

# LIVINGSTON PATTERNS Downtown

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS  
LIVINGSTON, MONTANA

February 2003

*now on the web at [www.raffety.net/patterns](http://www.raffety.net/patterns)*

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# INTRODUCTION

*“The kinds of places people really care about are rarely created from scratch. They evolve, they ripen and mellow. The city of the future isn’t waiting to be built: It’s here already, in the streets and neighborhoods where we live and work. We don’t have to devise it; we just have to ensure that it makes the transition from today to tomorrow without losing the ineffable, rooted character it has gained over time.” \**

This document identifies design parameters, or “patterns”, for future street and public space development within the Central Business District of Livingston, Montana. It forms a bridge between the community’s vision as outlined in the Urban Design Plan, and the efforts of those individuals who will complete detailed design and construction of new public works.

These patterns are tools anyone working within the Central Business District can access to understand downtown’s unique attributes. They provide criteria for any proposed changes within both the public and private domains, beyond standard technical parameters.

This document will be expanded as more patterns are identified for the Central Business District and for other areas of the community.

Additional design parameters that should also be considered can be found in the Further Reading section at the end of this document.

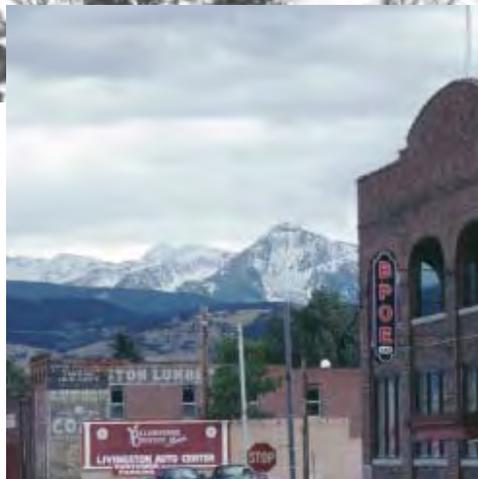
\* From “Like an Old Shoe” by Dwight Young, *Preservation*, November/December 2002. Copyright National Trust For Historic Preservation. Reprinted with permission from National Trust For Historic Preservation.

# 1 EXTERIOR SETTING

The Central Business District's exterior setting is one of its most enduring and unique qualities. Livingston sits beside the Yellowstone River, surrounded by mountain ranges and bluffs that define the river valley. From the Central Business District various parts of these surroundings are clearly visible.

These views draw both your eye and your frame of mind outward into the landscape. They are very dynamic, breathtaking in their changing seasons, light and weather.

These views at the same time create a sense of closure at the end of streets in the Central Business District.

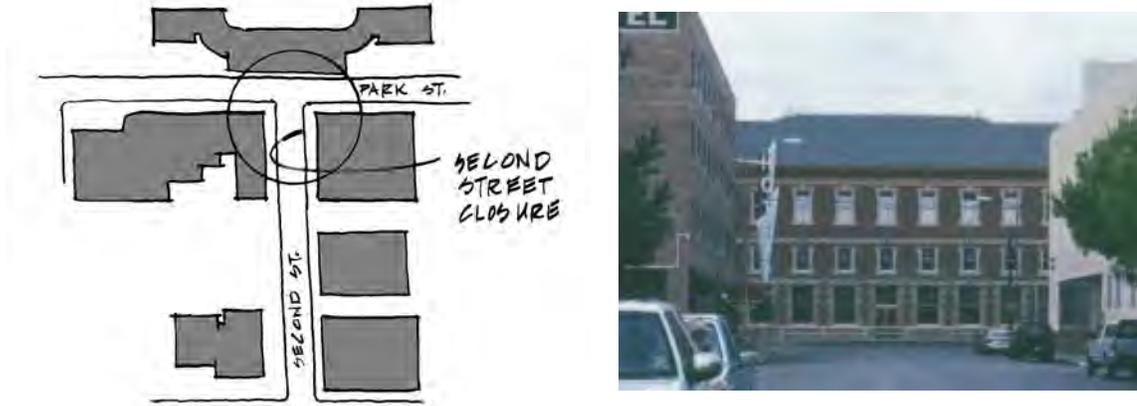


Therefore:

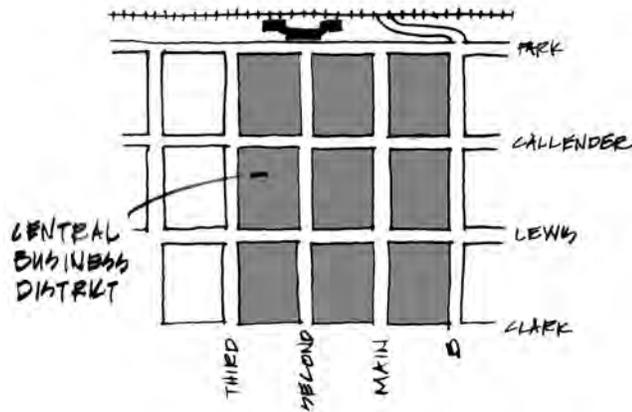
**Recognize and protect from encroachment views from the Central Business District towards the surrounding river valley landscape.**

## 2 INTERIOR SETTING

Within the Central Business District there are juxtapositions of structures and streets that define Livingston as a particular place. An example is the north end closure of Second Street by the railroad passenger depot.



