Fruit Valley

Sub Area Plan

VANCOUVER
WASHINGTON

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Table of Contents

Background 1

Public Process 2

Plan Context 3-6
- History
- Characteristics of Surrounding Area
- Planning Area Characteristics
  - *Business and Industry*
  - *Agriculture*
  - *Commercial/Retail*
  - *Institutional*
  - *Residential*
  - *Demographics*
- Transportation

Challenges and Opportunities 7-8
- Challenges
  - *Disconnected from services*
  - *Pedestrian Circulation*
  - *Disconnected from Natural Area*
- Opportunities
  - *Fruit Valley Center*
  - *Retail and Commercial*
    - *The Kauffman Center*
    - *Healthy Corner Stores*
    - *The Affordable Community Environments*
  - *Industrial-Residential Interface*
  - *Improved Connections*
  - *History*
  - *Regional Open Space and Trail*

The Concept "Getting Better Connected" 9-18
- The Vision
- The Concept Diagram
- Concept Key Elements
  - *A Healthy Neighborhood*
  - *Historic Neighborhood Character*
  - *Neighborhood Safety and Security*
  - *Fruit Valley Community Center*
  - *Business Growth and Development*
    - *Industry*
    - *Small Scale Urban Farming*
    - *Micro Enterprise*
  - *Access and Circulation*
    - *Enhancing Pedestrian & Bike Connections*
    - *Creating Unique Neighborhood Streetscapes*
    - *Green Streets*
  - *Open Space, Parks, and Regional Trails*
    - *Value of Parks, Trails & Open Space*
    - *Role of Neighborhood Park*
    - *Local Connections to Regional Trails*
    - *Trailhead Destinations*
  - *"The Dike"*
    - *Location*
    - *Background*
    - *"The Dike" Today*

Policies 19-23

Implementing Recommendations 23

Appendices A, B & C

Background

The Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association with assistance from the City of Vancouver Office of Neighborhoods developed the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Action Plan (NAP), which the Vancouver City Council accepted by resolution in June of 2008. The NAP includes a vision statement describing the neighborhood's sense of identity. It also includes neighborhood goals identifying issues that are of importance to the residents and action steps delineating strategies to accomplish the identified goals.

This Subarea plan builds upon the NAP to protect and enhance the livability, wellness and economy of the Fruit Valley Plan area. The Plan policies, recommendations, and implementation measures extend directly from the Fruit Valley NAP and the public input provided by Fruit Valley residents during development of this plan.

The 2004 City of Vancouver Comprehensive Plan calls for the creation of focused subarea plans as the comprehensive plan is implemented. The Vancouver Planning Commission identified the Fruit Valley area as a planning priority.

Vicinity Map

Public Process

The project team compiled information on existing conditions in the study area to create a "baseline" for future planning, actively engaged property owners, businesses, agencies, school age children, interested citizens in the planning process, and relied heavily on the 2008 Neighborhood Action Plan.

In April 2009, Fruit Valley Elementary School fourth and fifth graders completed a neighborhood planning project. The children answered a series of questions about the neighborhood and described their likes and dislikes. In addition to discussion and written answers, the students drew pictures to convey their thoughts about the neighborhood. City staff produced a summary of trends from the children's answers and descriptions.

Freight interests were also enlisted to help. During the summer of 2009, city staff and consultants introduced the planning process and upcoming stakeholder interview at a West Vancouver Freight Alliance meeting facilitated by the Port of Vancouver. Following the meeting, project team members conducted interviews with owners of a variety of Fruit Valley businesses to inform them in more detail of the planning process, and to identify individual business goals. The interviews also yielded important information about the interface of business and residential uses in Fruit Valley and local demand for goods and services.

Neighborhood Drawings by Fourth and Fifth Graders

Next, staff solicited information, shared ideas, and encouraged community involvement by tending an information table at the Annual Fruit Valley July Picnic, distributing information flyers at a variety of neighborhood, church and school functions, posting flyers and leaving survey boxes at community gathering places, attending the regularly scheduled Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association meetings, and submitting articles in the monthly Neighborhood Newsletter. Informal contacts and discussions with residents and business owners helped the project team better understand the Fruit Valley community.

The kick-off public meeting was on August 20, 2009 and regular monthly public meetings and workshops were held in the Fruit Valley Community Center thereafter. Finally, the neighborhood provided information on the neighborhood website and the city provided information on the Plan with e-mail and on the project website.

July 4th Picnic Plan Information Displays

Plan Context

History

The Fruit Valley Neighborhood exists within a unique historical context that contributes significantly to its character and charm. An understanding of the neighborhood's beginnings is important to an appreciation of those unique characteristics that neighborhood residents want to preserve.

Fruit Valley was once known for its breathtaking views of vast prune, peach and filbert orchards. Early settlers came from the Dakotas in 1890 and 1891 and the area was nicknamed "New Dakota". The fruit orchards supplied local dehydrating and packing companies. At the peak of prune production, nine dehydrators were located in Fruit Valley. In the lower elevation areas, dairy, wheat, and pasture farms flourished. The area was also settled by some of those employed by the Hudson's Bay Company such as Joseph Petrain and Naukane (John Coxe).

Firestone Farms Peach Orchard

Between 1908 and 1910, the railroad was constructed along the eastern edge of the Fruit Valley area. To support the World War I effort, G.M. Standifer Construction Corporation built two shipyards on the Columbia River in close proximity to Fruit Valley. These early shipyards and the railroad began to establish Fruit Valley as an industrial area. Slowly over the years, industry and shipyard housing continued to replace Fruit Valley's original agricultural character and economy. Only a small amount of commercial agriculture continues today.

In 1942, the Vancouver Kaiser shipyard was opened to build ships for World War II. And within one year of its opening, the City of Vancouver doubled in size. A cattle and dairy farm in Fruit Valley was purchased to build 300 wartime homes constructed by the Vancouver Housing Authority, under the direction of D. Elwood Caples. The property for the housing project was purchased from Catholic Sisters who had farmed the land. A community center, constructed with the housing project, hosted a wide variety of activities, including dances, movies, church services, and daycare. An elementary school located on Fruit Valley Road opened in 1944.

Thus, the Fruit Valley neighborhood's history and the identity of its residents are intertwined with the development of nearby industries, the demand for labor, and the need for workforce housing. When the war ended, the homes were sold and in 1947, the housing development was subdivided and given a new name, the Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision.

In 1948, the Vanport flood swept through Fruit Valley carrying three feet of flood water into residents' homes and lives. This disaster was the major reason for the formation of the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association. One of the association's first tasks was to facilitate the construction of a dike along the western border of the Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision. (A more complete history can be found in the Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision Design Handbook).

Characteristics of the Surrounding Area

The Fruit Valley planning area is surrounded by diverse landscapes and land uses. The long and narrow 614 acre plan area stretches from Mill Plain Boulevard on the south to Vancouver Lake on the north on both sides of Fruit Valley Road. North of the plan area is the Regional Burnt Bridge Creek Trailhead and single family housing near the shores of Vancouver Lake. The eastern boundary of the plan area is defined by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe north/south railroad tracks and the prominent treed-ridge above the tracks. The Vancouver Lake Lowlands, made up of sensitive wetlands and wildlife habitat with some agriculture and recreation uses, surround the plan area to the west and northwest. The Port of Vancouver and other industrial use land owners make up the south/southwest boundary area.

Within the next five years, the Port of Vancouver plans to develop 364 acres of land located just west of the plan area on land formerly used for a dairy farm. Although this development will take place outside of the planning area, it will impact Fruit Valley. While Port development will add to truck use of surrounding roadways and additional peak-hour traffic and congestion, it will also add jobs and employees that may help support additional local retail and service business in Fruit Valley.

Planning Area Characteristics

There are two primary land uses in the Fruit Valley Plan area – industrial (including both heavy and light industrial) and residential (including both single family and multifamily) and they have always been closely related, accepting, and cooperative, as explained in the history section above. Sixty one percent of the 614 plan acres are zoned for industrial uses.

Business and Industry

While Fruit Valley has its share of national name businesses, the majority are smaller and local, probably because the industrial parcels and buildings are smaller than contemporary industrial development demands. There are approximately 55 businesses within the plan area. Most of these businesses fit within the broad "industrial" category. Four major industry "clusters" can be identified:

- Warehousing, shipping and distribution. Many businesses are directly involved in shipping and receiving, and run freight trucks throughout the region, West Coast, and even in some cases nationwide. The larger the service area, the more likely the business is to also use rail.
- Packaging Non-food items. There is a packaging cluster anchored by Tetra Pak and Pac Paper
- Manufacturing. There are approximately a dozen businesses with a wide range of products from energy generation systems to chemicals.
- Food processing and packaging. One of the larger industries in the plan area includes Frito Lay that produces and packages food products. Additionally Food Express and Firestone Packing, packages and distributes food products.

Beyond those clusters a wide range of small and local business types predominate.

BNSF Railroad

Fruit Valley Industry

Agriculture

Agriculture, once the sole economic activity and the namesake of Fruit Valley, is still active and is essential to the area's identity, but is less important in aggregate economic terms. The Firestone family orchard, berry fields, and food packaging operation are a good example of Fruit Valley's historical economy. The Firestone family was one of the original farming families in Fruit Valley. Today their orchard is located on industrial zoned land adjacent to the BPA transmission towers and includes a small seasonal fruit and vegetable store.

Firestone Farms Fruit Stand

There are approximately 157 acres commercially farmed. Out of the 157 acres, approx. 17 acres are privately owned and are zoned industrial, 140 acres is city owned and zoned Lake Greenway District for agriculture and wildlife preservation uses. Today, farmers grow a variety of crops on the leased Lake Greenway District acres.

Berry Fields

The publicly owned community gardens located in the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Park were recently expanded based on growing demand for vegetable gardening space. Community gardening in Fruit Valley Park carries on the tradition of the area's agricultural history and the ethic of independence and self-reliance established by the working families that created the Fruit Valley neighborhood.

Commercial/Retail

A Chevron food mart and a Shell minit mart serve the planning area with convenience store goods. The Chevron also has the only small-sit down restaurant in the area. An approved mixed use development proposes multifamily housing, a Boys and Girls Club and a small retail/office space just north of the Fruit Valley school.

Institutional

A neighborhood focus, the Fruit Valley Elementary School is a hub of school and non-school events and activities. The family resource center housed within the school building contributes to these activities. The family resource center provides food for children to take home for the weekends, a pick up location for donated clothing, and family activities such as story time and computer use. Middle school children before catching their school bus may eat breakfast provided by the elementary school in the family resource center.

Fruit Valley Elementary School

A second neighborhood focus, the community center, is located within the Fruit Valley Park. It is owned by the City of Vancouver and the neighborhood association administers the daily operations and maintenance of the building. The neighborhood association organizes events, schedules meetings and leases the center to other users.

There are two public parks located in Fruit Valley, Liberty Park, a small children's playground park and the large centrally located Fruit Valley Park.

Residential

The core residential area includes the historic World War II housing named the Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision, a predominantly single family area east of the Fruit Valley Road, and a small mobile home park. The Fruit Valley School and Fruit Valley Park with a community center and gardens are located in the center of this core residential area. Two smaller residential neighborhoods are located on the far north and south ends of the planning area. Liberty Neighborhood Park is a small pocket park located at the far southern edge of the southernmost residential area.

Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision

Demographics

The 2000 US Census states that the population of Fruit Valley is 2,014. This number does not include the newer Plum Meadows housing development or the approved future McCallister Village development. Fruit Valley's race and ethnic make-up includes a higher percentage of Hispanic, Asian, and Native American than overall Vancouver does. Fruit Valley's Census tract has the second highest poverty rate in the City of Vancouver with 35% of the people living in poverty. This is triple Vancouver's overall poverty rate of 12%.

Plum Meadows Housing

Transportation

The Fruit Valley plan area is served primarily by Fruit Valley Road itself, a designated minor arterial roadway built to urban standard with curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and streetlights. Fruit Valley Road is accessed via several arterial roadways. At the north end, Fruit Valley Road continues north into Clark County as Lakeshore Road, or turns to the east up 78th Street, a principal arterial roadway, providing access to Interstate 5. On the south end Fourth Plain Boulevard, a 3-lane principal arterial roadway, and Mill Plain Boulevard, a principal arterial roadway and state route provide access to the plan area and the Port of Vancouver. Both Fourth Plain and Mill Plain Boulevards also provide access to Interstate 5. 39th Street enters the plan area from the east, just north of the core area of the Fruit Valley Neighborhood. 39th Street is a minor arterial roadway that bisects the Lincoln Neighborhood to the east and up the hill from Fruit Valley on its way to providing access to both Interstate 5 and State Route 500. The plan area has many local roadways that feed off Fruit Valley Road to serve residential, industrial, agricultural and recreational land uses.

Several years ago, the City and the Port of Vancouver evaluated a future 26th Avenue extension to serve as a new north/south arterial roadway located to the east of the residential area, and linking the Port of Vancouver with Fruit Valley Road at the north end of the plan area. A preliminary alignment has been identified and the Port of Vancouver will complete the southernmost portion of this proposed extension when it develops the former dairy farm lands east of the core Fruit Valley neighborhood. The remainder of the 26th extension, north of La Frambois Road, will only develop as future need warrants and funding is available.

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

Disconnected from Services

Physically separated by the BNSF railroad tracks, a steep ridge, and distance from daily destinations, Fruit Valley residents are disconnected from most commercial services. Aside from the two convenience markets within Fruit Valley, all services are distant enough that most residents need a car to reach them. For example, the nearest grocery store is near the intersection of 39th Street and Main Streets, nearly two miles from the core Fruit Valley neighborhood. Existing bus service is infrequent and falls short in offering convenient routes to shopping destinations limiting access to healthy food options. The relatively small residential population and the abundance of industry within the plan area do not support the required market demand for significant or even medium scale commercial services such as a neighborhood grocery store to locate within the plan boundary (refer to the Leland Report found in the appendix). Fruit Valley has the poorest access to healthy food of any neighborhood in Vancouver.

Pedestrian Circulation

Fruit Valley's main street is Fruit Valley Road, a large road that bisects the neighborhood. Although Fruit Valley Road has been improved for pedestrian, vehicle and truck traffic safety, area residents feel that specific locations and intersections, especially in the vicinity of the elementary school and along school walk routes, provide less than adequate opportunities for safe roadway crossing. Freight traffic, particularly near the school is seen as a potentially dangerous aspect of the interface and an area where ongoing vigilance will be needed. Fruit Valley's major features need to be more effectively connected into a cohesive circulation network.

Disconnected from the Natural Area

The Vancouver Lake and Lowlands, one of the largest natural open space areas of the region lies adjacent and to the west of the plan area and yet there is little access beyond La Frambois Road itself to the open space. Protecting these natural areas and enhancing pedestrian connections to provide opportunities for all ages to enjoy and learn about nature is a high priority for the Fruit Valley Neighborhood.

Opportunities

Fruit Valley's Center

Fruit Valley's neighborhood center is clearly defined by key features that include the Fruit Valley park, community center building, and community gardens; the Fruit Valley Elementary school and family resource center; a church; two gas station/minit marts, (one with a sit-down restaurant); and a proposed Boys and Girls Club with a small retail space. Closely interwoven and surrounding this center is the subarea's major population of both single and multi-family homes. The cohesive design and availability of the community center, park, and community gardens are assets other neighborhoods wish they had.

Retail and Commercial

Based on a review of conditions within and near the Fruit Valley neighborhood, and a survey of the retail and commercial industry principles, these are the key retail and commercial opportunities in the area:

The Kauffman Center

The relatively small residential population and the abundance of industry within the plan area do not support the required market demand for significant or larger-scale commercial services such as a grocery store to locate within the plan boundary. However, located at 4th Plain Boulevard and Kauffman Avenue is an existing neighborhood shopping center that is vacant. It has spaces suitable for a grocery store or pharmacy, and a number of smaller retail tenants. Since it is the closest usable retail space to the neighborhood, additional retail at this location is desirable, as it would

enable residents to meet daily needs easily and conveniently.

Healthy Corner Stores

HCS) - are a relatively new concept in which produce and staple foods are added to the convenience products already carried by most corner stores in order to give nearby resident's easier access to healthy foods and to strengthen local communities. Clark County Public Health was recently awarded a grant to work with the neighborhood to evaluate opportunities to increase access to healthy food and investigate the feasibility of this approach.

The Affordable Community Environments

(ACE) Development - includes a small 1400 sq foot retail/office space within the project. The neighborhood could collaborate with ACE to identify a desirable tenant for this planned commercial space. There are a number of options for the small space. The most viable and desirable tenants according to the City's Economic Development consultant, are a dry cleaner, deli coffee shop, medical or dental office, and salon. Regardless of the use, it will be a challenging location for business because of the absence of parking in front, limited available parking behind, relatively limited foot traffic, and absence of adjacent retailers.

Industrial – Residential Interface

Throughout the plan process, both businesses and residents were universally positive about the relationship between businesses, the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association, and residents. It was stated clearly that they saw "no reason we can't have thriving businesses and a healthy neighborhood." Both the neighborhood association and businesses showed enthusiasm about working together in the future. Nonetheless, freight traffic, particularly near the school is seen as a potentially dangerous aspect of the interface and an area where ongoing vigilance will be needed.

Improved Connections

Better connections through improvements to the transit, automobile, bike, and pedestrian networks will allow Fruit Valley residents to more easily reach retailers beyond the neighborhood. Improving these connections is important since most residents currently make a large share of their purchases outside of the Fruit Valley area, a trend that is likely to continue in the future. Important retail destinations to which transit connections should be maintained or improved include Winco, Safeway, Walmart, Uptown and Downtown Vancouver. The completion of the 39th Street overpass will significantly improve connectivity.

History

Significant features of Fruit Valley's remarkable history remain - the World War II Shipyard Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision, working agriculture fields and community gardens, and the nearby natural history of the Vancouver Lake Lowlands. The Fruit Valley residents value their neighborhood's history and wish to preserve and enhance the area's historic features and document its significance.

Regional Open Space and Trail

As the westernmost neighborhood, Fruit Valley acts as the City's gateway to the regionally significant Vancouver Lake and Lowlands natural area. This area provides an abundance of open space with regionally significant wildlife habitat, recreation, potential interpretation of both the natural and Native American histories, and access to the proposed future extension of the Lake to Lake Regional trail. Protecting and enhancing this natural area is a high priority for the Fruit Valley neighborhood.

The Concept - “Getting Better Connected”

The Vision

A clean pleasant environment welcomes residents, businesses, employees and visitors; neighbors conveniently access goods and services; industry, businesses, and neighborhoods coexist and prosper; new micro businesses develop; safe inviting places for people to play, walk and ride bicycles are plentiful; the original shipyard housing character retains its historic charm; and an interconnected park, trails and open space system allows for recreation and mobility.

