CHAPTER 3:
DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Park Street has long served as an auto-oriented commercial district and a major arterial street that provides a direct connection between the UW Campus and Downtown Madison from the Beltline Highway. Public input during the Park Street Design Guidelines process has identified the need to create a more pedestrian-friendly “Main Street” atmosphere for the Park Street corridor as one of the top priorities for improving the character and quality of life of the Southside. The following chapter provides guidelines for public street improvements to accomplish this goal.

The guidelines in this section provide recommendations on how to integrate pedestrian, multi-modal, and environmental improvements into the design of Park Street while maintaining its function as a major arterial street for the City of Madison. These guidelines are supported by recommendations in the Park Street Possibilities to Reality report prepared by City Vision Associates in 2001 and the Inventory of the Park Street Corridor prepared by the University of Wisconsin Department of Urban and Regional Planning in 2002.

The design guidelines for public street improvements have been based on the following goals:

- Strengthen gateways and districts
- Accommodate multiple modes of travel (e.g., transit, autos, pedestrians, bicyclists)
- Enhance pedestrian safety and comfort (e.g., crosswalks, lighting)
- Visually unify the streetscape (lighting, street trees and street furniture)
- Reduce visual clutter (signage and overhead utilities)

These guidelines will be implemented through a coordinated effort between the City, business association and neighborhoods. Implementation projects must be prioritized, and it is recommended that projects that improve pedestrian safety be implemented first. Implementation of public street improvements will be triggered when:

- A redevelopment plan is proposed for an area that includes street improvements.
- Street reconstruction projects are planned.
- MG&E or other utilities propose a project that requires street reconstruction.
These guidelines are divided into five parts:

I.  Street Design  
II. Streetscape Amenities  
III. Entrances  
IV. Public Spaces  
V. Wayfinding and Regulatory Signage

I. STREET DESIGN

As Park Street is reconstructed over time, several improvements to the basic design of the street should be considered. It will be important for the City to work closely with the business association and neighborhoods on planning for these street design projects to allow for the opportunity to discuss and program appropriate improvements.

Sidewalks

The development of a pedestrian friendly environment starts with creating a safe, attractive and integrated network of sidewalks along the entire length of Park Street. The sidewalk should be a minimum of 10 feet wide, including a 6 foot wide unobstructed circulation zone and a minimum 4 foot wide terrace area for furnishings, street trees and signage. A greater terrace width (5 to 6 feet) is desirable where possible. Guidelines related to the construction of sidewalks on Park Street include:

3.1 Where possible, easements should be acquired from private property owners to expand the public sidewalk to minimum standards and to provide additional space for landscaping and amenities.

3.2 In heavy pedestrian traffic areas adjacent to moving traffic, where easements are not possible, a 6 foot wide circulation zone should be maintained with a narrower terrace. Railings should be considered for the terrace area to buffer the pedestrian from the moving traffic, or if possible, a parking lane should be provided as protection for pedestrians.

3.3 In high pedestrian traffic areas, the sidewalk circulation zone should be scored concrete and the terrace area should be paved with pavers or colored concrete to provide visual interest. In areas where there is more limited pedestrian traffic, grass terraces may be used.

3.1 Where possible, easements should be provided on private property to expand the public sidewalk and terrace to minimum standards and provide buffers to existing parking lots. This photo also illustrates the need for a better, more attractive site design to integrate within the public terrace.
Crosswalks

Today, Park Street is viewed as a barrier to connecting neighborhoods and businesses that exist on both sides of the street. Improvements are needed to provide safe pedestrian and bicyclist crossings. Intersections that have a history of pedestrian and bicycle accidents should be prioritized. The following guidelines should be considered as Park Street is reconstructed over time:

3.4 Clearly define crosswalk areas along Park street with reflective paint or other DOT / City approved materials.

3.5 Medians or refuge islands should be located at all crosswalk locations and be wide enough for multiple pedestrians and bicyclists. Optimally, the nose of the median should fully enclose the crosswalk.

3.6 Investigate the feasibility of providing pedestrian activated crossing lights, (countdown pedestrian walk lights) at key signalized intersections.

3.7 Explore adding all-way pedestrian crosswalks along Park Street at the Fish Hatchery Road, West Washington Avenue, and Olin Avenue intersections.

