

AN ADVISORY SERVICES PANEL REPORT

Midtown Missoula Missoula, Montana



Urban Land
Institute

Midtown Missoula Missoula, Montana

A Redevelopment Plan

October 12-17, 2003
An Advisory Services Panel Report

ULI—the Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
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About ULI—the Urban Land Institute

ULI—the Urban Land Institute is a non-profit research and education organization that promotes responsible leadership in the use of land in order to enhance the total environment.

The Institute maintains a membership representing a broad spectrum of interests and sponsors a wide variety of educational programs and forums to encourage an open exchange of ideas and sharing of experience. ULI initiates research that anticipates emerging land use trends and issues and proposes creative solutions based on that research; provides advisory services; and publishes a wide variety of materials to disseminate information on land use and development.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has more than 20,000 members and associates from 70 countries, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals rep-

resented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students, and librarians. ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of America's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

This Advisory Services panel report is intended to further the objectives of the Institute and to make authoritative information generally available to those seeking knowledge in the field of urban land use.

Richard M. Rosan
President

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About ULI Advisory Services

The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI panel teams are interdisciplinary and typically include several developers, a landscape architect, a planner, a market analyst, a finance expert, and others with the niche expertise needed to address a given project. ULI teams provide a holistic look at development problems. Each panel is chaired by a respected ULI member with previous panel experience.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 75 key community representatives; and two days of formulating recommendations. There are many long nights of discussion. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are

able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academicians, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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Of particular note was the outstanding support provided by the MRA staff under the leadership of Geoff Badenoch, director, and Kari Lei Nelson, redevelopment specialist. Their assistance throughout the course of the study was invaluable as they helped to ensure the success of the panel's efforts.

More than 40 members of the Missoula community—including residents, government and business leaders, property owners, and representatives of both the medical establishment and the University of Montana—volunteered their time to meet and share their unique and valuable insights with the panel. As a group, these community members are a major asset in advancing the interests of Missoula. Their participation was offered in a spirit crucial for the success of the planning process envisioned by this panel.

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Foreword: The Panel's Assignment

The success of two existing urban renewal districts in downtown Missoula, Montana, was the impetus for creating Urban Renewal District (URD) III in the midtown area, which is the study area for this ULI Advisory Services panel study. Recognizing that extensive growth to the south and west of Missoula was making midtown the geographical center of the city, the Missoula Redevelopment Agency (MRA) asked the panel to help determine this district's redevelopment potential.

The panel envisions that the 555-acre study area eventually will become known as "Midtown Missoula," reflecting its central location within the city. When that happens, the panel's objective to "create a place" will have been realized. This report outlines a plan to assist the city in achieving this goal.

Background Information

The city of Missoula is located west of the Continental Divide in the Rocky Mountain region. Although the city has a population of approximately 57,000, Missoula serves a much larger primary trade area population, because the nearest competing regional market is 120 miles away in Kalispell, Montana. Between 1990 and 2000, Missoula's primary trade area population increased from approximately 79,000 to 96,000. Most of the city's retail growth occurred northwest of downtown along Reserve Street, adding a third major retail area. Today, the city's three retail areas are the downtown, which features primarily specialty and soft goods retailers; Reserve Street, along which many big-box retailers are located; and the midtown area, which is anchored by Southgate Mall, a regional shopping center. Future growth is expected to occur to the south and west of the city.

Many of the buildings in URD III are more than 30 years old, landscaping is sparse, only intermit-



Above: Location map.
Left: Regional map.



tent streetscape improvements have been made along the main arterials, and mixed land uses predominate. Significant traffic issues exist, primarily at the intersection of Brooks Street, South Avenue, and Russell Street. Plans are underway to add a cul-de-sac at South Avenue, which would reroute some traffic away from the Brooks/South/Russell intersection.

Neighborhood protection is another important issue facing the study area, given the anticipated growth pressures in midtown. Few improvements have occurred there; the most recent construction

This four-story bank, which is located on South Avenue north of Southgate Mall, is the area's newest building and has become a midtown landmark because of its height.



was a four-story bank building along South Avenue that is not yet fully tenanted.

The panel found that in addition to being blessed by a scenic location and a dynamic university that is steadily gaining wider recognition for excellence, the Missoula community is characterized by its positive attitude and energy. It was not surprised to learn that the city's residents share an enthusiasm for their community.

The Assignment

The Missoula Redevelopment Agency (MRA) asked ULI's Advisory Services Program to organize a panel of experts that could help identify development opportunities at a number of sites throughout URD III. This study area generally is referred to as "midtown," and the panel's recommendations center around the goal of establishing this area as "Midtown Missoula."

In this report, the panel presents an assessment of how URD III/Midtown Missoula will fit into the broader regional market for real estate development over the next several decades. The panel chose to focus on the long term because it believes it will take Missoula quite some time to realize the full potential of this area. Toward this end, the panel proposes a land use plan for midtown as well as detailed site plans for some initial key development sites. The panel also reviewed traffic implications and roadway needs. Specific street sections and landscaping plans for key roadways presented later in this report further illustrate the panel's recommendations. In support of these recommendations, the panel presents an array of proposed development strategies that could lead to the implementation of a redevelopment master plan for Midtown Missoula.

Overview and Summary of Recommendations

The panel identified numerous opportunities for redevelopment in the study area. The highlights of its proposed plan and the development strategies it considers necessary for the realization of a new center of activity for Missoula are described below.

The panel proposes that the first phase of development consist of an area to be known as "Missoula Commons," which it views as the centerpiece of its proposed redevelopment plan. This new entertainment retail and residential area would be located south of and linked to the existing Southgate Mall. Further development in this area would enhance the surrounding environment and thereby benefit the mall itself.

Employment opportunities will be crucial to support Missoula's anticipated continuing population growth. Toward this end, the panel proposes the development of a research and development (R&D)/business campus in the northern section of URD III, just south of Mount Avenue. The campus should consist primarily of "flex-tech" space, which features an adaptable design, can be built quickly, and appeals mainly to technology business users.

Farther south, between the R&D/business campus and South Avenue, and east of Russell Avenue to Brooks Street, the panel believes that neighborhood commercial services should be revitalized in the area around the existing Tremper's Shopping Center. Although it lacks aesthetic appeal, this shopping center traditionally has contained services supported by the community, and the community in turn is quite loyal to it.

The panel also anticipates the eventual redevelopment of Holiday Village Shopping Center, which is located east of Brooks Street. The panel recommends that this property, together with other nearby properties, be redeveloped as a multifamily residential neighborhood. Housing there should be designed to serve both the elderly and students

from the University of Montana (UM), which is located northeast of URD III. Housing for seniors will be needed to accommodate the city's large—and growing—number of single-person elderly households. Additional housing also will be needed for the gradually expanding student population that cannot be accommodated on campus.

The panel supports the need to preserve and enhance existing residential neighborhoods within URD III, particularly in the area north of South Avenue. This cohesive community is centered around the Jefferson School, which provides educational resources, and McLeod Park. The panel proposes that live/work units be constructed and/or renovated along the north side of South Avenue in buildings no taller than two stories.

On the south side of South Avenue, the panel recommends a similar mix of uses at a slightly higher density of three to four stories. These units would be developed to relate to the office space located between South Avenue and Southgate Mall.

The panel generally targets commercial areas along the east side of Brooks Street and residential areas located west of the Bitterroot Branch line of the Montana Rail Link (MRL) for stabilization with no change to their existing uses. The realignment of South Avenue east of Brooks Street, as proposed by the panel, would create a potential site for a hotel and, perhaps, a conference center just north of the fairgrounds.

To support these extensive changes—and to enhance the mobility of automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians in Midtown Missoula—the panel recommends some revisions to the area's circulation pattern. It proposes an expanded and more efficient network of roadways that includes a round-about at the Brooks/South/Russell intersection, elimination of unnecessary street connections, and the addition of trolley service that would link the area directly to downtown. The panel believes

The view to the east along South Avenue shows the mountains in the distance and some potential development parcels.



that the trolley would complement both downtown and Midtown Missoula, providing the necessary synergy between these two retail areas.

The panel senses that Missoula may be about to embark upon an era of unprecedented growth and opportunity. While the panel disciplined itself to analyze the market conservatively, future opportunities quite possibly may be greater than cur-

rent numbers/market calculations indicate. For this reason, the panel has built some flexibility into the conceptual plans presented in this report. In summary, the panel's overarching message to the community is the same as the one that appears on the plaque next to the carousel in downtown Missoula: "Ride the Dream—Live the Magic!"

Market Potential

Missoula sits at the center of a region with a population of 300,000. The 555-acre study area, URD III, is at the geographic center of the region and is likely to remain so as the region expands in most directions over the next 25 years.

Overview

While the midtown area still captures a reasonable share of the city's retail market, the evolution of Missoula has caused consumers and commerce to disperse beyond midtown, to the revitalized downtown and to Reserve Street and the recent and ongoing development of big-box retail there. The panel believes that the key to the revitalization of URD III is to recapture these markets by "seeding" the study area with new, contemporary uses.

The panel conducted a market overview analysis of development opportunities in the study area. Because the area is so large, significant opportunities exist to "anchor" it with new, expanded, and larger land uses that together can effectively transform the area. These land uses—which include research and development (R&D), office, hotel, retail, and residential—are discussed in this section. The key will be to take advantage of development opportunities by adding and updating these land uses to transform a very large, dispersed area with little perceived community identity into a cohesive, recognized, and relevant community asset. The core of the proposed transformation involves the addition of jobs and commerce, the enhancement of the commercial and retail sectors, the construction of targeted residential infill development, and the addition of a high-quality hotel and conference facility in conjunction with the revitalization of the fairgrounds property with an events facility and a central park.

Research and Development (R&D) Market

Research and development can contain a variety of employment-generating uses in a campus-style setting, including the following:

- Scientific research, including both wet and dry lab space;
- Flex-tech;
- Business incubator;
- Manufacturing;
- Showcasing, where products are publicly displayed;
- Warehousing; and
- Administrative.

Such uses often profit from being clustered in an R&D/business environment where resources and intellectual ideas can be shared. This type of environment particularly prospers near a university, which can contribute to the success of such a venture through its research activities, which, in turn, often generate business ventures. While these ventures generally are cocapitalized by business enterprises and/or the university, they often are founded and staffed by professors, other university employees, and students.

The study area's proximity to UM suggests that businesses can be spawned from it. Because the university's current enrollment is just under 13,000 students, such a venture initially could not be large. Yet examples of scientific and medical-related ventures emanating from UM already exist. These include bioengineering, remote imagery, and environmental mitigation firms. The International Heart Institute also is generating ventures that could appropriately be included in an R&D/business park.

Another potential driver for an R&D/business park is the fact that many national companies are foot-loose, meaning they can locate almost anywhere in the United States. These firms generally prefer to be in communities that offer a high quality of life for their employees at a reasonable cost of living.

Market Analysis

The panel projects that demand for R&D employment—and thus for R&D space that might be accommodated in an R&D/business park—will increase over a 25-year period. The panel made this projection by examining overall employment growth projections and then reducing them for the appropriate employment categories that might be accommodated in this type of park.

Absent an inventory of competitive space currently in place in Missoula, and based on a calculation of 300 square feet per employee, the panel estimates that the base R&D employment is 6,534 in the year 2000. The panel projects that this number will increase to 9,485 by the year 2025, which would generate a demand over this period for approximately 885,000 square feet of additional space. If one assumes that URD III could capture 75 percent of this demand, this represents 664,000 square feet of space, which could be constructed in increments of roughly 26,500 square feet per year. This capture estimate assumes that demand for this space will come strictly from the R&D category and not, for instance, from manufacturing or office uses. It also assumes that the R&D/business park will not contain any government or university buildings.

Recommendations

The panel has identified an approximately 60-acre site on the northern edge of the study area for a master-planned R&D/business park. By reserving this property for development as an R&D/business park, the city can ensure a 25-year inventory of land for this purpose. This means that such a park can be planned with an initial contribution of properties currently occupied by the U.S. Forest Service, Northwestern Energy, and Beach Transportation. Other contiguous properties could be added, as needed, to complete the R&D/business park.

The panel recommends that this facility be developed as a public/private partnership that includes

UM. The city should create a menu of bonuses and incentives to encourage UM-related ventures to locate at the R&D/business park. These incentives could include land writedowns; expedited permit approval; common area facilities for research, manufacturing, and distribution; and a venture capital program.

Office Market

Targeted office clusters for the study area might include medical and financial services as well as more general office uses. The success of the International Heart Institute and the fact that Montana is home to more physicians per capita than any other state suggest a high concentration of medical office space demand, with the prospect that other emerging specialty medical programs could generate even more demand.

A sizable inventory of financial services firms is spread throughout Missoula. Consistent with the panel's concept of the importance of clustering certain industries, this business sector also might prove to be a good candidate for targeted clustering within the study area. This sector will increase in size, as much of Missoula's projected growth will come from the aging and affluent baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964.

The study area also should accommodate other general business uses, possibly including back-office users in various service, transportation, insurance, legal, and accounting sectors. The area already enjoys a number of positive attributes that should appeal to office users, such as better-quality restaurants—including Jakers and the Montana Club—and retail services than can be found elsewhere in the city, and transportation corridors close to housing. The future development of a hotel, meeting space, and an R&D/business park will create a powerful aggregation of services to accommodate the demands of the Class A office sector.

Market Analysis

The office market currently consists of space scattered throughout greater Missoula. The city contains only a few Class A multitenant office structures; most of the office inventory is in single-occupant, low-density commercial structures.

The panel estimated the projected demand for office space in Missoula to the year 2025. Its analysis suggests that the city's office space inventory will require the addition of more than 80,000 square feet every year, based on a projection that employment will grow by 36,000 over the 25-year period and the assumption that approximately 8,000 of these employees will require about 250 square feet of office space each. The study area should be able to accommodate 20 to 40 percent of this demand, or about 15,000 to 35,000 square feet per year.

Recommendations

The study area could accommodate this space in a variety of ways. One obvious location is the proposed R&D/business park. In addition, the panel recommends that the city attempt to seed new development in certain target locations by encouraging office development through methods such as zoning changes, use of its power of eminent domain, and land writedowns. However, the panel also believes that the office market will emerge naturally throughout midtown, in infill locations near or adjacent to the proposed R&D/business park, retail, and hotel locations, as well as adjacent to Southgate Mall.

Hotel and Motel Market

Missoula currently has approximately 45 motels and hotels with a total of 2,600 rooms. The occupancy rate in the Mountain Region over the past four years has ranged from 61 percent to 65 percent; it peaked in 2000 at 65.5 percent. This occupancy rate regularly exceeds that of Montana as a whole by a considerable margin. These numbers suggest that new hotel/motel space has been developed in recent years, which likely has contributed to the decline in occupancy, because the number of visitors to the region has been increasing steadily at 2 percent per year. The market is responding by adding inventory.

Demand from visitors—including business travelers, academics and others attending university events, tourists, and conference goers—appears to be the principal driver of the hotel/motel market. Most of the city's lodging is in limited-service motels. Missoula has only two or three full-service fa-



cilities that appear to target the conference and business segments of the visitor market. Most of the new inventory, including a new business hotel, is located on Missoula's west side. Midtown does not contain any viable hotel inventory.

Recommendations

The panel believes that midtown should be targeted for the development of a full-service hotel adjacent to the fairgrounds. (Although the fairgrounds are outside the URD III boundaries, the panel considers them part of midtown.) The panel suggests that this hotel be developed in conjunction with the expansion and modernization of an events facility at this same site. The hotel would target demand generated by that facility; both would benefit significantly from the site's proximity to UM. The following groups can be expected to generate demand for the hotel rooms and conference space:

- Event and conference attendees, including those attending events at the multiuse events facility at the fairgrounds, UM events, and business conferences at the hotel;
- General business travelers;
- Medical service providers and users, including out-of-area patients, their families, and visiting medical professionals; and
- Other visitors, including those attending UM activities as well as tourists.

The panel recommends the development of a full-service hotel geared to business travelers that contains significant meeting space. One possible prototype is the Courtyard by Marriott, a compact, full-service hotel that can be built inexpen-

The panel takes a lunch break at the Montana Club after the site tour. On the left are Geoff Badenoch, director of the MRA—the panel sponsor—with panel members Ed Starkie and Bonny Hershberger; on the right (from right to left) are Bill Lawrence, Matt Holbrook, Dave Scheuer, and Linda Cuadra.

A Costco store, part of the recent wave of big-box retail development, is located on the east side of Reserve Street.



sively and is flagged by a high-quality chain. (The panel is not endorsing this particular chain, but rather offers it as an example of the type of hotel that would be appropriate for this site.) The hotel should contain approximately 200 to 300 rooms and 8,000 square feet of meeting space. It could be built at a cost of \$100,000 per room, excluding land costs.

