



BALBOA CONCEPT PLAN

FINAL REPORT
CENTRAL BALBOA
CONCEPT PLAN

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and the

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Orange County Chapter
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July, 1993

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Main Street, Balboa, Cal.



INTRODUCTION

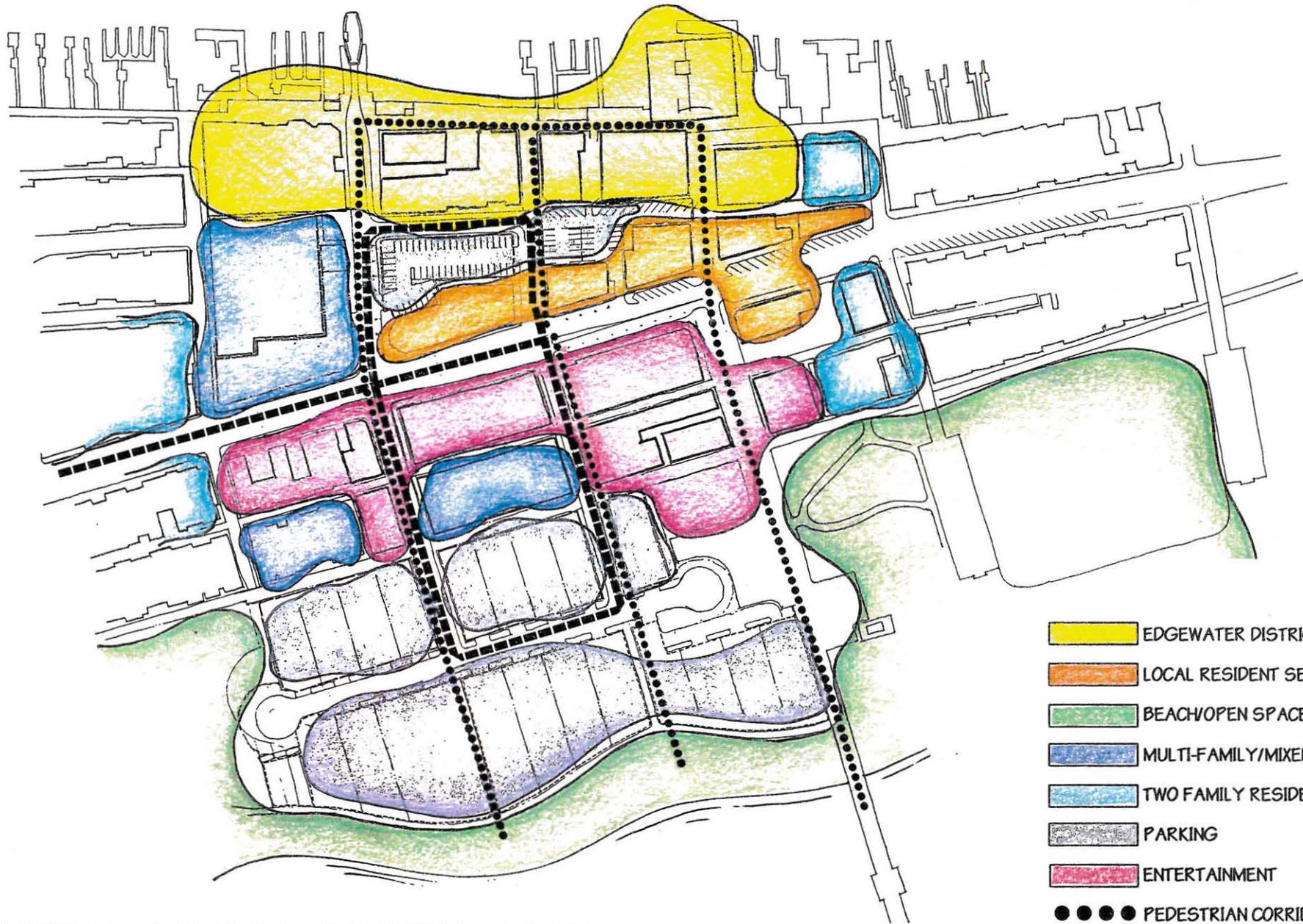
The following text and graphics represent the Concept Plan that emerged from the Central Balboa design workshop. On March 26, 27 and 28, 1993, the City of Newport Beach co-hosted a community design workshop for the Central Balboa study area with the American Institute of Architects, Orange County Chapter, Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT). The purpose of the design workshop was to identify potential improvement strategies to restore economic health and urban vitality to Central Balboa.

CONCEPT

The concept that evolved from the workshop effort emphasizes the unique character of Central Balboa and the role it plays in the Orange County experience. The R/UDAT team discovered naturally occurring activity zones that lend themselves to the residents, business owners, short term visitors or long term visitors. An implementation plan to coordinate the automobile and pedestrian traffic to strengthen and balance the existing activity zones was developed. When pulled together into a system, the interdependence of the needs and opportunities for each of the activity zones strengthens the overall character of what Balboa is.

The Central Balboa plan is built upon the following basic ideas.

- Identify, clarify and strengthen the existing land use patterns. The concept maximizes the local resident serving business district, provides increased residential densities near this district, enhances the existing beach entertainment activities, maintains surrounding low density residential uses, and provides additional activities and facilities in the beach area.
- Define automobile circulation patterns to control and separate visitor traffic from residential traffic, and to pull parking and ferry traffic off East Balboa Boulevard before it enters the center of the district. Additionally, as much long term parking as possible should be located off-site, which would enhance the feasibility of a shuttle bus service either on a demand basis or regularly scheduled basis.
- Knit Central Balboa together through encouraging an informal pedestrian network of smaller streets that link both sides of Balboa Boulevard, and strengthen the existing major pedestrian edges of Edgewater Place, Main Street, Balboa Pier and the Boardwalk. This will be accomplished with attention to building massing, architectural detailing and streetscaping that respects the area's nearly 100 year old historic character and style. Major gateways at strategic points will be constructed to clarify the presently vague boundaries of the Central Balboa district.
- Develop an implementation plan that identifies improvement priorities and potential implementation programs. Phasing addresses starting traffic circulation and parking management programs at the earliest possible date, along with some streetscape improvements. Ultimately, some areas would need to be rezoned to reflect the land use plan developed in this study. Major capital improvements would need to be implemented as the economic vitality of the area improves. Implementation programs include the appointment of a leasing agent/area coordinator whose job would be to attract a balance of new tenants in much the same manner as successful shopping centers.



- EDGEWATER DISTRICT
- LOCAL RESIDENT SERVING
- BEACH/OPEN SPACE
- MULTI-FAMILY/MIXED USE
- TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- PARKING
- ENTERTAINMENT
- PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR
- VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

CENTRAL BALBOA CONCEPT MAP

CENTRAL BALBOA'S REGIONAL CONTEXT

Central Balboa's city-wide and regional context should be explored in order to reach a greater understanding of the interacting forces and concerns affecting the area. If the study-area is the trees, then the regional context is the forest.

The contextual overview reveals that no other area in the region is so rich in diversity of unique attractions and activities. In a distance of less than eight hundred feet one may stroll from the harbor dock side activities, through the bustling Fun Zone with its amusement arcade and Ferris wheel, through a commercial zone with stores and restaurants, and then along the boardwalk to the park with its volleyball games and on to the beach. There is no other beach community along the Southern California coast that offers such a wide variety of experiences within such a confined space.

But, Central Balboa's intensity is also its downfall. Especially during the summer months and on warm winter days, people gravitate to Central Balboa in large numbers just because it offers such a wide variety of activities. In the midst of this hustle and bustle brought by visitors, Balboa businesses also attempt to address the shopping and service needs of local residents.

Viewing the peninsula from a regional perspective illustrates that the bulk of visitors to Balboa are traveling on SR55, which ends at Pacific Coast Highway as Newport Boulevard. This freeway access allows the opportunity to encourage drivers heading to Balboa Peninsula to park at off-site parking lots and then use a shuttle to

get to the peninsula. Advisory signs could be placed at spots above the freeway. During peak usage the status of parking availability and traffic congestion may be conveyed by these signs. Signs should also clearly announce that there is no through traffic route along the peninsula.

In looking at Central Balboa from a city-wide perspective, it becomes clear that the area is part of a greater commercial and recreational community. Cannery Village and McFadden Square, both on the peninsula, are linked to Central Balboa to form one visitor and commercial area. At the same time, Balboa Island and Corona del Mar are linked to Central Balboa via the Balboa Ferry.

Looking a bit farther we see that Mariners Mile and Fashion Island are linked to Central Balboa both visually and through the city-wide circulation system. It becomes apparent that the business association of Balboa would do well in considering their interests in terms of being a part of the set of villages that comprise Newport Beach. Each village has a certain image and specialty that provides it a unique identity. And, Balboa needs to agree on what its image should be, and then upon what set of special services that reinforce this image.

REGIONAL CONTEXT MAP

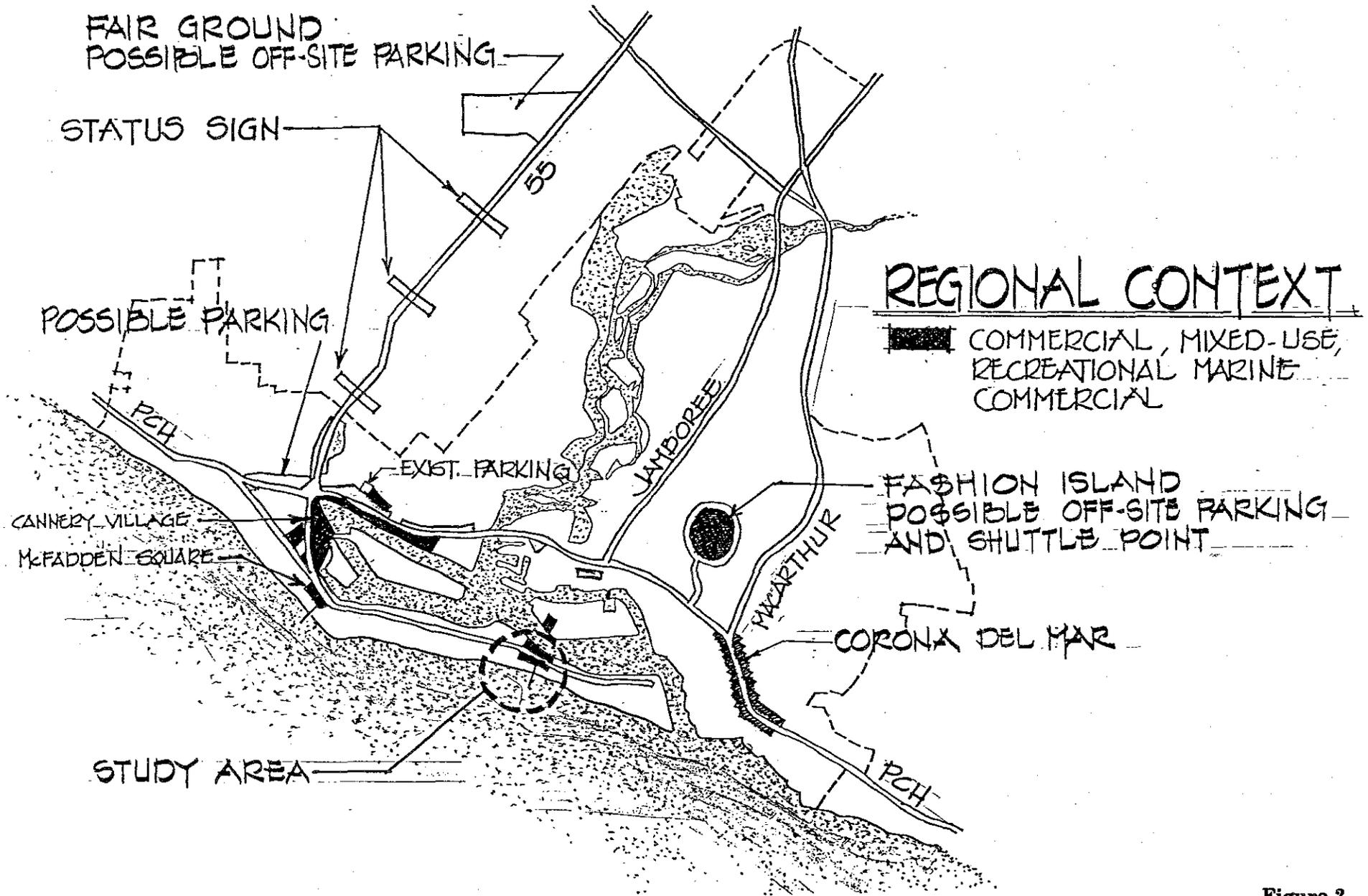


Figure 2

HARD/SOFT ANALYSIS

Hard/soft analysis is a very powerful tool for looking at an area in transition. By mapping structures that are "hard," or those which will remain well into the future, and structures that are "soft," or which will probably be replaced in the future, areas of potential future development can be identified.

Figure 3, Major Buildings to Remains, shows "hard" structures in Central Balboa. Major structures that will either remain in place for a long time to come, or those that have major long-term tenants were mapped first. Next, Central Balboa's major historic structures were mapped, including any that would be very difficult to move, expensive to replace, or those that are very important because of their character (either individually or because of where they are located).

Definite patterns emerge, with most of the buildings along Main Street and Edgewater Place remaining as is. Physical change is not highly likely in these concentrations of "hard" spaces; rather, they will provide the underpinnings of any future development and land use strategies.

Other buildings may be "hard" over the next decade or two, but could become "soft" thereafter as demand for more intense mixed retail and office space strengthens. This applies to many of the existing commercial buildings along Balboa Boulevard west of Main Street, and along Adams and Palm.

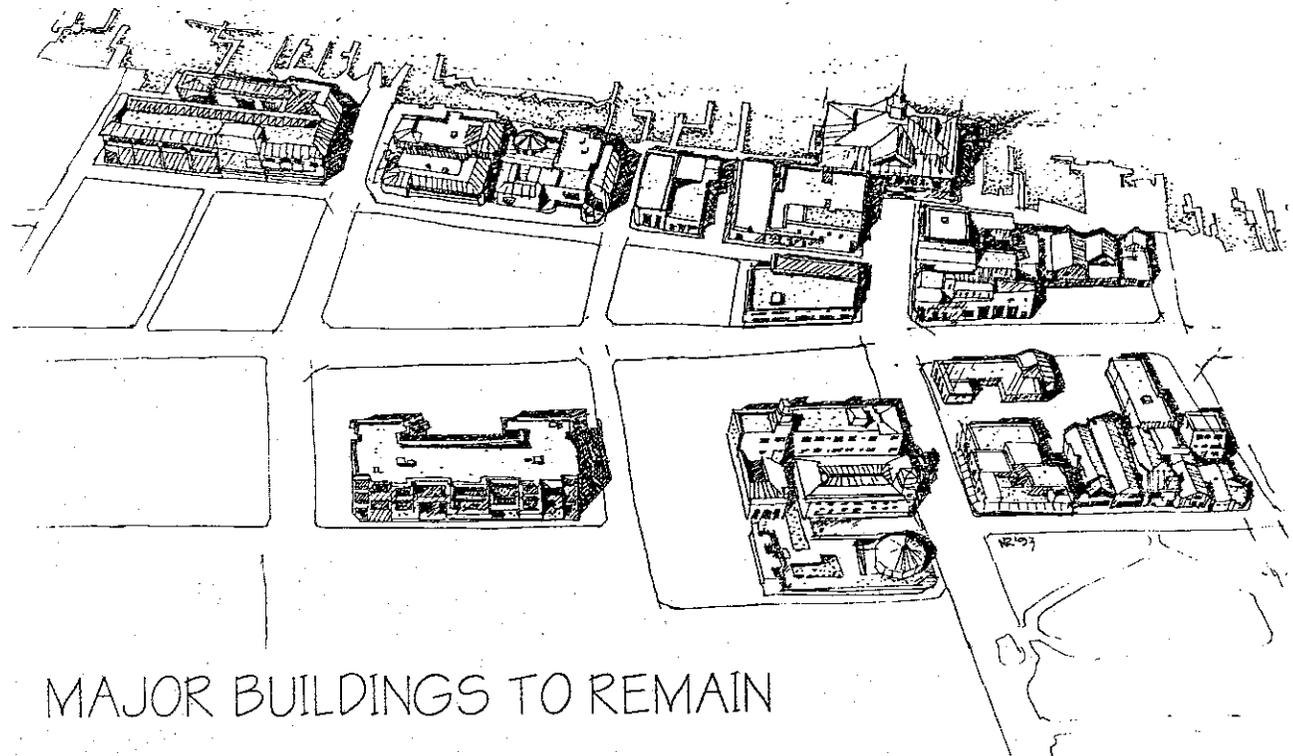
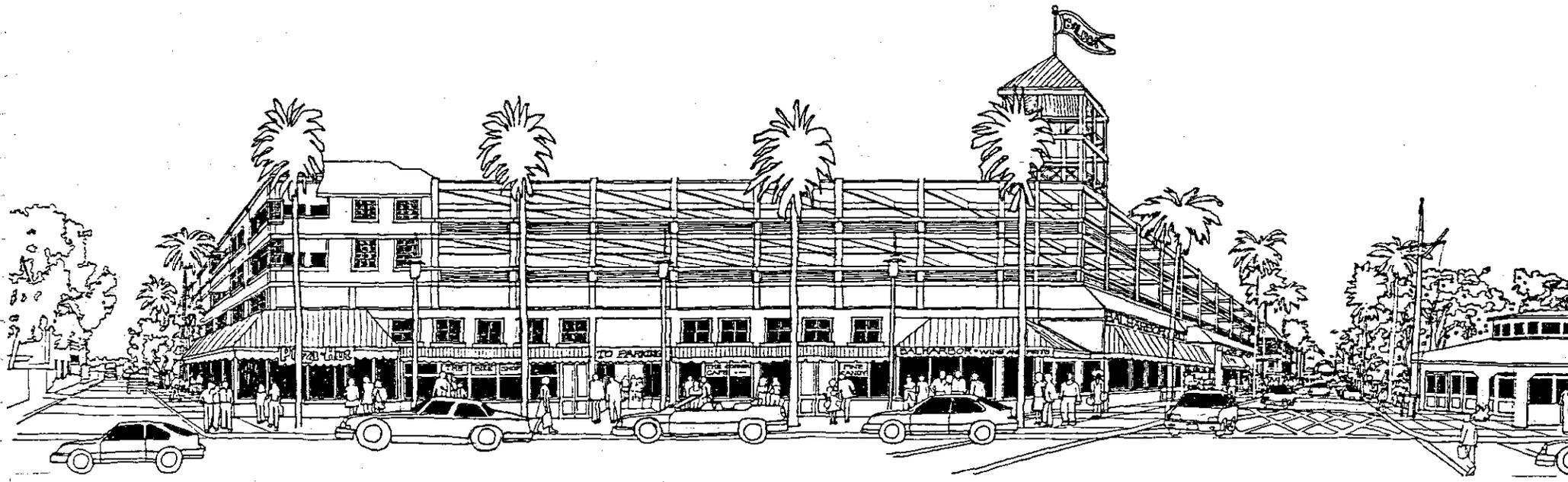


