

Bike Walk Colorado Avenue Program

City of Stuart • Marcela Camblor & Associates

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DRAFT

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A Plan to Balance Mobility and Enhance Walkablility

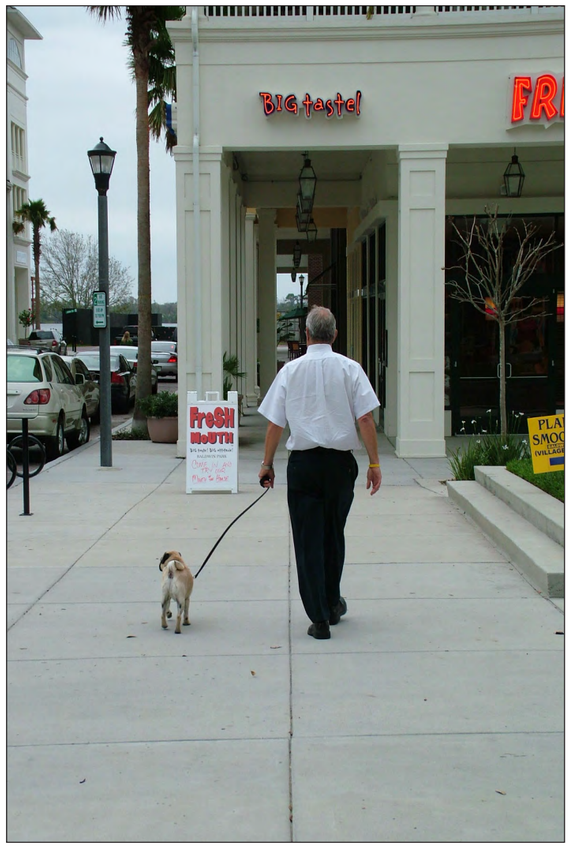
South Colorado Avenue's transformation over the last decade from a 5-lane auto-oriented environment to a mostly two-lane boulevard section has proven a successful economic development, beautification and place making strategy. A road that was previously flanked by vacant or under-performing retail and office space is now the epicenter of an emerging and highly sought out restaurant, arts and business district.

Colorado Avenue's transformation has been text-book proof that public investment in the public realm leads to private investment, increased tax base and improved safety, security and desirability.

While Colorado's improvements' have been highly successful, they focused mainly on lane reconfiguration and reduction and landscaping. This master plan supports the City's current "Bike-Walk Colorado Avenue Program" and is a blueprint to balance mobility and enhance walkability. It builds on the success of the existing improvements and seeks to further the goal of enhancing the pedestrian and bicycle experience of this signature avenue.

Factors That Affect Walkability:

- Land use mix.
- Street design.
- Street connectivity.
- Presence of trees and vegetation.
- Building types, frequency and variety
- Building placement.
- Building design, specifically entrances, storefronts and other pedestrian interaction along street frontages.
- Transparency, which includes amount and type of glass in windows and doors, orientation and proximity of homes, and buildings to watch over the street.
- Residential density (residential units per area of residential use)
- Appropriate placement of uses.
- Adequate parking.
- Shade.



Reid Ewin's 5 D's of the Built Environment:
Density, diversity, design, destination accessibility, and distance to transit heavily influence an area's walkability. Appropriate combinations of these factors influence an individual's decision to walk.

Strategies That Increase Walkability Involve:

- Completing and connecting sidewalk gaps. This includes areas where sidewalks are missing as well as areas where vehicular driveways interrupt them.
- Buffer pedestrians from moving cars by using trees, on-street parking or urban interventions such as parklets.
- Properly place or move obstructions (light poles, utility poles, improperly planted street trees, trash cans, benches, etc.)
- Increase shade: properly planted (appropriate) street trees, properly placed buildings and the inclusion of shade structures (awnings, porches, balconies, arcades, colonnades, etc.)
- Along commercial streets, remove suburban landscaping and replace with urban landscaping techniques.
- Improve pedestrian visibility at crossing points. Improve crosswalk safety at intersections by decreasing the radii of corners at curb intersections and eliminating deceleration and unnecessary turn and merge lanes.
- Incorporate attractive way finding.
- Add/enhance bicycle infrastructure.
- Provide shaded rest areas.
- Increase residential density: Walkability increases with density. Density allows for the creation of attainable housing that is closer to an individual's workplace and general needs. This encourages people to walk from place to place which increases health, decreases carbon footprint, decreases parking needs, supports transit, increases patronage of local businesses, allows for aging in place and fundamentally, provides an environment that encourages social interaction.
- Remove obstructions from the pedestrian path.

