PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS
JULY 1, 1998

HAYMAKER PARKWAY ENHANCEMENTS

FRAMEWORK PLAN

Main Street/Willow (Station 114+00) to Franklin Overpass (Station 93+00)

City of Kent, Ohio  Summer 1998  Fuller Design Group, AIA Architects, Designers and Planners
INTRODUCTION

On the following pages a plan is presented for the enhancement of a nearly half mile section of Haymaker Parkway in Kent. This plan, which stems from the need to improve the character, maintenance and development of this critical transportation facility includes an analysis and recommendations.

Haymaker Parkway is a four lane limited access state route that bypasses the downtown of Kent. This plan covers the .4 mile portion of SR59 as it cuts through the heart of the City of Kent from S.R. 43 (Water Street) on the west until it rejoins East Main Street at N. Willow Street on East. The intention of this plan is to develop a long range strategy for enhancing the beauty, maintainability and functionality of the parkway. With this strategy in place, the city can then more carefully allocate its capital funds to leverage additional public and private investment. This parkway has already benefited significantly by the investment of the community. Initial planning has shown that interest remains high, and opportunity abounds.

The following pages and the illustrations included address our analysis of the opportunities and obstacles as well as preliminary recommendations for the consideration of public officials, community organizations, private individuals and corporations that have an interest in the matter.

It is intended that this plan, rather than being the final word on the matter, is a conceptual starting place for the long term enhancement of an important district between the downtown and the University.
URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The primary design issue of the Haymaker Parkway is the way in which this road impacts the historic grid pattern of the town. Built as a bypass of downtown to alleviate congestion caused by traffic on the Conrail (upper) tracks, the road cuts through Depeyster Street, Erie Street and College Avenues at a skew. While this road provided and still provides benefits for traffic through the Western portion of Kent to the University core, it also resulted in an interruption of the street pattern, and especially the pedestrian and bicycle accessibility of Central Business District from the University District. This issue was studied extensively in 1992 by the Urban Design Center of Northeast Ohio. (UDCNEO)

The UDCNEO report contains many graphic representations of the overall impact of this highway on the character of the downtown of Kent and particularly what has become known as the Cuyahoga to Campus District. Aside from the typical disruption of sidewalk and bicycle patterns the roadway modified the topography of the area and the historic streetscape pattern of the town. The UDCNEO therefore recommended development of pedestrian enhancements that would to some degree begin to reconnect the pattern of streets, improve pedestrian safety as well as the appearance of the thoroughfare. This present study therefore commences where the UDCNEO concluded by evaluating in detail some of its primary recommendations in the context of a concern by the community and the Council regarding the long term maintenance and development of the parkway.

PERCEIVED PROBLEMS

As many similar "Bypass" projects, the development of the limited access road project created a fenced in limited access streetscape which, unlike a typical street throughout the city, had no property owners to maintain it. Its development and maintenance therefore became the responsibility of the city government and civic minded groups. It only came to be known as "Haymaker Parkway" as an attempt to mitigate some of its negative impacts.

While there was no landscaping included in the original development of the parkway, over time several private corporations and community organizations have contributed significantly to the development of the corridor into a parkway. The most significant contribution to this effort was spearheaded by the Kent Environmental Council who took the lead in raising $60,000 in landscaping improvements for the Parkway in the late 80's and early 90's. They remain interested in the maintenance of the parkway, and have recently been involved in clarifying the obligations of the city in maintaining the landscape they were given care of in 1993.

Most recently, the Kent Men's Garden club has initiated the development of a major portion of the parkway in the context of a downtown gateway master plan. They have committed to spending $50,000 in developing the south side of the landscape between Water Street (milepost 97-00 and Depeyster Street (milepost 102-00) over the next several years. This project raised interest by the Kent City Council in enhancing the quality of the balance of the Parkway East of the Bridge. (See section C in this report)

PROJECT SCOPE

The primary scope of this project is to develop a framework plan that includes a general approach, specific objectives, evaluates opportunities and sketches out recommendations.