3.8 Pursue traffic signal timing throughout the corridor that allows sufficient time for pedestrian crossings while maintaining efficient traffic flow.

3.9 Explore the use of pedestrian warning lights at uncontrolled intersections (ie. Emerald Street) where there is a higher volume of pedestrian and bicycle crossings.

3.10 Where feasible, construct “bump-outs” on side streets adjacent to Park Street in high pedestrian traffic areas. Bump-outs can shorten crosswalk distances and provide areas for street furniture and amenities.

3.11 At key intersections, explore removing one of the existing exclusive left-turn traffic lanes and restrict left-turns for a wider median for pedestrians and bicyclists. Intersections of interest include Huxley, Cedar, Beld, and North Streets.

3.4, 3.5 The photo above illustrates a pedestrian crosswalk and refuge island on North Sherman Avenue. This installation utilizes highly visible reflective paint to clearly demarcate the pedestrian crossing.
Medians

Today, Park Street has a center median that separates the northbound and southbound travel lanes throughout most of the corridor. Guidelines for improvements include:

3.12 Work with the Parks Division to identify medians with sufficient width to add street trees and landscaping to improve the character of Park Street. Landscaping in the medians can also have a traffic calming affect.

3.13 Medians under six feet that are too narrow for landscaping should be paved with special colored paving in lieu of plain concrete to visually break up the wide expanse of pavement.

Multi-Modal Circulation

The following guidelines are recommended to improve the multi-modal function of Park Street.

3.14 Establish a continuous bicycle system on both sides of Park Street through shared parking/bicycle lanes and shared transit / bicycle lanes.

3.15 Highlight the bicycle lane with special markings to improve the visibility of bicyclists.

3.16 The future design of Park Street should consider accommodating expanded transit options such as express bus, streetcar, or light rail service.

3.17 Explore installing on-street parking along Park Street where feasible, such as the section from North Street to Wingra Drive.
New Streets and Intersections

New streets and intersections should be considered to improve the grid street pattern and connections between Park Street and the adjoining neighborhood.

3.18 The Badger Road intersection has a high incidence of traffic accidents and should be improved as part of street reconstruction.

3.19 The Beld Street intersections should be reconstructed to create perpendicular intersections with Park Street or cul-de-sacs. This improvement will discourage traffic in the neighborhood and facilitate safer pedestrian movement and more open space along Park Street.

3.20 Redevelopment plans for the areas north and south of Wingra Creek should include new public streets, which will improve the grid street pattern and connections to Park Street.

3.21 Additional signals should be considered for Park Street to facilitate improved pedestrian connections and access to future redevelopment sites. Explore the signalizing of North Street as part of the redevelopment plans for the industrial lands south of Wingra Creek.

3.22 On-street parking should be considered as part of the redevelopment plans for the Wingra Creek and Villager Mall areas. Additional right-of-way dedication may be necessary to achieve this.

Stormwater Design

Park Street is located in the Monona Bay, Lake Wingra and Wingra Creek watersheds. The public street design for Park Street should employ “best practices” for stormwater design to minimize impacts on these natural resources.

3.23 As Park Street is reconstructed, explore the possibility of designing the storm sewer system to allow for stormwater infiltration and sediment collection.

3.24 Open spaces along public right-of-ways should be considered as locations for rain gardens to facilitate stormwater infiltration.

3.25 The City, neighborhoods, and businesses should work together to initiate a street sweeping program that will keep the lakes clean, similar to the pilot program on the City’s east side.
II. STREETSCAPE DESIGN

Street improvements include features such as lighting, landscaping, and furnishings that enhance the pedestrian use of the street. For the most part, streetscape improvements should be located in the terrace zone of the sidewalk or building setback zones that adjoin the public sidewalk.

Some areas of Park Street, particularly in the more urban areas north of Olin Avenue, already have strong pedestrian activity and should be prioritized for streetscape improvements. In other areas of the street, pedestrian activity will increase over time as redevelopment occurs. Streetscape improvements should be added as redevelopment plans are implemented and pedestrian activity increases.

The City should work with the Park Street business community and neighborhoods to determine the design theme and identity for Park Street and select appropriate streetscape improvements.