The Benefits of Walkability:

Walkability offers benefits to our health, the environment, our finances, and the "livability" of our communities.

Health: Walkability index show a relationship of healthier Body Mass Index (BMI) to physical activity of local populations. Physical activity can prevent chronic diseases and improve cardio metabolic risk profiles. Studies show that people are more prone to maintain long-term walking commitments when the walk is to a destination (to a restaurant, to a park, etc) as opposed to recreational walking (in and out the same door for exercise purposes).

Environment: 87% of CO_2 emissions are from burning fossil fuels. Walking/biking are "zero-pollution" modes of transportation. The benefits of less emissions include improved health conditions and quality of life, less smog, and less of a contribution to global climate impacts.

Finances: Cars are the second largest household expense in the U.S. Walkable environments provide more choice: the choice to live with one less or with no cars, the choice to do one or more trips by foot or by bicycle, the choice to interact and be connected with others. More and more real estate listings are displaying a neighborhood's walkability score (Walk-score). One point of Walk Score is estimated to be

worth up to $3,250 of added value for any given property. *(How Much is a Point of Walk Score Worth? By Sheharyar Bokhari)*. Local businesses, particularly non-national chains have a higher chance of prospering in high-density walkable environments.

Communities: Walkability is associated with higher levels of arts organizations, creativity, and civic engagement and increased philantropy.

Aging in Place: Walkable, mixed-use districts are often referred to as N.O.R.C.S. – Naturally Occurring Retirement Community. An environment that allows people of all ages mobility and access to needs and social interaction is critical to provide a viable housing choice for those who desire independence after they can't or won't drive anymore.

Environmental: One of most important benefits of walkability is the decrease of the automobile footprint in the community. Carbon emissions can be reduced if more people choose to walk/bike rather than drive or use public transportation.

Socioeconomic: Economic benefits include cost savings both to individuals and to the public: increased efficiency of land use with higher returns for local governments (including a reduced need of land dedicated to parking), increased profitability for local businesses, increased tourism and the basis for an amenity-rich environment.

Income, age, race, ethnicity, education, household status, and having children in a household all influence walking travel.

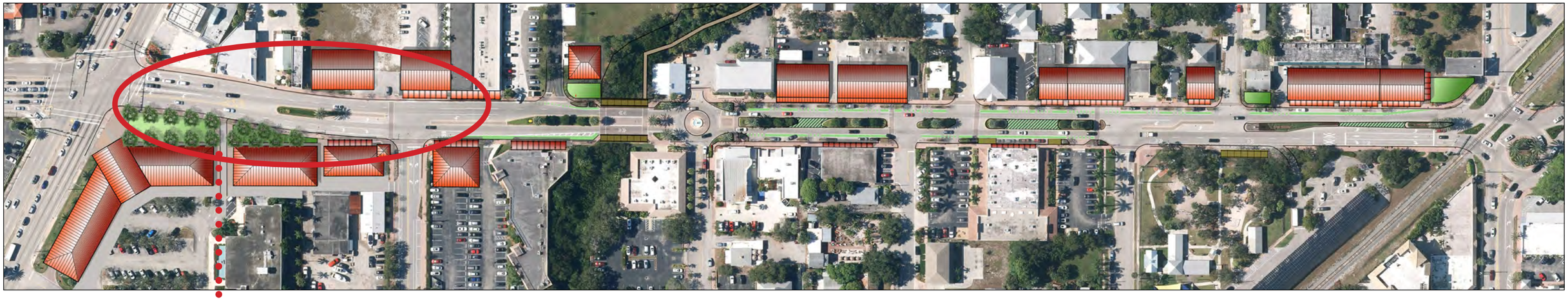
The benefits of walkability are best guaranteed if the entire system of public streets is walkable - not limited to certain specialized routes. More sidewalks and increased walkability help promote tourism and increase property value.