Figure 3



Adams

Palm



LAND USE PLAN

Land use patterns in Central Balboa should be clarified and refined to reflect the business area's three distinct roles as a commercial service center for local residents, as an entertainment/commercial boating area along the bay front, and as a beach-going and park service area along the beach front. The concept maximizes resident serving commercial services along Balboa Boulevard, encourages increased residential densities on larger building sites, enhances existing beach entertainment activities along the bay front and ocean front, and maintains lower density residential development on either side of the Central Balboa business district.

Six basic land use or activity districts are proposed for the Central Balboa area. The Edgewater District would apply to the relatively intense commercial day use activities along the harbor's edge. The Local Resident Serving District would emphasize businesses and services such as bakeries, stores and the post office that serve local residents as well visitors. The Beach/Entertainment District would provide day and evening beach oriented services. The Multi-Family/Mixed Use District would encourage combination of high density residential uses, a parking structure, and ground floor commercial development between Palm and Adams. The Two Family District would reflect existing attached single family development at either end of the Central Balboa area. Finally, the Beach/Open Space District would preserve beach recreational uses including the beach itself, the surrounding parks and the boardwalk.

The following summarizes development potential in Central Balboa given the recommended land uses.

Size = 11.3 acres, or 492,200 square feet net of streets, rights-of-way and public land.

Existing Building Area = 218,300 square feet.

Existing Floor Area Ratio (FAR) = 0.44:1

Existing Dwellings = 218 (62 in "hard" buildings)

Total Future Commercial Building Area =
292,700 square feet at 0.5:1 FAR, and
443,400 at 1.0:1 FAR

Total New Commercial Construction = 150,700
square feet at 0.5:1 FAR and 301,400 square
feet at 1.0:1 FAR

Total "Hard" Commercial Square Footage to
Remain Over Long Term = 142,000 square
feet, plus 62 residential units

Maximum Dwelling Unit Capacity = 311 units

Total Increase in Dwelling Units = 93, primarily west of Palm.

LAND USE DISTRICTS

The **EDGEWATER DISTRICT** is a major anchor which establishes one of the prime elements of Balboa's identity. Opportunities for this area are to maintain the strong day-use, commercial recreation orientation towards the harbor and provide a "point of departure" for public boating activities, support all scales of restaurants (from convenience food to fancy sit-down), support the Fun Zone and encourage night time uses. There are also opportunities for intensifying residential use at the west end of the district as part of future mixed use developments.

The **LOCAL RESIDENT SERVING DISTRICT** has opportunities to further encourage and enhance existing residential services. (The Post Office, Britta's coffee shop, pharmacy, grocery store, 2 bakeries, custom embroidery, real estate office are existing uses). There are opportunities to encourage new resident serving tenants such as a dry cleaner, hair salon, book store, or a laundry with a minipark with restrooms located along East Bay around the existing public parking lot. The location of the Resident Serving District allows easy right-hand access for residents leaving the area in the morning.

The **BEACH/ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT** has the opportunity to emphasize beach oriented day and evening uses, including hotel accommodations. With a good tenant leasing plan for the entire area, the district's function can balance population loads between morning, afternoon and evening, and between summer and winter. Longer term visits also should be en-

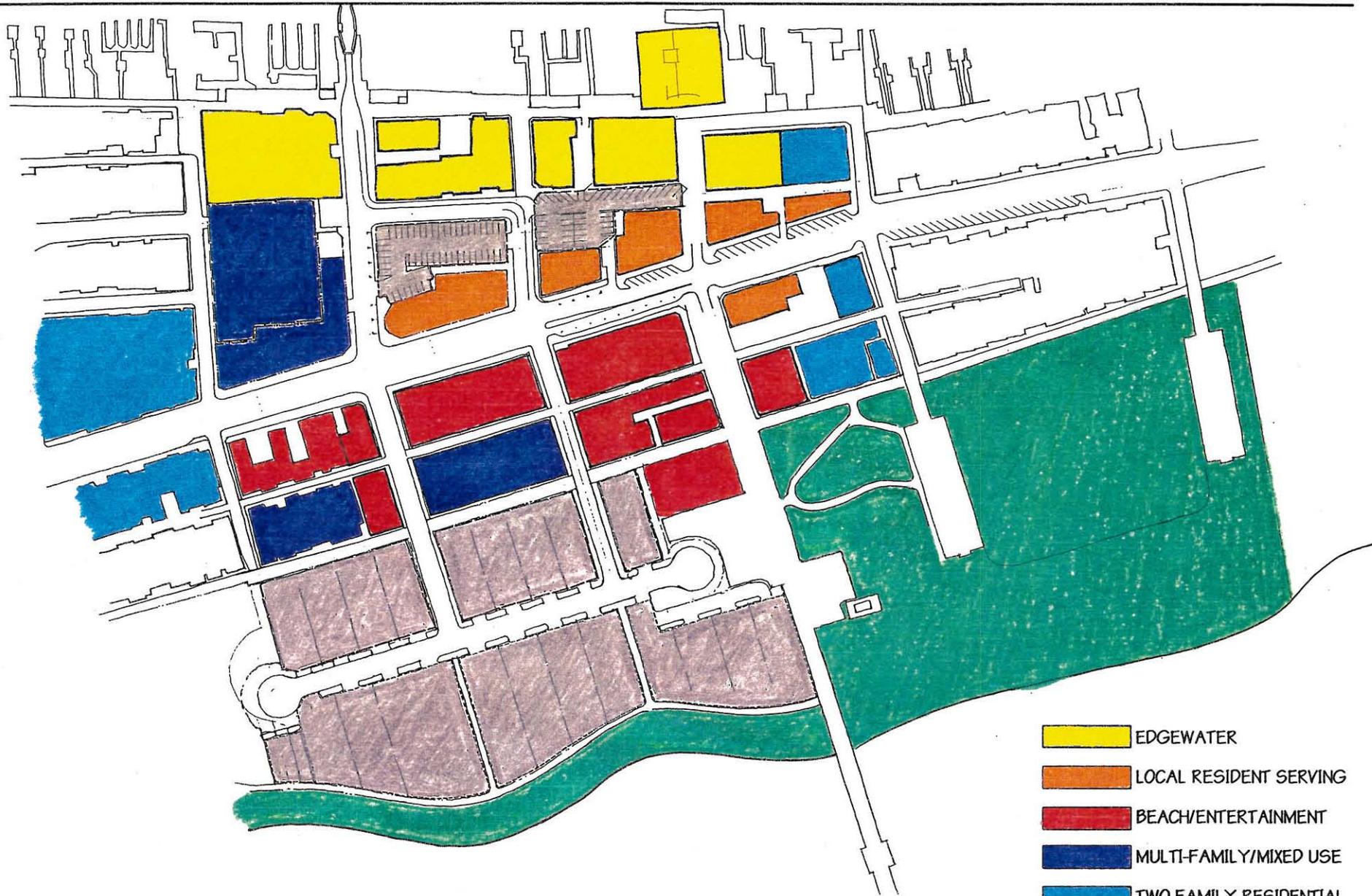
couraged through the provision of a balance of activities. Higher quality restaurants, beach oriented stores, and a strengthening of the boardwalk frontage near the hotel and Studio Cafe should be encouraged.

The **MULTI-FAMILY/MIXED USE DISTRICT** is an area concentrated on 2 blocks between Palm and Adams on Balboa. Opportunities exist for a multi-story residential structure over parking with roughly 60 units, or a 3-4 story parking garage with commercial along Balboa and Bay. The latter concept would provide additional parking beyond what is needed to serve the commercial uses within the building. Residential development could be oriented to a higher end, and/or retirement market. Views to the beach and bay would enhance the residential values for this site.

The **TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT** consists of detached and duplex units on long narrow lots. Future development will be two-story primarily, and would reflect existing residential development. This residential district also would help support Central Balboa's resident serving businesses. Establishment of this district would represent a change in zoning for the area west of Adams.

The **BEACH OPEN/SPACE DISTRICT** is the primary public recreation area between the boardwalk and the ocean, including Balboa Pier. This area along with the Edgewater district provides the major attractions for visitors from off the peninsula. These amenities attract the customers who support Central Balboa's shops

and restaurants on a day in and day out basis. The role of the Beach Open/Space District is to provide public open air, shore-side active and passive recreation.



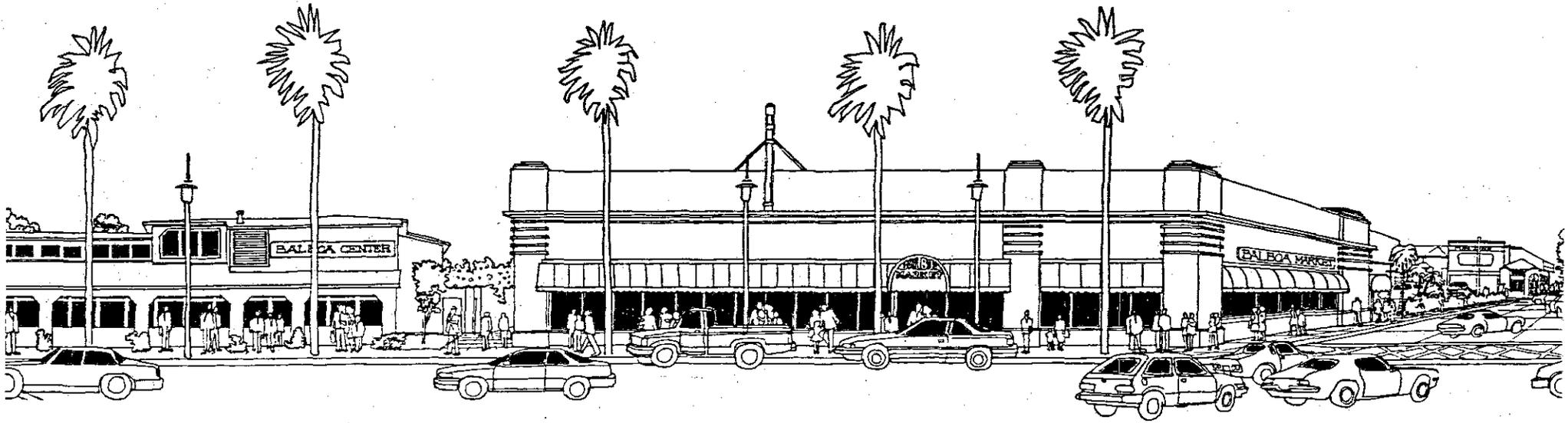
- EDGEWATER
- LOCAL RESIDENT SERVING
- BEACH/ENTERTAINMENT
- MULTI-FAMILY/MIXED USE
- TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- BEACH/OPEN SPACE
- PARKING/UTILITY

LAND USE DISTRICTS

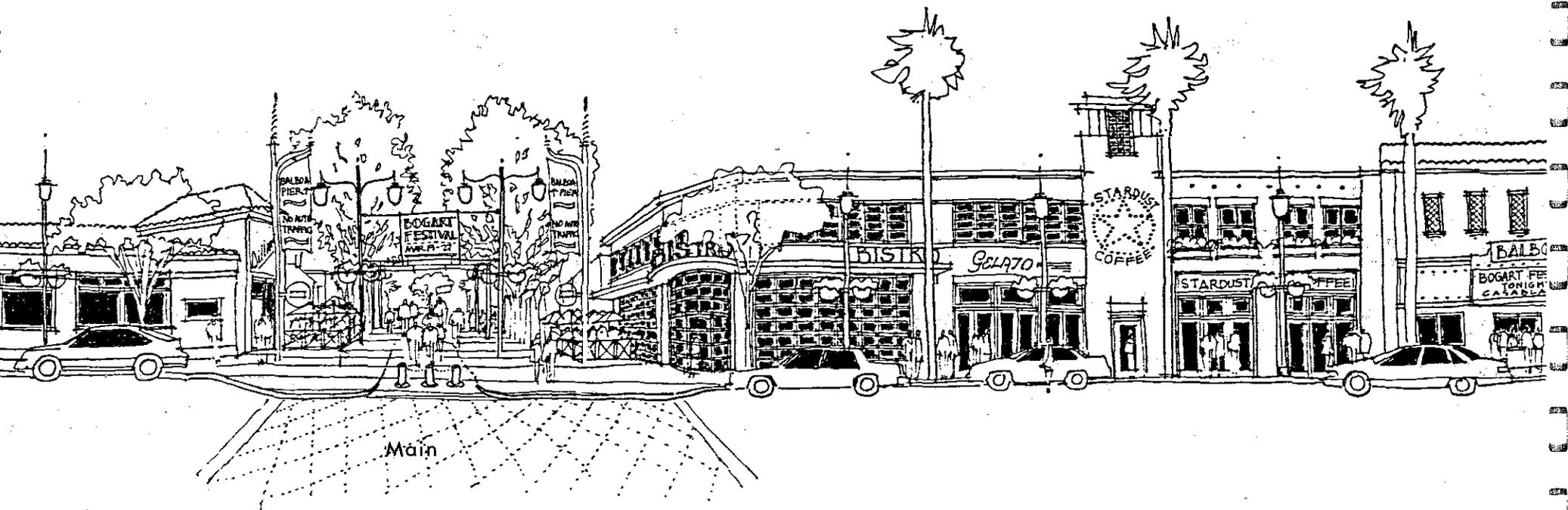


"Balboa did live on drinking, gambling, and a dance hall. Balboa was a beach resort, plain and simple. It was hell on wheels from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Then it went into hibernation for the rest of the year."

from Bawdy Balboa by Judge Robert Gardner



Washington



Main

BALBOA PIER

BOGART FESTIVAL
APR. 27

BALBOA PIER

BALBOA PIER

BISTRO

GELATO

STARDUST
COFFEE

STARDUST

COFFEE

BALBOA

BOGART FEE
TONIGHT
CASABLANCA

CIRCULATION AND PARKING

BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

The circulation and parking concepts for Central Balboa were developed on the basis of the following general principles:

- Main Street should be primarily for pedestrians, with service vehicles and delivery permitted during specified time periods.
- Separation of destination (visitor) traffic from local (resident) traffic should be accomplished as soon as possible at the entrance to downtown.
- The 15th Street cruising control turn-around is an effective congestion management device and is assumed to be continued.
- A dual turn-around loop system would be an efficient means to separate destination and resident traffic. One loop would provide a turn-around exit from downtown; the other would provide efficient ingress and egress from beach parking.
- Limits to provision of more parking in Central Balboa must be accepted as a given. A balance must be achieved between the need to retain and enhance the village scale and pedestrian environment and the need to provide parking.
- The primary focus for parking improvements should be on efficient management of existing parking facilities and prudent use of limited opportunities for expansion.
- Circulation and parking improvement plans should incorporate off-site accommodations, particularly for long-term or all day visitors.