Another example is the several block area that composes the Central Business District. Many small Montana towns have central business districts that stretch along one main street. Our district covers an area several blocks in both directions and has significant historic development along intersecting streets.



Other existing features that contribute to the district's unique interior setting include areas like this pocket of landscape tucked between buildings. A particularly valuable urban context is created by such features.



Therefore:

**Identify unique characteristics of streets, structures and landscape in the Central Business District. Ensure future changes build upon these aspects of Livingston.**



## 4 DIVERSITY

This community is unusually diverse, reflecting both its past and its transition to accommodate a changing population and economy.

That diversity is an extremely important aspect of what makes Livingston unique, and is reflected in our built environment.

The variability of construction within the Central Business District creates a particular attraction for visitors, who see Livingston as a place that seems “real” as opposed to contrived.



Therefore:

**Do nothing to diminish the diversity evident within the Central Business District. Encourage new work that expands that diversity.**

# 5 HERITAGE

Livingston's past is still very visible in the Central Business District.

Downtown streets and buildings illustrate the aspirations of those who were empire building, based on an intriguing combination of agricultural development, railroad manufacturing and transportation, resource extraction and access to the nation's first national park.

Much of this construction is still in place, and elicits a very powerful emotional response from both residents and visitors. When you are in the Central Business District you are inhabiting our past.



Therefore:

**Identify and protect the Central Business District's historic assets. Ensure new development respects and blends with our past, and avoids artificial imitation.**

## 6 PRIORITIES



Communities can only thrive if there are recognized safety priorities covering all occupants.

The key occupant for economic and social success, particularly in the Central Business District, is the individual pedestrian resident or visitor who feels comfortable on the streets.

Therefore:

**Establish and maintain safety priorities for the occupants of the Central Business District in this order:**

1. **Pedestrians.**
2. **Bicycles.**
3. **Personal vehicles.**
4. **Commercial vehicles.**

## 7 VINTAGES

Each specific building in the Central Business District was completed at a particular time. Its design reflects styles prevalent at the time of construction, or selections of the owner or builder.

Livingston's particular mixture of styles is a special characteristic to be valued.



Therefore:

**Encourage additions to this mixture, and an integration of the old and the new. Enable individual points along the street to match the particular vintage or style of adjacent buildings.**

# 8 CONVERSATION

Livingston is still a place where you may have to wait for the traffic to clear because someone in the crosswalk is speaking to someone in a vehicle, or two drivers have stopped to chat while passing in the street.

This is a key attribute of a small town, where relaxed communication between individuals is still more important than traffic flow. This is also an indication of a strong social fabric within the community, and of the capacity of the Central Business District to host social interaction.



Therefore:

**Do all you can to ensure downtown Livingston is a relaxed, safe place where you can loiter, and where you are encouraged to stop and chat throughout public space.**

# 9 LANDMARKS

Every district in a town has buildings, intersections or other points of interest that have become landmarks - by architectural or historical significance, by setting, by community use and habit.

These landmarks are important as icons of the community's individual personality and as navigation aids.

Landmarks in Livingston's Central Business District include:



United States Post Office 5



Northern Pacific Railroad Depot 6



East Main Street Skyline



Carnegie Library

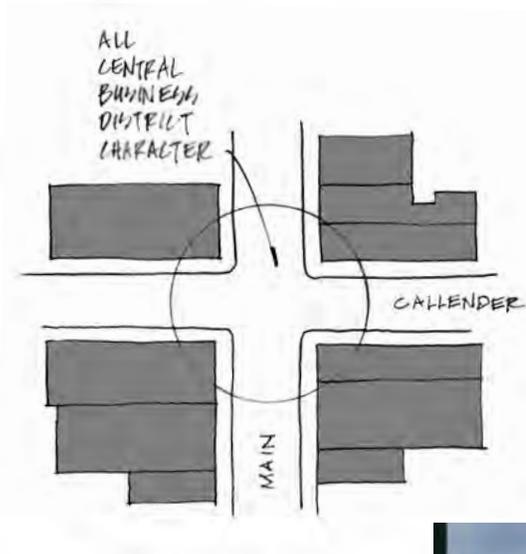
Therefore:

**Recognize, preserve and enhance landmarks within the Central Business District.**

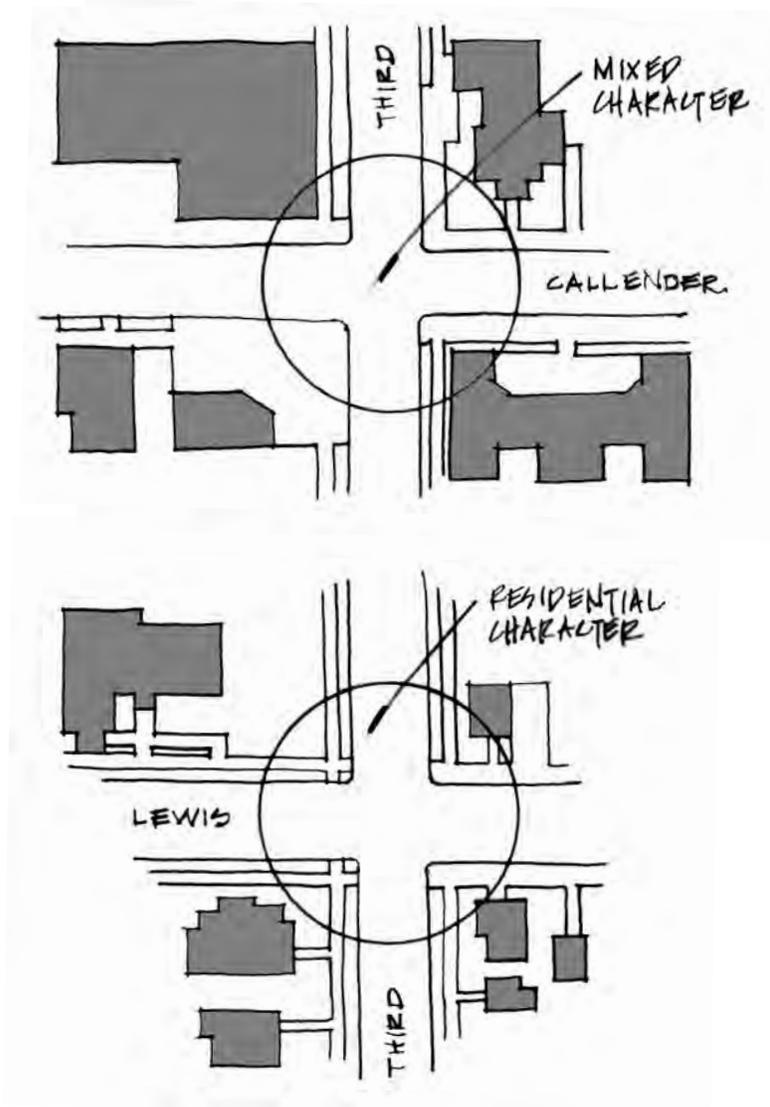
# 10 INTERSECTIONS

Intersections are nodes of intense activity. They are of two types.

*Intersections that lie within the Central Business District.* These intersections often have a strong individual sense of place and of enclosure. You have no doubt about what particular district of town you are within. They are nodes of activity, containing specific landmarks that illustrate the character of the surrounding district.



*Intersections that lie on the edge of the Central Business District. These intersections have a mixed character reflecting surrounding uses and community perceptions. This character must be maintained at the intersection or its sense of place will be compromised. Sometimes these intersections define district edges or entry points.*



Therefore:

**Assess and establish the predominant character of each intersection. Design changes at the intersection to reflect that character.**

# 11 CORNERS

How many times have you stopped on a street corner to visit, to assess your direction, to see if it's safe to cross the street, or to just admire the view? These and many more similar activities occur on the sidewalk at corners.

Street corners must provide sufficient sidewalk area as safe haven from vehicles for all this activity.



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Therefore:

**Design street corners with ample area to serve all their social functions as well as their practical demands. Ensure protection from vehicular traffic.**

## 12 ROOM TO GATHER



The Central Business District is a social destination, and its vitality is dependent upon how successfully it serves this purpose. Any successful social place requires space to gather together.

This defines two different needs within the Central Business District.

The first is enough sidewalk to encourage all kinds of gathering - dining, socializing, reading, sunning, playing. Sidewalk area should have priority over vehicular area.

The second need is space that can be cut off from vehicular traffic for large scale events. Areas historically used in this manner in downtown Livingston include portions of Main Street, Callender Street, Park Street and Second Street.

Therefore:

**Make sure our streets have enough area for social gathering:**

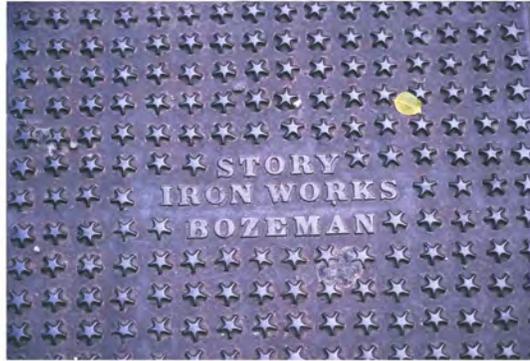
- a. **Wide sidewalks that firmly express social gathering as a priority.**
- b. **An area able to be devoted to large gatherings free of vehicular traffic.**

# 13 TIME TRAIL

Livingston's Central Business District has within it many historic elements that illustrate our heritage to both residents and visitors.

