FACADE IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

THE CITY OF HUGHSON

Adopted
May 23, 2005

FACADE IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

THE CITY OF HUGHSON

Adopted
May 23, 2005

City Council

Thomas E. Crowder, Mayor
Ken Moore, Mayor Pro Tem
Ramon Bawanan, Council Member
Greg Adams, Council Member
Stephen Qualls, Council Member

Planning Commission

Matt Beekman
Michael Brooks
Jean Henley
Jerry Ledermann
Larry Montoya

City of Hughson

Joseph Donabed, City Manager
Barry Siebe, Planning Director
David Chase, Public Works Director

Design, Community & Environment

David Early, AICP, Principal
Tom Ford, AICP, Senior Associate, Project Manager
Maren Moegel, Project Urban Designer
Caitilin Pope-Daum, Urban Designer
Diana Lee Sonne, Graphic Production Artist

OVERVIEW

The City of Hughson has begun a process to help revitalize its downtown area and transform Hughson Avenue into a more pedestrian-oriented and commercially vibrant "Main Street." Right-of-way improvements are planned for Charles Street, including the intersection of Charles Street and Hughson Avenue, and additional improvements have been designated for two blocks of Hughson Avenue as part of a grant application that the City prepared to seek funding. In tandem with the improvements designed for the public right-of-way on Hughson Avenue, the City is instituting a façade improvement program to assist Hughson Avenue building owners and merchants. The goal is to promote commercial viability and to foster a pedestrian-scaled environment on Hughson Avenue.

This booklet is intended to be used by merchants and property owners on Hughson Avenue as a springboard for design ideas. It includes two chapters:

- ***The Hughson Avenue Commercial Corridor.*** The first chapter provides an overview of streetscape designs that have been prepared for Charles Street and Hughson Avenue in addition to other designs and strategies for strengthening the downtown area.
- ***Downtown Façade Improvements.*** The second chapter is comprised of two parts. The first provides design concepts for façade and building improvements that promote a pedestrian-oriented commercial street. A second section uses some of those concepts to illustrate conceptual façade improvements that could be made to existing buildings along Hughson Avenue, between Third Street and Fourth Street.

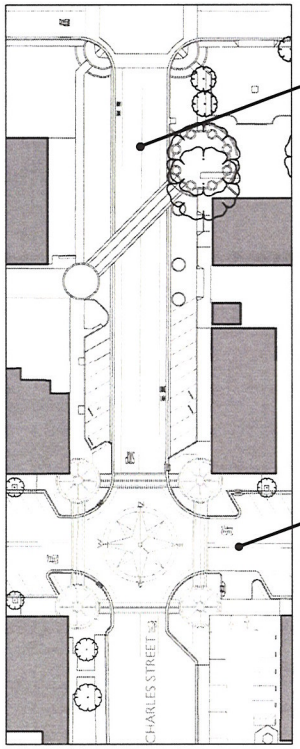
This chapter provides an overview of various downtown design concepts and improvement strategies that the City of Hughson and downtown Hughson building owners and merchants can utilize to improve the attractiveness and vitality of the downtown business district.

A. Background Studies

This section summarizes the design work that has been for the downtown, specifically Hughson Avenue.

1. Charles Street Improvements

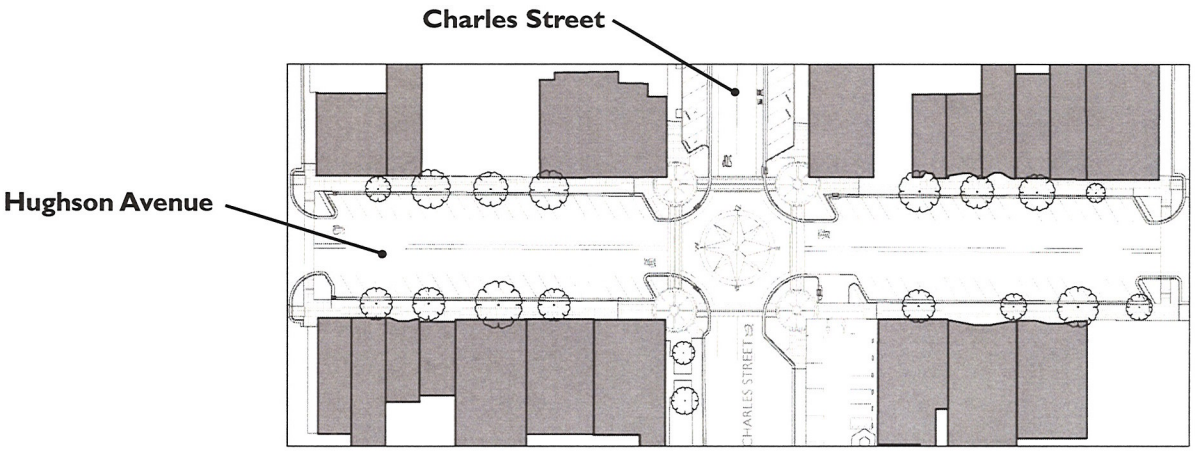
A streetscape improvement plan was completed in 2004 for Charles Street, which includes significant improvement of the intersection of Charles Street and Hughson Avenue. The design bridges between the previously completed improvements to Charles Street, north of the downtown area, and Hughson Avenue. This plan includes features that will add to the character of the downtown area and enhance the pedestrian experience, such as landscaped planting areas in the intersection's curb bulb-out areas and a decorative pavement treatment on the sidewalk.



Charles Street Improvements

2. *Hughson Avenue Phase I Improvements*

In November, 2004, the City prepared streetscape improvement plans for the two blocks of Hughson Avenue between Third and Fourth Streets, as part of a funding application. These improvements included sidewalk improvements between Third and Fourth Streets and intersection improvements in that same area, to allow for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.



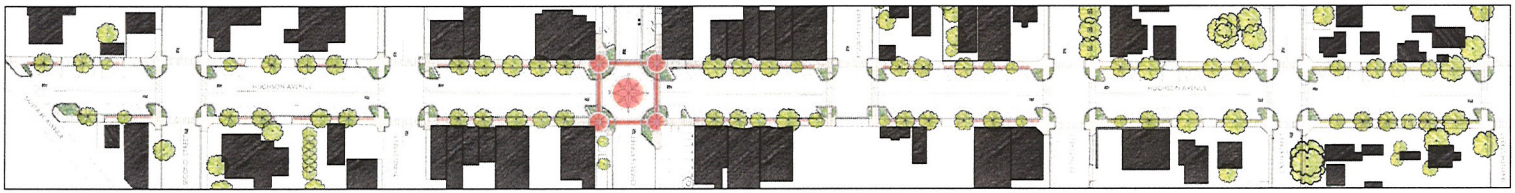
Hughson Avenue Phase I Improvements

B. Conceptual Streetscape Plan

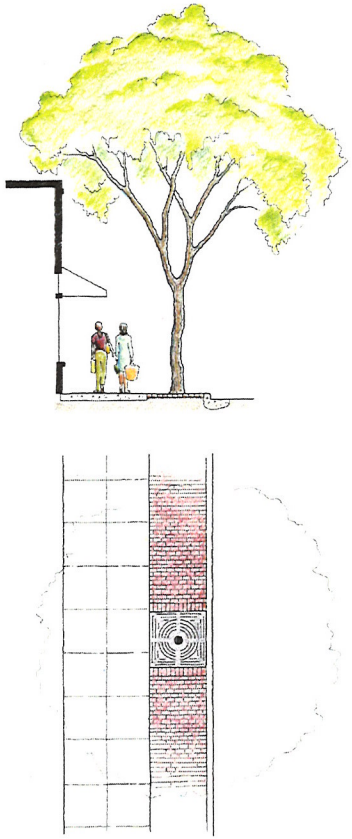
A conceptual design for a second phase of improvements to Hughson Avenue has been prepared by DC&E. The Conceptual Streetscape Plan was developed to build on design work completed for the Charles Street Improvements and the Hughson Avenue Phase I Improvements, and illustrates design treatments the City can implement along the entire length of Hughson Avenue. This section summarizes some of the key components of the Conceptual Streetscape Plan.

- ***Sidewalks.*** The Streetscape Plan includes two complimentary sidewalk treatments, each to be used in different Hughson Avenue contexts. While Hughson Avenue is primarily a commercial street, it also serves as frontage for both single family and multi-family residences, particularly towards the east end. To accommodate this difference in use, the majority of Hughson Avenue receives a brick and concrete treatment appropriate to the commercial setting, while the two block stretch at the east end includes a planting strip between the sidewalk and the back of the curb.