As community response is gathered, it is intended that we will also develop cost estimates and a preliminary recommendation for timing the implementation of the framework plan.
**Design Issues/Objectives**

Preliminary planning work for the Downtown Gateway plan as well as plans developed by the Northeast Ohio Urban Design Center and the Kent Intermodal Transportation Plan brought to light the following design issues which this study incorporates:

1. General improvement of the appearance through a beautification program.

2. Development of a landscape that is appropriate for the environmental conditions, is energy efficient, and low maintenance. This could include permaculture techniques for storm water drainage control and weed control.

3. Development of islands within the existing striped median to add beauty and reduce the field of view (thereby slowing traffic).

4. Improve Pedestrian/Bicycle Access to Downtown. This includes evaluating reopening pedestrian access across Erie Street.

5. Work on developing shade for pedestrians who use the corridor.

6. Improve Access points for pedestrians across parkway as well as signalling connections to downtown and campus. This provides opportunity for detailed garden experiences.

7. Evaluate Opportunities for Urban Art. Pedestrian/Vehicular junctures are spaced across the parkway and provide the opportunity for large scale sculpture sites, perhaps incorporated with the pedestrian access sites.

8. Evaluate Wayfinding opportunities. The concept of a community information sign at the corner of Haymaker and Water was received with much interest. Further development of a memorial garden in this location, as well as other wayfinding elements would be appropriate.

9. Development of Gateways, places that emphasize entrance and provide views of the downtown. Several gateways to the downtown have been studied at a preliminary level. Additional gateways at the intersections noted above have potential as well. Further elaboration of the plans for the NE Corner of Water and Haymaker at College shows potential to increase the amount of green area of the corridor.

The end of the parkway at Main and Willow is also another area with great potential.

10. Improve the safety of the street for bicycle use through provision of bicycle lanes.
Landscape Analysis

General Appearance

The appearance and maintenance of the landscape of the parkway is a primary issue. In general the roadway was not designed to optimize the impact of the landscape and so the right of way creates several intersections where angles, corners and grades make planting areas awkward. In some areas the adjacent landscape is level to the road to sloping up, and in others the adjacent fern is significantly depressed from the road surface. This variety of grade makes a unified landscape difficult to accomplish as it creates a variety of viewing angles, planting heights, drainage conditions and the like.

Another general issue is the general condition of the landscaping and appropriateness of the plants to their conditions. At Water, Erie and Willow Streets there are Austrian Pines that are in mostly in poor condition. While they serve some purpose as a buffer to the neighboring residences, their reach exceeds the point where it would be advisable to remove most of them. There are also a variety of trees in this stretch that are not in good condition. Several Blue Spruces have also been planted, some as part of the KEC memorial landscape project. While these will remain healthy for some time, a plan should include their future replacement. There are several flowering shrubs and other deciduous trees and shrubs dotting the landscape. Most of these are in fairly good condition, with some in fair to poor condition. There are many pin oaks in the streetscapes that are in a variety of conditions.

The general format of the landscape on the south side of the roadway is a curb, treelawn, sidewalk, and then a larger tree lawn that is mostly depressed from Erie Street East, and level or raised from Erie Street West. There is nothing planted in the road side tree lawn at present. The treelawn south of the sidewalk has a variety of shrubbery against the fence, and a dotting of trees. The right of way is 20 feet wide beyond the curb at minimum, with some areas as wide as 80 feet at intersections.

The North side is of the same profile as the South, excepting that there is no sidewalk to the east of Depuyer, and the treelawn is generally level to elevated. The right of way is generally 20 feet wide beyond the curb with a stretch east of Erie street being up to fifty feet wide.

Weed Control is a general issue for the parkway landscape, with the primary method used to control them being maintaining a lawn and mulching. Unfortunately there is a large amount of mulch being used, in some places being 8 or more inches in thickness. This not only has the potential to suffocate trees, but it has led to the cultivation of a large population of fungus and mushrooms. It is also generally not very appealing, and in some cases it is spread up against the fence with no break or edging.

Detailed landscaping areas occur in several locations along this part of the parkway, many donated by corporations or as memorial plantings.

They are in a variety of conditions and will be addressed in more detail in our recommendations.

