



Commercial-Vista Corridor Plan Connecting People and Places



Prepared for:



CITY OF *Salem*
AT YOUR SERVICE

Prepared by:



 LELAND CONSULTING GROUP



Crossing Commercial Street SE between signalized intersections

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Acknowledgments

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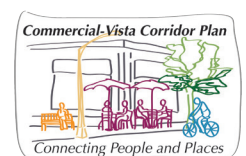
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Protected bike crossing: Commercial Street SE & Liberty Road S

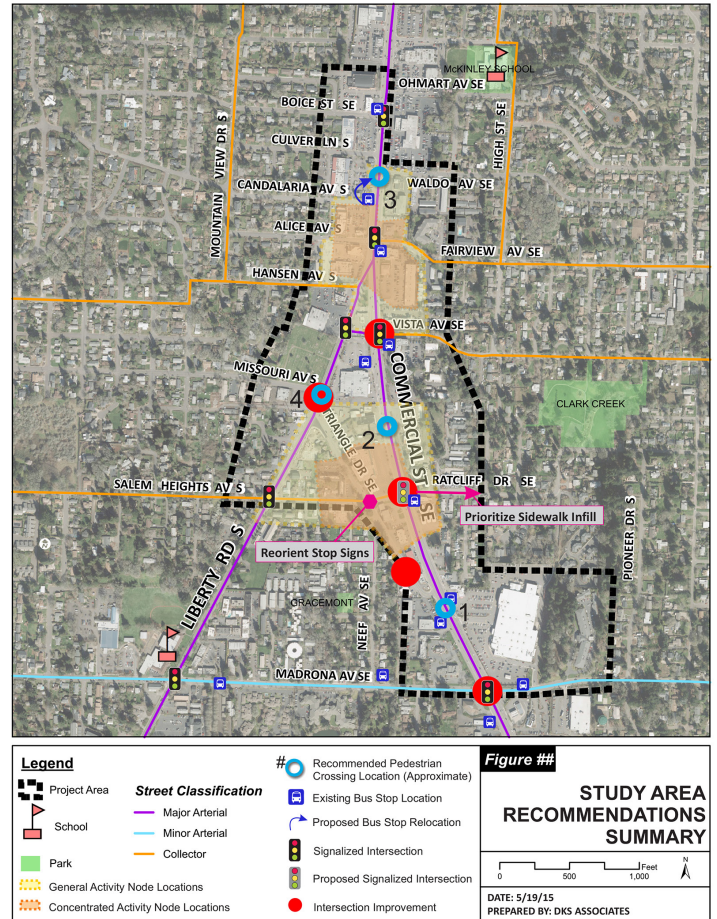
This booklet conveys the community’s desires for upgraded street designs and related urban design components of Commercial Street, Triangle Drive, Liberty Road S, and Salem Heights Avenue within the project area. The number of lanes are proposed to remain the same on most of the study area streets, but slightly narrowed to allow for wider sidewalks or bike facilities without impacting adjacent properties. Major themes include improved sidewalks, better bike facilities, and a visually enhanced streetscape with trees, plantings and art. The change in traffic flow and walkability will provide better access through safer turns and greater visibility for drivers. The landscape and sidewalk improvements with trees, plazas or courtyards, and furnishings will enable businesses to make the street their front yard, not just their driveway.

The following pages describe the specific improvements for each of the corridors within the project area, potential costs, and a discussion of implementation phasing. The improvements facilitate a more comfortable and safely navigable corridor for people on foot, bikes, and in cars.

Project Background

In 2013, the City of Salem applied for and received grant funds from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), Transportation and Growth Management Program to develop a refinement plan for the Commercial-Vista project area.

The commercial district, which is the focus of this project, is a distinct area of the city where auto-oriented commercial development evolved adjacent to unique residential neighborhoods. This commercial district provides a mix of neighborhood services as well as businesses with citywide appeal. Commercial Street SE and Liberty Road S are main transportation corridors connecting south Salem to downtown. These streets carry more than 33,000 and 16,000 vehicles per day, respectively. The roadways converge in the project area, creating a complex street configuration which requires careful planning and design to better accommodate all modes of travel and better to serve the area businesses, customers, and neighborhoods.

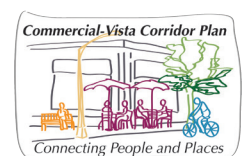


The Problem

This commercial district was developed at a time when little thought was given to non-auto travel. Much of the area consists of commercial properties with a mix of parcel sizes, numerous driveways, and few connections between the public realm, commercial, and business entrances. This lack of an inviting, attractive circulation system can limit prosperity.

Specific Issues

- There are limited safe east-west crossings for pedestrians across Commercial Street SE.
- Neighborhoods are poorly linked to adjacent businesses.
- Operational and safety issues exist.
- Minimal bus stop improvements exist along the corridor.
- Gaps have been identified in the sidewalk and bicycle networks.
- The intersection of Commercial Street SE/Liberty Road S has been identified as a Tier 1 priority needing improvement in the Bicycle Element of the Salem Transportation System Plan (TSP). This intersection has a complex configuration and will require a unique, innovative design solution.
- The Bicycle Element of the Salem TSP calls for “enhanced bike facilities” along both the Commercial Street SE and Liberty Road S corridors. These enhanced facilities require an additional level of analysis and design to move these projects forward.



Summary of Public Outreach

During 2015, an advisory committee and numerous neighbors and business owners worked with the City to discuss their vision for the project area. They reviewed concepts and provided suggestions at multiple workshops to ensure that the proposed improvements matched the local needs and priorities.

Common themes quickly emerged:

- Beautify the corridor with trees and landscaping
- Add safer and more pleasant walking environments
- Build better bike facilities
- Preserve convenient auto access to businesses
- Fill in street lighting gaps
- Narrow travel lanes
- Build street furnishings



