3 OF 3 - APPENDIX B)



APPENDIX B

Appendix B

PHYSICAL PLANNING

Following the identification of issues during Phase I, the second phase of the Development Plan effort focused on physical planning. This phase was primarily an urban design exercise, identifying opportunity sites, and addressing public investments intended to spur redevelopment. Note that some of the recommendations and design concepts from Phase II were modified during the subsequent phases of the Development Plan, so that the recommended action plan does not always correspond directly to the Phase II findings.

■ IDENTIFICATION OF OPPORTUNITY SITES

As a first step in understanding the development potential of Old Town/Chinatown, the Design Team sought to identify potential sites for new development or renovation (see Development Potential Plan, at left). The new development sites were identified using the following criteria:

- *Historic structures should remain.*
- *Buildings which contain compatible existing businesses should remain.*
- *Existing historic buildings which are under-utilized should be adaptively reused.*
- *Existing buildings which are not historic, or are occupied by incompatible uses or are unoccupied, should be replaced with new structures.*
- *Open parking lots should be redeveloped.*

■ DETAILED URBAN DESIGN STUDY AREAS

Recognizing the size of the Old Town/Chinatown Study Area and the complexity of issues, the Steering Committee selected specific areas for detailed study. These areas were chosen not only for their specific issues and conditions, but also because they were representative of the major issues and conditions of the entire district.

As a result of the Phase 1 Issues & Data Collection Report (see Appendix A) the

Steering Committee designated the following areas for detailed Urban Design:

The Third and Fourth Corridor. This area was chosen because it is the heart of the district. Third Avenue is where Old Town and Chinatown meet, and it engages the proposed Chinese Classical Garden.

The Trailways Blocks. Development of the three blocks east of the bus terminal and south of Union Station was the one major goal identified in the Central City 2000 vision process which has not been accomplished. The open lots represent a major opportunity to bring new energy to the streets of the district.

Burnside and related barriers and edges of the district. Burnside acts as a major divider between the Old Town/Chinatown district and Downtown. Slowing traffic and improving the pedestrian crossings would enhance the quality of the sidewalk experience and help integrate Old Town/Chinatown with Downtown and provide a more welcoming entrance.



Old Town / Chinatown aerial



- NEW BUILDING
- RENOVATED BUILDING
- NEW BUILDING OUTSIDE STUDY AREA
- EXISTING BUILDING
- GREEN SPACE
- HARDSCAPE COURTYARD/PLAZA

1 NOTES

3RD AND 4TH AVENUE



3rd and 4th Avenue Plan Key

Possible Developments

- Block P** Development Assumptions
6:1 F.A.R., 360 FT Height Maximum
- Block O** Development Assumptions;
Plus Renovated Warehouse
6:1 F.A.R., 350 FT Height Maximum
- Block 24** Development Assumptions
Office Building
12:1 F.A.R., 360 FT Height Maximum
- Block 25** Development Assumptions
9:1 F.A.R., 360 FT Height Maximum
- Block 26** Development Assumptions
9:1 F.A.R., 360 FT Height Maximum
- Block 27** Development Assumptions
6:1 F.A.R., 100 FT Height Maximum
- Block 28** Development Assumptions
4:1 F.A.R., 75 FT Height Maximum
- Block 29** Development Assumptions
Burnside Street
4:1 F.A.R., 75 FT Height Maximum
6:1 F.A.R., 100 FT Height Maximum
- Block 33** Potential Mixed-Use Development
with Open Space
- Block 34** Development Assumptions
6:1 F.A.R., 100 FT Height Maximum
- Block 35** Development Assumptions
9:1 F.A.R., 360 FT Height Maximum
- Hotel** Alternate-No Specific Site
12:1 F.A.R., 360 FT Height Maximum

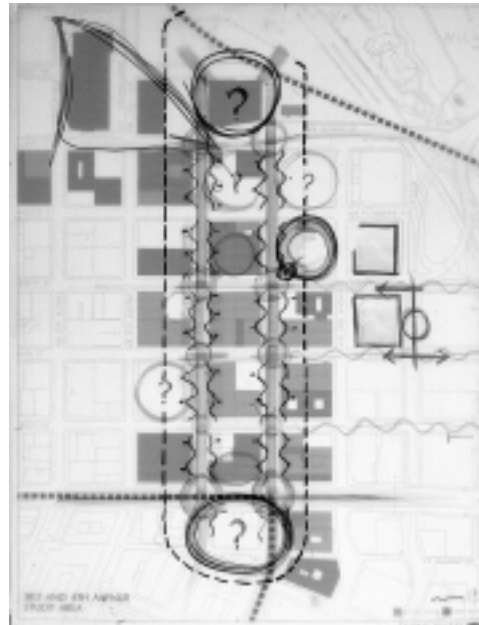
Note: residential development is eligible for an additional 3:1 FAR bonus. Other FAR bonuses may apply to non-residential development as well.

Street Improvements

- 1) Add pedestrian crossing at Third Avenue to Naito Parkway.
- 2) Reduce width of Glisan Street to two lanes plus parallel parking; add curb extensions to improve pedestrian crossing.
- 3) Eliminate eastbound traffic on Glisan.
- 4) Modify for pedestrian crossing at Glisan Street to Waterfront Park.
- 5) Reduce Third Avenue to two lanes plus parallel parking; add curb extension to encourage pedestrian crossing; extend sidewalks.
- 6) Develop curb extensions to encourage pedestrian crossing.
- 7) Reduce Burnside to two lanes each way plus parallel parking.
- 8) Reduce width of Second Avenue at Ankeny Street.
- 9) Develop Ankeny Street as pedestrian connector.

■ THIRD AND FOURTH AVENUES

Third and Fourth Avenues are the heart of the district. Fourth Avenue is the historic center of the Asian Community. Third Avenue is where Old Town and Chinatown come together, with the boundaries of their historic districts overlapping.



