

AGENDA

7. NEW BUSINESS

Adopt a Resolution recommending the City Council adopt the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan



San Carlos Downtown Streetscape Master Plan

Planning and Transportation Commission
April 7, 2025



Project Team

City Staff

Al Savay, Community Development Director

Lisa Porras, Planning Manager

Rendell Bustos, Senior Planner

Hanieh Houshmandi, Senior Traffic Engineer

WRT

James Stickle, Principal, Landscape Architect and Urban Designer

Agenda

- Introduction
- Vision and Guiding Principles
- Downtown Core – Public Realm Design
- Mid-Laurel and South Laurel (SoLa) Street
- Alleys
- Materials, Public Art, Green Infrastructure, Wayfinding
- Phasing and Funding Strategies
- Staff Recommendation and Next Steps

The Project

In progress

**San Carlos
Downtown Specific
Plan**

**Goals
Policies
Standards
Implementation**



Ready for adoption



**Downtown Specific Plan
Adoption September 2025**

**Downtown Streetscape Master Plan
Adoption April 2025**

The Streetscape Master Plan Document



Executive Summary

Chapter 1: **Introduction**

Chapter 2: **Existing Traffic Network and Street Character**

Chapter 3: **Proposed Streetscape and Public Space Design**

Chapter 4: **Towards Implementation**

The Vision

“Downtown is the heart of San Carlos that provides a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, safe, charming, futuristic, and accessible destination for the community and strongly expresses its unique culture and heritage. It is a place for celebration and gathering that offers diverse and authentic experiences through a draw of food, retail, services, art and music in a visually attractive environment for the growing community. Downtown is an inclusive place with easy access for all, opportunities for housing and businesses of all types, and inviting spaces for all users. Downtown San Carlos is a sustainable district, with landscape that supports ecological and community health & well-being.”

Guiding Principles

- Balance and more equitable mobility modes.
- Socially vibrant pedestrian-oriented environment
- Distinctive character and identity unique to San Carlos' culture, history, and context.
- Vibrancy and vitality that consistently attracts users and shoppers in a setting that is distinctive, safe, and attractive.
- Equitable place offering social, economic, housing and recreational opportunities at varying levels of affordability for all users along with being resilient to address evolving climate adaptation needs.



Downtown Advisory Committee (DTAC)

- 7 mtgs
- 1 All-Commissions mtg

Endorsed street designs on March 19, 2024

Revisited final designs on September 3, 2024 prior to City Council endorsement.



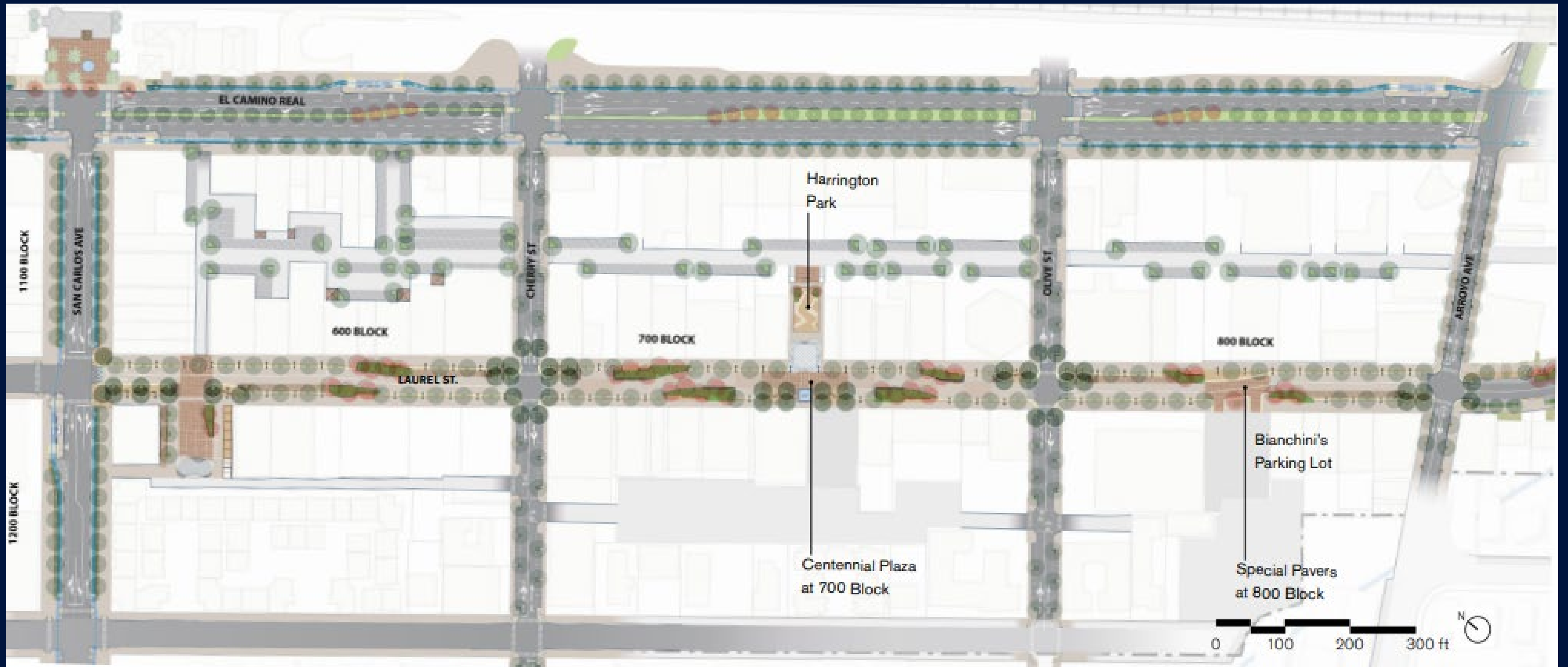
Community Engagement

- Stakeholders Focus Group Interviews: August 2022
- Survey 1: August 2022 – January 2023
- Workshop: August 2022
- Workshop: February 2023
- Coffee and Comments Open House: March 2023
- Survey 2: March 2023 – April 2023
- Project Updates to PTC and CC: April 17 and 24, 2023
- Downtown Business Stakeholder Meeting: May 2023
- Ideation Workshops: December 2023
- Survey 3: December 2023 – January 2024
- EDAC Meeting: January 2024
- PRCC Meeting: February 2024
- YAC: March 2024
- PTC and CC: May, June 2024 (DTAC-endorsed street designs)
- Downtown Business Stakeholder Meeting: August 2024
- All Commissions Joint Meeting: September 2024
- Survey 4: August 2024
- CC Endorsement: September 2024