Before: Looking south at Commercial Street SE and Liberty Road S

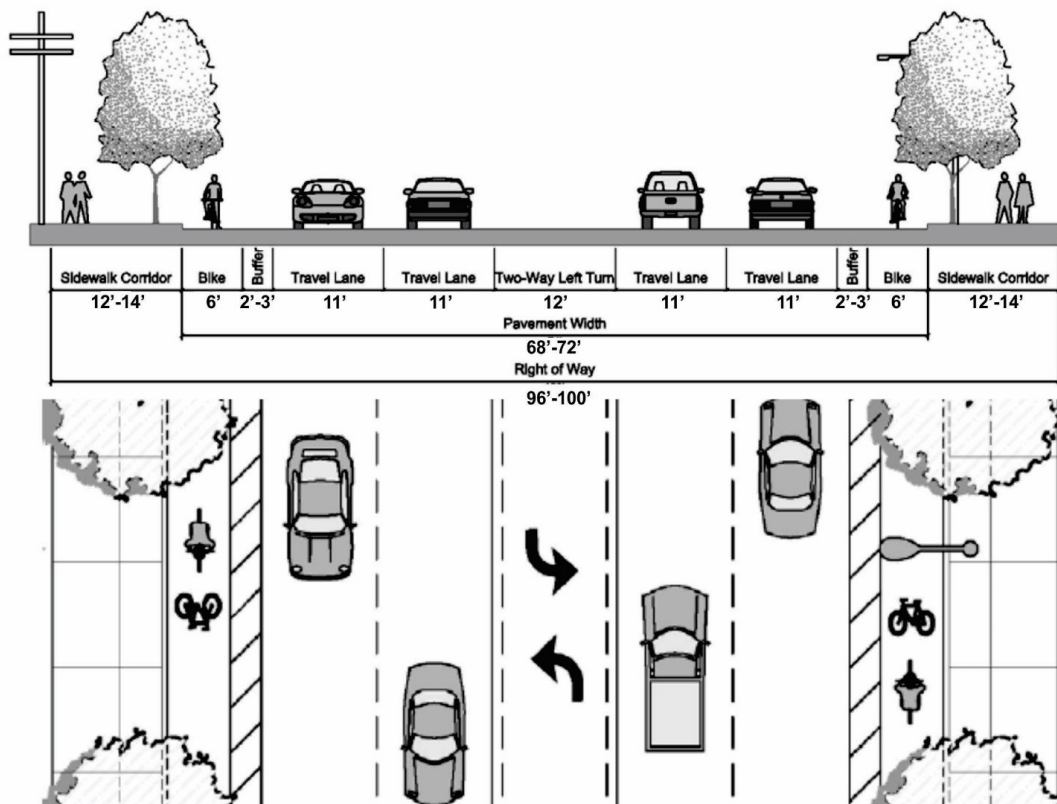
Following the last workshop in September 2015, the City's project team developed final recommendations based on the community's input. They have been compiled for this guide book and are summarized and illustrated on the following pages.



After: Enhanced pedestrian experience, due to the buffered bike lane, public art, and street trees on Commercial Street SE and Liberty Road S

Recommendations: Commercial Street SE

The Commercial Street recommended design, with localized improvements along the corridor, will improve safety for all modes of travel and more conducive to new investment in existing or vacant properties. The design narrows travel lanes to reduce speeds and make room for widened sidewalks and buffered bike lanes without significantly encroaching on existing land uses. Bicycle improvements at the “split” where southbound traffic can leave Commercial Street SE and head down Liberty Road S will also help improve safety. The design also adds refuge median islands to the center turn lane to aid pedestrians making a two-stage crossing. Supplemental lighting is recommended along the corridor and at the Commercial Street SE/Madrona Avenue SE intersection to improve visibility and safety. The addition of a traffic signal at the Commercial Street SE/Ratcliff Avenue SE intersection will provide signalized crossings for pedestrians and bikes to increase intersection capacity. Further, completing the sidewalk gap north of Ratcliff Drive SE will also improve pedestrian safety and comfort along the corridor.



A full featured multi-modal roadway with buffered bicycle lanes and wide sidewalks



A new pedestrian crossing with a protective island

Recommended Considerations

Motor Vehicle Mobility

- Maintain existing four travel lanes, but narrowed from the current 14-foot width to 11- to 12-feet throughout the corridor.
- Maintain a striped median for left turns and emergency vehicles, but at a reduced width of 12 feet.
- Encourage slower speeds more consistent with the posted speed limit.
- Add a continuous 12-foot left turn lane, except where pedestrian crossing refuges are located.

Walkability

- Widen the sidewalk corridor to 12 to 14 feet, including a furnishing zone with green infrastructure. The overall width of the sidewalk corridor remains slightly less than the Salem TSP standard of 14 feet from Vista Avenue to Ohmart Avenue.
- Add a furnishing zone, along with the buffered bike lane, to provide pedestrians with a buffer from moving cars and offer space for sloped driveway approaches outside of the pedestrian through zone.
- Reduce the curb-to-curb distance, shortening the pedestrian crossing distance and reducing travel speeds.
- Optional: Add pedestrian crossing refuge islands at selected locations.

Bikeability

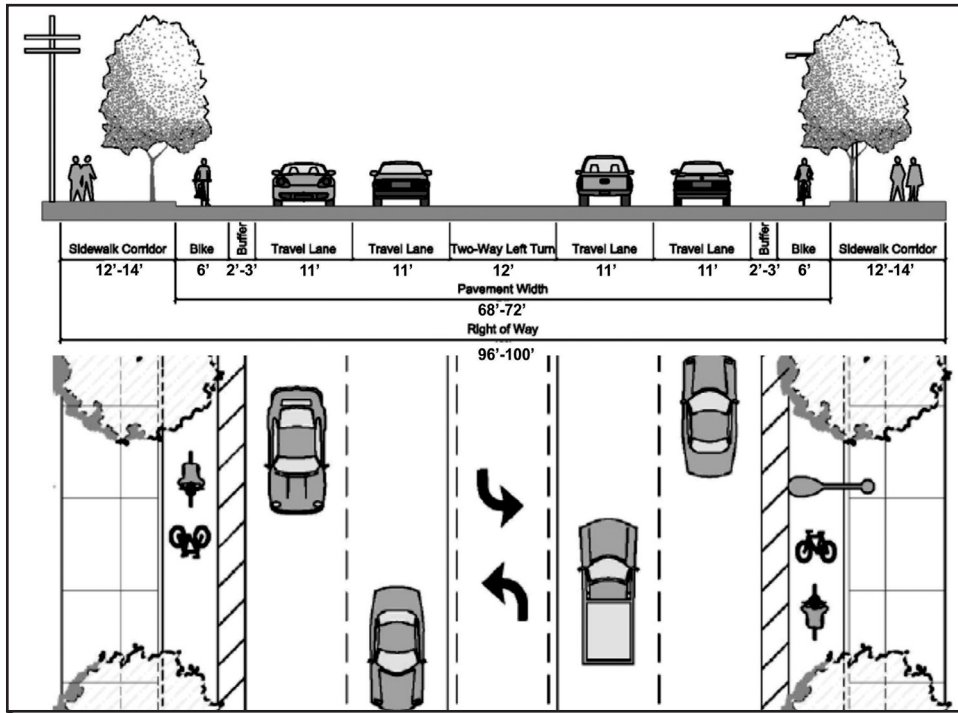
- Provide a 6-foot bike lane with a 2- to 3-foot striped buffer (depending on the existing width of the pavement in each segment of Commercial Street), improving safety and comfort for bicyclists and drivers.