Roadway Lighting

Today, lighting for the street and sidewalk zones of Park Street is provided by roadway light standards. The City has recently made investments in new roadway lights between the railroad crossing near Plaeirt Drive and Chandler Street. New lighting should be added to other areas of the street as reconstruction or redevelopment projects are scheduled. General guidelines for roadway lighting include:

3.26 All public sidewalks along Park Street should be lit for pedestrian safety.

3.27 New roadway lighting should be selected to provide a unique identity for Park Street.

3.28 New lighting fixtures should be directed toward the ground and not toward the sky.

3.29 Existing and new roadway lighting should accommodate banners, hanging flower baskets and holiday decorations that will improve the visual character and identity of the street.

3.27 A coordinated roadway lighting system should be installed along Park Street with a design that reflects the desired identity for the street.
Pedestrian Scale Lighting

Pedestrian scale light standards are recommended for high pedestrian traffic areas along Park Street to supplement existing roadway lighting and visually identify special districts and business areas along the street. Pedestrian scale lighting programs should be initiated by the neighborhood and business community similar to lighting programs that have been implemented in neighborhood retail districts along Monroe Street and E. Johnson Street. Additional funding sources will be needed to implement and maintain pedestrian lighting.

3.30 The section of Park Street between Regent Street and Haywood Street should be prioritized for pedestrian scale lighting corresponding to the newly adopted TIF district and the Meriter Hospital and St. Marys Hospital expansion projects.

3.31 Pedestrian scale lighting should be designed to accommodate banners, hanging floral baskets, holiday decorations and possible duplex receptacles.

Street Trees and Landscaping

The addition of street trees and landscaping can have a dramatic effect on the visual character and pedestrian experience of Park Street. Today, Park Street is almost devoid of street trees. Street tree plantings will improve the street’s pedestrian character by visually reducing the scale of the street, creating a sense of enclosure for the sidewalk and providing a buffer between the sidewalk and the moving traffic. Street trees can also provide a traffic calming effect.

3.32 Work with City Forestry to select street trees for Park Street that will provide visual interest and seasonal variety. Street trees should have the same characteristics on both sides of the street in a given block.

3.33 Street trees should be selected to fit the constraints of a given location. Trees that adjoin moving traffic lanes or are adjacent to buildings that are at the property line should have a vertical profile and higher branching height. Trees that adjoin parking lanes can be wider in profile with lower branching heights.

3.34 Use tree grates in areas where heavy pedestrian traffic is anticipated. A minimum of 25 square feet of tree grate is necessary, ideally 4’ by 8’ grates.

3.35 Provide low maintenance, perennial plantings in the medians. Opportunities should be explored for businesses, business associations, or business improvement districts to fund the installation and maintenance of median landscaping.
3.36 This existing view of Park Street can be dramatically improved with adding median plantings, street trees, removing overhead utilities, and adding well-designed buildings that create a focus for the street, rather that the street itself.

3.36 Overhead Utilities

Overhead utilities should be buried as sections of Park Street are reconstructed or redeveloped to improve the visual character of the street. The business association can assist property owners in funding the necessary modifications to buildings to accept underground utility service.

3.37 Street Banners

Banners can be a short-term, low cost method of creating identity for the street such as expressing its international character. A banner program should be a coordinated effort between the business association and the City of Madison. Banners should only be installed if a Business Improvement District, business association, or other entity besides the City is in place to provide the necessary maintenance. The design and installation of street banners should consider the following guidelines:

3.37 Banners should be placed on City-owned light poles at key locations.

3.38 The size of banners should be scaled appropriately. Larger banners can be placed on roadway lights and smaller banners can be placed on pedestrian scale lights.

3.39 Banners should not contain commercial advertisements.

3.40 Banners should be complementary to the design theme of Park Street.

3.41 A logo for Park Street or special districts along the street may be incorporated into the banner design.
Street Furniture and Amenities

Street furniture and amenities including benches, trash receptacles, planters, drinking fountains, bicycle racks, etc. can enhance the pedestrian use and character of the street. The type and location of amenities will depend on the volume of pedestrian traffic. Generally, the City will assist neighborhoods and the business association in securing approvals and identifying appropriate locations for amenities within the public right-of-way. In some cases, where funding sources are available, amenities can be purchased and installed by the city with business and neighborhood input. If additional amenities are desired, neighborhoods or the business association may need to take full responsibility for funding and maintenance. Guidelines for street furniture and amenities include the following:

3.42 Street furniture and amenities should present a uniform design that complements the desired theme and identity for Park Street.

3.43 The construction of “bump-out” areas on side street intersections will allow additional room for locating street furniture and amenities within the public right-of-way.

3.44 Bicycle racks should be installed on Park Street particularly in areas where business activity is concentrated and where the business association recommends their installation.

3.45 Easements should be negotiated with private property owners to locate furnishings and amenities in building setback areas if the public sidewalk is too narrow.

Bus Passenger Shelters

Well-designed bus passenger shelters should be located in high pedestrian traffic areas including Meriter Hospital, St. Marys Hospital, near civic destinations such as the Boys and Girls Club and the Catholic Multi-Cultural Center and as part of future redevelopment areas such as The Villager Mall and Wingra Creek areas.

3.46 Easements should be acquired to locate bus passenger shelters on private property if there is inadequate room within the public right-of-way.

3.47 Bus passenger shelters should be transparent.

3.48 Bus passenger shelters can incorporate special Park Street signage such as information directories.

3.49 Benches should be provided at key bus stops where shelters are not located.
III. PUBLIC SPACES

Today, there are several small, public open spaces along Park Street that provide areas for seating, public art, neighborhood entrance signs and expanded landscaping next to the public sidewalk. These spaces include the pocket park at the N. Beld Street / Park Street intersection, the South Transfer Station and the Fish Hatchery Road intersection next to Dean’s Dairy. Collectively, these spaces enhance the ambience of Park Street. As Park Street is reconstructed and redeveloped, additional public open spaces should be created.

3.50 Redevelopment plans for the Villager Mall and Wingra Creek areas should include provisions for public gathering spaces to serve the Park Street community.

3.51 The Wingra Creek bridge crossing and adjoining right-of-way offer a special opportunity to make the creek more visible and accessible from Park Street.

3.52 Realigning the north and south Beld Street intersections at Park Street as perpendicular intersections or cul-de-sacs can add new open space in what is currently street pavement.

3.53 A public art and interpretative signage program should be developed for Park Street to express the street's ethnic diversity and cultural heritage. These features can be located in existing and future public open spaces along Park Street.

3.53 New opportunities should be identified for landscaping, open space, neighborhood identity and public art along the Park Street Corridor.

3.59 Example of open space and neighborhood identification next to the public sidewalk.
IV. ENTRANCES & GATEWAYS

The Park Street Possibilities to Reality report recommends that prominent entrance features be located at key gateways to Park Street including the Beltline Highway, Fish Hatchery Road, West Washington Avenue and Regent Street. Neighborhood entrances and smaller business district entrances that occur along Park Street should also be designed with signage and landscaping to improve the visual character and identity of Park Street. The design of key gateways and entrances should present a coordinated identity and theme for Park Street and should complement other street design features such as lighting, furnishings, and street banners.

3.55 A community entrance feature should be designed for the Beltline and Park Street intersection. This entrance feature should include public art, landscaping and signage that are visible to vehicular traffic.

3.56 Fish Hatchery Road, West Washington Avenue and Regent Street are major arterial streets that intersect with Park Street. These intersections should be beautified with landscaping and signage features that are scaled and proportioned to respond to both the pedestrian and vehicular travelers.

3.57 The beautification of the West Washington Avenue intersection at Park Street should include signage that marks the entrance to the State Capitol and Downtown Madison.

3.58 Park Street and Regent Street intersection should include signage and/or monuments that will mark the entrance to the University of Wisconsin.

3.59 Neighborhood entrance signs or smaller business district signs should be located in open spaces along the street. Easements on private property may be needed to locate these signs.

3.60 Entrance features and signage should be located so as to avoid clutter and confusion with other signage, particularly regulatory signage.

The photo above shows an example of a Community entrance feature.
V. WAYFINDING AND REGULATORY SIGNAGE

Ensuring public safety and efficient use of the public street, reducing signage clutter and directing visitors to destinations along Park Street are key goals for the design wayfinding and regulation for Park Street.

Wayfinding Signage

Park Street currently has signage that directs the visitor to major destinations such as the University of Wisconsin and the Downtown, but lacks a coordinated wayfinding system that directs visitors to the many public destinations located along and around Park Street such as the hospitals, parks, zoo, library, community centers, etc. A dedicated funding source will be needed to implement and maintain a wayfinding system. A coordinated improved wayfinding system for Park Street should be developed using the following guidelines:

3.60 Wayfinding signage should be located in the sidewalk terrace.

3.61 Single-use wayfinding signs are discouraged. Combine information for up to three destinations per sign when appropriate.

3.62 A consistent style should be used to create easy-to-read signs that complement the desired theme and identity for Park Street. An exception to this guideline will be regulatory signage, such as hospital signage, which must be consistent with official standards.

3.63 The location of wayfinding signs should be coordinated with the City and DOT to avoid conflicts with regulatory signs.

3.64 Pedestrian wayfinding signs such as information kiosks and interpretive signage should be provided at public locations.

Regulatory Signage

Signage that regulates parking, speed limits, etc. are critically important. Opportunities to reduce the number of regulatory signs should be evaluated to limit signage clutter and improve the visual character of the street while maintaining safety standards.

3.65 Maximize opportunities to place multiple signs on each pole.

3.66 Locate signs in sidewalk terrace areas, wherever possible. Limit signs in the median.

3.67 Inventory existing regulatory signage to identify potential duplications.
CONCLUSION

A coordinated and cooperative process will be necessary to revitalize and transform Park Street into a visually pleasing and socially stimulating “Main Street” for the Southside. The implementation of the Park Street Guidelines is one of the key steps toward achieving this goal. The Park Street Partners and the City of Madison are excited about this opportunity and are committed to assisting Park Street property owners, businesses, developers, and residents in their individual and collective efforts to implement these guidelines.
AGENDA ITEM #__________________
Copy Mailed To Alderperson__________________

City of Madison, Wisconsin

A SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION

Adopting the *Design Guidelines for Private Property Improvements and Public Streetscape Design* document for the Park Street corridor, and directing staff to prepare the necessary ordinances to create an Urban Design District for this corridor.

Drafted By: William A. Fruhling, AICP
Principal Planner, Planning Unit

Date: January 14, 2004

Fiscal Note: It is anticipated that any increase in Urban Design Commission cases can be absorbed by existing staff. Implementation of certain plan recommendations may have future budgetary impacts needing Common Council approval.

Sponsors: Ald. Matt Sloan (District 13)
Ald. Tim Bruer (District 14)

Presented February 16, 2004
Referred *Urban Design Commission, Board of Estimates, Plan Commission, Pedestrian/Bicycle/Motor Vehicle Commission, Board of Public Works*

Reported Back

Adopted March 30, 2004 POF
Rules Suspended
Public Hearing

WHEREAS, the Park Street corridor serves as the “Main Street” for Madison’s Southside, and is a prominent entry into the City of Madison—specifically to the downtown and University of Wisconsin-Madison; and

WHEREAS, the functional and aesthetic importance of Park Street is recognized in *Park Street Revitalization: Possibilities to Reality* plan and the *South Madison Neighborhood Plan*, both of which recommend that guidelines be established for the corridor to ensure high quality design and long-term economic vitality for new and existing development; and

WHEREAS, design guidelines, implemented through the creation of urban design districts, provide an effective mechanism to enhance the aesthetic quality of a district on a project-by-project basis; and

WHEREAS, Park Street Partners received funding from the City of Madison Neighborhood Planning Grant Program, raised the required matching funds from Southside businesses, facilitated faculty and student resources from the University of Wisconsin, and retained Schreiber/Anderson Associates to develop design guidelines; and
WHEREAS, the aforementioned groups worked closely with the Southside businesses and residents and the City to develop a comprehensive set of design guidelines as described in *Design Guidelines for Private Property Improvements and Public Streetscape Design*.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the *Design Guidelines for Private Property Improvements and Public Streetscape Design* document for the Park Street corridor is adopted, and staff is hereby directed to prepare the necessary ordinances to create an Urban Design District for this corridor.