Off-site facilities should consider parking and scheduled shuttle bus service to Central Balboa.

KEY ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

There are a number of issues concerning circulation and parking. It was recognized that no option would be able to satisfy all of these issues, and that some compromises would need to be made. Some of the key issues and problems that were identified include:

- General traffic congestion problems, particularly at the intersection of Main and Balboa;
- High pedestrian volumes and disobedience of "Don't Walk" signs, again particularly around the Main Street-Balboa Boulevard intersection;
- Cruising problems, particularly late Friday and Saturday nights;
- Problems with "lost tourists", driving around residential areas, not knowing where to park for beach or commercial access, and not realizing that Balboa Boulevard is a dead end;
- Storage of vehicles waiting to get on the ferry or into the private hydraulic lift operated parking garage located on East Bay Avenue;
- A significant parking deficiency exists for all Balboa activities -- the beach, boating and commercial businesses.

The cruising and parking deficiency issues were identified as being particularly problematic, and

were cited as a major cause for the decline in commercial activity in the area in recent years. Business representatives indicate that a significant increase in "cruising" started in 1987.

The major objectives for circulation and parking are:

- To provide alternatives for solving current traffic congestion and parking problems;
- To provide a circulation and parking system that would enhance the commercial, residential and recreational use of Balboa;
- To provide a transportation system compatible with and supportive of the proposed land use concepts.

GENERAL APPROACH

The Balboa peninsula is unique. It is a fully developed three mile long, narrow spit of land with no room for new roads as a means of improving traffic circulation. Similarly, adding parking facilities for the entire identified deficit of some 2,000 parking spaces in Central Balboa would be virtually impossible without major changes to the existing scale and character and land uses. The general approach, therefore, was to work as much as possible with the existing infrastructure, and use management practices to control both vehicle and pedestrian flows. Another option identified was to provide supplemental means of access without bringing more cars, such as off-site parking connected to Central Balboa via a shuttle bus service.

CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS

The following sections present recommendations to improve both pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION (Figure 5.)

Central Balboa should be made much more "pedestrian friendly". This can be done by improving the facilities and increasing the attractiveness of the Bay and seaside boardwalks, and by changing Main Street into a primarily pedestrian route from the Balboa Pavilion to the Balboa Pier. In order to provide service and emergency vehicle access, as well as limited commercial access to facilities along Main, provisions would still be included for vehicles, perhaps limited to one lane. This was done to increase the pedestrian friendliness of Main Street without jeopardizing its commercial viability.

Other major improvements include extending the grid pattern from bay to beach, with defined walkways on Palm and Washington. This will tie the bay and beach together and allow the pedestrian easy access to all attractions. In addition, a meandering walkway/bikeway is suggested along the beach edge of the main parking lot. This will soften the straight edge and provide an alternative route through the heart of the village, where most congestion exists today.

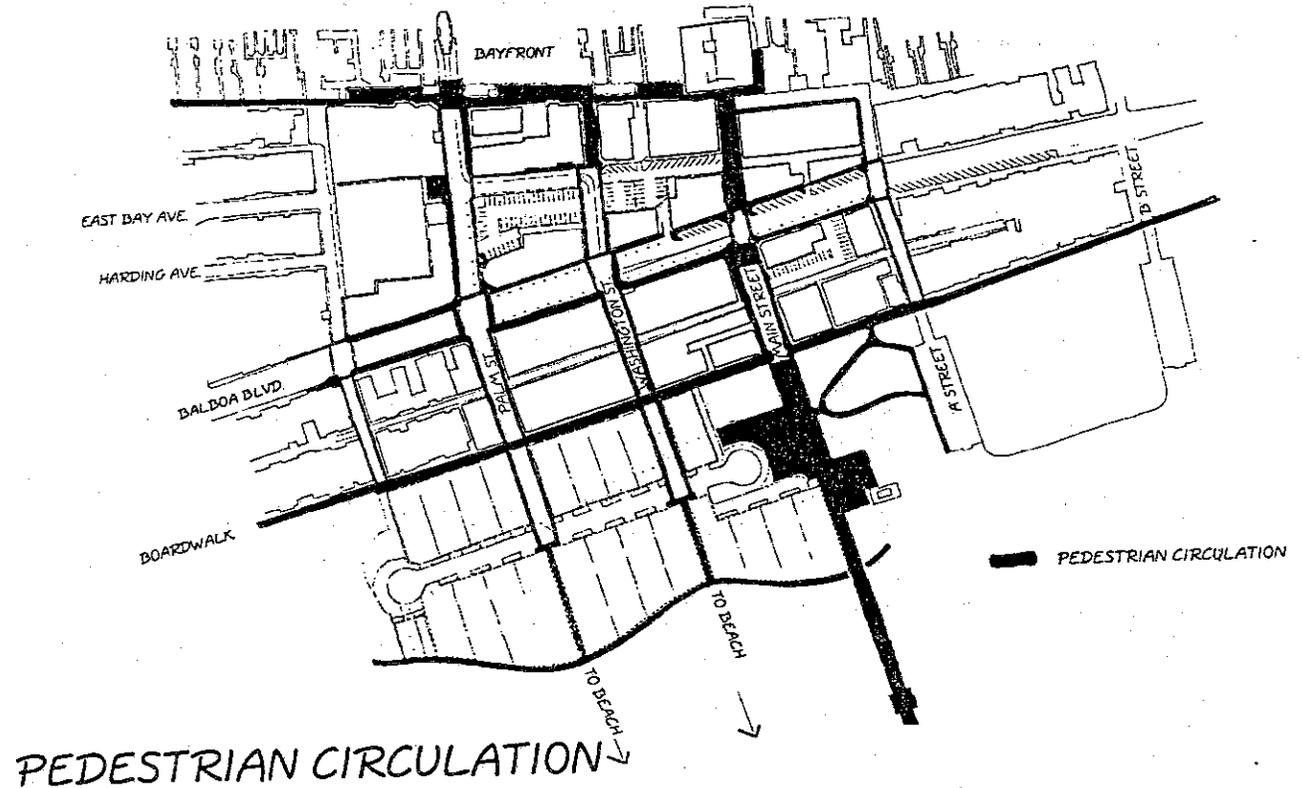


Figure 5

VEHICLE CIRCULATION (Figure 6.)

There are a variety of different types of vehicle traffic in the area, including beach goers, tourists headed for the commercial area, residential traffic, other commercial users and ferry traffic. To help manage traffic and minimize congestion, it is recommended that the different types of traffic be separated and routed to their respective destinations, with on-street signing used to aid motorists. This can be done through the provision of two major circulation loops on either side of Balboa Boulevard as shown in Figure 6, Vehicular Circulation. The first loop is for beach, pier and long-term parking. Traffic is routed south on Palm and either directly into the parking lot or back out on to Washington. This is similar to the current practice, except that exiting traffic is currently routed on Main Street and conflicts heavily with the pedestrian movements in that area. The peak characteristics of the parking lot exit (the majority of the beach goers typically leave at the same time, around 3:00) dictated that at least two exit lanes be provided. It is also necessary to provide facilities for OCTD and other buses to enter and exit the parking lot. Although ingress on Palm was judged not to be a problem, the narrow lane width on Washington would make it difficult to handle both the buses and high volumes of exiting traffic. Therefore Washington between the beach and Balboa Boulevard should be widened to two full traffic lanes (with no parking) and remain one way. A new signal at the intersection of Washington and Balboa Boulevard would be necessary to accommodate exiting traffic along this route

Synchronized signals along Balboa should also be considered. Because the majority of the traffic is being routed off of Main, it should be possible to change the signal splits such that the

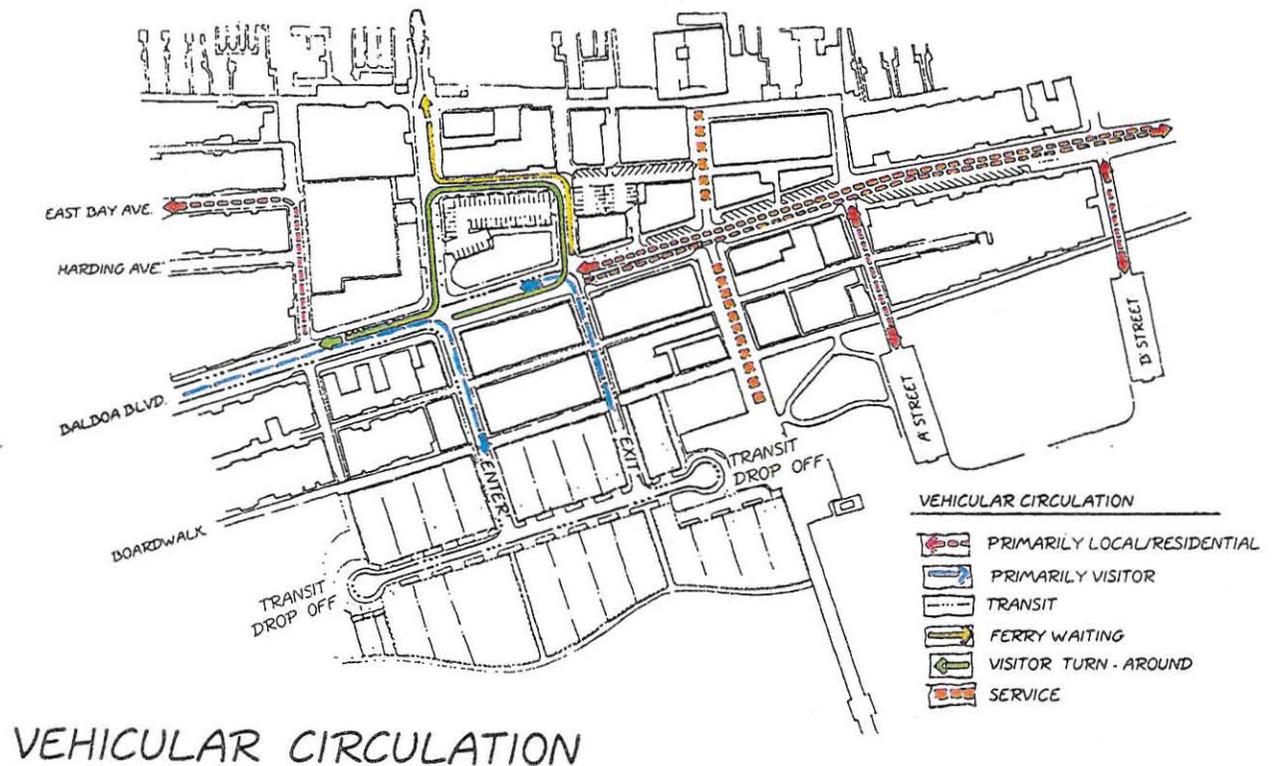


Figure 6

majority of the green time would be given to east bound and west bound Balboa and an all pedestrian phase. For vehicle traffic, Main Street would be considered a minor side street and could be accommodated with either a very short green phase, or by making the intersection semi-actuated. For the latter option, care would have to be taken to ensure that the stop line detector was not located in the immediate vicinity of service truck loading/unloading areas.

One of the key advantages of the new parking lot circulation option is that it effectively separates the major vehicle movements from the major pedestrian movements along Main Street. It also provides a turnaround for nonresidential traffic before they enter the residential area to the east of the commercial zone. Earlier options explored by the City for providing a turnaround focused on the area to the east of Main Street near the A and B Street parking lot. This option proved to be unpopular with the residents of the area and could also adversely impact the operation of the Main Street/Balboa Boulevard intersection. The new parking lot circulation pattern should also accommodate bus stop and passenger drop-off points. These should be located at the foot of Balboa Pier and at the Adams Street end of the lot.

The other major loop is to the north of Balboa Boulevard and utilizes Washington, Bay and Palm as a one way counterclockwise circulator. This provides an effective turn-around in a location where pedestrian conflicts can be minimized.

To accommodate expected traffic volumes, two through lanes are provided in the circulator, with a third lane along Washington and Bay that can be used for either parking or, during

peak periods, for ferry storage. This eliminates the need to store ferry destined vehicles on Balboa Boulevard. Traffic signal timings at both Balboa/Palm and Balboa/Washington will need to be adjusted to accommodate the revised traffic flows.

To help stop vehicle incursion into residential areas, and to increase utilization of the north circulator loop, east bound Balboa Boulevard should be narrowed from two lanes to one east of Washington through the provision of a landscaped median island. Appropriate signing would be provided to indicate that the through movement is for residential/service vehicles only, and that all other traffic should turn left onto Washington. Both of the east bound lanes at Washington would be allowed to turn left. West-bound traffic would have two lanes as currently exist. These changes east of Washington have the added benefit of being able to increase on-street parking on Balboa Boulevard by changing parallel stalls to diagonal ones.

PEAK PERIOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

The majority of the traffic problems occur during the summer months, weekends, and other peak periods including late Friday and Saturday nights. Specific conceptual proposals to mitigate this congestion include:

- Implementing the proposed circulation improvements described above;
- Coordinating the signals at Balboa/Palm and Balboa/Main, along with the proposed one at Washington/Balboa and implementing alternative timing plans for different peak periods;

- Use of parking restrictions to allow use of parking lanes on key routes as travel lanes during peak periods;
- Implementation of turning movement restrictions on a time of day basis where appropriate;
- Continuation of the City of Newport Beach's Police Department cruising control check point at 15th Street.

PARKING

Parking in the Balboa area is a significant problem for merchants, residents, and visitors. The merchants expressed concern that there was insufficient parking to service their shops, and that what parking is available is often occupied by long-term beach goers or users of the tour boats. Residents complain that they were often unable to find parking spots near the local shops and were thus forced to go elsewhere for goods and services.

Data obtained from the City of Newport Beach identifies a parking deficiency of approximately 2,000 spaces based on code requirements. However, many users of the area find alternate means of transportation to Balboa, notably bicycle or by parking on Balboa Island, and that the true deficiency is likely somewhat less than the stated 2,000 spaces. Providing all of the code required parking would require as a minimum doubling all of the available parking, an option which is deemed to be infeasible and undesirable. The focus then turned to options for managing parking in the immediate vicinity of Central Balboa, providing some limited options for expansion, and providing alternative means of access.

PARKING SUPPLY AND MANAGEMENT (Figure 7)

Proposed changes to the existing main beach lot, and A and B lots include "softening" the beach edge of the lot with a meandering path, and reorganizing the parking layout to make it more efficient. Although no detailed count of available parking spaces was performed for the new configuration, it is estimated that efficient

restriping could yield approximately 750 to 800 spaces, up from the current 676. Given the geographic location of the A and B lots east of Main Street, these would be allocated for residential permit parking only. The bottom section of the A lot reaching to the pier would be eliminated and replaced with green space, and a potential site for a beach activity center serving the junior life guard program, special events, and other community needs.

On-street parking can also be better organized to serve short-term parking needs. The most visible change is the addition of diagonal parking east of Washington, in the west bound direction of Balboa Boulevard. This parking is primarily intended for use by residents wishing to access the services and shops in Balboa. Diagonal parking was considered for the south side of Balboa Boulevard; however, having this type of parking in both directions could be excessively disruptive to traffic flow and would likely generate additional congestion problems. The west bound diagonal parking could be provided as long as two through lanes are provided and the circulation patterns are changed to discourage nonresidential traffic from entering and exiting the area east of Washington. Diagonal parking could also be added on East Balboa between "A" and "B" Streets, on the east-bound side only. This parking would primarily serve area residents.

Other short-term parking options include existing surface lots north of Balboa Boulevard between Palm and Main. These could be redesigned and made more efficient, and if East Bay Avenue is closed between Washington and Main, it could be incorporated into the existing

surface lot. To improve parking availability for customers of local resident serving businesses, resident permits for short-term parking also should be considered.

The land use options for Central Balboa could increase both residential and commercial space. Anywhere between 75,000 and 225,000 square feet of additional retail and commercial space could be added, along with up to 90 residential units. Management of existing parking spaces would be insufficient to accommodate demands created by this new development. Therefore, the feasibility of constructing a new, four story parking structure bounded by Palm-Balboa-Adams should be explored. The existing private structure at Bay and Palm could be interconnected with the new structure in order to improve the efficiency of its operation. Implementing this option would add approximately 400 to 500 spaces in the area. This concept requires East Bay Avenue to be closed between Adams and Palm. Existing businesses and possibly residences on this block could be incorporated into a revitalization plan. Both Balboa and Palm should retain retail frontage, with the parking structure behind.