Transit Stops

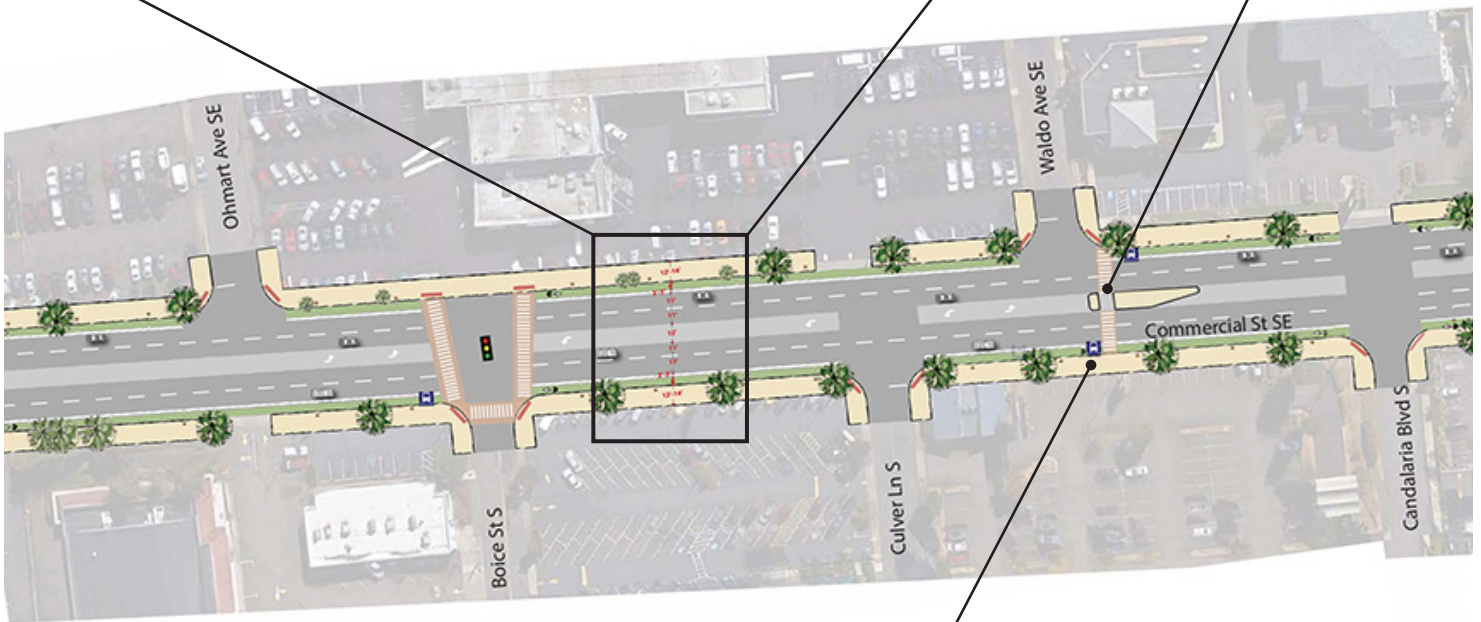
- Widen sidewalk corridor in support of the standard transit shelters in the furnishing zone.
- Add pedestrian crossing refuges at selected locations, along with enhanced pedestrian and bike facilities, to improve access to transit.

Streetscape



- Enhance the attractiveness of the corridor and better integrate the public realm with adjacent land uses through streetscape elements in the furnishing zone.