PROPOSED STREETScape AND PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN

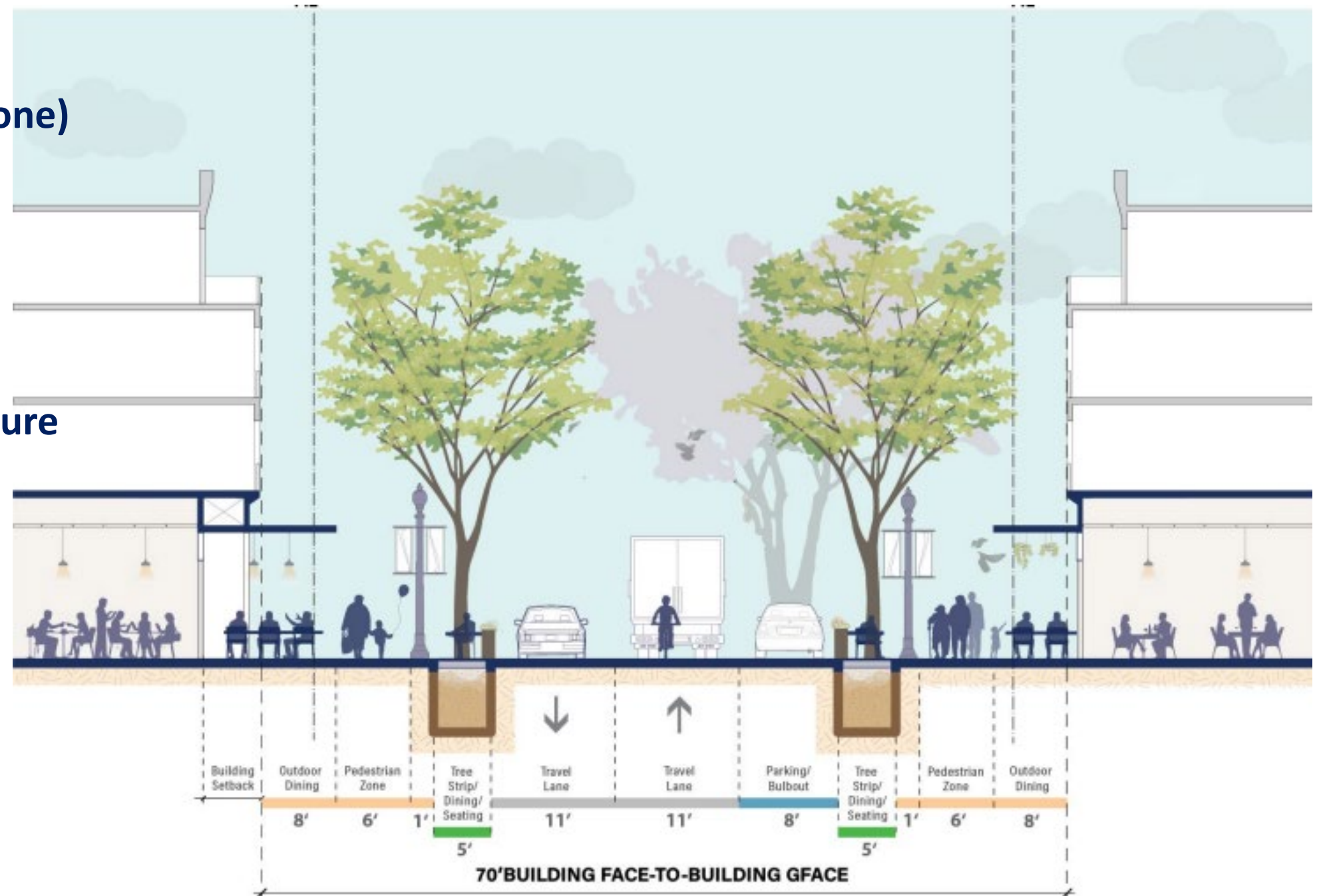
Downtown Core



600 & 800 Blocks, Laurel – Prioritize Pedestrian Access

Key Features

- Entry plazas (within the sidewalk zone) at the end of each street
- 20 ft. sidewalks:
 - 8 ft. wide outdoor dining zone
 - 12 ft pedestrian zone, includes lighting and street trees
- Groves/raingardens (green infrastructure solutions)
- Public seating
- *New public plaza at the 600 block*
- Retractable hydraulic bollards (street closures for events)
- 1 travel lane in each direction
- Multi-use curb zone (e.g. parking)



600 Block, Laurel – A New Public Plaza

Key Features

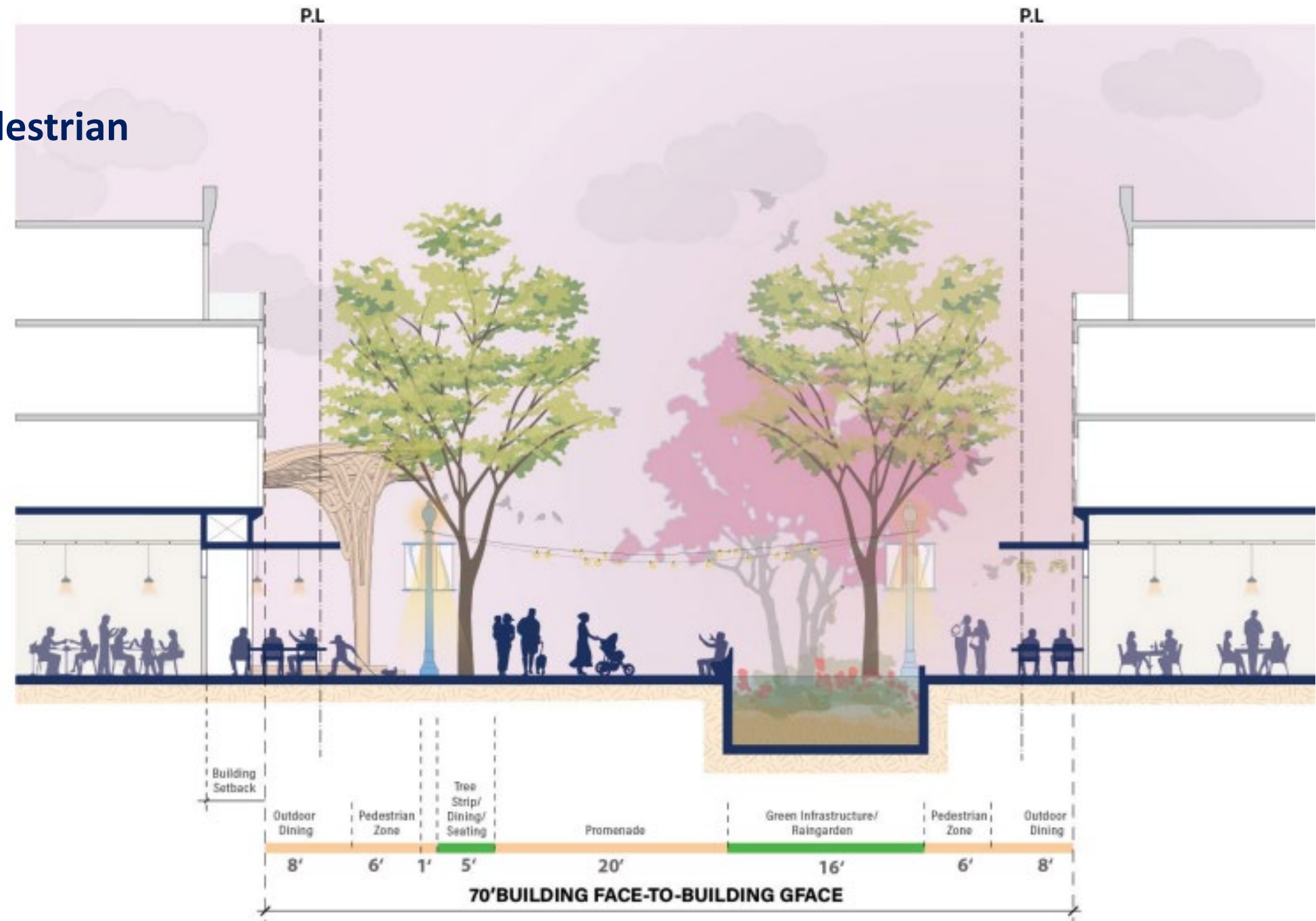
- Event space/ programming
- Pavilion/stage
- Public seating
- Drinking fountain
- Restrooms
- Storage space



700 Block, Laurel Street – Pedestrian Promenade

Key Features

- Full span transformed into a pedestrian plaza
- 8 ft. wide outdoor dining zone
- “Centennial Plaza” at the center
- Fountain/water feature
- Rain gardens
- Tree groves
- Harrington Park improvements
- Restrooms
- 20 ft. wide emergency access
- Retractable bollards