One of the concerns raised during the design workshop was that there is too much long-term parking in the area, and that it is often occupied on an all day basis thus preventing other, short-term users from utilizing it. The best option for addressing this issue would be to change the distribution of short, medium and long-term parking spaces in the area. There is a strong correlation between the amount of time people plan to stay at an activity and how far they are prepared to walk to get there. Since

users of the commercial area typically are involved in short-term activities, it is recommended that parking in the areas bounded by Adams, Balboa and Main all be less than two hours with parking spaces in the immediate vicinity of businesses being restricted to half an hour or less. Within the beach lot, it is recommended that it be reconfigured to provide approximately 60% long-term parking and 40% short-term (under two hours) parking. This is in line with the estimated current utilization of this lot.

Variable pricing within the beach lot so that long-term users would pay a significant premium is another option to consider. Although this can be done with the current parking system, it is expected to raise concern from tour boat operators and fisherman who regularly use the long-term facility. The outcome of variable pricing might make off-site parking and shuttle bus options more desirable, because they would cost less than all-day parking.

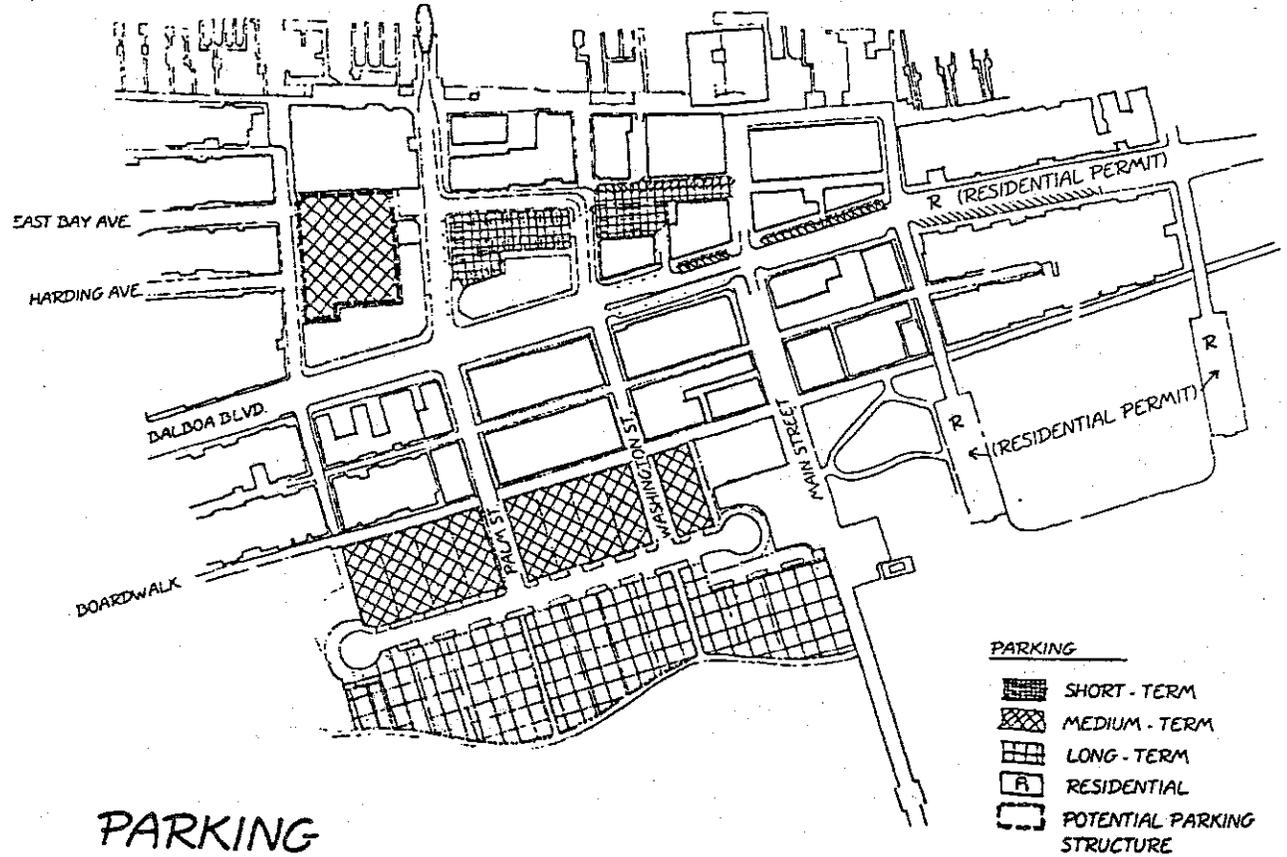


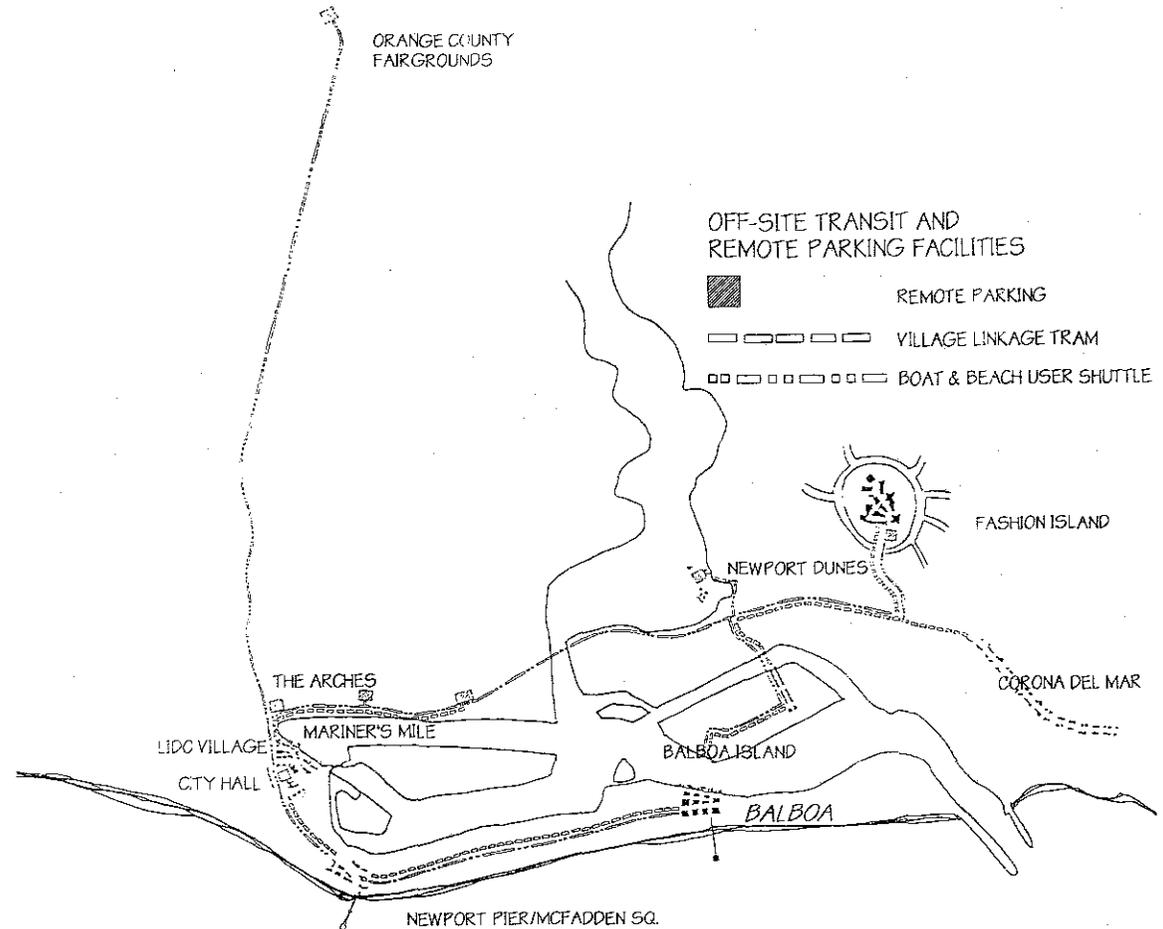
Figure 7

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION (Figure 8)

The option of providing off-site parking and alternative access (shuttle bus) should be considered. To make this a viable alternative, it should be provided during the peak holiday months and should be coordinated with specific commercial services, such as the fishing charters and the *Catalina Flier*. To further increase the attractiveness of an off-site shuttle service, it is suggested that an open air tram rather than conventional bus be used (similar to the Laguna Beach system), and that it have additional stops to distribute beach goers at various locations. It is also suggested that the tram system could be used to link the various villages within Newport Beach thus further enhancing its utility.

While the City could operate such a tram service, it could not directly secure UMTA funding. If the Orange County Transportation District were to operate the service, however, they could conceivably obtain UMTA funding assistance. The other option would be to have the tram paid for by private/commercial sources or through developer fees. Figure 8 shows potential tram routes and off-site parking areas.

Consideration should also be given to providing a water taxi service. Although no specific recommendations are made herein, the water taxi service could provide another option for access to Central Balboa without making traffic congestion and parking deficiencies worse. Similar options for providing enhanced bicycle access should also be part of circulation plans, such as the beach-front pathway along the edge of the main beach lot.



ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

Figure 8

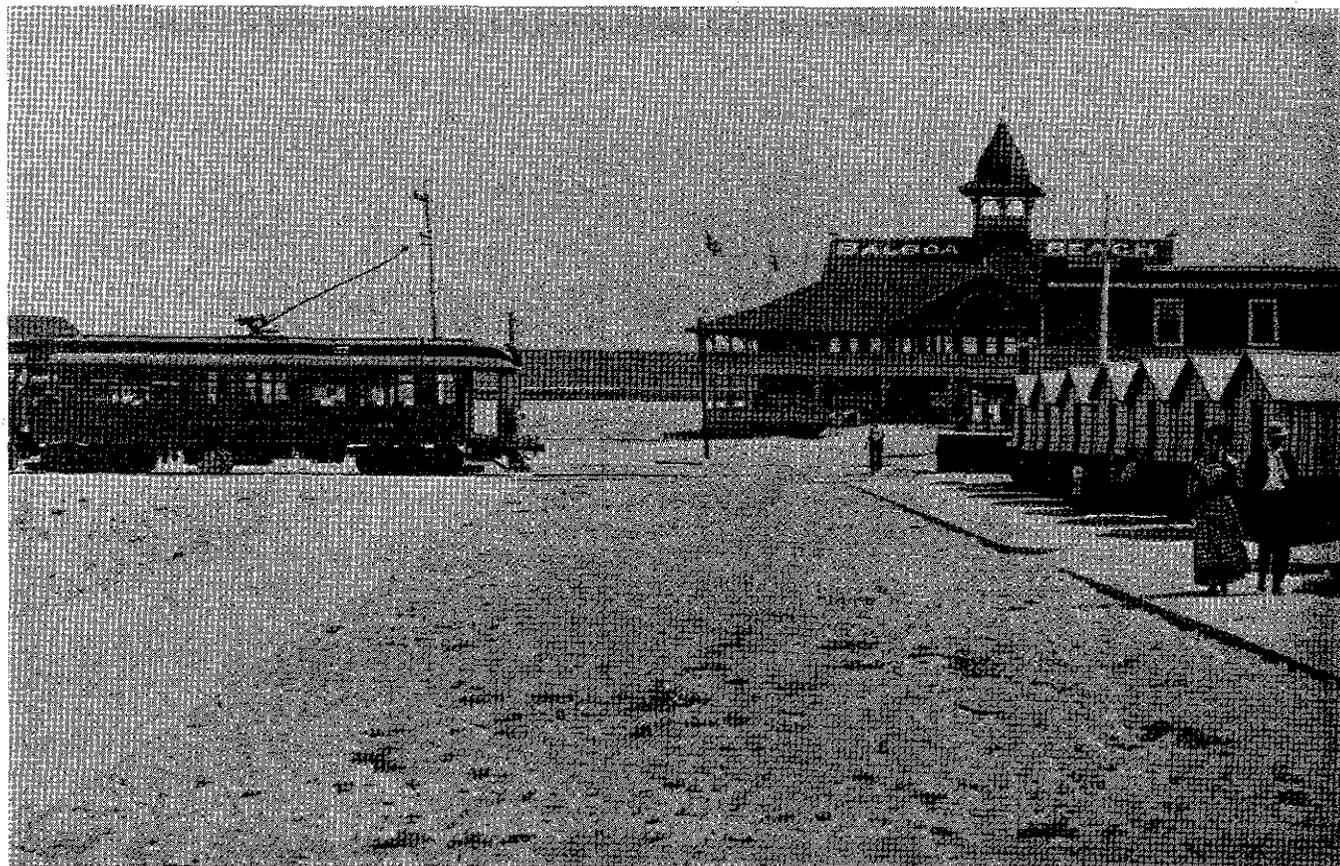
SUMMARY

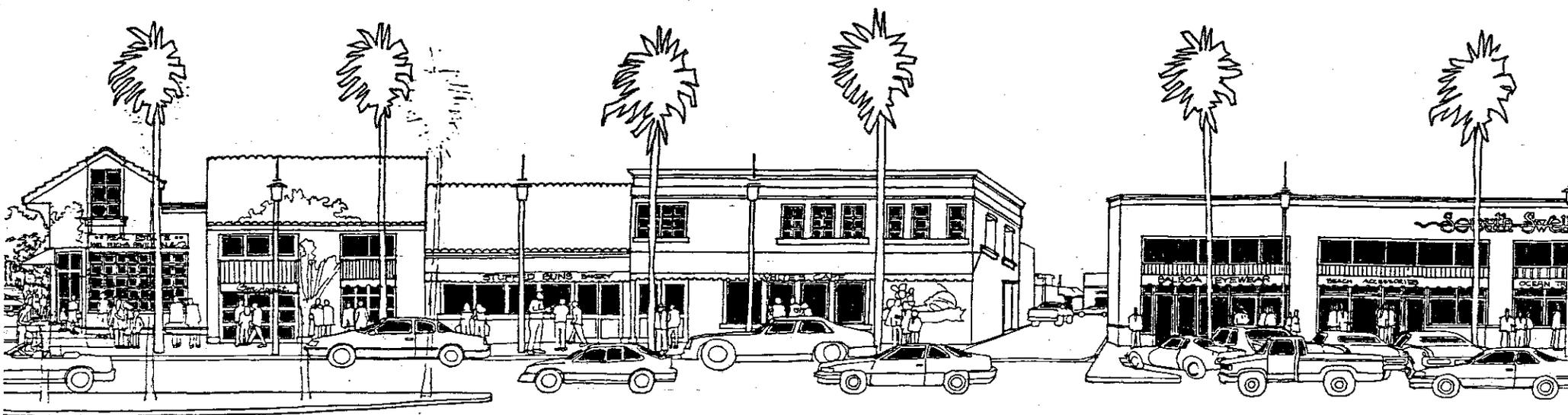
The circulation and parking concepts explore a wide variety of options to improve traffic circulation and reduce congestion and parking problems. The major recommendations include:

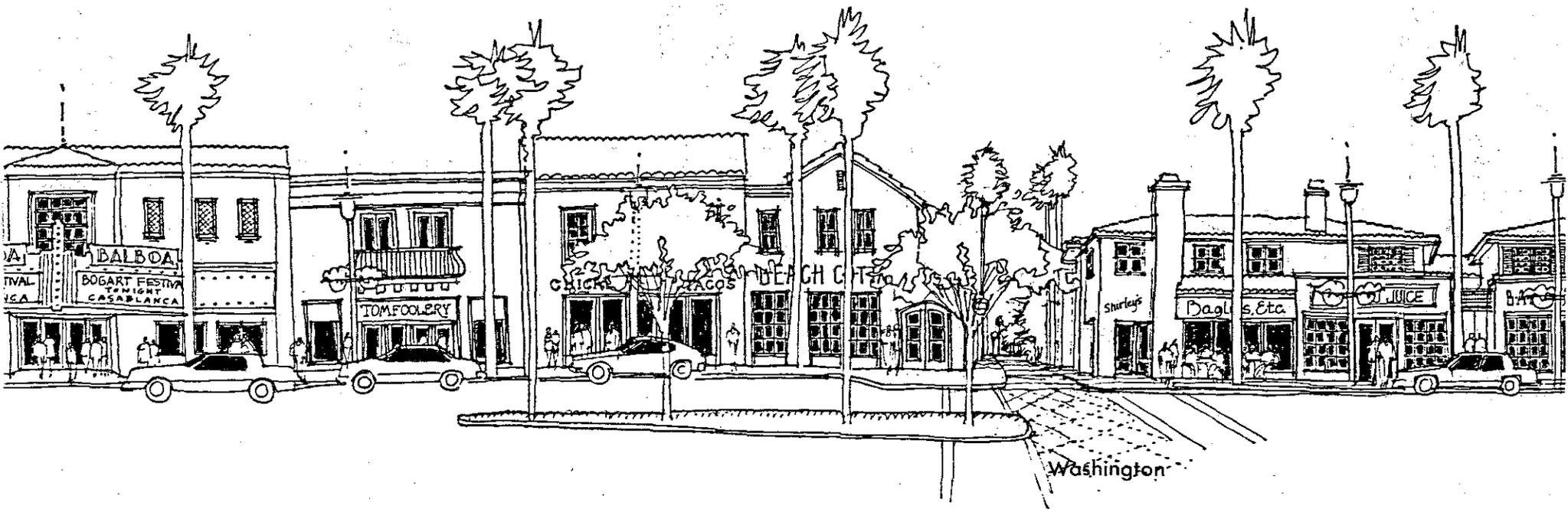
- Separation of traffic flows and providing two new circulator loops for nonresidential traffic by using Palm, Washington and Bay;
- Minimizing visitor traffic east of Washington through improved routes into parking and turn-around loops, and through improved signage. Public access to establishments on or east of Main, as well as to areas such as the Wedge and peninsula beaches must be maintained;
- Redistribution of parking in Central Balboa by concentrating short term parking near the commercial activities and long-term parking near the beach;
- Providing a new multi-level parking structure bounded by Palm, Balboa and Adams to accommodate parking demands generated by additional development and revitalization;
- Moving ferry storage from Balboa Boulevard to Bay Street;
- Providing alternative means of transportation from off-site parking lots to Balboa, and undertaking steps to make them not only feasible but an attractive option for users of the area.