3rd and 4th Avenue Concept Diagram

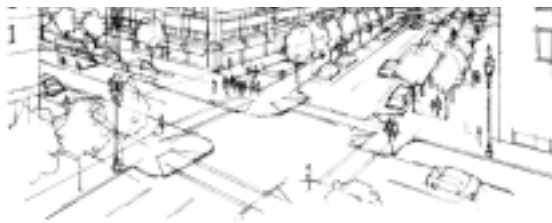
Street Character

The quality of the pedestrian experience is impacted by the scale and dimension of the streets, and the activity on the adjacent properties.

Fourth Avenue generally has a comfortable pedestrian scale. With additional infill development of vacant sites with ground floor retail space, it has the potential of becoming an active urban environment. Curb returns to decrease the width of the pedestrian crossings and reduced traffic speeds will improve the streetscape, but are not essential. The plan suggests a simple version of a Chinese gate or some other gateway feature at Fourth and Glisan to provide closure to the street, and balance the Chinese Gate at Burnside at the south end.

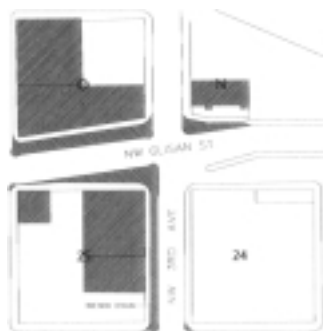
Third Avenue is less commodious than Fourth Avenue because it has three traffic lanes rather than two and because of the excessive traffic speeds, which are related to the ramp

access from the Steel Bridge. The right-of-way is actually 70 feet as opposed to 60 feet on Fourth Avenue. Discussions with the Office of Transportation revealed that the third lane between Glisan and Couch is not required to handle the projected traffic volumes. The design proposal is to eliminate one lane, reconfiguring the street to have two traffic lanes and two parallel parking lanes. The sidewalk should be widened on the west side of the street, and graded to slope back to a continuous trench drain at the existing curb line. This sidewalk widening should occur on the west side because it can be accommodated incrementally with potential development of blocks 25 and 26, and with the potential renovation of buildings on block 27.



Glisan Street at 3rd

Glisan Street/Third Avenue is excessively wide and the traffic speeds are far too fast to be a safe, comfortable place for pedestrians. The design proposes several changes to address these problems. The eastbound traffic lane connecting Fourth to Third Avenue should be eliminated. This traffic should be rerouted to Hoyt Street. Glisan should be reduced in width to two lanes of traffic plus parallel parking. An additional right-turn lane from the bridge to Third Avenue should be maintained. The street width should be narrowed creating a large triangular plaza on the south side of Glisan Street between Fourth and Third Avenues.



Reconstruction at Glisan St. and 3rd

Development

The Third and Fourth Avenue corridor includes several parcels available for new development, existing buildings appropriate for rehabilitation and a few buildings which we recommend be replaced with new buildings. The intent of the plan is not to be prescriptive about the uses, so that the developers and property owners will be encouraged to respond to the market demands. However, the plan has made some assumptions about uses in order to represent a balance of uses in the neighborhood and because particular sites are more appropriate for particular uses.

Housing. The priority for new development in the neighborhood is for housing above ground floor retail. Fortunately, housing is also the most likely form of new development because it is a public funding priority. There is particular interest in the development of some specialized housing, particular Asian Senior housing. There are several alternative sites for this housing and the specific site will be determined by market conditions. Similarly a proposal for an Asian Community Center could be accommodated in several locations and would be most compatible as a part of a housing development (perhaps occupying the ground floor retail space).

For the purpose of assessing capacity (see matrix), the analysis assumes that most of the available parcels north of Couch Street on either side of Fourth and on the west side of Third Avenue be developed as housing with ground floor retail.

Retail. Ground floor retail or office space should be encouraged in the Third and Fourth Avenue fronts of all new buildings. Counting only the potential new buildings, and allowing for apartment lobbies and parking entrances, properties along Third and Fourth Avenue have the potential of adding over 80,000 square feet of new commercial space. Community amenities such as the proposed Asian Community Center would be counted in this number.

Parking. Old Town/Chinatown has suffered the loss of over 200 parking spaces in the development of the north transit mall. This loss is exacerbated by the fact that many

patrons of commercial parking lots in Old Town/Chinatown actually work south of Burnside, i.e., out of the district. The plan recognizes that new development in the district plus the attraction of the Chinese Classical Garden, with the corresponding decrease in surface parking lots will worsen the parking problem and require the construction of new parking facilities. Current zoning restrictions which do not allow for the replacement of surface parking spaces in new developments are a serious impediment to new development.

The plan suggests construction of four levels of parking on Block 24, as indicated above. Large, mostly full block developments such as those on blocks 25 and 26, could accommodate ground level parking behind the retail and one level of parking above grade. The half block developments on Blocks O and P could accommodate ground level parking behind retail. A potential park on block 33 (see below) could accommodate one level of below grade parking. The total amount of parking could be approximately 870 off-street parking spaces along Third and Fourth Avenues, compared with the approximately 450 existing spaces (not including those on Block 16, the site of the Chinese Classical Garden).

Hotel. A hotel in the district would add vitality in the evenings and weekends, bring visitors to the neighborhood, serve the Classical Chinese Garden and the adjacent businesses and the convention center which is just across the Steel Bridge. As with the housing, several parcels could accommodate a hotel of up to 200-rooms, with ground level retail space and the hotel lobby. The area around the Chinese Garden is a promising vicinity for such a hotel.

An alternative idea would be to rehabilitate several historic structures as smaller hotels and bed and breakfasts. This approach could take advantage of a market for this type of lodging, i.e., visitors drawn to the historic character of the area.

Offices. The plan recognizes that Old Town/Chinatown has traditionally had an employment base of its own and continued development of office space is essential for the creation of a vibrant life of the district during the weekdays. The proposal suggests new Class A

office space as an alternate to the hotel on Block 24. This site could accommodate a twelve-story building with 160,000 square foot of office space above four stories of parking. The plan also suggests additional Class A office space on the Trailways Blocks (see below). The neighborhood also has the need for Class B and C office space. This space is attractive to small professional service providers, such as designers and engineers, and has typically been accommodated in renovated buildings. This space is also particularly compatible with arts and entertainment activities.