The Concept Diagram

The concept diagram (shown on the following page) illustrates the neighborhood’s vision, key features, and identified opportunities.

Concept Key Elements

The concept "Getting Better Connected" consists of seven major elements: 1) Creating a healthy neighborhood, 2) Creating a safe neighborhood, 3) Preserving historic neighborhood character, 4) Maximizing the potential of the Fruit Valley Community Center, 5) Growing Businesses, 6) Improving access and circulation, and 7) Opening access to open space and trail opportunities in the Vancouver Lake lowlands.

A Healthy Neighborhood

A neighborhood's overall health is connected to factors of the environment and physical design. Fruit Valley's vision for a healthy livable neighborhood focuses on conditions that influence the health of individuals; increasing safe pedestrian connectivity, increasing access to open spaces and safe places for physical activity, improving opportunities for purchasing and growing healthy foods, assuring affordable housing and promoting economic development opportunities. These conditions are associated with improving overall health and reducing the rate of chronic diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and stroke. Additionally, a healthy environment is associated with reduced rates of depression and anxiety. We all share in the responsibility of supporting and fostering overall health and well-being through encouraging neighborhood environments that support an individual's ability to make healthy choices. Better connections improve daily living conditions and are essential in achieving health equity for all residents and Vancouver neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Safety and Security

Crime and the fear of crime seriously impacts neighborhood residents, as well as workers and visitors who frequent a neighborhood. Over the past few years, Fruit Valley has experienced an increase in gang related vandalism and crime. The Fruit Valley neighborhood responded to this increase by volunteering in the Neighbors on Watch (NOW) program and encouraging the Fruit Valley School to expand gang awareness education programs for their students. Fruit Valley benefits from these existing crime prevention programs that also fuel the neighborhood's strong sense of community and tendency to look out for each other. Another potential tool to help decrease crime in Fruit Valley is the use of crime prevention through environment design principles. These principles include: designing for maximum visibility on and around properties; designing with physical and symbolic barriers that attract, channel or restrict the movement of people minimizing opportunities for crime; and encouraging the up keep of property to show that the community 'owns' the neighborhood.

Historic Neighborhood Character

One of Fruit Valley's distinctive features is that it is the city's largest community of remaining World War II housing, built in the 1940's by the federal government to house Aluminum Corporation of America and Kaiser Shipyard workers. The residents of the Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision (FVHS) are proud of its history. The neighborhood has survived several challenges; the decline of the war-related construction efforts and the 1948 VanPort Flood. It has survived primarily because as early as 1949, residents banded together to preserve the neighborhood's identity and protect its interests.

Fruit Valley Residences

Fruit Valley residents are living in a piece of history, and many of the buildings in the FVHS are older than the people who now own them. With care, these historic structures will survive for many more generations. The residents value their neighborhood history and wish to document its significance to the city at large and to the neighborhood's unique identity. Regarding documentation, the city completed a historic inventory of the Fruit Valley Homes World War II Subdivision (287 houses) and a historic context and survey report (see the FVHS Design Handbook). The inventory forms have been submitted to the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). Both the inventory forms and the survey report are required by DAHP, if and when, the neighborhood determines to move forward with a historic district nomination for the Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision. In addition, color posters illustrating Fruit Valley's significant history were presented to the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association and Fruit Valley Elementary School to display in the Community Center and School buildings.

To further help preserve the historic character of the FVHS, the city with neighborhood resident participation should develop design guidelines to encourage period appropriate house orientation, construction materials and architectural design.

Fruit Valley Community Center

Historically, an important neighborhood focus, the Fruit Valley Community Center was built in the 1940s along with the Fruit Valley Homes war worker housing. Reflecting early planning principles, the housing project incorporated a park and community center to stimulate community cooperation.

Fruit Valley Community Center

Since the time of its completion, the community center has served as the neighborhood's gathering place. The building was originally the office where people went to pay their rent and take care of other administrative tasks. Soon after, the community center's uses were expanded to include a wide variety of neighborhood activities, including dances, movies, children's programs and church services. In its more recent history, the building served as a fire station. It eventually returned to its original use as a community center. Currently, the City of Vancouver owns the building and the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association (FVNA) administers its daily maintenance and operations. The FVNA uses the

building for its monthly meetings and organized neighborhood events, as well as leasing it out to other groups for meetings and events.

The City recognizes that the FVNA has devoted many volunteer hours planning, organizing and performing hard manual work in the upkeep of the community center. However, the building is showing its age (nearly 70 years) and outdated spatial design limits its usefulness. Neighborhood residents have several innovative ideas for how the community center could serve a much wider neighborhood constituency. A remodel that modernizes the building's structure and function with efficient space design and energy efficient construction would allow the community center to serve the neighborhood at its full potential and would honor the tradition of the community center's role as the hub for community cooperation.

Additionally, neighborhood residents feel strongly that any future remodel should retain the center's purpose to primarily benefit the neighborhood and that the remodel design should respect and reflect the historic neighborhood context. Any remodel or alteration of the community center's building footprint should consider the neighborhood context, avoid impacting the park's setting and features, and be closely coordinated with the Parks Department.

Business Growth and Development

Industry

Fruit Valley's long and prosperous history of business and industry continues today. Advantages of locating business in the Fruit Valley plan area include access to I-5, rail, and Port facilities, reasonable price of land and buildings, and proximity to housing.

Business and Industry

The Leland Consulting Group expects that new business and industrial development within the plan area will continue at a modest rate in the near and long term timeframes. The limitations of the remaining vacant land supply such as floodplain constraints and a low number of available parcels will continue to restrict business development within the Fruit Valley plan area. However, the proposed 26th Street extension could have a positive impact on business development by connecting Lower River Road to Fruit Valley Road. This could stimulate and increase the economic viability of development on adjacent land particularly on several parcels that are currently buildable but vacant.

Leland Consulting Group interviewed 13 business owners and managers representing a wide range of businesses and the Port of Vancouver. An outcome of the interviews is a list of key actions the business managers and owners thought would have a significant positive impact on the profitable operations of their businesses. The identified key public sector actions include:

- Maintain and improve access to Interstate 5,
- Make safety improvements to the bridge on Fruit Valley Road and NW Whitney Road,
- Maintain the area's industrial zoning, and
- Make the permitting process quicker and easier for expansions and new construction.

Small Scale Urban Farming

Farming and agriculture played an important role in Fruit Valley's history with both large scale commercial agriculture and community scale agriculture (WWII Liberty Community Gardens). Although most of the orchards and farming fields are covered with housing and industry, some of the city's largest remaining farmed land and only agriculture cluster are found in the Fruit Valley plan area. Additionally, City Community gardens serve Fruit Valley residents and the demand for garden plots continues to grow. The City of Vancouver's Community Garden program recently added 8 additional garden plots now providing 28 (10,000 sq ft) in the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Park.

Fruit Valley Park Community Gardens

Fruit Valley individuals and the greater neighborhood can benefit from small scale urban farming. A study completed by Portland State University School of Urban Studies and planning documents that in low income neighborhoods, when individuals and families are supported and encouraged to garden, gardeners have been able to create stronger local communities because of their gardens. A survey of the gardeners indicates that 86% of them share food with people who do not live with them and 32% say they have met neighbors through gardening. Additional results show an increase of 44% in the number of households that ate fresh vegetables five or more times a week, and an 80% increase of the number of households that spent time outside more than five times a week after their garden was installed.[1]

Many Fruit Valley residential lots are large enough for home gardens; some are even large enough to act as a neighborhood garden. One property owner in the Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision has as much as 1,000 sq feet planned for growing vegetables, herbs, and flowers. The owner has involved neighbors in the creation, maintenance, and harvesting of this growing neighborhood garden. The Fruit Valley Elementary School maintains a vegetable garden for science education and healthy food harvesting. The manager of Fruit Valley Commons plans to develop several garden plots this spring for the apartment residents.

Several Fruit Valley residents see their neighborhood as an opportunity rich community for small scale urban farming and associated micro enterprise. They are interested in expanding the support needed to encourage gardeners and in developing businesses related to their gardens – for example, selling the produce itself or processing and selling it. The central location of the Fruit Valley Community Center to the neighborhood, park andcommunity gardens, and the growing neighborhood interest in urban farming provides a unique environment and opportunity to encourage small scale urban farming and its numerous associated activities in the Fruit Valley neighborhood.

Urban farming is an important component for increasing access to healthy food, opportunities for community connections, and increase in physical activity. With encouragement and support, urban farming may also provide a catalyst for developing food micro enterprises.

[1] Nohad A. Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning Portland State University, The Diggable City: Making Urban Agriculture a Planning Priority, June 2005

Micro Enterprise

Micro enterprises contribute significantly to economic growth, social stability, and equity. The sector is one of the most important vehicles through which low-income people can escape poverty. A typical micro-enterprise has fewer than 5 employees, often family members, has limited capital assets under $1,000, uses simple technologies, is labor intensive, obtains its raw materials locally, and markets its products locally. This diverse group requires a variety of support to grow and improve. They lack access to services such as marketing and training in business skills. But they do not lack potential.[2]

Micro enterprise assistance programs serve participants in workforce development programs, the unemployed, low-income and moderate-income persons with training and financing to start and grow small home based businesses. These programs help to prepare individuals who are interested in self-employment for the challenge of successfully owning their own business by:

- helping evaluate interests and abilities;
- exploring concepts and commitments of self-employment;
- providing materials and coaching;
- offering one-on-one mentoring to help create a plan for starting and growing business; and
- exploring financial options.

The Fruit Valley neighborhood's demographics, interest in small scale urban farming, existing agriculture business presence, and the potential for creative re-use of the community center, presents a unique set of factors supportive to the development of a focused food micro enterprise program for interested Fruit Valley residents. To determine the likelihood of such an opportunity, the city with potential partners would need to examine the idea more closely.

Access and Circulation

Getting better connected begins with identifying desirable local destinations. The primary destination within Fruit Valley is the neighborhood center focused on the intersection of Fruit Valley and La Frambois Roads. It includes Fruit Valley Park, Community Center and gardens, Elementary School, a church, and an approved mixed use development with multifamily housing, a small retail and office space, and a Boys and Girls Club. The nearby Chevron food mart and Shell mini-mart are important local retail destinations.

Outside of the immediate neighborhood, destinations to the east include downtown Vancouver, Fourth Plain Boulevard, and 39th Street. Each route provides access to a variety of retail opportunities and services not available in Fruit Valley. The vacant Kauffman Commercial Center on Fourth Plain Boulevard is the nearest retail center with the market potential to provide a small grocery store. In the future, the Kauffman Center - accessible by foot, bike, car, or public transit - could become an important close by retail and service destination for Fruit Valley residents.

West of Fruit Valley, the Vancouver Lake natural area, including the oak woodland and the proposed alignment for the Lake to Lake Regional trail[3] are popular neighborhood destinations. The "dike" just west of the historic Fruit Valley neighborhood is also a popular local recreation destination, although its use is strictly informal.

[2] Inter-American Development Bank, Web site

[3] The regional trails plan includes linking many existing trails to create a continuous network from Lacamas Lake in east Clark County with Vancouver Lake in the west.

City consultants and staff working directly with the Fruit Valley stakeholders identified transportation opportunities for enhancing bicycle and pedestrian connections and creating unique neighborhood streets appropriate to the uses and environment of Fruit Valley. A complete description of the following transportation opportunities and recommendations is included in the Plan Appendix C. Brief descriptions are provided below.

Enhancing Pedestrian and Bike Connections

Walkable communities include safe and inviting pedestrian corridors. Expanding transportation options and creating a streetscape that better serves a range of users – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and automobiles would improve Fruit Valley's connectivity, livability and safety for businesses, residents and visitors. The pedestrian and bike connections needed for a unified circulation network are listed below.

- Fourth Plain Boulevard walkway improvements within existing right-of-way; especially at the intersection of Fruit Valley Road.
- Design treatments to focus and make safer the frequent mid-block crossings of Fruit Valley Road between 34th Street and 36th Street.
- Fruit Valley Road and La Frambois Road/West 34th intersection is signalized on Fruit Valley Road, but is stop controlled for the side streets in order to provide crossing protection for the school. However, this configuration creates some confusion among motorists and is a point of concern for Fruit Valley residents. This issue could be addressed by signalizing the side streets or providing additional signage.
- Design treatments to make La Frambois Road frontage for the school and park a pedestrian priority street.
- Design cross-section for La Frambois Road west of the neighborhood to provide better bike and pedestrian facilities continuously to Vancouver Lake.
- Continue planning and implementation of proposed trail through the Vancouver Lake and Lowlands natural area.
- Continue planning and implementation of a 26th Avenue extension. Including a parallel multiuse pathway connection to La Frambois Road and the planned regional trail.
- Continue cooperation and advocacy with CTran for high quality transit service for Fruit Valley employers and residences.

Creating Unique Neighborhood Streetscapes

Residents often feel a strong sense of ownership of their neighborhood streets. Developing unique streetscape qualities for important streets can increase a sense of ownership and neighborhood identity. In the Fruit Valley neighborhood, two streets provide that opportunity.[4]

- Fruit Valley Road serves two primary functions within the neighborhood. It is the neighborhood Main Street and it is the only north-south access route for bicycle and vehicle travel, as well as for the truck movements associated with the local commercial and industrial uses. Recent improvements to the street include bike lanes and a complete sidewalk system. When the NW 26th Avenue extension is completed, the southern portion of Fruit Valley Road through the core of the neighborhood should be modified to emphasize its role as a major neighborhood street. [See Appendix C, Figure 6, Pages 6-9]

[4] See Appendix B for a detailed discussion of transportation/accessibility issues and opportunities and Appendix C for illustrated design recommendations for area streets.

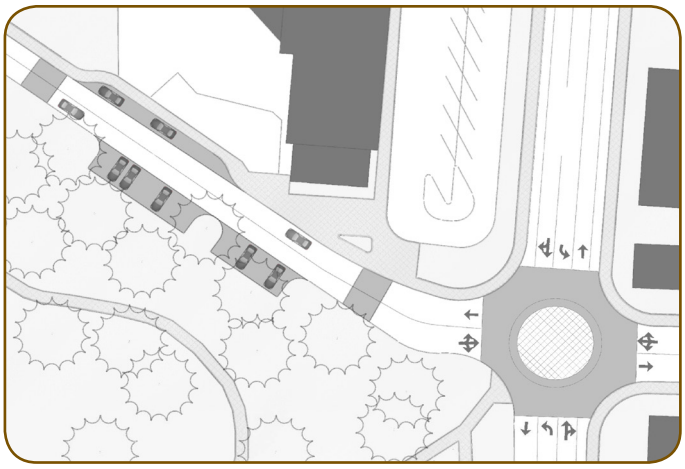
- La Frambois Road offers two neighborhood gateway opportunities. The intersection with Fruit Valley Road marks the arrival at the heart of the neighborhood center and the beginning of access to Vancouver Lake and the lowlands natural area. Street design elements within the right-of-way or visible from the street can be explored to emphasize this important intersection within the neighborhood street system. A second gateway opportunity coincides with the western edge of the historic neighborhood. Design treatments for the street should discourage through truck travel and signify a transition from light industrial to neighborhood street. [See Appendix C, Pages 2 and 4]

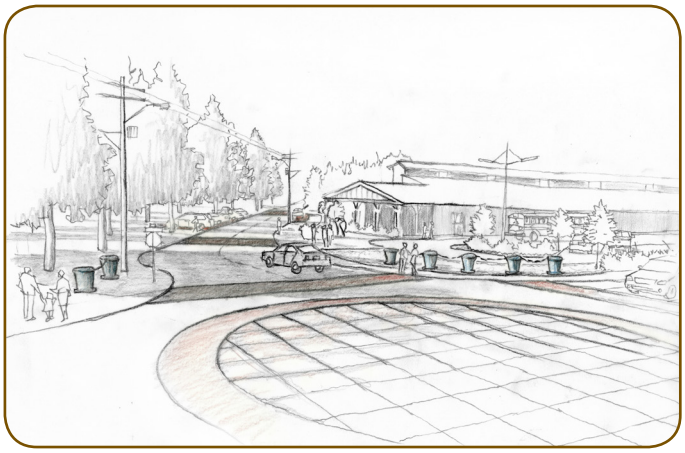
- Between the two gateways - La Frambois should be a pedestrian priority street. The design should emphasize pedestrian-friendly improvements that connect the park and the school. Local vehicle traffic would be at low speeds and volumes, and the design should discourage through truck traffic. Future street improvements should consider Green Street facilities for stormwater management. [See Appendix C, Page 3]

- West of the neighborhood - La Frambois will take on two other distinct characters. From just west of the neighborhood to several hundred feet past the Bonneville Power Administration right-of-way, La Frambois will serve both recreational accesses for all travel modes and as a secondary access to local business park development. From that point west, La Frambois will continue to be used solely for recreational access to the Vancouver Lake lowlands. [See Appendix C, Page 5]

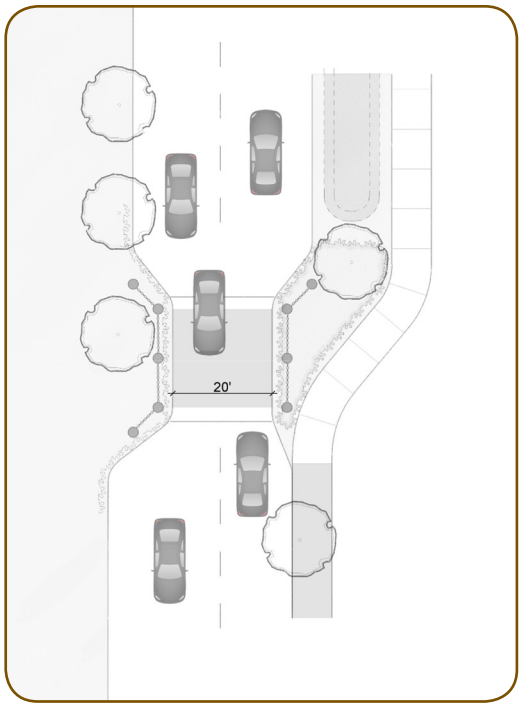
Green Streets

Green Streets are a unique opportunity for the residences and businesses of the Fruit Valley neighborhood.
Green Street strategies include innovative stormwater management techniques, safe and appealing pedestrian environment, reflect a community desire for a sustainable relationship between the natural systems and the built environment, and visual and physical connections to important community and open spaces. The low elevation of Fruit Valley, the relatively high water table, and proximity to both Vancouver Lake and the Columbia River make Fruit Valley an ideal location to apply green street principles to minimize stormwater runoff.





Emphasize Fruit Valley Road and La Frambois Intersection as a Gateway



Discourage Truck Traffic at La Frambois Road West Gateway

Open Space, Parks, and Regional Trails

Value of Parks, Trails & Open Space

Fruit Valley has a rich history of close relationships with its natural resources. Proximity and connections to the rich agricultural soils, the waters of Vancouver Lake and the Columbia River have helped shape the community's character and continue to provide opportunities for its future. Expanding the connections and amenities of parks, trails and open spaces within the community will enhance the quality of life for local residents.

