



CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission acting as the Historic Landmarks Commission
FROM: Jennifer Dimsho, AICP, Associate Planner
RE: S. 1st Street, just south of the St. Helens Street Intersection
DATE: June 30, 2023

In November 2022, the City kicked off construction of the Streets & Utilities Project to prepare the Riverfront property for redevelopment and enhance downtown St. Helens. A more detailed description of the infrastructure included in this project is included on the City's waterfront website. It is anticipated to be completed by September 2024.

<https://www.sthelensoregon.gov/waterfront/page/streets-and-utilities-extension-project>

Part of the project includes intersection enhancements to the intersection of S. 1st Street and St. Helens Street, which has been identified as "gateway" intersection, welcoming people to the City's downtown. One of the elements includes a gateway feature. City Council selected Lower Columbia Engineering, LLC to work with a Stakeholder Committee to recommend a preferred design. The Stakeholder Committee met three times from May to June and developed the preferred concept. The final design will be shared for final feedback with the group.

Gateway Design Stakeholder Membership	
Member	Role
John Walsh	City Administrator
Jenny Dimsho	City Project Manager
Sharon Darroux	City Engineering Manager
Alex Bird	City Engineer II
Les Watters	Columbia County Museum Association Curator
Brandon Sundeen	City Councilor
Jessica Chilton	City Council President
Amara Liebelt	Mainstreet Alliance Executive Director
Suzie Dahl	Mainstreet Alliance Arts & Design Committee
Russell Hubbard	Planning Commissioner



"Welcome to St. Helens"
Gateway on the corner of 4th Street &
Columbia Blvd.

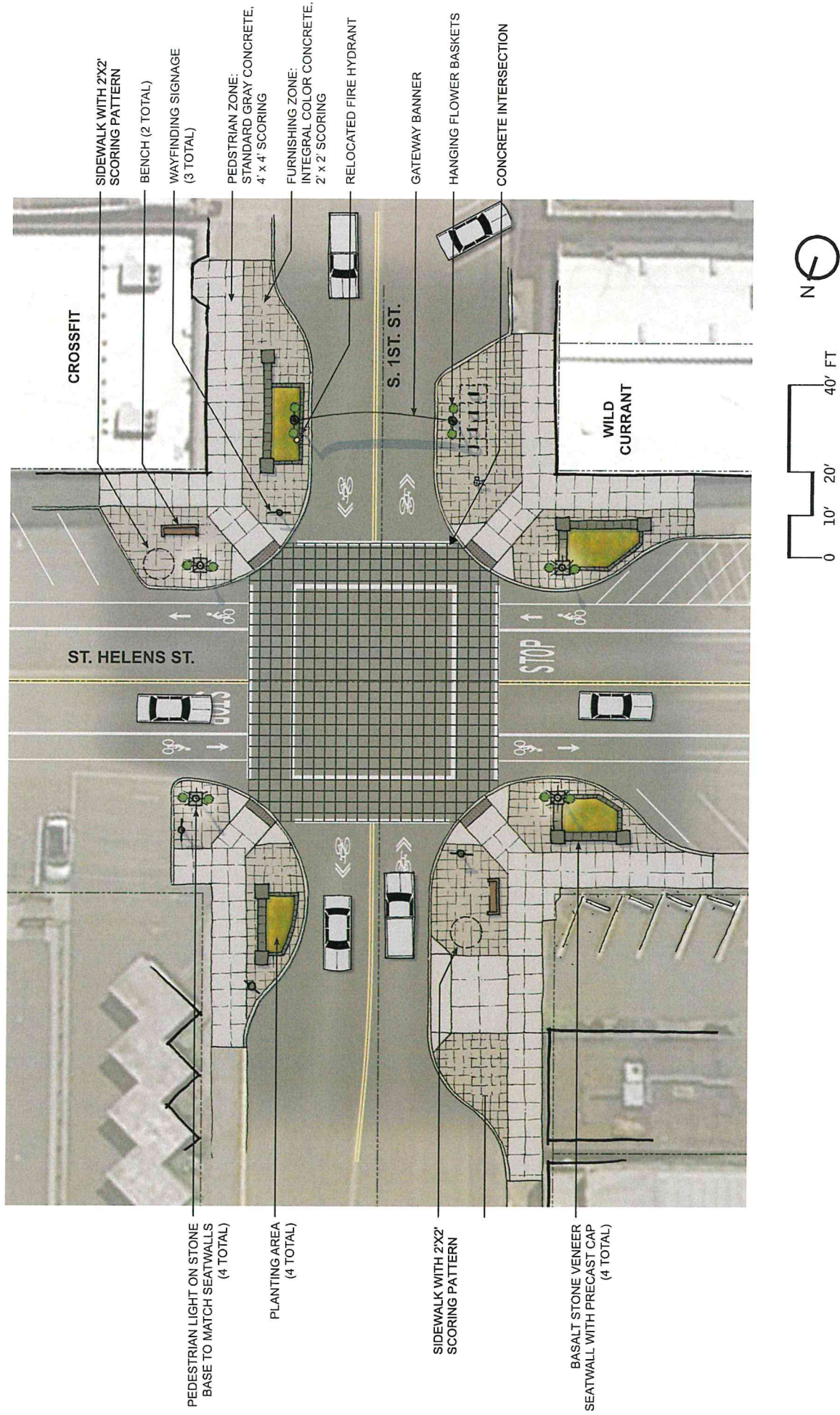
Per SHMC 17.132.172 (7), permanent exterior architectural changes to buildings (including new construction) must comply with the ***Riverfront District Architectural Guidelines***. The Historic Landmarks Commission shall make a recommendation to the approval authority as to whether the Commission believes the proposal complies. Please review your copy of the Guidelines when looking at this proposal and be prepared to discuss. The Guidelines can also be found on the City website on the City's website:

<https://www.sthelensoregon.gov/planning/page/riverfront-district-architectural-design-guidelines>

Since this proposal is not a typical building, most of the guidelines do not apply. Gateway features most resemble signage, so the relevant chapters include the Signage (Chapter 4) and the Material & Building Colors (Chapter 6). The Commission must decide if the proposed Gateway feature complies with the relevant Guidelines.

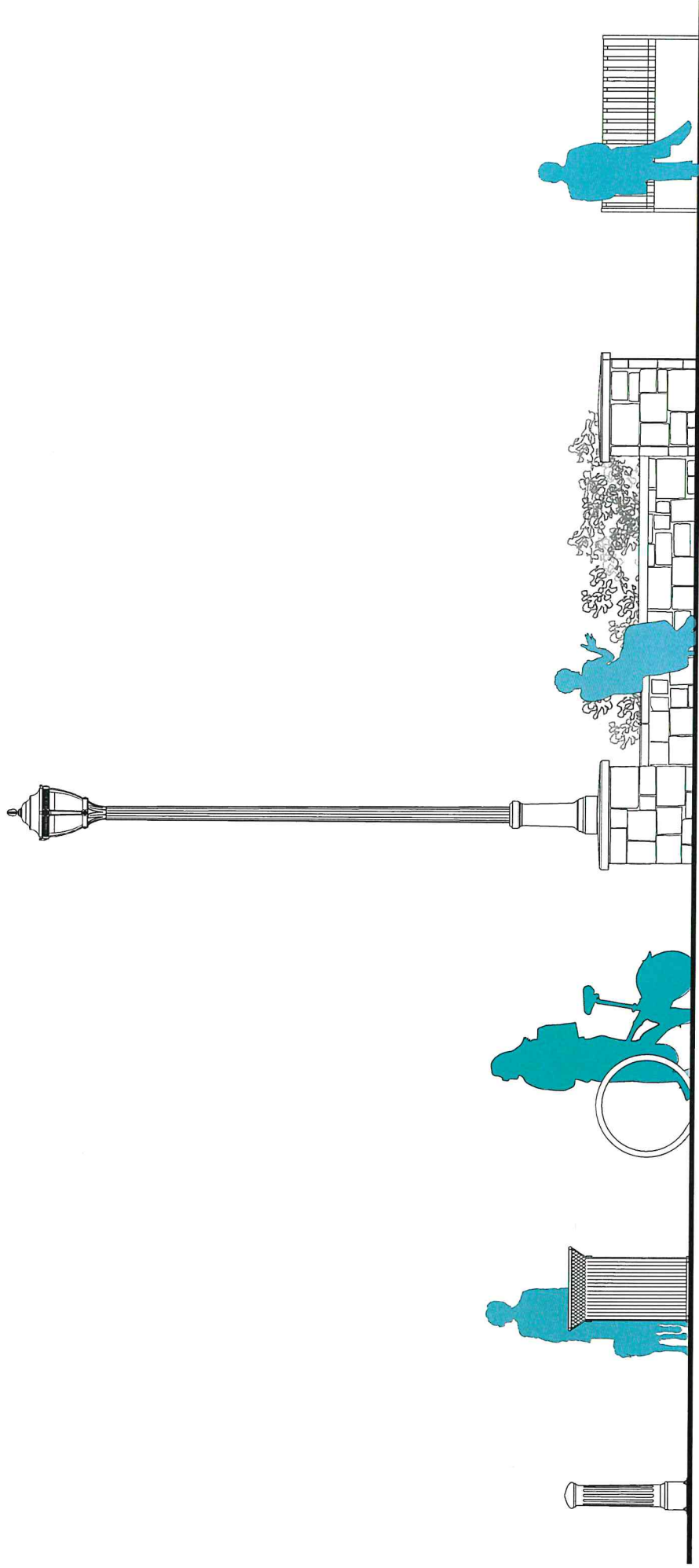
Attachments:

S. 1st St. & St. Helens St. Intersection Improvement Plan
Streetscape Elements
Gateway Plan Set
Relevant Chapters from the *Riverfront District Architectural Guidelines*
Gateway Rendering **(TO BE PRESENTED DURING THE MEETING)**



1st & ST. HELENS INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS CONCEPT PLAN





BOLLARD

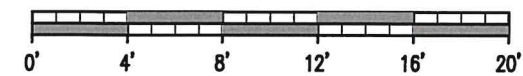
TRASH
RECEPTACLE

BIKE RACK

LIGHT POLE

STONE SEATWALL PLANTER

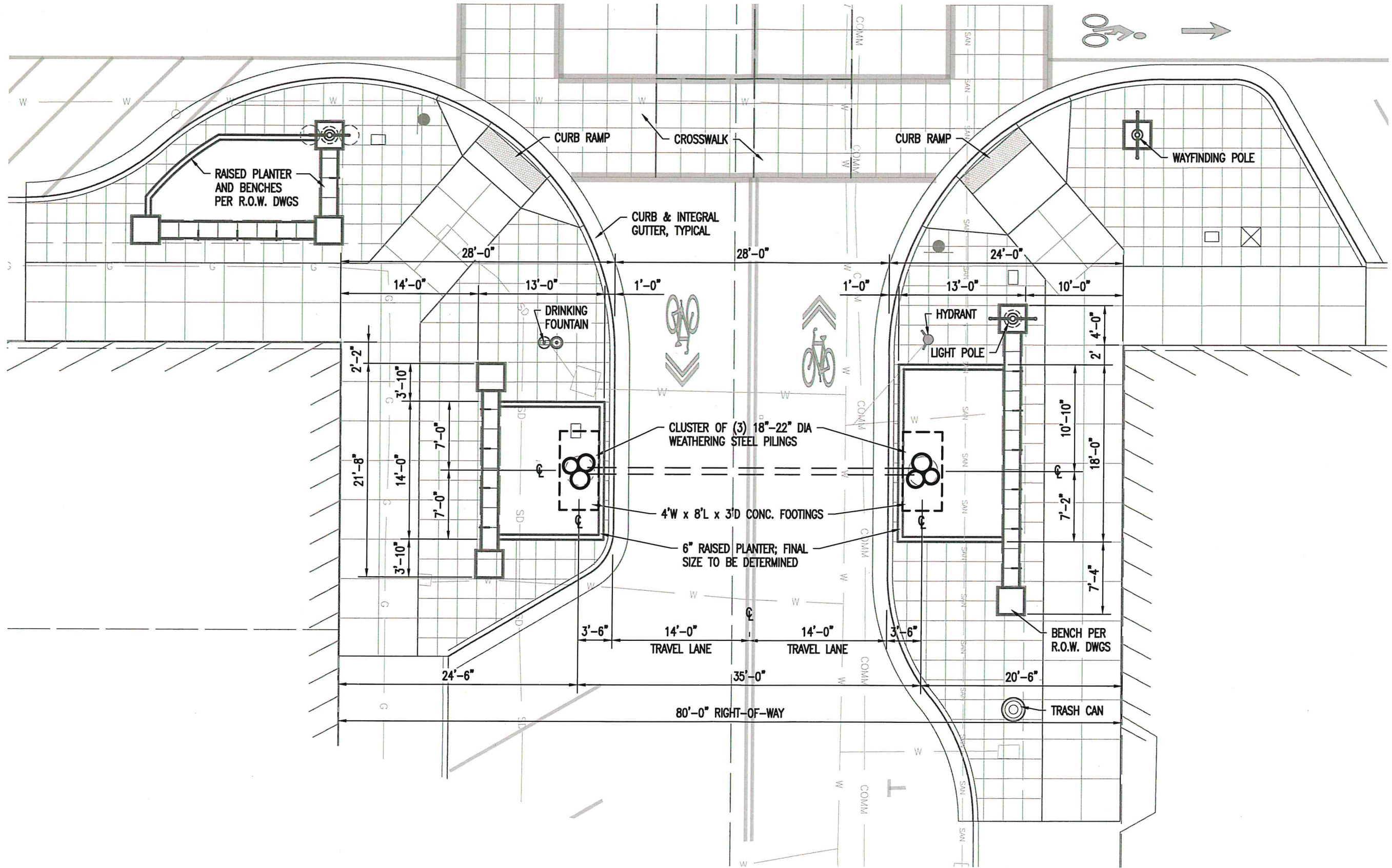
BENCH



Lower
Columbia
Engineering

St. Helens, Oregon
(503) 366-0399

3450-SECTION.DWG



ST HELENS AND S 1ST STREET INTERSECTION - GATEWAY PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 10'



St. Helens, Oregon
(503) 366-0399



GATEWAY LAYOUT PLAN

PROJ. NO. 3450

ST. HELENS RIVERFRONT GATEWAY

DWG. BY BMK

CITY OF ST. HELENS

APPR. BY

SCALE NOTED DATE 06/30/2023 DWG. NO. 3450-PLAN.DWG

4. SIGNAGE

Signage that creates visual delight is preferred.

Commercial signs in Olde Towne should identify businesses, promote merchandise or service within, attract customers, provide direction and information, and in some cases create visual delight and architectural interest. Poor quality commercial signage creates an uninviting image and suggests lack of consideration for the historic character of the retail storefronts.

NOTE: The following is meant as a supplement to the city's Sign Code. Sign permits, obtained through the Planning Department, are required pursuant to the St. Helens Development Code.



When considering materials for signage, prioritize those that are locally harvested and/or extracted, contain recycled materials, rapidly renewable materials or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood.

4.2 GENERAL GUIDANCE

Signs should complement the historic and cultural significance of the area and be sensitive to existing architectural patterns and features found in Olde Towne.

- Signs should not obscure important architectural details.
- Signs should align with other signs on the block to create a pattern of horizontal and vertical façade features.
- Signs should be positioned to emphasize special shapes or details of the façade, draw attention to the shop entrance, or emphasize a display window.
- Buildings should use signs that are appropriately scaled, durable, and consistent with other signage in Olde Towne. Signs should be good neighbors within a block.

• Wall signs should be well positioned and appropriately sized within architectural features, such as the panels above storefronts on the primary or secondary building front, on the transom, or flanking doorways.

• Projecting signs should be positioned along the first floor level of the façade. Projecting signs may take on their own special shape, or create their own symbol within the overall façade design.

- Awnings may have building or business names or street address on the apron, but may not function as signs with extensive text areas.

Murals shall not become a predominating visual element of the streetscape.

- Murals must create and/or promote a similar character or feel to the Olde Towne district.
- Wall murals and other artwork of noncommercial nature should be sympathetic to historical context.



The Strand looking south c. 1913

4.3 EXISTING BUILDINGS

Signs should be maintained; signs that are historically represented in photographs may be replaced given compliance with other sign regulation. Murals can be maintained or recreated based on evidence, or created to honor building history.

- Honor historic uses of the structure by investing in mural refurbishment or depicting historically accurate ads, commercial displays, or logos previously displayed on the building.

4.4 NEW CONSTRUCTION

Sign materials should be durable and easy to maintain.

- Appropriate sign materials include painted or carved wood; carved wooden letters; epoxy letters; galvanized sheet metal; slate, marble, or sandstone; gold leaf; gilt, painted, stained, or sandblasted glass; clear and colored acrylic; neon; or stained glass.
- Lighting external to the sign surface with illumination directed toward the sign is preferred. Internally lit signs are generally discouraged.
- Light level should not overpower the façade or other signs on the street.

- The light source should be shielded from pedestrian view.
- Neon is acceptable, though can be restricted in size, if it does not obscure architectural detail or overly illuminate display windows. Neon lights should have an authentic, period or hand crafted look, and should not flash or otherwise vary in display.
- Lettering styles should be proportioned, simple, and easy to read. In most instances, a simple typeface is preferred over a faddish or overly ornate type style.
- As a general rule, the letterforms should occupy no more than 75% of the total sign panel.

4.5 FREESTANDING SIGNS

The standards herein shall apply to freestanding signs as applicable.

- As an independent feature, a freestanding sign should incorporate architectural features of the building it serves or otherwise complement the historic and cultural significance of the area and be sensitive to architectural patterns and features of Olde Towne.
- If freestanding sign will serve an existing building that is not compatible with the architectural patterns and features of Olde Towne, it should not reflect those incompatible features, but be compatible on its own.



6. MATERIAL & BUILDING COLORS

A traditional pallet of colors and materials are preferred.

Building materials of new structures and additions or alterations should contribute to the visual continuity of the district. The materials should appear similar to those seen traditionally to establish a sense of visual continuity.

 Buildings consume a large portion of Earth's natural resources, including 40% of raw stone, gravel, and sand and 25% of virgin wood. Choosing more sustainable building materials can mitigate negative environmental impacts and conserve virgin materials and resources. Utilize salvaged building materials, look for products with recycled content, containing rapidly renewable materials, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood, and/or locally harvested or extracted components.

6.2 GENERAL GUIDANCE

Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the historic district should be preserved.

- Match brick and mortar in color, profile and texture to that of the original building or to another neighboring historic building.
- Where possible, use materials indigenous to the region and/or manufactured or supplied locally.

6.3 EXISTING BUILDINGS

During rehabilitation of buildings, replace materials with similar material types to maintain original appearance of the structure.

- Brick that has not been painted should not be painted.
- Match stone coursing, finish and joints to original.
- Maintain historical architectural detailing at window heads, cornices, belt course, and corners.
- Generally, the use of plastic, bright-unfinished metal, unpainted wood, and false stone is inappropriate and discouraged.
- Retain and preserve original wall and siding materials when possible and appropriate.
- Avoid removing siding that is in good condition or that can be repaired in place.
- Remove only the siding that is deteriorated and must be replaced.
- To preserve the character, defining-features of the historic façade materials do not cover or obscure the original façade.
- If the original material has been covered, uncover it, if feasible.



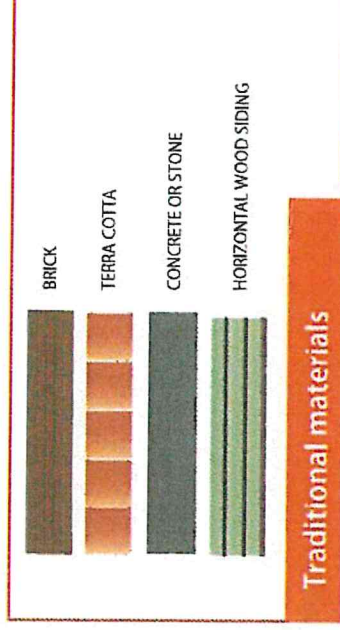
6.4 NEW CONSTRUCTION

To maintain visual consistency, building materials used on the exterior of buildings should be traditional materials that are more durable.

- Alternative materials to the traditional stone or brick should appear similar in scale, proportion, texture and finish to those used traditionally. Durability should be considered when alternative materials are reviewed.
- Do not use bricks that are larger than the standard size.
- Stone should be limited to colors and types similar to those found in Olde Towne buildings (basalt or similar for face stone, rubble stack okay for non- frontage building faces). Use existing stonework as an example.

Use building materials and construction practices that evoke a sense of permanence and are compatible with St. Helens' historic buildings.

- Incorporate one of the following building materials found on traditional American Main Street commercial storefronts, into the design of the ground floor (street facing) facades:



- T-11 or similar sheet materials
- Stucco clad foam (EFIS)
- Vinyl siding
- Log construction

Prohibited materials

- Generally, the use of plastic, bright-unfinished metal, unpainted wood, and false stone is inappropriate and discouraged.
- Concrete and wood siding should be painted using a palette of earth tone or muted colors. Bright, neon- like colors are strongly discouraged. Paint color choice is the owner's decision, but painting a structure to be a good neighbor on the block is encouraged.