The plan suggests new Class C Office space on Block 29, on Burnside and Couch between Third and Fourth Avenues. These sites are currently occupied by non-historic buildings which are either not occupied, or occupied by non-compatible uses. The condition and use of these buildings, at the entrance to the district from Burnside, make redevelopment of these parcels critical to the redevelopment of the entire district. In addition, existing multi-story historic structures could be developed for office space. A strategy of public investment to facilitate these projects is a priority of the development plan.



Potential Development along 4th Ave. at Burnside St

■ OPEN SPACE

The River District Recreation & Open Space Needs Assessment, prepared by Portland Parks & Recreation in March of 1997, identified the need for open space within the neighborhood.

Open Space Study. It is recommended that an open space study be conducted as part of the short-term actions for the Development Plan. The following considerations should be incorporated as part of this open space study.



OLD TOWN / CHINATOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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AND ASSOCIATES
ARCHITECTS P.C.



Increased connection to existing Community Recreation Spaces. The plan proposes to enhance the connections to the North Park Blocks and Waterfront Park. Specifically, a pedestrian crossing should be created at Glisan and Naito Parkway, and the pedestrian light at Couch Street should be upgraded to be a fully signalized crosswalk. To emphasize these new connections a tree planting program should be undertaken on Glisan Street, Everett Street and on Couch Street, i.e. the streets with signalized pedestrian connections to these open spaces.

Neighborhood Recreation Space. The plan suggests that a neighborhood park should be developed in the neighborhood. Block 33, between Fourth and Fifth Avenues, Couch and Davis is designated as a potential mixed use site to possibly include retail and housing along with a community center/cultural space. Ideally this project would have an open space component, i.e. an urban park, with below grade parking. The design should be compatible with the neighborhood context, i.e. Chinatown, especially on the Fourth Avenue side.

There is significant concern in the neighborhood about the safety of open space. It is essential that the park be created only after the residential population of the district is greatly increased and in conjunction with the redevelopment of the properties immediately adjacent to the proposed park. The park must be designed to engage the street and avoid spaces which may be conducive to unsavory activity.

The plan also anticipates a plaza space in front of Union Station, although such a space may be limited to a relatively decorative character and function.

Recreational Pockets. New quarter block developments may have landscaped courtyards with controlled access from the street if these blocks are not developed with ground

floor parking. These would be primarily for the use of residents, however could be open to the public at some times of the day. A neighborhood precedent for this is the courtyard in the Merchant Hotel on Davis, between Second and Third Avenues.

With the creation of a neighborhood parking plan, and in conjunction with the renovation of the upper floors of the Couch Street Fishhouse, there is the possibility that the parking lot behind the facade of the Simon Building (Block 28) could be developed as a pocket park. A park in this location would get good light from the east and west, and could be secured with gates in the evening. This proposal would preserve the facade as a public amenity and provide needed open space.



Merchant Hotel Courtyard

Weekend Market. The plan suggests that the Chamber of Commerce Parking lot, across from the entrance to the Classical Chinese Garden, be made available for market stalls on the weekend.

Classical Chinese Garden. While the Classical Chinese Garden is not a public park, it has significant open space benefits. With its one-story wall and over-arching foliage, it offers visual relief in the district.

OPEN SPACE PLAN KEY

Notes

- A. Courtyard at grade in new housing development with controlled access from street.
- B. Courtyard above parking for use of housing resident.
- 1) Parking lot proposed for weekend market.
- 2) Proposed community garden accessible from Flanders Street.
- 3) Modify for pedestrian crossing at Glisan to Waterfront Park.
- 4) Add signalizations for pedestrian crossing at Couch Street.
- 5) New neighborhood park as part of mixed use development.
- 6) Street tree program for streets connecting to North Park Blocks and Waterfront Park.



Future Development of Chinese Classical Garden

Ankeny Street Pedestrian Way. The plan suggests that an enhanced pedestrian way of linked plazas with fountains be developed along Ankeny Street from Third Avenue to the Waterfront Park. Third Avenue should be reduced to two traffic lanes, creating a widened sidewalk on the east side between Burnside and Ash Streets. Ankeny Street, between Third and Second Avenues should be restricted to pedestrians. Second Avenue should be reduced in width to three lanes between Ash and Burnside, creating widened sidewalks. The parking could be removed from the free-standing facade adjacent to the New Market (and a new building developed on the north side of Ankeny). These spaces should have the same pavement, and share other design features. Together these spaces will serve as an entrance into Old Town and encourage the expansion of Saturday Market to the west.

■ CULTURAL IDENTITY AND URBAN FORM CHINATOWNS

In order to set a clear course to revitalize Portland's Chinatown, it is necessary to respect its history, the uniqueness of its community, and its cultural characteristics. The cultural identity of a successful contemporary Chinatown relies on the vibrancy of a work/live community. During the physical planning effort, the following goals were established for Chinatown:

- *To encourage development that fosters Chinatown's cultural identity as well as its history.*
- *To promote a vibrant work/live environment in Chinatown.*
- *To recognize and respect the growth of a contemporary Chinatown.*



Chinatown Gate at 4th Avenue

Historical Background

1851. The original location of Portland's Chinatown was along SW Second Avenue roughly between Yamhill and Stark. The first Chinese-owned business was opened.

1873. The most devastating fire in Portland's history began in a Chinese laundry in the "old" Chinatown. Twenty City blocks burned prompting the gradual relocation of many businesses to the "new" Chinatown, which was previously Japantown.

1880-1910. Portland's Chinese population was the second largest in the United States, trailing only San Francisco. Most Chinese came from southern China to mine, farm, build railroads and roads, or work in the fish canning industry.

1880's. West Coast's economic depression aroused an anti-Chinese sentiment. The Oregon Constitution forbade any Chinese to own or buy any property.

1886. The Chinese were to be forced out of Portland on March 24 by anti-Chinese mobs. But the expulsion did not occur because Mayor John Gates intervened.