Sidewalk items such as trap doors, glass blocks, hitching rings, manhole covers and advertisements imprinted in concrete all tell our unique story. Loss of these items will impoverish that story.





Therefore:

**Inventory and salvage items illustrating our heritage from the sidewalks. Integrate them into new work in the same place and manner as the original, to preserve the district's time trail.**

# 14 UNPREDICTABILITY

A large part of what makes downtown Livingston unique is its sense of being an authentic small town center, not an imitation created for commercial purposes. Its character reflects the unpredictable nature of development over time by independent action.

No single effort by anyone can replicate this personality. Indeed, efforts to do so will only diminish this sense of authenticity. Creation of an overly controlled appearance would do serious damage to one of our best assets.



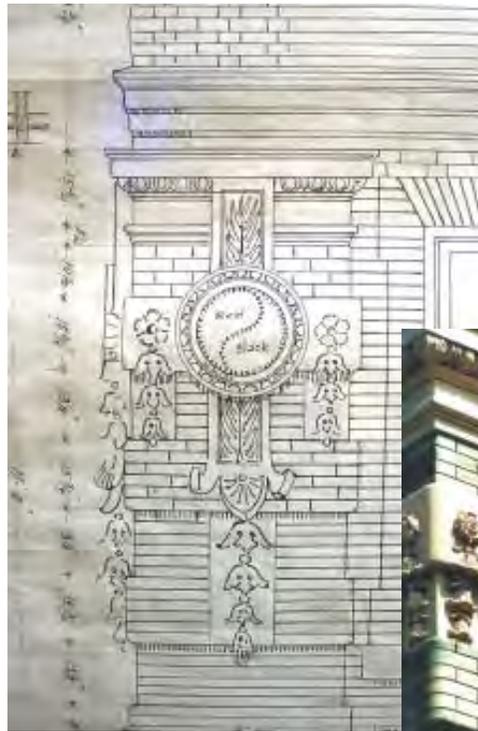
Therefore:

**Allow and encourage unpredictable elements to become part of our streetscape. Avoid standardization that might negatively affect the Central Business District's mixed character.**

# 15 ART



Expressions of individual creativity add tremendously to the Central Business District's character. The district should take advantage of what artists can contribute to public spaces and items within them.



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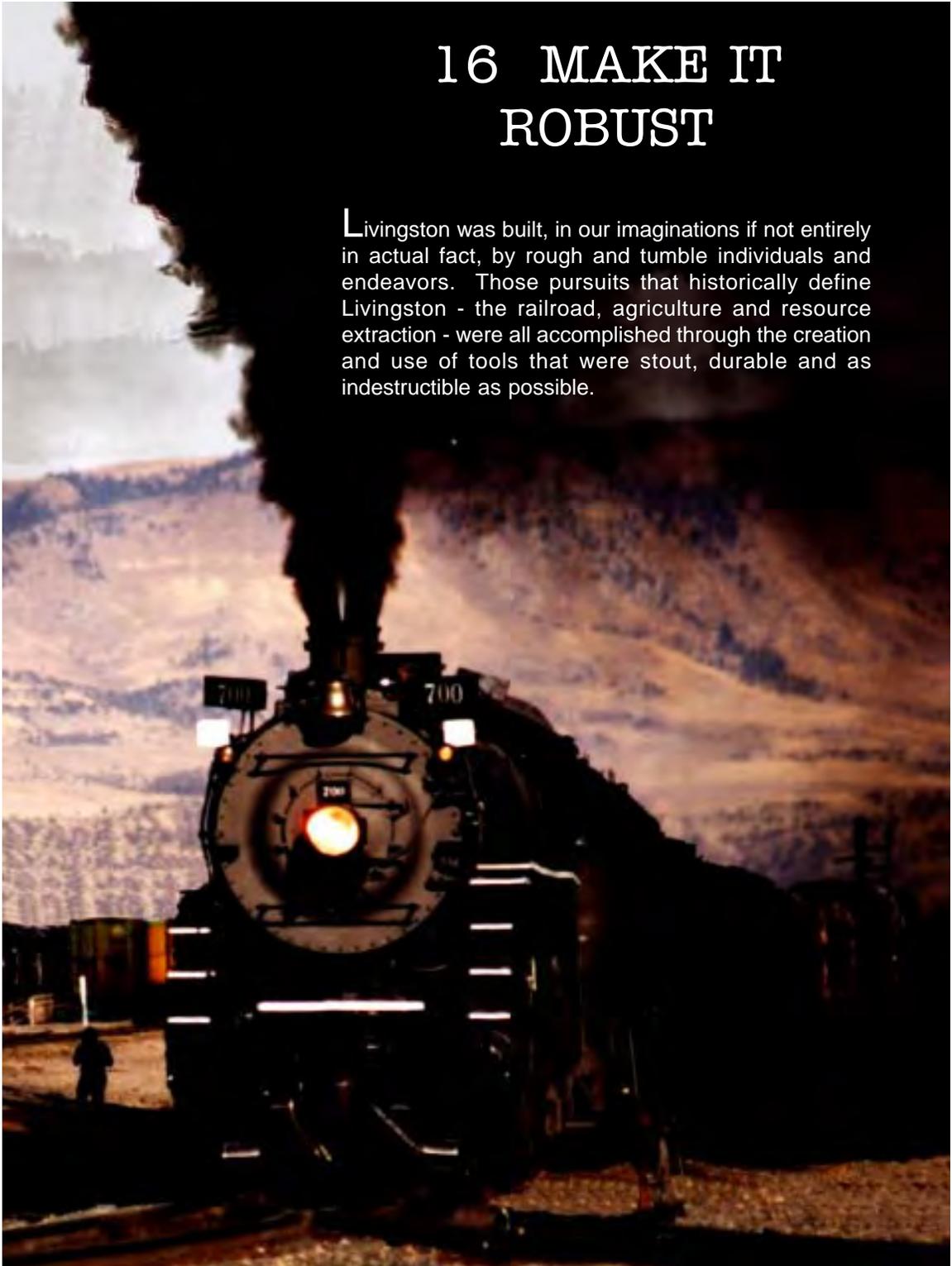
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Therefore:

**Integrate artists into the design of new public amenities.**

# 16 MAKE IT ROBUST

Livingston was built, in our imaginations if not entirely in actual fact, by rough and tumble individuals and endeavors. Those pursuits that historically define Livingston - the railroad, agriculture and resource extraction - were all accomplished through the creation and use of tools that were stout, durable and as indestructible as possible.



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Railroad signal



Park Street railing



Salvaged boiler as stock tank

This character is evident in items as diverse as railroad signals, railings, locomotives, agricultural implements and new uses of rejected industrial materials.



This robust character is also expressed in historic monumental buildings such as the Northern Pacific Railroad Passenger Depot.

Therefore:

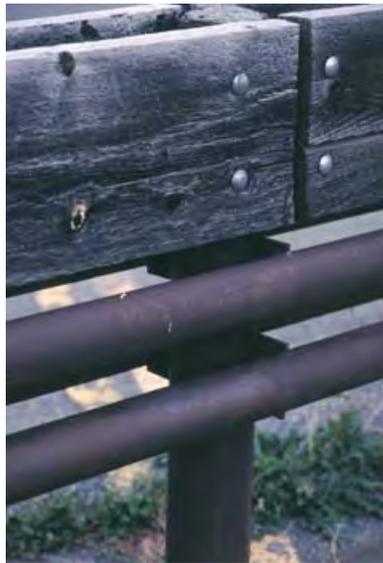
**Provide a robust character throughout new additions to the Central Business District.**

# 17 MATERIALS

The materials we use within the streetscape can reinforce unique aspects of our community.

We will not have much discretion in selection of some materials - concrete curbs for example. But there are other instances where we can seek something unique to us, either in material or method of use.

Be wary of materials chosen because they have been used everywhere else, or because they are habitual responses to recurrent situations. Use of such things will diminish the Central Business District's individuality.



Therefore:

**Wherever possible select materials and methods that have some unique connection to Livingston's heritage.**

# 18 VARIABLE LIGHT



Our climate and clear air produce dynamic lighting changes throughout the days and seasons. These variations create differing impressions of the district, and constantly shift our focus of attention.



We can further expand this attribute during the hours of darkness, by highlighting with artificial illumination different characteristics of the Central Business District.

Be wary of an overabundance of street lighting. This can have the opposite affect, blanketing the entire district in an unflattering uniform glare.

Therefore:

**Keep street lighting at a minimally effective level. As part of the street lighting system, provide special illumination at distinctive features within the district.**

# CREDITS

1. Photo courtesy Doris Whithorn.
2. Photo courtesy Doris Whithorn.
3. *Livingston Enterprise*, November 29, 1990.
4. Photo courtesy Doris Whithorn.
5. Photo courtesy Doris Whithorn.
6. Photo courtesy Doris Whithorn.
7. Photo courtesy Doris Whithorn.
8. Courtesy Livingston Depot Center. Original Reed & Stem Architectural Tracing 1901.
9. Courtesy Livingston Depot Center. Bob Ebinger, Photographer.
10. Photo courtesy Bob Ebinger.