700 Block, Laurel Street - Pedestrian Promenade

Key Features

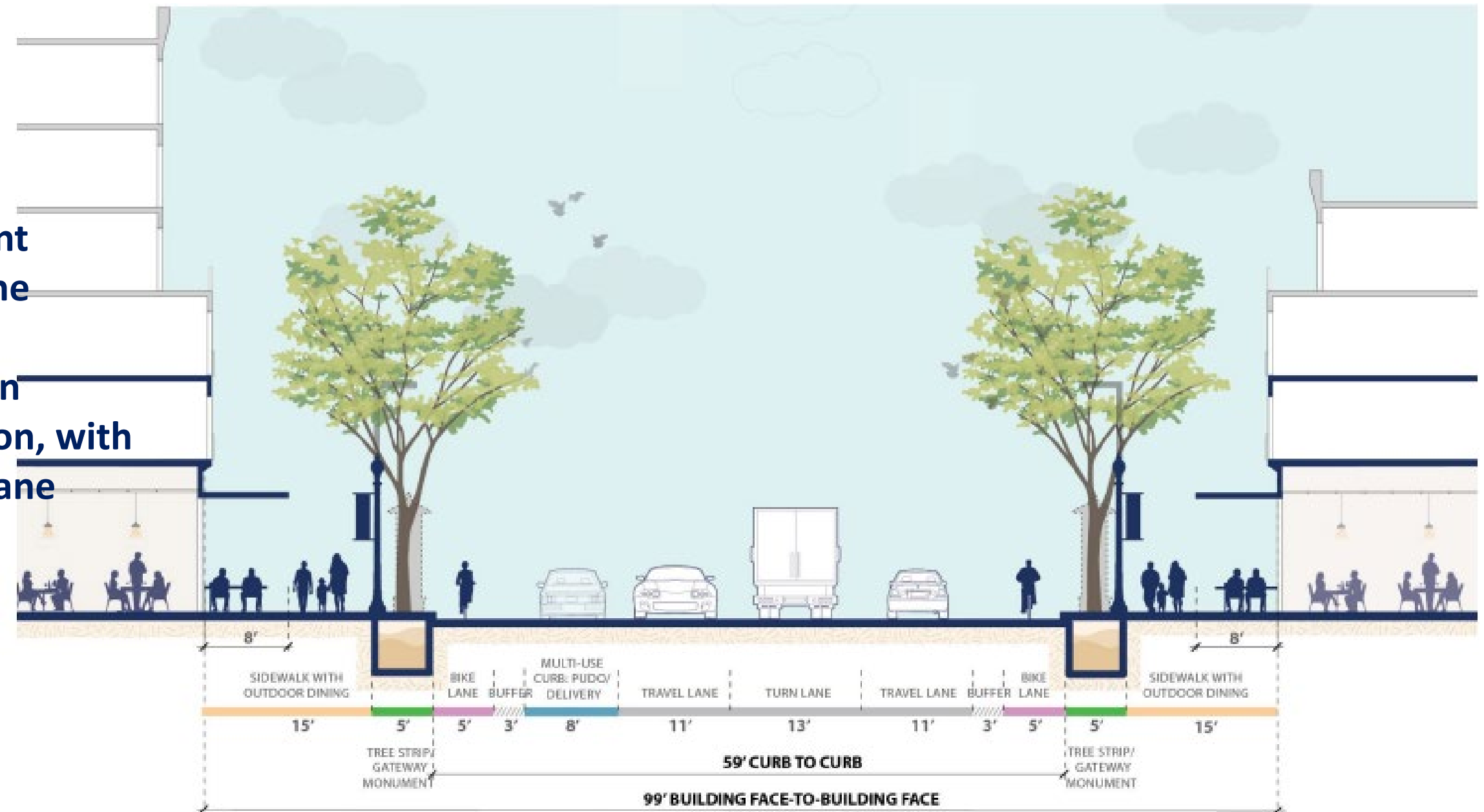
- Entry plazas at opposite ends of the block
- Sinuous promenade
- Pavilion/stage
- Public seating
- Murals/Art/Sculpture options



San Carlos Avenue – The Gateway to Downtown

Key Features

- 20 ft. sidewalks
- Protected bicycle lanes
- New gateway monument
- Multi-use curb lane/zone
- Retractable bollards
- Public transit integration
- Travel lane each direction, with additional center turn lane

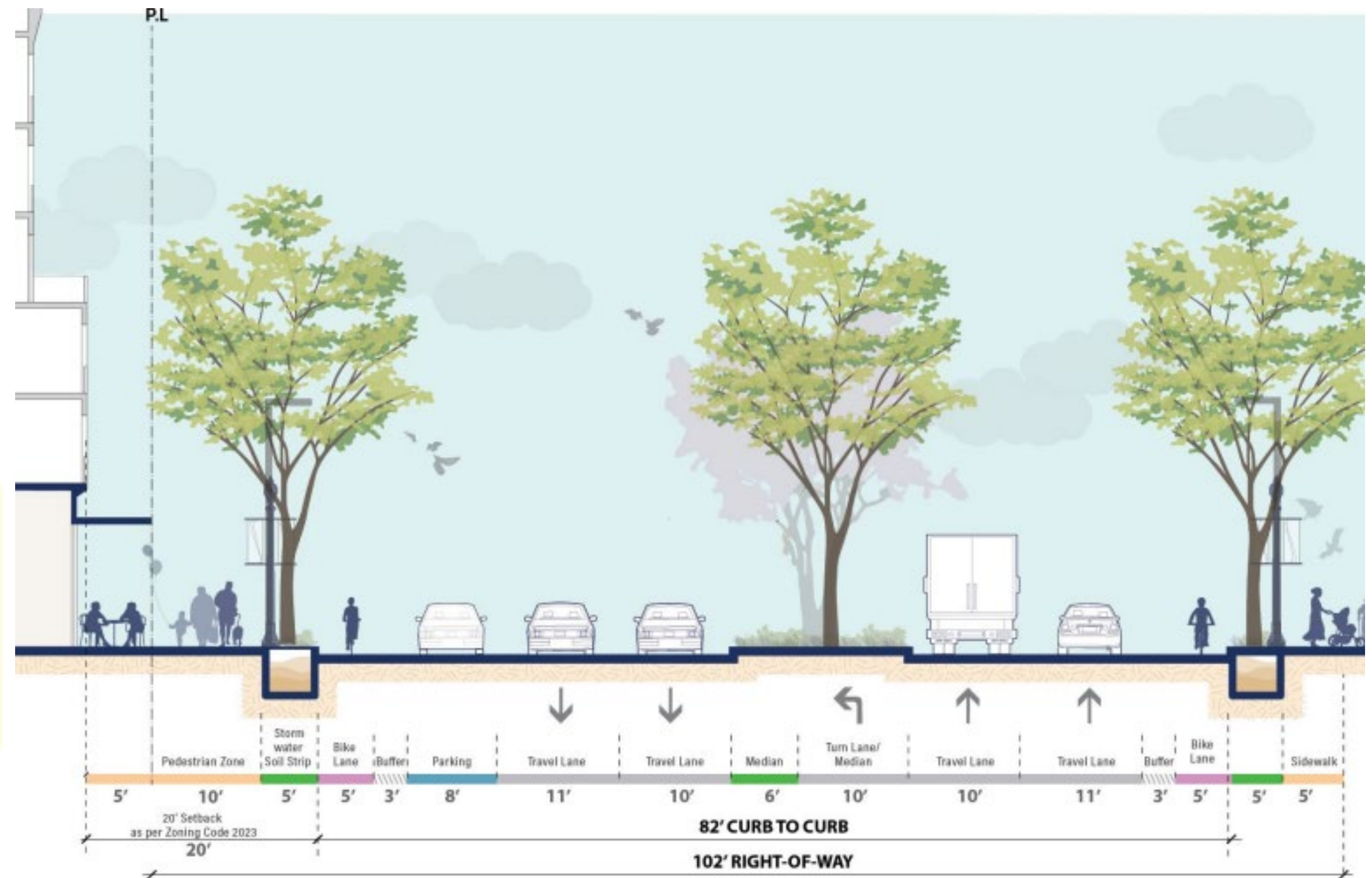


El Camino Real – The Grand Boulevard

Key Features

- 20 ft. sidewalks
- Protected bicycle lanes
- Parking on west side
- Two travel lanes, each direction and turn lane
- Public transit integration