Adjacent Properties

A significant factor in the development of an enhanced parkway are the impacts of adjacent private properties. Acquisition and/or development of adjacent properties at gateway locations would significantly improve the overall aesthetic qualities as well as improvement of pedestrian access and vehicular site lines. While it is necessary to control the limited access right of way, the chain link fence along most of the parkway disconnects it from the adjacent landscape. Some of the impact of this is lessened in areas where the grade is depressed and where shrubs and trees from adjacent properties spill over the fence. Long term maintenance of the fence means that some consideration of the condition of these plants is a concern of the City.

Fence, Wayfinding and Lighting

This fence is also a major obstacle to enhancement at the major gateway corners at Water/Erie and Willow, especially in locations where it merely functions to separate the limited access line from city owned property or right of way. Improvement of this situation is addressed in our recommendations.

The absence of a unified signage and wayfinding system for the city has meant that the there are not a lot of visual cues as to the connections to either the Downtown or the University, with the exception of a few generic highway signs. The existing signs also are not clustered in one location or pole and so contribute to the visual discontinuity of the landscape.

Lighting of the parkway is the standard high pole "cobra head" type roadway lighting. While this lighting does provide general illumination it does not enhance the landscape or contribute to creating an atmosphere conducive to pedestrian access.

Natural Features

As mentioned above, when the parkway was developed, the new road grade required a significant alteration of the natural topography of the neighborhood. This in part exposed a fairly large "remnant" forest to the North side of the parkway east of Erie Street. This forest, the last "natural" feature adjacent to the right of way provides some clues to opportunities for development of a landscape that softens and tempers the negative impacts of the 64 foot wide roadway.

Memorials

Throughout the years many trees and shrubs have been planted in honor or memory of citizens of Kent. The city service department has documentation of the memorials, and has been working to maintain them to the best of their ability. While most have survived, some have not. In the absence of a clear policy, there is some uncertainty as to what should be done regarding their replacement. Those that have survived are generally fairly hardy deciduous shrubs and small trees. While some may not be appropriate for the long term (such as the Blue Spruces) they are mostly healthy and we would recommend that they remain intact. Since plant materials have a limited life span in even the best of conditions, and in these urban conditions have a shorter lifespan, some kind of reasonable strategy for maintenance of memorials should be put in place.
Transportation Analysis

The Parkway was originally constructed as a bypass to the downtown, with a major impetus being the frequent bottlenecks due to the grade crossing of the Conrail tracks at the main street bridge. As a result of this bypass, the limited use of these tracks and other road development and use patterns, the section of the Parkway under study has an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 15,850 (1997) vehicles. This traffic is accommodated in a 64' road profile with 5-12' lanes (center turning) and 2' curbs/gutters. Information from AMATS indicates that this street is of sufficient capacity up until at least 2020.

The Pedestrian needs of the corridor have begun to be addressed with the development of a sidewalk along the south edge of this portion of the Parkway. Obstacles to pedestrianism in the corridor include the 64' curb to curb width and the lack of access at Eric Street. The following plans indicate opportunities for improving access by providing center safety islands and opening up access at Eric Street.

There are no bicycle facilities (paths or lanes) currently integrated into the design of the corridor.
GENERAL

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are our general recommendations of an approach for the development of the landscape. These recommendations are included in illustrations for the development of specific areas of the plan.

1. Restore the forest landscape.

The General Character of the terrain before the development of the Parkway was a fairly dense residential neighborhood with mature hardwood street trees and rear property trees. The remnant forest to the north and east of Erie Street indicates this character, as well as the pre-settlement character of the entire area.

We recommend that the primary design concept be the reestablishment of as much hardwood forest canopy in the corridor as possible. This will have many benefits:

- A. Serve to visually reconnect the two sides of the roadway.
- B. Provide shade for bicyclist and pedestrians and reduce the ambient temperature for adjoining residences.
- C. Help reduce the over all noise impact of the street.
- D. Create a more enclosed space resulting in slightly reduced sightlines. This has shown to have a calming effect on traffic.

Generally enhancing the existing pattern of the encroaching forest by planting large caliper hardwoods as close as possible to the roadway, taking into account existing underground utilities.

This single objective, along with the creating islands in Item 2, would transform the character of the parkway, making into a forest. The popularity of the Sand Run Parkway in Akron bears out the potential.