1882-1943. US Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act prohibiting all Chinese immigration or citizenship.

1894. The physical damage caused by the flooding of the Willamette River as well as the social and geographical restructuring of the Chinese community caused remaining Chinatown activities to move to the current location on NW Fourth Avenue (New Chinatown).

1942. President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which forced the evacuation of persons with Japanese ancestry from the West Coast.

1986. Erection of the 38 foot tall Chinese gate at NW Fourth Avenue and Burnside.

1989. The new Chinatown was named a National Historic District.

1999. Completion of Old Town/Chinatown Development Plan funded by the City of Portland.

2000. A Suzhou-style classical Chinese garden is scheduled to be opened to the public (sited at NW Third Avenue and Everett Street). This garden will be the largest urban Chinese garden outside of China.

Traditional Chinatowns (Urban)

Location: Traditional Chinatowns in the United States mostly date back to the 1850's. They were usually sited in less desirable/less-valued land allocated by local governments.

Social Structure: Most Chinatowns at one time or another were the only areas where the Chinese were allowed to stay. Their population consisted mostly of male laborers. Tongs [meeting halls] and Associations (distinguished by their Chinese village origins, surnames, dialects, trades, etc.) in different Chinatowns were established to serve as social & cultural safe havens. Many of them are linked to a national headquarters in San Francisco. These organizations maintain strict social traditions, engendering absolute loyalty as well as strong seniority-based ruling hierarchies. This organizational structure has made it difficult for many Tongs and Associations to obtain consensus on the development directions for their holdings. In addition, due to the history of racial discrimination, apprehension still exists among some old-timers. Today, the old-style Associations and Tongs need to expand their roles as community-involved, family-oriented organizations in order to attract new members.

The solidarity of Tong and Association members at times cause conflicts between organizations. In most major cities, CCBA, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolence Association (a national entity) serves as the umbrella organization.

Physical Presence: Of the buildings built in the 19th and 20th centuries in Chinatowns, many have extensive use of Chinese mythical motifs intended to reinforce the cultural identity as well as attract business from the non-Asian community. Auspicious elements are integrated into the built form. Many Tongs' and Associations' buildings have very specific hierarchies of uses on each floor. This practice very much reflects a vertically-oriented traditional Chinese courtyard house

Note: The social structure and the physical presence of traditional urban Chinatowns have created a "style" that uniquely represents the culture of the Overseas' Chinese. The authenticity of Chinatown is based on the functional content; scenographic physical images would not be enough. It is important to understand that each Chinatown uniquely expresses its interrelationship with the host city. Therefore, no one Chinatown can serve as a model/prototype for any other.

Contemporary Chinatowns (Urban)

The traditional urban Chinatowns of the United States, are generally losing their luster due to aging of the older immigrants, the decreased availability of affordable housing and business opportunities, limited availability of larger land parcels for development and the unwillingness on the part of Chinese property owners to reinvest. The sustainability of the traditional Chinatown also suffers tremendously due to the rise of upscale suburban Chinatowns. Today's urban Chinatowns tend to be places that attract supporters who yearn to preserve the romantic identity of the ethnic Chinese enclave and for a "captive" community. Many existing housing and business establishments enjoy unrealistically below-market-rate rents. These residents and business are therefore unwilling to leave or simply cannot afford anything outside of Chinatown. New development usually features market rate rents which the locals cannot afford. Many cities have integrated Chinatown into their larger city planning studies. Often collaborative efforts develop between the Chinatown communities and their respective cities in an attempt to provide investment-friendly Chinatowns. Many Chinatowns have also been attracting a diverse Asian population such as Vietnamese businesses.

NOTE: It is a challenge to attract Chinese to reside in existing urban Chinatowns due to their awareness of race and history. Chinatowns are very commonly perceived by more affluent Chinese as urban enclaves where the less fortunate Chinese reside and this causes potential investors to be less motivated, perhaps even skeptical.



Chinatown storefront

Contemporary Chinatowns (Suburban)

As the affluent Chinese population increases, a new market for suburban living has developed. Since traditional urban Chinatowns provide only limited options in terms of lifestyle, amenities, and social structure, Chinese immigrants (from mainland China as well as Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia) have begun to establish Chinese residential and commercial hubs outside of the urban environment.

Social Structure: There are a variety of available organizations in which Chinese can participate beyond traditional ethnic boundaries.

Physical Presence: Due to a more globally-aware mainstream population, Chinese busi-

nesses are less dependent on mere exotic visual attractions. In increasingly competitive markets, Chinese businesses are now very conscious of delivering quality goods and services at affordable prices. Contemporary suburban Chinatowns exhibit many of the characteristics of the American shopping mall.

Portland Chinatown

Challenges: The traditions within the Tongs and Associations make it extremely challenging to foster a proactive development process within the Chinese community. The Chinese community is generally skeptical about the success of any investment in Chinatown. Many properties have multiple ownership or belong to absentee owners making it difficult to initiate any development process. Too often, one encounters a “wait and see” attitude as a means by which to avoid taking the “risky” initiative. It is vitally important to seek out willing Chinese owners who are willing to take action in investing in/developing their properties. Their leadership is crucial in motivating the rest of the Chinese owners to seek development options. The current push to establish an Asian senior housing and cultural center will be an extremely important confidence boost within the Chinese community.

Constant communication between the city and the Chinese community (within and beyond Chinatown) must be in force in order to stimulate development interest and, more importantly, to establish the community's trust in accepting development aid and guidance. Publications must be made available in both English and Chinese and take full advantage of the local Chinese organizations, the Chinese Weekly Times, as well as the Oregonian. Portland's Chinatown also needs to expand its attraction to the diverse Asian population in the city at large. The Seattle International District can serve as a successful reference.

Common Design Features that Can Enhance Chinatown's Character

- *Deep awnings fixed/retractable.*
- *Street vending.*
- *Display of merchandise on the exterior of the storefront.*

- *Retractable storefront for displaying merchandise.*
- *Chinese signage protruding beyond building faces.*
- *Bilingual signage on storefront surfaces.*
- *Signage highlighted with neon lights.*
- *Ethnic murals.*
- *Chinese motifs accenting the architecture.*
- *Curbside loading/unloading.*

Note: Refer to River District Design Guidelines 1998 amended version A5-1-6 REINFORCES THE IDENTITY OF CHINATOWN for specifics on signage.