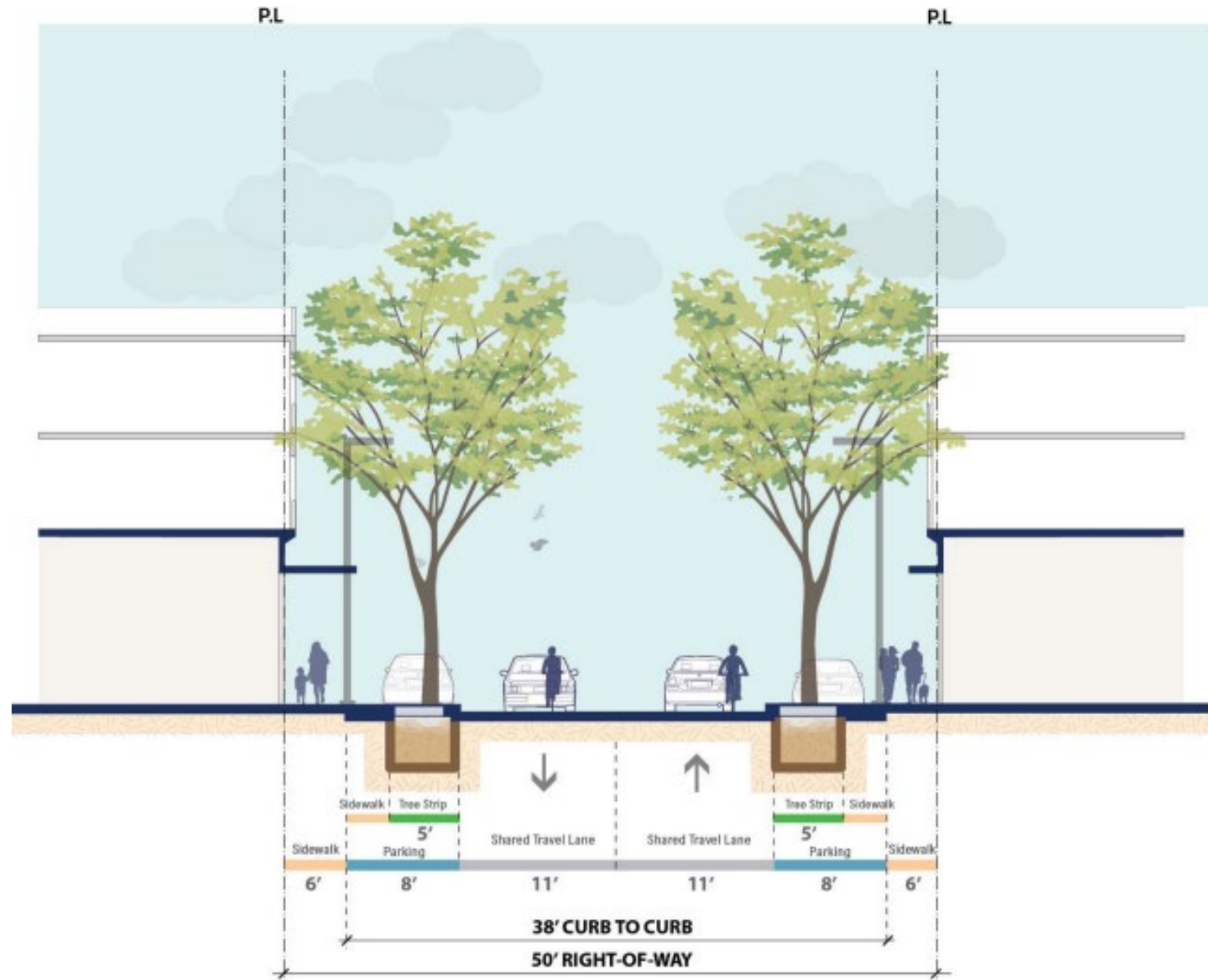
“Supports multi-modal transportation by incorporating key elements such as protected bicycle lanes, widened sidewalks, and in-lane bus stop to offer a comprehensive multi-modal experience.”



Cherry & Olive Streets — Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly

Key Features

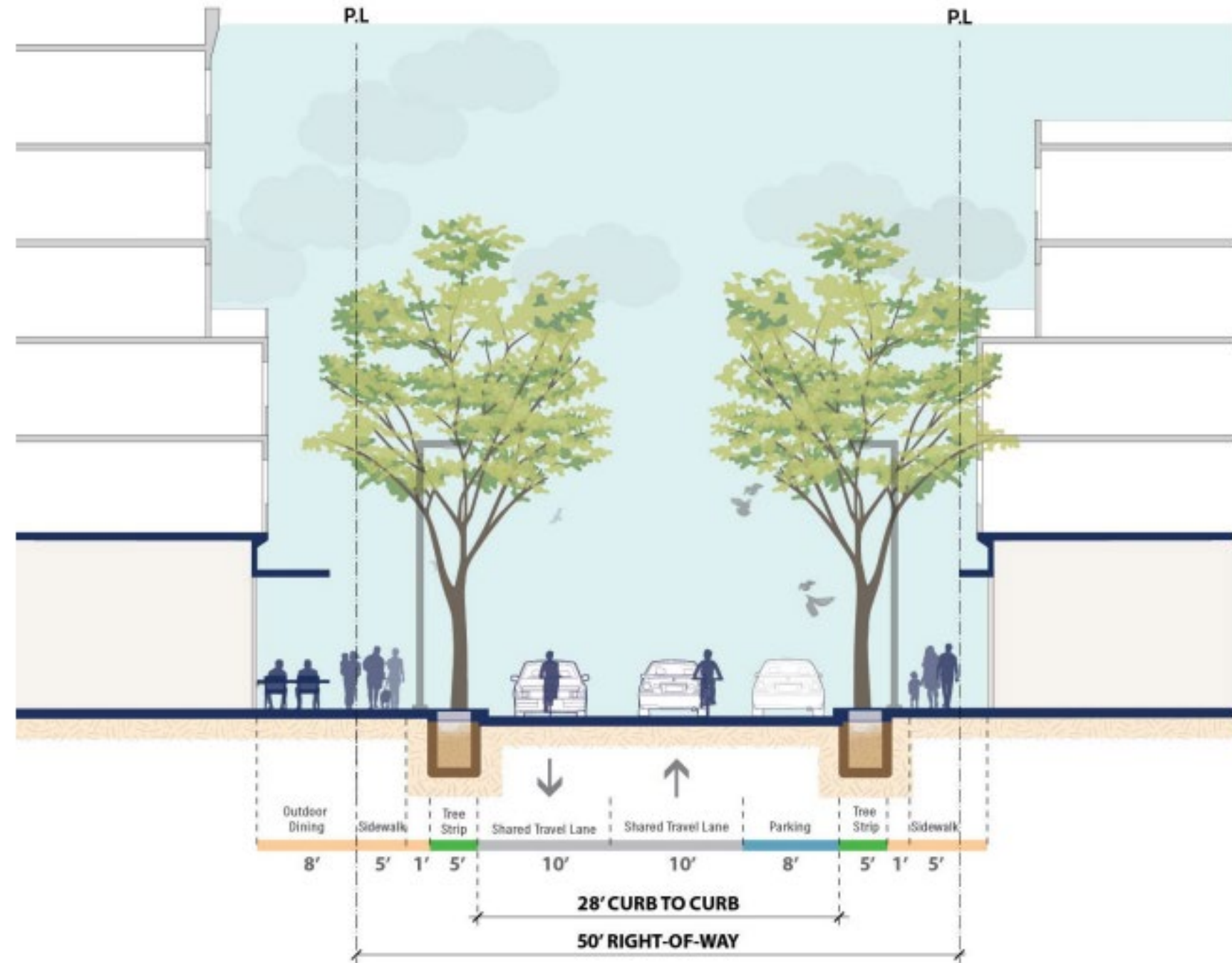
- 6 ft. wide sidewalks
- New trees and tree grates
- Shared bicycle lanes
- Parking / Pick-Up Drop Off on both sides
- One travel lane each direction