Enhanced pedestrian crossing at Waldo Avenue SE



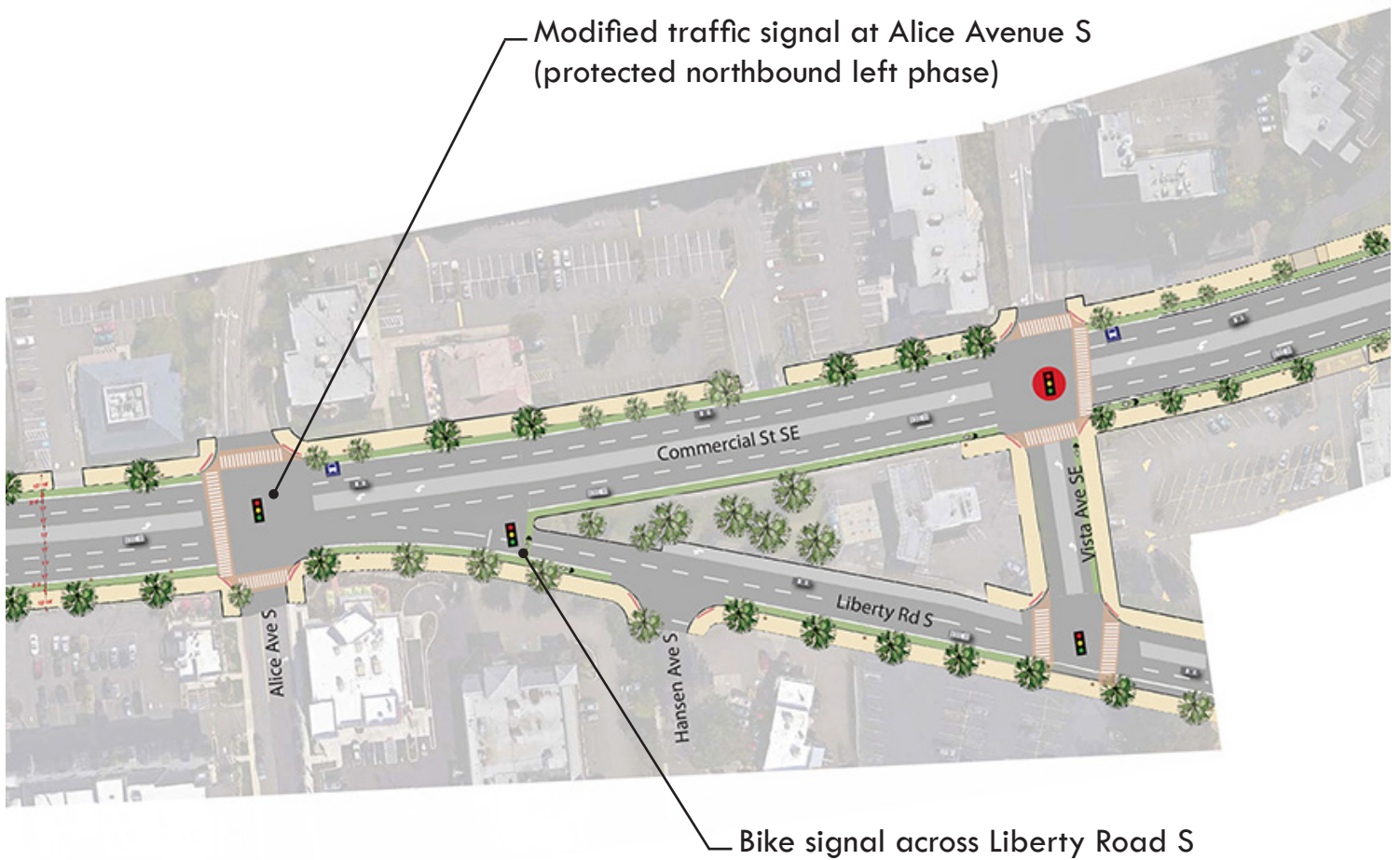
Recommended transit stop location

Existing Signalized Intersection 
 Intersection Improvement 

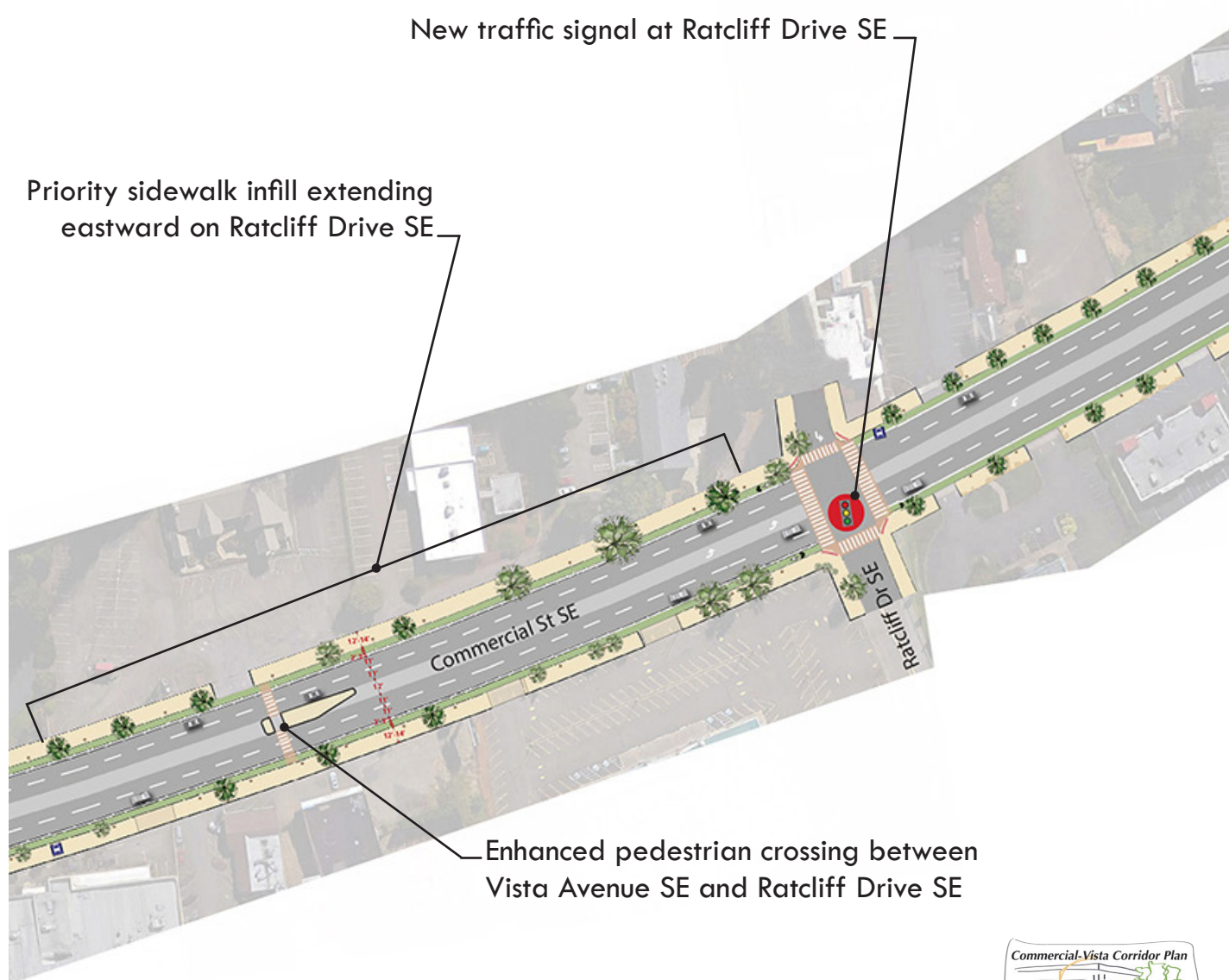
Sidewalk 
 Bike Lane 
 Two-Way Turn Lane 
 Buffer for Bike Lane 