These recommendations are by no means comprehensive and should be studied in detail before being implemented. In particular, the proposed circulation changes and effective installing of a new signal at Washington and Balboa should be carefully assessed to determine impacts and benefits. Similarly, it is suggested

that a detailed parking study be undertaken to develop a true picture of the demand /supply relationship as well as examine the feasibility for providing a multi-story parking structure on the recommended site.







LANDSCAPE AND STREETScape

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN

The overall landscape concept for Central Balboa is to:

- Give a unique identity to the area.
- Help resolve traffic problems by creating strong street identities, and by helping to funnel traffic.
- Enrich the pedestrian environment and establish distinct internal connections.
- Help promote tourism to the area by creating a pleasing visual atmosphere.

In order to accomplish these objectives, the overall landscape master plan is built on a number of major elements, as illustrated in Figure 9, Landscape Concept Plan, and as described below.

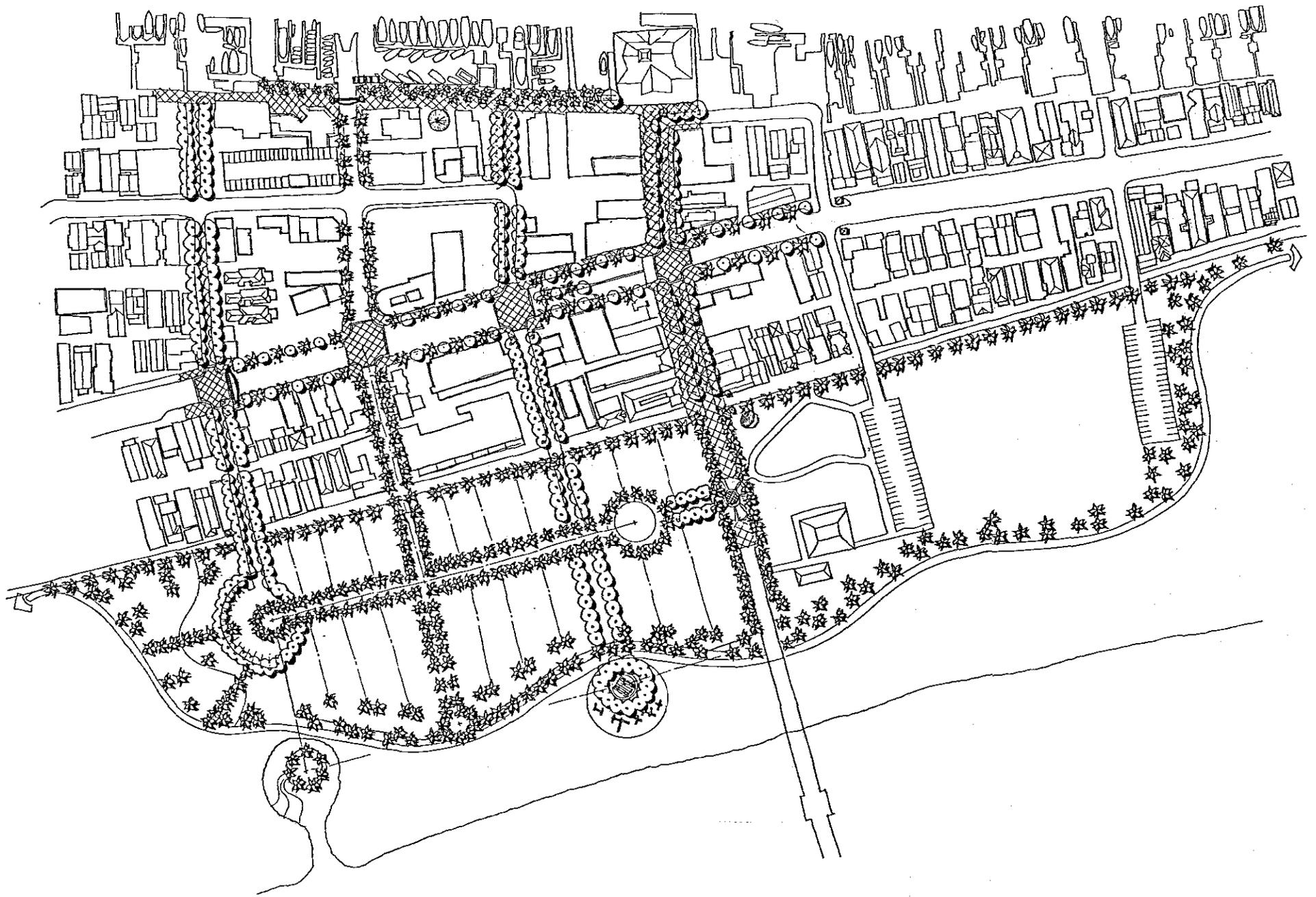
Major Auto Spine - The primary east-west automobile spine will be along Balboa Boulevard. A gateway treatment at Adams is coupled with major visual nodes at Palm, Washington, and Adams. These nodes will be composed of special planting, enriched paving, and designated street trees in sidewalk tree grates along Balboa Boulevard that will cumulatively lend uniqueness and unity to this stretch of Balboa Boulevard.

Major Pedestrian Spine - The major pedestrian link takes advantage of the existing popular bayside waterfront between the Fun Zone and the Pavilion, and then extends along Main Street to cross Balboa Boulevard and ultimately connect with the Balboa Pier after passing through the existing beach park.

Highlights along this spine are the ferry landing, the Pavilion, and the pier.

Secondary North-South Pedestrian Accesses - The pedestrian experience along all the north-south streets will be enhanced by tree plantings to provide an enticing and shaded environment for pedestrians.

Public Beach Fronting the Pacific Ocean - A fully improved bike route has been designated to establish a well defined edge along the Central Balboa beach. Existing beach parking will be reorganized for easy access and for taking maximum advantage of the ocean view. Street trees along secondary pedestrian access streets will be extended into the parking lot. An aquatic park has been proposed for this area as well.



LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN

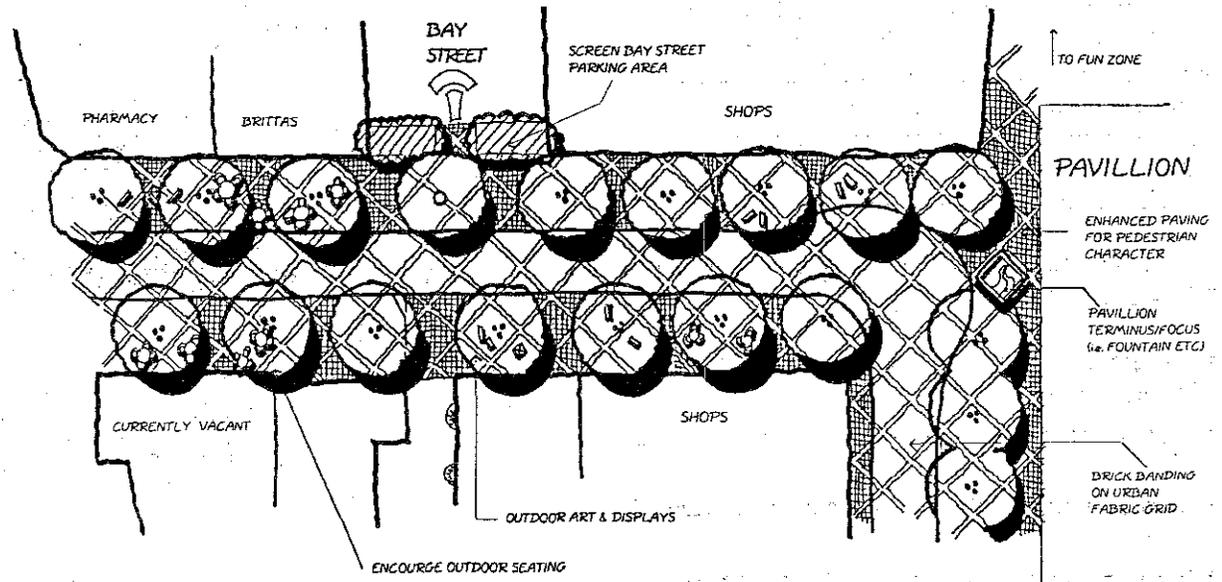
Figure 9

MAIN STREET AT THE PAVILION

Main Street should become Central Balboa's pedestrian focus, de-emphasizing the vehicular and encouraging the existing pedestrian scale. Main Street might mimic other successful Southern California urban streetscapes such as Fourth Street Promenade (Santa Monica), and State Street (Santa Barbara). These example projects have shown that, when pedestrian-friendly streetscape environments are introduced, commerce thrives.

Promenades have encouraged year round activity so that seasonal tourism based businesses are able to shift their product to better serve the surrounding community. Year-round outdoor events and festivals along the Main Street Promenade will draw the community and tourists to revitalize Balboa; the following activities are suggested as a menu to strengthen Main Street

- Concerts in the gazebo
- Farmers Market on a given weekday evening
- Art festivals which will also encourage art galleries
- Theater and film festivals (i.e., Bogart Festival)



MAIN STREET PROMENADE

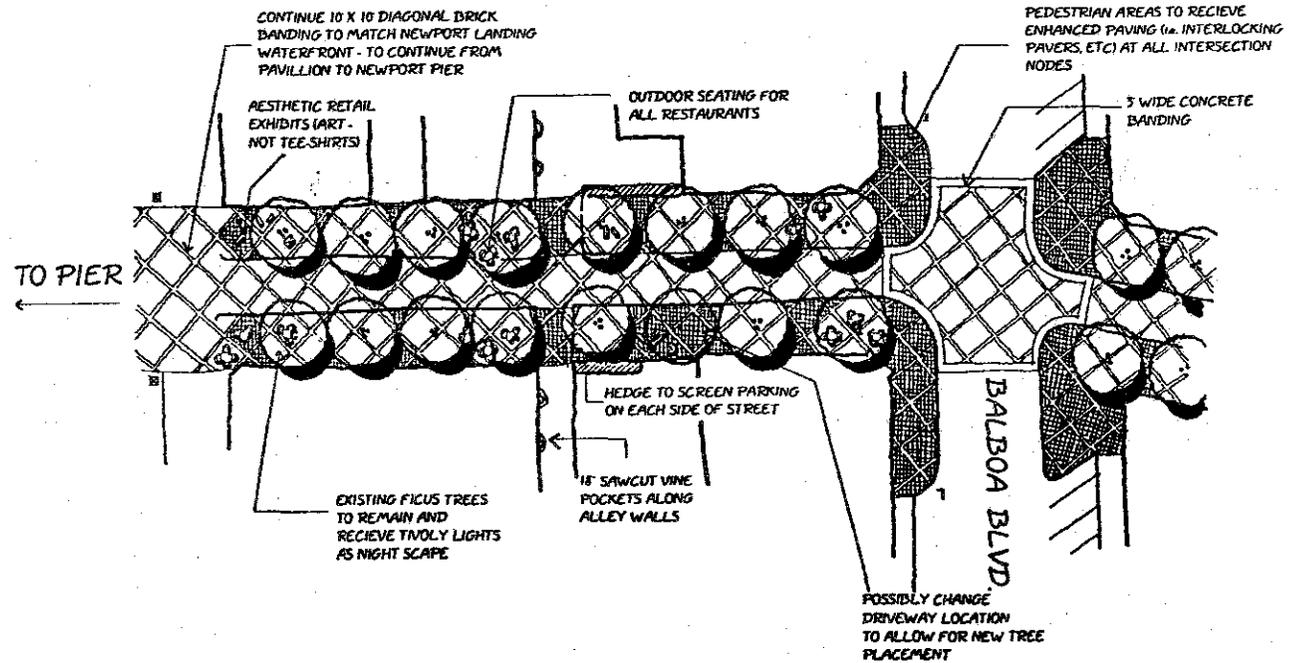
Figure 10

MAIN STREET AT BALBOA BOULEVARD

Encouraging pedestrian use along the Main Street Promenade will be the economic key for revitalization. The walking visitor must feel comfortable and be allowed to dominate the street space. To accomplish this objective, the street should be narrowed to 15 feet, thus enlarging the curb to building space for outdoor use. Restaurants and retailers should be leased sidewalk space to encourage outdoor eating, and to help finance the improvements.

Enhancement of Main Street should include the following:

- Interlocking pavers along pedestrian sidewalk;
- Sawcut brick bands in concrete 10x10 grid as shown on the sketch plan;
- Tivoli lights intertwined in to existing ficus trees;
- Planter pockets to screen parking and bare walls;
- Site furnishings (e.g., bollards, benches and banners).



MAIN STREET PROMENADE

Figure 11

FUN ZONE WATERFRONT

The waterfront shall become the bottom side of the "L" creating a pedestrian link between the ferry (Balboa Island) and the pier. The existing waterfront adjacent to The Newport Landing shall serve as the model for this enhancement. The environmental designer used outdoor seating, lightpoles with hanging baskets, and an urban brick grid to create a vivid character. The waterfront adjacent to the fun zone (recently redeveloped) utilizes similar material and site furnishings, but should receive the following upgrades to continue the model waterfront character:

- Sawcut brick bands into existing concrete to match grid;
- Strengthen vertical element with more palms;
- Site benches to form conversation pits as shown on plan;
- Continue light pole theme with baskets and banners;
- Break up linear brick wall with tables and vegetation.