Retail Market

Missoula has a sufficient supply of retail space that is geographically dispersed throughout the community, provides a wide range of choices for consumers, and includes a mixture of old and new retail establishments. The city's existing retail offerings include traditional downtown specialty and soft goods retailers, neighborhood shopping centers, the more contemporary Southgate Mall regional center, and a very large inventory of the big-box retail facilities that have become so appealing to consumers.

Although the city's retail offerings are varied and dispersed, they have solidified Missoula's importance as a regional retail hub. The panel senses that the more recent addition of big-box retailers has attracted consumers from the larger region, in effect recapturing consumer dollars that have, in turn, augmented retail sales at the regional mall and downtown.

Recommendations

The challenge for retailing in the study area is to create a land use plan that continues to build on the successful retail already in place. The centerpiece is Southgate Mall, a well-known regional shopping center that has remained up to date and can be expanded and augmented. The panel recommends the development of additional retail space around the mall, possibly on some of the adjacent undeveloped or underdeveloped properties south of it. Expanded services might include a new cinema, contemporary "small-box" national retailers, and infill retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses.

The study area also contains some existing neighborhood centers. While the panel understands that most of these centers are viable, it recognizes that they are older, unattractive, and disconnected. The panel recommends rectifying this situation with the ultimate goal of making it easier for shoppers to move about, adding pedestrian linkages, and improving streetscapes, signage, and ingress and egress.

Housing Market

The Mountain Region is expected to experience continuing population growth consistent with recent historical trends. A principal source of this growth is in-migration, both from within Montana

and more notably from out of state. Approximately 85 percent of the region's population growth during the 1990s was attributable to in-migration. Statistical and anecdotal evidence attribute much of this growth to the "psychic values" of Missoula's physical setting, access to recreation, and small-scale livability.

The city has experienced a population growth of 2 percent annually for several years. This is somewhat misleading, since the city's capture of regional population growth is very modest and lags far behind growth rates for suburbanizing communities in the upper Bitterroot Valley and adjacent areas. While suburbanization is expected to continue—particularly as a result of relatively inexpensive land and housing costs as well as political resistance to land use controls that would alter current market conditions—this trend must be set apart from what might be projected within the city. For a more accurate projection of population growth in the city, one must examine the income, demographic, and lifestyle characteristics that distinguish those who choose to live in an urban setting rather than in low-density, conventional suburban and exurban housing.

The panel believes that creating a mixed-use community with a significant residential component in URD III will meet publicly stated policy goals. Specific types of housing can be integrated effectively into a mixed-use neighborhood to meet a public need. An examination of the market capacity for in-city housing requires one to consider several interrelated issues:

- Who are the potential residents, both buyers and renters?
- What can they afford to pay for housing?
- How deep is the potential market at each price point and demographic segment?
- What housing products will be needed to attract residents to a specific neighborhood type?

In the absence of an existing in-town new housing market, an examination of demographic factors is especially critical to identifying new users. Housing choice is about both economic capability and lifestyle choices, and thus demographic and eco-

nomic identifiers have to be balanced to identify market demand.

Urban Housing Analysis

Moderate-density urban housing products differ substantially from those typically found in suburban or exurban settings. They are typified by smaller units designed to house smaller households. Urban residents generally value convenient access to work, to essential services, to urban amenities—particularly entertainment, cultural, and retail ones—and, in the case of older residents, to medical services.

Those who live in urban neighborhoods by choice, whether owners or renters, also constitute a market made up of two particular age groups. They are predominantly young professionals in their 20s and 30s, whose child-rearing years are ahead of them, or empty-nesters, whose child-rearing years are behind them. Urban housing markets seldom include concentrations of households with children. The market therefore can be described as a barbell with two age-group clusters bracketing the child-rearing years. The smaller, in-between age sector consists primarily of single, childless, or otherwise nontraditional households.

National demographics indicate the predominant age segments are growing and are expected to continue to grow, primarily as a result of the aging of the U.S. population and, especially, the graying of the baby boomers, who are now leaving their child-rearing years. This trend has been a considerable force in the rejuvenation of urban housing markets across the country. First visible in the physical transformation of neighborhoods in larger cities, this trend has filtered down to smaller ones, and especially to those whose natural and physical attributes create "psychic" value. The presence of a major university adds to the cultural allure of these cities, making them attractive for in-migration. The student base produces people who gravitate by choice to an urban lifestyle. In many university communities, alumni have become a significant segment of the housing market; often, they return to enjoy the diversity and cultural richness of life in a college town. By all accounts, Missoula falls well within the parameters that suggest that development of denser

urban residential neighborhoods there is both desirable and achievable.

Local Demographic Trends

Local demographic data demonstrate that Missoula's population characteristics mirror these national trends. According to the 2000 census, 28 percent of the Missoula County population falls within the 45- to 64-year-old age group. Only 26 percent of households contain children and 49 percent are "nonfamily" households. According to information supplied by the O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West:

Between 1990 and 2000, Missoula County's population expanded most for adults between their early 40's to late 50's as well as among teenage children and persons in the early and mid 20's. Extending into the future, growth in Missoula will be focused among older adults in their early 50's to late 60's, and among younger adults in their 20's and early to mid-30's.

Local Demand Trends

Long-range forecasts suggest an annual demand of about 700 units. A recent five-year forecast based on population growth suggested that from 1999 through 2004, a total of 3,600 housing units—or 900 units annually—would be required to meet market demand in the immediate urban market area. This aggregate demand, when analyzed by household type, indicates that the demand for smaller urban units with access to urban services and amenities likely will be strong. Specifically, childless married couples make up 11.6 percent of the population; single women over age 65, 24.6 percent; senior couples, 12.8 percent, and other nontraditional couples, 1.1 percent. Thus, in aggregate, half of the identified household demand conforms to the prototypical higher-density urban household. The study (www.co.missoula.mt.us/measures/HousingShelter.htm) further observed that—consistent with national trends—household growth is outpacing population growth, resulting in even stronger demand for smaller residential units:

The number of households in Missoula will grow at an average rate of 2.25% per year over the next five years, as opposed to a

growth in population of 1.4%. In terms of housing, [planning] will need to [accommodate] the household growth, not the population growth. This is due in part from the increase in people over 65 who will be living alone. It is also due in part to the number of people in the 25-45 age range who will be looking to form households together. As a result, more housing units will be needed than one would expect from the numbers of people. From 1999-2008, the number of households in Missoula will expand another 21%. Missoula is forecast to add 720 households each year to the urban area.

Even if one assumes a modest capture rate for the study area of 50 market-rate units annually (not including housing for seniors and others who may need assistance) or 7 percent of all demand, ample market depth should exist to create a substantial amount of urban housing. Income and wealth statistics indicate the same: 28 percent of households have incomes above \$50,000, which suggests sufficient ability to purchase or lease market-rate units.

The panel offers one caveat: Fulfilling the needs and aspirations of potential residents and successfully creating an emerging urban neighborhood require careful execution. Although quantifiable aggregate demographic demand for such a neighborhood exists, real demand for real units will occur only if these units meet the expectations and needs of prospective residents. Realistic phasing strategies and careful decisions about the neighborhood's density, unit types and mixes, pricing, amenities, and physical configuration will require further and more detailed analysis. However, based on existing demographic indicators, the experiences of other similarly sized communities in similar circumstances, and anecdotal evidence repeatedly and consistently verified by knowledgeable local professionals, the panel believes it is safe to assume that the conditions necessary to create a viable public/private housing investment—a partnership between a governmental entity and private developers—already are in place and will become even more favorable in the future.



Southgate Mall's entrance signage is on Brooks Street and reflects the quality of the mall shops; the mall itself is set back from the street.

Midtown Opportunities and Constraints

The study site's midtown location offers several opportunities for—as well as some constraints to—housing development. The opportunities include the following:

- *Adjacencies.* To maximize locational advantages by developing a residential community with pedestrian and bicycle access to UM and the downtown. Great added value can be created in a community with convenient access to major employment, learning, retail, and cultural activities, particularly in one from which residents can walk to work.
- *Community.* To create a safe, comfortable, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood environment.
- *Convenience.* To optimize convenient resident access to existing neighborhood assets—including Southgate Mall, public parks, and other activity centers—and to support transit use.
- *Housing Creation.* To create a neighborhood of needed new rental and for-sale housing units that will fit the lifestyles and meet the economic needs of a broad cross section of Missoula residents, including the elderly and those in need of affordable housing. Specialty housing types such as lofts and live/work units also should be considered.

- *Fiscal Sustainability.* To create a community that will flourish and contribute to the tax increment of the urban renewal district and thereby repay the public investment required so that development can be essentially self financing.

Constraints to midtown housing development include the following:

- *Phasing.* With the exception of the southernmost housing site south of Southgate Mall, housing development will have to await a major physical transformation of the area.
- *Substantial Front-End Investment.* Public investment—in the form of streets, landscaping, and related infrastructure—and private investment—in nonresidential buildings—will need to be put in place to change the character of the neighborhood prior to the introduction of housing. Unlike downtown, where existing infrastructure and a neighborhood character supportive of housing uses already are in place, midtown needs to be entirely transformed before housing can succeed there.
- *Place Making.* Redevelopment, especially at the scale of midtown, cannot succeed without a concerted and focused “branding” effort to reposition the neighborhood and its new residential communities. To attract new residents,

the neighborhood must have a sense of place. The place making required to market new mixed-use neighborhoods successfully involves careful and sensitive integration of known market factors, physical design, phasing, and marketing.

In summary, the housing market demand is assured because in-migration will continue and household growth will exceed population growth. The housing types in demand will change because the number of smaller households will increase.

Young professionals and empty nesters will predominate, creating demand for smaller units at all price points. This growth should be directed into downtown and midtown at higher densities than currently are found. Substantial public/private investment will be required to overcome physical constraints to residential development in midtown. Mixed-use development, as proposed by the panel, will require educating potential residents and promoting the benefits of mixed-use design for neighborhood development.

Planning and Design

URD III presents distinct planning and design challenges. The panel frames these challenges in terms of the need to capitalize on the development potential in midtown and thereby increase revenues for the city. In order to do that, the existing character of midtown must be transformed in ways that respond to the opportunities presented by current growth patterns. The city must:

- Capitalize on the economic draw and market potential of one of Missoula's largest concentrations of retail and service activities—Southgate Mall—to create optimal land use patterns in the surrounding districts that are mutually reinforcing and meet the long-term needs of Missoula's residents and visitors.
- Transform a random and often conflicting pattern of residential, commercial, and institutional uses with arbitrary boundaries and underutilized, obsolete sites and facilities into compatible districts of land uses and development types that facilitate the growth and operation of uses that respond to current and projected market demands and opportunities.
- Take advantage of the community's current and expected growth pattern. Residential and employment growth is expanding to the west. Traffic patterns are reacting to this expansion, as seen by the dramatic increase in traffic on Reserve Street almost immediately after the construction of street improvements. Traffic patterns on Brooks Street are changing. This growth pattern has made URD III the city's midtown area. The area now has the influence and opportunity to capitalize on its location by creating strong connections with UM, downtown, Southgate Mall, the fairgrounds area, and Community Medical Center and St. Patrick Hospital and Health Sciences Center. URD III's central location within the city, its proximity to these influential icons, and its accessibility to

Highways 12 (Brooks Street) and 93 (Reserve Street) requires modifying the street network to respond to new patterns of traffic and land use. A revised circulation system should establish defined and stable edges and transitions between residential neighborhoods and commercial districts, while dramatically enhancing the connectivity and visual quality of the overall street landscape.

The panel's strategic plan for the study area is founded on the use of four basic principles to create a successful urban renewal district that is active, safe, and pleasant, and that contains a diversity of uses, including housing, retail, entertainment, public space, activities, and jobs that can be woven into the neighborhood. The principles of the strategic plan are to protect residential neighborhoods, build synergy among the city's three distinct retail districts, provide for expansion of the housing market, and establish clusters of related uses. The plan should:

- *Protect residential neighborhoods* by calling for the development of low-scale transitional uses along the edges of existing neighborhoods that contain compatible uses, protect against the impacts of spillover and through traffic on residential streets, and offer services and amenities that will be useful to neighborhood residents.
- *Build synergy among the city's three distinct retail districts*—downtown, which features arts/specialty/boutique offerings; Reserve Street, with its big-box retail; and midtown, with its neighborhood and community shopping centers as well as Southgate Mall—by expanding and providing complementary commercial, service, entertainment, dining, and cultural attractions that will reinforce midtown's local and regional market draw.
- *Provide for an expanded housing market* in locations within easy walking distance of con-

The view to the south along Reserve Street shows the width of the right-of-way and recent development.



venience retail services and other retail uses. These uses, in turn, will be strengthened by regular, repeat visits from new residents/customers drawn by easy access.

- *Establish clusters of related uses* that will benefit from being located in a regionally identifiable district offering synergies among a variety of uses—such as medical services, R&D/flex-tech space, educational services, financial services, and/or corporate offices—as well as choice and convenience for their customer base.

The panel has incorporated these guiding principles into its proposed strategic land use and design plan. This plan provides for specific development opportunities, which are discussed below according to land use category.

Residential Development

The panel identified certain objectives related to residential land uses in Midtown Missoula. These objectives include the need for significant infrastructure upgrades, the need to permit home businesses in live/work units, and the need to protect the edges of existing neighborhoods from the incursion of incompatible land uses.

The city should make targeted infrastructure upgrades to streets, curbs, sidewalks, drainage, fire hydrants, and recreational space in the Franklin

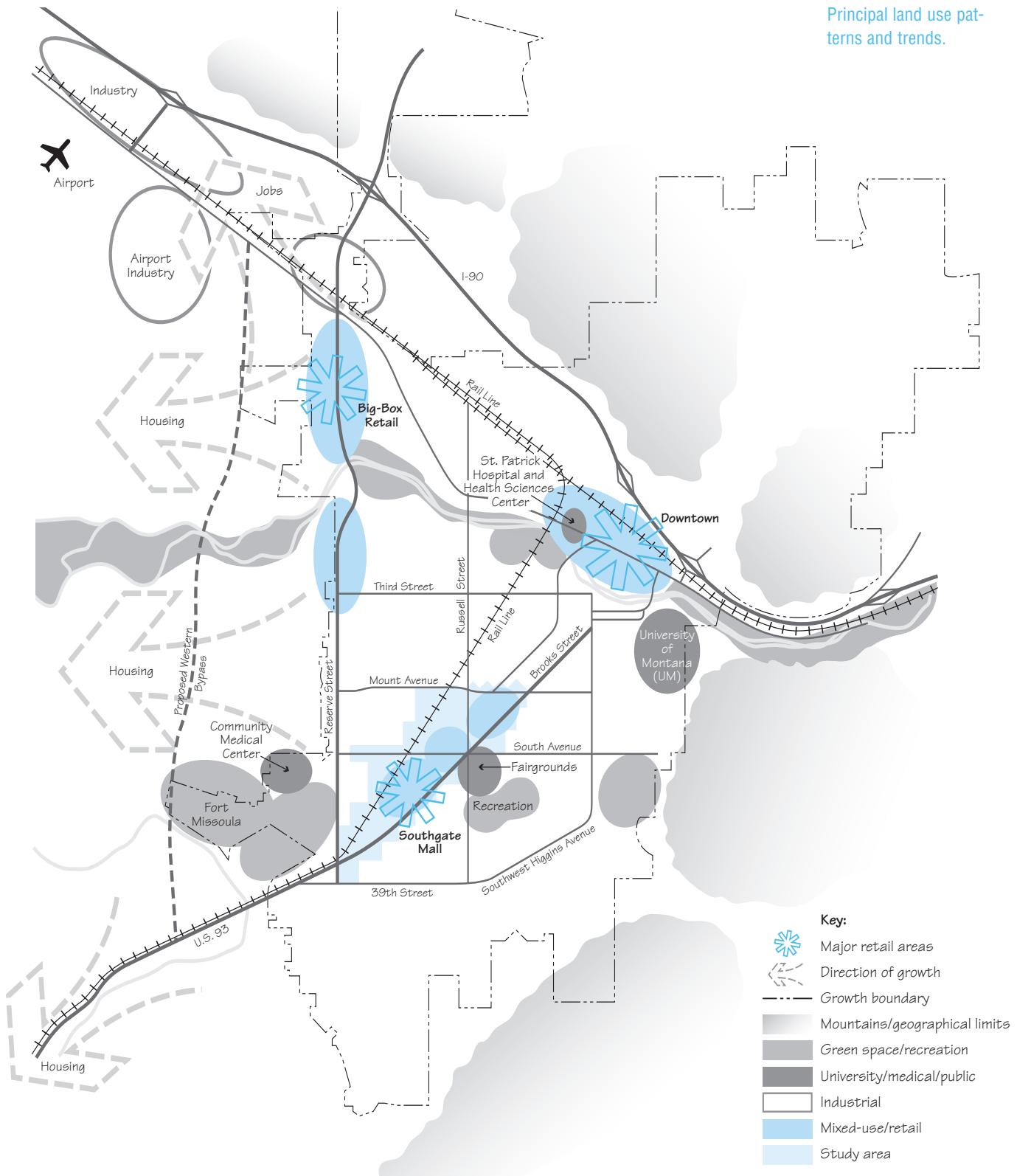
to the Fort neighborhood south of South Avenue and west of the rail line. Community development block grant funds can be used to make these improvements without assessing homeowners—an important consideration in this low- to moderate-income neighborhood. Because the area shares a boundary with Southgate Mall, its long-term stabilization is vital to ensuring economic growth around the mall.

