



section five
BEAUTIFICATION PLAN



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The goal of the Beautification Plan is to improve the Route 8-Sunnyland Corridor in terms of aesthetics and to create an inviting place for businesses and customers alike. The Beautification Plan for Route 8-Sunnyland includes three components: streetscape improvements, gateways, and wayfinding. These essential elements will be combined to enhance the experience of all who arrive and will begin to create a true sense of place. Investing in beautification supports existing and proposed private and public investment in the area.

A key component of the Beautification Plan is the concept of incremental change as properties redevelop. This is due to insufficient right-of-way width needed to accommodate a landscaped parkway. Therefore, much of the proposed improvements must occur on the periphery of adjacent private property.

It is important to understand that Route 8 is primarily a commercial corridor that is dominated by vehicular traffic. The majority of right-of-way is dedicated to moving traffic leaving little room for public improvements. The adjacent land uses and parcel sizes are well established and for the most part, are likely to remain for the foreseeable future even when considering redevelopment opportunities. The beautification recommendations take these realities into consideration.

Streetscape

Recommendations for streetscape improvements are shown in two sections: a residential/natural/informal streetscape and a commercial/formal streetscape. The conditions of the corridor require a clustered approach to streetscaping rather than a strictly linear one. Elements include appropriate locations for street furnishings, plantings, landscaping and lighting. This makes the environment more pedestrian friendly, enhances the aesthetics and establishes a consistent identity.

Gateways

As a primary travel route and center for commerce, it is important that the Corridor address gateway signage and enhancements. This will assist Route 8-Sunnyland in establishing itself as a destination to compete with neighboring commercial areas. Gateways are much more than just a welcome sign. These important sites are strategically selected for their prominence and visibility and help to set the theme of the area.

Wayfinding

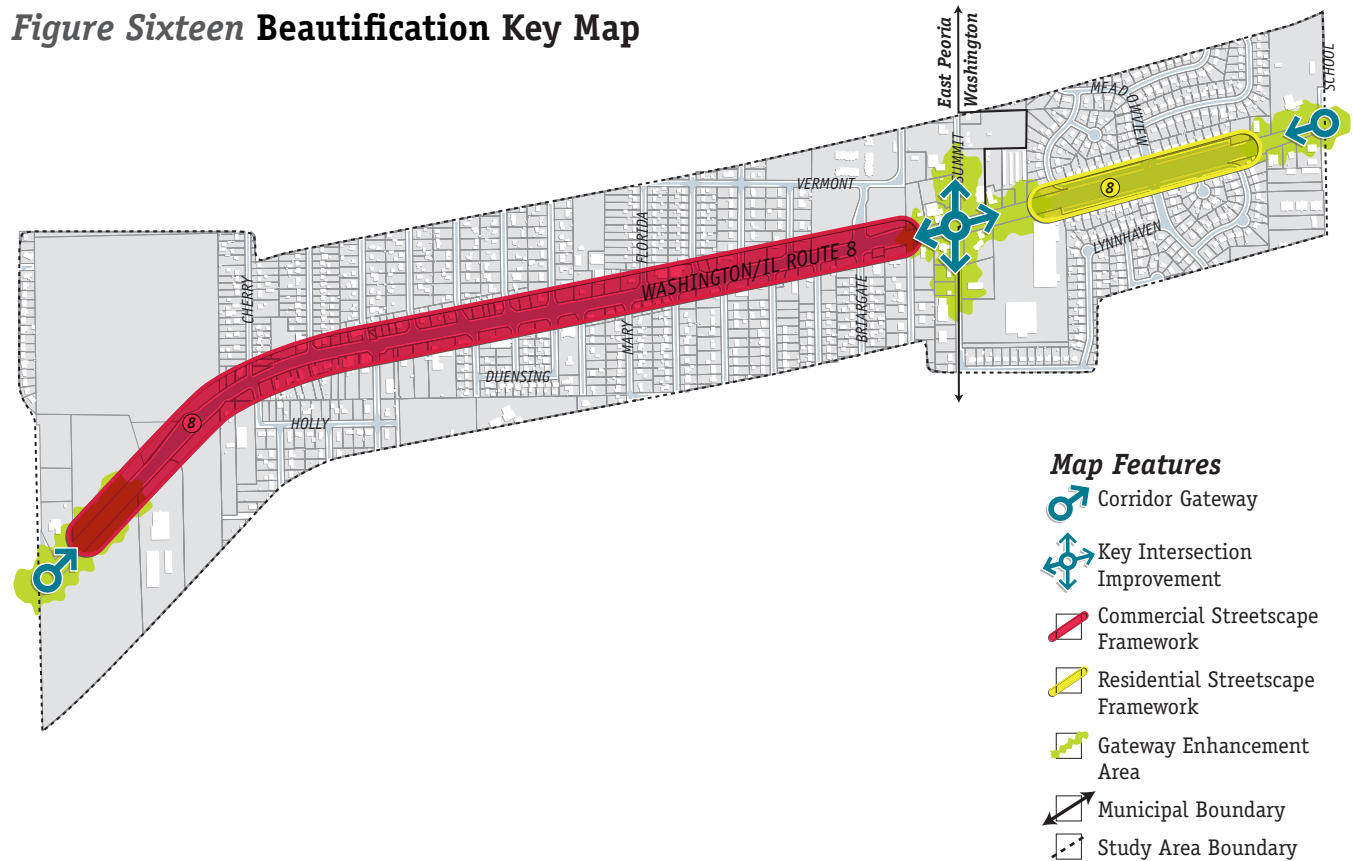
Creating a wayfinding system helps to direct visitors and customers in a thoughtful and meaningful manner. Wayfinding signage will connect Route 8-Sunnyland to other landmarks, destinations and areas in East Peoria and Washington. This strategy acknowledges Route 8's primary role as a thoroughfare while minimizing the nondescript feeling of the Corridor today.