Arroyo Avenue – Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly

Key Features

- Widened sidewalks:
 - 17 ft wide north side
 - 6 ft wide south side
- Shared bicycle lanes
- Narrowed travel lanes
- Speed calming measures
- On-street parking
- Pick-Up/Drop-Off
- Pedestrian and Bicycle connector to the East Side



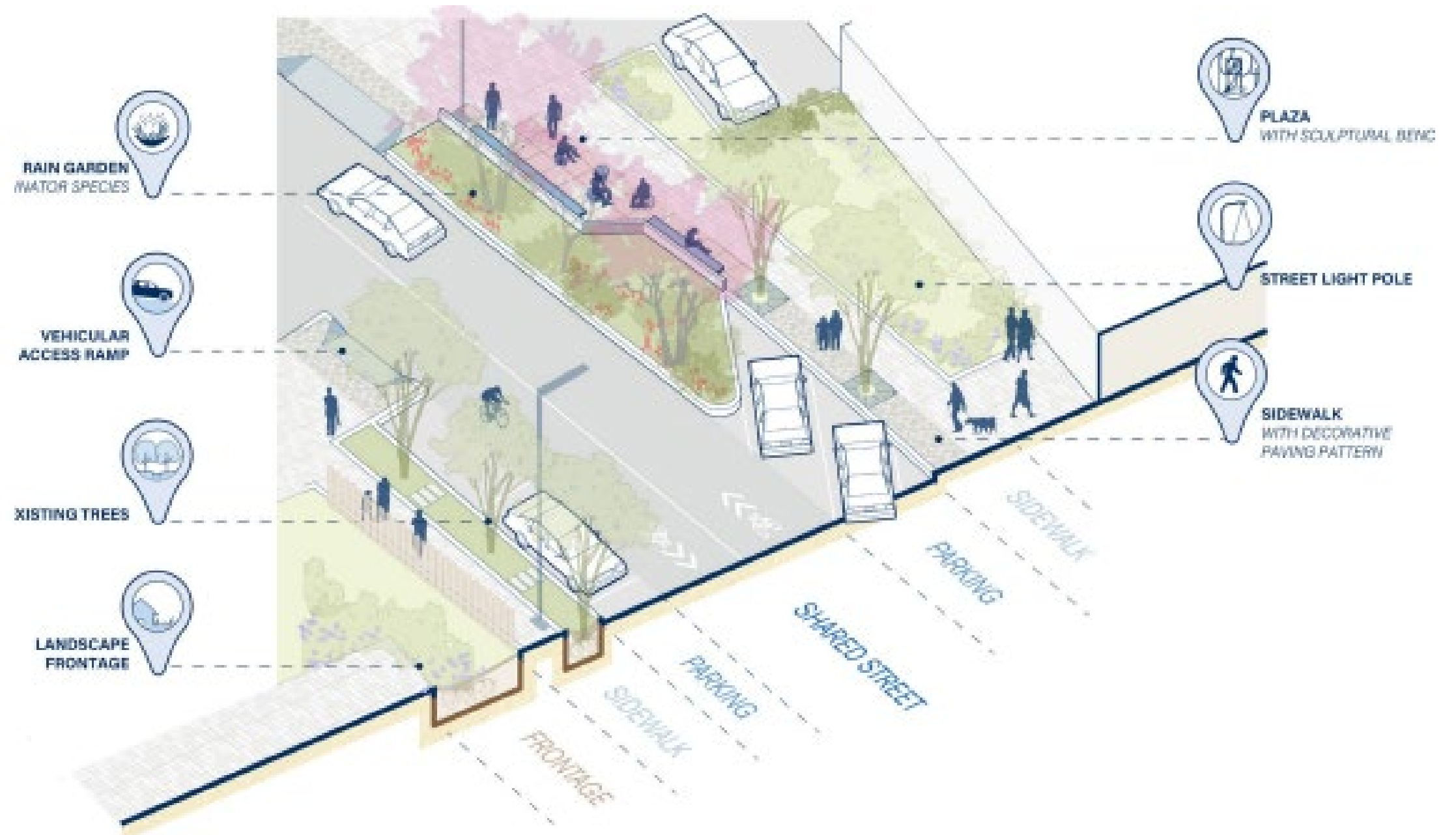
Mid-Laurel and South Laurel (SoLA) Street



Laurel Street – South of Arroyo

Key Features

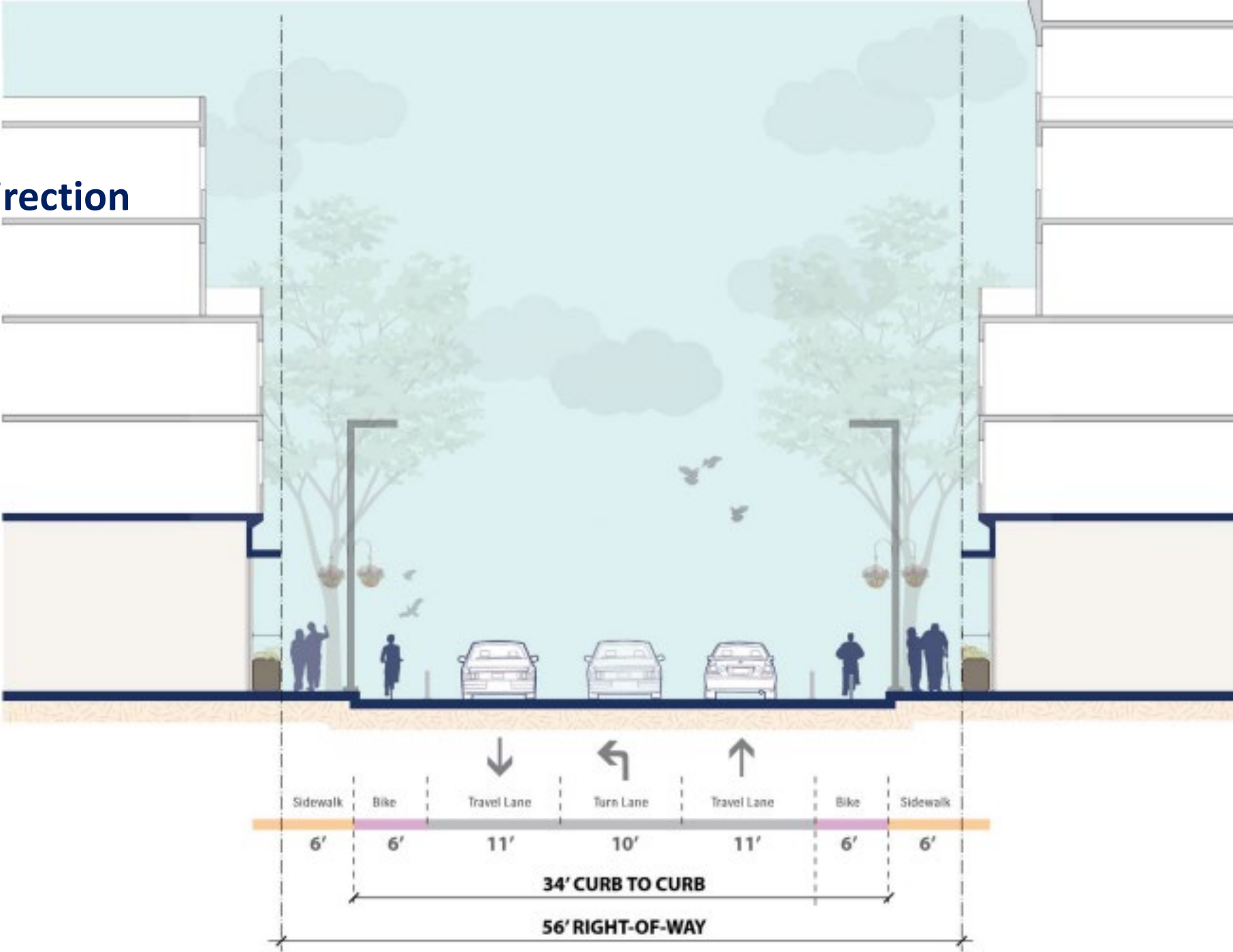
- Parkway Character with green spaces and tree canopies
- Shared travel lanes
- Public seating
- Green infrastructure
- Entry plazas at Morse and Brittan