The city also needs to fundamentally rethink its land use regulations as they apply to cottage industries. Instead of making these acceptable non-conforming uses and discouraging improvements, the panel suggests that these uses be legalized, subject to performance standards. The panel therefore endorses the concept of live/work units in scale with the neighborhoods within which these units would be located.

Finally, the city must address the fragile and rather exposed edges of the portion of the Franklin to the Fort neighborhood that lies immediately to the west of Southgate Mall along the rail line. A band of live/work loft units or a mix of office and residential uses along South Avenue could provide a transitional-use edge for this neighborhood, which currently is undergoing change.

A discussion of various residential opportunities by location follows, and includes a description of the general characteristics of each location.

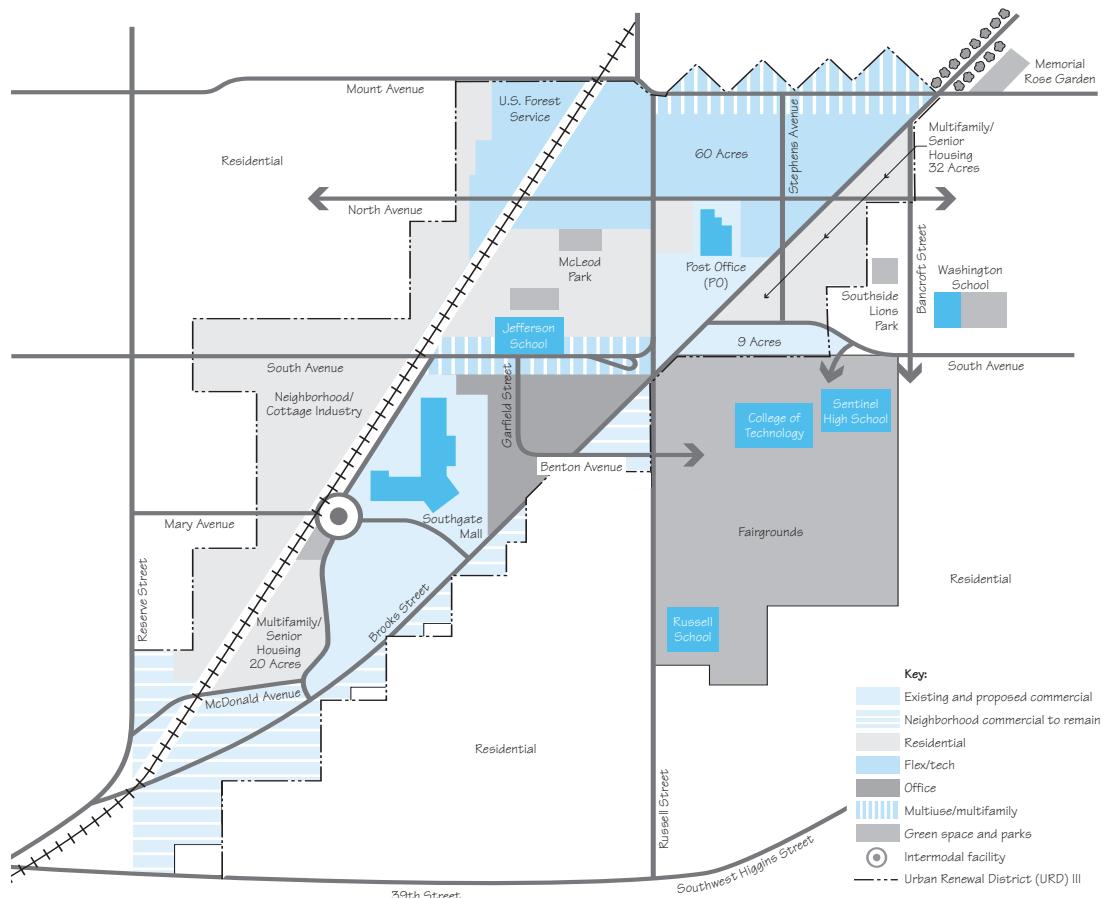
Principal land use patterns and trends.



Strategic plan principles
(phasing).



Land use areas.



Existing and Proposed Residential Neighborhoods

It is important to define and safeguard the existing neighborhoods in URD III by planning for compatible transitional uses along their edges. One appropriate strategy would be to locate multifamily units on the perimeter and preserve the single-family character of the interior. This arrangement also would allow cottage industries to remain.

South Avenue between Russell Street and the Rail Line

Multifamily and office uses (and, possibly, live/work units) could be provided along both sides of South Avenue in this approximately six-block area, which could create a relationship with the flex-tech district to the south. On the north side of the street, the maximum building height should be two stories; on the south side, it should be three to four stories. On-street parking for commercial uses and parking for residents at the rear of the lots should be provided. The streetscape should be defined by the addition of appropriate sidewalks, planting, lighting, and signage. The area's architectural character should be more residential in scale; design guidelines and controls should be set for building heights, materials, roof types, and the like.

Mount Avenue

The panel proposes the development of another mixed-use neighborhood along the north and south

sides of Mount Avenue, with neighborhood-oriented commercial space on the ground floor below two stories of rental or for-sale multifamily housing. Some units could be made available to the university population. The parking, streetscape, and design guidelines proposed for South Avenue also should be followed here.

North of the Fairgrounds/East of Brooks Street

At this location—north of the proposed realignment of South Avenue—the panel recommends the development of multifamily housing that includes some housing for seniors. If developed at a density of 20 units per acre, this approximately 32-acre site could accommodate about 640 units.

A number of factors—including strong demand for housing, the desirability of the east side of Brooks Street because of its proximity to high-quality neighborhoods, and the lack of demand for additional retail space—make this a prime location for residential uses. Generous setbacks with landscaped buffers and convenient access to neighborhood services across the street add to the area's desirability. Opportunities exist for housing for seniors, assisted-living facilities, and market-rate multifamily units, as well as for more upscale condominium units. The area also will enjoy the advantage of proximity to new jobs in the proposed R&D/business park, as well as to the university and downtown employment centers. Small amounts of service retail space—including med-



The site for the proposed Missoula Commons mixed-use development contains an irrigation ditch running north/south and this power line, which runs east/west across the property.



ical offices and professional services—also might be incorporated along South Avenue east of Brooks Street to serve residents and create pedestrian activity.

South of Southgate Mall

The final major residential opportunity exists here, as a component of a major mixed-use development containing retail, cultural, entertainment, and dining establishments. This area also could appeal to those seeking convenient access to a more urban and active lifestyle with a full complement of services. Condominiums may be offered for empty nesters looking for affordable homes adjacent to an urban center.

Office and Flex-Tech Space

URD III is ripe for community-related office space. This might include a concentration of financial and insurance services that expands upon the existing banks and mortgage companies located in and around the study area.

Flex-tech space, as mentioned previously, is another appropriate use that should be allocated space in midtown. The area could accommodate the relocation of the UM College of Technology, thus maintaining its proximity to the university's main campus and providing additional space.

The panel also recommends that the U.S. Forest Service yard relocate to a site adjacent to other

Forest Service activities, either near its Fort Missoula offices or its offices by the airport. The Forest Service uses this site primarily to store vehicles and fire-fighting equipment, a function that contributes little to the economic vitality of the surroundings and creates some conflicts with adjacent neighborhoods. While the Forest Service needs storage space, this space does not have to be located in midtown; it may even be advantageous to consolidate these services elsewhere.

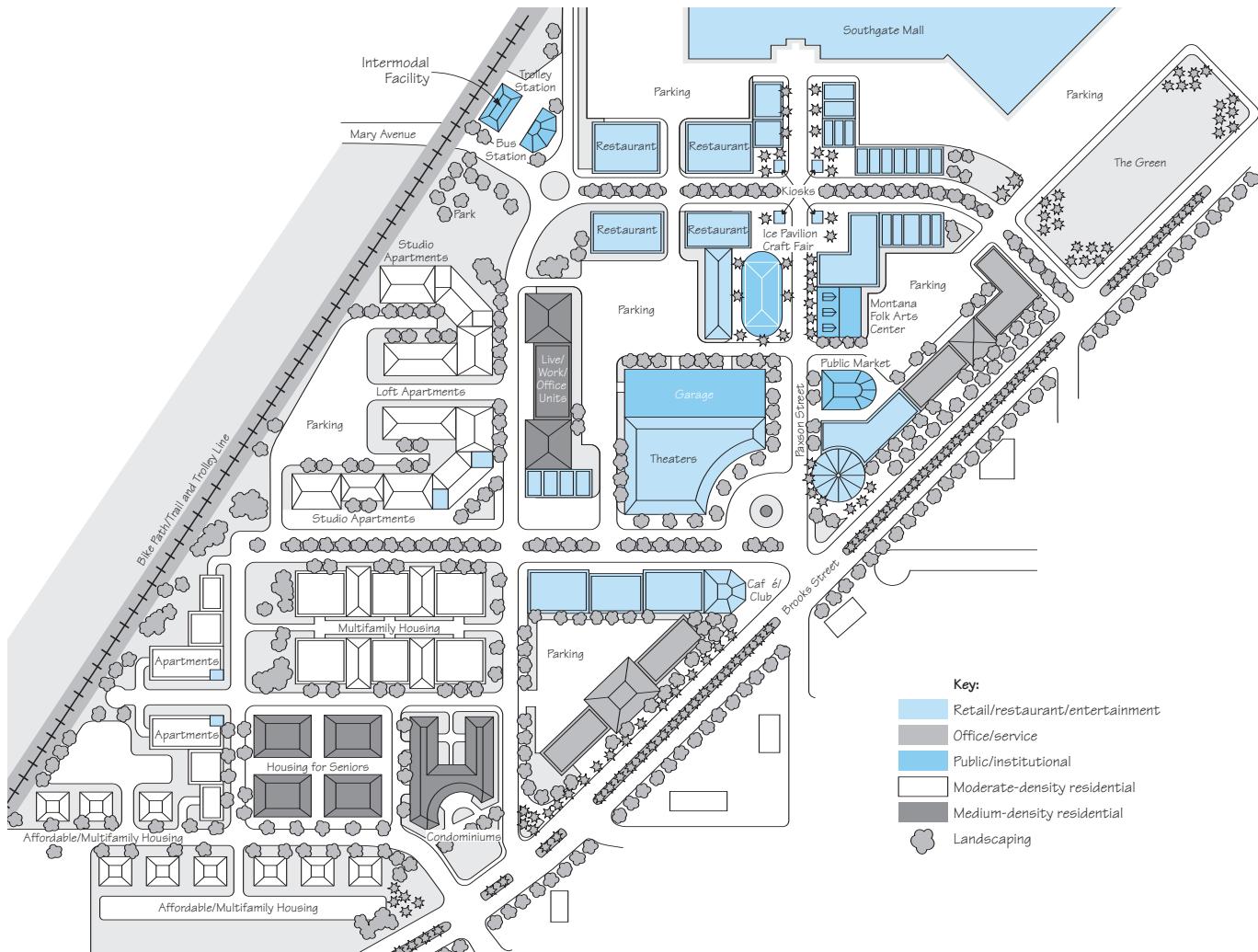
Other Commercial Development

The following discussion of various commercial opportunities by location includes a description of the general characteristics of each type of use.

Missoula Commons

The panel's premier development proposal is for the redevelopment site in the commercial core area south of Southgate Mall, which it calls Missoula Commons. The panel has prepared a detailed site plan for this area to illustrate the range of services recommended and the potential linkages among these land uses. The panel envisions an extensive mix of uses, including retail and entertainment establishments and restaurants. This is where the panel believes the most intense development in Midtown Missoula should occur.

The panel proposes the addition of approximately 150,000 square feet of new retail space to build on the mall's current tenant mix. Other commercial



facilities that should be considered for this site include an eight-screen, 1,600-seat movie theater; a bookstore; coffee shops, bars, and restaurants, including an Olive Garden, P.F. Chang's China Bistro, or a similar-quality chain; a recreational skating rink; entertainment retail, such as a Game-Works amusement center, a major record/CD store, or a similar use; a folk art center; an indoor, year-round public market, which should be linked operationally to the downtown Missoula Farmers' Market; live/work units, such as those with offices for interior designers, architects, and others, as a transition to residential uses; a mix of market-rate and affordable multifamily housing; and at least one upscale condominium building.

The panel believes that a trolley connection to this development that utilizes the existing rail tracks is feasible, and recommends a "push me-pull you" type of system, in which trolleys do not need to turn around to change direction. The trolley would be adjacent to the proposed intermodal facility.

Post Office Area

Revitalized neighborhood commercial development should take place near the U.S. Post Office, which could serve as the focal point for an expansion of neighborhood convenience services. The uses currently housed at Tremper's Shopping Center could be expanded and the building enhanced. Existing services include a drugstore, breakfast shop, hardware store, grocery, and dry cleaner.

Missoula Commons:
a center for midtown.

The panel recommends that trolley service be added along the Bitterroot Branch line of the Montana Rail Link, to connect midtown with downtown. The existing—but non-continuous—pedestrian trail can be seen on the west (left) side of the rail line; the land to the east (right) is the proposed Missoula Commons site.



This building should be linked, both physically and visually, to the post office building.

East Side of Brooks Street

The existing commercial services along the east side of the Brooks Street corridor should be retained. As market conditions begin to drive redevelopment in this area, improvements should be required to meet design guidelines for architecture and streetscape.

North of the Fairgrounds/East of Brooks Street

A Courtyard by Marriott or similar type of hotel and conference facility should be considered for the area immediately north of the fairgrounds and just south of the realigned South Avenue. Market conditions should support a 200- to 300-room hotel with 8,000 square feet of conference center/meeting space. An extension of Stephens Avenue farther south could make a strong connection to the fairgrounds and adjacent park space.