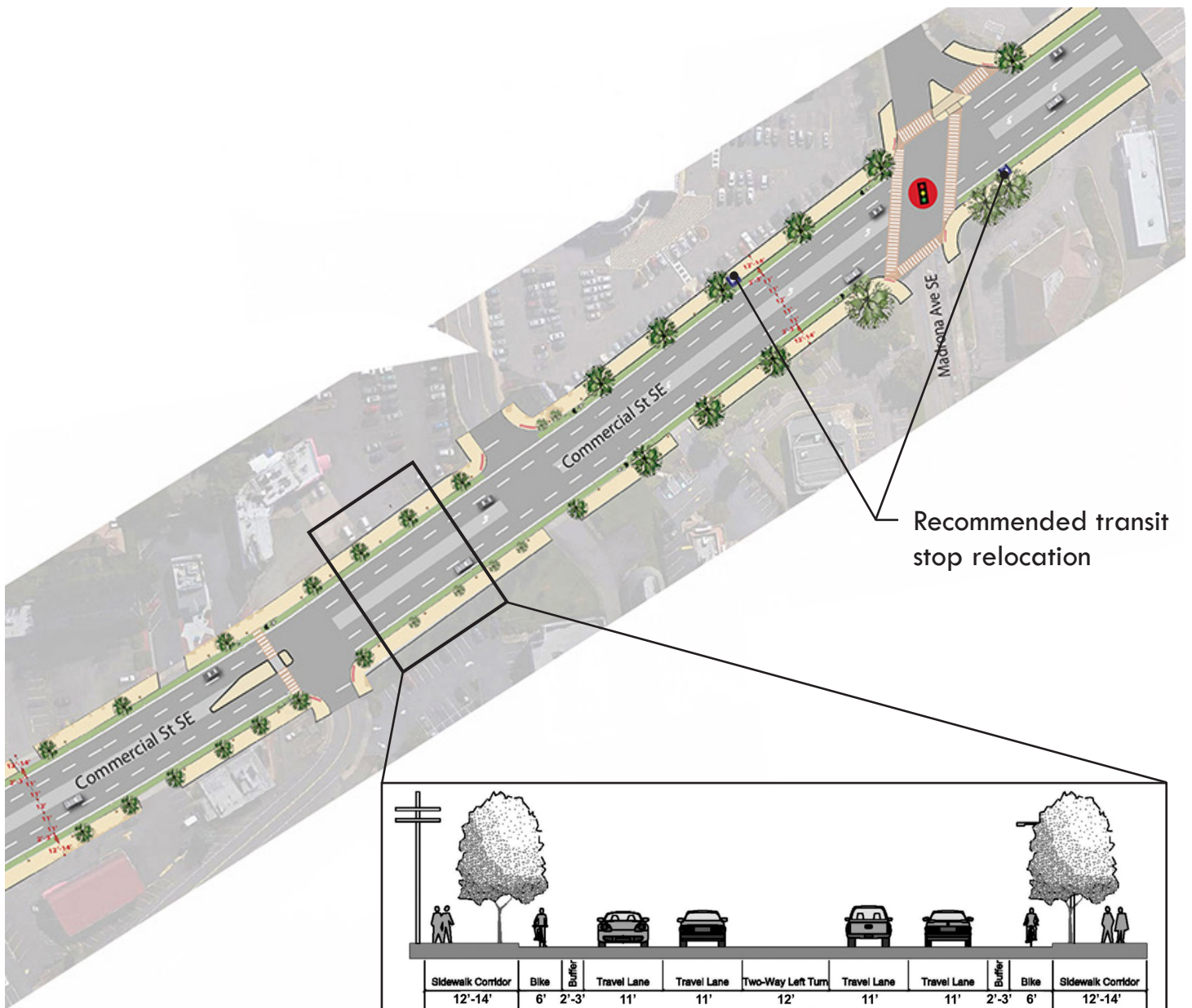


Conceptual Commercial Street SE Recommended Improvements Ohmart Avenue SE to Vista Avenue SE

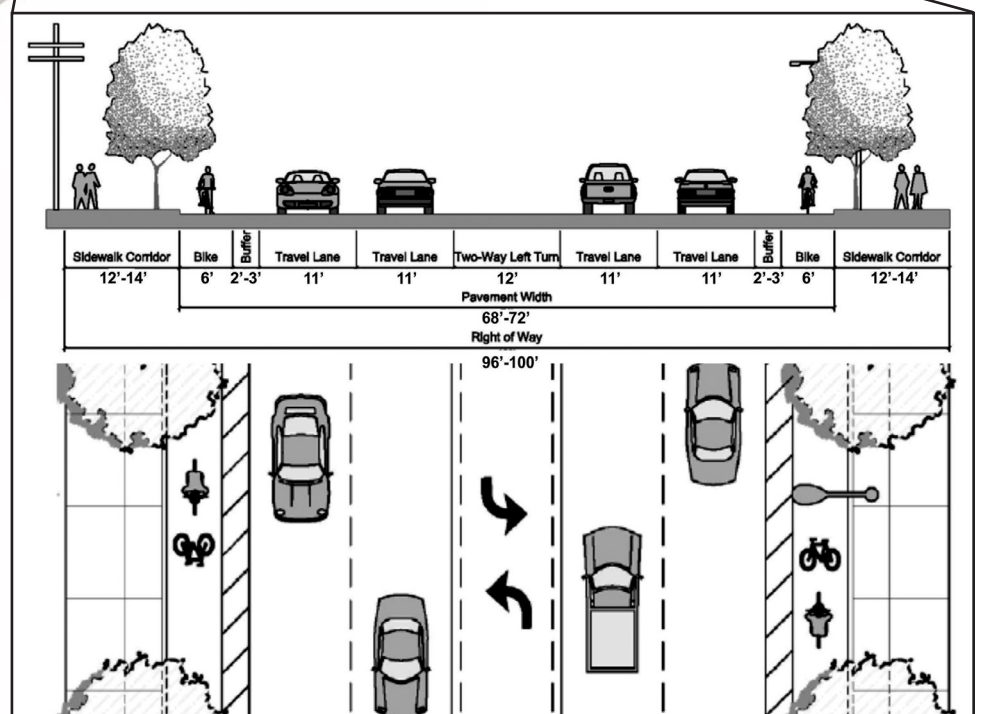


Conceptual Commercial Street SE Recommended Improvements Vista Avenue SE to Madrona Avenue SE





Recommended transit stop relocation



Proposed / Existing Signalized Intersection

Intersection Improvement

Sidewalk
Bike Lane
Two-Way Turn Lane
Buffer for Bike Lane



Recommendations: Liberty Road S

Liberty Road S is recommended to be developed in two phases, short-term and long-term. The short-term improvements consist of the expansion of the sidewalk into a 10- to 12-foot multi-use sidewalk/pathway.

The long-term improvements include an added 6-foot bike lane on both sides of the street and a median lane for left turns. The design is also intended to make pedestrian crossings safer and more comfortable by installing an enhanced pedestrian crossing with a refuge median near Missouri Avenue S.