Beautification Plan

Route 8-Sunnyland plays a special role for the Cities of East Peoria and Washington as it provides entrance into each community and connects the two cities. The current condition of the Corridor is not welcoming nor does it portray a positive overall impression for residents and visitors. Using design enhancements, it is possible to integrate Sunnyland by using wayfinding to the river and to downtown Washington and the proposed downtown for East Peoria.

Gateway improvement locations, rather than signs alone, shall be developed along Route 8, as it serves as the primary entry way into each city. In addition to signage, gateway features shall include special landscaping, lighting and paving.

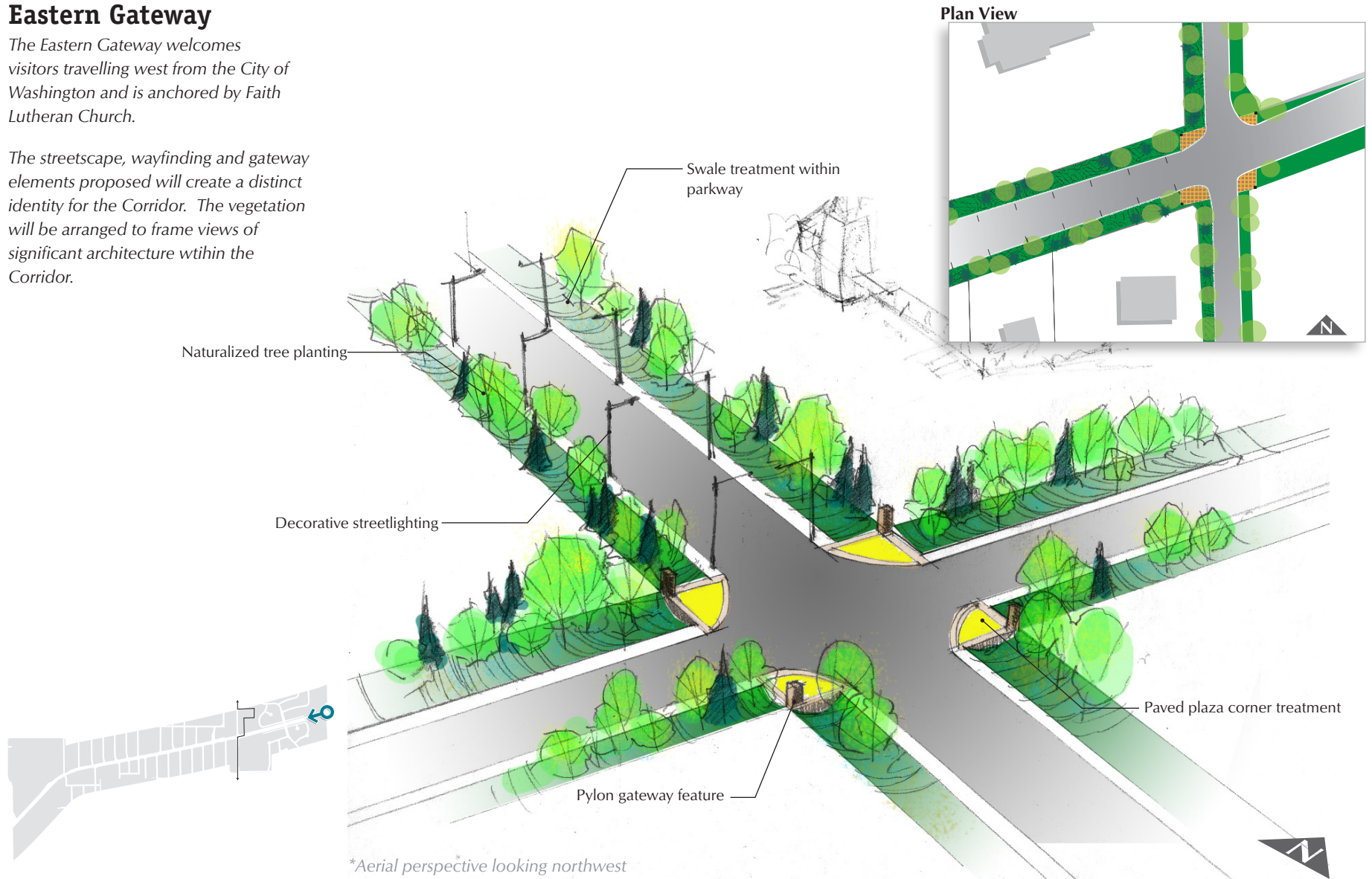
Figure Sixteen Beautification Key Map



Eastern Gateway

The Eastern Gateway welcomes visitors travelling west from the City of Washington and is anchored by Faith Lutheran Church.

The streetscape, wayfinding and gateway elements proposed will create a distinct identity for the Corridor. The vegetation will be arranged to frame views of significant architecture within the Corridor.



Western Gateway

The Western Gateway welcomes visitors travelling east from the City of East Peoria and is anchored by the East Peoria Event Center.

The streetscaping, wayfinding and gateway elements complement the character of the natural areas nearby through the introduction of an undulating mound representing the hills surrounding the valley area.

This also anticipates the development of the large tracts of land on either side of Route 8. As these properties develop, it is possible to use development requirements for storm water and open space to incorporate a park feature. This park design will connect existing wooded and natural areas on either side of Route 8.



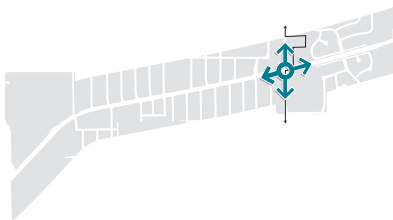
Central Gateway

The Central Gateway is the heart of the Corridor and is anchored by Sunnyland Plaza.

The streetscaping, wayfinding and gateway elements reinforce the “Summit” identity of the intersection. Within this gateway, improvements occur at the intersection and extend in all directions to create a large-scale statement for the Corridor. Of particular note are stone “bridges” with retaining walls on either side of the swale which provide architectural interest.

As properties redevelop, building design and orientation should provide a strong presence and a defining character by locating buildings closer to the street.