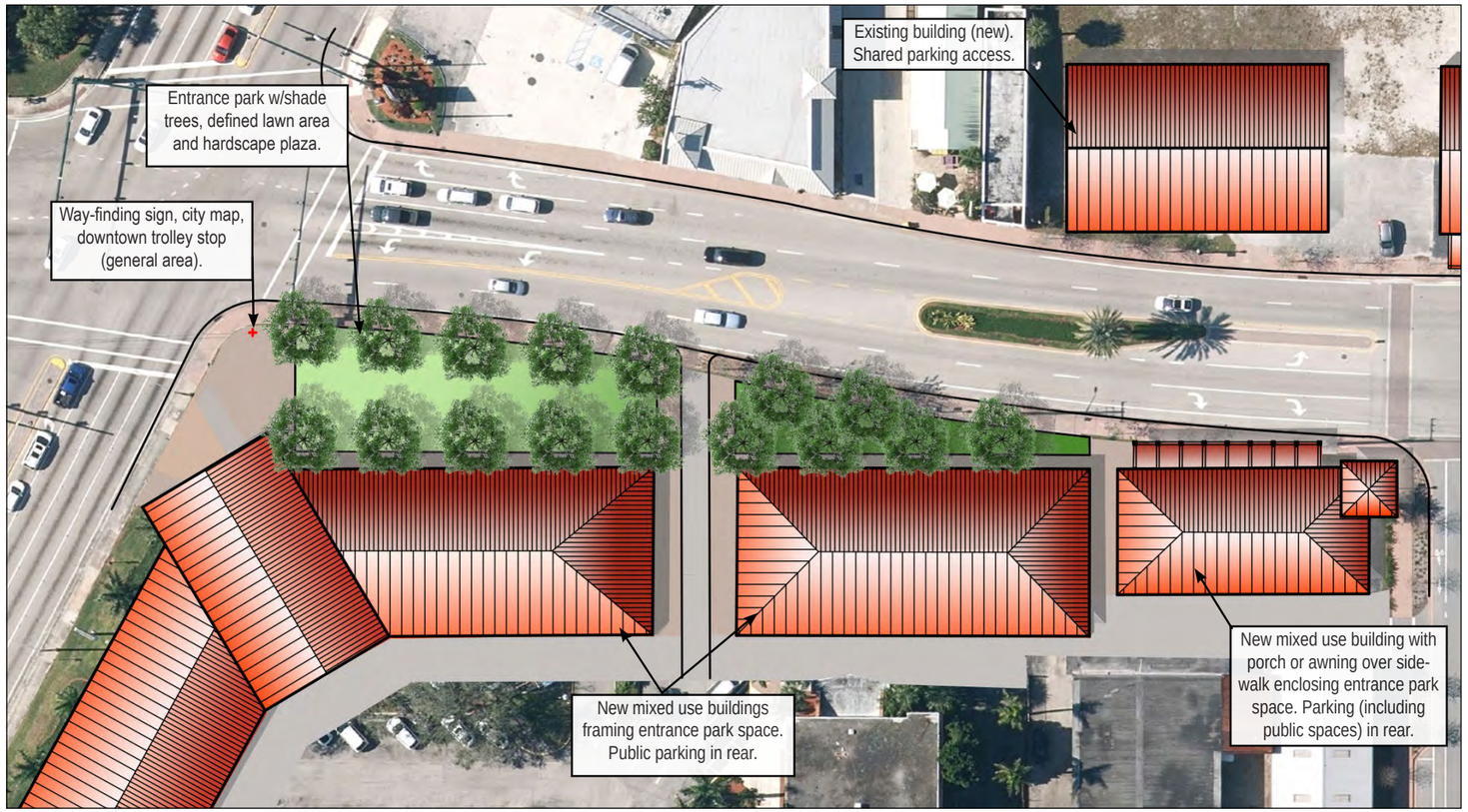


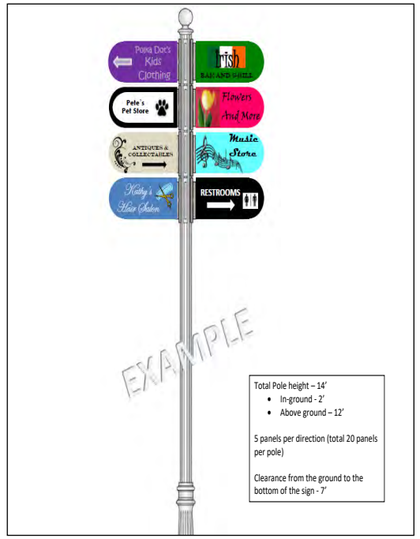




Images depicting wide, covered sidewalks, shaded outdoor seating and buildings that frame and prioritize the pedestrian realm. Baldwin Park, Orlando.







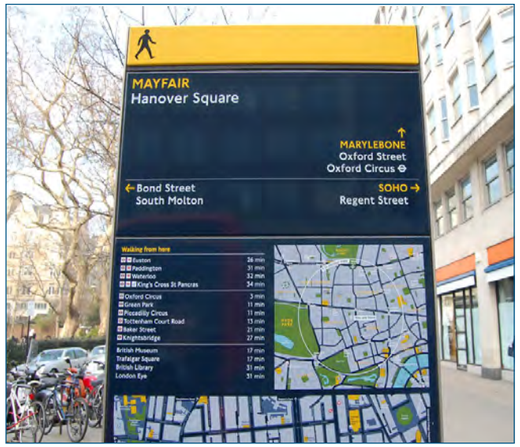


Proposed Walkability Strategy #1 - Establish Signature Public Place: The intersection of Colorado Avenue and US1 is considered a "Main and Main" intersection. It is the appropriate location to announce arrival into the downtown, define identity, locate a flagship business or restaurant and incorporate required open space in a manner that amounts to a formal, signature public plaza.

Proposed Walkability Strategy #2 - Multiple Modes of Mobility: At this location, elements such as recently adopted way finding signs and bike racks (shown above) should be supplemented with way finding maps, bike-rental or scooter rental stations, future shared car designated parking, bus and tram stops.

Section I























Sky Bike West Palm Beach; Palm Beach Segway; Lime Scooter station Tampa; Drivenow car sharing, wayfinding maps London; Sailfish in three stages of ascending - Fort Lauderdale, Dancing Fountain - Chico City; Valencia spanish ship fountain; Light city fountain, Baltimore; fish sculpture, Pompano Beach.

PROPOSED WALKABILITY STRATEGY #3 - EXPERIENCE-DEFINING ART: Public art that enhances the experience of destination should be carefully thought out and strategically incorporated. As shown in the Master Plan, this first section of Colorado Avenue presents opportunities for new construction on vacant sites as well as infill development.



Before-and-After rendering depicting infill development along Colorado Avenue. Buildings should be mixed use and incorporate architectural elements that provide shade and protection from natural elements. These shade and protection requirements include arcades, colonnades and balconies, awnings and canopies.

Additionally, buildings along Colorado should be placed (set back) to allow a minimum 10’ clear, unobstructed sidewalk. Areas where the building facade is recessed to allow for small, shaded and shielded outdoor seating areas are encouraged.

Landscaping for commercial buildings along Colorado should be urban (potted or constrained to specific areas as opposed to suburban planting strips).