Liberty Park

Role of Neighborhood Park

Acquired in 1948 with initial development as a park in 1989, the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Park plays a pivotal role as a community center and vital open space. The park should continue to provide a focus for recreational activities and community open space, a place for people to connect and interact in a shared, public environment, offering a sense of place and neighborhood identity. The community gardens may be expanded to meet growing demand for local vegetable production for individuals and families. The existing community center located within the park provides limited opportunities for programming that relates to food production and healthy nutritional choices. Any future renovation of the community center building should be carefully integrated with the other values that the neighborhood park provides for Fruit Valley residents.

Fruit Valley Park

Local Connections to Regional Trails

The proposed regional trails identified in the Vancouver Paths and Trails Master Plan (adopted in 2004) and the Regional Trail & Bikeway Systems Plan (adopted in 2006) will connect Fruit Valley to pedestrian/bicycle access to Vancouver Lake and Frenchman's Bar Regional Parks and the Stewart Glen trailhead for the Burnt Bridge Creek (BBC) Greenway Trail. While those regional trails address the larger system of connectivity, the Fruit Valley neighborhood has an opportunity to connect through local trails, sidewalks, and public corridors to the future regional recreational amenity. The Lewis and Clark Discovery Greenway regional trail alignment runs east-west along the southern boundary of the Fruit Valley Neighborhood. The alignment of the future western section of the Lake to Lake Regional Trail would connect the existing BBC trail through the Vancouver Lake Lowlands and the Port of Vancouver to the Lewis and Clark Regional Trail alighnment. Connecting to this future trail would allow Fruit Valley residents to access recreational and wildlife observation opportunities through the lowlands to the western edges of the lake at the regional park.

Trailhead Destinations

The eventual implementation of the Lake to Lake Regional Trail will trigger a need for trailhead facilities to support the trail users and provide points of embarkation on the trail. Locating a trailhead facility within Fruit Valley can create a hub of activity with positive influences for both the neighborhood and the trail. The Lake to Lake Trail is designated to follow the top of the dike through the lowlands connecting to Fruit Valley Road near an extension of NW 61st Street and connecting to an alignment parallel with La Frambois Road west of the future 26th Avenue extension. A future

trailhead with restroom and parking facilities at either or both of these connections could provide a recreational support amenity to benefit both the regional trail users and neighborhood side trail uses. A future trail head near the intersection of La Frambois and the 26th Avenue extension would give proximity access to the oak woodland, an identified destination target of Fruit Valley residents who enjoy walking in their nearby natural public lands.Future improvements in the Vancouver Lake Lowlands should be guided by the development of a master development and management plan conducted by the Parks Department. The plan would evaluate opportunities for public access and use in balance with continued habitat restoration and land management activities.

"The Dike"

Location

Owned by the City of Vancouver "the dike" is located directly west of the Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision and between La Frambois Road to the north and Lower River Road to the south. To the west is a flat grassy utility corridor and large fenced settling ponds owned by the city.

"The Dike"

Background

In 1948, the Vanport flood swept through Fruit Valley carrying three feet of flood water into residents' homes and lives. This disaster unified the community and spurred the formation of the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Association. The association's first task was to facilitate the construction of "the dike" along the western border of the Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision. In the years since the construction of "the dike", many changes in development and road elevations within the Fruit Valley area have occurred replacing "the dike's" original purpose.

In 2007, the city and county in response to the FEMA Map Modernization Project, reviewed the Preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM) and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Report for Clark County. The City of Vancouver filed a formal protest on the mapping accuracy. The city's protest provided accurate and up to date information to FEMA for their analysis to better determine the flood plain and flood fringe within the city. Depending on FEMA's determination, development in Fruit Valley may be subjected to additional local, state, and federal regulations. At this time, FEMA has not made a determination on the new city provided mapping and elevation data.

"The Dike" Today

Fruit Valley residents appreciate "the dike" as an informal trail and open space adjacent to their neighborhood. On snowy day's children slide down its slopes, families take evening strolls and watch the sunset from the top, and many use "the dike" as a connecting north/south path. In addition to acting as an informal neighborhood trail and open space, "the dike", if strategically planted with trees could double as a trail/open space and buffer from future industrial development to the west.

Policies

Business and Services

FV-1 Encourage new industry and business to locate in Fruit Valley.

FV-2 Support existing industry and business prosperity by maintaining and improving road access to Interstate 5; making safety improvements to the bridge on Fruit Valley Road and NW Whitney Road; maintaining the area's industrial zoning; and streamlining the permitting process for expansions and new construction.

FV-3 Encourage and support the development and growth of micro enterprise in Fruit Valley.

FV-4 Build on the historic as well as current strength of the area in food production. Encourage diversity in scale and type of agriculture businesses including but not limited to:

- large scale commercial agriculture and food manufacturing;
- community supported agriculture;
- small market gardens, farmer's markets, community gardens, food stands, home gardens; and
- community commercial kitchens for incubator food businesses,

to all prosper in Fruit Valley.

FV-5 Continue leasing the Vancouver Lake Greenway District properties for both large and small scale food production.

FV-6 Encourage businesses that provide a community service to locate within or very near the plan area, such as a deli/coffee shop, laundromat, etc.

FV-7 Explore all options to improve local Fruit Valley access to a full range of groceries including:

- Promote the Kauffman Center site for the location of a full service grocery store;
- Support partners in the development and operation of healthy grocery programs within Fruit Valley; and
- Support Food Cooperatives/Buyers Clubs/Farm Stands.

FV-8 Consider opportunities to plant edible landscaping, thus further increasing access to neighborhood food sources.

FV-9 Preserve the neighborhood's agricultural heritage and provide healthy food sources by planting fruit trees within new residential developments and existing neighborhoods.

Fruit Valley Community Center

FV-10 Recognize the neighborhood's hard work and devotion in maintaining and operating the community center as a significant neighborhood resource by ensuring: a continued partnership with the city, retention of the center's purpose to primarily benefit the neighborhood, and support to the neighborhood in applying for funding to aid in the building's long term viability.

FV-11 Proposed Fruit Valley Community Center remodels shall compliment the historic neighborhood context and include energy efficient construction, efficient space design, and needed tools to facilitate additional programming.

FV-12 Support and cooperate with the neighborhood to determine appropriate uses for a remodeled community center, including but not limited to, the potential for neighborhood food preparation and education and micro-business incubation.

FV-13 Any remodel or reconfiguration of the community center building shall be integrated to fit within the neighborhood park's functional spaces without compromising the value and connectivity of the public open space.

Neighborhood Character

FV-14 Preserve the livability and aesthetic character of Fruit Valley residential neighborhoods.

FV-15 Encourage property owners to keep their properties maintained in accordance with city code.

FV-16 Encourage new residential and mixed-use development to include community gardens or resident gardens.

FV-17 Encourage compatibility of new residential development with original historic neighborhood design and character.

FV-18 Preserve and enhance the significant historic street and neighborhood patterns of the historic WWII Fruit Valley Homes Subdivision (FVHS) and encourage upgrading and remodeling existing residential structures rather than demolition and new construction.

FV-19 Utilize flexible design standards and innovative surface water management solutions to ensure that street design is in keeping with the historic context and is appropriate for the function of the street and character of the FVHS subdivision (such as no curb and gutter requirements).

Access and Circulation

FV-20 Make the pedestrian environment safe, convenient, attractive and accessible for all users through planning and developing a network of continuous sidewalks, pathways, and crossing improvements.

FV-21 Utilize passive traffic calming methods where appropriate to create a safe pedestrian environment.

Pedestrian Connections

FV-22 Improve pedestrian circulation both within and to and from the plan area, especially connecting to nearby destinations.

FV-23 Sustain the existing respectful relationship between residents and industry by providing a safe and efficient circulation network for pedestrians, automobiles and trucks.

FV-24 Evaluate traffic calming strategies at the intersection of La Frambois and Fruit Valley Road to identify improvements that will enhance safety and create a gateway to Fruit Valley's Center.

FV-25 Evaluate and implement needed Fruit Valley Road pedestrian crossing enhancements between 31st and 39th streets to serve children and other community members accessing the school, the park, and other neighborhood destinations.

FV-26 Complete missing sidewalk links to ensure pedestrian safety and encourage pedestrian mobility.

FV-27 Evaluate and improve the pedestrian environment and crossing safety at the Fourth Plain Blvd and Fruit Valley Road intersection. Specifically, evaluate a crossing on the intersection's east leg.

FV-28 Create bike and pedestrian connections to the open space areas surrounding Vancouver Lake and to Vancouver Lake Park and Frenchman's Bar Park.

FV-29 Establish a foot and bike pathway that connects residential and industrial areas with the Vancouver Lake natural area.

Street Character

Fruit Valley Road

FV-30 In the future, if the proposed 26th street is extended north to meet Fruit Valley Road, the city should reconsider Fruit Valley Road's purpose within the larger Fruit Valley circulation network, and consider making Fruit Valley Road in the vicinity of the park and school more of a neighborhood roadway.

La Frambois Street

FV-31 Develop and maintain a small scale pedestrian character for La Frambois Street extending from Fruit Valley Road to the western edge of the residential neighborhood. Any new street trees planted on the pedestrian portion of La Frambois should be large canopy to support a comfortable enclosed pedestrian environment.

FV-32 Create a gateway feature at the intersection of La Frambois and Fruit Valley Road as a pedestrian/bike entrance to the Vancouver Lake Lowlands natural area. Gateway features should include but not be limited to, special signage, way-finding, landscaping, street trees, paving and/or structures.

FV-33 Provide low impact pedestrian and surface water improvements on the north side of La Frambois Street.

FV-34 Create a gateway feature at the west end of the Fruit Valley neighborhood on La Frambois that may include a traffic "choker" to cut down the use of La Frambois for through traffic. The proposed 26th Avenue will become the main public entrance to the Vancouver Lake recreation area.

Parks, Open Space and Regional Trails

FV-35 Expand the number of plots in the Fruit Valley Park community garden available for Fruit Valley residents and support linkages between community, individual and school garden programs.

FV-36 Preserve the neighborhood's agricultural heritage by maintaining the Vancouver Lake Greenway zoning designation on City owned property.

FV-37 Locate and develop a Trailhead facility along the proposed Lake to Lake Regional Trail alignment that supports Fruit Valley residents' trail use and connections.

FV-38 Trail connection opportunities, such as the "Old Dike" between recreational and open space sites should preserve public access.

FV-39 Continue to protect the Vancouver Lake Lowland's wildlife and natural areas by establishing native plantings and removing invasive species.

FV-40 Develop a master development and management plan for the Vancouver Lake Lowlands that will guide future improvements for public access as well as habitat restoration and land management activities.

Sustainable Site and Development Design

FV-41 Promote sustainable practices minimizing the use of energy, water, and other natural resources and providing a healthy productive environment.

FV-42 Invite and consider new innovative sustainable design practices in all Fruit Valley development.

FV-43 Incorporate sustainable building practices or techniques into development design such as LEED, and to the extent possible, reduces its energy consumption or that generates its own energy with renewable resources, that captures and treats all of its water on site, and uses resources efficiently and for maximum beauty.

FV-44 Consider innovative low impact stormwater management systems, as much as practicable, with the overall site and development designs.

Neighborhood Safety and Security

FV-45 Ensure a safe Fruit Valley Neighborhood for residents, businesses and visitors by applying elements of crime prevention through environmental design:

1. Natural Surveillance - designing for maximum visibility on and around properties.
    - Lighting - Street lights should be well spaced and in working order. Lighting along pathways should be low enough to be unobstructed. Business and residential parking lots, walkways, building entrances and exits, and common areas should be lit day and night. Lighting in areas that are not active both day and night should reflect the hours of intended operation. Motion sensor lighting should be used to provide lighting when it is needed while also letting trespassers know they can be seen.
    - Site design - The placement and design of physical features on a site should allow for unobstructed views on and through the site. This includes building orientation, door and window, and entry and exit placements for maximum street and site interior viewing.
    - Landscaping - Plantings should follow the '3-8 rule of thumb' in which hedges are no higher than 3-feet and trees are no lower than 8-feet, especially around entryways, windows and along paths.
    - Fencing - Fences should be built lower and have regular openings to provide visibility.

2. Natural Access Control - Design physical and symbolic barriers that attract, channel, or restrict the movement of people minimizing opportunities for crime. This includes homes, businesses, parks and other public areas that have distinct and legitimate entries and exits.
    - Homes - Doors (both front and back) on single and multi-family residences should be clearly visible and well lit.
    - Businesses - should have only one legitimate entrance that is visible and well lit and should avoid recessed doorways.
    - Parks - should be designed with open, uninhibited access, and have one well defined entry point. Community buildings, vendors and restrooms should be located near the entry to create more traffic and surveillance.
    - Public buildings and spaces - all public buildings should site restrooms close to entries so that they are visible. Restrooms located on the edge of a site, or down a long hall way are more likely to attract problems.

3. Territoriality/ Defensible Space - Encourage the upkeep of property to show that the community 'owns' the neighborhood.
    - Reporting of nuisance crime should be promoted through the Neighborhood on Watch (NOW) program and improved surveillance by the neighborhood.

- Volunteer graffiti removal, trash clean-up and yard and building maintenance programs should be encouraged.
- The owners of buildings with walls that have large areas of blank space should be encouraged to plant vines or other vegetation that can take away potential places for graffiti.
- Buildings, porches, windows and balconies should be built to face the street and/or the site interior to provide more opportunity for interaction between neighbors and street surveillance.
- Work with city parks, schools, and non-profit organizations to program more events and recreation opportunities in the neighborhood to help create a strong sense of community and provide children and young adults with positive activities.

Implementing Recommendations

- Explore and pursue available resources that support the development process for urban farming associated activities and micro enterprise.
- Explore funding opportunities for community center rehabilitation.
- Encourage private owners to make unused properties available for use as neighborhood gardens.
- Evaluate zoning codes for barriers in allowing food production and distribution on properties within the Fruit Valley SubArea Plan.
- Review new development proposals to ensure routes to healthy food are provided, including but not limited to transit, pedestrian and bicycle opportunities.
- Assure residents have access to community programs that support a food secure household; WIC, senior meals, school and summer lunch programs, SNAP and emergency food services.
- Work with agency partners and other stakeholders to enhance the water access at the lake end of La Frambois Road.
- Add trash and recycling receptacles and doggie bag dispensers at the entrances to Fruit Valley Park and Community Center.
- Determine if a tree planting plan is appropriate for the “Old Dike” considering that a city utility corridor is adjacent to it. If trees are found to be appropriate, ensure trees are planted to fulfill the goals of buffering the neighborhood from future industry to the west and maintaining an informal trail on the dike.

APPENDIX A
Retail and Commercial Opportunities Analysis

Fruit Valley Subarea Plan

FINAL DRAFT

TO: Sandra Towne, City of Vancouver

FROM: Brian Vanneman and Chris Zahas, Leland Consulting Group

DATE: 29 October 2009
Project Number: 4910

Introduction

The 2008 Fruit Valley Neighborhood Action Plan, states that Fruit Valley residents would like to see more retail and commercial offerings added to the neighborhood. Objective 2 of the Action Plan is "Economic Development" and includes two action steps, both related to retail/commercial services:

- "Encourage businesses that provide a community service to locate within our boundaries, such as a post office, grocery, store, laundromat, etc."
- "Develop a farmers market or food co-op."

The purpose of this memorandum is to follow up on the neighborhood's stated desire for additional retail and commercial opportunities, identify the most realistic opportunities, and assess the context and challenges for retail in Fruit Valley. This document has been completed as part of the planning efforts for the City of Vancouver's Fruit Valley Subarea Plan, which is being completed during 2009 and 2010. Following this introduction, the memorandum moves on to a Findings section, followed by Existing Conditions and Appendices.

Findings

Primary Opportunities

Based on a review of conditions within and near the Fruit Valley neighborhood, and a survey of the retail and commercial industry principles, Leland Consulting Group has identified key opportunities for the subarea, each of which is explained further below.

The City of Vancouver's primary role in planning for Fruit Valley has been to assist in the creation of the existing Neighborhood Action Plan and the Subarea Plan currently in process. As the opportunities listed below move from the planning phase into later

implementation phases, the City will step away from its role as day-to-day organizer, while the Fruit Valley neighborhood should expect to take the lead on monitoring and implementation. The neighborhood, as the leader in this effort, should seek and receive support from a variety of stakeholders, including the City, Clark County, C-TRAN, local businesses, and others.

- **Improve connections to existing retail outside of Fruit Valley, particularly via transit.** Better connections—through improvements in the transit, automobile, bike, and pedestrian networks—will allow Fruit Valley residents to more easily reach retailers beyond the neighborhood. Improving these connections is important since most residents currently make a large share of their purchases outside of the Fruit Valley area, a trend that is likely to continue in the future. Important retail destinations to which transit connections should be maintained or improved include Winco, Safeway, Walmart, Uptown Vancouver, and Downtown Vancouver.

- **Work to retenant the Kauffman Center.** The Kauffman Center, located at Fourth Plain Boulevard and Kauffman Avenue, is an existing neighborhood shopping center that is vacant. It has spaces suitable for a grocery store or pharmacy, and a number of smaller retail tenants similar to those listed below for the McCallister Village space. Since it is the closest usable retail space to the neighborhood, additional retail at this location is desirable as it would enable residents to meet daily needs easily and conveniently. The available spaces should be suitable for the above listed tenants because of the number of households located nearby, and the site's location on a major thoroughfare.

- **Work with one of the existing convenience stores to establish a "Healthy Corner Store" in Fruit Valley.** Healthy Corner Stores (HCS) are a relatively new concept in which produce and staple foods are added to the convenience products already carried by most corner stores in order to give nearby residents easier access to healthy foods and to strengthen local communities. The HCS concept could be applied to either of the existing Chevron or Shell gas stations/minit marts. Clark County Health Deptartment is currently working with the neighborhood to apply for a grant that will allow all parties to evaluate the feasibility of this approach.

- **Collaborate with ACE Development to identify a desirable tenant for the commercial space planned for McCallister Village with a tenant that will meet the needs of the neighborhood.** There are a number of options for this small (1,400 square foot) space. The most viable and desirable tenants are: a dry cleaner, deli, coffee shop, medical or dental office, and salon. A food co-op or community-led "corner store" could also work at this location, however, these are challenging business models in which community members would need to invest start-up capital. It is unlikely that both a co-op and healthy corner store could both be implemented due to the size of the market for produce and staple foods in Fruit Valley. A survey or other means of gathering residents' tenant preferences for this space may be necessary.

Regardless of the use, it will be a challenging location for business because of the absence of parking in front, limited available parking behind (3 stalls), relatively limited foot traffic, and absence of adjacent retailers.