2. Develop Median Safety and Landscape Islands

We further recommend the development of center islands in the area currently striped out. These islands would:

- A. Create a boulevard effect and contribute to the reforestation of the parkway.
- B. Create a safety zone for pedestrians of low mobility.
- C. Contribute to the traffic calming effects of the landscape.

These islands would accommodate the continuation of the forest and the blending of the existing landscapes on both sides of the parkway, working to some extent to rejoin the neighborhood that was severed when the road project was developed. These landscaped islands would also serve to calm the traffic by reducing the field of view through enclosure, thus deterring speeders. They also provide a mid street safety zone for lower mobility individuals.

The Development of these islands and other pedestrian amenities would need to be studied in detail as part of a comprehensive engineering study.

Evaluation of turn lanes at Erie and Depeyster streets to accommodate safety islands and pedestrian access across Haymaker on the West side of South Water Street is also recommend.

3. Modify Street Profile

We recommend that the City consider modifying the profile of the street to accommodate both the landscape island as well as a bicycle lane in each direction. The existing Average Daily Traffic for the street is roughly the same as Broad Boulevard in Youngstown, which is a boulevard with a ten foot island and two eleven foot carwats on each side. This offers a possible direction for enhancement of the parkway.

We recommend that the city evaluate in detail the potential for creating a profile based on current AASHO highway standards of a 10.5 foot turning lane/island, two eleven foot carwats in each direction and a 4.75' bike lane on each side. (including curb and gutter)

Discussions with Mr. Ken Hanson, Director of Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study indicate that this might be difficult due to the fact that SR 59 is part of the National Highway System which aims at 12 twelve foot lanes in each direction. City officials will need to pursue discussions with ODOT regarding this. It seems to be a reasonable reduction as it would be the only practical way to accommodate a bicycle lane within existing curb to curb dimension. With agreement regarding the modification of the profile, this configuration could be used on the balance of SR 59. The only bottleneck would be at the bridges where the curb to curb dimension is less than 54 feet.
4. **Modify some of the fencing and enhance with decorative fence and walls**

One of the primary visual elements of the Parkway is the chain link fence that creates a limited access way. This fence has been replaced in recent years. In our evaluation of the streetscape there are several locations where the fence doubles back against property owned by the City of Kent. Since the city is responsible for maintenance of both sides of a fence, we would recommend that the fence be eliminated in as many of these areas as possible. In discussion with Design Engineer Chris Messenger of ODOT district 4, he indicated that this may be a possibility in some areas where the limited access nature of the road would not be significantly affected.

This condition occurs at W113th College and Water Streets. In the plans for the gateways below we recommend that in some locations the fence be eliminated and others it be replaced with a more decorative fence or wall.

5. **Enhance the existing Memorials and Dedications**

It could be said that in some respects the Haymaker Parkway is a memorial Parkway. Much of the landscape that gives it its character is a result of the hard work and generosity of the community in wanting to create a living legacy. In keeping with this history and the continuing interest in making dedications, we recommend that a comprehensive development program be initiated that includes a component for the receipt of dedications and memorials. This recommendation is fleshed out in greater detail in the IMPLEMENTATION section of this report.

From a landscape perspective, we have evaluated the memorial and dedication process used to develop the existing landscape in the light of the potential for using this process in the future. Whereas that process accepted very specific donations and fit them into the landscape, we would recommend that "ownership" of particular plant specimens be carefully handled.

As specific components of the framework plan are implemented, there will logically be distinct species of trees, shrubs, perennials, ground cover specified. There will also be locations set aside for detailed gardens or planting beds for perennials and annuals.

It would be our advice that based on the detailed plans people could make a specific memorial, but that a specific specimen would not be indicated. It would be more manageable to receive donations based on contributing generic items such as a shrub, tree or detailed garden instead of specific plants. Cost for these items should include a certain amount beyond the actual cost to provide for an endowment for long term maintenance and replacement.

We further recommend that a centrally located memorial garden be developed (See section B) where recognition plaques can be maintained for memorials and dedications.