# FURTHER READING

Anyone interested in further investigations regarding our streets and activities within them will find the following books helpful.

## A Pattern Language

Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa and Murray Silverstein

Copyright 1977

Oxford University Press

An indispensable resource. Covers a wide range of design parameters in the same format as this publication.

## Streets For People

Bernard Rudofsky

Copyright 1969

Doubleday & Company, Inc.

## The Death and Life of Great American Cities

Jane Jacobs

Copyright 1961

Random House, Inc.

## The Great Good Place

Ray Oldenberg

Copyright 1989

Marlowe & Co.

## The Image of the City

Kevin Lynch

Copyright 1960

The M.I.T. Press

## Townscape

Gordon Cullen

Copyright 1961

The Architectural Press



### III. Community Vision, Goals and Aspirations

With the input gathered from community participants during the planning process, a basis for developing a set of design standards for Park Street and the downtown was established. Through the articulation of shared community values, a vision for downtown and Park Street was formulated, which in turn helped establish a set of goals and aspirations that, once achieved, would ensure the regeneration of the downtown and Park Street into a vibrant, sustainable and economically viable urban place.

The values described in the vision statement define broad concepts for the future Livingston. More specific goals and aspirations for downtown Livingston and Park Street follow the community vision statement.



### Vision Statement

Livingston, Montana, is nestled along the banks of the Yellowstone River surrounded by beautiful mountain vistas and upland grassland foothills. The community is comprised of an authentic architectural form reflective of a past territorial period founded by commerce, trade and tourism. The cultural identity and railroad heritage that defined early Livingston as a modern community continues to influence the unique character of the place.

The community represents a broad range of diverse interests centered on a human-scale pedestrian design combining natural images, civic and open spaces, buildings, streets and alleyways. Each element is designed by a principal belief of protecting and preserving the unique character of Livingston, Montana. Preservation of important landscapes and the rehabilitation of existing buildings to reflect and enhance regional architecture and building traditions are important community values.

Downtown Livingston — defined as the community commons — reflects an individual expression and a unique sense of place. The commons is a comfortable and attractive place where people feel safe and secure. The downtown commons is the heart and soul of the community – the living room of the community, open to all to experience and enjoy. Town residents, business people and even those who choose to live on the community's fringe and mountain surroundings together take pride in caring and preserving the unique qualities of this community.

The predominant gateway and entry corridor to the downtown commons is Park Street. Park Street is a tree-lined, pedestrian-friendly boulevard defined by linear green spaces and interesting building forms. The green spaces provide a buffer from the railroad corridor and enhance the pedestrian circulation areas in town. Clean bike paths and walkways, pedestrian-level lighting and safe pedestrian crosswalks create an attractive entry gateway feature for the town. Entry and way-finding signage is located at each end of the corridor to help direct visitors to the downtown commons and assist in welcoming people to the community. The quality and character of development along Park Street provide interest and invite people to come visit and stay in the downtown.

The community is defined by a collective and understood ethic and sensitivity toward preserving and enhancing the character-defining elements that are distinctive to Livingston, recognizing an architecture of its time and place, and responding to the unique qualities that places Livingston apart from other communities. A mix of downtown land uses is integrated with existing neighborhoods where people are able to walk and bicycle to work, shopping and recreation.





### *Goals and Aspirations*

The following goals and aspirations were derived from the shared community values and hold a complex and direct relationship with them, where the lines between goals and values frequently overlap. Each goal is stated and its major point briefly explained. Italicized are the specific shared values that the goal helps promote.

#### *A. Promote an intuitive understanding of the layout of downtown Livingston.*

The use associated with city centers may be enhanced if the physical layout can be easily understood. Understanding requires that we form a mental map of the area. The logic of the place needs to be understood sufficiently to orient pedestrians and visitors to the downtown community.

#### *B. Reinforce the sense of historical continuity.*

This goal speaks to the preservation of historical buildings, landscapes and other facilities of historical layout but, equally important, speaks to the relationship among buildings built over time — including those built in the present time.





*C. Foster physical continuity for Park Street and the downtown.*

Physical continuity speaks to the freedom of movement in pedestrian and automobile environments, but is most important in the pedestrian circumstance. Encouraging movement within the downtown and along Park Street provides a sense of comfort and invites people to come to town, shop and do a variety of activities.

*D. Develop the public nature of downtown and reinforce the sense that downtown belongs to everyone.*

The public nature of downtown is most apparent in public open space — plazas, sidewalks, street and parks. The design of the ground levels of buildings is also vital in promoting inclusion in the place that is downtown. Park Street should also address public spaces with the inclusion of a continuous, multi-use path system along the railroad corridor, pocket parks with seating areas, and way-finding and signage.