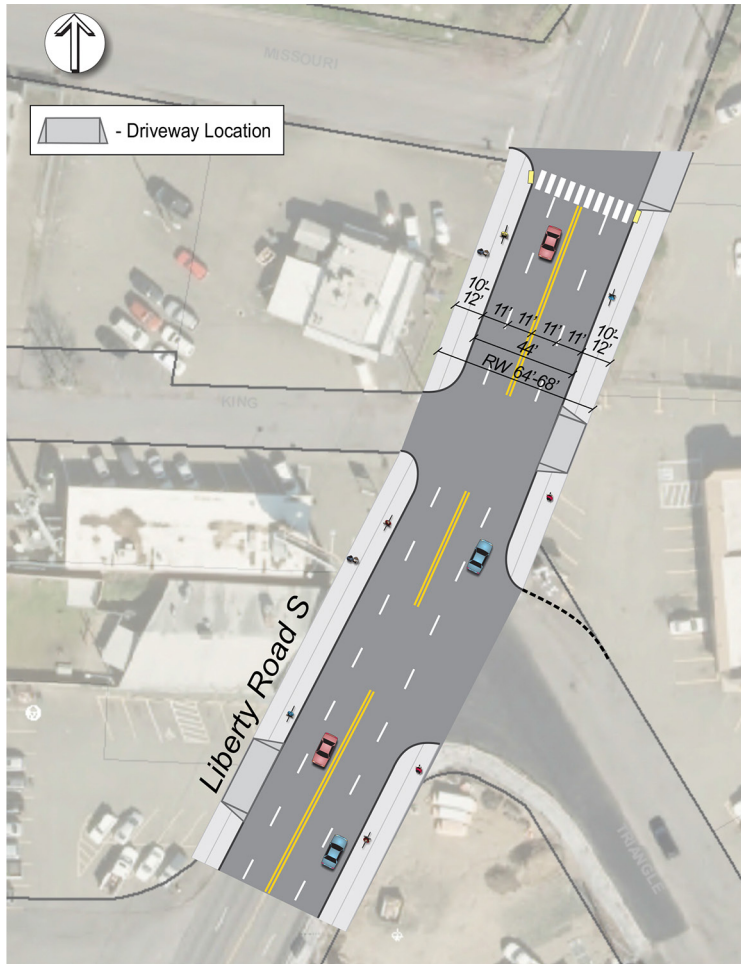
Recommended Considerations for Long-Term Improvements

Motor Vehicle Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain existing four travel lanes at the current 11-foot width, which already conforms to the adopted Salem TSP cross-section.• Add a continuous 12-foot left turn lane; this also conforms to the adopted Salem TSP.
Walkability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the overall width of the sidewalk corridor to the Salem TSP standard of 14 feet.• Provide pedestrians with a buffer from moving cars and driveway approach cross slopes outside of the pedestrian path of travel through the furnishing zone, along with a standard bike lane.• Optional: Add pedestrian crossing refuges at selected locations with the addition of a center left turn lane.
Bikeability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accommodate cycling with a 6-foot standard bike lane, improving bicycle mobility and safety.
Transit Stops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Currently there is no transit service for this segment; however transit stop facilities could be accommodated in the future within the public right-of-way.
Streetscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a 7.5-foot sidewalk corridor furnishing zone to support an attractive commercial/residential streetscape, as well as offer a wide range of opportunities for amenities such as bike parking facilities, wayfinding signage, and public art. This well-developed furnishing zone also provides an opportunity for better integrating the public realm with adjacent land uses.

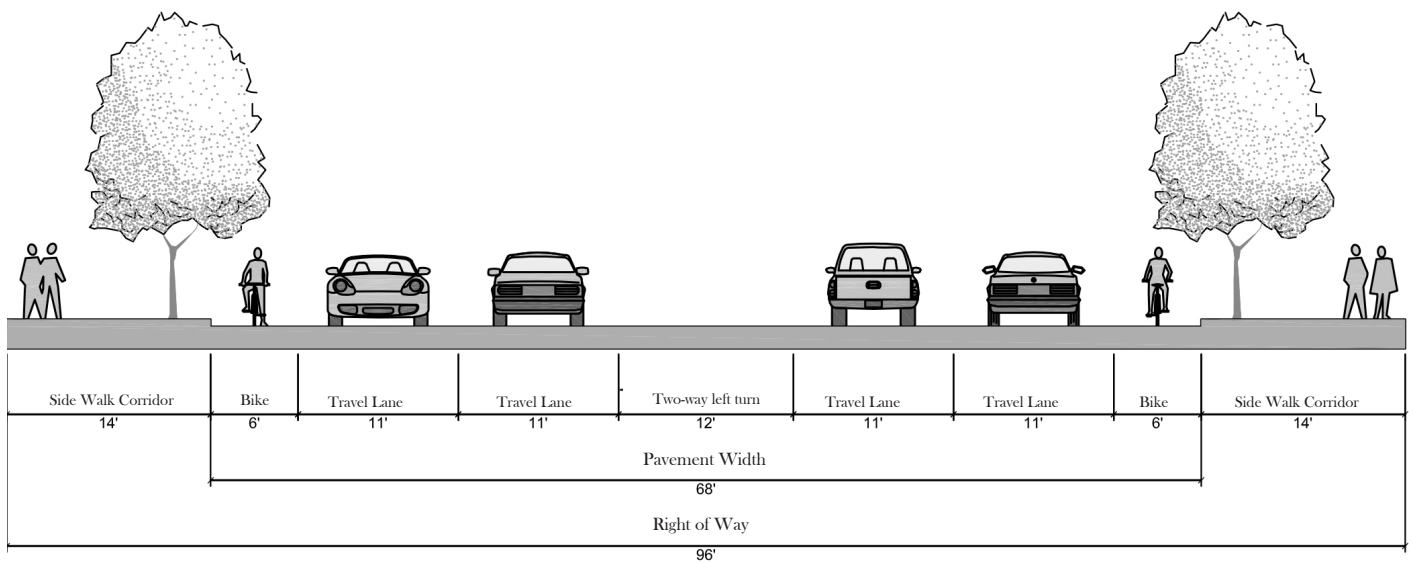


Before: Liberty Road S





Conceptual Liberty Road S recommended short-term improvements



Liberty Road S long-term recommended at Salem TSP cross section

Recommendations: Salem Heights Avenue SE

The recommended treatment is for upgrades to Salem Heights Avenue SE to match the Collector “B” cross-section from the Salem TSP. The cross-section includes street design elements that do not currently exist in this segment: 11-foot travel lanes, bike lanes and on-street parking on one side. Providing these elements would significantly improve the pedestrian and bicycle environments and vehicle mobility, while supporting adjacent properties and businesses.