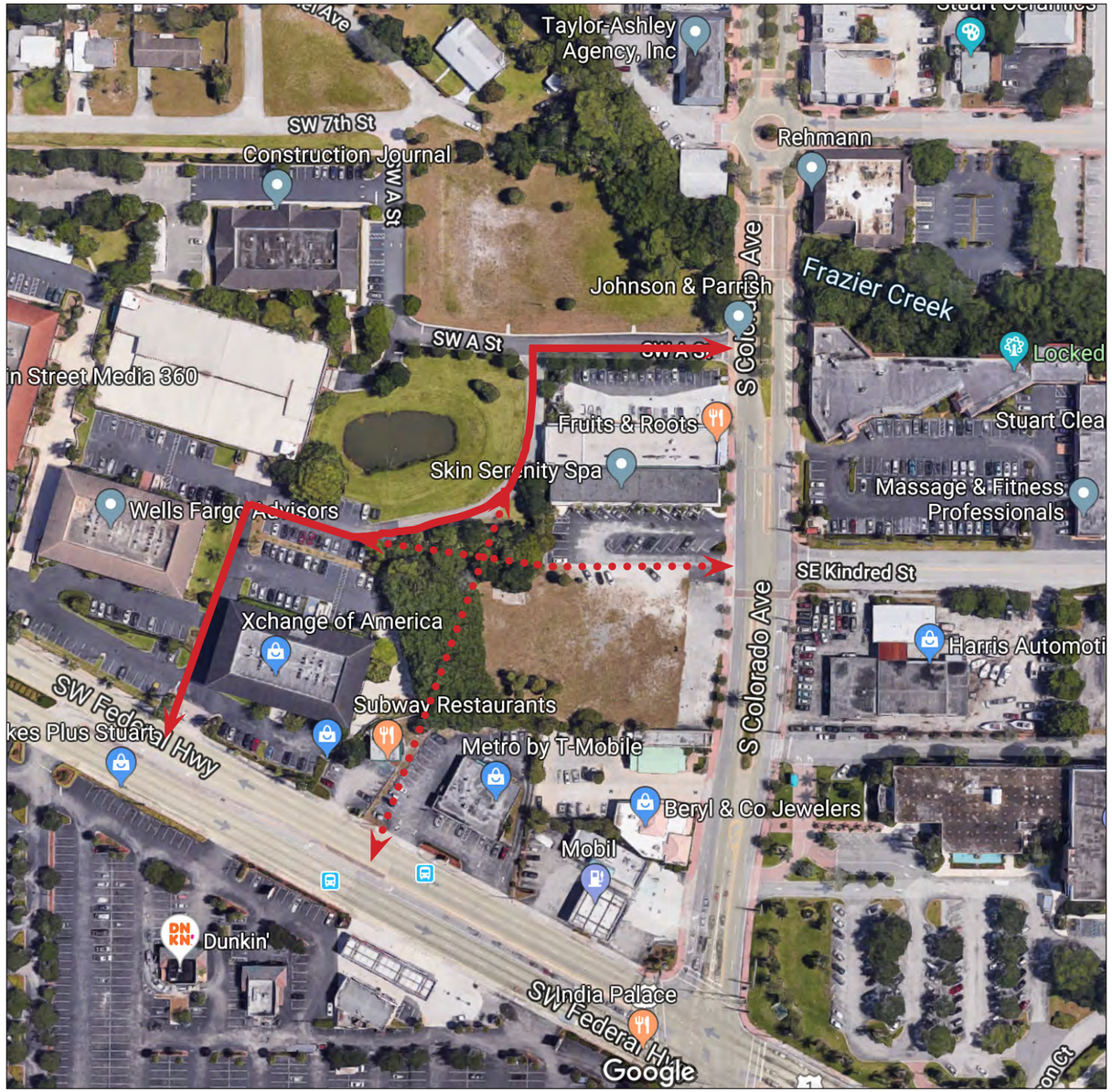






Proposed Walkability Strategy #4 - Coordinated Public Improvements: A coordinated landscaping, lighting and power-pole placement/relocation plan should be developed and implemented as redevelopment occurs. In the section depicted on the left, trees and light fixtures should be align with power poles.