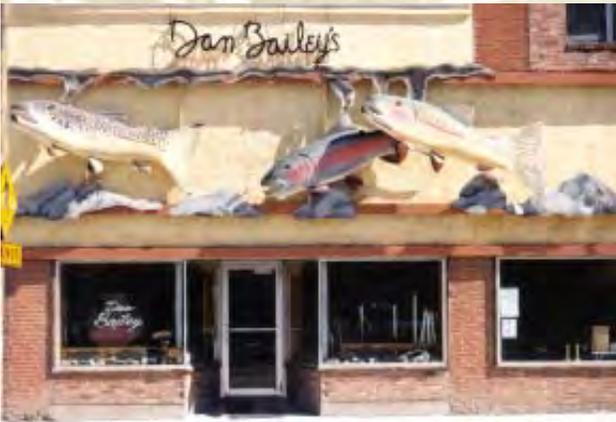
*E. Encourage a diversity of uses, activities and sizes of development.*

Achieving this goal will require balancing the existing uses downtown with additional uses that it lacks, such as residential and destination retail-clothing stores and specialty shops to attract new visitors. Diversity of uses, activities and sizes of development will foster a needed urban character and economic viability.

The Park Street corridor should also strive for a diverse range of land uses and activities. The preservation of interesting building types and linear open spaces will contribute to the character of the corridor. Preservation of the unique agricultural and railroad service industry along Park Street should be considered as long-term redevelopment is pursued.

*F. Encourage public and private investment in the future of downtown and for Park Street.*

Perhaps no other goal provides more opportunity to demonstrate the value we place on civic behavior than this one. Where those who have gone before us have been willing to invest in the future — to regard the value of their investment over a long period — we generally have bridges, buildings and other structures that have endured and that we now regard as important to our history. This principle should be encouraged as new development is considered for the downtown and for Park Street.



*G. Reinforce the unique and authentic character of Livingston.*

To better promote a sense of connection to and membership with Livingston, downtown and Park Street should be a signal for a unique place. Developing a unique character for downtown — unlike any other downtown — should start with what is already unique about Livingston. Likewise, the Park Street corridor offers interesting defining character elements and opportunities to enhance positive perceptions rather than potential negative responses by visitors and residents.

*H. Create a safe downtown for Livingston.*

All the users of downtown and Park Street — men, women, children, young and old, those with physical challenges, natives and visitors, customers and service people — should be considered when designing public spaces in the downtown and Park Street. A safe downtown and Park Street will encourage economic activity and foster community.

*I. Create a comfortable downtown for Livingston.*

Comfort includes shelter from the harsh wind and cold conditions in the Yellowstone River valley, a reorientation of downtown away from an automobile-oriented place to a slower-moving, pedestrian-oriented place and an understanding of intuitive way-finding. Outdoor spaces can be designed to better accommodate people as they move from place to place within the community. As a pedestrian, the experience of movement should be enjoyable and inviting.

*J. Create a hierarchy of circulation that begins with pedestrians.*

The hierarchy of order for circulation for the downtown and for parts of Park Street should be:

- Pedestrians,
- Ride share or future public transit
- Bicycles
- Vehicles

*K. Actively promote civic art in the downtown.*

Civic art promotes economic development, cultural tourism, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, national prestige and recognition, and an improved quality of life for a community. Art in a city's downtown describes the way in which the city honors spirit and soul, expresses humor and responds to its surrounding environmental context. Public art can create a civic awareness and expressions of community identity, myth and culture.



*L. Encourage a vibrant cultural atmosphere.*

Arts, entertainment and other cultural activities add richness and viability to our everyday lives. Such activity is an advantage to Livingston because it promotes economic development, cultural tourism, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, national prestige and recognition, social service opportunities, and an improved quality of life for the community.

*M. Encourage interesting street level activity.*

The street is a place for extra activities — sidewalk seating, vendors, waiting for a ride or friends, social gatherings outside the post office. Activities that do not require enclosed spaces or are enhanced by design outside should be added to the activities already occurring outside to create street level activity. This is particularly important during peak tourism season's to add interest and variety in the community.

*N. Maintain a sense of connection to the natural environment.*

Livingston's natural environment is a primary attribute. Every economically feasible effort to preserve, maintain and enhance Livingston's natural environment should be pursued. The urban design of Livingston should respond and celebrate to the surrounding environment and the region.

*O. Encourage an architectural design that responds to functional needs and reinforces downtown activities and Park Street character.*

Innovative building design intended as a sculptural effect is not discouraged. However, formalist aspirations should not be attained at the expense of functional requirements and positive relationships with other buildings and uses downtown. Architecture should respond to the entire array of human needs for the downtown and along Park Street. Broad-based architectural design principles — as opposed to specific guidelines for the community — may provide guidance and a visual understanding of appropriate architectural design values for the community.

*P. Encourage quality building.*

Downtown and Park Street should represent a sense of permanence to it where some other areas of the city may not require. Quality building development adds to the overall value of downtown and will enhance the perceptions of the Park Street corridor as a significant part of the urban form.