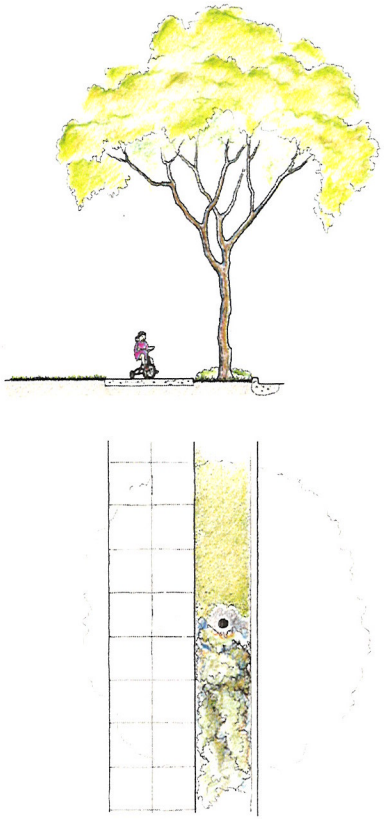
- ***Curb Bulb-outs and Crosswalks.*** Plans completed for both the Charles Street Improvements and the Hughson Avenue Phase I Improvements included planted bulb-outs, or curb extensions, at intersections. These bulb-outs increase pedestrian safety, shorten crossing distances and provide opportunities for including attractive planting. The design work completed for this Conceptual Streetscape Plan continues the continues this concept by recommending installation of bulb-outs for the remainder of Hughson Avenue, from Second street to Seventh Street. Installation of the bulb-outs can be achieved without decreasing the net number of parking spaces on Hughson Avenue.



Hughson Avenue Conceptual Streetscape Plan



Section and Plan: Commercial Condition



Section and Plan: Residential Condition

- ***Street Trees.*** Street trees are an important part of the pedestrian environment. In an area with hot summers, such as Hughson, shade is a crucial component of pleasant sidewalk environments. Additionally street trees are able to provide shade for adjacent buildings, which can offer significant reductions in energy usage. Street trees help to define the pedestrian realm, differentiating the sidewalk from the street and offer a pleasurable experience for pedestrians and motorists alike. The Conceptual Streetscape Plan includes information on:
  - Tree Species
  - Tree Installation
  - Planting Conditions
  - Tree Grates
- ***Street Lighting.*** Implementation of pedestrian-scale street lights should continue, following the lead set by recommendations made in the Charles Street Improvements and Hughson Avenue Phase I Improvements designs. The light standards and fixtures should be spaced approximately 30 to 40 feet apart.

C. Downtown Opportunities

A number of ideas have been developed for improvements to the Downtown, including the identification of potential sites that could be used for parking, plazas or new buildings. The drawing on page 8 illustrates those potential improvements and is for illustrative purposes only. The implementation of these types of improvements would strengthen the pedestrian scale of the area and provide opportunities for increased amenities and parking for downtown businesses. There are four types of improvements that have been considered for improving the overall downtown of Hughson.

- *New Parking Facilities.* A number of different sites have been identified specifically for new parking facilities. These facilities would be funded through the introduction of a Downtown Parking District, the potential boundaries of which are shown in the Downtown Opportunities drawing on page 8. These facilities would provide greater capacity for parking spaces for patrons of downtown businesses. Sites considered include:

  - A large area along Santa Fe Avenue that would include closure of Second Street south of Hughson Avenue and would incorporate an efficient reorganization of the existing parking behind the Community Center

  -The Fourth Street right-of-way south of Hughson Avenue, potentially in conjunction with a new plaza

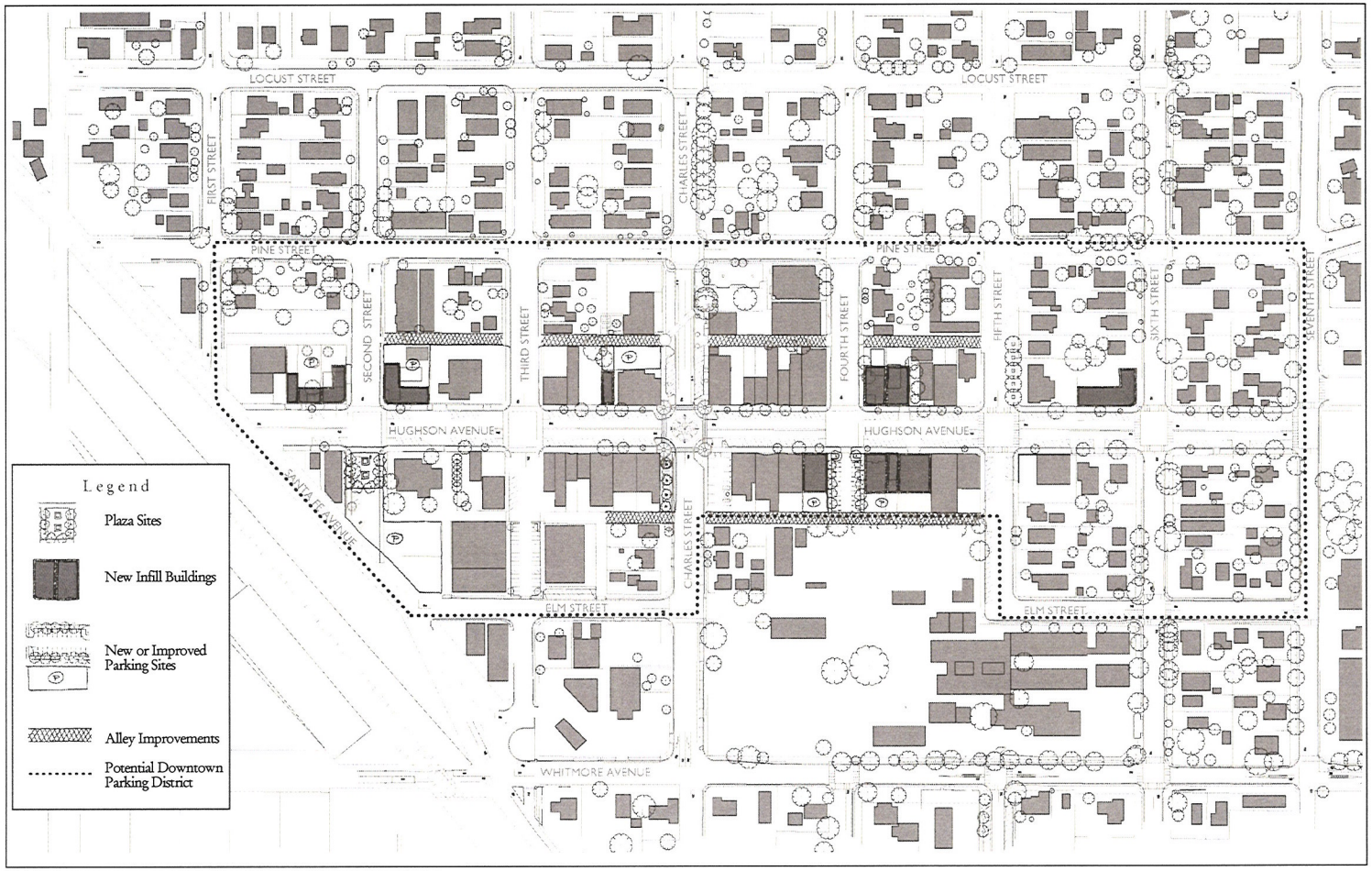
- *Public Plazas.* Two potential sites have been identified for a new downtown plaza, including:

  - South of Hughson Avenue at Second Street

  - A narrow piece of land at the southwest corner of Charles Street and Hughson Avenue

- *Alley Improvements.* Many of the alleys in the downtown would benefit from improvements that would include paving, storm drainage and street lighting.

- *Infill Buildings.* A few sites have been identified as potentially underutilized. New development on these sites could create economic benefit for the property owners as well as enhance the Hughson Avenue street frontage. The Downtown Improvements drawing on page 8 is for illustrative purposes only and does not commit any property owner to redevelopment of their building.



Downtown Opportunities

This drawing does not commit property owners or the City to making specific improvements on the parcels shown.

This chapter includes an overview of design concepts that help to achieve attractive and pedestrian-oriented façades for buildings located on a typical downtown street. Following that overview, four Hughson Avenue block frontages are examined and illustrated with potential façade improvements.

A. 'Main Street' Concepts

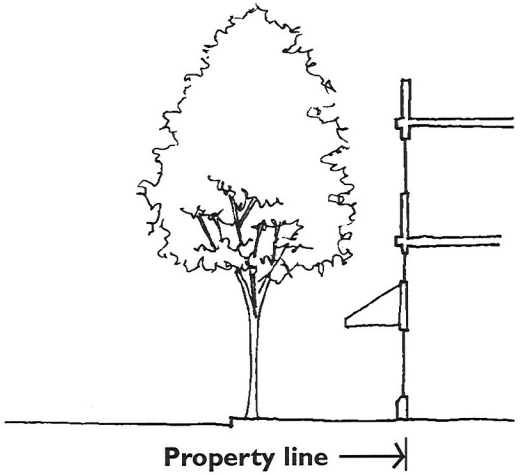
This section describes and illustrates building-related design concepts that can help to promote an environment on Hughson Avenue that is vibrant, walkable and economically viable. Hughson currently possesses the historical structure of a charming small town, and with thoughtful improvements and design interventions, Hughson Avenue businesses can be part of a mixed-use neighborhood that is supportive of its residents, employees and patrons. With a number of improvements to some of its buildings, Hughson Avenue could be a more vibrant commercial street that is attractive to walk on, accessible to all ages and abilities, encourages spontaneous browsing and is safe for patrons and business owners.

The "Main Street" concepts in this chapter below are intended to offer Hughson business and property owners conceptual ideas for potential façade and building improvements that can help to reinforce a walkable commercial character for Hughson Avenue.

1. Massing

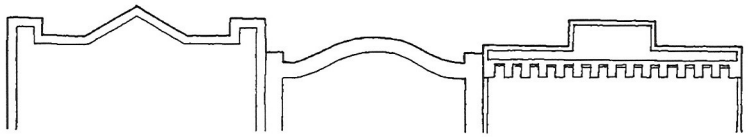
Building massing should define the pedestrian realm that exists between the building façade and the street.

- Buildings should have no front setbacks, minimal side setbacks, and front doors that directly access the street.
- Building heights should create an edge to the street.

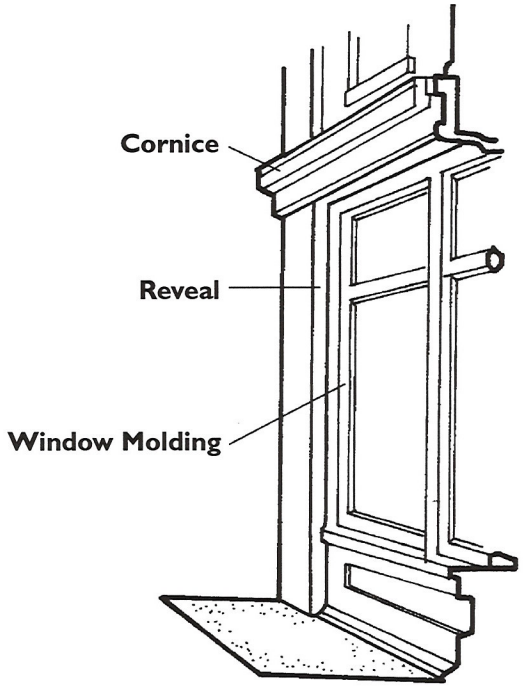


Building is built to the property line at the back of the sidewalk

- Buildings should be articulated with detailed roofline cornices, and reveals and eaves at the block scale.
- Monotonous boxes and lengthy blank facades should be avoided.
- Massing should be articulated to reflect the small parcel sizes on Hughson Avenue.



Rooflines are given articulation that helps to define and give interest to the front façades of buildings



2. *Scale*

Building components should maintain a relationship to the human form in order to encourage use of the street by residents and business patrons.

- Building façades should be designed at a pedestrian scale and provide protection from the elements, such as sun and rain. Façades should be activated by entries, transparent display windows and business-related information signage.
- All façades should emphasize three dimensional detailing such as cornices, window moldings and reveals to cast shadows and create visual interest on the façade.

3. *Materials*

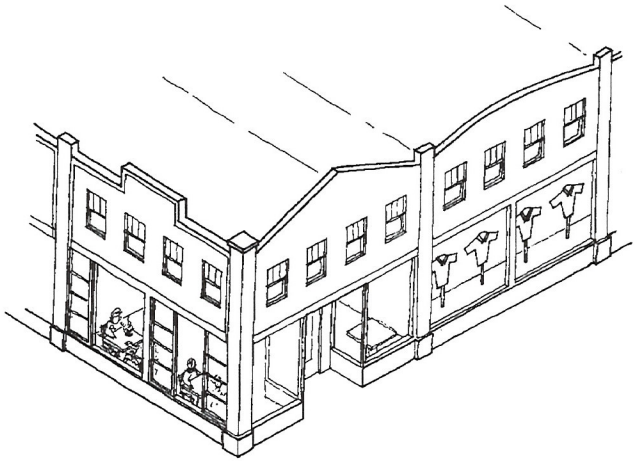
A building's style and materials can reflect and reinforce the community's established character. Newer styles and materials that compliment surrounding buildings are also appropriate.

- Building materials and styles should be appropriate for the regional climate, which is characterized by rainy winters and very hot dry summers.
- Buildings should use a variety of durable materials and textures. Such materials may include both traditional materials such as wood and stucco and materials such as concrete, structural steel, corten steel, and high-quality, durable metals, which have not been traditionally used in historical "Main Street" architecture.
- Individual building elements, such as the building base, horizontal break bands, pier/column bases, roof terminations, sills, and awning, should be articulated by differences in materials and exterior finish.

4. *Windows and Doors*

Windows and doors should have a high degree of transparency to promote a connection between businesses and potential customers.

- Window displays and signage should be strategically placed to avoid visual advertising clutter.
- Glazing, or window glass, should be transparent and adequately protected from the elements, including sun glare and water penetration.



- Primary pedestrian access should be from the sidewalk. Windows, especially restaurant facilities, might encourage low window sills and operable glazing to encourage interaction with the public and outdoor environment.
- Transitional space can be created on the sidewalk that fosters a more intensive use by pedestrians and piques the interest of passersby. This effect can be achieved by features such as storefront awnings, door overhangs, balconies and recessed entryways. Elements such as furniture or planters also help to create this transitional space.

5. *Signs*

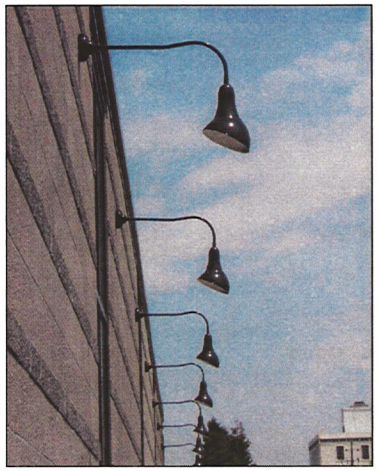
Building and business signs should graphically identify the business at both the automobile and the pedestrian scale.

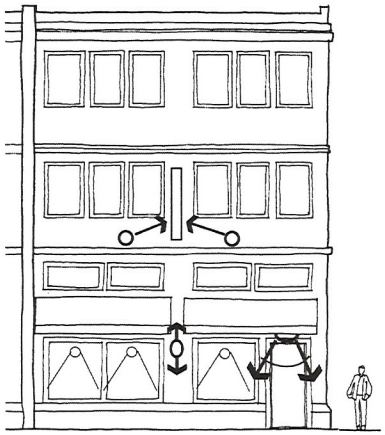
- Signage should help identify the building from down the street, across the street and from the sidewalk. Font style, color, lighting and distinctive icons can help give a business character and distinctive identity.
- Building signage should be located within an area of the façade which enhances and complements the architectural design. Building signs should not obscure architectural details such as recesses, ornaments or structural bays.
- Interior-illuminated signs, including individually mounted letters and "can" signs, are discouraged.

6. *Building Lighting*

Safety is necessary to encourage return patrons, and adequate lighting should be provided for building signage, storefront display, pedestrian entry access and travel in parking lots.

- Appropriate lighting includes: directional sign illumination, wall sconces, wall downlights or recessed lights, and interior display lights. The building itself should not be on display.
- If used, lighting for awnings should be from above the awning, from fixtures designed and placed to enhance the appearance of the building.





Directional sign illumination

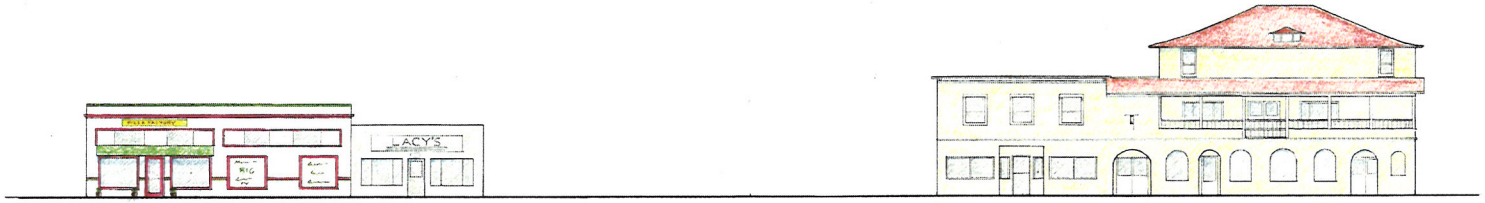
B. Hughson Avenue Façades

This section builds on the design concepts presented in Section A, above, to illustrate potential façade improvements for Hughson Avenue. Conceptual designs have been drawn up for the blocks between Third and Fourth Streets, on both sides of Hughson Avenue. The drawings illustrate improvements that could be implemented along the entire street. Each figure includes an illustration of the existing condition together with an illustration of how that block might look if the façades were remodeled.

The improvements shown fall into a range of approaches, from minimal intervention to extensive renovation. Typically, minimal approaches might include a change in paint color, new awnings or a new sign. More extensive alterations could involve replacing windows or remodeling the parapet roofline. The extent of remodeling for any given building would be based both on the existing condition of the building, and the level of investment that the building or business owner is prepared to make.

The conceptual façade illustrations depict the overall design direction for the street, but are not intended to specify actual projects that will be built on Hughson Avenue, and do not bind either the City or any private property owner to build specific projects. Actual façade improvements need to meet building code requirements and would need to be approved by the City's building department for permit before construction is started.

Included with the illustrations of existing and proposed conditions are brief descriptions of the improvements that have been illustrated. For discussion purposes, buildings have been identified by their existing business name or use in 2004.



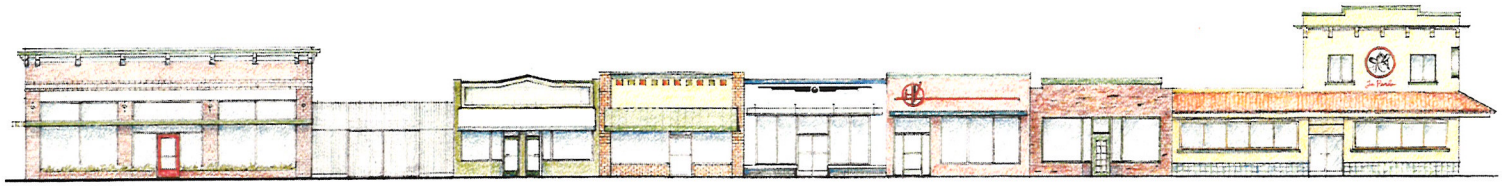
Third Street-Charles Street, North Side - Existing

Third Street-Charles Street, North Side - Potential

1. Third Street-Charles Street, North Side

- **Pizza Factory.** Potential improvements include removing the old sign and adding a new cantilevered sign and two new windows, followed by an awning over the new windows and outdoor seating.
- **Lacy's.** Potential improvements include adding a new sign board with lamps, an awning, a parapet extension and painting.
- **New Building.** A new building to take the place of the demolished theater.
- **New Building.** A new building on the currently vacant parcel.
- **Multi-use building.** Potential improvements include adding awnings to windows on the left and adding business identification signs.

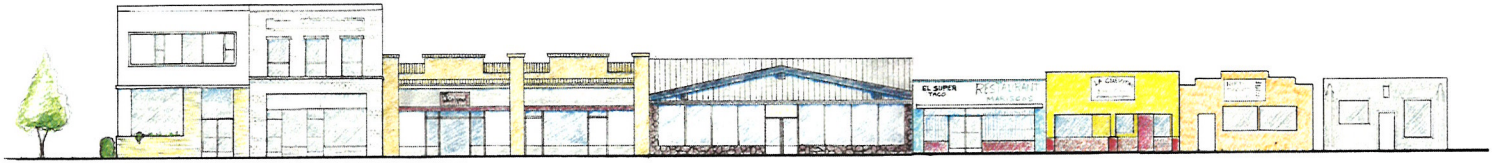
Charles Street-Fourth Street, North Side - Existing



Charles Street-Fourth Street, North Side - Potential

2. *Charles Street-Fourth Street, North Side*

- **Ace Hardware.** Potential improvements include adding a cornice and a new sign with lamps.
- **Medical and Security.** Potential improvements include removing the mansard roof and adding a parapet extension, an awning and new identical doors.
- **Antiques.** Potential improvements include adding a parapet extension and a new awning.
- **Windows.** Potential improvements include adding a parapet extension with architectural detailing, a new tile base and concrete sill and a glass awning with steel rod supports.
- **Video.** Potential improvements include adding a new parapet extension, a new steel box awning and a new sign.
- **Construction.** Potential improvements include removing the mansard roof and adding a parapet extension and brick to match existing veneer.
- **La Perla.** Potential improvements include removing the existing sign and adding a 2nd story sign, window sills and a tile or slate base.



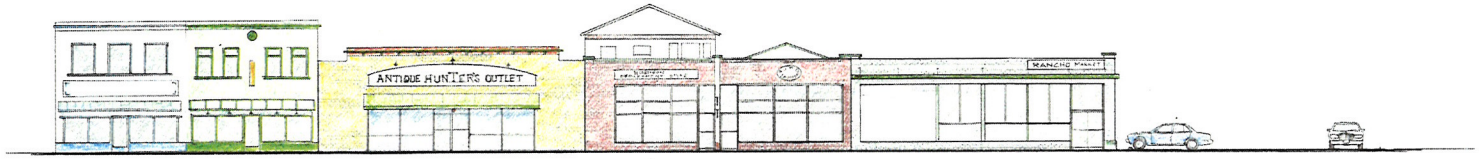
Charles Street-Third Street, South Side - Existing

Charles Street-Third Street, South Side - Potential

3. *Charles Street-Third Street, South Side*

- **Braden/Alta Building.** Potential improvements include adding a new sign and painting the building trim.
- **New Building.** A new building to take the place of the existing building.
- **New Façade.** A new façade in coordination with the new building next door.
- **El Super Taco.** Potential improvements include removing the window bars and adding new windows, a parapet extension and painting, a replacement awning, a new sign board and outdoor seating.
- **La Cuevitas.** Potential improvements include adding architectural detailing to the façade, new paint of a different color and a new sign.
- **Nifty Thrifty.** Potential improvements include adding new window trim, a new tile base, an awning and a new transparent or semi-transparent door.
- **Jacob's Mini-Mall.** Potential improvements include a parapet extension, new paint of a different color and a new transparent door.

Fourth Street-Charles Street, South Side - Existing



Fourth Street-Charles Street, South Side - Potential

4. *Fourth Street-Charles Street, South Side*

- **Vacant Lot.** A new building on the currently vacant parcel.
- **Antique Hunter's Outlet.** Potential improvements include removing the cantilevered awning and replacing it with a new awning, adding a parapet extension and a new sign board.
- **Hughson Department Store/Laundromat Building.** Potential improvements include removing the cantilevered awning, adding a parapet extension and new signs for each business.
- **Rancho Market.** Potential improvements include adding a cornice to the façade, replacing the existing awning with a new one, adding new windows, new paint and a new sign.

C. Façade Improvement Loan Program

The City of Hughson Downtown Façade Improvement Loan Program has been established to stimulate investment in the Downtown. Attractive buildings attract business. The intent of the Loan Program is to produce visible changes on the façades of commercial buildings in Downtown Hughson. Complete information on this program, including an application and checklist, is available at the Planning Department.

1. Eligibility

Although, the City Council may periodically amend the boundaries that define the area in which eligible projects must be located, the current boundaries are coterminous with the Hughson Avenue Commercial Principle Improvement Zone. Businesses located within the Hughson Avenue Commercial Principle Improvement Zone are eligible. This area is approximately 36 acres and includes the Hughson Avenue commercial/downtown district as well as the public facilities north of Hughson Avenue and extends south along Santa Fe Avenue to the intersection of Charles Street. Maps of the Improvement Zone boundaries are on file with the City of Hughson Planning Department. Interior rehabilitation, purchase of inventory, promotions or business venture expansions do not qualify.

2. Loan Amount

The lesser amount of either $10,000 per project or 50 percent of the total project is available. The loan has a 4 percent fixed rate of interest.

3. Design Approval

Design approval for the façade improvement project is required. Applicants should submit design plans for the project to the City of Hughson Planning Department. City staff can assist applicants in meeting the design guidance provided in this booklet.

4. Application Procedure

Interested business or property owners should pick up a copy of the City of Hughson Downtown Façade Improvement Loan Program application at the Planning Department. Applicants will need to submit a completed application, project drawings, project budget and bid proposals to the Planning Department.