Chinatown street life

Feng Shui Applications

Feng Shui is a traditional art of geomancy practiced by many Asians to different extents. This art form originated from Taoist beliefs specifically for siting auspicious burial grounds in ancient China. There are a multitude of Feng Shui practices ranging from the placement of a tree at one's home to the orientation of built form at an urban scale. Authentic Feng Shui applications are very site specific and can involve extremely complex calculations and considerations. Feng Shui is gaining substantial interest in the United States. There are many commercial publications and Feng Shui "Masters" readily available in the market. Unfortunately, there is no one credible source that provides an authentic approach holistically. The general principles are very much integrated into one's daily life in Asia as "common knowledge".

When developing Portland's Chinatown, it is helpful to be aware of some common Feng Shui planning principles and to try to empha-

size overall balance as a means of achieving harmony. To take any Feng Shui consideration out of context might not be practical or appropriate. The following lists some Feng Shui issues worth considering:

- *Orientation / proximity / views: Southern and Eastern exposures are considered preferable as entrances.*
- *Encourage the use of auspicious colors & numbers: Avoid large surfaces of black or white and the number 4; they are usually associated with death or mourning. (Exception: exterior walls of Portland's Classical Chinese Garden.)*
- *Location of trees/lamp-posts: Avoid placing a tree or a lamp-post directly in front of any entrance.*
- *Subtle integration of Chinese paving patterns and/or graphic motifs.*
- *Mirrors: Avoid using large surfaces of reflective or mirror glass for exterior glazing, it is considered very offensive to the opposite neighbor(s).*

Possible Additional Programs that Need Public Support

- *Affordable housing*
- *Senior center*
- *Community service center*
- *Community recreational facility*
- *Cultural center*
- *Parking*
- *Asian business recruitment*

Issues for Residential Development

Portland's Chinatown will be a strong work/live environment where Chinese and non-Chinese work and live together. It is prudent to sensitively address any development to the particulars of Chinese culture.

- *Sound transmission factor: The construction of interior divisions between units and floors should take in the consideration of extra reduction of sound transmission.*
- *Kitchen: it is preferred to have gas stoves for Chinese cooking and to separate kitchen space from the rest of the residential unit (this can be compensated by providing duct venting, NOT filter vents).*
- *Laundry set-up in individual units preferred.*

- *Balconies*
- *Landscaping of Asian plants for street-scape as well as in courtyard (with seating): Bamboo, ginkgo nut tree, wintersweet tree, peonies, etc.*
- *Maximize indoor presence of daylight*

Closing Note

Although Portland's Chinatown played an important role in the early history of Chinese immigration to the United States, the current Chinatown lacks a critical mass to support a more vibrant atmosphere. With the increase of activities and population around Chinatown due to the development of the Pearl District and the River District, the projected increase in pedestrian and automobile traffic will certainly benefit Chinatown commercially. As well, it is inevitable that Portland's Chinatown, with its physical location, will attract a diverse population of residents. Although it is unrealistic to romantically impose an image of a traditional Chinatown in Portland, it is critical for us to recognize and thus strengthen Chinatown's historical value and the Chinese community's cultural identity.

The lack of rich historical structure in Portland's Chinatown should not diminish the level of success in revitalizing this Chinatown. Success will depend on how vibrant the work/live environment can become.

TRAILWAYS BLOCKS

Development of the three blocks opposite the Trailways Bus Station and south of Union Station was the only development objective of the Old Town/Chinatown Vision Plan which has not been achieved. The blocks are in public ownership and represent a major opportunity for the neighborhood. Their location has great visibility and development would be a positive signal of the vibrancy of the district.

The plan looked at several options for development. A priority in the review of options was for a phased development which could be initiated to complete a short-term objective. Previous ideas about the development potential of the site as a high-density office space were considered to not be achievable in the time frame.

The proposed option calls for the development of a plaza, with parking below on the northern block, opposite Union Station. This parking (approximately 80 spaces) would serve the station needs and the Plaza would form a forecourt for the station and a setting for public events. The plan calls for the middle block (Block U) to be developed as a six-story residential building with ground floor retail on Sixth Avenue, parking behind and one-story below grade. This scheme could have 195 dwelling units, 145 parking spaces and 8,000 square feet of retail space. For the southern block (Block R), there are two options, dependent on market conditions. One option is housing similar to Block U. This would yield 202 dwelling units, 16,000 square feet of retail and 100 parking spaces. The second alternative would be an eight-story building with 285,000 square feet of office space, 16,000 square feet of retail space and 100 parking spaces.

The three blocks could be a phased development, with the below grade parking continuous under all three blocks and the intervening streets. Phase 1 could be the center block and Phase 2 could be the southern block. The park could be done with the extension of Sixth Avenue (see below).