Brittan Avenue – Connector to the East Side and Beyond

Key Features

- 6 ft wide sidewalks
- Dedicated 6 ft wide bicycle lane each direction
- 1 travel lane each direction



The Alleys



The Alleys

Alleys serve a dual purpose: access to surface parking and enhance pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connectivity.

700 Block, Laurel Street

- A model for alleys
- Improved striping
- Secondary business entrances
- Service and delivery access
- Strategic placement of trash enclosures

Re-Organized Alleys

- Re-organization of parking
- Screened dumpsters and equipment
- Secondary business entrances

Plus

- Better lighting
- Landscaping
- Potential to integrate art elements

...more inviting and multi-functional public space.

Materials, Public Art, Green Infrastructure, Wayfinding

1. **Grand Boulevard Character** – *El Camino Real*
 2. **Civic Character** – *San Carlos Ave and Cherry St*
 3. **Pedestrian Promenade & Plaza Character** – *600, 700, 800 Laurel St + Harrington Park and New Plaza*
 4. **Parkway Character** – *Laurel St (South of Arroyo) and Brittan Ave*
- **Public Art** – Recommendations to Integrate Public Art in the downtown core streetscape
 - **Green Infrastructure** – incorporated throughout all street segments
 - **Wayfinding** – builds upon the City's Wayfinding Project

Grand Blvd Character – El Camino Real



Application Examples:



Pole Light



Lighting Fixture Section View



Gateway Monument



Sky Climber Southern Live Oak
Quercus Virginiana 'Sky Climber'
Along El Camino Real streetscape, for large scale and form



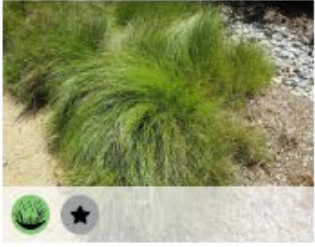
California Sycamore
Platanus racemosa 'Roberts'
Along El Camino Real Median, for scale and form



Goldenrain Tree
Koelreuteria paniculata
At median + entry plaza, for accent colors



Muskogee Crape Myrtle
Lagerstroemia indica x faunei 'Muskogee'
At median + entry plaza, for accent colors



Sand Dune Sedge
Carex Pansa
Inside raingardens, grove understory



Island Pink Yarrow
Achillea millefolium 'Island Pink'
Grove understory



Douglas Iris
Iris Douglasiana
Inside raingardens



Autumn Moor Grass
Sesleria Autumnalis
Inside raingardens, grove understory

Raingarden Plants:



Pollinator Garden Plants:



California Native Plants:



El Camino Real will feature materials that reflect the scale and prominence of this important arterial as it defines the eastern edge of the downtown area. It is characterized by warm tone furnishing and paving, in the darker range of this color palette. Larger metal and natural stone components will be incorporated to convey a sense of civic formality and grandeur.

Civic Character – San Carlos Avenue & Cherry Street

San Carlos Avenue and Cherry Street both serve as gateways to the downtown and as primary connector streets to the Civic Center. They share the same material palette with the Grand Boulevard Character, which is characterized by warm tones and a darker color palette.



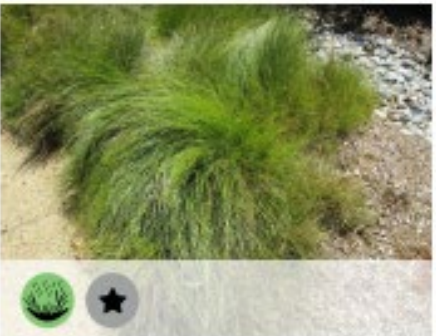
Cork Oak
Quercus suber
Along streetscape, for shade and form.



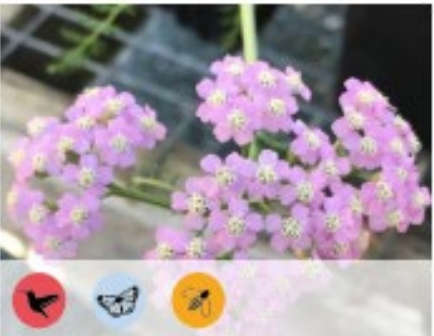
Goldenrain Tree
Koelreuteria paniculata
At median + entry plaza, for accent colors



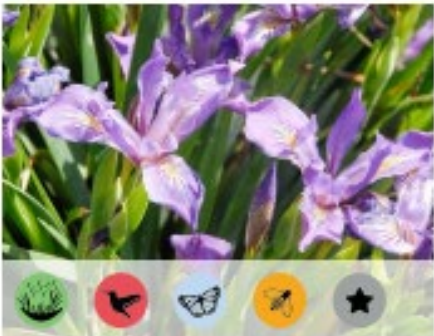
Muskogee Crape Myrtle
Lagerstroemia indica x fauriei 'Muskogee'
At median + entry plaza, for accent colors



Sand Dune Sedge
Carex Pansa
Inside raingardens, grove understory



Island Pink Yarrow
Achillea millefolium 'Island Pink'
Grove understory



Douglas Iris
Iris Douglasiana
Inside raingardens



Autumn Moor Grass
Sesleria Autumnalis
Inside raingardens, grove understory

Raingarden Plants:

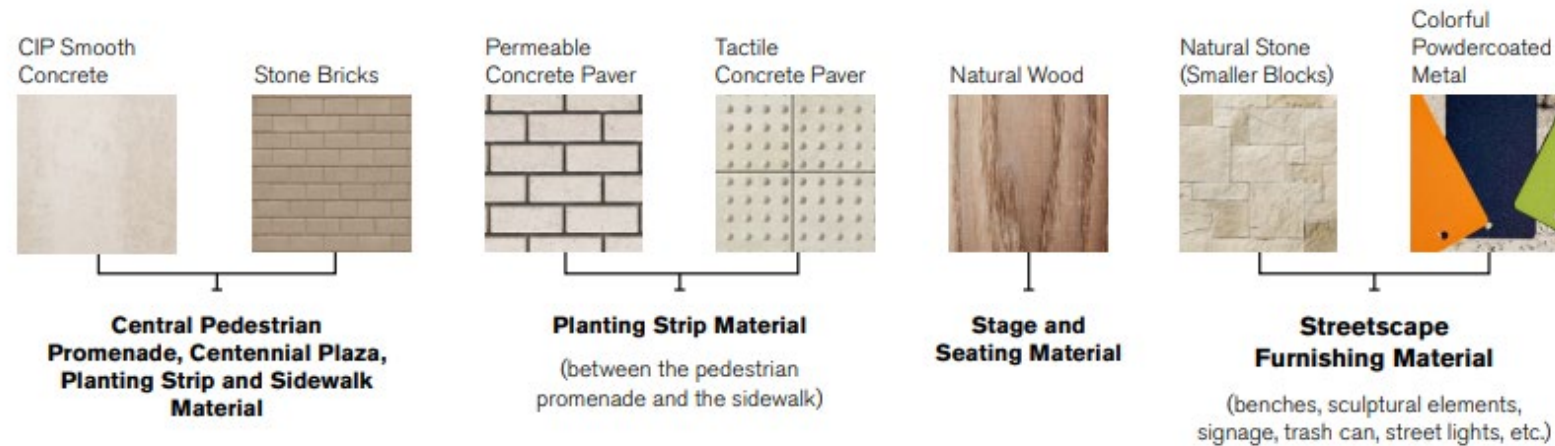
Pollinator Garden Plants:

California Native Plants:

Pedestrian Promenade and Plaza Character

600, 700, and 800 Blocks of Laurel Street + Harrington Park and New Plaza

Distinguished by materials in warm tones and a lighter color palette. Paving patterns incorporate greater variation to enrich the visual and tactile quality of the streetscape. Wooden elements are generously deployed into this character zone to create warm and inviting social atmosphere, highlighted by the custom benches and the pavilion structure at Harrington Park.



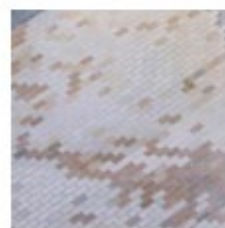
Plaza Application Examples:



Mural Art



Pop Up Stores



Geometric Paving Pattern



Stage Canopy



Sculptural Seating

Promenade Application Examples:



Play Equipment



Street Pole Light



Light Fixture Section View



Western Sycamore
Platanus racemosa 'Roberts'

Along streetscape, for shade, large scale and form



Gambel Oak
Quercus gambelii

Inside raingardens, for accent color and shade



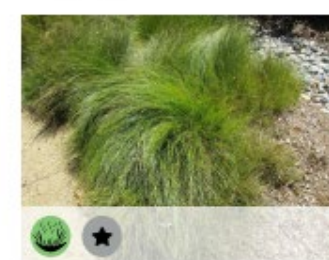
Goldenrain Tree
Koelreuteria paniculata/ Koelreuteria elegans

At median + entry plaza, for yellow/ pink accent colors



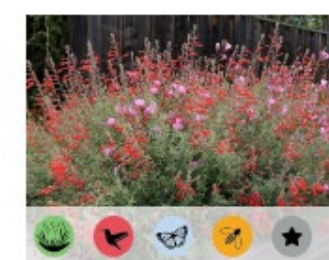
Muskogee Crape Myrtle
Lagerstroemia indica x fauriei 'Muskogee'

At median + entry plaza, for pink accent colors



Sand Dune Sedge
Carex Pansa

Inside raingardens, grove understory



California Fuchsia
Epilobium Canum 'Everett's Choice'

Inside raingarden



Douglas Iris
Iris Douglasiana

Inside raingardens



Autumn Moor Grass
Sesleria Autumnalis

Inside raingardens, grove understory

Raingarden Plants:



Pollinator Garden Plants:



California Native Plants:



Parkway Character – Mid Laurel and SoLa



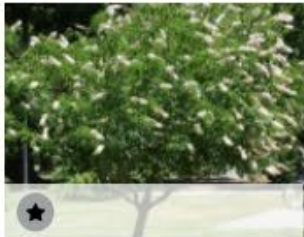
Application Examples:



Mix of Native Oak Species
Quercus suber, Quercus tomentella, Quercus engelmannii
Along streetscape, for shade and form.



California Sycamore
Platanus racemosa 'Roberts'
At creek crossing, for scale and form.



California Buckeye
Aesculus californica
Landscape frontage, for unique form and texture.



Catalina Ironwood
Lyonothamnus floribundus ssp. aspleniifolius
Landscape frontage, for unique form and texture.



California Fuchsia
Epilobium Canum 'Everett's Choice'
Inside raingarden



Autumn Moor Grass
Sesleria Autumnalis
Inside raingardens, grove understory



Sand Dune Sedge
Carex Pansa
Inside raingardens, grove understory

Raingarden Plants:

Pollinator Garden Plants:

California Native Plants:

The Parkway Character focuses on diversifying the tree selections instead of having a unifying species for the entire linear planting strip. Existing trees are kept integral as much as possible, with addition of new trees where shade is lacking, or where additional planting spaces are present such as in the bulb-outs and landscape setback zones.

Public Art

Reflect the City of San Carlos' unique identity, promote cultural expression, and enhance the public realm by integrating art into key civic spaces, infrastructure, and community hubs.

- More platforms for local artists, e.g. season art installations throughout downtown
- Sculptures and monuments at key gateways and/or intersections
- Incorporate cultural elements – e.g. Sister City concepts
- Murals
- Locations: Street intersections, plazas and parks, along sidewalks and pedestrian strips

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure will be incorporated throughout all street segments within the Project Area to mitigate the impacts of extreme weather events and provide key environmental benefits such as passive-cooling, carbon sequestration, and rainwater interception. The overarching goal is to foster a climate-forward, sustainable future that supports all living creatures co-existing in the urban system.

Wayfinding

Help drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians get around our city in the most efficient way possible. The signage system is proposed to help direct people to downtown, public parking, the Caltrain station and other important locations in San Carlos.

- Gateway – welcoming entry point
- Placemaking – cohesive visual language (street light pole banner)
- Pedestrian – navigating key destinations (civic center, etc.)
- Bicycle directional wayfinding
- Vehicular directional wayfinding (points of interest or major intersections, to parking)