Additional Findings

- Beyond the retail opportunities described above, there is little opportunity to add significant or large-scale retail within the community. This has been acknowledged by the community, and is due to the fact that demand for services and retail goods (spending power in the area from residents and employees) is generally in balance with the supply (leasable space in commercial and retail buildings).

  One indicator of the low demand for new retail space is the low rents expected for the area. Retail space currently rents for approximately $14 or less per square foot per year, a rent level that is too low to pay for the costs of building new retail space, and will likely deter most new development.

- In keeping with the above finding, Leland Consulting Group's analysis does not indicate a need to rezone any areas within the neighborhood in order to allow more retail or commercial space.

- As the Port of Vancouver adds additional workforce to its existing industrial areas and the Columbia Gateway area, the employees will support and strengthen the retail in the Fruit Valley neighborhood and the Kauffman Center.

- There is one potential retail vacancy in the area, within a flex/industrial building just south of the Chevron station at 3410 Fruit Valley Road. However, because of low parking ratios and very difficult ingress/egress, this space is seen as a weak retail space and a moderate to weak office/commercial space. It could be filled by an office user.

- Additional design guidelines could be added to the existing zoning code in order to require new retail and retail expansions to meet new physical design attributes, pedestrian-orientation, or other characteristics that meet City and neighborhood goals. However, this has not been a primary issue raised by project stakeholders.

Background and Existing Conditions

Requirements for Viable Retail

The following fundamental conditions for retail success are useful for understanding the commercial and retail opportunities in Fruit Valley. Retail and commercial services generally require the following to succeed:

- **Accessibility and visibility.** Customers must be able to see and get to retail very easily. Obstacles can be as simple as being on the wrong side of the road (where potential customers cannot make a left turn on the way home) or inadequate parking (which can deter customers from shopping).

  Thus, most retailers seek locations with high traffic volumes or walk-by traffic, with 20,000 vehicles per day being a typical expectation for most grocery-anchored centers. Since intersections and corners are more visible and accessible than mid-block locations, they tend to be more desirable locations for retail. For example, the Main Street and 39th Street intersection, just north of a Safeway, handles approximately 25,600 vehicles per day. This represents thousands of potential shoppers that could patronize the store.

- **Convenient, central location relative to market.** All other factors being equal, potential customers will travel to the closest and most convenient retailer. This means that retailers are less likely to locate at the edges of a market area because other retailers closer to the center (and a larger population base) will have a considerable competitive advantage.

- **Adequate market size and spending power.** Many retailers look for specific market sizes and demographic indicators of spending power, some of which are described below.

- **Secondary tenants need anchor tenants.** Most retailers cluster near "anchor" tenants or a critical mass of other retailers. For example, smaller clothiers will locate near department stores in a mall. Located alone, without the drawing power or walk-by traffic generated by a department store, such a retailer would struggle to survive.

Retail Demand and Customer Groups

Retail demand in Fruit Valley is drawn from three core customer groups:

- **Fruit Valley residents.** There were 2,014 Fruit Valley residents as of the 2000 Census. Median household incomes in Fruit Valley are lower than the citywide median, as shown in Table 1 below. Therefore, the average Fruit Valley household will spend approximately 60 percent of the amount that the average household citywide will spend on a variety of retail categories, including food away from home, household furnishings, and retail goods. For further information about Fruit Valley's demographics, see the City of Vancouver's "Existing Conditions/Demographics" memorandum, completed for the Subarea Plan.

Table 1. Sociodemographic Summary of Fruit Valley and Other Areas

	Fruit Valley Neighborhood	Kauffman Center 1 mile radius	Kauffman Center 3 mile radius	City of Vancouver
2009 Total Population	2,441	14,018	63,533	168,476
2009 Households	955	5,904	26,618	65,986
Median Household Income	$33,795	$44,089	$45,052	$55,673
Consumer Spending by Household*				
Food away from home	$1,907	$2,568	$2,700	$3,153
Household Furnishings & Equipment	$1,147	$1,397	$1,491	$1,983
Retail Goods	$14,168	$18,172	$19,218	$23,741

**Expenditures are shown by broad budget categories that are not mutually exclusive.*

Source: ESRI Business Analyst, Leland Consulting Group

- **Employees.** Approximately 2,000 employees work in the Fruit Valley subarea, mostly in industrial businesses.[1] However, based on interviews with Fruit Valley employers, many of these employees have onsite food service options or have relatively short lunch breaks (30 minutes or less), reducing the likelihood that employees will contribute to retail spending in the area.

- **Drive-by traffic/commuters.** The average daily traffic volume is approximately 6,500 vehicles per day on Fruit Valley Road north of Fourth Plain, and approximately 12,400 at Fruit Valley and Fourth Plan. Based on historic trip counts[2] taken before the 39th Street bridge closure, trips can be expected to increase between 6 and 18 percent after the bridge reopens, with an average of all counts at 11 percent (see Table 4). Assuming an 11 percent increase in trips following the bridge reopening , the average daily traffic volume on Fruit Valley Road near 39th Street is expected to be 7,200. All of the trip counts are significantly below the 20,000 trips per day expected

[1] This is based on the City's Existing Conditions analysis showing approximately 250 developed acres of industrial and commercial land within the subarea, and an estimated employment density of eight employees per acre, which is based on business stakeholder interviews and Leland Consulting Group's experience elsewhere.
[2] Trip counts are 24-hour counts that include northbound and southbound traffic.

day expected by grocers and other anchor tenants of the typical grocery-anchored neighborhood retail center.

Table 2. Auto Volumes by Location

Location	Average Daily Traffic
Fruit Valley North of Fourth Plain	
Current	6,500
After 39th St. bridge reopening	7,200
Fruit Valley at Fourth Plain	12,400
Kauffman at Fourth Plain	12,900
Grocery-anchored center expectation	*20,000*
Main at 39th	25,600

Note: All ADTs are approximate and based on traffic counts from between 2006 and 2009.

Source: City of Vancouver, Leland Consulting Group

Retail Formats

The vast majority of retail developers and merchants build and operate *certain specific established retail formats*—such as grocery anchored neighborhood centers and shopping malls. As shown in Table 3, these range from smaller convenience centers to regional malls such as Westfield Vancouver Mall.

In the Portland region, the average population per grocery anchored center is approximately 6,000 people. For newer centers, most developers prefer to have a market area with a population of 10,000 or more. Given the population within Fruit Valley, it is not likely that a grocery-anchored center will be feasible. Based on these formulas used within the commercial real estate industry, only the convenience format is likely to be feasible. However, in the event that financial, logistical, or other assistance is available from the neighborhood, nonprofits, or the public sector, non-traditional retail formats such as a healthy corner store or food co-op may be viable.

Table 3. Summary of Retail Formats

Retail Type	Anchor Tenants	Customer Drive Time	Typical Size (Square Feet)	Mininmum Site Area (Acres)	Support Population
Convenience Center	Convenience stores, services such as beauty salons, dry cleaners, banks	Very close or on commute routes	20,000	1.0	2,000 or more
Neighborhood Center	Supermarket	Very close or on commute routes	60,000	3 - 10	6,000 - 12,000
Community Center	Supermarket, drugstore, discount department store, mixed apparel	Five to ten minutes	180,000	10 - 30	40,000 - 150,000
Regional Center	One or two full line department stores	Ten to 20 minutes	600,000	10 - 60	150,000 or more
Super Regional Center	Three or more full line department stores	25 to 30 minutes	1,000,000	15 - 100	300,000 or more

Source: Urban Land Institute, Leland Consulting Group

In recent years, some enterprising (and usually independent) retailers have opened small, "unanchored," local-serving "general stores," co-ops, or corner stores that also offer produce and a greater variety of food items than a typical convenience store. For example, there are three small food co-ops that operate retail stores in Portland. The Vancouver Co-op is currently searching for a location. These businesses, however, are not highly profitable and are usually community-focused "labors of love." They must be persistently cultivated, often by a combination of nonprofit organizations, neighborhood groups, and others. To be successful, they must also follow the same retail principles discussed earlier.

Existing Fruit Valley Retail Space

There are currently three retail/commercial nodes within the Fruit Valley Subarea:

- **Fourth Plain and Fruit Valley Road,** the location of a Shell gas station and Minit Mart.

- **39th Street and Fruit Valley Road,** which includes a Chevron gas station and a flex industrial building. The station also includes a market and grill, providing some hot and cold prepared foods. South of the Chevron station is a flex industrial building at 3410 Fruit Valley Road that houses the Rivers Edge Church and one vacant commercial space.

- **Firestone Pacific Foods,** a fruit vendor that sells fresh, dried, and frozen fruit produced by the company, at 4211 Fruit Valley Road.

In addition, there is at least one significant retail space located outside the Fruit Valley Subarea:

- **Kauffman Center.** Located near the Fruit Valley Plan area on Fourth Plain Boulevard at Kauffman Avenue, half of this vacant shopping center was recently renovated, and it now stands ready to be occupied. The location is well suited to

numerous mid-range and discount grocers and other retailers. A population of approximately 14,000 lives within one mile of the center (with 63,000 within three miles), which is enough to support a grocery anchored center (see Table 3). The median household income within a one mile radius is approximately $44,000. Because it is more central to a larger residential market base and because it is built and vacant, the Kauffman Center is likely to fill up with local-serving tenants such as a grocery store, pharmacy, coffee shop, deli, bank, and other retailers and commercial services typically seen in such centers, before any new construction takes place in Fruit Valley.

Future Retail Considerations

In addition, several other considerations are relevant to Fruit Valley's current and future retail environment:

- **McCallister Village (ACE Communities building).** A small retail/community space, including a community kitchen, is planned for the affordable housing development that will be built just north of Fruit Valley Elementary School. Tenants have not been announced. Retailers in that space will probably face the following significant challenges:
    - Unanchored and not adjacent to any other retail;
    - Limited amount of foot traffic;
    - Poor access to the drive-by shopper since there is no on-street or dedicated off-street parking.
    - Not on the "homebound" (right) side of the road, making after-work purchases less likely.

- **Employment increases.** The Port of Vancouver has plans to add 3,000 to 4,000 new jobs on its land during the next 20 years, which could significantly increase the amount of drive-through traffic and, thus, potential retail spending. An increase on this order of magnitude could expand the amount of retail that could be supported within Fruit Valley, particularly at or near the Shell Station and Minit Mart and at the Kauffman Center.

Conclusion

Fruit Valley residents have stated a desire to attract additional retail and commercial services to the neighborhood. Due to Fruit Valley's relatively small population, location, and modest drive-through traffic volumes, there is little opportunity to dramatically add to the amount of retail and commercial space. There are, however, four opportunities to make modest but very significant retail improvements to the neighborhood. These are:

- Improving connections to retail outside Fruit Valley;
- Retenanting the Kauffman Center;
- Establishing a Healthy Corner Store; and
- Attracting a desirable tenant for the planned McCallister Village.

Appendix: Auto Volumes in Fruit Valley and Nearby Road Segments

Table 4. Estimated Traffic Impact of the 39th Street Bridge Closure

Bridge closure date	September 2008
Location	**Traffic Count**
Fruit Valley north of 34th (all day)	
Before closure*	6,930
After closure*	6,538
Change	-6%
Fruit Valley at 39th St. (PM peak hour)	
Before closure	594
After closure	530
Change	-11%
Fruit Valley at 4th Plain (PM peak hour)	
Before closure	888
After closure	729
Change	-18%
Average Change	**-11%**

** These two counts were taken at different locations but are used here since they are the best available for comparison. The before figure was taken at Fruit Valley south of Bernie Rd.; the after figure was taken at Fruit Valley at 36th/37th.*

Table 5. Fruit Valley Auto Volumes #1

Location		Fruit Valley south of Bernie Rd.	Fruit Valley / 39th (1)	Fruit Valley / 39th (2)	Fruit Valley 36th/37th	Fruit Valley / 4th Plain		Fruit Valley / 4th Plain	
Year		2007	2006	2009	2009		2006		2009
Leg of Intersection		Midblock	Midblock	Midblock	Midblock	East	North	East	North
All Day	Northbound	3,200			3,109		5,735		
	Southbound	3,730			3,429		6,585		
	Eastbound					5,139			
	Westbound					5,830			
	Total	**6,930**	**0**	**0**	**6,538**	**10,969**	**12,320**	**0**	**0**
	Intersection Estimate	**6,930**			**6,538**		**12,415**		
Peak PM Hour	Northbound		380	354			502		388
	Southbound		214	176			386		341
	Eastbound					404		435	
	Westbound					334		287	
	Total	**0**	**594**	**530**	**0**	**738**	**888**	**722**	**729**

Source: City of Vancouver Transportation Department

Table 6. Fruit Valley Auto Volumes #2

Location		Kauffman / 4th Plain				Main / 4th Plain				Lincoln / Mill Plain	Main / 39th St.				Main just west of 39th
Year					2007				2007	2008				2006	2009
Leg of Intersection		East	West	North	South	East	West	North	South	West	East	West	North	South	West
All Day	Northbound			1,548	897			2,358	3,441				6,172	5,149	
	Southbound			1,834	1,015			3,839	2,753				8,009	6,733	
	Eastbound	5,044	4,430			6,934	4,966			4,782	8,111	6,099			4,700
	Westbound	5,724	5,181			7,833	6,269			3,649	6,355	6,146			4,650
	Total	**10,768**	**9,611**	**3,382**	**1,912**	**14,767**	**11,235**	**6,197**	**6,194**	**8,431**	**14,466**	**12,245**	**14,181**	**11,882**	**9,350**
	Intersection Estimate				**12,885**				**20,079**	**8,431**				**25,612**	
Peak PM Hour	Northbound			196	111			274	355				641	506	
	Southbound			121	67			259	318				486	380	
	Eastbound	457	366			585	345			322	577	464			325
	Westbound	389	308			542	361			221	505	603			390
	Total	**846**	**674**	**317**	**178**	**1,127**	**706**	**533**	**673**	**543**	**1,082**	**1,067**	**1,127**	**886**	**715**

Source: City of Vancouver Transportation Department

Appendix B:

Fruit Valley Transportation Connectivity Assessment

Submitted by Otak, Inc.

to the City of Vancouver

March 2010

Acknowledgements

Fruit Valley Transportation Improvement

City of Vancouver

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Table of Contents

Key Findings 1

Pedestrian and Bike Destinations 1
Enhancing Pedestrian and Bike Connections 2
Additional Street Improvements 4
Creating Unique Neighborhood Streetscapes 5
Creating Green Streets 6

Next Steps 7

Figure 1 9

This memorandum summarizes a planning level inventory and analysis of the existing transportation system and transportation choices for the Fruit Valley Subarea (Figure 1). The analysis identifies opportunities for improvements to the neighborhood transportation system. Additional recommendations and design concepts for enhancements will be included in a Design Solutions memorandum. The analysis and design solutions will supplement the on-going development of the Fruit Valley Subarea Plan by the City of Vancouver.

The subarea is approximately 600 acres located between Mill Plain Boulevard to the south and Vancouver city limits to the north. Framing the east side of the subarea are the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad tracks and to the west and northwest is a Vancouver Lake Lowlands natural area. Fruit Valley road is the primary neighborhood collector street providing north to south access. Port of Vancouver properties to the south of Mill Plain Boulevard are not included in the subarea plan.

Key Findings

The inventory and analysis is based on onsite analysis and street, utility, and traffic data provided by the City of Vancouver and focuses on five key opportunity areas for improving multimodal transportation choices:

- Identify primary pedestrian and bike destinations.
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections and crossings.
- Improve the neighborhood street system.
- Develop unique neighborhood streetscapes.
- Improve stormwater management through Green Street strategies.

Pedestrian and Bike Destinations

Getting connected is an important theme for the Fruit Valley neighborhood. Today, the neighborhood is disconnected by the physical separation of the BSNF railroad tracks, distance from downtown, and missing links in the walkway system and underdeveloped access to Vancouver Lake and the Lowlands open space.

Getting better connected begins with identifying the desirable destinations. The primary destination is the neighborhood center focused on the Fruit Valley Park and the Fruit Valley Elementary School. Secondary neighborhood destinations include a Chevron food mart (includes a small sit down restaurant), a Shell mini-mart and an approved mixed use development

Fruit Valley Road

Fruit Valley Park

Fruit Valley School

with multi-family housing, Boys and Girls Club, and retail/office space just north of Fruit Valley School

Potential destinations to the east of the neighborhood are characterized by retail and other neighborhood-scale services not currently available within the Fruit Valley subarea. These more distant destinations such as Winco, Safeway, Walmart, and Downtown will be better connected to the neighborhood when the 39th Street overpass is completed. The vacant Kauffman Center is the nearest potential retail center. Located

Kauffman Center

at the intersection of Fourth Plain Boulevard and Kauffman Avenue, it could become an important retail and service destination accessible along a major street connection for walking, bike, car, and transit trips.

Vancouver Lake natural area and the proposed alignment for the Burnt Bridge Creek trial and trailhead are at the western and northern edges of the subarea. Both are highly desirable neighborhood amenities for recreational uses. Current access to Vancouver Lake is by La Frambois Road. The road is underdeveloped and relatively safe for low speed,

La Frambois Road

low volume auto access. However, it lacks designated pedestrian or bike facilities. North of NW 61st Street on Fruit Valley Road walkways and bike lanes end, leaving a narrow shoulder for access to the trailhead.

Enhancing Pedestrian and Bike Connections

Enhancing pedestrian and bike connections is a priority for realizing the neighbor goal of getting connected. Within the subarea, the most notable deficiency in the pedestrian system occurs along Fourth Plain Boulevard between Simpson Street and Fruit Valley Road. In order to reach the primary and secondary neighborhood destinations, residents living at the south end of the study area must walk along the narrow roadway shoulders or an unpaved area at the edge of the right-of-way. The pedestrian crossing at Fourth Plain Boulevard and Fruit Valley Road is complex and unfriendly.

Fourth Plain Boulevard

Use of Fourth Plain Boulevard as a pedestrian route out of the neighborhood is constrained by the same deficiencies mentioned above. These constraints may be especially impactful to the remaking of the Kaufmann Center as neighborhood serving retail uses.

Construction of a vehicle and pedestrian bridge at 39th Street is scheduled for completion in 2011. The new bridge will provide uninterrupted, east-west pedestrian and bike connections out of the neighborhood. In the past, vehicles and pedestrians experienced long

Fourth Plain Boulevard

waits on 39th Street at a seven-track railroad crossing. However, 39th Street improvements should not be construed as a substitute for pedestrian enhancements for Fourth Plain Boulevard.

Walkways in other areas of the subarea are fairly consistent and complete with the exception of the historic, World War II residential area located west of Fruit Valley Road and north of Fourth Plain Boulevard. Sidewalks have never existed on these neighborhood streets, and the existing character of these streets is part of the historical identity of the neighborhood.