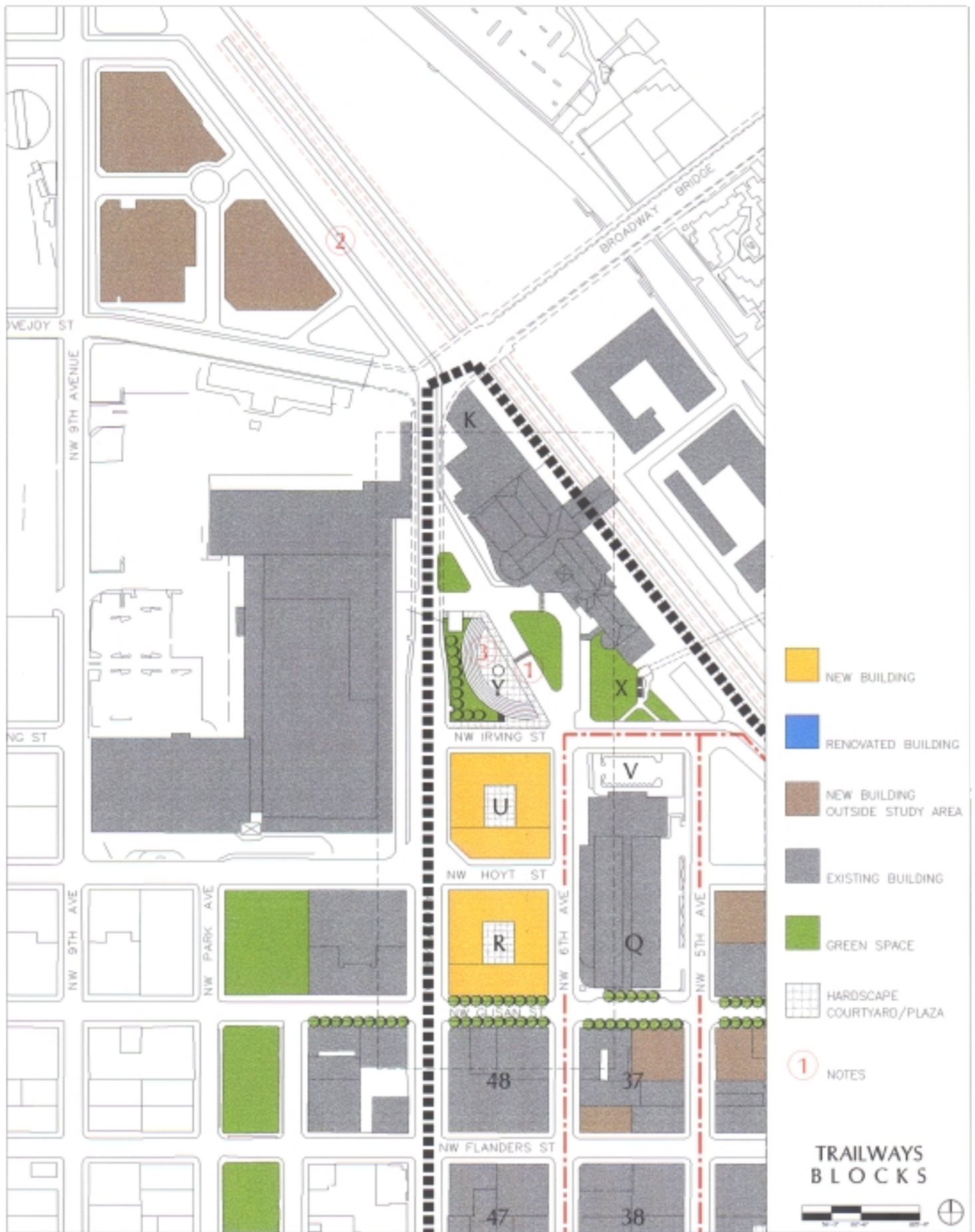
Trailways Block Plan Key

Possible Developments

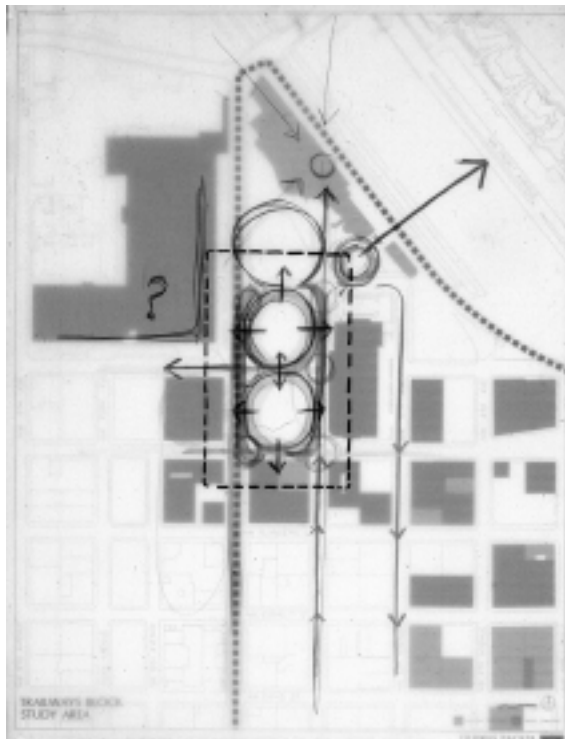
Block Y	Development Assumptions Union Station Forecourt Below Grade Parking 6:1 F.A.R., 75 FT Height Maximum
Block U	Development Assumptions High Density Housing 6:1 F.A.R., 75 FT Height Maximum
Block R	Development Assumptions High Density Housing 6:1 F.A.R., 350 FT Height Maximum
	Office (Alternate) 6:1 F.A.R., 350 FT Height Maximum

Street Improvements

- 1) Extend Sixth Avenue under Broadway Street to North River District.
- 2) Develop enhanced pedestrian walkway from North River District to Third Avenue crossing of tracks to Naito Parkway.
- 3) Develop parking below public plaza/park.

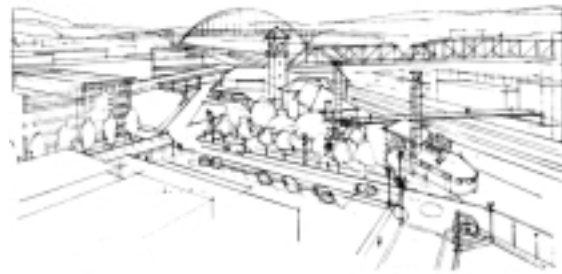


OLD TOWN / CHINATOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Trailways Block concept diagram

River District Connection. A major focus of the Old Town/Chinatown Development Plan is breaking down the borders which isolate the neighborhood from adjacent neighborhoods. The development of the Trailways Blocks and the removal of the Lovejoy Ramp, as a part of the River District Plan presents a major opportunity to create a direct connection between Old Town/Chinatown and the River District. The plan proposes that Sixth Avenue be extended diagonally in front of Union Station, under Broadway and connect to Northrup Street in the River District. Current plans for the River District anticipate the construction of a supermarket (with housing above) at 9th and Lovejoy, which could serve the Old Town/Chinatown neighborhood. Bus service could be extended from the Bus Mall to serve the River District. An enhanced pedestrian walkway from the River District can be developed along this extension and continue in front of Union Station, parallel to the train tracks to a pedestrian crossing to Naito Parkway at Third Avenue, or south on Third Avenue to the Classical Chinese Garden. A separate study is underway to consider the potential of extending the Central City Streetcar along a similar route.