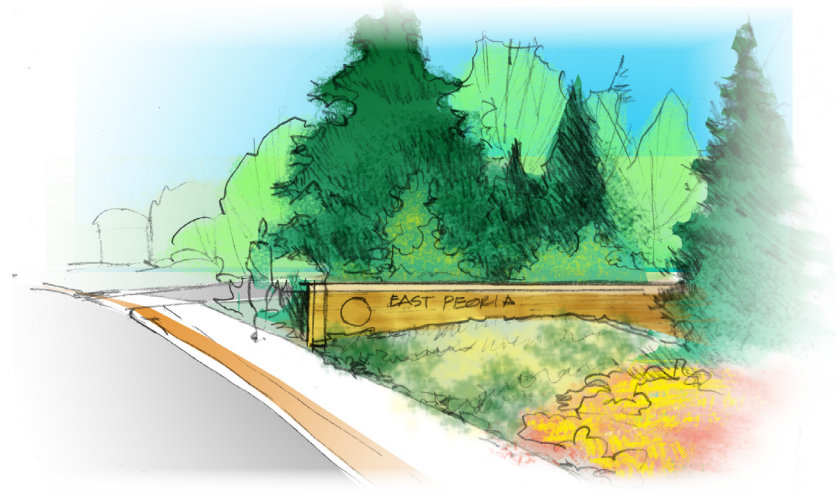
As the Summit Drive extension project is designed and implemented, opportunities for enhanced landscaping opportunities should be explored and incorporated.



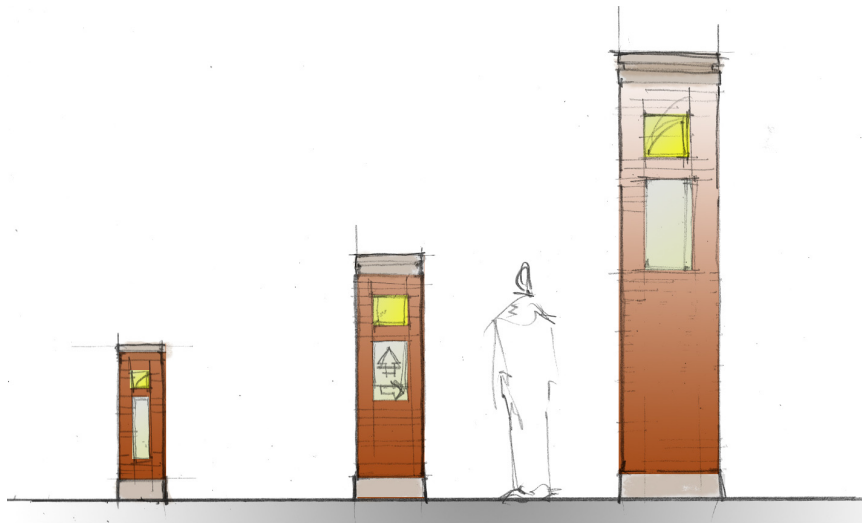
Wayfinding Signage



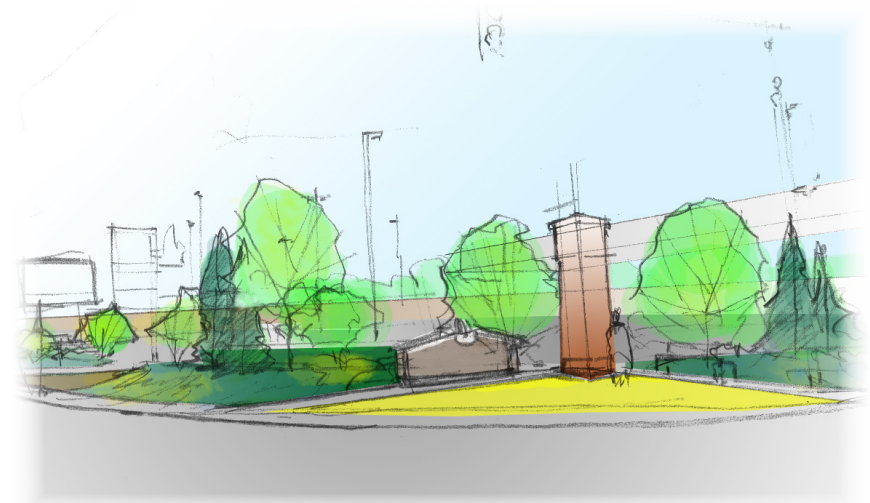
The existing sign characterizes the City of Washington very well and should not be modified. It is currently surrounded by utility boxes and structures that dominate its presence. Landscape treatments should be added to screen competing elements and enhance the sign's stature. Specifically, this would include plantings, low wooden screen wall, lighting and painting of utility boxes.