The residential area at the south end of the subarea and centered on Simpson Avenue has a walkway system for accessing the primary destinations of the school and park at the neighborhood center. The walking constraints for these residents are the poor walkway and pedestrian crossing conditions at Fourth Plain Boulevard.

Liberty Park

Between 34th Street and 36th Street, there are frequent pedestrian crossing movements on Fruit Valley Road, particularly by school children going to and from Fruit Valley Elementary School. These crossings occur randomly and without any visible markings or signage to alert motorists. There are also no protective design elements for pedestrian safety.

Bike lanes exist throughout the corridor on Fruit Valley Road as well as on limited sections of Fourth Plain Boulevard, and will be included on the new 39th Street railroad overpass connection. For the rest of the neighborhood, bike travel is a shared lane condition on relatively low volume streets and along the under-improved La Frambois Road leading to Vancouver Lake.

Historic Neighborhood

Opportunities to prioritize enhancements to pedestrian and bike connections include the following (also see Figure 1):

- Fourth Plain Boulevard walkway improvements within existing right-of-way.
- Designated walkways added to 1 to 2 streets in the historic residential area. These walkways would not require conventional curb-and-gutter street construction and would be limited to defining primary pedestrian routes to the neighborhood center.
- Design treatments to focus and make safer the frequent mid-block crossings of Fruit Valley Road between 34th Street and 36th Street.
- Design treatments to make La Frambois Road frontage for the school and park a pedestrian priority street.

- Design cross-section for La Frambois Road to provide better bike and pedestrian facilities to Vancouver Lake.
- Completion of the 39th Street railroad overpass.
- Continue planning and implementation of proposed trail through the Vancouver Lake and Lowlands natural area.
- Continue planning and implementation of a 26th Avenue extension from Fourth Plain Boulevard north. If the final design of the roadway is rural in character, consider including parallel multiuse pathway connection to La Frambois Road and the planned regional trail.

Example – Walkway Without Curb

Additional Street Improvements

Improving the designated pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the neighborhood is a "get connected" priority. However, other types of street improvements will also support pedestrian safety and mobility, and will contribute to the overall livability of the neighborhood.

Traffic Calming and Controls — Traffic is managed within the subarea with a mix of signalized and stop-controlled intersections. Major intersections in the subarea include:

- Fourth Plain Boulevard and Fruit Valley Road which is a signalized 5-leg intersection.
- Fourth Plain Boulevard and Mill Plain Boulevard/ Lower River Road which is a signalized, skewed intersection.
- Fruit Valley Road and West 39th Street which is an un-signalized tee intersection.

Other intersections within the subarea providing notable vehicular and pedestrian access to neighborhoods are:

- Fourth Plain Boulevard and Simpson Avenue, an un-signalized tee intersection providing access to the neighborhood south of Fourth Plain Boulevard.
- Fruit Valley Road and West 31st Street, a signalized intersection which provides access to the historic neighborhood west of Fruit Valley Road, Fruit Valley Park, as well as housing east of Fruit Valley Road.
- Fruit Valley Road and La Frambois Road/West 34th Street which is signalized in two directions (on Fruit Valley) and stop controlled for the side streets. This intersection provides signalized pedestrian access across Fruit Valley Road to the school and park, but creates some confusion among motorists that could be relieved by signalizing the side streets or providing additional signage.

Fruit Valley Road/La Frambois Road Intersection

Street Lighting — A drive-through inventory was performed in the subarea to review the existing street lighting. Fruit Valley Road was recently improved; therefore, street lighting appears to be to standard along the corridor. Fruit Valley Park, adjacent to the street, is illuminated by light poles within the surrounding streets. Safety and aesthetics within the park could be enhanced by adding pedestrian-level lighting.

Street lighting within the neighborhoods both east and west of Fruit Valley Road is consistent and appears evenly distributed. Further study would be needed to

evaluate the lighting levels and function of existing street lights. The neighborhood south of Fourth Plain Boulevard includes relatively consistent street lighting. However, on Thompson Avenue, south of 22nd Street, only one street light exists along a significant length of the street which leads to Liberty Park. This area should be further evaluated for adequate lighting.

Pavement Conditions — The City of Vancouver maintains a pavement condition inventory categorizing pavement condition based on distresses. Distresses include alligator cracking, longitudinal cracking, transverse cracking, patching, and aging/raveling. Streets are rated on a scale of 0 to 100, a score of 100 correlating to the existing pavement being in very good condition and a score of 0 meaning the existing pavement is very poor and in need of reconstruction.

Pavement condition within the subarea is reported as follows:

- On Fruit Valley Road between Fourth Plain Boulevard and West 34th Street/La Frambois Road, the pavement received a score of 73, indicating a possible slurry seal or micro-surfacing treatment should be considered.
- North of La Frambois Road, Fruit Valley Road received a score above 90 indicating no treatment is necessary.
- Streets within the neighborhood south of Fourth Plain Boulevard received ratings as low as 30, but averaged about 55 indicating that these streets would benefit from a 2- to 3-inch overlay or at least a slurry seal.
- North of Fourth Plain Boulevard, streets within the historic neighborhood west of Fruit Valley Road generally scored about 50 and street east of Fruit Valley Road on average scored slightly higher, but still averaged about 60. Street segments in these areas scored as low as 30 and as high as 90. The average scores indicate that streets within these neighborhoods are in fair condition but would benefit from a slurry seal treatment.

Creating Unique Neighborhood Streetscapes

Residents often feel a strong sense of ownership of their neighborhood streets. Developing unique streetscape qualities for important streets can increase that sense of ownership and neighborhood identity. In the Fruit Valley neighborhood, there are two streets that provide that opportunity.

Fruit Valley Road

Fruit Valley Road serves two primary functions within the neighborhood. It is the neighborhood's Main Street and it is the only north-south access route for bicycle and vehicle travel, as well as for truck movement associated with the Port of Vancouver, the south end of the subarea and the light industrial uses located north of La Frambois Road. Recent improvements to the street include bike lanes and a complete sidewalk system. Main Street qualities between Fourth Plain Boulevard and 39th Avenue can be enhanced by the following:

26th Street Extension — Construction of this new street connection will connect Fourth Plain Boulevard and Fruit Valley Road north of the neighborhood center. It is reasonable to assume this new connection will divert some truck and employee traffic from Fruit Valley Road. Reducing the truck traffic on the southern segment (Figure 1) would allow for a quieter and more "main street" quality to emerge. This "main street" quality would be directly associated with the neighborhood center and historic residential area.

Pedestrian Crossing Enhancement — Introduce appropriate pedestrian refuge devices, or traffic signage and control devices, between 34th Street and 36th Street. These features would enhance the visual and physical presence of pedestrians. It is also reasonable to expect some degree of "traffic calming" (slower vehicle speeds) to result from these measures. Slower speeds are a vital characteristic of a Main Street.

On-Street Parking — It may be possible to provide a limited amount of on-street parking on Fruit Valley Road and La Frambois Road to serve the neighborhood center facilities. The objective would be to accomplish this without major street reconstruction.

La Frambois Road

La Frambois Road is also a defining street for the Fruit Valley neighborhood. The street provides access to and frontage for the neighborhood center, as well as business access to future employment development and local and regional access to Vancouver Lake and the Lowlands open space. Consideration of future improvements to La Frambois Road should be based

on the potential for a "gateway" intersection and three distinct but complementary street design segments. The design of gateway and segments is an opportunity to strengthen neighborhood identity.

Gateways — La Frambois Road offers two neighborhood gateway opportunities. The intersection with Fruit Valley Road marks the arrival at the heart of the neighborhood center and the beginning of access to Vancouver Lake and the Lowlands natural area. Street design elements within the right-of-way or design elements visible from the street can be explored to create an appropriate visual expression of the importance of this intersection within the neighborhood street system.

A second gateway opportunity coincides with the western edge of the historic neighborhood. Design treatments for the street should discourage through truck travel and signify a transition from light industrial to neighborhood street.

Examples – Discouraging Truck Traffic

Segment 1 — A pedestrian priority street between Fruit Valley Road and the western edge of the historic neighborhood. Design character should emphasize the street as a pedestrian-friendly connecting seam between the park and the school. Local vehicle traffic would be allowed and encouraged at low speeds and volumes. The design should discourage truck traffic as future light industrial development continues to the west, with La Frambois Road and/or the future 26th Avenue extension as the main access streets. Future street improvements should include a walkway and Green Street facilities for stormwater management.

Segment 2 — Primarily a business access street for existing and future developments between Xavier Street and the marked entry point for the natural area. It should include a designated pedestrian and bike facility and appropriate Green Street strategies for stormwater management (see below).

Segment 3 — Recreational accessway for the natural area and recreational facilities at Vancouver Lake. This will serve both local and regional users and should have good connections to the planned trail system for Vancouver Lake and the Lowlands natural area.

Creating Green Streets

Green Streets are a unique opportunity for the residences and businesses of the Fruit Valley neighborhood. Green Streets strategies can be implemented on either residential or collector streets by developing a streetscape design concept targeted to provide the following key elements:

- Innovative stormwater management techniques.
- Safe and appealing pedestrian environment.
- Reflect a community desire for a sustainable relationship between the natural systems and the built environment.
- Visual and physical connections to important community and open spaces.

Early assessment of Green Street opportunities within the neighborhood includes options for both the residential and industrial streets within the subarea. As noted above, the historic residential has never included conventional curbs, gutters, or sidewalks. Introducing these elements would compromise the historical identity of the neighborhood.

Stormwater currently sheets flows off neighborhood streets into vegetated areas and residents' yards adjacent to the roadway, as well as to a limited number of area drains connecting to the City of Vancouver storm sewer system. Because of the area's poor draining soils and low elevations, the existing conditions provide detention for stormwater, preventing potential overloading of the storm sewer system. In the historic residential area, it makes sense, in terms of stormwater management, to mostly maintain the existing conditions but add Green Street strategies to enhance treatment and detention capabilities. Options for Green Street enhancements along uncurbed residential streets include:

- Bioretention facilities (rain gardens) along the length of the street consisting of plantings, amended soils, and an under drain system.
- Bioretention facilities (rain gardens) at key intersection within the neighborhood, focusing treatment at intersections to reduce impact to property frontages.
- Porous pavers or valley gutters along the length of the street to collect and channel stormwater. This option would provide opportunities for preserving parking along property frontages.

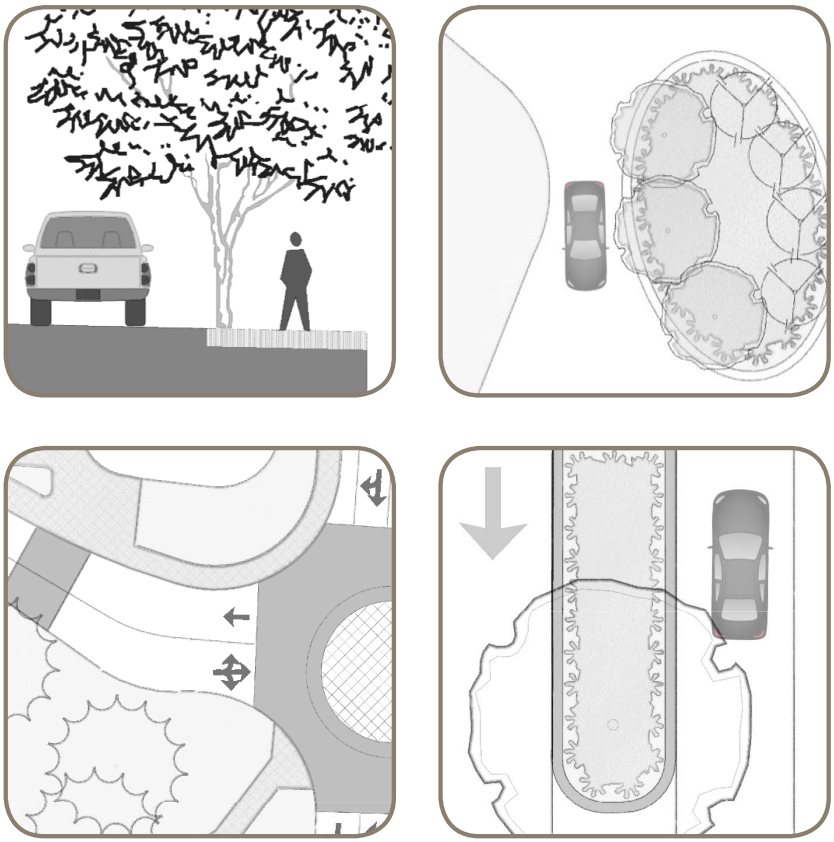
As the subarea develops, streets having a typical light industrial cross section will likely be developed. Green Street strategies should be considered before traditional stormwater collection and treatment systems. Because of the area's elevation relative to Vancouver Lake, gravity flow systems will be a challenge. Surface treatment and detention systems should be the first consideration. Collection, detention, and treatment systems could include rain gardens, infiltration planters, and curb extensions. These options are similar in that they include bioretention areas. Each offers a different way of fitting into the street section. Rain gardens fit best in a wide area between back of curb and sidewalk, while infiltration planters are usually constructed with retaining walls and are incorporated into smaller areas. All options can be incorporated into curbed street sections, additional elements such as amended soil and under drain systems may be required depending on site conditions.

Next Steps

Input from City staff and neighborhood residents will confirm, or perhaps modify, the key findings and opportunities for improvements. Based on that input, concept design solutions will be developed to support the Fruit Valley Subarea Plan and those recommended solutions will be included in a Planning Commission workshop.

Appendix C:

Fruit Valley Transportation Design Concept Recommendations



Submitted by Otak, Inc.

to the City of Vancouver

March 2010

Acknowledgements

Fruit Valley Transportation Design Concept Recommendations

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Table of Contents

Transportation Needs and Analysis 5

Conceptual Design Solutions 5

- La Frambois Road 5
- Fruit Valley Road and Fourth Plain 6
- Historic Neighborhood Streets 6
- 26th Avenue Extension 6

Budgeting for Future Improvements 14

Transportation Needs and Analysis

In March 2010, an inventory and analysis of neighborhood's transportation infrastructure was completed and documented in a memorandum. The analysis focused on enhancing neighborhood streetscapes and providing for safe pedestrian and bicycle travel. Five key opportunity areas for improvements were identified:

- Identify primary pedestrian and bike destinations.
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections and crossings.
- Improve the neighborhood street system.
- Develop unique neighborhood streetscapes.
- Improve stormwater management through Green Street strategies.

The full analysis can be found in Appendix B — Fruit Valley Transportation Connectivity Assessment.

The opportunity areas for enhancement were discussed at two neighborhood meetings. Input from those meetings included:

- Don't develop formal walkways for the historic neighborhood streets. However, better lighting, especially at the larger intersections, would be welcomed.
- Consider adding traffic circles to the larger intersections of the historic neighborhood.
- Don't use swales or rain gardens for stormwater management within the streets of the historic neighborhood. It may have too much impact on parking and may not be well-maintained over time. Green Street treatments should only consider the use of porous paving.
- Recommend overall improvements to existing pedestrian routes including safer street crossing opportunities.
- Develop design solutions to maintain a neighborhood street character for La Frambois Road from Fruit Valley Road to the extension of 26th Avenue. Discourage truck traffic on this segment.
- Develop design solutions for streetscape "gateways" for the neighborhood center area.
- Make sure that La Frambois Road will provide for pedestrian and bike access to Vancouver Lake.
- Consider making the intersection of La Frambois Road and Fruit Valley Road a fully signalized intersection. As it is today, it is confusing to motorists and pedestrians.

Conceptual Design Solutions

Based on the analysis and on neighborhood input, a set of design solutions was developed. The designs are conceptual and additional engineering design and traffic analysis will be required to implement any of these street improvements. Implementation would also require identifying a funding source. Likely funding sources would be street frontage improvements with new development, a capital improvements project with City of Vancouver funding or obtaining a state or federal grant to support a specific street improvement project in the Fruit Valley Subarea Plan. Planning level cost estimates has been included in this memorandum. Given the uncertainty of funding sources at this time, no timeline for implementing the changes has been recommended.

La Frambois Road

(Figures 1 -5)

The design concepts define distinct street characteristics for different uses and two gateway treatments to mark the neighborhood-serving segment of the street.

Segment A to B – The design concepts suggest the street as a connecting seam between the Fruit Valley Neighborhood Park and the Fruit Valley Elementary School. It is a street intended for local vehicle traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists and should encourage low traffic speeds and volumes. The enhancements should discourage truck traffic associated with future light industrial development to the west. Street improvements should include a continuous walkway and Green Street facilities for stormwater management.

East Gateway – Gateway treatments include special paving for the intersection and portions of the street between the park and the school. The intersection pavement could also be constructed as a raised intersection. Vertical elements at the street corners might suggest some aspect of neighborhood history, such as its importance for the former shipyards.

Segment B to D – This segment should continue the design character of a neighborhood street. It should include a designated pedestrian walkway. Street trees should be added if possible, as well as Green Street strategies for stormwater, similar to the rest of the historic neighborhood. Street width for all of the desired improvements will require dedication of additional right-of-way, should any redevelopment occur in the future.

West Gateway – The gateway treatment is to reduce the curb-to-curb width for a short distance using a device commonly known as a "choker". This narrowing of the street will discourage unwanted truck traffic. Other suggested gateway features are dense landscaping and using the same historical markers as the east gateway.

Segment D to E – This street design will accommodate both light industrial traffic to serve new development west of 26th Avenue as well as providing recreational access for the natural area and the facilities at Vancouver Lake. It is also an opportunity to implement swale or rain garden treatments for stormwater.

Fruit Valley Road and Fourth Plain

(Figures 6-9)

Improvements focus on pedestrian comfort and safety at important street crossing points. At the Fourth Plain Boulevard and Fruit Valley Road intersection, potential solutions involve improvements to the sidewalk system, as well as reconfiguring curb lines of the intersection to shorten the pedestrian crossing distance. Along Fruit Valley Road, there are opportunities for a landscaped median and a landscaped pedestrian refuge island.

Historic Neighborhood Streets

(Figures 10-11)

Any improvements should retain the historic character of streets. Safety improvements for pedestrian include traffic circles and additional street lighting at two of the large intersections. In addition to slowing vehicle traffic through intersections, traffic circles are an opportunity to create a distinctive character for these. Stormwater management features would be limited to porous pavement that could be included in a future street repaving project.

26th Avenue Extension

(Figures 11-13)

This is a design concept suggesting a more rural roadway character north of La Frambois Road as 26th Avenue is extended into the natural areas and past the Oak woodlands. This concept would provide a multiuse pathway rather than on-street curbs and sidewalks. The pathway could be a connector to the planned Burnt Creek regional trail as it passes through the Fruit Valley neighborhood natural areas.