Old Town/Chinatown connection to River District

■ EDGES TO THE DISTRICT

The Old Town/Chinatown district is surrounded by edges that represent major barriers to access and commerce. Considerable effort will need to be made to reduce and mitigate the impact of these edges in order to assure the successful redevelopment of Old Town/Chinatown. The following issues were identified during Phase 2:

1. Burnside: The width, high traffic speeds and difficult pedestrian crossings on Burnside Street create a huge barrier to the connection to downtown.
2. Naito Parkway: Waterfront Park is a well-developed open space with limited accessibility for Old Town/Chinatown due to the difficulty in pedestrian crossing.
3. Railroad: The Union Station tracks cannot be crossed by pedestrians other than by the new pedestrian bridge under construction at Union Station. The McCormick Pier Apartments and Union Station housing have difficult pedestrian access to the district.
4. Glisan/Hoyt: The ramps from the Steel Bridge create a significant barrier to areas north of Glisan.
5. Union Station/Post Office: The new developments north of Lovejoy are not accessible to the district.
6. Ankeny: The avenues (3rd, 4th, etc.) crossing Ankeny are wide. There is potential for pedestrian improvements.

Burnside Street

Burnside Street is a major issue and constraint for the Old Town/Chinatown Development Plan. The current design and operation of the street poses a significant problem for the area due to the poor pedestrian safety for crossings, major degradation of economic activity on the street, and high automobile speeds contributing to safety and environmental problems.

ROLE OF BURNSIDE

Burnside Street is a major arterial street located in the heart of downtown. The street serves several roles:

1. **Major Arterial:** Burnside Street connects Northwest Portland with the Burnside Bridge, providing a substantial regional connection for auto traffic.
2. **Urban Boulevard:** Burnside Street qualifies as a Metro-designated urban boulevard. This designation suggests that the area along Burnside should be recognized as a regional center where higher densities and mixed uses need to be supported. Traffic impacts need to be mitigated to enable the mixed-use activity in the vicinity of the street.
3. **Active Use Area:** The Central City Plan designates Burnside Street as an “active use” area which requires storefront retail and pedestrian priorities for the street.
4. **Transit Access:** Buses use the street to provide service to the eastside and require access through left turn at Fifth Avenue and the Transit Mall.

Problems with Burnside for Old Town/Chinatown

The multiple functions of the street are necessitated by the location and historical use of the street. The current operation and use of the street creates significant problems for Old Town/Chinatown:

1. **Burnside Creates A Major Barrier to Downtown:** The current street operation substantially discourages people from

crossing Burnside from downtown. This substantial barrier is regarded as the major deterrent to redevelopment of Old Town/Chinatown.

2. **Street Too Wide:** The width of the street is wider than any other in downtown making pedestrians reluctant to cross the street.
3. **Crossings Unsafe:** The pedestrian crossings are substantially limited on the street and are documented as unsafe based upon the record of incidents.
4. **High Traffic Speeds:** The operation of the street currently encourages high speeds due to the nature of the signals and the width of the street. The speeds and noise contribute to the barrier-like qualities.
5. **Poor Street Front Activity:** Burnside Street does not provide a comfortable environment for pedestrians, resulting in unsuccessful street-front activity in the buildings.
6. **Limited On-Street Parking:** The current operation limits parking during the day allowing three lanes of traffic in each direction. The traffic adjacent to the sidewalk further deteriorates the environment on the street.



Short-Term Recommended Actions

It is recommended that consideration be given to some immediate actions that would begin to improve the environment on the street:

1. **Revise Signal System:** Modify signal system to discourage the current high-speed operation on the street.
2. **Reduce Burnside to Two Lanes/Add Parking:** Add parking meters on the street providing for parking all day. Also consider narrowing the lanes of traffic in accordance with urban boulevard standards. Parking from Fourth eastward should not be installed.
3. **Reduce Excess Roadway Space:** Evaluate the operation of the street and reclaim for sidewalks and public space areas that are not needed for auto use. Included for consideration are reduction of Third and Fourth Avenues south of Burnside that have excess capacity dedicated to autos.
4. **Increase Number of Pedestrian Crossings:** Consider addition of crossings that are currently prohibited to improve accessibility for pedestrians.
5. **Provide Grants for Street Front Improvements:** Consider program to support upgrade of street fronts.
6. **Acquisition:** Include properties in PDC acquisition program that could be converted to support street front activity.

Long-Term Recommended Actions

1. Advocate Commencement of the Burnside Street Study: It is recommended that the City of Portland commence the study of the reconstruction of Burnside as soon as possible. It is recommended that direct participation of representatives from Old Town/Chinatown be assured in the development of the Burnside Street plan.
2. Revise Sidewalk Environment: Change Burnside Street to increase pedestrian amenities including sidewalk extensions at crossings, increased crossings, elimination of the median, and extended sidewalks where possible.
3. Street Improvement Program: Implement a long-term street improvement program that supports redevelopment of buildings along Burnside.
4. Provide Parking: Establish parking along Burnside.
5. Slow Traffic Speeds: Develop operational plan that reduces travel speeds in the area through signal management.
6. Revise Median Design: Consider removal of median in Burnside in all areas except between Fifth and Fourth Avenues to accommodate bus left turn to the Transit Mall and auto left turn at Fourth to provide access into Old Town/Chinatown.
7. Provide Auto Access into Old Town/Chinatown: Consider inclusion of an east-bound left turn lane at Fourth Avenue that would enable access from Burnside into Old Town/Chinatown.