Current condition

Recommended Considerations

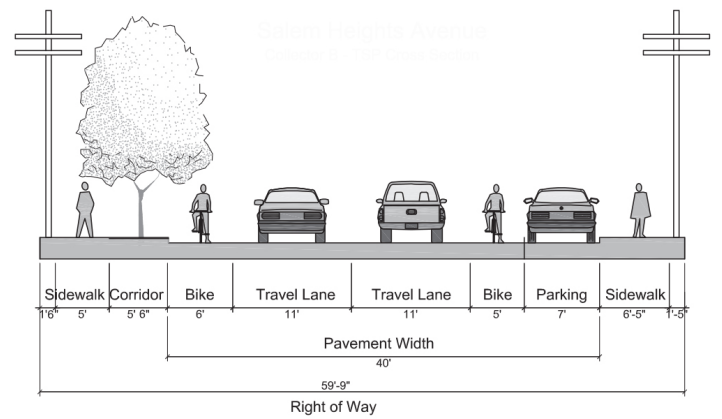
Motor Vehicle Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide two 11-foot travel lanes.• Provide parallel parking on one side.• Re-orient stop sign at intersection with Triangle Drive SE.
Walkability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a sidewalk corridor of 10.5-feet on one side and 6.5-feet of sidewalks on the other.• Provide pedestrians with physical separation and a landscape buffer from moving cars and accommodate driveway approach cross slopes outside of the pedestrian path of travel through a sidewalk corridor furnishing zone on one side and bicycle lanes.
Bikeability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve bicycle mobility and safety with 6-foot bicycle lanes.
Streetscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a sidewalk corridor furnishing zone on one side supports an attractive commercial/residential streetscape, as well as offer a wide range of opportunities for amenities such bike parking facilities, wayfinding signage, and public art. A well-developed furnishing zone also provides an opportunity to better integrate the public realm with adjacent land uses.



Salem Heights Avenue SE, recommended design; pedestrians and bikers get a safe share of the street and parking also supports nearby uses.



Conceptual Salem Heights Avenue SE improvements



Salem TSP Collector B standard

Recommendations: Triangle Drive SE

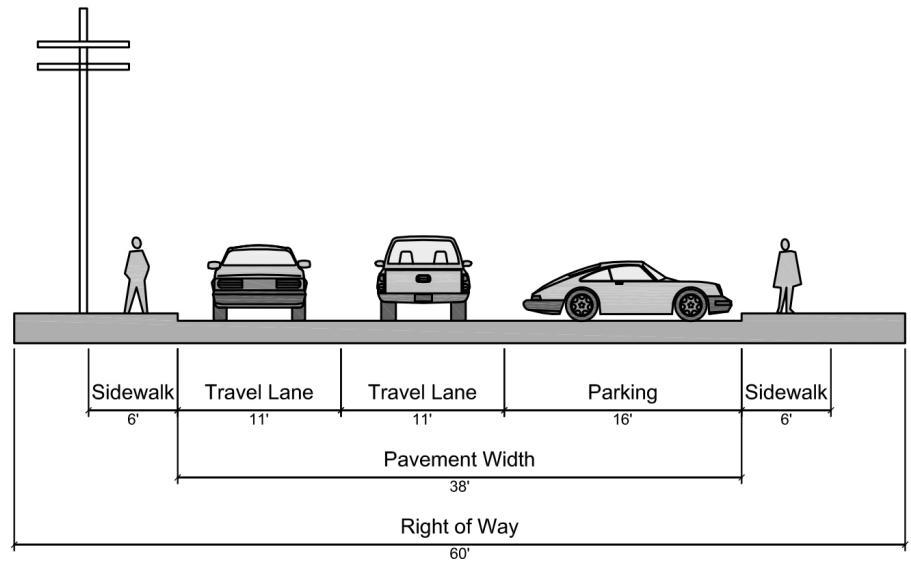
The recommended improvements address the lack of pedestrian walkways along Triangle Drive SE and formalizes on-street parking. In the recommended design, the on-street parking is angled on the east side of the street adjacent to the majority of businesses. Based on feedback from the public meetings, business owners supported the angle parking of this recommended design.

Recommended Considerations

Motor Vehicle Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provides existing two 11-foot travel lanes.Include on-street parking.
Walkability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide sidewalks to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.Note: The sidewalk corridor width does not provide a furnishing zone buffer from vehicles or a pedestrian zone clear of driveway approach cross slopes.
Bikeability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue the practice of cyclists sharing the roadway lanes which is typical for roadways with local-street traffic volumes like Triangle Drive SE. Sharrow markings could be added to enhance the bicycle environment.Angled parking conflicts with the bicyclists.
Transit Stops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There is currently no transit service for this segment.
Streetscape Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The proposed sidewalk corridor does not provide a furnishing zone, however landscaped islands are recommended at driveway entrances to channel vehicles and provide additional streetscape amenities.



Before: Triangle Drive SE



Triangle Drive SE recommended option-angled parking



Conceptual Triangle Drive SE improvements

Activity Centers

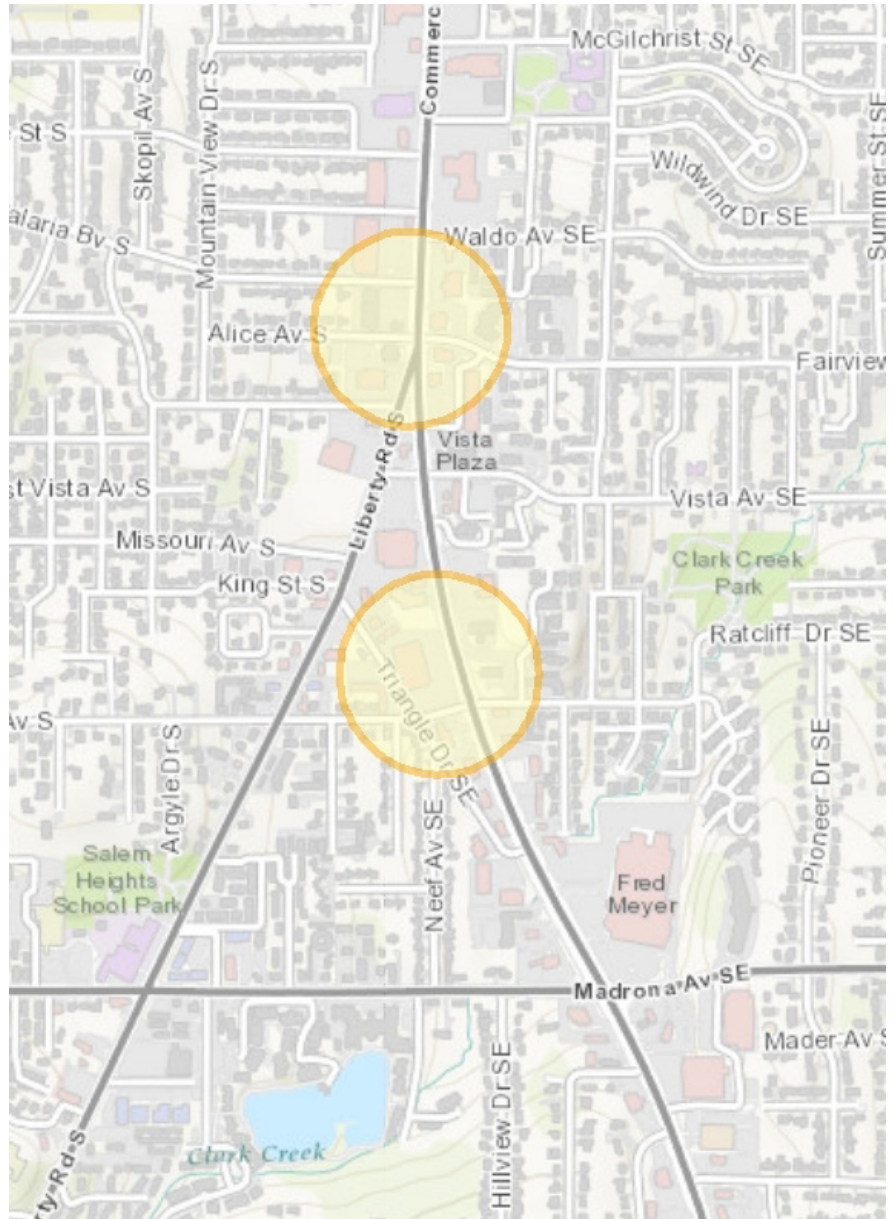
Existing land uses generally represent a healthy economic environment. While market forces are unlikely to spur a transition to multi-story mixed use development, a mix of general and retail commercial uses, as well as some multi-family residential can continue to be supported in the corridor by new development and re-purposing of underused sites. Investments in the public realm along with updated multi-modal facilities will support the growing success of the corridor.