Figure 1: Concepts for La Frambois Road

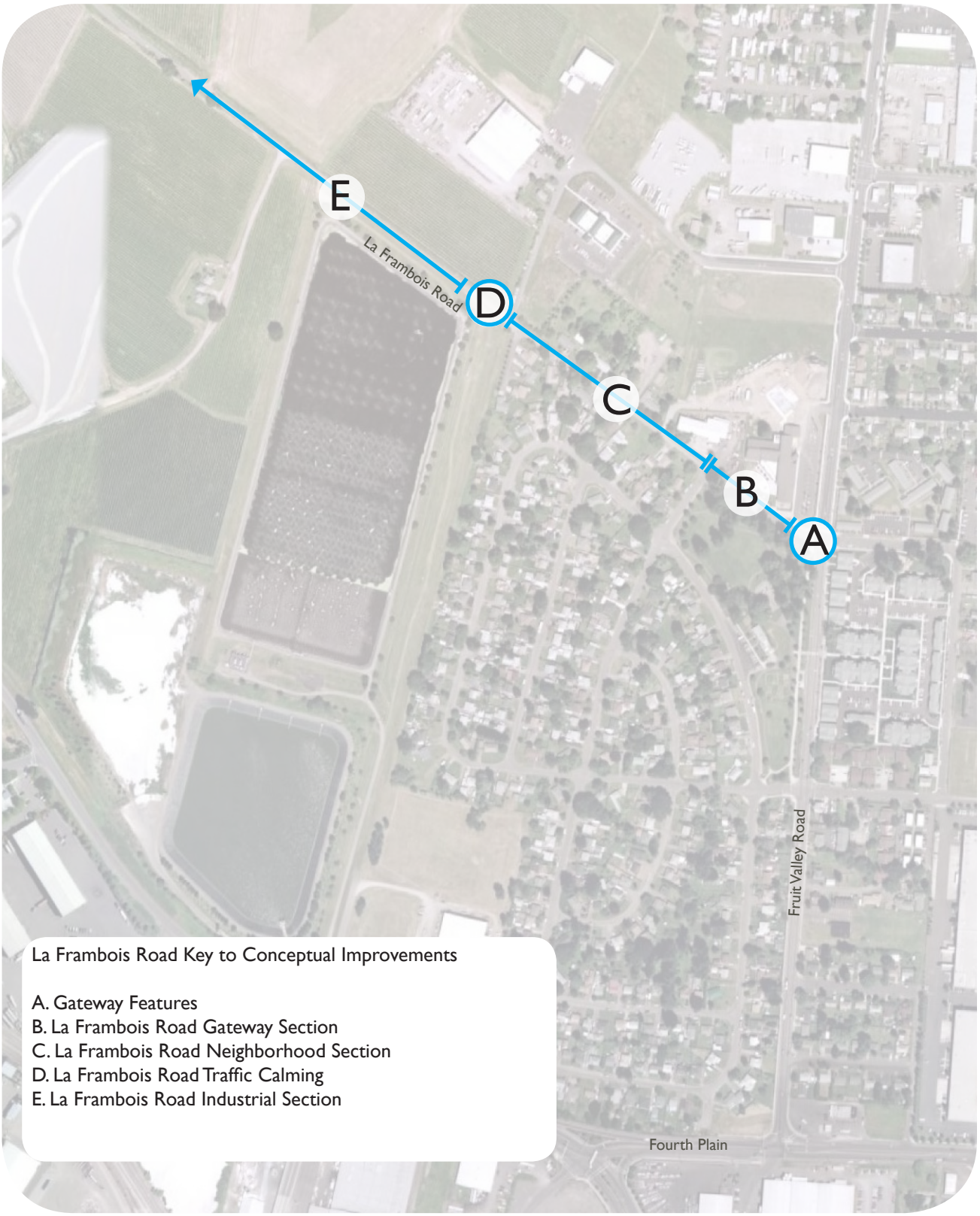
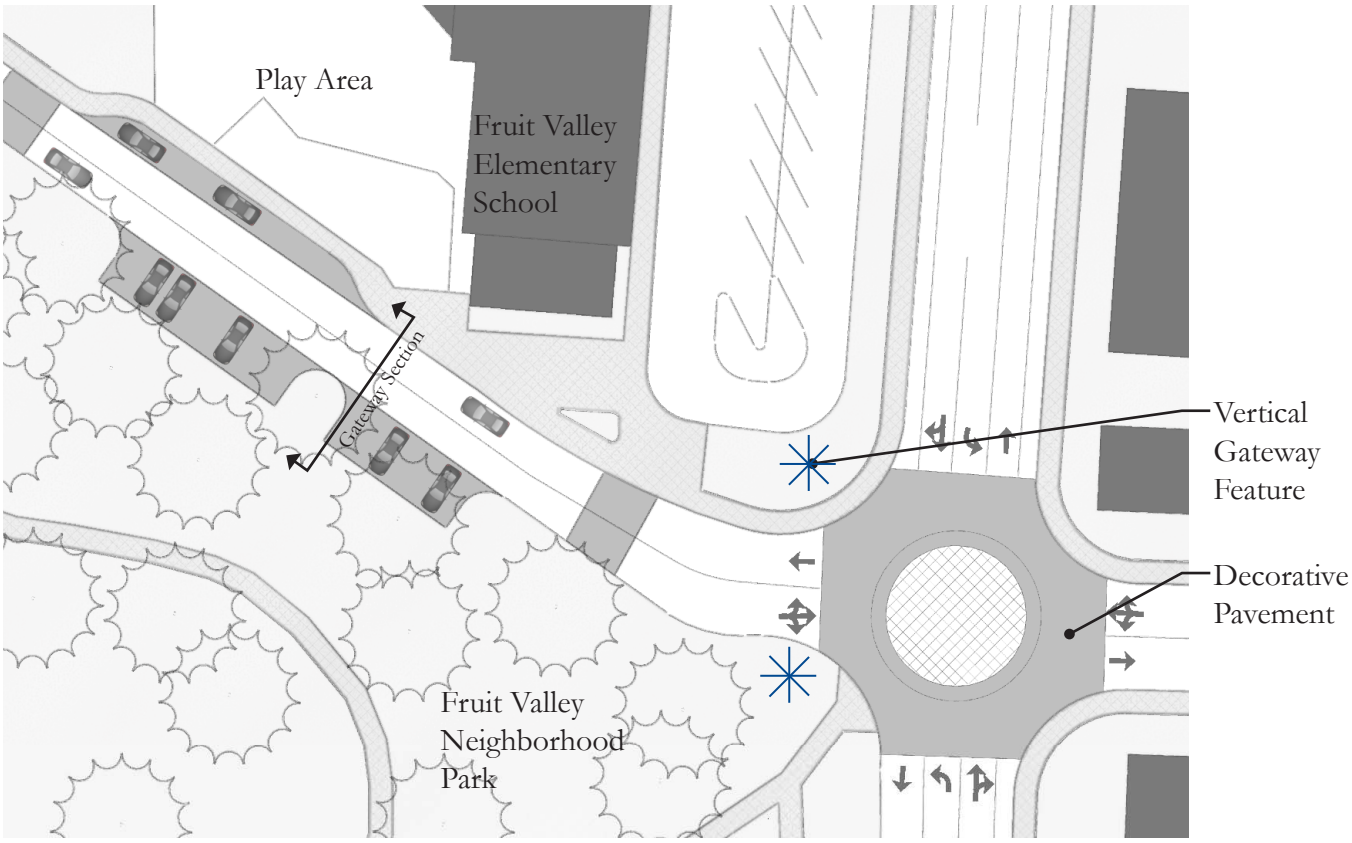
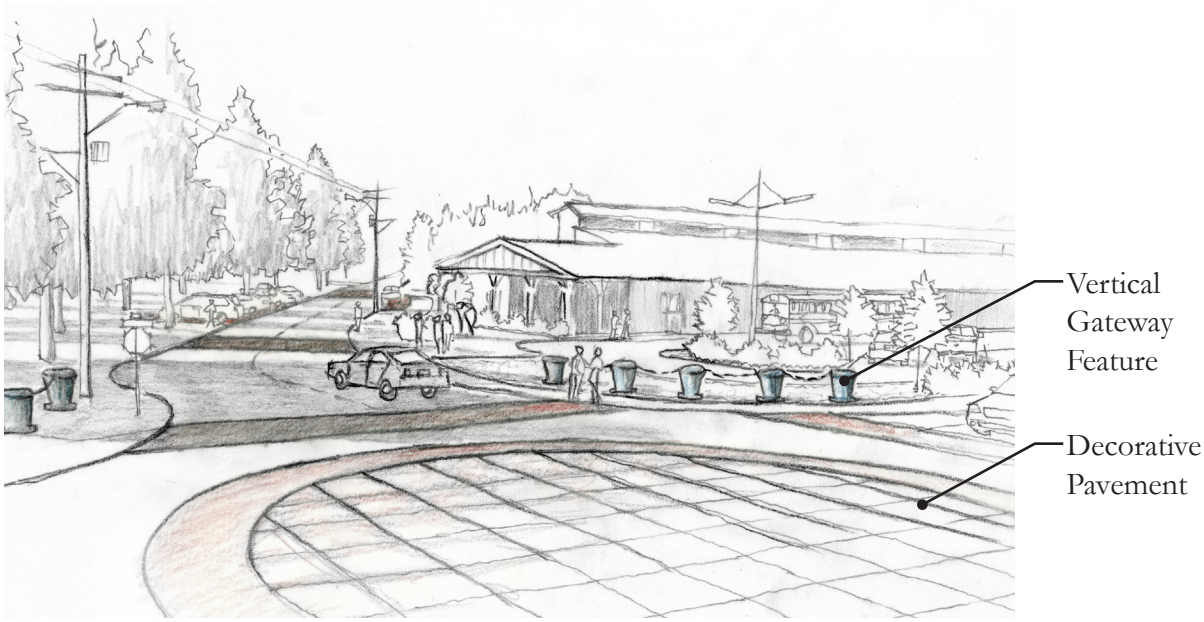


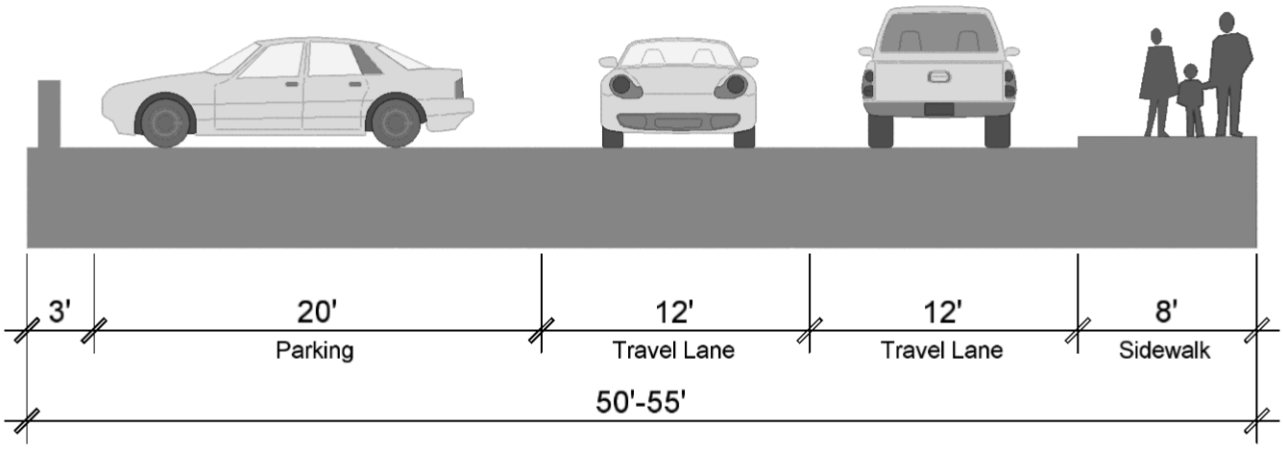
Figure 2: Concepts for La Frambois Road



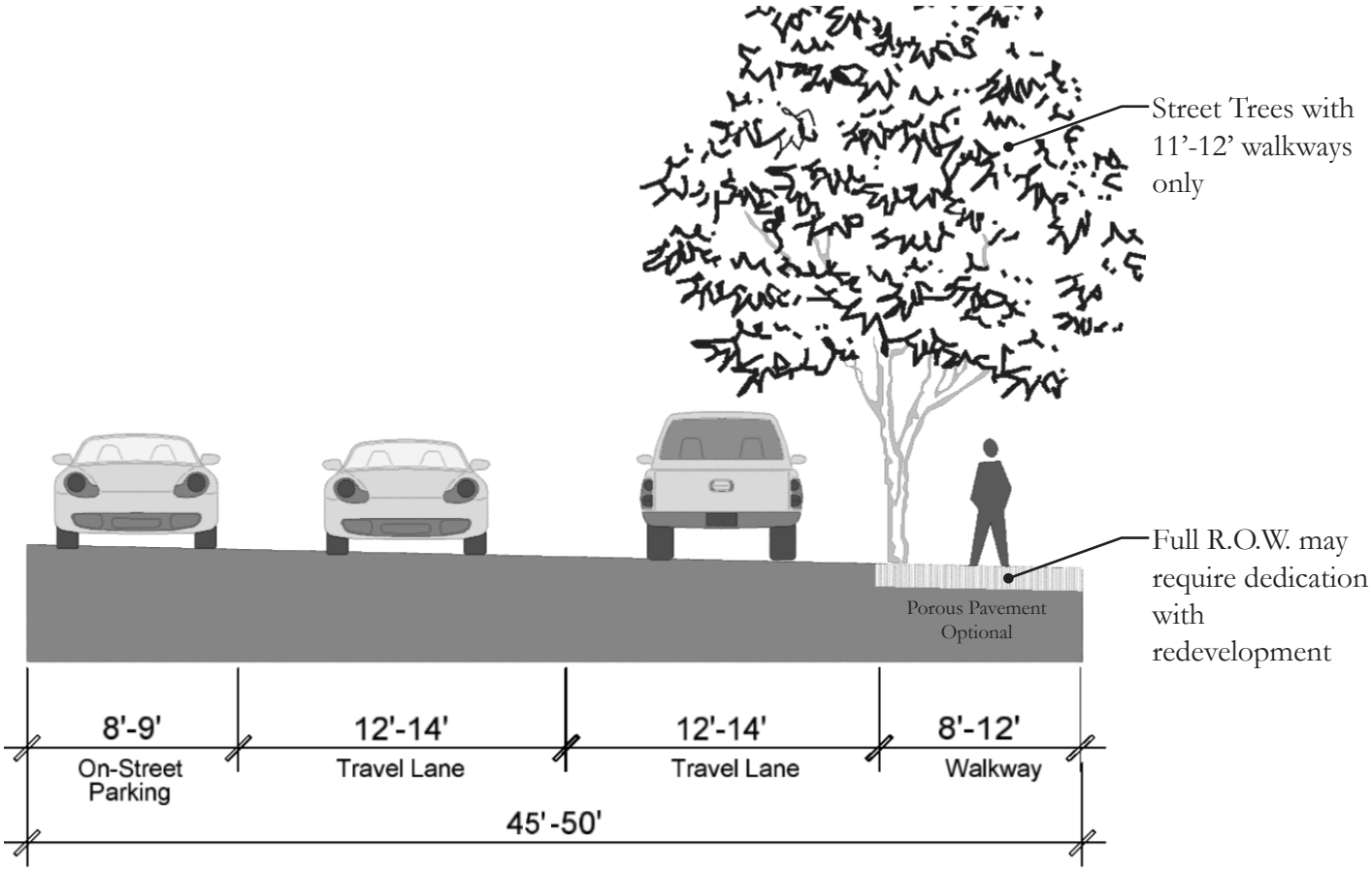


A Gateway Features

Figure 3: Concepts for La Frambois Road

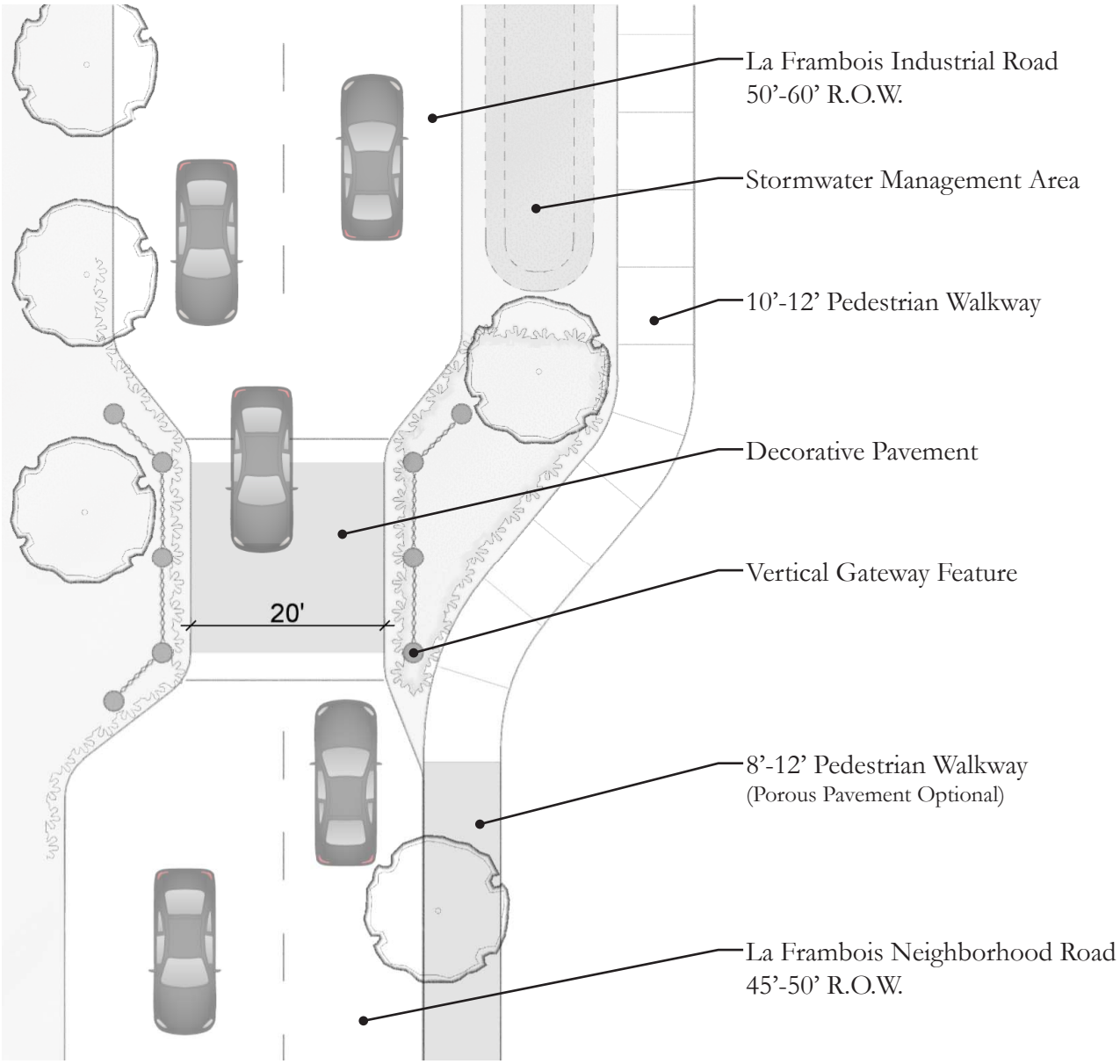


B La Frambois Road Gateway Section
(Looking West)