Priority Objectives

The following priority objectives are recommended for consideration by the Steering Committee:

1. **Pedestrian Crossings:** It is recommended that the highest priority be given to improving the pedestrian crossings at Burnside. This can be accomplished through a number of techniques including reduction in the number of lanes to two in each direction all day and extending sidewalks at corners. The median currently in Burnside could be removed in all areas except Fifth Avenue (bus use only) to shorten pedestrian walk distances.

Discussion: The pedestrian crossing is recommended as the highest priority for two reasons: safety for pedestrians and improving the connection to downtown. Burnside Street has one of the highest occurrences of pedestrian accidents in the City. Old Town/Chinatown commerce and first floor retail activity would be enhanced by the willingness of the neighboring populations in downtown to cross Burnside. This should be encouraged and could well be the most important factor in supporting first floor retail activity.

2. **Improve Streetfront Environment on Burnside:** It is recommended that the second priority be given to physical changes on Burnside Street that support an active street environment. This can be accomplished by widening the sidewalks, improved lighting, and/or providing on-street parking along both sides of the street. The on-street parking will provide access for potential customers and serve as a buffer for pedestrians to Burnside traffic. Storefront improvement grants can only be successful if the environment on the street is improved.

Discussion: Burnside Street suffers from a perception of unsavory activity that discourages people from walking to or along the street. The storefronts are unable to improve their operations due to the lack of people willing to be on the street. A physical investment in improved sidewalk environment combined with pedestrian crossings and façade improvement grants could be successful. The combination of high

vehicle speeds, noise and the lack of a buffer to the traffic is a major deterrent to promoting an active pedestrian environment.

3. **Reduce Burnside Traffic Speed:** It is recommended that the third priority be reducing the speed of traffic on Burnside. This can be accomplished by a combination of narrowing lanes, physical improvements such as landscaping and modification of the signal cycle.

Discussion: Travel speeds create significant safety hazards to pedestrians contemplating use of the Burnside crossings. Metro has developed urban boulevard design standards that could be incorporated in the Burnside design. Narrower lanes, landscaping and other devices are recommended. The current signal cycling system (simultaneous) encourages drivers to speed so that more signals can be cleared. This cycle system works most effectively for two way traffic. The one-way grid in downtown is set on a progressive system that results in traffic speeds of 15 miles per hour. The progressive system does not work on a two way street. Alternative cycles should be investigated that would not promote high speeds as the current system does.

4. **Reduce Excess Auto Space:** The fourth priority is to evaluate the true need for auto lanes and space adjacent to Burnside. These areas could be converted to public spaces extending sidewalks for storefronts and providing open space which is greatly needed in Old Town/Chinatown. Most notable are the areas south of Burnside at Third and Fourth Avenues where sidewalk extensions could be effective.

It is recognized that Burnside Street must continue to serve as a major arterial. To that end, certain traffic objectives are recommended to be accommodated by the Burnside Street operation:

1. **Traffic Volumes:** Continue to assure that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the traffic volumes projected. This is recommended to be accommodated in light of the limitations at the Burnside Bridge and 10th Avenue which currently are recognized as bottlenecks.

2. Auto Accessibility: Continue to limit the left turns from Burnside other than Fourth Avenue in order to accommodate traffic flow. This limits access to Old Town/Chinatown but is necessary to assure flow and limited width of the street.
3. Bus Accessibility: Continue to provide access for transit at Fifth Avenue.

Naito Parkway

Naito Parkway has considerable traffic volumes and speed. The Tom McCall Waterfront Park is well developed in the area. The pedestrian access is more limited due to the traffic volumes. There is a pedestrian activated signal at Ankeny which enables a strong connection. North of Burnside, there is a pedestrian warning signal at Couch.

It is recommended that the pedestrian activated warning at Couch be changed to a full signal so that the pedestrian is given full priority for crossing. This signal should be accompanied with signage in the district directing pedestrians to this crossing.

Railroad

The railroad tracks divide the new Yards at Union Station housing development from the district. A pedestrian crossing is being built connecting from the Yards to Union Station at Fifth Avenue. Pedestrians are able to cross the tracks at Naito Parkway under the Steel Bridge. Pedestrians are also able to cross through the Greenway Trail in Waterfront Park. Unfortunately, the crossing at Waterfront Park does not provide for pedestrian access to Old Town/Chinatown until Couch Street which is a poorly understood crossing. The crossing under the Steel Bridge is confusing and difficult, discouraging use.

It is recommended that a pedestrian crossing be provided at Third Avenue where the railroad track narrows to two tracks. This more direct access would enable pedestrians to easily access the Classical Chinese Garden and the district.

Glisan/Hoyt

The ramps from the Steel Bridge at Third Avenue create a poor pedestrian area for the district. The area north of Glisan has redevelopment potential along with the opportunity for connecting the new residential developments in Union Station.

It is recommended that the Glisan Street ramps be reduced to two lanes by extending the curbs on both sides of the street. The east-bound connection on Glisan should be eliminated by providing access for vehicles on Hoyt. The service road along Glisan from the under the Steel Bridge should be closed off at Third Avenue enabling a single lane for turning from the Steel Bridge.

Union Station/Post Office

The Union Station/Post Office area separates Old Town/Chinatown from the Pearl District and Hoyt Street Yards where new development is occurring. PDC has planned a major development in the Union Station property which would include a grocery store.

It is recommended that an attractive access be built through Union Station under the Broadway Bridge that would enable vehicle and pedestrian access to 10th and Northrup. Tri-Met should be encouraged to extend bus routes on the Mall to connect to the Central City Streetcar. This added pedestrian access will strengthen the Union Station area and connections to the adjacent developments.

Ankeny

Ankeny Street provides an important connection from the U.S. Bank Plaza to Waterfront Park. The street includes fountains at Fifth and First Avenues, Third and Fourth Avenues are significant barriers to use of Ankeny by pedestrians due to the street width and traffic speeds.

It is recommended that Third and Fourth Avenues be narrowed with curb extensions and widened sidewalks, and that fountains be placed in Ankeny at Second, Third and Fourth Avenues.