Proposed Walkability Strategy #5 - Connectivity and Lane Elimination: The last block of Colorado (top middle) has a south-bound turn lane that has forced trees to be planted on the west side of the sidewalk as opposed to between pedestrians and moving cars. As connectivity opportunities increase through redevelopment of commercial properties as shown above, an analysis to determine the feasibility of eliminating the turn lane, expand the sidewalk and add a parallel row of trees along the road should be contemplated.





Proposed Walkability Strategy #6 - Framing the Public Realm: As visitors approach downtown, a more balanced mobility and walkaility improvepo. Further signaling arrival to the historic downtown is possible by adding shade structures over the urban parklets that exist where the Avenue intersects Frasier Creek. This feature would also provide much needed shade and reinforce the passive nature of the already existing parklets. Public art in the median would complete this gateway intervention,

Proposed Walkability Strategy #7 - Shade and Protection: Adding arcades, colonnades and awnings to existing buildings covering sidewalks is a simple and effective strategy to improve the experience of walking along Colorado Avenue. This action could be encouraged through a facade improvement program.

Proposed Walkability Strategy #8 - Balanced Mobility: Bike lanes along Colorado Avenue are a key element to balancing mobility. While already in place, the existing bike lanes are interrupted and should - to the extent possible- be completed. This section presents the opportunity to eliminate a suburban merge lane that would allow the extension of the bike lanes on-to Kindred Avenue.

Proposed Walkability Strategy #9 - Privately Owned Public Open Space: As buildings develop, incentives such as increased density and reduced parking should be provided in exchange for the provision of small, privately owned yet publicly accessible parks and green spaces.



Pergolas providing shade to the parklets over the Frazier Creek would announce arrival and create a signature parklet area along Colorado.







Striped road area that could be eliminated and replaced by bike lane. This re-striping proposal would extend the bike lane to Kindred Avenue.

Additionally, suburban lanscaping should be replaced by more urban landscaping allowing for wider sidewals wherever possible. Planting strips, while beautifully maintained do not conribute to walkability in the area.





Proposed Walkability Strategy #10 - Closure of Unnecessary Median Cuts: As properties develop and redevelop in a manner that is less suburban and more consistent with a walkable, urban environment, median cuts that were originally intended to allow for turning movements into parking lots need to be closed. Closures will eliminate an unnecessary amount of conflict points between cars, bicyclists and pedestrians. Closures can be rapidly achieved with traffic dividers, planters or decorative railings.