6. **Enhance Landscape and Streetscape Lighting**

As with many road projects, the lighting of the Parkway is limited to high pole general roadway lighting. This lighting results in a general cast over the neighborhood. We agree with the UCNEO that consideration should be given to enhancing the existing lighting with Historic Streetscape lighting in the center median and along pedestrian ways on the parkway and existing side streets. An evaluation of the potential for reducing the ambient light pollution of the existing lighting by adding median and low level lighting should be pursued. SEE FIGURE BELOW

We also recommend development of landscape lighting to light architectural features, low walls, sculpture and to profile trees. Seasonal modifications of the lighting may be desirable as well.
7. Create a Wayfinding System

We recommend the development of a wayfinding system along the parkway. This system should be a component of a city wide effort to citizens and visitors to important places throughout the community. Kent State University is currently implementing such a system, and it would be an ideal time to co-ordinate with them in these efforts.

The concept of the development of a welcome sign at the NE corner of Water and Haymaker has already begun to be explored. Response to this has been positive, and preliminary ideas are included in the detailed recommendation section of this report.

8. Plant Clusters of edge shrubbery and reduce mulched areas by planting lawn under trees.

To break up the monotony of the Limited Access fence and screen neighboring residents, we recommend planting clusters of a variety of native deciduous and coniferous shrubbery along it. It could also be painted. (See recommendation 4 above.)

We also recommend removal of as many of the deep mulch beds as part of the reforestation and replacing them with lawn or ground cover.

All species of plants planted should be native species that are tolerant of the urban conditions of the street. Second choices should be plants adapted to the climate.

9. Create Sculpture and theme gardens at the ends of cut off streets where pedestrian access is restored.

Pedestrian/Vehicular junctures are spaced across the parkway and provide the opportunity for large scale sculpture sites. These sites can be developed into gateways, (see recommendation 10) and contain opportunities for detailed specialty gardens where they can be appreciated by pedestrians. Otherwise the landscape is intended to be large scale with sweeping tree and shrub masses.

10. Develop Gateways at major vehicular and pedestrian intersections. Increase the green space by acquiring adjacent properties to enhance gateways.

Gateways are places that emphasize entrance and provide visual cues and information that delineates special areas or districts. The detailed area studies propose developing a variety of pedestrian and vehicular gateways that connect across the parkway, reconnecting the two neighborhoods, as well as gateways that signal the entrance to the heart of the downtown, the municipal complex and the university.

We see the intersection of the Parkway and Water Street as the primary vehicular gateway. The Depeyster and Main Street Intersections are primary pedestrian gateways, and the Erie street intersection as a secondary pedestrian gateway.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

On the following Pages we present our detailed recommendations for each of six sections of the parkway. Each section contains a location key, a plan map, some detailed drawings and/or photographs. Further development of these sections to develop costs, calendars and details will progress into the future.
Western Edge

West side of S. Water Street at Haymaker Parkway

- Work with owner on building façade improvements as backdrop to streetscape.
- Shrubbery cluster and a few shade or flowering trees.
- Replace chain link w/ decorative fence.
- Evaluate modifications to accommodate pedestrians would need to provide safety island.
- Existing hardwoods to remain.
- Detail garden w/ wayfinding sign or decorative wall.
- Shrub backdrop.
- Pulld down line of fence, replace w/ decorative fence.

EVALUATION
This section entails the Western edge of Water Street at the Parkway. To the north there is a sidewalk with a chain link fence and a short area until the McGill Auto parts building. This narrow section is hard to maintain as presently developed, and the fence is fairly unsightly. The Water Street edge has a fairly highly developed landscape screening the McGill parking lot.

To the south, the Limited Access chain link fence turns the corner to the south, and because of its raised location is very unsightly. There are some fairly mature Maple trees along the water street edge that help screen the vacant lot considerably.

From a transportation perspective, this intersection is difficult for pedestrians. There is no crosswalk in this location due to the double turn lanes from the south. This puts pedestrians on the west edge of Water Street at a significant inconvenience as they must make three very difficult crossings to get across Haymaker whereas vehicles can move freely in any direction.

OWNERSHIP
The northern property (beyond the right of way) is owned by McGill Auto Parts and by the city of Kent. The southern parcel is owned by the city of Kent. This parcel was the former site of the recycling center and is currently a vacant potential development site.

RECOMMENDATIONS
To the north we recommend the city work with McGill Auto Parts on facade improvements to make the building fall more into the background. It could still retain a tasteful sign and be painted a neutral color and serve as a backdrop to landscape improvements. Removal or replacement of the fence with a decorative fence, along with some marginal shrubbery and some additional trees would go along way to making this corner unified.

To the south we recommend that the city dedicate an additional amount of land to the Haymaker landscape. The existing fence on the corner should be relocated back off corner and be replaced with a low masonry wall. A focus garden could be developed here, with the potential for an additional wayfinding sign being sited here. At the least a background hedge should be considered with a perennial/annual bed or a mass planting of shrubbery put in place.

The challenge of providing pedestrian access across Haymaker is more perplexing. As the road is presently configured it is not possible to accommodate pedestrians at this point. It might be possible to modify the turning configuration and provide a safety island. This would need to be studied as part of a comprehensive pedestrian upgrade of the parkway.
OWNERSHIP
This portion entails the land from the Roadway to the Northern edge of the College Street right of way to the end of the college street roadway. This land is owned by the State of Ohio and the City of Kent. To the north of College Street there are several private property owners.

EVALUATION
This corner landscape was originally developed as a screened buffer of the downtown from the Parkway. The odd section of College that remained after the Parkway was put in place remains a quasi public parking area that is not highly utilized. An adjacent vacated parking lot indicates that this whole area is underutilized.

At the corner, some aging Austrian Pines screen a renovated Water Street streetscape. A chain link fence, while screened by some healthy arborvitae in some parts, still does not contribute to the enhanced streetscape. On the corner there is a memorial landscape bed that needs some attention, as well as a few mature flowering crabs.

College Street is a fragment of the original streetscape and is terminated in a metal guard rail. The pavement and sidewalks are deteriorating.

RECOMMENDATIONS
We recommend that this entire area be considered one landscape. Assuming the neighbors are cooperative, it would be worth considering vacating this roadway and creating a publicly owned memorial park and welcome center. The illustration shows components of this scheme which include,

1. Removal of Pines that are blocking downtown view and placing historic vehicle (trolley or caboose). This could be a curiosity or be used by the historical society for special exhibits. A public restroom could be located in the area if such a facility were desired.

2. A slightly raised memorial plaza with a large welcome sign/directory. This plaza would provide visibility for people in wheelchairs and a central location for recognizing previous and future memorials and dedications.

3. Development of a small shade forest/park. This could be used by visitors as a picnic area. It would otherwise continue the theme of enhancing the forest landscape.
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX

West side of S. Water Street at Haymaker

OWNERSHIP
This portion entails the southern edge of the right-of-way of the Parkway from S. Water Street to Depeyer Street. This portion of the landscape has been adopted by the Kent Garden Club. In 1997 and 1998 they received the bid to maintain it. They have also paid for the development of plans which they plan to implement in 1998-2001. This plan indicates the scope of the work.

EVALUATION
The current landscape has been developed a little bit at a time over the years and has received some significant attention this year. It’s steep slope on the west end has presented a hindrance to maintenance. The east end features a cluster of crab apples and a shade garden that has not been maintained over the years. In between there is a variety of plantings and some mature trees.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Our firm developed the plans for the landscape which are in the process of city administrative and Ohio Department of Transportation approval. The primary focus is on developing a series of retaining walls to reduce the impact of the slope and create mass plantings of shrubs and perennials. A variety of viburnum, serviceberry and burning bush is used to screen the fence, with some hardy shrubs as a feature. We recommended that walls and trees be lighted and a water supply be put in place. On the east end a short walkway is installed through a renovated shade garden.
OWNERSHIP
This portion entails the land on the four corners of the intersection of Depeyster and Haymaker Parkway. To the Northwest there is a vacant lot owned by a local private concern. To the Northeast there is a two-family residence owned by that same company. The Southeast corner is the remnant street right of way, and is owned by the City and the State. To the SW is the balance of the right of way discussed in section C.

EVALUATION
The Northwest corner has a LA fence with shrubbery next to it. This creates an uncomfortable and potentially dangerous situation for pedestrians. Behind the fence there is a fairly large flat area and then the property grades down to the north. There are a few fine fir trees. To the Northeast the right of way is very narrow, and there are a few flowering crabs in front of the LA fence. There is a gravel parking lot for the house behind it. The Southeast quadrant contains a left over street with a less than beautiful galvanized guard rail system. The street just ends and there is little landscape save but some grass. The South West corner is contained in section C.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1. We recommend that the city consider acquiring the northern parcels in its long term downtown revitalization efforts. A portion of these sites should be retained to enhance the gateways into the downtown to the north and the Municipal complex to the south.

2. On the Northwest we recommend removing the chain link fence and shrubbery and placing a decorative fence to the west edge of the open parcel. (Assuming that it can be acquired.) We would further recommend planting a shrub edge along the fence and additional shade and flowering trees in the lawn. A corner feature garden with a wayfinding sign would be recommended on this corner.

3. Should the Northeast corner be acquired, we would recommend pushing back the fence 30 feet or more to allow additional gateway landscape development.

4. For the Southeast corner we recommend that a t-turn around or very small cul-de-sac be considered to enable removal of the guard rail. We also recommend grassy raised mounds and shade trees be put in place with a few flowering trees and a small feature garden with a wayfinding sign.

5. We also recommend that this intersection be evaluated for elimination of the center turn lane and installation center safety islands. A diagonal, all traffic stopped crosswalk with demand responsive buttons could be another option to reconnect this pedestrian way.
ERIE STREET PEDESTRIAN CONNECTOR

Haymaker Parkway at Erie Street

OWNERSHIP
All properties affected by these proposed modifications fall within the public right of way.

EVALUATION
At this location the interruption of the street grid had the most impact on the pedestrian network, but it also provides the best opportunity to improve the overall character of the street. To the north there is a remnant forest (mentioned earlier) and the dead end of Erie street. To the south Erie street was relocated to attach to the Parkway at a 90 degree angle. The result is that the sidewalk on the south of Erie street ends in a fence, and the North at the corner. The odd triangle at the corner is planted in not so healthy Austrian Pines.

RECOMMENDATIONS
1. We recommend that the city consider restoring the pedestrian connection across the roadway by opening up the fence at Erie and by placing a mid block pedestrian crossing as indicated on the plan. We also recommend extending sidewalks where necessary to accommodate this. This would need to be evaluated in greater detail as noted above.

2. On the North we recommend removing a portion of chaining fence at the end of the Erie Street and setting aside a spot for a future specialty garden or sculpture court. Infilling with as many shade trees and flowering trees as possible would enhance the forest-like character of the parkway.

3. We also recommend that this intersection be evaluated for construction of median center islands in all locations presently striped out. This would also accommodate a safety island for the crosswalk.

4. To the South we recommend that the Austrian Pines be removed and be replaced by lawn and shade trees with flowering tree edges. A decorative fence on the corner with shrub highlights would finish the edge.

5. Along both sides of the parkway we would recommend a general reduction in mulch beds and replace them with a forest landscape with grass and ground cover. (See general recommendations.)

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EVALUATION

At this location there are two triangles of land created by interruption of the historic street grid by the bypass. Both corners are separate from the street right of way and adjacent private residences by chain link fence. Both corners also have overgrown and stressed Austrian Pines with a heavy weed understory. There are some crab and some miscellaneous grasses. To the South there is a remnant perennial garden. To the north there is a small plaza and built in seating feature, surrounded by holly and a variety of other grasses, trees and shrubs, some of these shrubs grow downward to the roadway.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We recommend that the city work to open up these corners while maintaining buffers from the residences.

2. To the North, we recommend removal of the chain link fence adjacent to the Main Street sidewalk and replace the fence adjacent to the house with a decorative fence. Shrub groupings in front of the fence and the planting of some large caliper shade trees in lawn would replace the buffer provided by the pines. We also recommend that overgrown shrubs be thinned and pruned. It may be necessary to remove/ relocating some memorials for this to be effective. The corner concrete planter is mature and can remain intact unless there is a desire for putting a wayfinding element in it instead of as recommended below.

3. To the South, we recommend removal of the chain link fence adjacent to the Willow Street sidewalk and replace the fence adjacent to the house with a decorative fence. Shrub groupings in front of the fence and the planting of some large caliper shade trees in lawn would replace the buffer provided by the pines. We also recommend that existing crabs be thinned and pruned. They should be replaced over time setting them back further from the street. It would be worthwhile for the perennial bed to be restored or recreated as a mass shrub planting to add some color to this intersection.

4. At the end of Main Street we recommend putting in a median island with a wayfinding directory.

5. We also recommend installation of a median island on the stepped section of Haymaker just west of the concrete island. A low shrub planter in the pedestrian island would eliminate some of the harshness of that space as well.

6. General enhancement of the right-of-way edges is recommended above.
NEW FENCE OR WALL WITH SHRUB CLUSTERS AND SHADE TREES.
NEW MEDIAN ISLAND WITH MIDSIZED AND SMALL TREES AND GROUND COVER.
EXISTING PLAZA TO REMAIN SCULPTURE SITE.

EVALUATE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
EXISTING CONCRETE ISLAND TO REMAIN
WAY FINDING SIGN LOCATION.
EXISTING CONCRETE MEDIAN

REMOVE FENCE ALONG MAIN STREET

PROPOSED 7' SMALL MEDIAN WITH SMALL AND MEDIUM MISED TREES

INFILL TREES AND SHRUB CLUSTERS, NATURALIZE RIDGES IN GROUND COVER AND LAWN

REMOVE FENCE, CREATE DECORATIVE FENCE OR WALL WITH SHRUB CLUSTERS AND SHADE TREES. FLOWERING TREES ON EDGE.

DECORATIVE STREET LIGHT
REHABILITATE PERENNIAL GARDEN

REMOVE FENCE ALONG WILLOW STREET
REMOVE EXISTING AUSTRIAN PINES

VIEW TO EAST/SOUTH FROM NORTH

West Corner - View from East
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

As with any plan, this framework plan would be of little value without a strategy for implementing it. We have taken the time to think through some of the possible ways that this plan can be managed, staged and paid for.

This project is called the Haymaker Parkway Enhancement Framework Plan because the proposed modifications all fit under the category of enhancing the functionality, beauty and impact of the road on the road. This road is at once a community and regional thoroughfare and at the same time a divider of a neighborhood, or now that it has existed for nearly 25 years, two neighborhoods. These changes would go a long way to mitigating some of the negative impacts while increasing the functionality of the road for other modes of transportation. (ie bicycles and pedestrians.)

There is a special enhancements category of funding available under the recently passed national transportation bill that is earmarked to the states for the development of enhancement project. This money is 80% Federal and State and requires a 20% Local Match as well as a local commitment to pay for design and engineering.

The City of Kent would need to commit to funding some amount of the work of this plan to be considered for these funds.

PRIVATE FUNDING

Our discussions earlier in the year with civic organizations and private corporations indicated that there is substantial interest in contributing to this type of project. Should the city choose to further investigate any or all elements of the plan a first step would be to take the time to talk to the private and community sector about support for the project. Private monies can be used as the local match to leverage public funding.

The nature of the project is such that save for median and crosswalk/sidewalk improvements, much of the project could be done on an incremental basis with local and in-kind funding should the pursuit of federal enhancement funds not be desirable.

MEMORIALS, DEDICATIONS & MANAGEMENT

As noted earlier, there is significant precedence for continuing the memorial program begun by KEC with some slight modifications. The creation of a community endowment to develop and maintain the landscape would be a permanent contribution to the enhancement of this core segment of Kent.

The challenge to establishing an endowment is the amount of management required to develop and maintain permanent landscapes. Earlier discussion about creating a landscape committee that would act as an advisory board regarding the landscaping of this and other city properties would seem to fit into this component of implementation.

It may be possible to work with an existing community foundation to create a fund for this purpose. A board of directors that would manage this fund could then set strategy and policy to be implement by a City Gardener. Such a position and committee could be integrated or related to the Shade Tree Commission, or be a separate entity. The previously approved ad hoc committee should also study this matter further.

Funding for this position and the cost of developing and maintaining this landscape could be a combination of private (endowment) and public funds, with a partnership established based on a budget recommended by the landscape committee and the City Administration.

NEXT STEPS

The next step in the development of this framework plan is the mobilization of the previously approved landscape committee and the development of a public consensus on the project and details. This committee can then make specific recommendations regarding its implications to the administration and council.