The current location of the East Peoria sign is enhanced with a berm that reflects the hilly topography surrounding the region and provides a unique character to the City. New landscaping will frame the sign and utilize the existing and mature vegetation in the background.



A major design element recommended for the Corridor, the pylon creates a simple wayfinding system for Route 8. This is accomplished through a unique vertical structure located just off of the sidewalk and provides a clear notification system through the use of simple arrows. This strong design element unifies the design and character of the Corridor.

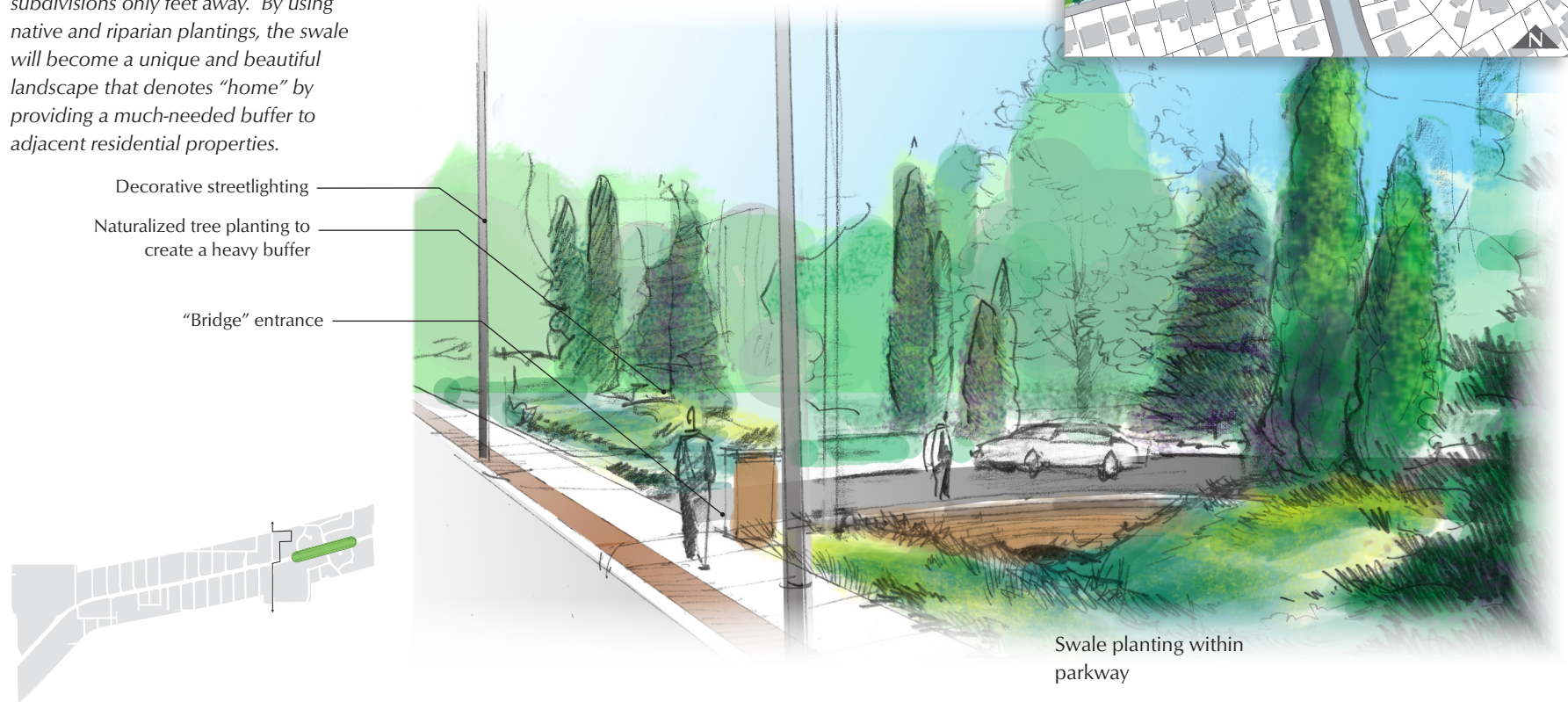


Combining elements of gateway signage and wayfinding signage, this perspective of the intersection of Summit Drive and Route 8 demonstrates the potential for an integrated system. As Sunnyland Plaza redevelops, public and private investment can be combined to achieve this dramatic result.