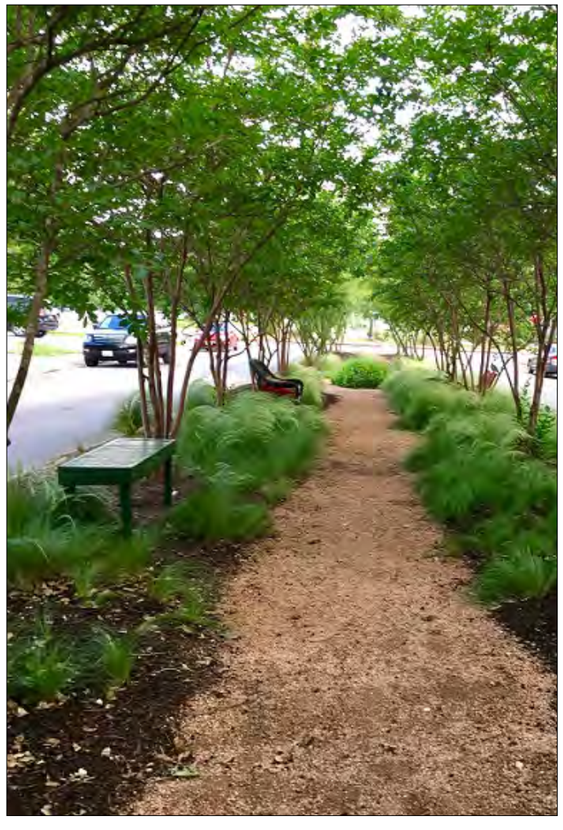
Section III

Bike Walk Colorado Avenue Program - Median Closures











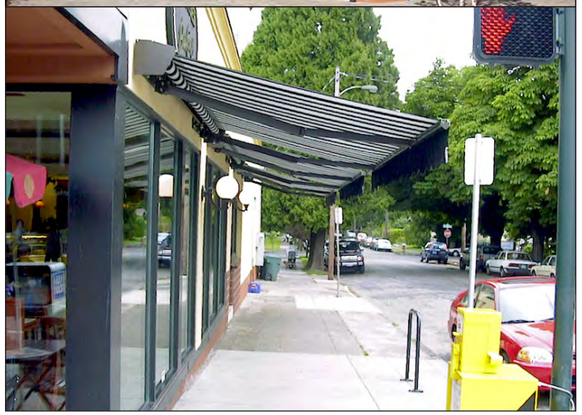


Median closures reduce points of conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists and moving cars. Closed medians may be used as small parklets, beautification and even parking









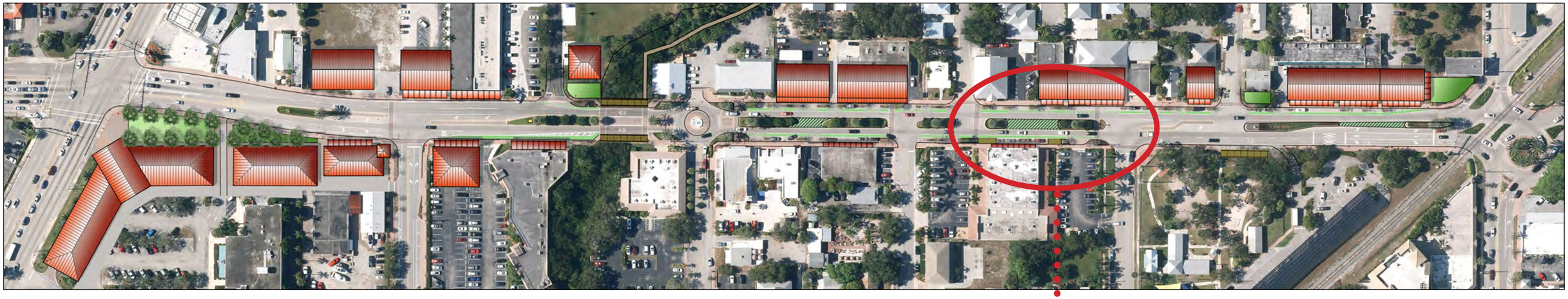








Multiple examples of shade and protection from natural elements over sidewalks. New construction should be mandated to incorporate balconies, arcaddes and colonnades. Existing buildings may add porches and awnings to provide a shaded pedestrian environment. Stretches without buildings may incorporate shade in the form of art.



Proposed Walkability Strategy #11 - Parklets: Current changes in people's transportation habits, the growth of companies like Lyft and Uber, technological advances with self-driving vehicles, easy access to bikes, scooters and segways, public transit and a walkable street staged to encourage development where more people live closer to jobs, amenities and services will invariably lead to reduced parking needs. The City of Stuart was a pioneer in understanding this concept and replacing a few parking spaces in Main Street to allow for outdoor seating. That same successful strategy is applicable to other City streets where the intent is to create resting areas, outdoor seating opportunities, outdoor work-stations or simple gathering and socializing places. The Master Plan identifies possible locations where these types n interventions could occur.

Proposed Walkability Strategy #12 - Tactical Urbanism: Tactical urbanism is an approach to community building and neighborhood strengthening that uses low-cost, short term interventions to direct attention to an issue, place or event and trigger long-term interventions. This section proposes the removal of 4 parking spaces to create a temporary, weekend-long parklet.

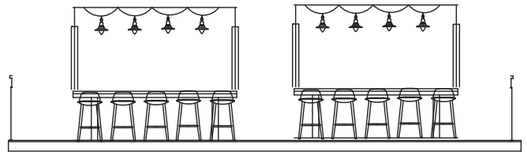
Tactical urbanism Strategies Include: Park(ing) day, play streets, pop-up retail, pop-up cafes, pop-up landscaping, intersection repair, pop-up road diets, pop-up bike lanes, pop-up lighting, street art, etc.

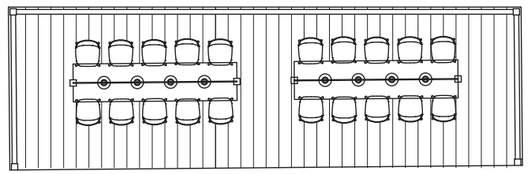


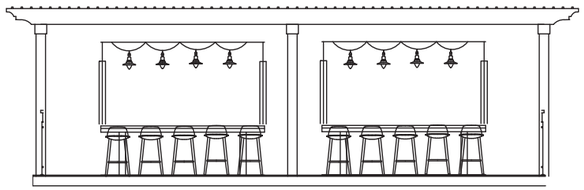


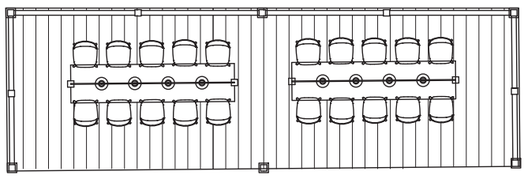
There are a number of areas along Colorado Avenue where sidewalk widenings will not be possible for a long time or even at all. At these locations, implementing a program similar to the Main Street outdoor seating one to create outdoor space for restaurants or just rest areas would be beneficial.

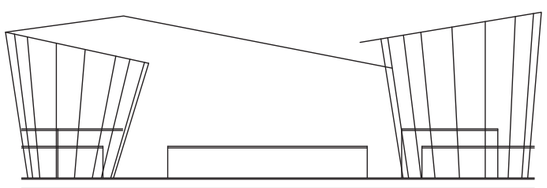


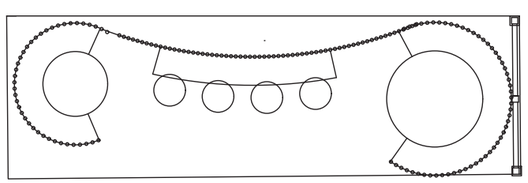




















Left ine-art images show possible designs for parklets on parking spaces along Colorado Avenue. Images above depict pop-up cafe on a bycicle, 2 parkelt spaces turned into parklets with temporary furnishings and plantings and one with pergola and more permanent structures. Unlike Osceola Street, parklets and seating along Colorado Avenue should be mainly geared to socializing and resting opportunities.









Biscayne Green, Miami; bean-bag tactical urbanism; indoor furniture for park(ing) day; Agueda Portugal umbrella sky project

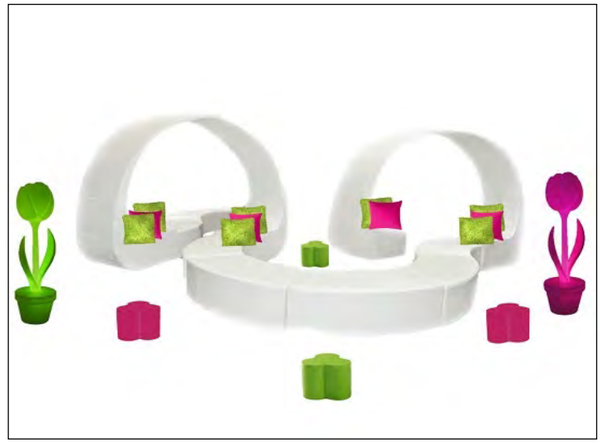














Tactical usranism and special event signature furnishing examples.



Proposed Walkability Strategy #13 - Shared Road: As bike lanes approach roundabouts or the railroad tracks it is common practice to merge bike lanes with travel lanes and clearly signal that the lane is a shared lane where bicyclists have the same rights and obligations as cars. The Master Plan shows areas where this signage would be appropriate.