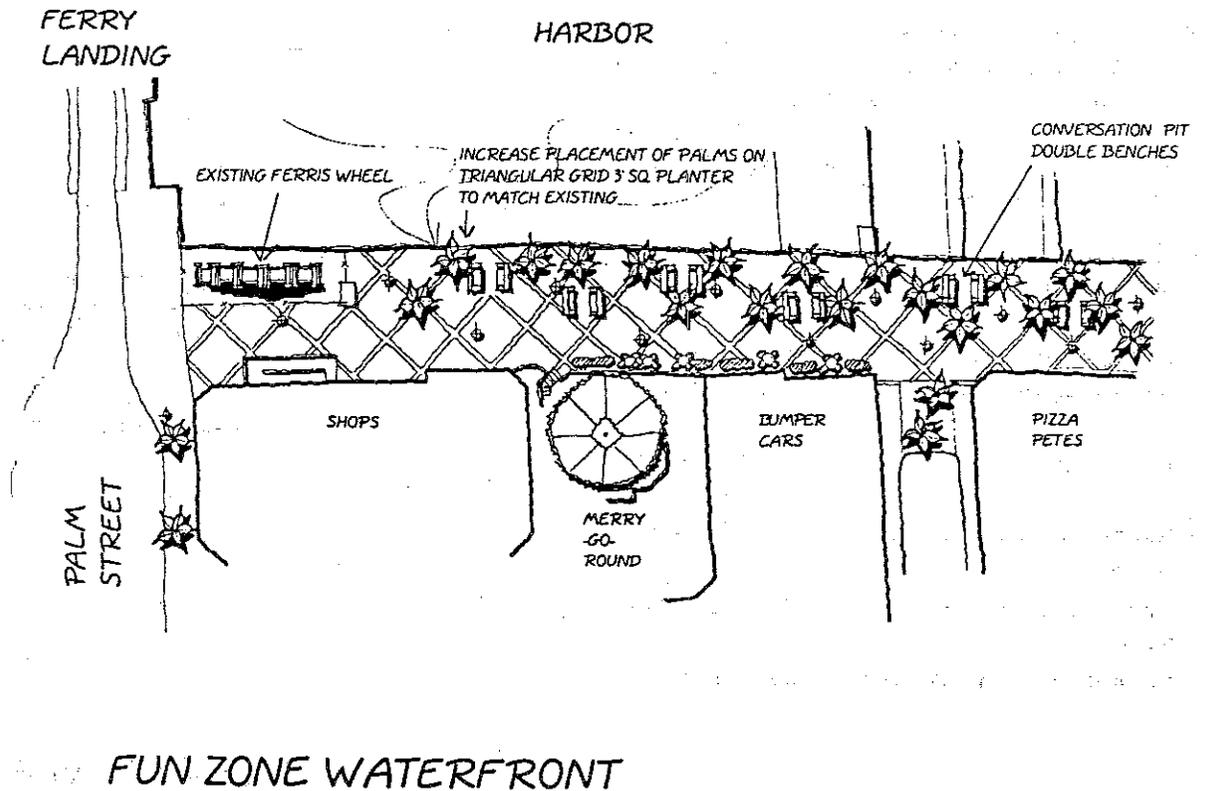


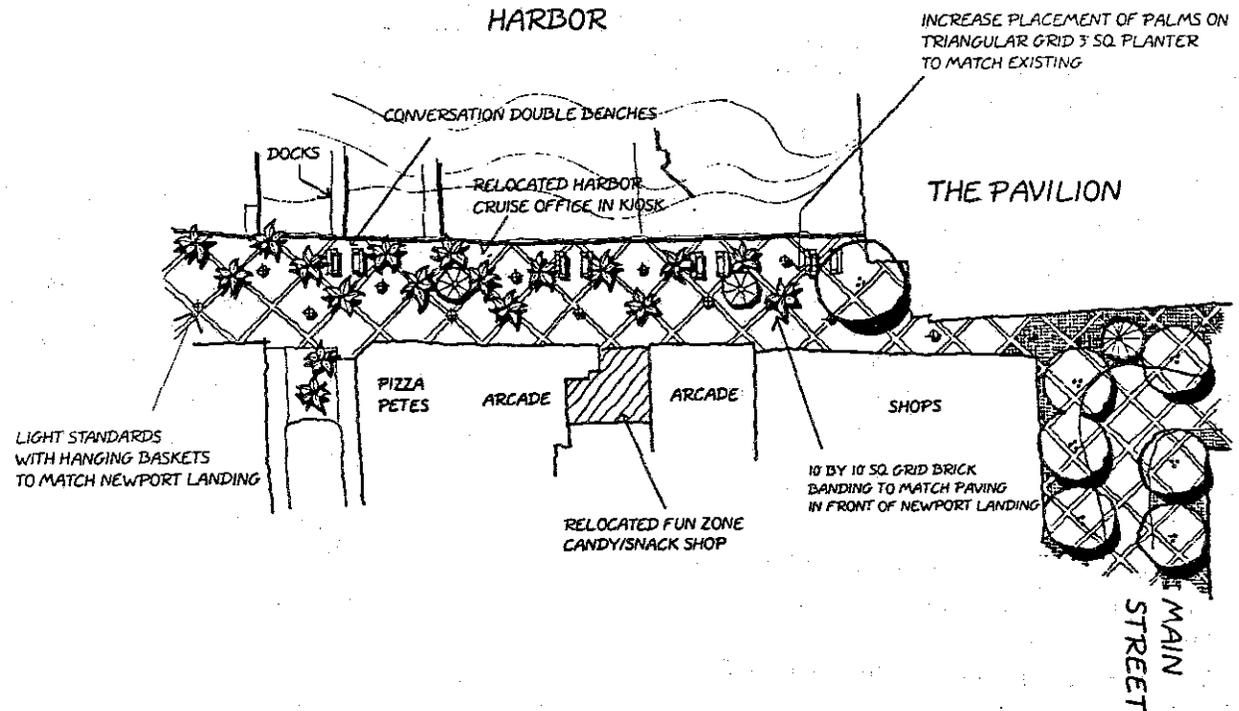
Figure 12

PAVILLION WATERFRONT

The waterfront from the Fun Zone to the Pavilion lacks the enhancement of Newport Landing. The problems are numerous: no view to the bay, smells of refuse, paving is broken and inconsistent, sparse of vegetation, and at night the area is dark and unsafe.

The following suggestions are necessary to establish the "L":

- Relocate free-standing stalls into existing buildings, and turn the cruise office into a kiosk.
- Remove paving and replace with proposed grid.
- Refinish existing railing to match adjacent waterfront.
- Continue palms, benches, lightpoles and banners.
- Provide for views to the vessels and bay.



PAVILLION WATERFRONT

Figure 13

PEDESTRIAN PATHS

Throughout Balboa there exists an intertwining network of pedestrian paths; all of which have their own individual function. The streetscape should not only respect these existing paths, but should strengthen their individual character. The following are recommendations for the secondary paths:

Washington is proposed to become part of the primary vehicular loop, which will de-emphasize the pedestrian element. To off set the vehicular traffic, small closely spaced street trees should be introduced to secure a comfortable scale for pedestrians and screen the continuous blank wall along Washington.

Palm should become the primary north-south vehicular spine linking the ferry crossing to beach parking. Visually, the streetscape should emphasize the connection between the bay and beach. Being consistent with the street name and the existing fan palms lining both ends of the street; fan palms should be infilled to create the vertical spine. Banners could be hung horizontally from the taller specimens for color and character. Palm Avenue also accommodates a high volume of bike traffic. Therefore, circulation improvements need to address bicyclists in addition to walkers and cars.

Because the Adams and Balboa intersection is the gateway; Adams should become the project boundary providing a visual edge to Central Balboa. Adams and Washington are both north-south avenues and share the same pedestrian and vehicular traffic.



PEDESTRIAN PATHS

Figure 14

BALBOA BOULEVARD AT GATEWAY

The majority of automobiles and pedestrian from Newport Beach, Costa Mesa and surrounding areas enter Balboa via two points; one is the Ferry Landing at Newport Bay, and the other is Balboa Boulevard at Adams. Therefore, two entry points have been identified as gateways into Central Balboa. Since Balboa Boulevard serves as the major auto access for east-west traffic, it is logical to establish a gateway at Balboa and Adams to identify and to strengthen the image of Central Balboa.

A structure, representing the symbol of a gate, spans the width of Balboa Boulevard. It should be made of contemporary material, with playful, fun and whimsical character. It should also be visible night and day from both directions of traffic. This gateway structure should be duplicated at the Ferry Landing.

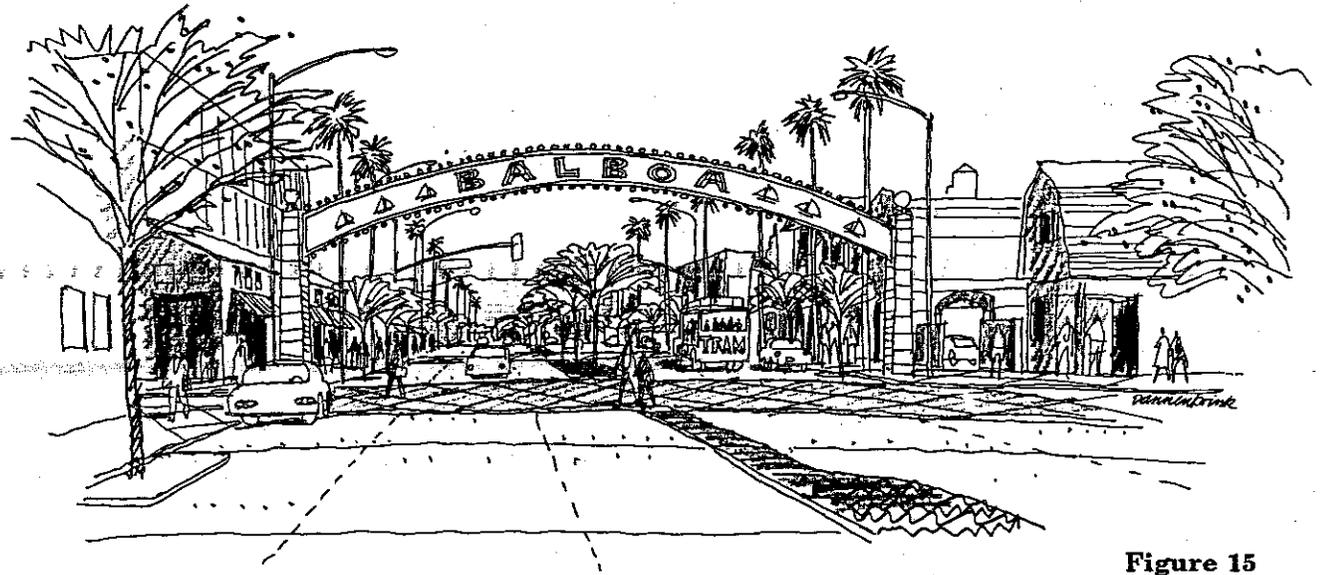
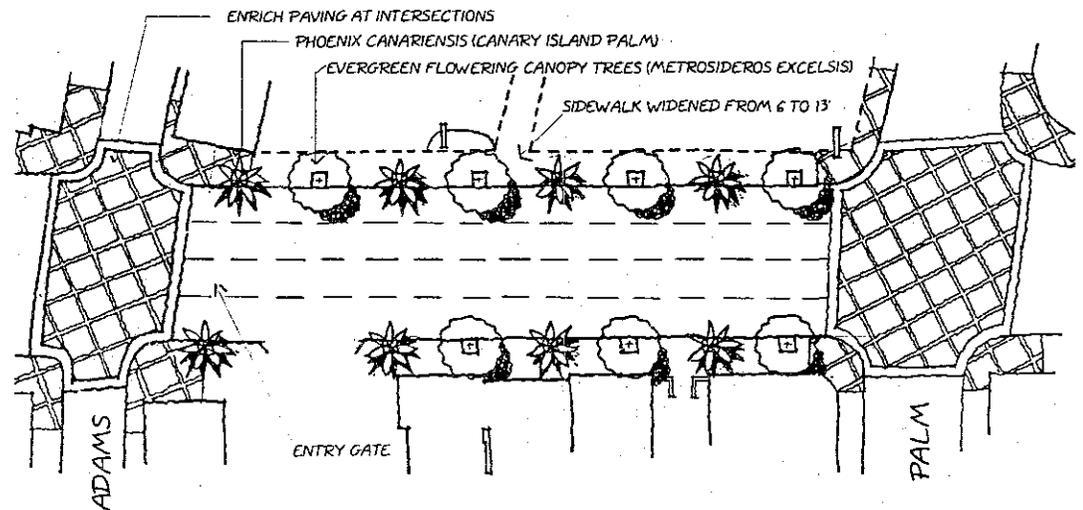


Figure 15

BALBOA BOULEVARD FROM ADAMS TO PALM

- No parallel parking on either side of the street.
- Sidewalks widened from existing 6 feet to 13 feet.
- Existing 4 lanes of traffic should remain.
- Canary Island Palm alternating with an evergreen/flowering canopy tree is the theme for these four blocks of Balboa Boulevard. The palm tree is to form a link to all the existing palm trees in this area and the canopy tree is to bring the human scale back.
- Enriched paving should be used at all four intersections along Balboa Boulevard. Use similar grid pattern as being used in Main Street pedestrian mall area to give unity.
- Promote the use of festive banners. Suspend these banners by steel wires which are fastened to street light poles. A series of these banners will help to define and overhead space.

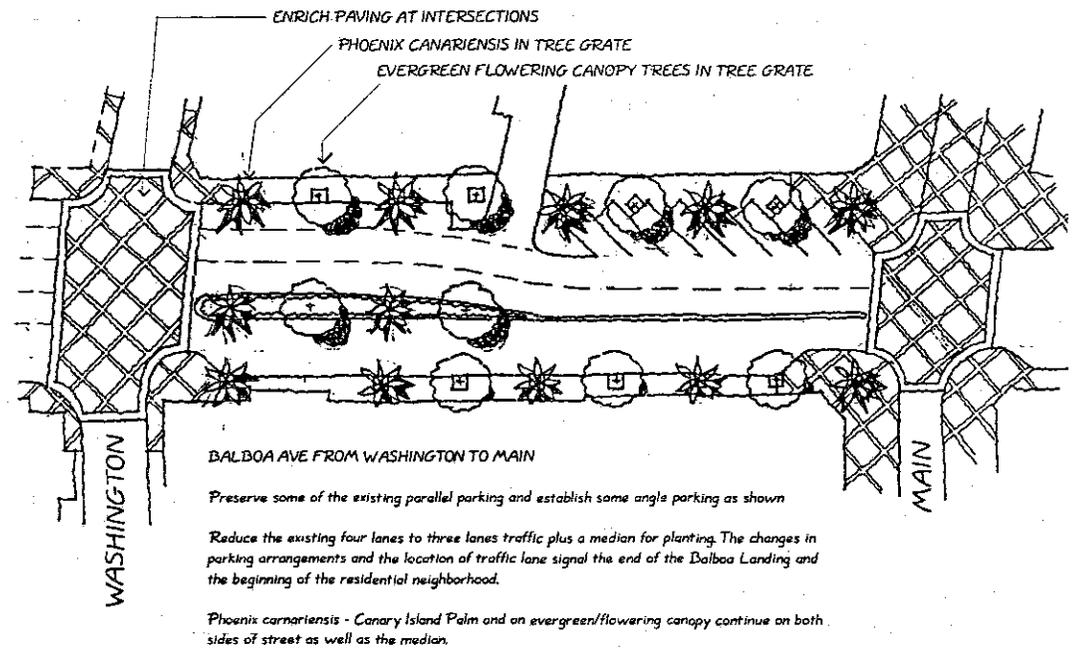


BALBOA AVE. FROM ADAMS TO PALM

Figure 16

BALBOA BOULEVARD FROM WASHINGTON TO MAIN

- Preserve some of the existing parallel parking and establish some angle parking as shown in Figure 17.
- Reduce the existing four lanes of traffic to three lanes, plus a median island for planting. The changes in parking arrangements and the reduction of traffic lane signal the end of the Central Balboa and the beginning of the residential neighborhood.
- Canary Island Palm and an evergreen or flowering canopy tree continue on both sides of the street as well as in the median.