Residential Street

The residential streetscape treatment invokes a natural and less formal approach with the goal of creating a distinctive identity.

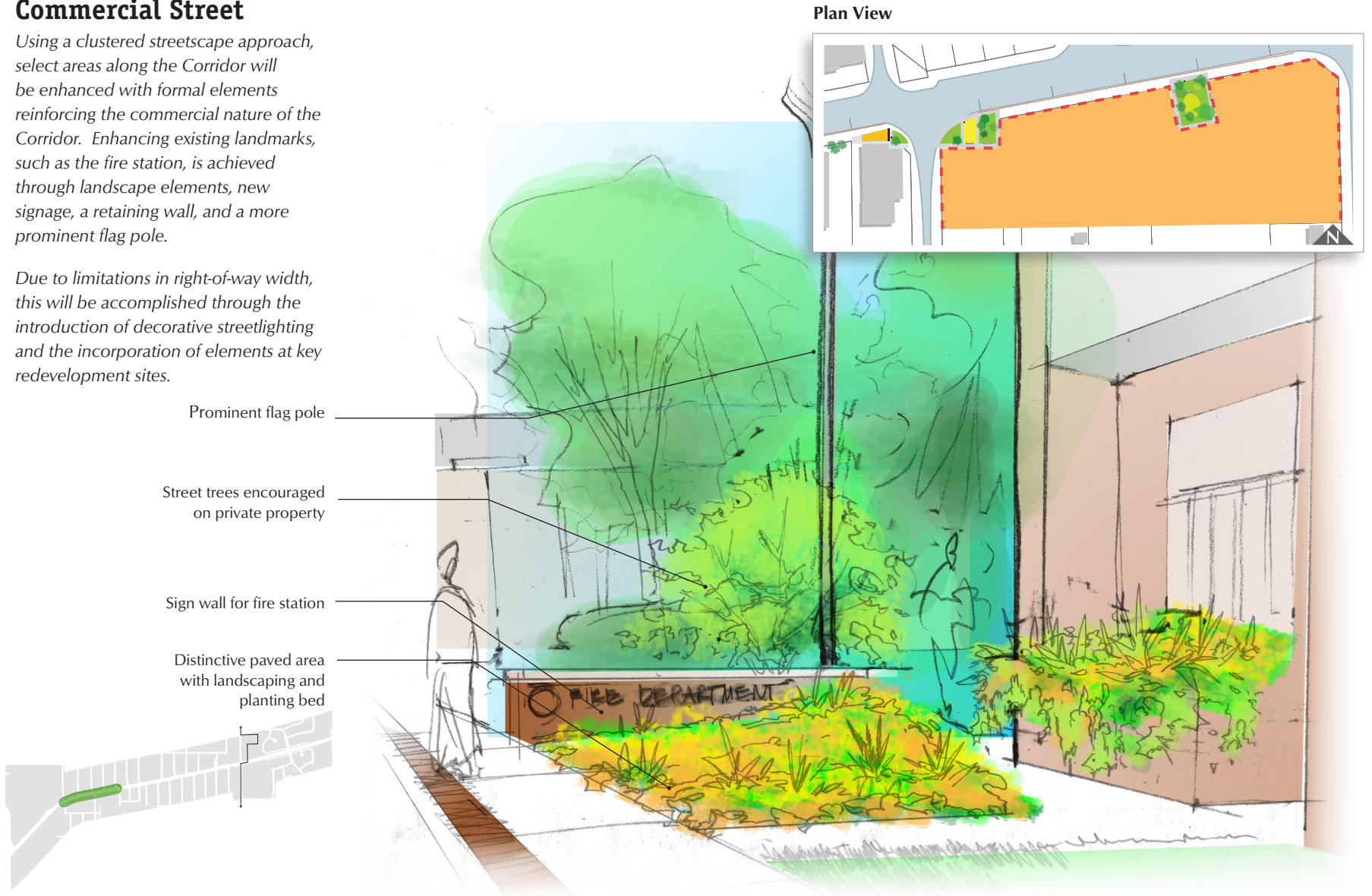
Introducing a wider swale provides an opportunity to integrate a significant natural character to the Corridor. This provides a necessary transition from the traffic-heavy Corridor to the residential subdivisions only feet away. By using native and riparian plantings, the swale will become a unique and beautiful landscape that denotes "home" by providing a much-needed buffer to adjacent residential properties.