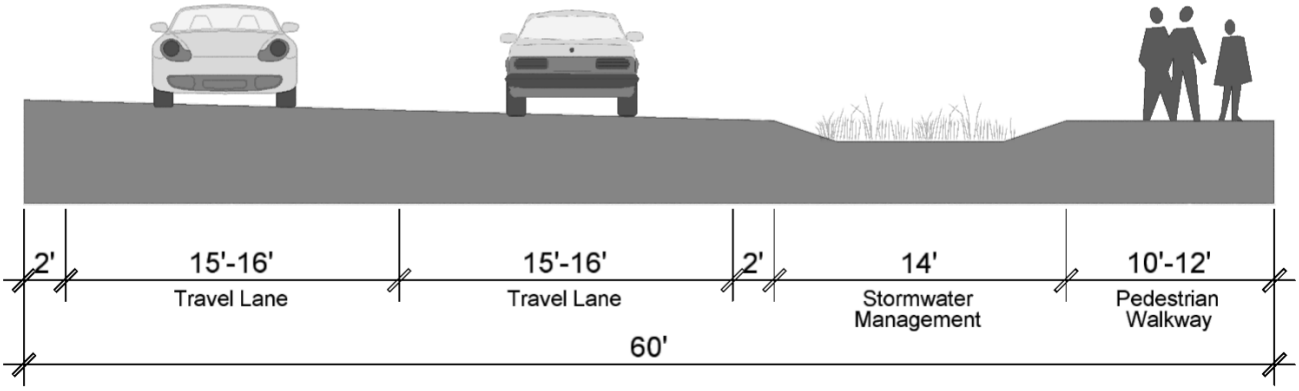
C La Frambois Road Neighborhood Section
(Looking West)

Figure 4: Concepts for La Frambois Road



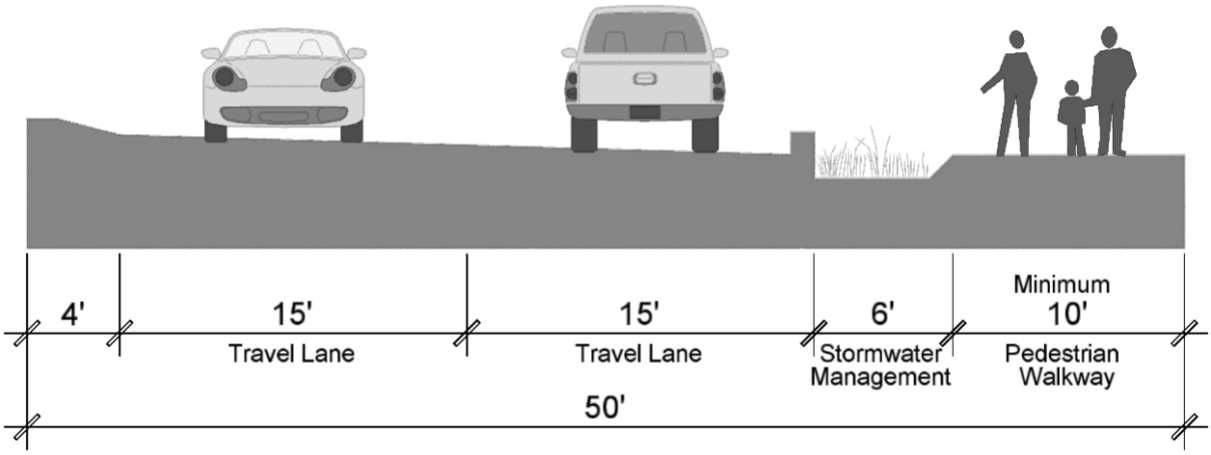
D La Frambois Road Traffic Calming

Figure 5: Concepts for La Frambois Road



E La Frambois Industrial Road Preferred Alternative Section

* Travel Lane widths assume shared travel with bicycles



La Frambois Industrial Road Minimum Alternative Section

* Travel Lane widths assume shared travel with bicycles

Figure 6: Fruit Valley Road and Fourth Plain Improvements

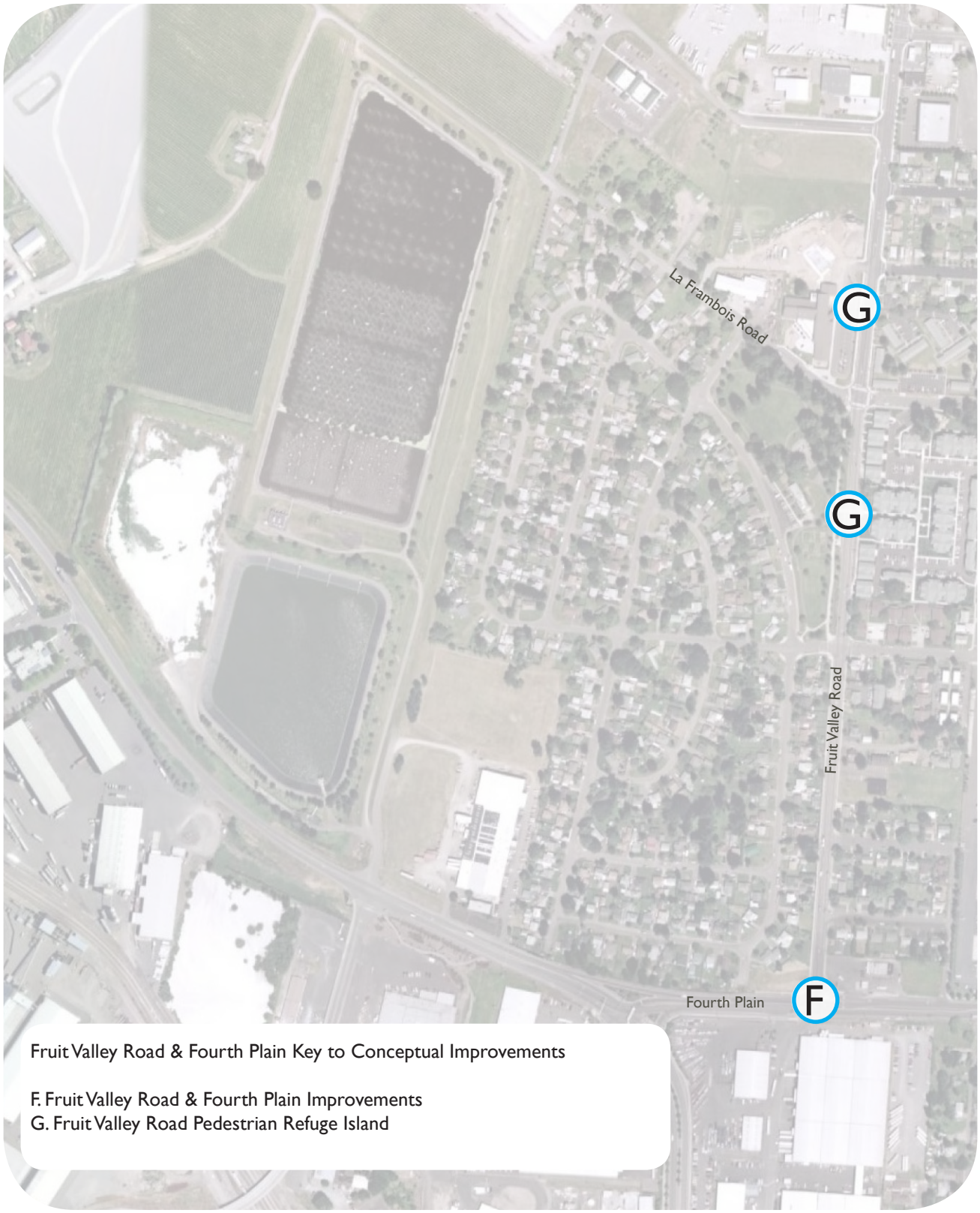
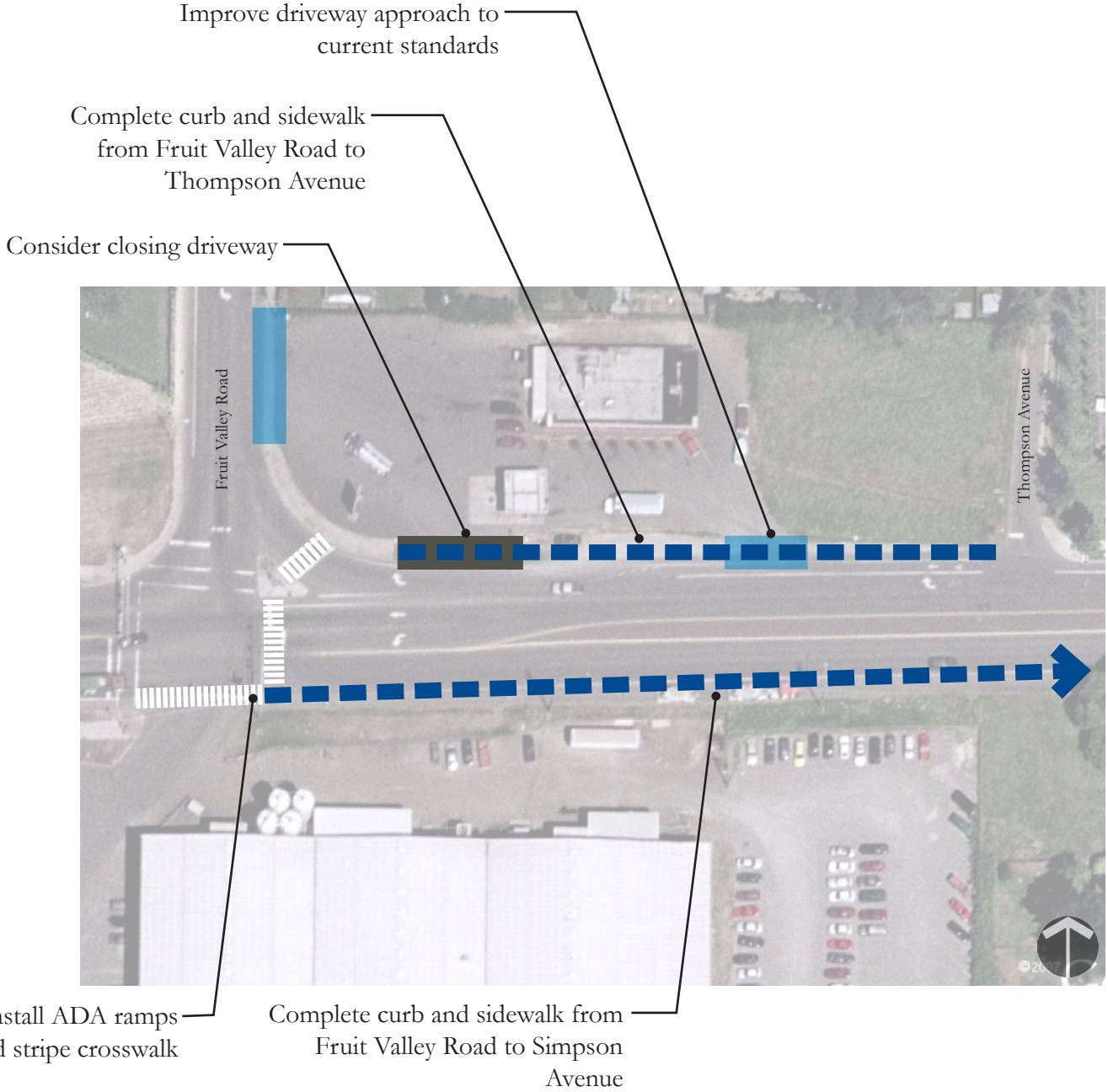
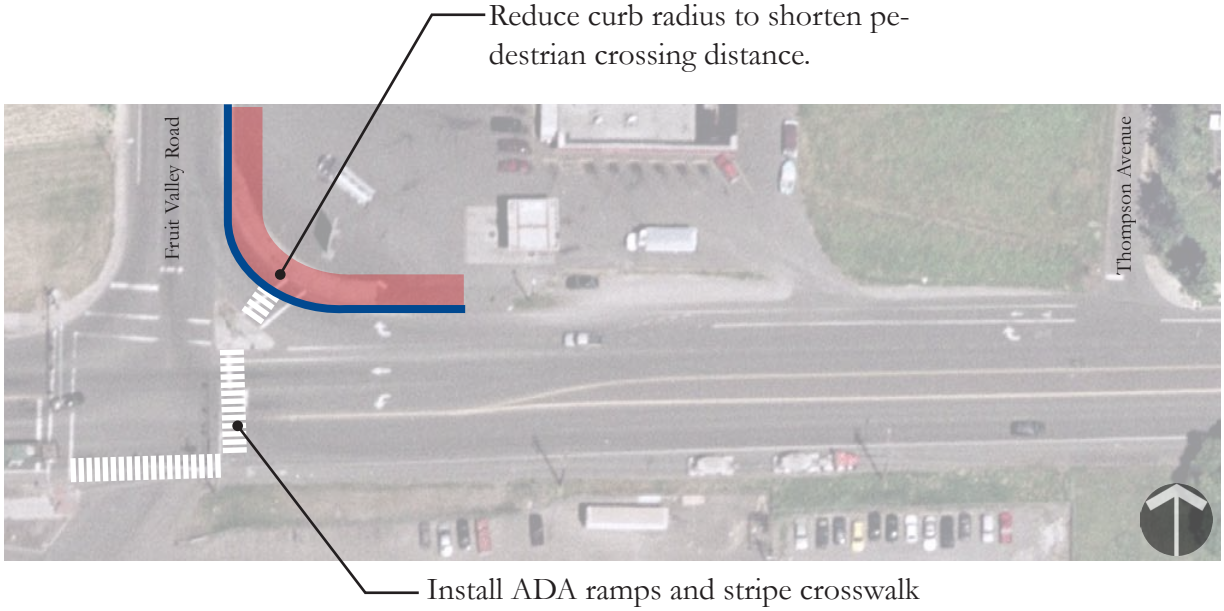


Figure 7: Fruit Valley Road and Fourth Plain Improvements

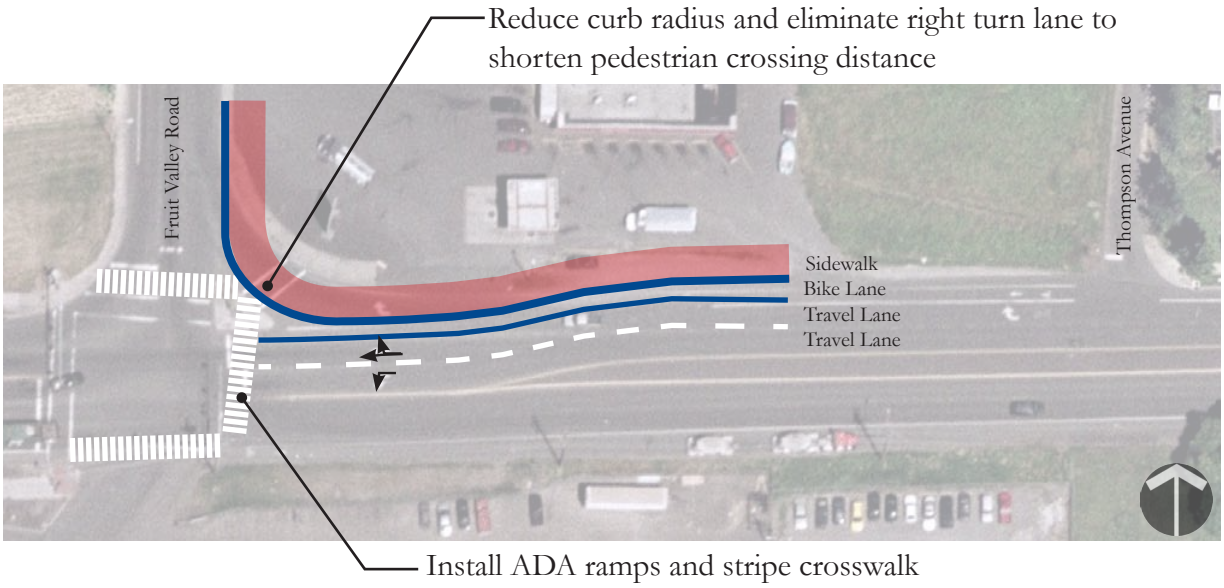


F Fruit Valley Road & Fourth Plain Walkway Improvements

Figure 8: Fruit Valley Road and Fourth Plain Improvements



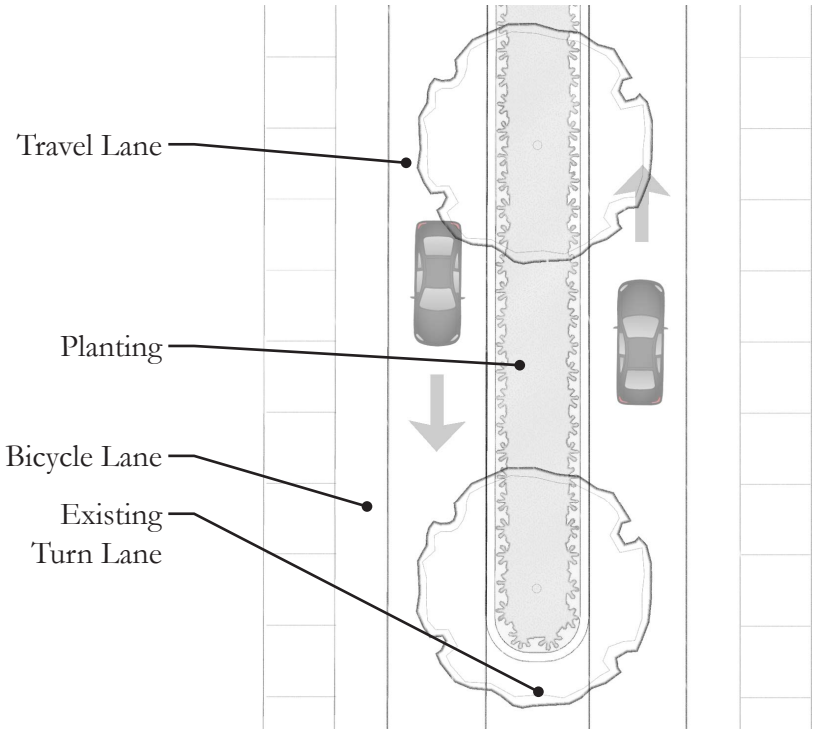
Option 1: Intersection Improvements for Pedestrians