Implementation Chapter - Phasing and Funding



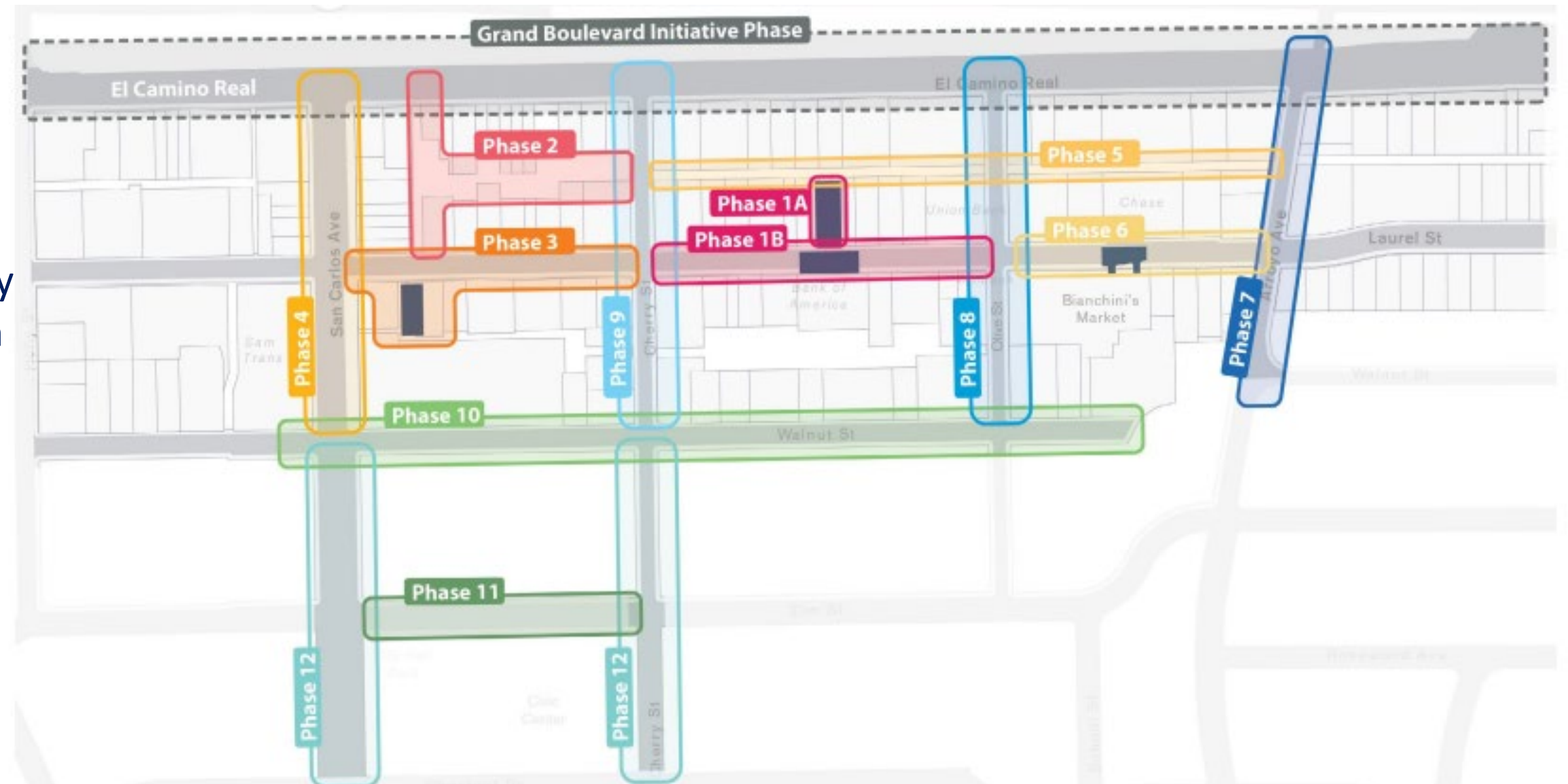
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TOWARDS
IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation Chapter

Phasing Strategy

Due to the scale and complexity of the project, the phasing plan is designed to minimize disruptions while ensuring continuous community access. **The precise sequencing of the phases will be decided by the San Carlos City Council.**



Implementation Chapter

Funding Strategy

Approximate budgets in 2024 dollars needed to implement all phases of the plan.

Realizing this vision hinges on securing adequate funding to cover design, construction, and long-term maintenance costs.

- City of San Carlos Funds
- Local, Federal Funding
- Municipal Bonds
- Community Benefit Dollars

DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION COST ESTIMATES FOR EACH PHASE

PHASE	STREET	DESIGN COST	2024 CONSTRUCTION COST	ENGINEERING	2024 DEVELOPMENT COST
0	El Camino Real (Holly to Arroyo)	\$1,379,232	\$13,792,323	\$2,068,848	\$17,240,403
1	Laurel Street - Cherry to Olive Street (700 Block)	\$813,037	\$8,130,370	\$1,219,556	\$10,162,963
1.1	Harrington Park (700 Block)	\$370,771	\$3,707,706	\$556,156	\$4,634,632
1.2	Alley Parking Improvements	\$24,460	\$244,600	\$36,690	\$305,750
1.2	Wheeler Parking Garage Improvements	\$8,594	\$85,938	\$12,891	\$107,422
2	North Alley - San Carlos to Cherry	\$574,014	\$5,740,144	\$861,022	\$7,175,180
3	Laurel Street - San Carlos to Cherry (600 Block)	\$756,440	\$7,564,403	\$1,134,660	\$9,455,504
3	New Plaza (on 600 Block)	\$263,052	\$2,630,524	\$394,579	\$3,288,156
4	San Carlos Avenue - El Camino Real to Walnut Avenue	\$710,908	\$7,109,080	\$1,066,362	\$8,886,350
5	South Alley - Cherry to Arroyo	\$374,067	\$3,740,667	\$561,100	\$4,675,834
6	Laurel Street - Olive to Arroyo (800 Block)	\$579,507	\$5,795,067	\$869,260	\$7,243,834
7	Arroyo - El Camino Real to Walnut	\$308,636	\$3,086,360	\$462,954	\$3,857,950
8	Olive - El Camino Real to Walnut	\$467,403	\$4,674,029	\$701,104	\$5,842,537
9	Cherry Street - El Camino to Walnut	\$530,804	\$5,308,036	\$796,205	\$6,635,045
10	Walnut Avenue	\$930,813	\$9,308,131	\$1,396,220	\$11,635,164
11	Elm Avenue	\$706,830	\$7,068,299	\$1,060,245	\$8,835,374
12	Cherry Street - Elm to Walnut	\$286,770	\$2,867,704	\$430,156	\$3,584,630
12	San Carlos Avenue - Walnut to Elm	\$397,272	\$3,972,720	\$595,908	\$4,965,900
TOTAL		\$9,482,610	\$94,826,103	\$14,223,915	\$118,532,628

The Vision

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Guiding Principles

- balance of mobility modes
- socially vibrant pedestrian-oriented environment and to minimize auto-dependence to access downtown
- distinctive character and identity unique to San Carlos' culture, history, and context
- vibrancy and vitality that consistently attracts users and shoppers in a setting that is distinctive, safe, and attractive
- equitable place offering social, economic, housing and recreational opportunities at varying levels of affordability for all users along with being resilient to address evolving climate adaptation needs



Staff Recommendation:

“I move that the Planning and Transportation Commission adopt a Resolution recommending the City Council adopt the San Carlos Downtown Streetscape Master Plan.”



Next Steps

- April 28, 2025 - City Council adoption
- Continue to prepare Downtown Specific Plan
- Summer 2025 – Release Public Draft Downtown Specific Plan
 - August 18, 2025 – PTC recommendation
 - September 22, 2025 – City Council adoption



www.sancarlosdowntownplan.com



AdvancePlanning@cityofsancarlos.org



Questions or comments from the Commission

1

Downtown

Core:

San Carlos Ave

600 Laurel

700 Laurel

800 Laurel

Harrington Park

New Plaza

Cherry and Olive

Arroyo Ave

2

Mid-Laurel & South

Laurel Street

Laurel (South of Arroyo)

Brittan Ave

3

Alleys

4

Materials, Public

Art, Green

Infrastructure,

Parking,

Wayfinding

5

Implementation

Phasing

Funding

PUBLIC COMMENT

**Planning and Transportation Commission – Agenda Item 7a – San Carlos Downtown Streetscape Master Plan

If you would like to make a public comment for items this item:

1. Fill out a Request to Speak Form located in the back of the Council Chambers and submit to City Staff; or you may raise your hand when the PTC Chair calls for public comments
2. Join the Zoom meeting (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88635467439> Or call 1-669-900-9128 and enter the Meeting ID: **886 3546 7439**). Virtually raise your hand by clicking on “Reactions” and the “Raise Hand” icon at the bottom of your screen. If joining by phone, press ***9; *6** to unmute when called upon.

Two Minute Timer:

In the interest of full disclosure,
please note if you are a paid representative/advocate for any item you'll be commenting on.