BALBOA AVE. FROM WASHINGTON TO MAIN

Figure 17

BAY STREET ALLEY

The opportunity exists to turn this underused space into an outdoor sidewalk cafe area. It is strategically located, accessible from the Waterfront and Bay Street. Opportunities such as this probably exist in other locations throughout Central Balboa, and should be utilized. Suggestions:

- Match existing planting area and locate it near Bay Street to define this space
- Relocate existing bike racks
- Plan Queen Palms on both sidewalks or plant them in decorative planter boxes and line them up as shown in Figure 18.
- Redo paving to match the Waterfront paving
- Install ice cream parlor tables, chairs and/or umbrellas

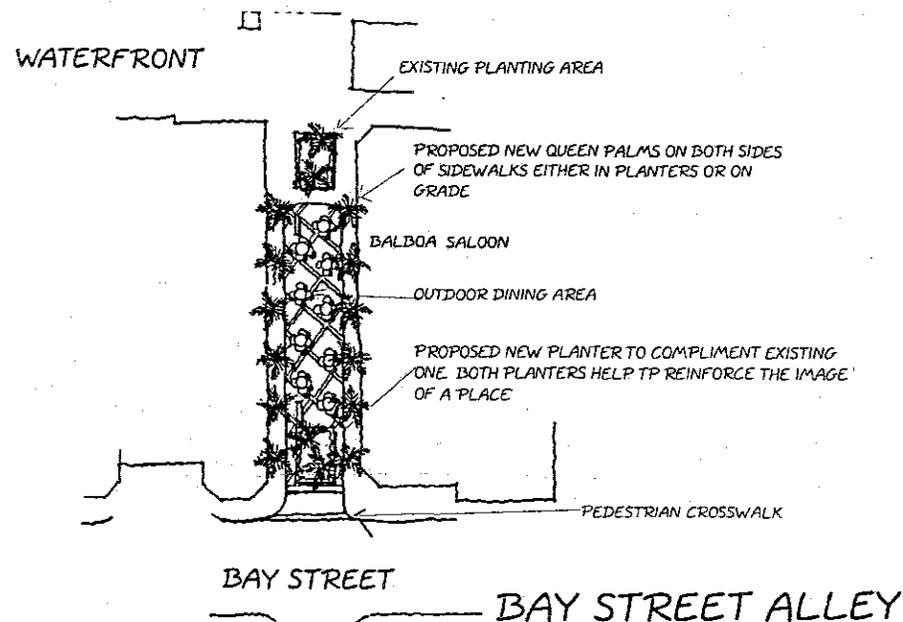
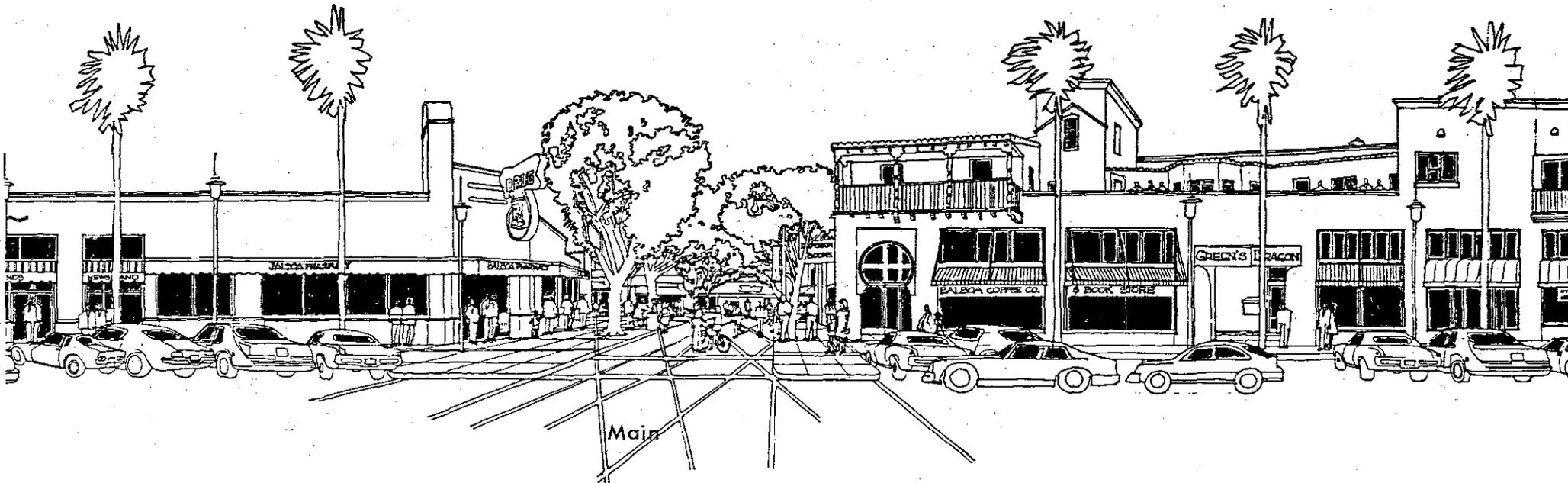
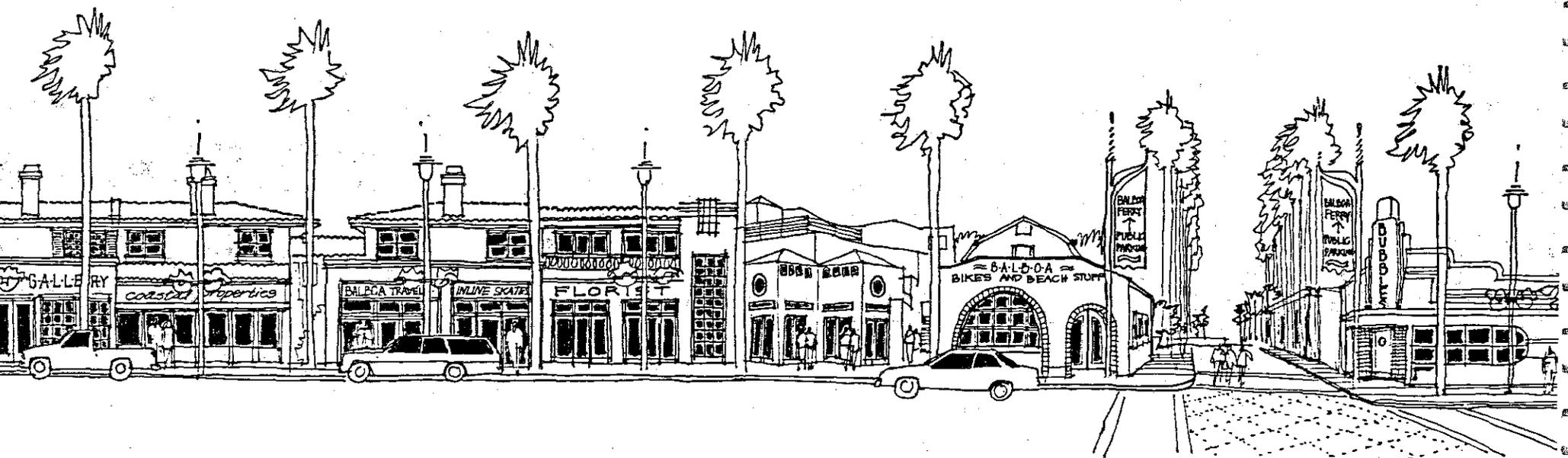


Figure 18





Palm

ARCHITECTURE

The architectural character of Balboa is eclectic. Its roots were established through the development of period pieces, built in response to the beach environment, the creative spirit of the architects and developers who made the improvements, and the needs of local residents and visitors to Balboa. There stands a strong foundation of architectural expression in Balboa that welcomes enhancement, revitalization and further implementation. The work of sensitive architects who will respond to the unique place that Balboa has become is not yet complete; there are opportunities for rejuvenation of existing structures, for infill on small lots where holes are still found in the existing fabric, for additional architectural elements within the residential and commercial areas, and for responsive development along new guidelines which will knit the pieces of the community into a strong, accessible, carefully crafted urban village between the beach and bay.

The primary issues identified by the architecture team include clarifying the existing physical structure of Balboa which could be implemented, modified and enhanced, as well as clarifying the inherent natural qualities of Balboa which could be amplified through future growth and change. The clues to both of these issues were found within a series of architectural building blocks or urban concepts which are apparent in the Balboa context.

Procession as a concept is the cornerstone of the Balboa experience. Two processional axes converge at the landmark Pavilion creating major pedestrian edges or boulevards: The first axis begins at the end of the pier, marches past the

park, the hotel and the boardwalk, then continues down Main Street to the prominent urban destination, the Pavilion. The second axis begins at the Ferry Landing, proceeds along the pedestrian edge between the land related fun zone activities and waterfront boating, docking and excursion activities along Balboa Bay. Although the urban concept is similar along both axes, the experience is different; uniquely Balboa. The architectural elements along these processional axes provide variety and identity, reinforcing the magnetism of the urban setting.

Urban magnetism has become the result of Balboa's development standards over time. With the unique Balboa Pavilion design as a model and a pacesetter, an image was established that subsequent local building responded to. Construction of the hotel followed a different architectural character while maintaining the same high standards of design and execution. Main Street construction maintains standards of architectural quality and variety which reinforce the magnetism of the place, greatly assisted by the mature street trees, which make an enormous contribution to pedestrian scale and comfort.

Scale, variety and texture highlight the architectural experience of Balboa today, challenging current owners and future developers to maintain the traditions established over time. Wells Fargo Bank, a fairly recent addition to the Balboa Boulevard setting, stands as an example of appropriate architectural scale for its corner location in the overall fabric. Balboa Boulevard commercial structures are examples of such architectural variety, and offer potential urban

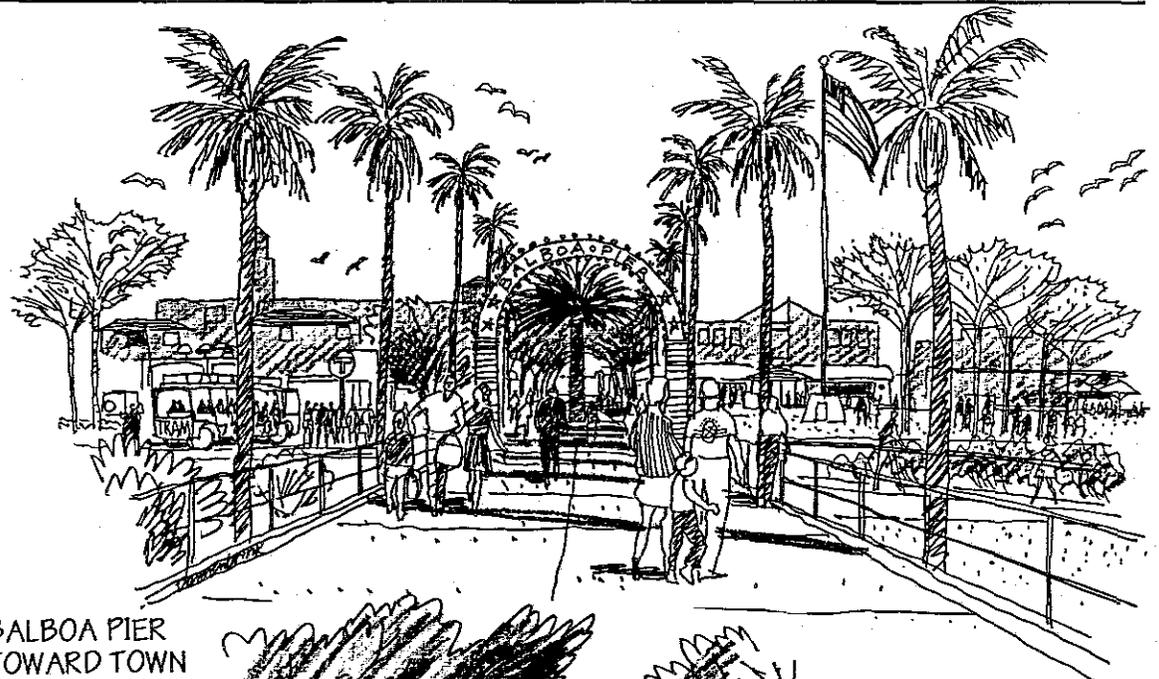
infill challenges to maintaining and continuing the Balboa tradition into the future. Urban texture has developed in Balboa as a result of the scale of individual land holdings with their resulting development, the variety of uses combined in a compact urban setting with their own individual identity and the larger pieces that have stood out and taken their place as Orange County landmarks. The unique texture is the identifying difference that Balboa holds as its own, which wants to be preserved, protected and enhanced with future developments.

Urban patterns which developed in accord with traditions of circulation, access and destination have crystallized into an urban form that is segmented in layers or stratified along the peninsula between the ocean and the bay. The architecture of Balboa responds to the existing patterns by supporting current stratification. This study calls for a shift from tradition with an overlay of axes that cross Balboa Boulevard at each intersection and provide for a physical urban interlock between the beach and the bay. This proposal requires a reciprocal shift in the influence that existing and future architectural elements within the district will project. Specifically, the buildings and uses along the cross axes at Adams, Palm, Washington and Main will provide primary linkages; both as destinations and processional elements connecting pedestrians to ocean side parking and bay side commercial activities. These architectural cornerstones will enhance the Gateways to Balboa at Adams, the ferry landing on Palm, and at the east end of the village.

The accompanying sketches present images of Balboa's character as it could be. The chapter introduction pages throughout this report show schematic elevations of Balboa Boulevard that capture the eclectic qualities of the streetfront architecture and suggest where improvements could be made through the addition of new buildings and the renovation of existing buildings.

Beginning on Balboa Pier, the view is towards the Hotel with its park and boardwalk setting in the foreground and the Pavilion in the distance. This view is of a pedestrian gateway along one of two primary axes in Balboa. The character of this place is uniquely Balboa, exclusively pedestrian by design, and special to the architectural components that are proposed to be carefully enhanced.

The second image leads the viewer down Main Street towards the Pavilion along a proposed pedestrian way with vehicular access restricted to service vehicles during certain periods of the day. The concept that this image highlights is that of a pedestrian friendly street, which will enhance its vitality as a shopping area for residents and visitors.



BALBOA PIER
TOWARD TOWN

Figure 19

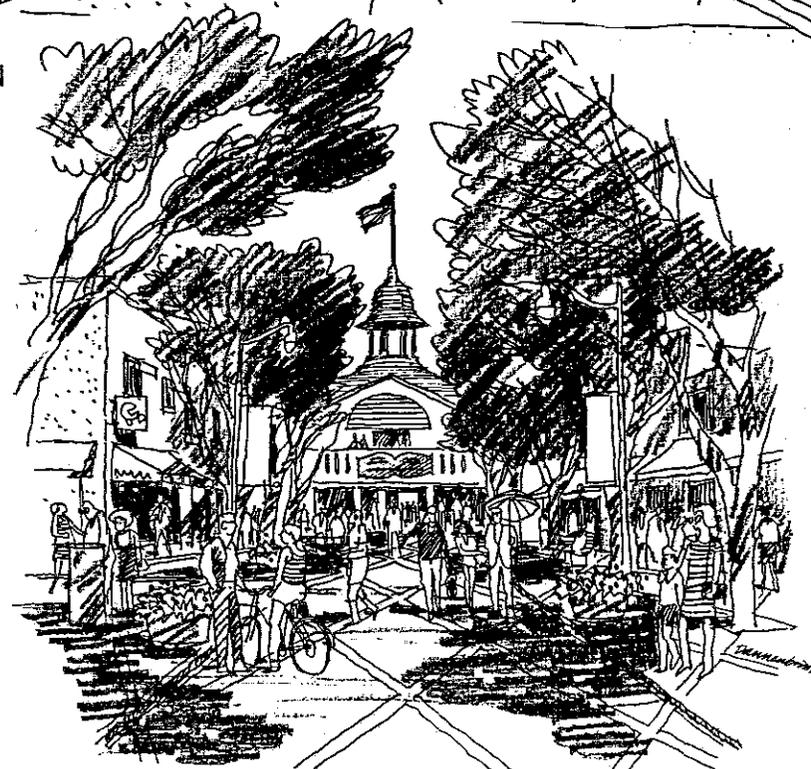
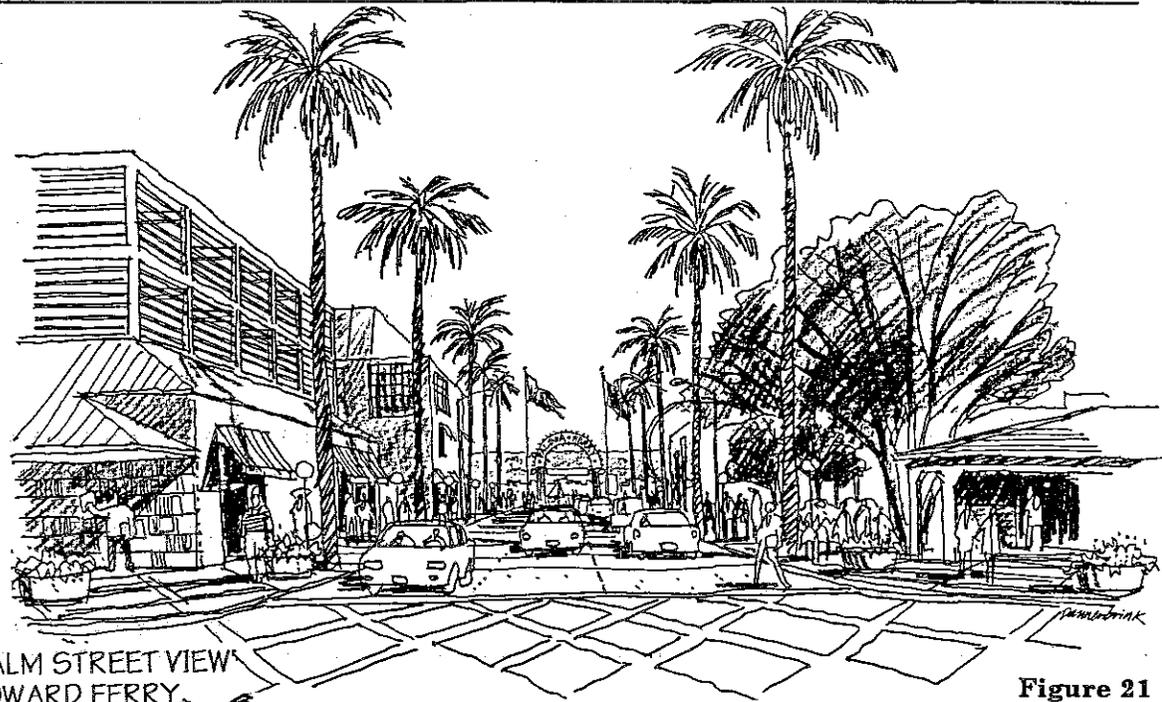