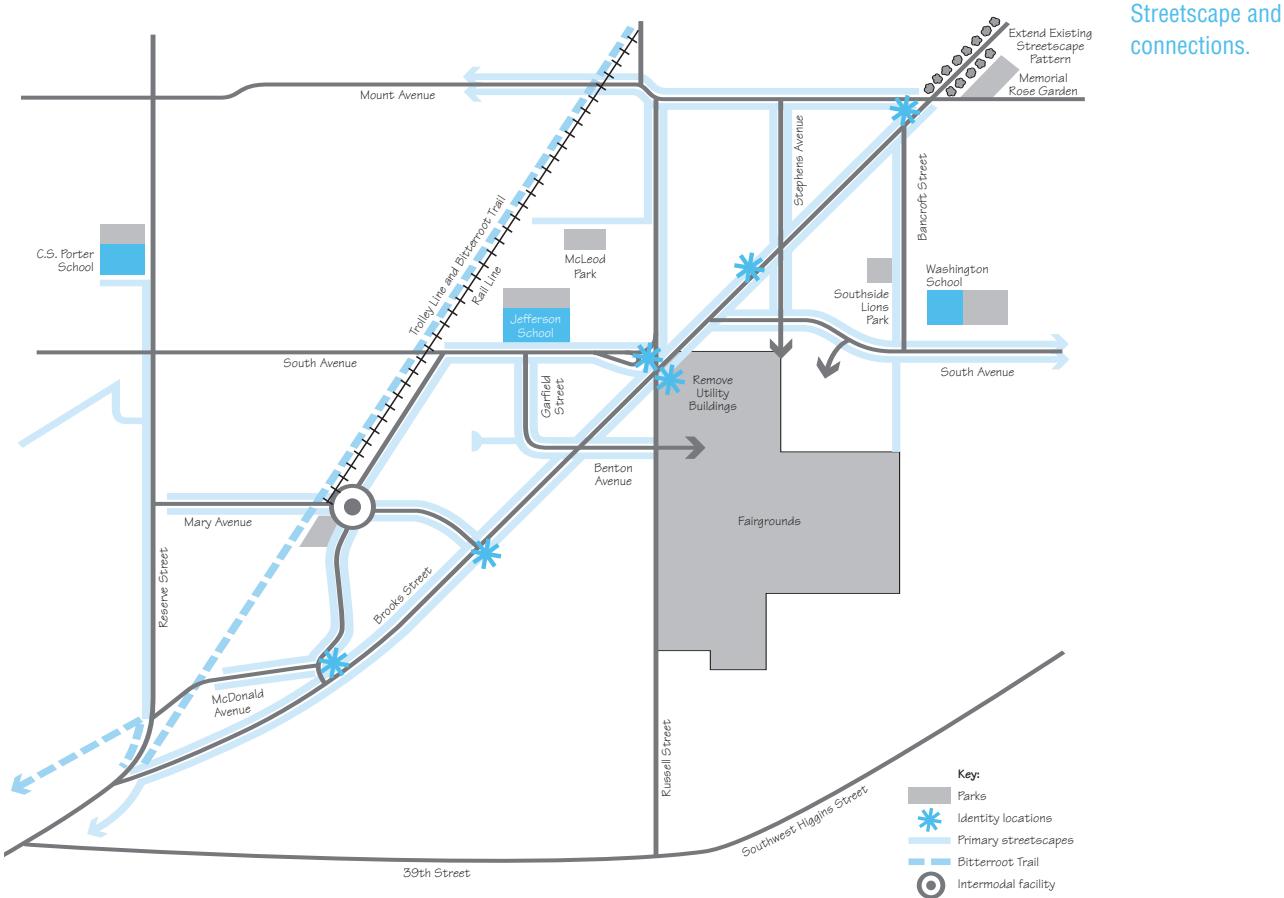
Streetscape/Pedestrian Circulation

The panel identified a number of streetscape design objectives it deemed integral to the successful redevelopment of Midtown Missoula. These objectives include the following:

- Allow for the safe and efficient movement of traffic;

- Make the pedestrian experience safe, convenient, and comfortable, by providing safe crossings, shade trees, and connections throughout midtown to schools, the fairgrounds, retail establishments, parks, transit, and the Bitterroot Trail;
- Provide a design that represents the midtown district's unique identity as well as the character of the city and the region;
- Protect and enhance views;
- Incorporate street parking to calm traffic and create a more appealing and usable pedestrian environment;
- Protect and enhance neighborhood character;
- Create open-space areas where people can gather; and
- Buffer neighborhoods and provide transitional uses between residential and commercial areas.

The panel maintains that wide streets and deep setbacks make it virtually impossible to achieve these design objectives and establish the type of enclosed space and comfortable pedestrian environment that characterizes the best of Missoula's streets. One example of good design is the northern section of Brooks Street, from Higgins Street to Mount Avenue, which features two travel lanes and a mature canopy of maples that provides



a strong sense of enclosure and frames the views toward the mountains. This section of the street also has continuous and pleasant sidewalks that allow easy pedestrian movement. Brooks Street has no character along the stretch that extends from Higgins to Reserve streets.

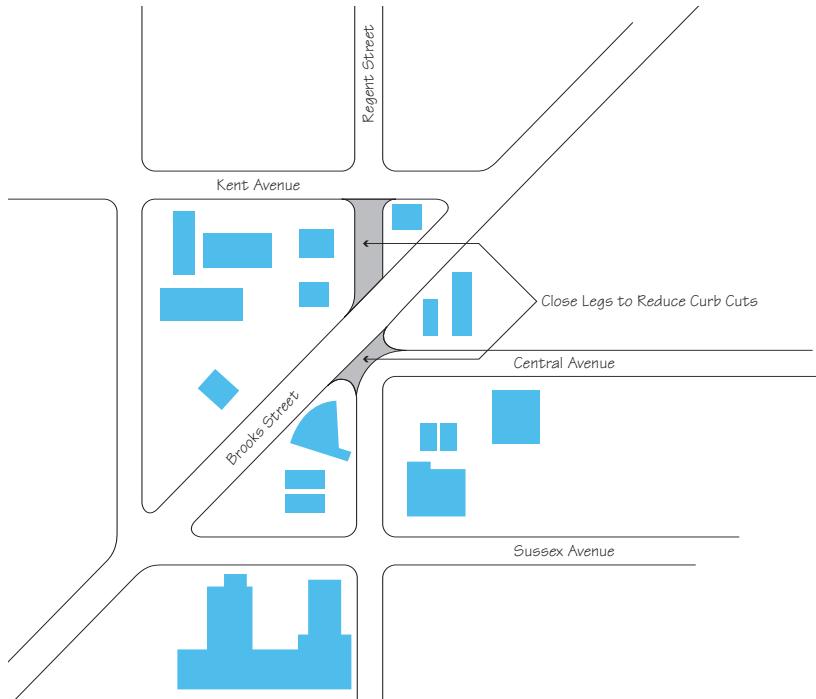
Actions that can improve the conditions along specific roadways are discussed below, beginning with suggested improvements to specific parts of Brooks Street.

Brooks Street from Mount Avenue to Paxson Street

The northern section of Brooks Street, which extends from Mount Avenue south to Paxson Street, contains four travel lanes with a concrete/asphalt median and a significant number of left-turn lanes that chop the median into small segments. The width of the right-of-way (ROW) in this section requires the city to negotiate the sidewalk design

with adjacent businesses. These negotiations have met with some, although inconsistent, success, leaving gaps in the sidewalk. The panel recommends that the following improvements be made along this part of Brooks Street:

- Extend the enclosed streetscape character of the Rose Park neighborhood south along Brooks Street.
- Plant maple trees on a center median to minimize the scale of the ROW and reflect a more desirable character. Consider using specialty plantings to indicate and emphasize intersections. Planting this median should be the first-priority improvement for this area, and will provide some initial momentum for street improvements throughout the midtown area.
- Include sculpture or uniquely designed icons to support an identity for Midtown Missoula. An



Example of Brooks Street improvements: reducing curb cuts.

excellent example of this is the sculpture of the horse and rider at the university.

- The Brooks/South/Russell intersection could provide a strong visual connection or “window” into the fairgrounds. A link between the Brooks Street area and the fairgrounds/park should be created and respected. This corner, or another place slightly to the east along South Street, would be a good place for a primary access point that could draw pedestrians into the fairgrounds/park site.
- Require street parking and add a seven-foot-wide planting area and a sidewalk that is at least six feet wide to the ROW by reducing the width of the driving lanes.
- Replace the tall “cobra head” lights along Brooks Street from Mount Avenue to South Avenue with pedestrian-scale lighting that also will be less obtrusive to residents of adjacent neighborhoods.
- Consolidate access points. Identify desired access points and require the use of easements between properties to access parking areas.

- Encourage shared parking where appropriate. Consider reducing the parking requirement in the land use code to require only the minimum and reasonable number of parking spaces and encourage bus and trolley ridership. This likely will result in the availability of more land for higher and better uses than parking, and will encourage improvements and redevelopment.
- Carve “bulb-out” left turn lanes out of the planted medians to create “refuge” areas for turning cars that will keep them from blocking pedestrian crossings, and highlight the crossing locations with pavement markings.
- Consider closing unnecessary legs of streets that intersect Brooks Street at an angle, to recapture poorly used space while maintaining functional and convenient access to businesses. One possibility would be to close the leg of Regent Street between Kent Avenue and Brooks Street, thus eliminating an unnecessary access point. The owner of an adjacent property could initiate this street-closing process and purchase the abandoned ROW for potential expansion.

Brooks Street from Paxson Street to Reserve Street

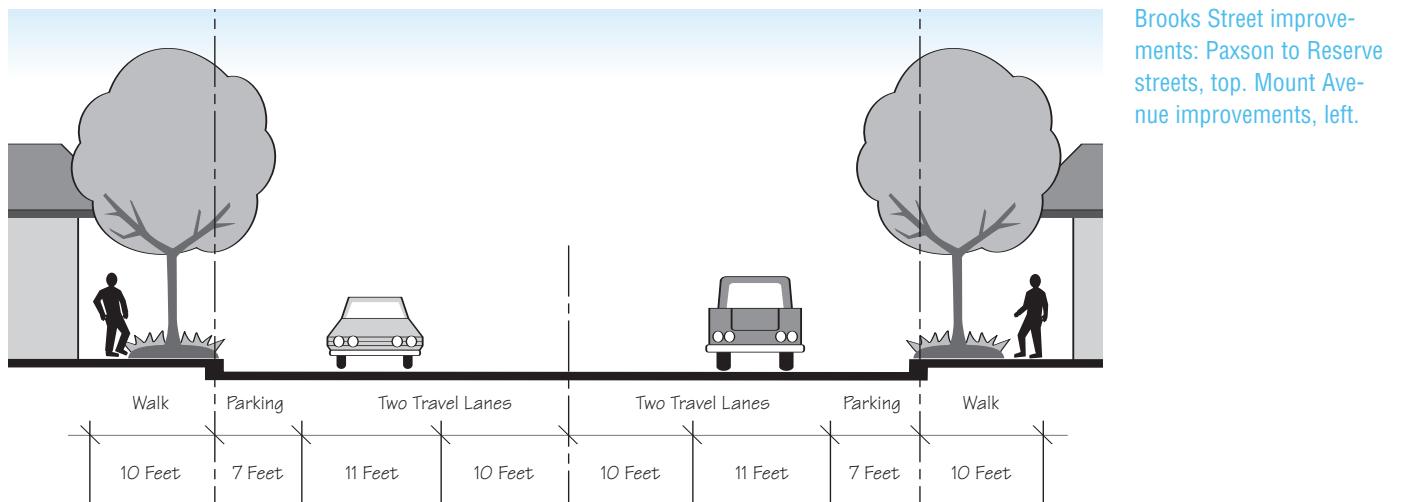
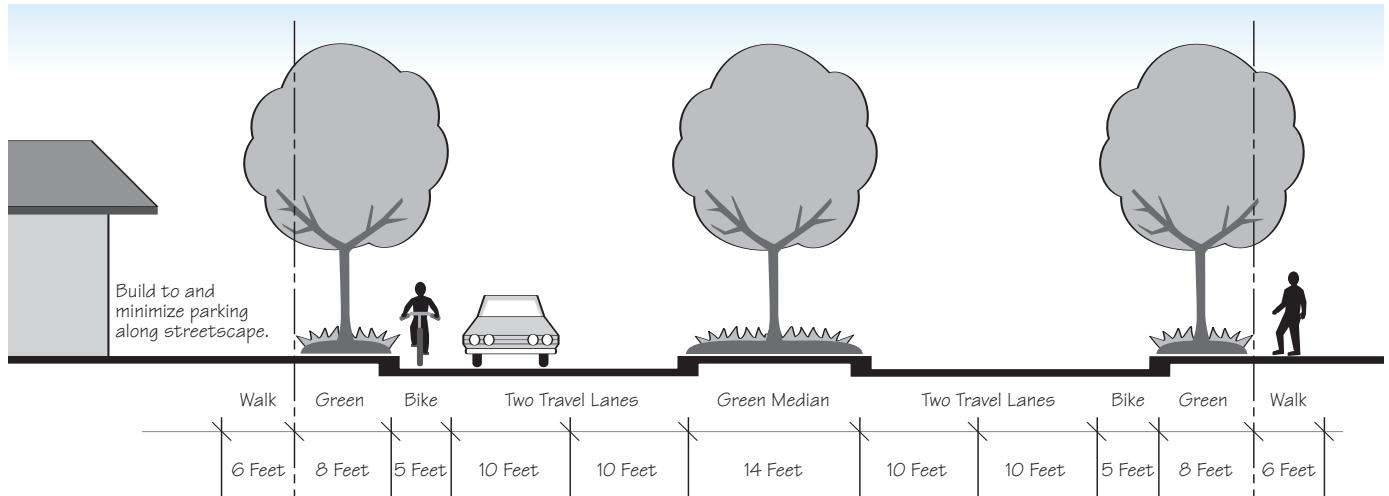
The following improvements should be made to this part of Brooks Street:

- Encourage more traffic from Brooks Street to use Reserve Street.
- As future development occurs, redesign this part of Brooks Street to include median landscaping, two vehicular lanes in each direction, narrower—ten-foot-wide—driving lanes, five-foot-wide bike lanes on each side of the street, a planting strip that is at least seven feet wide, sidewalks that are at least six feet wide, left-turn median cutouts at intersections, and maple and/or ash trees planted at 20- to 30-foot intervals.

Mount and South Avenues

The panel recommends the following improvements to these two streets:

- Provide two travel lanes in each direction, with parking on both sides where it can be accommodated.



dated within a reasonable ROW. This will result in a 70-foot-wide ROW.

- To reduce the ROW needs, stagger on-street parking on alternating blocks.
- Consolidate access points to minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles and to improve traffic flow.
- Provide on-street parking for commercial uses; parking for residents should be located behind the buildings, at a ratio of roughly one space per bedroom.

The street sections and plans presented here provide the pictures and tell the story of how to make Midtown Missoula a reality. It should be apparent from these illustrations that major improvements can be accomplished with relatively modest realignment and streetscaping. These modifications will provide the framework that will be crucial to support redevelopment and create a sense of place in this part of the city. Completing them should be an initial priority.

Transportation

Like anywhere in the West, the preferred mode of transportation in Missoula is driving. Although driving gets a bad rap, it continues to be the most comfortable and convenient way for people to get around. Choosing to drive is a rational response to the need to get to work, to transport kids to school and soccer games, to shop, to visit friends. Some people always will drive, and for good reasons. Responsible transportation planning requires that one recognize this preferred mode of travel while also accepting the need to offer convenient and attractive alternatives.

Missoula Today

The driving experience in Missoula today is degrading. Again, this is a familiar pattern in the West. Many cities the size of Missoula were small towns 20 years ago. The rapid influx of people and/or activity centers quickly overwhelms the historic roadway system, and roadway planning and construction frequently lag behind demand. As more people move into an area, the roadway system must grow and adapt to accommodate changing demand and driving patterns. Otherwise, the system breaks down. Cities and towns will always have traffic. But burdensome traffic congestion does not have to be accepted. In order to determine what to do about congestion, one must first understand what is causing it.

Traffic congestion is a function of many factors, not just “too many cars.” Congestion can be caused by insufficient roadway capacity, poorly designed intersections, and signalization that does not function properly, as well as by other factors discussed below.

Roadway Capacity

Roadway capacity, in its most basic form, is the number of cars that can travel safely along a road at a given speed. With open roads and no friction

factors, a travel lane can carry up to about 2,700 vehicles an hour at 60 or more miles per hour. Except on long freeway sections, these conditions rarely exist. Other factors frequently reduce roadway capacity.

Intersections

Most drivers know that intersections create congestion. At any intersection of two or more roads, someone has to stop, or at least slow down. The larger the intersection, the greater the number of conflicts, and the longer each driver is delayed. Most large intersections with many conflicting movements and high traffic volumes are signalized.

Signals

Signals serve a very important function. They sort out conflicting traffic movement by letting everybody “have their turn,” thereby improving safety and reducing delays. At a certain point, however, traffic flow breaks down even at signalized intersections. As it starts to break down, congestion increases exponentially.

Computerized traffic signal systems have greatly increased traffic capacity along signalized corridors in the past 20 years. When signals are fully actuated—as field adjustments are made in response to changing traffic conditions—and integrated—when they work as a system—traffic flows smoothly. Many cities have managed to absorb startlingly high increases in the amount of traffic, primarily by improving their signal systems.

One of the biggest causes of traffic congestion in rapidly developing areas is the installation of one or two signals at large intersections at the end of long stretches of road with high ambient speeds. The intersection at Reserve Street and Mount Avenue is a perfect example of this. The long distance between Brooks Street and Mount Avenue allows drivers to reach speeds of more than 50 miles per hour. Then they all come to a crashing

halt at Mount Avenue. This radical difference in speed creates a backward wave of stopped cars during busy times, resulting in long queues that cannot clear the intersection in a single signal cycle.

The conflicts at the Brooks/South/Russell intersection are caused by the highly complicated pattern of movement there. The confluence of cars traveling in six different directions, plus some that are attempting to turn, creates an intersection that a signal simply cannot sort out during peak times. This is a key issue for Missoulians, and one that the panel considered in detail.

Transit

Missoula enjoys a great transit system. Mountain Line carries more than 730,000 passengers a year, at a very low platform hour rate (the cost to operate one bus for one hour). Its vehicles are attractive, clean, and pleasant to ride. The routes provide sensible service and are considerate of demand levels and travel needs. The fare box return is quite high for a transit system of any size. Capturing 4 percent of daily trips, this is an extremely successful small city transit system.

The Mountain Line bus system should be supported and updated as needed. When demand increases, the system should expand accordingly. Buses represent one of the most economical options to driving, both from a capital cost standpoint and an operating and maintenance (O&M) cost standpoint. Buses can be added when and where they are needed. Major capital investments generally are limited to vehicle purchases, and buses can be moved. When demand changes, bus routes can change accordingly. Unfortunately, however, the current system cannot provide good service along Brooks Street because the street has no places for buses to stop along it.

Pedestrians

A lot of people walk in Missoula, primarily downtown and around the university. Everyone is a pedestrian at some time during the day, even if just when they walk from the front door to the car or from the car to the office. Yet urban areas often are lacking in pedestrian investments. The downtown and university areas offer pedestrian conveniences. The midtown area does not.

All pedestrians need safe, comfortable facilities. These include wide sidewalks that offer a sense of separation from vehicular traffic and a pleasant atmosphere for walking, with trees and other vegetation, interesting sites along the way, and weather protection in certain places. These types of improvements will be a key component in redeveloping midtown.

Bicyclists

The panel observed an appreciable level of bicycle activity in Missoula, and some parts of the city have great cycling facilities. In general, there are two types of bike riders: commuters—including many students—and recreational riders. Although both groups deserve specialized facilities, commuters/habitual riders will accept less pleasant conditions; for example, they will ride in the road in heavier traffic than recreational riders. The existing system should be enhanced and expanded to encourage more people to travel by bicycle.

Missoula Tomorrow

Congestion is increasing and will continue to increase as the population grows. Traffic grows every year even if no new people arrive, because people tend to drive a little more and a little farther all the time. Pretending people will not drive is an unreasonable assumption. Conditions would have to reach a disaster point before significant numbers of people will be forced out of their cars. Yet some people sometimes will use alternative forms of transportation if they are convenient, comfortable, safe, inexpensive, and enjoyable.

The panel's proposed transportation plan for URD III provides lots of options to the car. However, private vehicular travel will remain the most important mode of travel for Missoula. To prepare to cope with future traffic demand, it is helpful to look at what is creating traffic congestion now and what can alleviate it in the future.

What Is Missing: North/South Connections

Brooks Street, Reserve Street, and 39th Street/Southwest Higgins Avenue carry high daily volumes of traffic. Since traffic demand along the north/south axis will continue to grow, future transportation plans need to provide some additional north/south capacity.

Land is still available for development along Reserve Street; this property is located on the east side of the street.



The panel's plan for Midtown Missoula includes a new road parallel to the railroad, on its east side. This road would provide key access into and through the area. It also would remove some traffic demand from Brooks Street, allowing that road to absorb future demand from outside sources.

The panel recommends that another north/south corridor be provided in the future and suggests that it be located west of Reserve Street. This would help absorb future traffic demand as the city and surrounding areas continue to grow. The panel estimates the need for about 13,000 housing units in Missoula County by 2025, and another 8,500 south of Missoula in Ravalli County. The addition of about 30,000 new jobs will result in demand for additional travel corridors. Based on current travel and land use patterns, much of the demand will be for north/south routes.

What Is Missing: East/West Connections

Missoula already suffers from a lack of east/west connections. In fact, today it really has only one, South Avenue. The proposed solution to the Brooks/South/Russell intersection problem—which calls for South Avenue to end in a cul-de-sac just west of the intersection—would further restrict east/west connections. The panel instead

proposes strengthening existing east/west connections and creating new ones.

Without better east/west connections, Missoula neighborhoods will experience more cut-through traffic. This is the number-one complaint heard by transportation professionals at public meetings all over the United States. It is a real problem and, unfortunately, is largely created by a lack of leadership and vision on the part of local authorities, who often fail to deal proactively with traffic demand issues.

Missoula has a lot of good resources for traffic planning and solutions. The city's citizens and planners will need strong leadership and political backing to make things happen. To be frank, some people will be upset about the new connections. Someone will be affected by each connection. But without the connections, *everyone* will be affected and the city will strangle on its own traffic.

The panel's specific recommendations for improving east/west travel are to:

- Create a new connection along Mary Street;
- Create a new connection along Kensington and Strand streets;

The roundabout solution.



- Connect the Southgate Mall area to McDonald Avenue;
- Improve the 14th Street/Mount Avenue connection; and
- Reconsider the planned solution to the Brooks/South/Russell intersection problem and, instead, construct a modern roundabout to preserve this vital east/west connection.

A Modern Roundabout

A modern roundabout is not a traffic circle. Roundabouts allow vehicles to join the traffic stream by slowing and entering on an angle. All drivers yield to traffic in the roundabout, but few have to stop. Used for decades in Europe and Asia, roundabouts have become more common in the United States in the past decade. Initially, most communities are reluctant to adopt roundabouts. People are concerned about how drivers

will behave at roundabouts, and about the amount of land they require.

But roundabouts typically are built at intersections that already take up huge expanses of asphalt because of the volume and complexity of the traffic there. Rather than a sea of asphalt, the roundabout is primarily an attractively landscaped or otherwise decorated island of land surrounded by a few lanes of traffic. And U.S. drivers have proven over and over their ability to negotiate roundabouts. While special planning is needed to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, who should be separated slightly from the flow of vehicular traffic, and special attention needs to be paid to signals up and downstream from the roundabout intersection, these issues are not difficult to address.

In Vail, Colorado, roundabouts were installed to sort out traffic at freeway on/off ramps. The old ramp system simply did not work; the large num-

bers of vehicles traveling to the ski area created long delays, and forcing drivers to stop and start in poor weather conditions worsened matters. The roundabouts have been hugely successful and popular, and now carry as many as 50,000 vehicles per day. In Avon, Colorado, another busy ski-area town located near Vail, roundabouts also have been installed, with similar success. The landscaping and/or public art at these roundabouts have made them popular places.

Roundabouts are especially useful at intersections that experience traffic approaching from more than four directions, volumes that exceed 6,000 to 7,000 cars in peak hours, and a lot of conflicting traffic, particularly lots of demand for turns. Signalized intersections simply break down under these conditions, as Missoulians well know.

Roundabouts do more than help traffic flow. As a central point in the transportation system, they provide an opportunity for place making. Their center islands are perfect sites for public art, especially sculptures. Roundabouts can become city landmarks.

A roundabout is a solution to a significant traffic problem. But, more importantly for Missoula, a roundabout at the critical Brooks/South/Russell crossroads would reinforce the importance of the investment the community is making there. It could become a place unto itself, an important landmark in an important part of the city, Midtown Missoula.

An Integrated Signal System

The problems along Reserve Street already have been discussed, as have those at the Brooks/South/Russell intersection. Additional signals will be needed along both routes to help facilitate a smoother and slower flow of traffic. Signals on Brooks Street need to be carefully planned to allow traffic to be monitored along the route. The panel is proposing the creation of a new mixed-use environment, and high-speed traffic is not appropriate in such an environment, though moderate speeds are. Signal spacing needs to be considered near the roundabout; if signals are located too close to it, the roundabout will not function correctly. Finally, signals along all streets should be

fully integrated to allow traffic to flow smoothly and consistently.

An Intermodal Facility and a Trolley

The panel's Midtown Missoula proposal adds a new mode of travel to Missoula—actually, an old one—and creates a new intermodal facility in midtown. Here, pedestrians could wait for buses or the trolley in comfort while they enjoy the activity near the proposed folk art center and ice center. Bicyclists could stop and get something to eat or drink, or shop at the public market. Travelers could transfer from buses to continue north on the trolley to downtown. Some might attend a minor league baseball game, then ride the trolley to midtown to shop or eat.

The panel recommends the addition of a small-scale trolley system that would run from the intermodal facility to downtown along the existing rail track. With the track already in place, capital investments would be minimal. The rail line currently is used to carry cargo traffic, but with only a few cargo trains a week, it has plenty of unused capacity. Of course, any such system would require coordination and arrangements with the rail owner. The system would operate at low speeds—with a top speed of about 35 miles per hour—so track conditions should not be an issue.

The proposed plan would create a major activity center in Missoula Commons at the south end of the system. Terminating the route at the north end, near downtown, would give riders access to some residential areas, the softball fields and the future minor league stadium, and parts of the urban core.

Given the number of people projected to live or work within a reasonable walking distance of the intermodal facility, and the level of activity at the other end of the line, about 3,000 people per day could be expected to use the trolley. With a short line—about 2.7 miles—and limited stops—only four, including the terminal stations—this would be a very efficient trolley line. The short roundtrip time—about seven minutes—means the system could operate on ten-minute headways. This would require the construction of a passing section somewhere along the route, most likely at one of the intermediate stops. With a trolley leaving

every ten minutes and a linear track, a schedule would not be needed. This will greatly increase the number of people who will use the system.

The city, the MRA, or the transit authority could purchase refurbished cars—which are quite popular—at reasonable prices, or have new, custom cars constructed. Taking into account capital investments and O&M costs, the system could come close to paying for itself by charging \$1.50 a ride. This may seem like a high fare, but these types of systems often are able to garner higher fares than regular bus or rail systems. The convenience, comfort, and enjoyable ride—views along the rail line are fantastic—will encourage riders to accept a relatively higher fare.

Like the roundabout, the trolley would serve more than a transportation function. It could become a well-known feature of the city, like Seattle's monorail, the cable cars in San Francisco, Portland's streetcar, and the Mud Island cable system in Memphis. These systems are popular tourist attractions as well as convenient ways to get around.

Other Transportation Issues

Additional issues relating to signage, travel speed, parking, and truck traffic and deliveries all will affect the environment for mixed-use development in Midtown Missoula. Each of these issues requires attention.

Signage. The city should pay special attention to creating distinctive signage for Midtown Missoula. The existing signs are unattractive, and the roadway signage is confusing. Clear, simple information about roadways and attractions will help traffic flow throughout the area.

Traffic Speeds. Speeds along Brooks, Reserve, and other streets should be reduced. This can be accomplished through design, education, and enforcement. For example, speed limits should be prominently posted and enforced. The best speed enforcement programs include placing officers in key locations over several days or weeks. This reminds drivers that speeding will not be tolerated. High-speed travel is not appropriate in Midtown Missoula.

Parking. The land uses proposed in the panel's recommended plan will result in increased parking demand. Parking demand is a function of both activity level and dwell time—how long people leave their cars in one place. The mixed-use approach allows for some shared parking. People who live in the area may be able to walk to work or other activities and leave their cars at home. Those eating out can leave their cars in the same lot while they attend a movie before or after dinner. Office space sometimes can share parking with retail space, as their peak demand times tend to be different.

Parking should be provided at market demand levels. General office buildings typically need 3.5 to 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet; this can be adjusted for some transit use, walking, and biking. That also allows for visitor parking. But medical office buildings can require more parking, since demand comes from doctors, staff, and patients. True R&D space has a lower parking demand than office space, since fewer people typically occupy a comparable amount of research/lab/work space.

Adequate residential parking should be provided. Many jurisdictions make the mistake of requiring too little parking for multifamily developments. Most one-bedroom units have two residents, not one. And most multifamily dwellers own the same number of cars as homeowners. However, many new one-bedroom or efficiency units will be occupied by single, older women, and one parking space will be enough for these units. Thus bedroom count is more relevant than a one-size-fits-all assumption of one or 1.5 spaces per unit.

Parking demand for movie theaters typically is less than projected. Cinemas and office buildings often can share parking spaces, since few moviegoers attend movies before 7:00 p.m. The parking code should be modified, as needed, to allow for and encourage shared parking facilities.

Trucks and Deliveries. Finally, provisions need to be made for truck traffic and deliveries. Most businesses require some type of deliveries, either from small vans or large trucks. Truck loading facilities should be located at the rear of buildings whenever possible. Property owners with tight sites can work with delivery companies and allow

them to use parking lots for deliveries, preferably in off hours.

The panel has attempted to consider all of the many issues associated with mixed-use development and to incorporate transportation solutions, especially since improvements to Brooks Street, in particular, will have a significant impact on the area. It has focused its efforts on providing the

necessary linkages among the proposed land uses in an environment that is convenient and efficient for all users. The panel believes that Midtown Missoula can be transformed into a distinctive place that rivals other successfully developed parts of the city.

Development Strategies

The redevelopment process in URD III will be driven by a series of goals cited by the Missoula Redevelopment Agency (MRA) in the creation of the redevelopment district, which is located in what has become the center of the city of Missoula. These goals include the following:

- The preservation and buffering of existing neighborhoods;
- The creation of pedestrian-friendly streets;
- Mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development that will extend the success of the downtown area into midtown; and
- The development of a diverse mix of housing, shopping, and employment uses that better serves the community and, in particular, provides a higher quality of life for residents of the area and surrounding neighborhoods.

Before it implements such a program of uses, however, the MRA must consider some global development issues. It must understand all the criteria necessary to create a successful mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environment.

Requirements for Mixed-Use Development

This section discusses the components of mixed-use development (MXD) and the criteria that are essential to its success. The panel presents these criteria from a planning/design perspective as well as from the retailer's and the retail investor's perspectives.

Land Use Components

Mixed-use development is the juxtaposition of three or more revenue-producing uses in a single building or on a single site, in a way that is mutually beneficial to each use and to the surrounding community. Uses can be mixed horizontally or

vertically. A horizontal MXD combines different uses next to each other, while a vertical MXD stacks them atop one another in a single structure. Mixed-use development does not need to be high density, and it can be accomplished at a scale that is appropriate to each project's individual context.

Many MXDs combine residential with retail and/or office uses. The basic factors that drive residential MXDs are the proximity to amenities and the convenience of a limited commute and access to services. As density rises, residents trade private outdoor space for public amenities such as restaurants, retail facilities, services, and jobs within walking distance. Amenities make the residential units easier to rent or sell, and the proximity of residents supports the office and retail uses. The presence of office workers likewise supports retail and service uses, which also benefit surrounding neighborhoods.

Poorly conceived MXDs assembled one of the worst financial track records of the 1980s. During the last decade, however, many successful MXDs have been built. These projects offer some lessons about the fundamental steps that must be taken when conceptualizing and building an MXD. Each project clearly requires the following:

- An experienced development team with sufficient financial capacity to complete the project;
- Careful assessment of the market for each product to be included in the project;
- Realistic financial assessment during the project's conceptual phase;
- A supportive regulatory environment; and
- A supportive neighborhood.

Vertical MXD is more difficult to accomplish than horizontal MXD, and requires the following:

- Shared parking among residents and commercial tenants;
- Expensive fire separations between different types of uses;
- More stringent fire safety requirements than single-use structures;
- Costly duplication of vertical circulation—elevators and fire stairs—and building access;
- More complicated—and expensive—utility infrastructure;
- More regulatory oversight and approvals;
- A more complicated ownership structure;
- More complicated financial packaging; and
- A more expensive and complicated appraisal process.

For all these reasons, MXD requires:

- Experienced designers who know how to solve the technical problems that invariably arise;
- Developers who have refined their product mix and market strategy to respond to market and financial realities;
- An understanding of demographic niche markets and a realistic assessment of the local demand for such products; and
- A location with very specific amenities, including a pedestrian-friendly environment, restaurants, nightlife, and cultural activities.

Realistic financial assessment is another key to success. Everyone involved must recognize that:

- The increased values of MXD often come at a high price;
- Each part of an MXD must make financial sense by itself;
- Plans to subsidize retail space with high-end housing—and vice versa—rarely work;
- The presence of retail space does not make standard residential units worth more per square foot than similar projects without retail space;

- Using rule-of-thumb cost guides can result in an underestimation of costs, because MXD is more complicated than single-use projects; and
- Standard retail guides, such as surrounding population density and income, must be examined before an entire area is zoned for MXD in a way that demands retail uses in all structures.

Finally, a supportive regulatory environment must be in place for MXD to succeed. The key elements of such an environment include:

- Flexibility that allows developers to respond to the market while maintaining the intent of MXD to produce an amenity-rich, livable urban environment;
- Careful physical design to achieve compatibility with established neighborhoods;
- Balancing project-specific needs with potential impacts on existing neighborhoods; and
- Regulatory certainty regarding timing, process, and standards for surrounding properties.

Streets and Urban Design

Streets by themselves do not make markets; local demand and competition determine the potential for supportable land uses in specific places. But street configuration *does* support or limit the type of retail uses that will succeed in a given location. All retail space requires high traffic volumes, visibility, and easy access. Accommodating these business requirements within a pedestrian-friendly environment requires sensitivity to the ways in which the streetscape and the buildings adjoining it interact.

A clear relationship exists between the speed of traffic on a street and the nature of development along that street. Fast traffic begets buildings with large setbacks and large gaps between them, while locating buildings close together and close to the street tends to calm traffic. In fact, the combination of building-to-building distance and street width is more significant than street width alone in reducing traffic speed. High-speed traffic and large building-to-building widths obviously are less conducive to a pedestrian-friendly environment. However, a pedestrian-friendly environ-

ment is not necessarily at odds with the efficient movement of traffic, since higher traffic speeds do not guarantee greater throughput. In fact, the most efficient speed for traffic is below 35 miles per hour, which happens to be a speed conducive to small-scale or main street retail uses.