Two potential locations for future activity centers were identified based on:

- Proximity to nearby businesses that could draw pedestrians
- Proximity to key street intersections
- Potential for integration with existing or future developments

One location is at the northern end near the intersection of Commercial Street SE and Alice Avenue SE, and the second is a southern node near the area bounded by Triangle Drive SE, Commercial Street SE, and Ratcliff Drive SE. Creating such centers would help provide or enhance additional destinations for people traveling in cars, on foot, or by bike. Activity centers can vary in terms of their size and amenities provided. Potential amenities include seating, landscaping, bicycle racks, pedestrian-scale lighting, trash receptacles, fountains or splash pads, covered areas, public art, or food carts.

The northern activity node has seen recent investment such as the French Press, with great street orientation and outdoor seating. This prime intersection also houses Ventis Taphouse with an outdoor dining area, two small commercial centers, and most notably the new Panera Bread / Parklane Mattress building. Panera also features outdoor seating and premium landscaping adjacent to Commercial Street SE.



Two potential activity centers, north and south nodes

It is easy to imagine this type of communal treatment spreading in along the corridor. Wider sidewalks and landscaping will provide a buffer from traffic that an entrepreneur could utilize in developing more buildings mimicking the form highlighted by the examples at Alice Avenue S.

The southern activity center is home to the empty Safeway site that will soon be redeveloped by Wilco and another empty lot to the north. These types of properties are prime opportunities. The Wilco development will bring new customers to the area and will create a spark that others will notice. The construction of quality sidewalk segments and enhanced pedestrian crossings will be a significant improvement. The most significant change will come from the proposed signal at Ratcliff Drive SE along with improved pedestrian access to the nearby neighborhood.

The southern activity center could be oriented toward quieter streets like Triangle Drive SE, and Salem Heights Avenue SE, which will provide a better pedestrian atmosphere for a neighborhood center that is more accessible to nearby residents and distinguished from the auto-oriented businesses along Commercial Street SE. This location also provides an opportunity to reach out to community-minded businesses within the area to help create shared public spaces/activity centers and program them with activities.

The economy of the corridor clearly supports quality development. So far however, only a few have taken advantage of the option to see the street for the public space that it is. The enhancements recommended by this plan are designed to extend the possibilities to many properties along the corridor that benefit from a quality pedestrian realm, formed by wider sidewalks, improved bike facilities, street trees, landscaping, and narrowed travel lanes. Strategic investments in safety and multi-modal travel will have benefits that go far beyond the right of way in which they are made.



Building and outdoor space invite customers



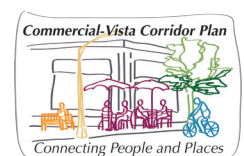
Sidewalk access to building

In addition to physical improvements to the streetscape, development regulations could be modified to help direct future development in this and similar commercial corridors to promote economic vitality, safety, and visual character. Such modifications to the City's development code or the Salem TSP could include some or all of the following.

- Improve pedestrian accessibility and safety by adopting standards requiring future developments to provide direct connections from the public sidewalk to building entrances.
- Reduce conflicts between drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians by requiring vehicular connections and cross access easements between properties, thereby reducing the need for new driveways.
- Visually enhance the streetscape by encouraging businesses to use the street as their front yard and minimize the amount of parking and circulation in front of buildings.
- Enhance security for bicyclists by refining bicycle parking requirements to include temporary spots for shoppers and other visitors, as well as permanent facilities for employees or residents.
- Establish standards for pedestrian activity centers, including a menu of potential amenities.
- Allow for, encourage or require that landscaping include a certain percentage of hardscaping, such as courtyards, plazas, seating areas
- Incorporate streetscape designs for the Commercial Street corridor in the Salem TSP as alternative standards to existing Salem TSP cross-sections for application in this area.
- Review off-street vehicle parking standards and consider reducing them to increase development potential, promote bicycle and pedestrian travel, and improve the visual character of commercial corridors.



Commercial Street SE today near Waldo Avenue SE



Phasing

Project phasing is a cost-effective way to implement alternatives along a given roadway. Recommendations that could potentially be implemented in phases are discussed below.

Corridor Segment	Short-Term	Long-Term	Estimated Cost
Commercial Street SE	Re-stripe or overlay road surface to narrow travel lanes and add buffered bike lanes	Complete the design by widening the pedestrian corridor by moving curbs and adding streetscape elements	Short-Term: \$240,000 Long-Term: \$4.2 Million
Liberty Road S*	Add a multi-use path to the existing corridor	Reconstruct road to Salem's Major Arterial standard	Short-Term \$1.6 Million Long-Term: \$3.9 Million
Salem Heights Avenue SE	Reconstruction to the City's Collector B standard could be implemented as redevelopment occurs or as funding sources are identified		\$1.4 Million
Triangle Drive SE	Redevelopment and addition of angle parking could be implemented as redevelopment occurs or as funding sources are identified		\$1.5 Million

* This estimate is for the study area portion of Liberty Road S. Additional improvements are needed to Liberty Road S extending south to Browning Avenue S.



Create direct connections from the sidewalks to the building entrance, enhancing how the buildings face the street