Figure 20

MAIN STREET VIEW TOWARD PAVILION

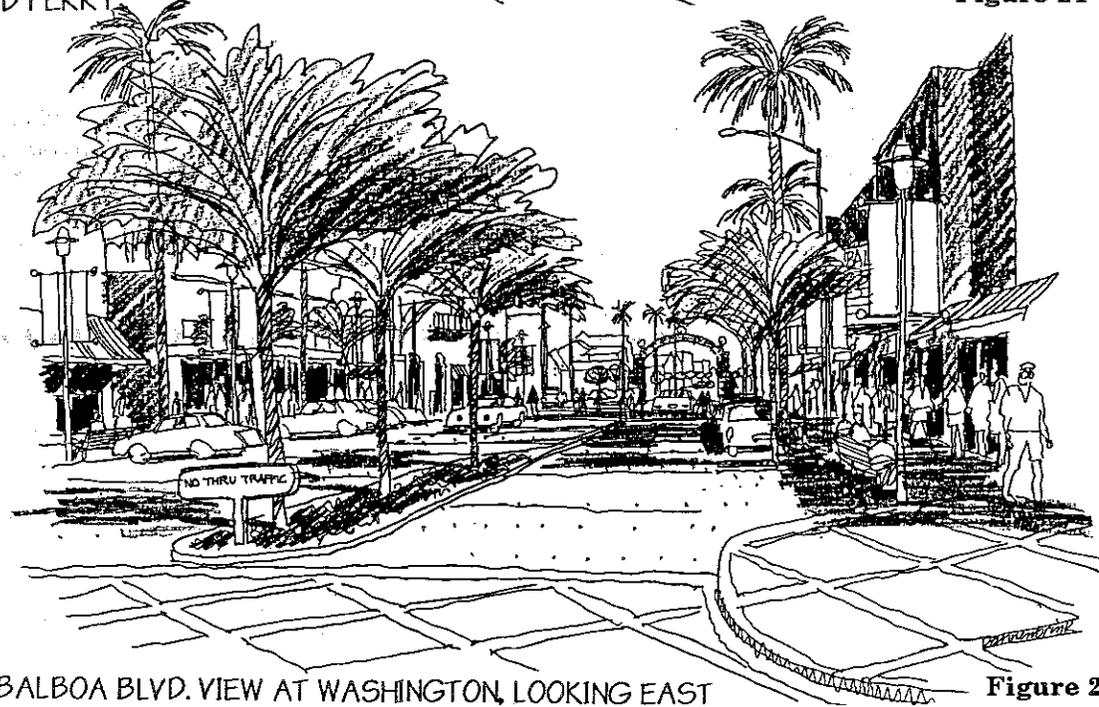
The view of the Balboa Ferry landing along Palm Street calls attention to another commercial edge. Here, a parking structure to serve Central Balboa is proposed. It will have retail outlets along the Palm and Balboa Boulevard frontages. A "gateway" sign at the ferry landing provides a welcome greeting to passengers, while additional palms line the street.



PALM STREET VIEW
TOWARD FERRY.

Figure 21

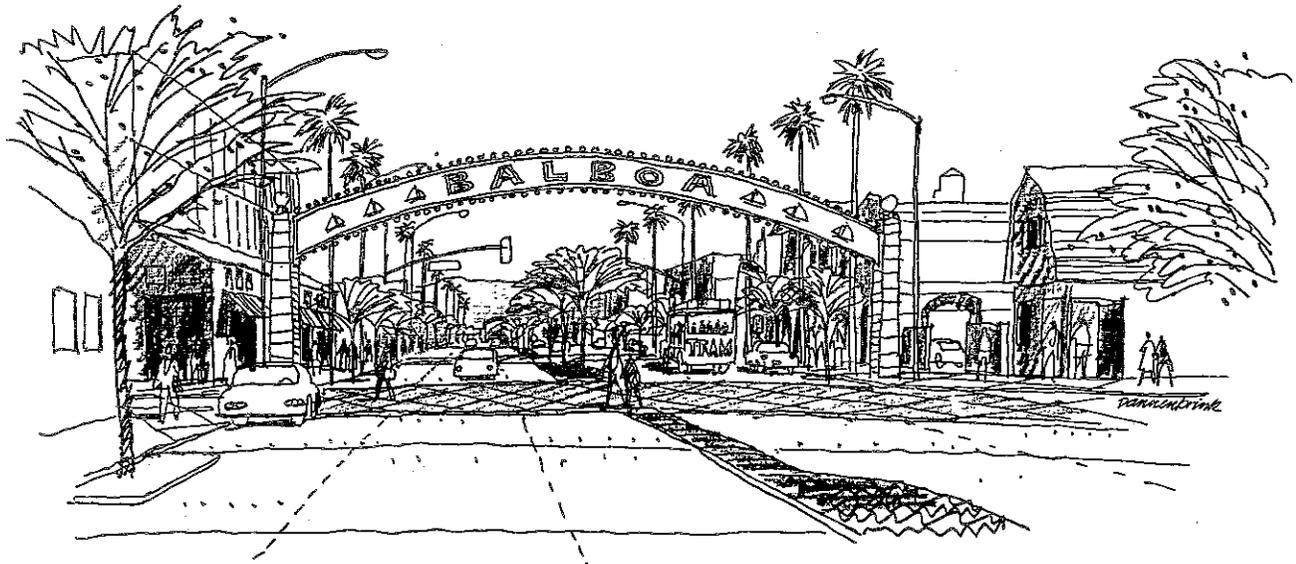
Two gateway and urban streetscape views illustrate a gateway intersection treatment at Adams and Balboa Boulevard, and modification to the street design at Washington and Balboa. On-street parking is arranged as parallel parking on one side of the street and as diagonal parking on the other close to local shops. Landscaped medians are introduced to narrow the street east of Washington, and enhanced paving, street trees and festive banners are also suggested. These views show how the area's existing architectural character would change once urban design guidelines are implemented with the support of residents and business owners alike.



BALBOA BLVD. VIEW AT WASHINGTON, LOOKING EAST

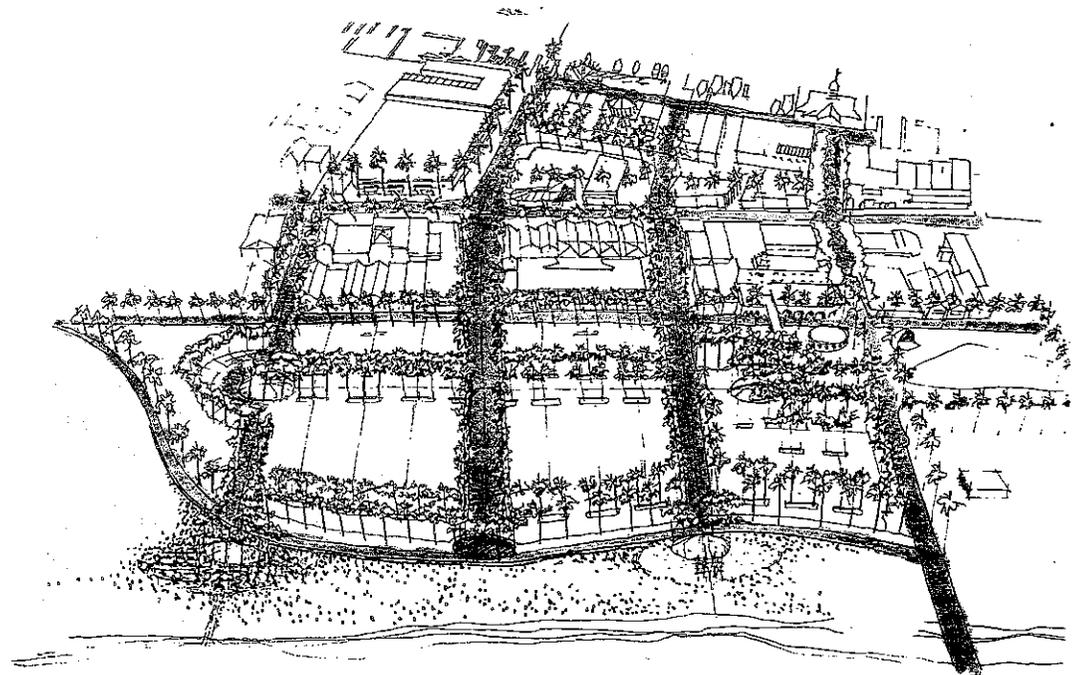
Figure 22

The final view is above the coast looking north over Balboa Pier and Beach activities towards the Pavilion and related commercial district. The view projects an image of periodic interlocking cross axes at Adams, Palm, Washington and Main Street, reinforcing the concept of an Ocean to Bay network of pedestrian ways enhancing the pedestrian experience throughout Balboa's Urban center.



BALBOA BLVD. GATEWAY AT ADAMS STREET

Figure 23

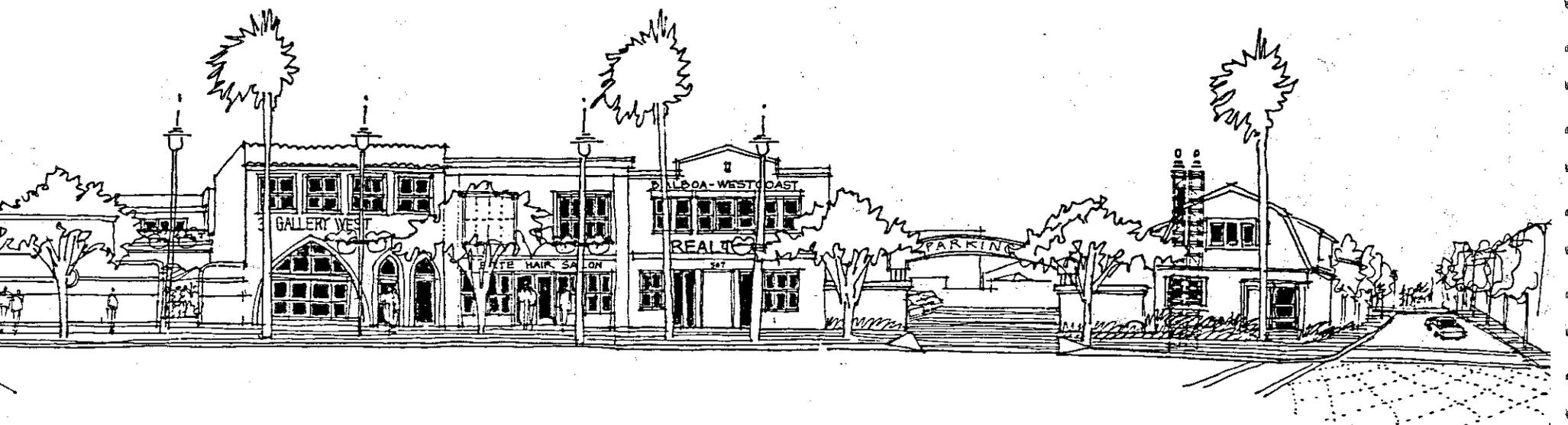


OVERVIEW OF CENTRAL BALBOA

Figure 24



'A' Street



Adams

IMPLEMENTATION

The preceding chapters represent an "end state," or a picture of what Balboa could be. To make this future happen, however, a great many public and private actions are needed, and a plan of action is required. This chapter briefly outlines a recommended phasing program for the Central Balboa plan, and a number of discreet actions that should be taken in the near future.

PHASING - Plans such as the Central Balboa plan cannot be implemented all at once. Rather, a number of short term, mid-range, and long term steps should be taken. The short-term steps can be implemented within a year or two with modest capital expenditures. Mid-term and long-term phasing will require considerably more lead time and greater capital expenditures. To this extent, the overall aim of the phasing plan is to start with easily achieved actions undertaken to have immediate effects leading to the implementation of the Central Balboa plan.

PHASE I - This phase could occur over the next one to two year period, and will involve mainly relatively easy steps with significant immediate impacts. One major outcome of this phase should be to build momentum under plan implementation both at City Hall and in the community as a whole. Discrete Phase I actions include:

Reroute Traffic - These actions involve primarily the installation of appropriate street signs, and restriping throughout the affected area between Palm and Main. Traffic is recommended for rerouting as described in the Chapter II, Traffic and Circulation.

Parking Management - The revised parking management programs should be refined within the first year and implemented within the second year. As with the traffic routing programs, the parking management programs involve primarily restriping and signage, rather than the construction of new facilities.

Minor Streetscape Improvements - A package of integrating streetscape improvements should be selected during the first year and implemented during the second. These programs could include Tivoli lighting in the trees along Main Street, banners along Balboa Boulevard, and other minor sidewalk-oriented streetscape improvements.

Institute Central Balboa Coordinator and Festival Program - The City should appoint an individual with significant economic development experience in coastal communities to provide overall coordination and liaison between the City and Central Balboa residents and business operators. This individual would work closely with all local business and resident organizations, and would be deeply involved in recruiting new enterprises and retaining existing businesses. The coordinator also could serve as

a leasing agent funded partly by local property owners, and partly by the City.

Another of the coordinator's primary duties would be to take the lead in organizing and establishing an annual Central Balboa festival. This festival should be regarded as a major marketing tool for the area, and should be designed to create a positive and cohesive public image.

Zoning Changes - A number of changes to the City's zoning ordinance should be considered to institute the land use recommendations in the Land Use Plan. These changes can be made as part of the Central Balboa Area Specific Plan program, or as a separate package of changes.

PHASE II - Programs and improvements that will take three to five years to implement are emphasized in this phase. Phase II programs will generally take longer to implement due to funding requirements, or to the lead time required to organize and establish various programs.

Parking Shuttle Program - The long-term parking shuttle program should be implemented during this period. Planning for the program and establishing initial funding should begin within the next two years, while actual implementation should be phased throughout the 3 to 5 year mid-term period.

Major Streetscape Elements - Major enhancements to Central Balboa's streetscape would take place during this period, including the planting of major tree elements, the construction of an entry arch on Balboa Boulevard and at the ferry landing, improvements to the beach parking lot, and other major elements. These improvements should start during the mid-term, but will likely take at least 5 years to complete. At the same time, the City may wish to evaluate the establishment of a landscape maintenance assessment district for the entire peninsula to help finance these improvements.

PHASE III - This phase incorporates long-range programs aimed at encouraging lot combinations in the commercial districts, and the construction of apartment structures and a new parking structure west of Palm Street. These major program elements will take the longest to implement because of the expense involved, and the relatively long period of time it will take to first build community support for the program, and then to arrange financing.

ZONING CHANGES - Changes to the zoning ordinance could reduce or eliminate a number of land use problems currently being experienced in Central Balboa. Recommended zoning ordinance changes include modifications to the floor area ratio standards, changes to the manner in which permitted residential densities are calculated, and changes in the manner in which parking space requirements are calculated.

Floor/Area Ratio (FAR) - The permitted base ratio of floor area to lot are (FAR) should be increased from the present 0.50:1 to 1.00:1 in

commercial areas only. The 1:1 FAR would result in commercial development intensities much like those along Main Street. At present, the overall FAR for Central Balboa approaches 0.5:1, and existing zoning standards would allow approximately 74,000 additional square feet of commercial construction. Increasing the allowable FAR to 1:1 would increase future development potential by about 225,000 square feet. Most increased development intensities would be along Balboa Boulevard west of Washington.

Residential Densities - Achieving a well designed mix of residential and commercial development in Central Balboa has been difficult at best, due in large part to an imbalance between prevailing lot sizes and on-site parking requirements. Current zoning permits second story residences in the Retail and Service Commercial (RSC) district that makes up the majority of Central Balboa. Modifications to residential densities would be to reduce the currently permitted 2,375 square feet of lot area per unit to 1,210 square feet of lot area per unit. This would allow two units on the typical commercial lot in Central Balboa. However, in order to provide enough lot area to accommodate parking, the minimum development parcel size should be 5,000 square feet, or two typical lots combined at least for planning and development purposes. If all parcels that have been identified for future development were to be combined, then the increased residential densities would result in 93 new dwelling units. Most new residential construction would occur west of Palm.

Parking Standards - Present zoning provisions require that parking be provided on a use-by-use basis, or that exceptions be approved on

a use-by-use basis. Little provision is made for shared or joint use parking, in which more than one use share the same space due to the likelihood that the same customer will use both uses in the same trip. For instance, a beach goer will use the beach, plus a restaurant and a tee shirt shop. So one parking space serves all three users. Parking requirements for the entire Central Balboa area could be calculated as a whole based on a reasonably expected mix of uses. Individual businesses or other uses would not have to provide discrete parking spaces in most cases, but would be required to buy into or underwrite the provision of overall parking. Parking for Central Balboa would be managed much as is parking for large regional shopping centers, with enough provided for all but the busiest day, but all sharing in common facilities.

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