As noted above, streets with high-volume, high-speed traffic favor widely spaced businesses that rely on the capture of passing traffic. Since sight times are short, signs must be large and visually prominent to compete for driver attention. Large frontages and setbacks are required to allow time for drivers to see and access businesses. Such development configurations require stand-alone destinations that increase the economic utility of visits by offering a wide selection of goods under one roof.

Alternatively, main streets—those with high-volume, moderate-speed traffic and on-street parking—allow businesses to aggregate together to create and capture pedestrian traffic. Slower traffic speeds allow smaller signs, since sight times are longer and drivers have more time to see and access businesses with shorter, pedestrian-oriented frontages. The aggregation of a wide variety of businesses in a relatively short distance—generally six to eight blocks, or 1,200 to 1,600 linear feet—makes for a diverse and economically viable business environment by creating a retail/commercial destination.

Main streets tend to draw visitors from throughout an entire region rather than from a more limited trade area. They are authentically public, active places where people can sit, gather, and watch other people because they are not in cars. Main streets also are visually intriguing places with interesting facades. As a result, main streets typically reap the highest retail rents in the market, and tenants are glad to pay these rents. According to a recent article (Charles Lockwood, “Raising the Bar,” *Urban Land*, February 2003), U.S. regional shopping centers averaged sales of \$220 to \$230 per square foot in 2002, while high-end retailers in new town centers consistently earned more than \$350 per square foot.

A good pedestrian experience does not necessarily require expensive paving, overly wide sidewalks,

large trees, and benches or other street furniture. Most successful main streets share many characteristics, including the following:

- Strong market support from the primary trade area;
- Retail establishments on both sides of the street, in buildings that directly face the sidewalk;
- Traffic speeds of no more than 25 to 35 miles per hour;
- Continuous street frontage with no mid-block curb cuts;
- A center of activity that is between three and eight blocks long;
- Short (20- to 35-foot), articulated shopfronts that encourage window shopping;
- A walkable street width—one that pedestrians can cross easily, with no more than four traffic lanes—and on-street parking along sidewalks; and
- Arterial intersections with turn lanes, in which the parking lane ends before the intersection, to allow for an additional (turning) lane.

Main street-style redevelopment offers the opportunity to provide:

- A transition between busy streets and the less dense neighborhoods adjoining them;
- Mixed-use development in areas with a market for retail space and an unsatisfied demand for moderate-density or multifamily residential units;
- Student housing and associated services that do not disrupt the fabric of surrounding neighborhoods; and
- Moderately priced housing ownership opportunities for one- and two-person households.

Infill development sites should be at least 20,000 square feet to accommodate parking, loading, and other services such as trash collection; however, smaller sites served by alleys also may be appropriate for infill development. Ideally, corridor planning will focus on the creation of high-quality,

800- to 1,200-foot-long sections, rather than on trying to mandate change for an entire corridor that is many miles long. Retail space should be required only where there are sufficient auto trips by the site—traffic counts should be between 8,000 to 20,000 trips per day to support main street retail—and the existing or planned residential density in the surrounding area also is high enough to support it.

Planning and Design Criteria

The MRA should provide the leadership for redevelopment. Planning for urban vitality requires the consideration of a wide range of factors. Concentrations of retail space can serve as hubs for social activity and interaction. To maximize the civic—as well as the monetary—value of a center, its location should be carefully chosen to:

- Concentrate retail uses in areas with easy access to residential neighborhoods;
- Provide pedestrian as well as automobile access;
- Offer consumer spending opportunities;
- Create a critical mass of retail and services that can become a destination; and
- Offer supportive zoning and a supportive network of streets and sidewalks.

Planning a successful, amenity-rich environment requires:

- An overall development strategy and specific designs, since zoning and regulation alone can only prevent the worst from happening;
- A collaborative public/private effort accomplished through a design process that engages the community and all stakeholders;
- Site-specific plans for key locations, developed with the cooperation of landowners and developers who understand the vision for the area; and
- A reliable and predictable approval process.

The design process should:

- Engage the community, businesses, and property owners to build consensus and refine their vision for the future into a specific plan;
- Determine the best locations for a variety of uses, including retail, residential, and parking, as well as for facilities that contain a mix of uses;
- Recommend zoning changes or amendments where required;
- Develop strategies for infill development and redevelopment;
- Prepare a parking strategy;
- Produce guidelines for business and neighborhood improvement districts;
- Develop site-specific plans for key locations;
- Create building and site plan prototypes for neighborhood redevelopment;
- Produce a visual guideline portfolio to facilitate compliance with design regulations;
- Propose streetscape improvements and designs for typical street sections;
- Determine potential funding mechanisms;
- Develop a fast-track approvals process for development that is in accordance with design guidelines;
- Identify opportunities to provide design assistance to property owners and businesses; and
- Investigate remedies for other community problems, such as the lack of affordable housing.

Retail Criteria

When planning redevelopment that will include retail space, it is important to understand the principles of retail location. Some shops and shopping areas act as destinations, while others fulfill shoppers' basic needs but are not particularly special places. Attractive main streets with many shops can become destinations that attract customers from a wider area than single businesses, because they have much more to offer. Small retailers with no particular specialty and service

shops such as dry cleaners tend to draw their customers from a small local area, unless they can be conveniently reached from roads carrying large amounts of traffic, a situation that can help increase capture.

A developer of an MXD containing retail space will want either a strong local market—that is, lots of local consumer spending—to support the shops or access to a wider market through a location near other shops and access to high traffic flows. If possible, of course, a developer would prefer a site that has all of these characteristics.

The actual criteria that developers and retailers use for siting new retail locations are too varied to list here, and change periodically as people's tastes and attitudes toward different retail formats shift. The result, for mixed-use and main street development, is that developers must conform, at least to some extent, to the retail marketing rules of the moment in order to attract and sustain retail tenants.

Destination MXDs typically contain at least 70,000 square feet of retail space, roughly the size of a community shopping center, but heavily weighted toward entertainment uses such as restaurants, nightlife, and creative retailers that may draw shoppers from as far as 30 miles away. An authentic main street with historic and cultural attractions may draw visitors from an even wider area because it acts, in part, as a tourism destination. Small, primarily residential MXDs tend to contain primarily local-serving retail facilities that are dependent on the market within walking distance.

Mixed-use projects can offer great benefits by creating a lively pedestrian environment and providing local residents with easy access to goods and services. Because of the varied requirements for retail success, insisting that MXDs contain a uniform retail mix can result in unsuccessful projects or can raise developer risk so high that developers will not be willing to undertake projects. A mixed-use development strategy that recognizes these limitations will result in stronger projects as well as better retail and services for residents.

Retail Investor Criteria

It is helpful to understand the process that prospective investors use when considering investment opportunities. When evaluating potential retail locations, investors begin by undertaking due diligence to enable them to understand the value for the life of their investment. The first set of questions they ask centers around the following factors:

- Retail demand, including a delineation of the market area;
- The demographic makeup of the market area and any demographic trends or changes;
- The strength of the trade area—that is, the amount of spending available; and
- Whether the location offers goods and services—a tenant mix—that is compatible with the market and is likely to succeed against local competition.

Prospective investors also will consider basic issues of supply, including whether retail space at the particular site has local and regional competition, the quality of competing centers versus the site in question, and the current performance and likely market capture and performance over time. They then will examine the site's specific characteristics to evaluate:

- Whether the retail offerings and services are compatible with producing the maximum amount of foot traffic;
- Whether the tenant mix draws customers for all of the businesses;
- The physical condition of the site, its access and configuration, its visibility, and service functions such as loading and trash removal; and
- How the site compares to national averages, because investors and financing are not restricted to particular markets.

Prospective investors also will look for unique or special characteristics that would ensure the retail site's viability, such as a theater, well-known restaurants, or major anchors.

Specific Development Opportunities

Development strategies are derived from market demand for new or redeveloped land uses. Planning and design considerations to accommodate that market demand contribute to how one formulates specific responses to those identified wants and needs. The panel has organized its comments about the midtown study area according to general considerations, corridor strategies, and area strategies.

Basic Considerations

Before discussing specific development strategies for the redevelopment district, the panel would like to suggest that the MRA provide the impetus to take the following actions:

Preserve and Enhance Existing “Anchors.” The district already has many attractive and viable individual uses, both large and small, that need to be preserved and enhanced. These include many existing restaurants, office buildings, gas stations, the regional mall, and stand-alone retail sites.

Protect Existing Areas, Particularly Residential Ones. Large, stable, attractive residential neighborhoods within and abutting the district—as well as those surrounding the district—need to be buffered wherever possible from the encroachment of commercial uses. Where residential uses are proposed within existing commercial areas, special attention must be paid to transitions and borders. These areas include Southgate Mall; the residential area bounded by South Avenue, Russell and Garfield streets, and North Avenue; the neighborhood bounded by Sussex and Clark streets and the railroad tracks; and commercial development on either side of Brooks Street south of McDonald Avenue. The rest of the area is considered ripe for redevelopment over the next 25 years.

Consider Plans for the Fairgrounds. Current planning efforts for the fairgrounds—which are located immediately adjacent to URD III—include the possibility of adding a new sports arena, a central park, and expanded year-round activities. These improvements suggest that private sector support facilities, such as a hotel and conference

center, could be located adjacent to the fairgrounds to support these potential new uses.

Define the District as a Place. The area has not yet been defined as a destination or even officially named as a distinct place. Midtown Missoula is an accurate characterization of the location, but other names might prove better for repositioning the district, which also needs distinctive streetscape treatments, a unified advertising program, and additional efforts to “brand” it.

Corridor Plans

The panel has identified five corridors in the study area, for which it has formulated specific development strategies. These corridors are Brooks Street, the railway right-of-way, South Avenue, Russell Street, and Mount Avenue.

Brooks Street Corridor. Because this street is a highly visible major transportation arterial, land uses along it have a high visual impact. The street cuts diagonally across a traditional street grid, creating tortured intersections and many inefficient parcel configurations featuring unusual land uses and buildings. Some structures are set right on the street with no setbacks; others sit on small triangular sites with little or no parking. Many parcels have no sidewalks and most have little or no landscaping. The street configuration has contributed significantly to this hodgepodge development pattern.

This type of irregular development pattern is common in many urban areas. What makes it unusual here is that it extends over such a large area and is so close to higher-value districts, including downtown and the university. Every city needs areas that house less-desirable types of uses like those found along Brooks Street, which currently contains automotive services, transportation, utilities, banks, and other businesses interspersed with retail space. These uses are housed in buildings in varied conditions set along the disconnected streetscape caused by Brooks Street’s diagonal orientation and the odd-shaped lots that this orientation creates. Given other development patterns in the city and the economics of land development, it is time to consider relocating some of these uses to other areas. And, given retail development on Reserve Street, some of Brooks

Street's marginal retail uses may become obsolete. The city now has an opportunity to add new types of services and increase the related values of land uses available to city residents, thus increasing the tax base by providing more innovative, larger-scale, and more timely development than otherwise might occur. Doing so also would address the MRA's objectives in creating this district.

The panel's specific recommendations for the Brooks Street corridor include the following:

- Improve the streetscape by incorporating pedestrian amenities appropriate to the corridor and intersecting streets;
- Eliminate excess street segments that intersect Brooks Street and incorporate them into larger, adjacent parcels;
- Similarly, incorporate the small triangles that intersect Brooks Street with adjacent parcels; and
- Make combining "soft sites"—where the land value exceeds the building value—through relocations and land swaps a high-priority effort.

The MRA should close street sections and rationalize land parcels as redevelopment efforts on adjacent parcels are initiated or upon determining that adjacent property owners are interested in purchasing the extra property. The results would generate new, one-time revenue from the sale of the new parcels as well as an annual tax increment from placing new land—and, potentially, buildings—with value on the tax rolls.

The Railroad Right-of-Way (ROW). Like Brooks Street, the railroad traverses the study area across the grain of the road grid system, creating odd intersections and triangulated parcels. The panel's recommendations assume that the ROW will remain in its current ownership even if railway operations cease. Most of the following recommendations relate to improving access to that part of the study area:

- Add a new east/west street crossing south of Southgate Mall, to increase circulation at the expanded mall, and consider adding a second

crossing to the north, through the existing U.S. Forest Service site;

- Fill the gap in the bike trail;
- Add a new two-lane road on the east side, paralleling the ROW, from South Avenue to McDonald Avenue;
- Provide a fixed-rail trolley service on the existing track that links Southgate Mall to downtown, the ballfield, the river walk, and other proposed or existing uses west of downtown; and
- Centralize access to all modes of transit through an intermodal facility at the mall.

South Avenue Corridor. South Avenue intersects with Brooks Street, creating two distinct planning areas, one west and one east of Brooks Street. While the precise circulation changes proposed at this intersection may affect travel and land uses within both areas, the panel assumes that its proposed development strategies would not be materially affected by changes in circulation around the intersection.

Along the north side of South Avenue west of Brooks Street, three blocks contain residences that have been converted to commercial uses, many of which feature awkward additions off the back and random parking configurations to accommodate customers. Located on another block between these three is the Jefferson School building, which now houses specialized educational and meal preparation facilities. The panel was told that the school district is interested in consolidating its office functions at the Jefferson School.

The south side of South Avenue west of Brooks Street is becoming an office corridor, as evidenced by recent construction. Office development should be encouraged there through parcel consolidation. The panel's recommendations for the section of South Avenue west of Brooks Street include the following:

- Convert buildings on the north side of the street to live/work units that can serve as transitional uses between commercial development to the south and residential development to the north;

This strip of commercial properties on the north side of South Avenue is typical of the area's one-story buildings.



- Create an office/financial node that builds off the presence of the bank buildings and financial services currently scattered throughout the study area;
- Convert the Jefferson School into a headquarters facility for the school district by adding a new 30,000-square-foot building on the site while retaining the existing playground and community access to the playground and other school resources; and
- Construct lower-density office space as a transitional use, to buffer the proposed R&D/business park to the south.

The north side of South Avenue east of Brooks Street sits outside of the study area and offers expansive views of the mountains across the fairgrounds property. Missoula County is reviewing its options regarding the 160-acre fairgrounds site, which currently houses Sentinel High School and school administrative buildings, UM's College of Technology, and the fairgrounds. The fairgrounds are used intensely for only about one month in the summer. Proposals for the site include the addition of an indoor, multiuse sports arena on the current racetrack and a central park, together with other improvements that would create a year-round public activity area. The panel's specific recommendations for South Avenue east of Brooks Street include:

- Create a hotel/conference district to serve the proposed new arena and related uses adjacent to the fairgrounds;
- Create a new fairgrounds gateway at the corner of Brooks Street and South Avenue that cele-

brates the presence of this important community resource; and, possibly,

- If the currently proposed traffic solution to the Brooks/South/Russell intersection is changed, consider locating the proposed hotel and conference facilities on the triangular parcel east of Brooks Street and south of South Avenue.

Russell Street Corridor. The 16-block area west of Russell Street between North and South avenues is a stable residential neighborhood that should be protected from the encroachment of commercial uses. The area to the east of Russell Street comprises Tremper's Shopping Center, a popular community center with a stable tenancy and loyal customers. Built in the 1960s, it is obsolete by current standards. Its location is ideal for neighborhood commercial uses, however, so the panel recommends that it be upgraded or redeveloped on approximately the same footprint. New, higher-value land uses should be developed at higher densities north of Tremper's Shopping Center. The panel's specific recommendations for this corridor include the following:

- Preserve the housing west of Russell Street;
- Create a flex-tech park north of the post office and the existing residential neighborhood bounded by Mount Avenue on the north, the proposed trolley line on the west, and Brooks Street on the east;
- Retain the post office building; and
- Redevelop neighborhood commercial space at Tremper's Shopping Center.

Mount Avenue Corridor. From Russell to Brooks streets, Mount Avenue serves as the northern edge of URD III. Along the northern side of the street sit four triangular parcels, referred to as the “sawtooth area,” which are considered part of the district. Urban Land Institute studies of these types of lots indicate that higher-density mixed-use development in two- to four-story structures would be viable on these four triangles, and would act as a buffer for the single-family residential area to the north. Very low-intensity uses—truck rental companies, car dealers, bus barns, storage facilities, and so forth—currently occupy the property to the south. The panel’s specific recommendations for this corridor include the following:

- Build two- to three-story mixed-use structures—with residences above retail space—on the north side of Mount Avenue within the sawtooth area;
- On the south side, build three-story mixed-use structures with residences above retail space; and
- Provide on-street parking and pedestrian amenities.

Area Plans

The panel also designated area plans for the sections of the study area located north and south of South Avenue. These are large and relatively complex redevelopment areas. The proposed uses are consistent—in both land area and expected absorption rates—with development coming into the region.

Since some of the proposed uses have never been built in Missoula, the size of some of the development uses may appear improbable. However, the panel believes that market demand is consistent with these designations. Phasing will respond to specific proposals; for more detailed information, see the discussion of phasing in the Implementation section of this report. The proposed uses are designated in areas deemed responsive to the dynamics of the surrounding parcels and the need for access.

The Area between Mount and South Avenues. In the northern section of the study area, proposed uses include flex-tech space in an R&D/business park

setting, retail, and housing. In the southern section, proposed uses include office, commercial/retail, and residential space.

Flex-Tech Space. This use would provide a defining theme for the northern entrance to Midtown Missoula. The panel bases its assumption that this area is a candidate for this type of use—a recent national phenomenon—on an inquiry from a national company interested in locating a back-office employment center in the region. The panel believes this is the best area for this use because it is close to the university and because it contains a high proportion of low-intensity uses—soft sites—with a low ratio of building to land area. Examples of low-intensity uses include vacant sites, new and used car dealerships, truck rental lots, storage yards, warehouses, and bus storage lots. Prime candidate sites for an R&D/business park and/or other flex-tech space include the U.S. Forest Service storage yard, the Northwest Energy storage lot, the bus storage yard, and vacant real estate between South and North avenues.

Retail. As noted above, the area needs at least one neighborhood shopping center similar to Tremper’s Shopping Center, which serves both existing residences and businesses. This shopping center is well located to serve the proposed configuration of uses, so the panel’s recommendation is to upgrade or redevelop it, retaining its existing function as a neighborhood retail center oriented to serve the surrounding residential development.

Residential. Those interviewed by the panel noted a lack of choice in housing products for most income groups. The Holiday Village Shopping Center and surrounding areas are one of two potential locations for major additional residential development; the second is the proposed Missoula Commons project. Additionally, because of the recent opening of the specialty retail and “category killers” on Reserve Street, which provide an excellent selection of products at good price points, the panel believes that the need for one of the two neighborhood shopping centers in this district will disappear over time. Some vacancies are beginning to appear in the Holiday Village Shopping Center. The panel recommends redeveloping this center and the surrounding area into multifamily housing and housing for seniors, and suggests that

some of Holiday Village's retail uses be transferred across Russell Street to Tremper's Shopping Center. The multifamily housing developed here should include a diverse range of rental and for-sale products that meet the needs of couples, families, active retirees, and those requiring assisted-living services and/or nursing care.

The Area South of South Avenue. Land uses for this section of the study area are discussed below, and include office and retail uses, with residential uses dispersed throughout.

Office. As noted above, a small agglomeration of office buildings has emerged on the triangle east of Southgate Mall. Because of the office space already located here, the panel recommends the creation of a Southgate office area in this triangular section west of Brooks Street.

Retail. One of the largest vacant parcels in URD III is located adjacent to Southgate Mall. The mall has been in the same configuration for about 25 years and is ripe for a second phase that will make it more competitive and distinctive. The panel proposes an innovative mix of uses on the south side of the mall property that will include the following:

- Multifamily residential units;
- Entertainment uses, including a six- to eight-screen cinema;
- Restaurants and bars;
- Book and music stores;
- A farmers market; and
- Art galleries and other exhibition spaces.

For more detailed information, see the Missoula Commons concept plan. Development here should begin to live up to the concept of a true midtown.

Residential. For the same reasons as cited for the area north of South Avenue, the panel proposes the development of additional housing here. Housing has synergy with the mall; residents will shop there and will frequent the new entertainment and retail offerings at the mall and nearby. Bringing additional residents into the area is consistent with the mall owners' expectations.

West of the railroad tracks and south of South Avenue lies an existing residential area with an eclectic mix of primarily single-family housing types, including conventional stick-built and modular houses. Some businesses are operated out of the homes, and some yards are used for storage. The panel's recommendations for this area include the following:

- Enforce residential development codes;
- Encourage homeowners to convert trailer homes to stick-built housing;
- Increase the number of neighborhood parks; and
- Link this neighborhood to the regional trail system.

In summary, these proposed development strategies for the study area will create a vibrant, diverse, and exciting mix of uses to capture the sea change the region is just beginning to experience. Midtown Missoula will become a place that landowners will want to be part of as investors in this new area of the city; visitors will want to spend time there, and some may even choose to live there.

Implementation

The panel found that, while not a severely blighted area, URD III certainly shows signs of uncontrolled growth evidenced by declining property conditions, incompatible land uses, dated architecture, and poor landscaping and site layout with large, empty parking lots.

According to the Congress for the New Urbanism, approximately 140 regional malls in the United States have reached “greyfield” status—meaning that they are failing—and an additional 250 malls are at risk of failing. Although it is still successful, Southgate Mall is in jeopardy of decline, in part because of the increased competition created by the presence of big-box retail along Reserve Street. Unabated decline of Missoula’s midtown area would affect the mall and result in compounding problems characterized by increased vacancies, depressed land values, job losses, a decreased tax base, and underutilization of midtown. Rather than waiting for declining properties to take their toll on the study area and the surrounding commercial and residential communities, the MRA must take immediate action to revitalize and redevelop this area as Midtown Missoula, a distinct district with an identity and a sense of place, and thereby ensure its prosperous future.

Major Obstacles

The panel’s interviews with local stakeholders indicate that many obstacles currently impede the revitalization of the study area. These obstacles include the following:

- Competing and conflicting agendas for the future of the area;
- URD III’s large, spread-out, and difficult-to-define nature;
- The area’s complex and mixed character;

- A lengthy, unclear, and inconsistent development process;
- Fragmented property ownership;
- Downward-trending land uses;
- Irregular parcel shapes;
- Limited value for owners wishing to perform small-scale property improvements;
- Permitting and code enforcement that promote “bootleg” improvements;
- Isolated improvements that do not reach a critical mass;
- An unappealing streetscape that discourages property improvements;
- Uncertainty about the future of the area, including the fate of the fairgrounds, the rerouting of South Street, and so forth; and
- Underutilized sites—with a low building to land area ratio—resulting in low valuations.

How to Promote Revitalization

The panel offers the following recommendations, which are intended to overcome these obstacles and promote the revitalization of Midtown Missoula.

Prepare a Redevelopment Master Plan

In order to facilitate positive change, the MRA first must envision the ideal improvements for the area and then must establish regulations that encourage desirable land uses, density, landscaping, public improvements, and so forth. One option is to revise the current plan to make it more specific. Another, better alternative is to establish a new urban renewal plan that overlays and supersedes the existing comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance. Although this alternative would require new development to comply with updated regula-

GART Sports and Best Buy join other big-box offerings such as Barnes & Noble, Staples, and Costco along Reserve Street.



tions, it would do nothing to improve existing properties.

The panel believes that the best option is to create and implement a new redevelopment master plan for the study area that replaces the existing comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance to encourage proposed land uses and to preserve and promote existing ones. Such a master plan would include requirements and guidelines relating to architecture, pedestrian design, setbacks, parking, and landscaping to encourage an attractive environment for living and commerce.

The redevelopment master plan also should limit or prohibit uses that are inconsistent with the vision for the area. For example, numerous small casinos are scattered throughout midtown along the high-visibility Brooks Street corridor; many of them occupy structures on small, odd-shaped parcels. The panel believes that the casinos do not fit into the synergy of complementary uses envisioned for Midtown Missoula, and feels that they should be relocated to outlying highway areas, where they could be concentrated on a larger and more efficient scale.

Update the Zoning, Planning, and Approval Processes

To establish a more efficient redevelopment process, the public sector needs to provide rational

procedures and useful guidelines for developers to follow.

Streamline the Approval Process. Improving the climate for economic development begins with a streamlined approval process. The approval process must be transparent, responsible, and reasonably expeditious. Interviews with local stakeholders and developers indicate that the existing approval process and the local approach to zoning and regulation are quite unpredictable and result in a great deal of uncertainty about how adjacent properties will be developed in the future. In addition, local stakeholders believe that some zoning decisions are made on a case-by-case basis without adherence to areawide goals.

Complicated, uncertain approval processes—which can be akin to opening a series of doors without knowing what will be found behind them—tend to dampen the enthusiasm of prospective developers and businesses. These issues of the unknown need to be addressed if the district's redevelopment goals are to be achieved. Typically, streamlined approvals and effective zoning can be accomplished by promoting interdepartmental cooperation on development approvals and appointing a lead person for each application to guide it through the process.

A variety of mechanisms have been used elsewhere and have proven successful. The panel recommends

that the following mechanisms be undertaken and that a development ombudsman be put in place to oversee the process and ensure that reforms are successful:

- Allow development by right for projects that meet specific plan objectives;
- Have a project manager or development ombudsman assist each development project;
- Establish one-stop permitting shops that eliminate the need to visit different agencies;
- Develop checklists that specify the exact requirements for permit approval;
- Provide application scorecards that rate a development's success in meeting community goals;
- Offer priority treatment for developments that meet community goals;
- Fast-track processing for projects that do not entail a change of use or occupancy;
- Use a geographic information system or other technology to provide information on permits, zoning, and other regulations, including clear design guidelines with visual examples;
- Authorize the city planning staff to approve minor zoning changes that comply with area objectives; and
- Require city council approval only for major zoning changes.

Develop Design Guidelines. One way of achieving high-quality development and ensuring that future projects will be of a similar high quality is to prepare design guidelines for the development products envisioned for midtown. Design guidelines assure real estate investors that future development will measure up to—and support—the quality of their projects as well as fulfill area goals. At the same time, they assure neighbors and the community that new development will occur as envisioned. In addition to establishing standards for new development, graphic design guidelines can be used to promote facade improvements to existing structures along prominent corridors.

The panel suggests that the MRA provide visual guidelines that form the basis for the written text. High-quality existing local projects can serve as examples of acceptable typical forms. Standards should be described for fenestration, a structure's relationship to the street, facade heights, cornice and pediment treatments, roof pitch, the relationships of scale among adjacent structures, building entrance treatments, site entries, parking, loading and service areas, signage, and landscaping. Guidelines that are visual as well as written also help streamline the approval process, since they are unambiguous and therefore require little interpretation. Projects submitted for permitting that clearly reflect the guidelines can be more quickly evaluated and approved. Projects that do not follow the guidelines are still at liberty to pursue a more lengthy public approval process.

Preserve Existing Neighborhoods

One of the objectives in redeveloping midtown is to preserve and stabilize the core residential neighborhoods. Home maintenance programs can help ensure the stability of existing neighborhoods, while providing a buffer around them can protect them from encroachment by new development.

Ensure Neighborhood Stability. Missoula's current ratio of owner-occupied to rental properties is lower than that in many other cities. This could result in the encroachment of development pressure along the edges of the city's residential areas. Midtown's residential neighborhoods are important: they support local retail and also fill a need for lower- and middle-income housing. The panel recommends that the city use a number of available programs to ensure the stability of these neighborhoods. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and federally chartered corporations such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac offer loan guarantees and other programs to help homeowners maintain their properties. Low-interest loans for renovation and upkeep efforts also are available.

Encourage Property Improvement. Programs to prevent housing deterioration have been a successful property improvement tool in other communities around the country. A periodic survey of the condition of units could be followed by code enforcement on the one hand and assistance on

the other. Littleton, Colorado, for example, has a program that assists homeowners who may be having trouble maintaining their property—such as the elderly—by ensuring that their dwellings are maintained, fences repaired, lawns tended, and so forth. Since this program began, deterioration in Littleton's oldest neighborhood has slowed. Portland, Oregon, has an annual volunteer program sponsored by local employers that paints the houses of seniors who no longer have the energy or funds to maintain them. Such efforts seem small and do not cost much, but they can change perceptions and enhance neighborhood quality and stability.

Limit Density. Another issue to consider in preserving neighborhoods is the use of the density bonus. The panel believes that the density bonus should be used only to buffer and protect the edges of neighborhoods where they abut commercial uses, and should not be allowed to encroach into the neighborhood core. This will require a legislative action to restrict the use of the density bonus in the centers of residential neighborhoods.

Make Streetscape Improvements a High Priority. The panel agrees that immediate streetscape improvements are required along Brooks Street. The charm and natural setting of the Rose Park neighborhood should be extended south along Brooks Street into midtown and to the intersection with South Avenue. As discussed previously, streetscape redesign should reduce conflicts between turning automobiles and pedestrians through the use of medians and walkways, remove unnecessary “triangles” and consolidate oddly shaped parcels, and incorporate pedestrian-scale lighting.

Designate a Master Plan Redevelopment Coordinator for Midtown Missoula

The success of the proposed midtown redevelopment efforts will be dependent on the appointment of an advocate for the area. This individual should be the champion for midtown; he or she should be responsible for the following efforts:

- Promoting Midtown Missoula;
- Attracting new businesses and retaining some existing ones;

- Assembling parcels for redevelopment through the use of purchase options, ownership, and eminent domain;
- Presenting and supporting a synthesized voice for all stakeholders, including residents, the mall owners, retailers, industrial and institutional users, and others;
- Advocating for the realization of the vision for Midtown Missoula, including the proposed entertainment complex, the trolley system, new and improved uses at the fairgrounds, the creation of a flex-tech/office area, and so forth; and
- Pursuing public improvements and identifying funding sources.

The redevelopment coordinator should promote public/private partnerships that work to accomplish the goals of Midtown Missoula. For example, he or she could act as a liaison between developers and the Missoula Housing Authority to encourage residential development in the area. The redevelopment coordinator could pursue funding and grants to assemble the required parcels and to intercede as necessary with adjacent neighborhood groups. To promote the proposed flex-tech/office area, the redevelopment coordinator also will need to forge a connection with the university, the medical community, and local business startups. This could be a new staff position within the MRA, or it could be part of a newly established development corporation, as described below.

The panel believes—and experience in other cities suggests—that the study area would best be served if the redevelopment coordinator is part of a new development corporation that the panel has tentatively named the Missoula Advisory Economic Development Corporation (MAEDC), which would work closely with other local and state development, financing, planning, zoning, housing, and permitting agencies. A board of directors made up of local business leaders, landowners, residents, MRA members, and the mayor would oversee the work of the redevelopment coordinator. The MAEDC will be most successful if its board members are supportive and cooperative advocates for the area and for the redevelopment coordinator.



Some efforts have been made to landscape the large surface parking lots serving the big-box development along Reserve Street.

Leverage Financial Incentives

Although redeveloping the study area will be challenging, numerous programs provide incentives that encourage this type of revitalization. Sources for such funding include local, state, and federal programs as well as several private sources. The following is a brief list of programs and processes that could be pursued to help expedite redevelopment efforts:

- Local improvement districts;
- Tax increment financing (TIF);
- MRA assistance with demolition and parcel assemblage;
- The Montana Board of Investment Loan Program;
- Workforce training;
- Community development block grants;
- Brownfield assistance for site investigation/remediation from federal and/or state programs;
- An MAEDC revolving loan fund;
- Federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) alternative transportation programs;

- Montana Department of Transportation (MDOT) and U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) road improvement assistance;
- HUD and Fannie Mae neighborhood redevelopment grants; and
- U.S. Small Business Administration resources, such as the Small Business Investment Company Program.

The local banking community should be an important partner in supporting the revitalization of the study area. It brings access to capital, a commitment to the community, and an understanding of the vision for Midtown Missoula. In addition to providing project-specific capital, the banking community should be harnessed to provide credibility to attract new public funding sources.

State regulations should be investigated to determine whether a local sales tax could be implemented. This could be used to fund public improvements, transit projects, and additional economic development. The tax could be applied to all products and services or limited to specific items, such as gambling and/or liquor sales.

An Action Plan

The consensus of the panel is that the greater Missoula area is on the cusp of an economic sea

change. New market pressures are expected to increase demand for developable land and for a mix of new uses, particularly in midtown. Nevertheless, some parts of the study area—including some strip shopping areas, existing residential neighborhoods, and the southwestern portion of midtown—are not targeted for redevelopment.

Given the proposed phasing and assuming an average tax increment of value added at 60 percent, within five years this action plan could result in \$60 million to \$70 million of development, which in turn would result in a bond capacity of about \$7 million. By the year 2014, the expected development value could be as high as \$140 million with a bonding capacity of \$16 million.

The panel recommends that the MRA undertake the following action items to anticipate and prepare for growth and revitalization in Midtown Missoula.

Administrative/Positioning Process

The MRA should undertake the following actions to prepare for revitalization and growth:

- Prepare and adopt a master plan, zoning/planning reforms, design guidelines, and public improvement plans;
- Support a facade improvement program and a housing deterioration prevention plan for existing structures along public corridors;
- Establish a partnership among Midtown Missoula, UM, and the medical and financial communities; and
- “Brand” Midtown Missoula through marketing, clearly designated boundaries, and signage designed to establish a sense of place.

Phasing

The panel recommends a series of actions to be taken within three different time frames: over the short term, within the next five years; over the mid term, within five to ten years; and over the long term, in ten or more years.

Short-Term Actions. The panel recommends that the following actions be taken within the next five years:

- Implement zoning, administration, and planning recommendations;
- Hire a redevelopment coordinator;
- Redevelop and expand Southgate Mall, by adding an entertainment complex and residential units as illustrated in the panel’s recommendations for Missoula Commons;
- Establish an employment (flex-tech) and residential pilot project at the Mount Avenue/Brooks Street triangle;
- Establish a midtown character along the Brooks Street streetscape from Mount Avenue to South Avenues;
- Identify and aggregate sites for various financial services;
- Close streets at some triangles to consolidate parcels; and
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a roundabout, as proposed by the panel, at the Brooks/South/Russell intersection.

Mid-Term Actions. The panel suggests that the following actions be implemented within the next five to ten years:

- Use increment bonding to expand employment and residential uses;
- Develop an events/hotel complex at the fairgrounds;
- Complete the Brooks Street streetscape from South Avenue to Reserve Street; and
- Implement the recommended rail corridor road improvements.

Long-Term Actions. The panel recommends that the following actions be implemented in ten or more years:

- Acquire sites—as needed—to consolidate parcels for employment and residential uses;
- Implement the trolley line;

- Encourage mixed-use development along Brooks Street and along Mount and South avenues; and
- Reuse and/or redevelop outlying areas, such as the U.S. Forest Service property.

This phasing plan is designed to address and prepare for anticipated development pressures, based on trends that are taking shape today. The redevelopment coordinator and the MAEDC board of directors should refine the phasing plan as needed.

Conclusion

Although the breadth and scope of this redevelopment initiative may seem overwhelming, Missoula is faced with a tremendous opportunity. Rarely do so many stakeholders within an area share the desire to reinvigorate a multiuse community. Rather than simply reacting to the cards it is dealt, Midtown Missoula should be prepared to attract and embrace development opportunities while preserving and enhancing existing uses.

The following is a brief list of benefits that can be expected if redevelopment efforts succeed:

- The creation of an identity and a sense of place for Midtown Missoula;
- The extension of a streetscape similar in character to the Rose Park neighborhood into midtown;
- The provision of multiple economic drivers to make midtown more productive and attractive;
- The preservation and enhancement of major midtown anchors, including the fairgrounds, Southgate Mall, and the existing residential neighborhoods;

- Enhanced services, which will be available to residents of the area and beyond;
- The protection of existing residential neighborhoods from commercial encroachment;
- Improved traffic and pedestrian flow;
- A diverse housing stock that offers many choices in both product and price;
- New entertainment opportunities;
- Job growth and better-paying jobs; and
- An additional tax increment from new land uses that will be available to fund Midtown Missoula improvements.

With all this possible, the panel believes that the future for Missoula is expansive. The city, with its anticipated population growth, can continue to support three major retail centers. As Midtown Missoula is established through the implementation of these recommendations, the community can truly continue to “Ride the Dream—Live the Magic!”

About the Panel

H. Pike Oliver

*Panel Chair
Sacramento, California*

Oliver is vice chairman of Interra and a principal of the Presidio Group, where he focuses on structuring, strategizing, and managing the community development process. He has a diversified business background with nearly 25 years of experience in public and private sector environmental and land use policy, strategic business planning, and project management.

Before forming Interra and the Presidio Group in 1994, Oliver was senior vice president of Southwest Diversified, Inc., a land development and homebuilding company. He managed the acquisition, planning, and processing of numerous environmentally challenging and controversial land development projects. Before that, Oliver held several positions with developers of master-planned communities and spent eight years with the Irvine Company. During the mid-1970s, he worked in the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research and the state department of finance. Oliver also worked for the city of New York in the early 1970s.

Oliver holds a bachelor of arts degree in urban studies from San Francisco State University and a master's degree in urban planning from the University of California at Los Angeles. He is a member of the American Planning Association, the American Institute of Certified Planners, Lambda Alpha, and the Urban Land Institute.

Linda K. Cuadra

Seattle, Washington

Cuadra is a senior associate with TDA, Inc. Her project experiences span a variety of specialty transportation issues. She has been involved with master planning for two planned-unit develop-

ments that include commercial and recreational facilities and planned populations of more than 10,000 people. Cuadra has extensive experience with environmental and growth management legal issues in Washington and California. She also has conducted transportation planning for resort and recreational facilities, including access, parking, transit, and pedestrian planning for Alaska's Denali National Park, Pro Player Stadium in Miami, Colorado's Copper Mountain Resort, and Crystal Mountain Resort in Washington, as well as a master plan for part of Waikiki, Hawaii. She also has worked in Southeast Asia.

Cuadra has reviewed parking demand related to special events, such as sporting activities and concert venues. Other special parking studies she has undertaken considered demand for parking at schools, retail centers, art museums, and universities. Cuadra has conducted detailed reviews and monitoring of project mitigation rules and fee requirements, studying jurisdictional rules and requirements, legal issues, political implications, payments, mitigation costs, fair share amounts, and collection schedules for accuracy. She received a BA degree from the Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington.

Bonny Hershberger

Jackson, Wyoming

After 14 years with Design Workshop, Inc., in Aspen, Colorado, Hershberger opened the firm's Jackson office. As principal-in-charge, she has increased the staff from four to seven in one year, making Design Workshop a prominent member of the community and continuing work on projects such as the Teton Village Master Plan, a pedestrian-oriented village development of more than 2,000 residential units and 150,000 square feet of commercial space.

Hershberger has successfully managed large multidisciplinary teams, and is known for her rapport with clients, consultants, and staff. Her experience in resort planning and design enables her to understand the complexities of and the relationship between mountain growth and base area improvements, as well as the market and economic forces that affect resort community development. Her current resort and community planning and design work includes generating the conceptual master plan for the Grand Targhee Ski and Summer Resort in Teton County, Wyoming; generating mixed-use development master plans encompassing 22 lots in downtown Jackson, Wyoming; site planning and design for the Bozeman (Montana) Public Library; and planning and design for a stewardship facility within Grand Teton National Park. Her past resort and community planning and design experience includes three developments totaling more than 2,000 acres in Snowmass Village, Colorado; she also served as a member of an international team selected to generate resort development concepts for the Tama region in Japan as part of Tama Life 21, a symposium for development into the 21st century. Hershberger also is an expert in high-altitude garden design, and her ability to select plants and to detail memorable outdoor spaces has resulted in award-winning estate residential designs.

A member of the Urban Land Institute, Hershberger has served on the Small-Scale Development Council and the Hotel Development Council, and currently is participating in ULI's Real Estate Development Certificate Program. As a result of her participation in community planning and design efforts, Hershberger was identified as a community leader and recruited by Leadership Jackson Hole to participate during 2001/2002 in a yearlong networking and information program. Wyoming's governor recently appointed her to the Wyoming Board of Licensure for Architects and Landscape Architects.

Hershberger received her bachelor of landscape architecture with honors from the University of Minnesota. She is a licensed landscape architect in Montana, Wyoming, and Arizona, and is certified with the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards.

Matthew Holbrook

Washington, D.C.

Holbrook is senior vice president of First Management Group, where he directs the firm's real estate development investment and asset management activities, including acquisition, strategic planning, financial structuring, and disposition. Other responsibilities include deal and lease negotiations, joint ventures, and public/private partnerships. His clients include private investors, property owners, nonprofit groups, and pension funds.

In addition to acquiring, managing, and disposing of income-producing properties throughout the United States, Holbrook has ongoing development projects in California, Arizona, Ohio, and Washington, D.C., including residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use ventures. He has expertise in brownfield redevelopment, including experience in environmental restoration, securing financial assistance, risk assessment and insurance, historic preservation, and adaptive use.

Before joining First Management Group, Holbrook was a development director for Strewer Bros. Eccles & Rouse, an innovative mixed-use developer based in Baltimore. While there, he managed multiple waterfront redevelopment projects, including a unique residential project that wrapped around a public/private parking garage to minimize the impact on the surrounding historic neighborhood. Holbrook began his career as an environmental consultant and certified professional geologist specializing in soil and groundwater investigation and remediation.

Holbrook is active in the National Brownfields Association, National Real Estate Investment Managers, the Urban Land Institute, and the Baltimore Brownfield Council. He received his BA degree from East Carolina University and his MBA degree in finance and real estate from American University in Washington, D.C.

William C. Lawrence

Westwood, Massachusetts

Lawrence has more than 25 years of in-depth background and experience in real-world problem

solving, strategy formation, feasibility assessment, and project management for complex real estate development projects. As principal of Cityscope, Inc., he engages in development projects for his own account and provides contract services in project management and consulting to both public and private clients. Cityscope specializes in value creation for its clients' assets, including strategic planning and assessment, asset positioning and management, and public and private financing.

Lawrence wrote the winning proposal and was designated co-project manager for a \$275 million, multiblock commercial development between a new Amtrak station on the Northeast Rail Corridor and the T.F. Green Airport as a joint venture among the Bulfinch Companies; the city of Warwick, Rhode Island; and the state of Rhode Island. He has assisted a Boston community development corporation in planning a large commercial development on excess public lands. Before undertaking this assignment, Lawrence was the contract project manager to outsource the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority real estate group, which had annual revenues in excess of \$5 million.

Before starting Cityscope, Lawrence was director of seaport planning and development at the Massachusetts Port Authority, where he planned and developed a diverse portfolio of public sector real estate assets on 400 acres. Before that, he created and directed public sector real estate consulting groups in Los Angeles and Boston for Kenneth Leventhal & Company (now E&Y Kenneth Leventhal Real Estate Consulting), a national CPA firm. Prior to that, he founded and managed the William C. Lawrence Company, a market feasibility and economic development consulting firm located in Pasadena, California, for 12 years. He also spent four years managing environmental policy planning at two large West Coast new community developments, Irvine Ranch and Mission Viejo.

Lawrence has a master's degree in city and regional planning from the Harvard Graduate School of Design, a master's degree in business administration from Pepperdine University, and a BA degree in political science from Trinity College. He was awarded the Thomas J. Watson Traveling Fellowship to study new town planning in Europe

and India after college. He currently is a member of the Urban Land Institute and has been a member of the National Association of Office and Industrial Properties and the Council on Urban and Economic Development. Lawrence is a gubernatorial appointee to the Boston Metropolitan Area Planning Commission and a member of its executive committee.

Gary H. London

San Diego, California

London is president of the London Group Realty Advisors, Inc. His real estate consulting experience includes both investment and development consulting. London's investment projects have included apartments and retail centers as well as office, industrial, and mixed-use projects; his development experience includes large-scale residential projects, office buildings, industrial properties, and hotels. London's clients include major corporations, financial institutions, small businesses, individual developers, investors, and public agencies. The services he offers include financial feasibility and market economic analysis for acquisition and disposition, strategic and business planning, portfolio analysis, mixed-use assessment, litigation consulting and workout programs, and deal and lease negotiations.

A columnist for *San Diego Metropolitan* magazine, London also has published articles and been quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Professional Builder*, *Builder*, *California Land*, *California Business*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *San Diego Union*, *San Diego Daily Transcript*, *Real Estate Securities and Capital Markets*, and the *San Diego Business Journal*. He has appeared on National Public Radio, KNBC, KABC, KFMB, KUSI, KCEO, KSDO, and KPBS, and was featured on the "Eye On America" segment of the *CBS Evening News*. London has testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs. His speaking engagements have included the Urban Land Institute, the National Association of Home Builders, the Western Builders Conference, the International Council of Shopping Centers, the National Association of Industrial and Office

Properties, the Industrial Development Research Council, UCLA extension courses, numerous real estate and building industry functions, and service clubs.

London was honored in the *San Diego Business Journal's* "Who's Who In Real Estate" in 1995 and was named "member of the year" by the San Diego chapter of Lambda Alpha International in 1996. He received a master of city planning degree from San Diego State University and a BA degree in political science/economics from the University of California at Berkeley.

Jack L. Luft

Sanibel, Florida

Luft is one of south Florida's highest-profile urban planners. He shaped the dynamic and complex growth of urban Miami over three decades, serving in a wide variety of challenging roles, including urban designer, master plan author, development department director, and planning director for the city of Miami.

Luft was responsible for writing and implementing numerous strategic plans for critical districts and emerging sectors of Miami's diverse neighborhoods and real estate markets, including the Downtown Master Plan; the redevelopment of the 65-acre downtown waterfront park system; the internationally recognized tourist destinations of Coconut Grove, Dinner Key, and Little Havana; the publicly owned 86-acre Watson Island and 1,000-acre Virginia Key; and the station area planning for the region's Metrorail high-speed rail transit system. In September 2000, he participated, at the invitation of the Urban Land Institute, as the urban designer on an Advisory Services panel that explored the strategic redevelopment of downtown Akron, Ohio.

For five years, Luft directed the Miami Community Redevelopment Agency's redevelopment program for Southeast Overtown/Park West and the Omni Redevelopment District, implementing construction of the \$2 million Park West Mall and assisting in the formation of three affordable housing projects totaling 250 units. Over the course of several high-growth periods in Miami's volatile and fast-paced real estate market, Luft wrote and

implemented detailed zoning district regulations to shape more than \$2 billion in private development in the Performing Arts/Omni District, the Central Business District, the Brickell International Finance District, and the Coconut Grove Entertainment District, as well as in the rail transit impact zones for ten station areas.

Luft wrote the first historic preservation ordinance, the first environmental preservation ordinance, and the first scenic corridor/urban design review ordinances adopted in the city of Miami. He has been recognized by the Florida chapter of the American Institute of Planners (AIP) with three awards of excellence and merit for plans he has authored.

Luft served for ten years as vice chairman of the Miami Beach Design Review Board, was appointed to the Florida Governor's Advisory Bicycle Council, served as a jurist for three years in AIP's Florida awards program, and was a featured speaker at national conferences held by the American Institute of Architects, the American Planning Association, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Garden Conservancy, and the Urban Land Institute.

Having retired from active public service in early 1998, Luft now is a private planning consultant. He served as an adviser to the planning team for the proposed Miami-Dade County East-West Metrorail extension and has completed urban design and zoning implementation plans for redevelopment projects in the commercial center of Coral Springs, Florida, and three industrial districts in Winston Salem, North Carolina. In 1999, he completed the redevelopment concept plan for the Town Center of Coral Springs. He presently is conducting strategic redevelopment planning for a 40-acre tract of commercial property in the oceanfront resort community of Sunny Isles Beach.

David Scheuer

Burlington, Vermont

Scheuer is president of the Retrovest Companies. During his more than 25 years in the real estate industry he has developed several award-winning residential and mixed-use projects. His company

has built a reputation for design quality, environmental sensitivity, and a willingness to take on complex joint public/private developments. He has worked on projects in Vermont and in four western states. The firm currently is developing a 320-unit, conservation-oriented new urbanist housing community and the housing portion of a public/private downtown mid-rise residential/hotel project in Burlington. He also is building an infill apartment project in downtown Seattle.

Scheuer is regarded as a national expert on and practitioner of smart growth policy, and was a gubernatorial appointee to Vermont's Municipal Land Law Review Commission. He is a former national director of the National Association of Home Builders; a former board member of the Preservation Trust of Vermont and the Fund for Vermont's Third Century; and has served as vice president of Preservation Action, Inc., a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group. Scheuer is a member of the Urban Land Institute—where he currently serves on the Public/Private Partnership Council—and Lambda Alpha, the national land economics society, as well as a founding member of the Congress for the New Urbanism. He is a former trustee of the U.S. Ski Team Foundation and currently serves on the executive board of the National Town Builders' Association.

Scheuer attended the University of Colorado, where he was a three-time All-American skier, and did graduate work at the University of Vermont in resource and land economics. He was a member of the U.S. Alpine Ski Team and was named to the 1972 U.S. Olympic and 1974 World Alpine Championship teams.

Edward Starkie

Portland, Oregon

A principal with Urban Advisors, Ltd., Starkie's 18 years of experience in real estate includes moving complex projects from conception and feasibility analysis to financing and development. He is a financial adviser for private and public development who brings to his work a pragmatic approach that results in projects that are feasible, profitable, and contribute to community livability. Starkie concentrates on project implementation and economic analysis. A particular focus of his career has been the financing and feasibility of smart growth, both as part of the state of Oregon transit growth management process and for a series of transit-oriented projects.

Starkie's work has received three awards from the American Planning Association in the areas of main streets and downtown revitalization, and he contributed to the current U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines for promoting smart growth.

Starkie received a BLA degree from the University of Oregon and an MS degree in real estate development from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He serves on the faculty of the University of Oregon Urban Architecture Program.