Commercial Street

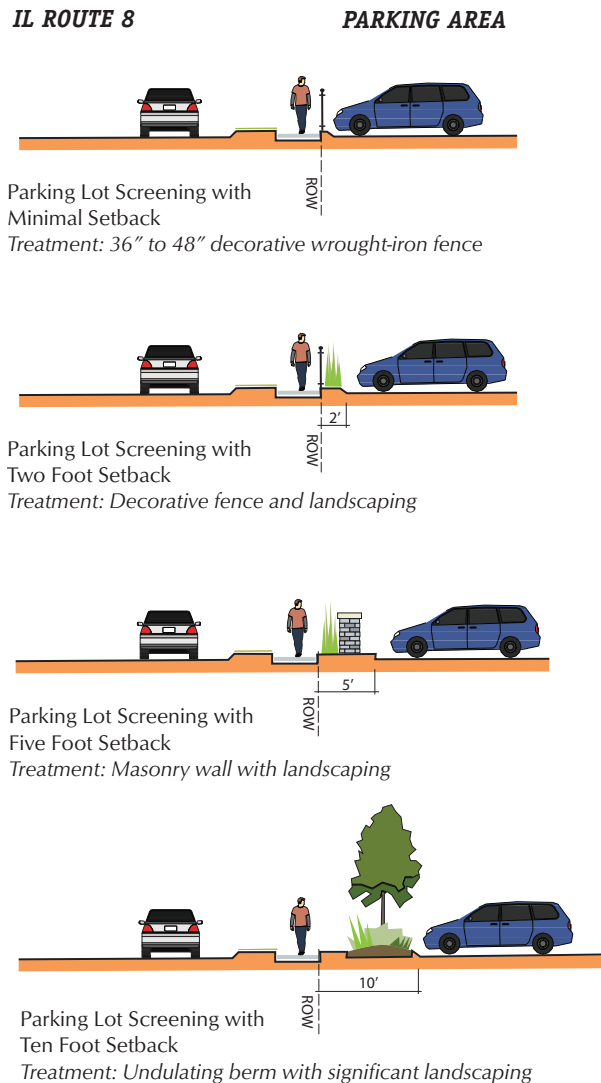
Using a clustered streetscape approach, select areas along the Corridor will be enhanced with formal elements reinforcing the commercial nature of the Corridor. Enhancing existing landmarks, such as the fire station, is achieved through landscape elements, new signage, a retaining wall, and a more prominent flag pole.

Due to limitations in right-of-way width, this will be accomplished through the introduction of decorative streetlighting and the incorporation of elements at key redevelopment sites.



Front Yard Parking Lot Buffering and Screening

Buffering and screening are essential elements for a successful commercial corridor. Below are sample buffering and screening techniques for pedestrians and automobiles including various treatments depending on the amount of land available. On the right are key landscaping concepts.



This photo demonstrates parking lot buffering and screening through a combination of landscaping and decorative fencing.

Key Landscaping Concepts

Perimeter landscaping

Ensure that the perimeter of commercial properties are enhanced with landscaping especially as a means of buffering and screening adjacent residential areas from unsightly elements and operations

Interior Islands

Provide interior landscaped islands within parking lots to decrease the amount of impervious surfaces. Interior islands should be provided at the ends of parking rows and along the entry drive aisle

Foundation Plantings

Install plantings at the base of buildings that is respectful of the architecture, character and use of the building to break up monotonous facades

Decorative Fencing

Use fencing as way to provide buffering for parking lots when space is limited and to reinforce entry and exit points

Other Site Landscaping

Where appropriate, provide clusters of landscaping (particularly near entrances) that enhance the site without blocking business visibility or compromising safety