Option 2: Intersection Improvements for Pedestrians

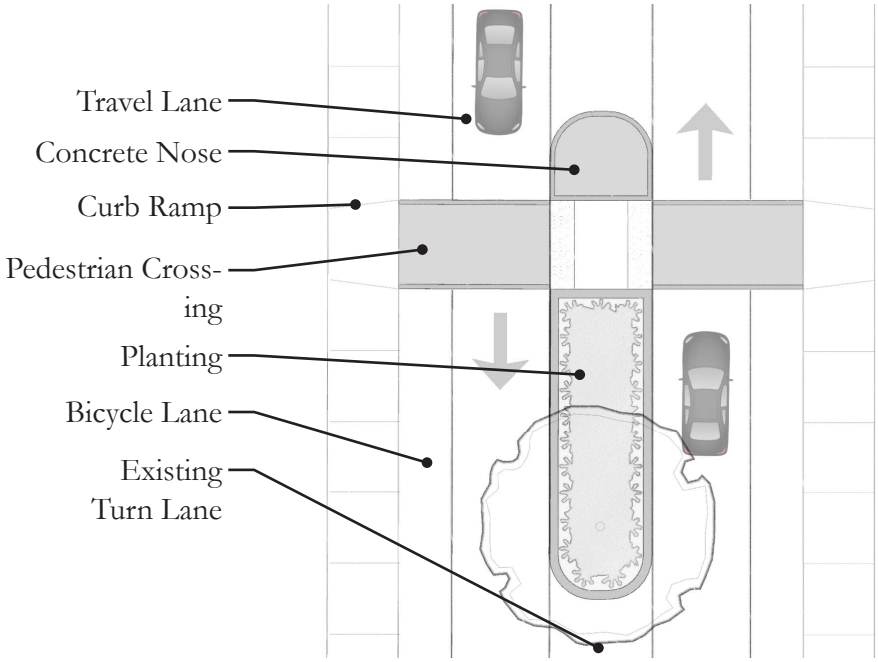
* Note: Traffic analysis required to determine if right turn lane can be eliminated

Figure 9: Fruit Valley Road and Fourth Plain Improvements



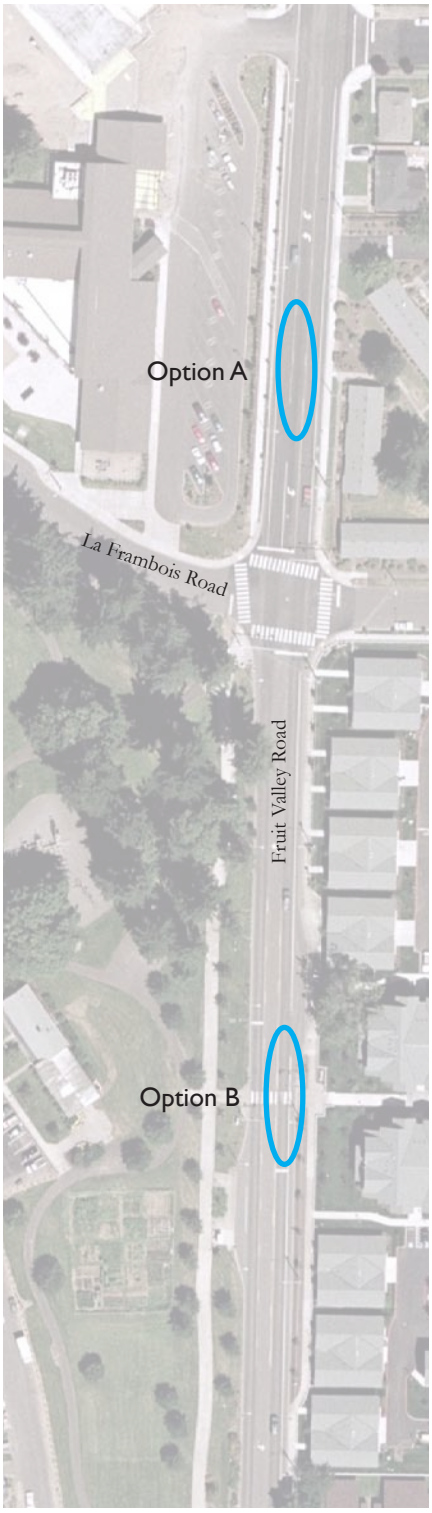
G Fruit Valley Road Median -Option A

* Note: Opportunity to vary length according to location & access needs



G Fruit Valley Road Pedestrian Refuge Island -Option B

* Note: Opportunity to vary length according to location & access needs



Fruit Valley Refuge Island Location Options

Figure 10: Historic Neighborhood Concepts

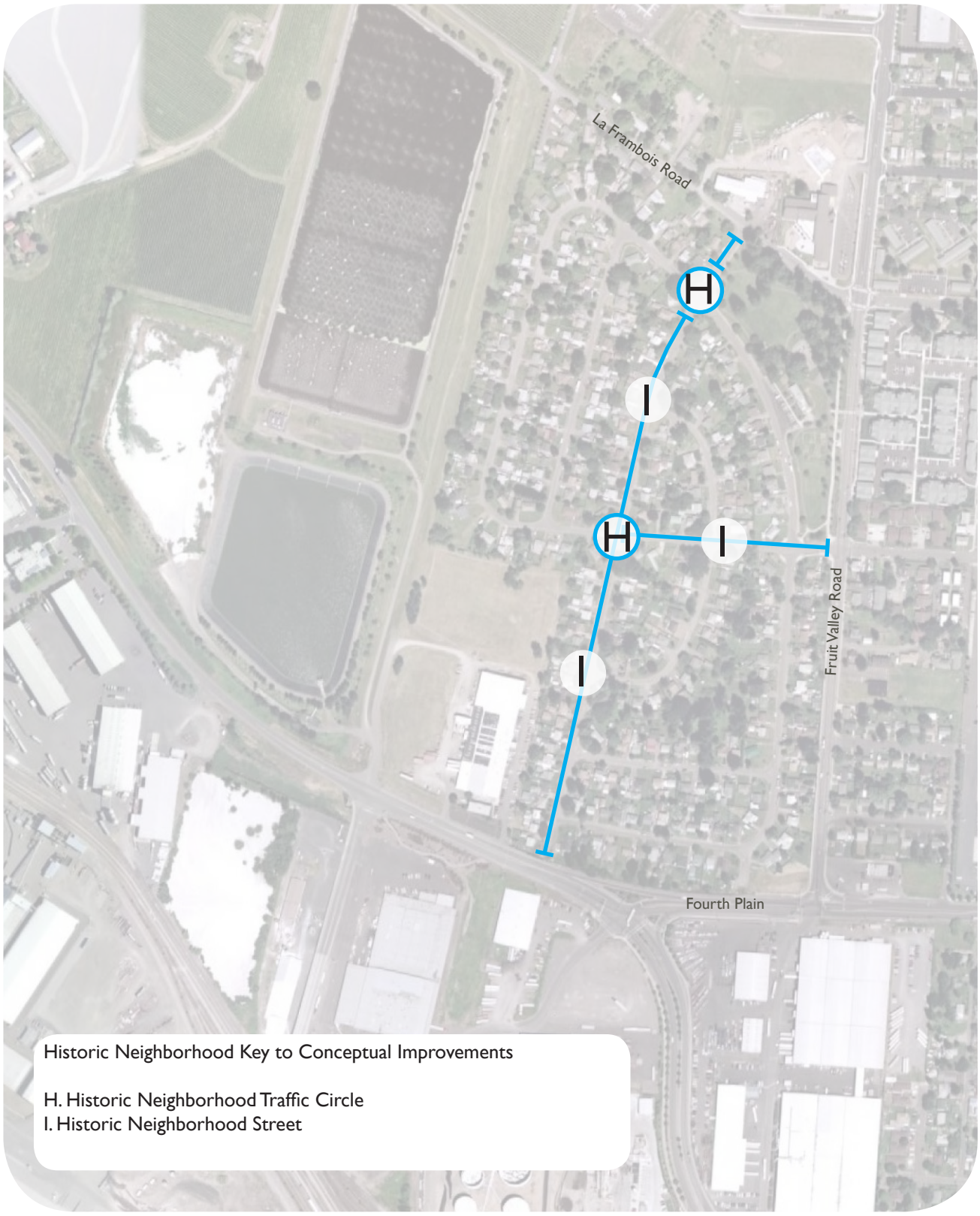
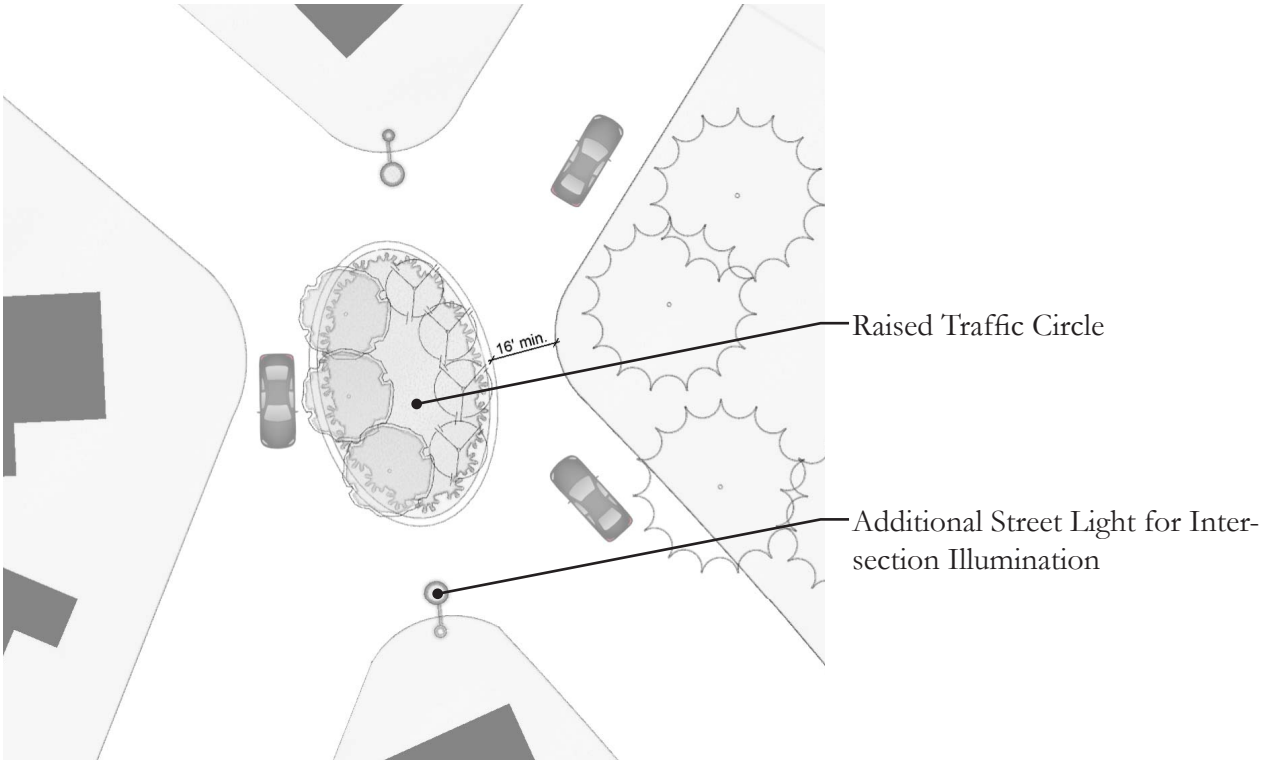
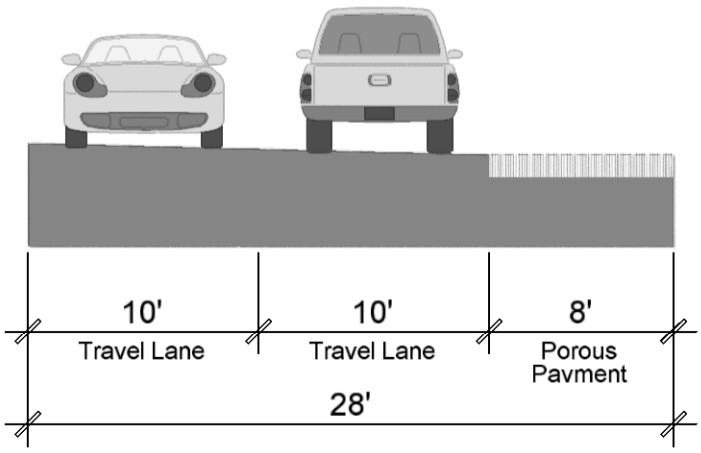


Figure 11: Historic Neighborhood Concepts



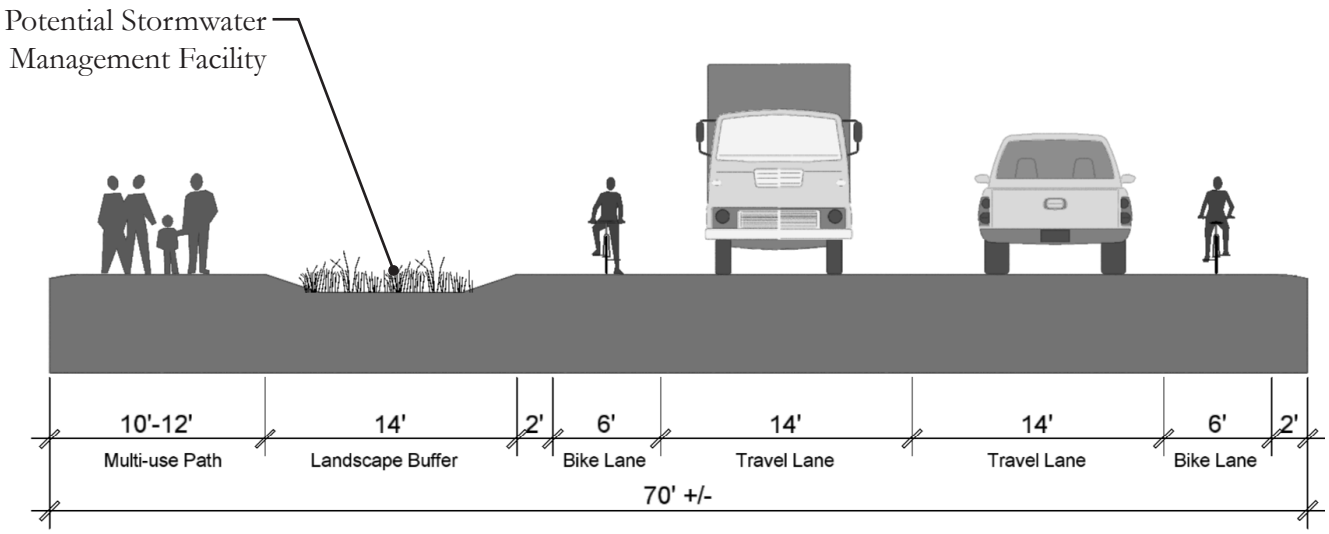
H Historic Neighborhood Traffic Circle



I Historic Neighborhood Street with Porous Pavement for Stormwater Infiltration

Figure 12: 26th Avenue Rural Alternative

Figure 13: 26th Avenue Rural Alternative



J 26th Avenue Rural Street Section Between La Frambois and Fruit Valley Road

Budgeting for Future Improvements

The following costs for suggested design concepts are for comparative and budgetary purposes. They are based on 2010 dollars for construction and should add a cost escalation factor when targeting improvement for future years. These costs are not based on detailed design or itemized construction costs and do not include costs for right-of-way acquisition or engineering design. Allowances are included for stormwater treatment/detention areas within the street sections; however costs for conveyance and discharge off site depend on site conditions to be determined during design and are not included. Other assumptions are noted as applicable.

1. **Gateway Intersection Improvement – Fruit Valley Road and La Frambois Road**

   Cost Range for Improvement = $200,000 to $300,000

   Assumptions:

   - Does not include costs for signal modifications (if necessary) at Fruit Valley Road/La Frambois Road intersection.
   - Range of costs cover at-grade stamped/color asphalt option to raised intersection color/stamped PCC option.
   - Includes allowance for vertical gateway feature.

2. **La Frambois Gateway Street Section**

   Cost Range for Improvement = $300,000 to $350,000 ($850/LF)

   Assumptions:

   - Total length of improvements is 400 feet.
   - Range of costs cover allowances for earthwork, paving, standard sidewalk, drainage, illumination, signing/striping, and decorative pavement bands.

3. **La Frambois Road Neighborhood Street Section**

   Cost Range for Improvement = $400,000 to $450,000 ($450/LF)

   Assumptions:

   - Total length of improvement is 900 feet.
   - Range of costs cover allowances for earthwork, paving, stormwater treatment area, illumination, signing/striping, and porous pavement walkway option.

4. **Secondary Gateway Improvement – Signifies transition from neighborhood to industrial street section**

   Cost Range for Improvement = $25,000 to $50,000

   Assumptions:

   - Range of costs cover allowances for colored asphalt and vertical gateway features.

5. **La Frambois Industrial Road Section**

   Cost Range for Improvement = $700,000 to $750,000 ($500/LF)

   Assumptions:

   - Total length of improvement is 1,500 feet.
   - Does not include costs for potential new traffic signal (if necessary) at La Frambois Road and NE 26th Avenue intersection.
   - Range of costs cover preferred and minimum street sections and include, where applicable, allowances for earthwork, paving, illumination, curb, signing/striping, stormwater treatment area, and asphalt walkway.

6. **Fruit Valley Road/Fourth Plain Boulevard Intersection Improvements**

   Cost Range for Improvement = $100,000 to $150,000

   Assumptions:

   - Does not include costs for potential signal modifications (if necessary).
   - Range of costs cover Level 1 and Level 2 improvements and include, where applicable, sidewalk, curb, ADA ramps, driveway approaches, striping, pavement removal, and site restoration.

7. **Fruit Valley Road Pedestrian Refuge Island**

   Cost Range for Improvement = $15,000 to $20,000 (per refuge island)

   Assumptions:

   - Range of costs cover a minimum 50-foot by 10-foot island and includes ADA ramps, curb, and landscape and hardscape options.

8. **Historic Neighborhood Traffic Island**

   Cost Range for Improvement = $15,000 to $25,000 (per traffic island)

   Assumptions:

   - Range of costs cover varying island size, hardscape/landscape treatments, and pedestrian level lighting.

9. **Historic Neighborhood Porous Pavement Walkway/Parking Area**

   Cost Range for Improvement = $450,000 to 500,000 ($150/LF)

   Assumptions:

   - Total length of improvement is 3,000 feet.
   - Ranges of costs cover reconstruction of 20-foot asphalt street and 8-foot wide porous pavement options.