*Q. Promote downtown residential uses.*

Regardless of the size of the city, a downtown residential component provides for 24-hour activity, a consumer base for retail activity, advocates for downtown, eyes and ears on the street, and encourages a pedestrian scale movement with minimal need for vehicle transportation for downtown workers.

*R. Create an economically vibrant downtown.*

None of the values defined previously can be promoted without the economic engine to drive downtown and Park Street redevelopment. Both the downtown and Park Street have specific market potentials. A range of economic development strategies should be defined for future sustained economic growth.

*'A good sustainability and quality of life indicator: The average amount of time spent in a car.'*

*Paul Bedford*



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# LARRY RAFFETY ARCHITECT

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October 23, 2002

Mr. Scott Nelson  
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Re: Streetscape Design  
BACKGROUND SUMMARY

## SITUATION

The City of Livingston is undertaking infrastructure improvements, covered in detail in the Infrastructure Improvements Plan . Construction work in 2002 included replacement of water and sewer services beneath Park Street, and extending across Callender Street at Third through Fifth Streets. Next year reconstruction of the streets listed above will occur.

The intersection of Third and Callender Streets is on the edge of the Central Business District. This will be the first newly constructed intersection to include design elements intended for future reconstruction throughout the Central Business District .

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To create and promote an experimental streetscape design for the intersection of Callender and Third Streets, focused toward standards for downtown Livingston redevelopment.

## MANAGEMENT WHOLE

The management whole for this project is the Central Business District of the City of Livingston.

The Central Business District encompasses a contiguous area of nearly twenty city blocks bounded by the railroad to the north, residential areas to the east and west, and public facilities lying between downtown and the Yellowstone River to the south. There are prominent visual connections to the surrounding mountainous landscape. Much of the community's commercial and social activity has historically been centered in the area.

Primary decision makers for this project are the Public Works Director for the City of Livingston and contracted professional consultants. The City Commission, Infrastructure Improvements Committee, Proposed Urban Plan Committee, and Historic Preservation Commission all have regulatory authority over the area.

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The current resource base includes:

- a. The Central Business District's built environment and it's setting.
- b. Governmental and non-governmental organizations.
- c. Citizens and visitors.
- d. Public and private financial resources.

Committed public funding for this project includes:

- a. Street Maintenance District.
- b. Public Utilities Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds.
- c. Street Lighting District.

Possible other financial resources applicable to this project include:

- a. Tax Increment Finance District
- b. Business Improvement District
- c. Special Improvement District
- d. Private Donations

#### HOLISTIC GOAL

Livingston's central business district will in the future be a dynamic community center, full of people and activity. It will be economically successful, socially invigorating, safe and attractive. It's character will reflect our unique setting, heritage and diversity.

Further illustration of the community's vision can be found in Part I, Sections 3 & 4 of the Urban Design Plan.

Means of achieving this goal include:

- a. The community's vision as identified in the Urban Design Plan.
- b. The commitment and energies of citizens, businesses, organizations, city government and visitors, all of whom have a stake in the Central Business District's success.
- c. The experience and talents of consultants and public works personnel.
- d. Financial resources committed and able to be pursued for this reconstruction effort.

#### TESTING QUESTIONS \*

Design decisions for this project will be assessed against the following:

1. **Cause and Effect.** Does this action address the root cause of the problem?
2. **Weak Link.**
  - *Social.* Does this action, due to prevailing attitudes or beliefs, create a liability affecting achievement of our holistic goal?
  - *Natural.* Does this action address the most environmentally compromised aspect of our situation?
  - *Financial.* Does this action strengthen the weakest component of our financial viability?
3. **Marginal Reaction.** Which action provides the greatest return, in terms of our holistic goal, for the time and money spent?

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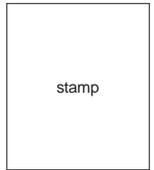
4. **Gross Profit Analysis.** Which actions contribute the most to covering the unavoidable costs of the project?
5. **Revenue Source and Use.** Is the revenue to be used in this action derived from the most appropriate source in terms of our holistic goal? Will the way in which the revenue is to be used lead toward our holistic goal?
6. **Sustainability.** If you take this action, will it lead toward or away from the ability to maintain a future as described in our holistic goal?
7. **Society and Culture.** How do you feel about this action now? Will it lead to our holistic goal? How will it affect the lives of those who live with it?

\* Edited from Holistic Management, Allan Savory with Jody Butterfield, © 1999

## MONITORING

The primary decision makers for this project will assess and seek outside comment regarding the newly reconstructed intersection of Third and Callender Streets. Patterns established for the experimental reconstruction will be modified to address this information, and will be codified by the City of Livingston for future redevelopment of the Central Business District.

str021018c-back



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- -

What have we missed?

What do we have wrong?

Other comments: