

design guidelines – appendix **B**

DESIGN GUIDELINES

As discussed earlier in this report, in some cases the city's Growth Management Code does not match either the community's existing character or the goals of this Revitalization Plan. Correcting these mismatches is one of the primary methods to implement the vision for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Veronica S. Shoemaker Boulevard.

In addition to the specific code changes discussed in this report, a concept for design standards for the study area is presented in the following pages. Design standards could reassure the local residents that future development will be built in accordance with the recommendations of this Revitalization Plan and thus their neighborhoods will be protected and will improve over time. The standards would also assure developers that other developers would match or exceed their investment in type and quality.

The city should work with the community to tailor the suggested standards to achieve the desired outcomes. The standards could either be adopted within the framework of the existing Growth Management Code or they could be the first step toward transforming the city's existing code into a form-based code, where the physical form of the buildings and their siting on their lots becomes a priority purpose of the code.

EXISTING REGULATIONS

Regulations that guide the development of land can work like DNA, in effect serving as the genetic code for a city's evolution. When these regulations are flawed or not adjusted to reflect the aspirations of its citizens, the city that is desired will not evolve regardless of the volume or rate of new construction.

For example, most of the residential neighborhoods

in the study area are classified "A-1" (single-family) or "A-1D" (duplex), requiring single-family lots to be a minimum of 60 feet wide and 100 feet deep. These requirements do not match the slightly smaller lots historically found in Dunbar; in some cases, lot owners must seek a variance to build a house on a lot that is the same size as every other lot in the neighborhood (see discussion and recommendation on page 6.2). Such regulations unintentionally disrupt the historic fabric of these neighborhoods.

Another example of needed code reform can be accomplished only through design standards. This reform could sidestep the trend in recent years toward new homes being hidden behind large garages, as opposed to the traditional pattern where garages or carports are placed to the side or rear of homes. Although this trend has not reached most of the study area, the relatively narrow lots in Dunbar require careful treatment to avoid the garage-dominated facades often seen in new developments. This subject is discussed for single-family homes on page B.14 and for duplexes on page B.15. Page B.8 illustrates the elements of a healthy neighborhood street.

Another example of code reform is discussed on pages 5.9 and 5.10; the widening of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard has made many business lots along the boulevard too small for redevelopment under the existing "B-2" standards.

Unlike many cities, Fort Myers does allow a mix of uses in all of its business districts, an aspect of the existing code that should be retained. However, the specific standards in the code are not conducive to mixed-use environments. Many areas along the corridors would benefit from street-level uses that lend vitality and make walking interesting. Buildings at street level, for the sake of safety, need to have win-

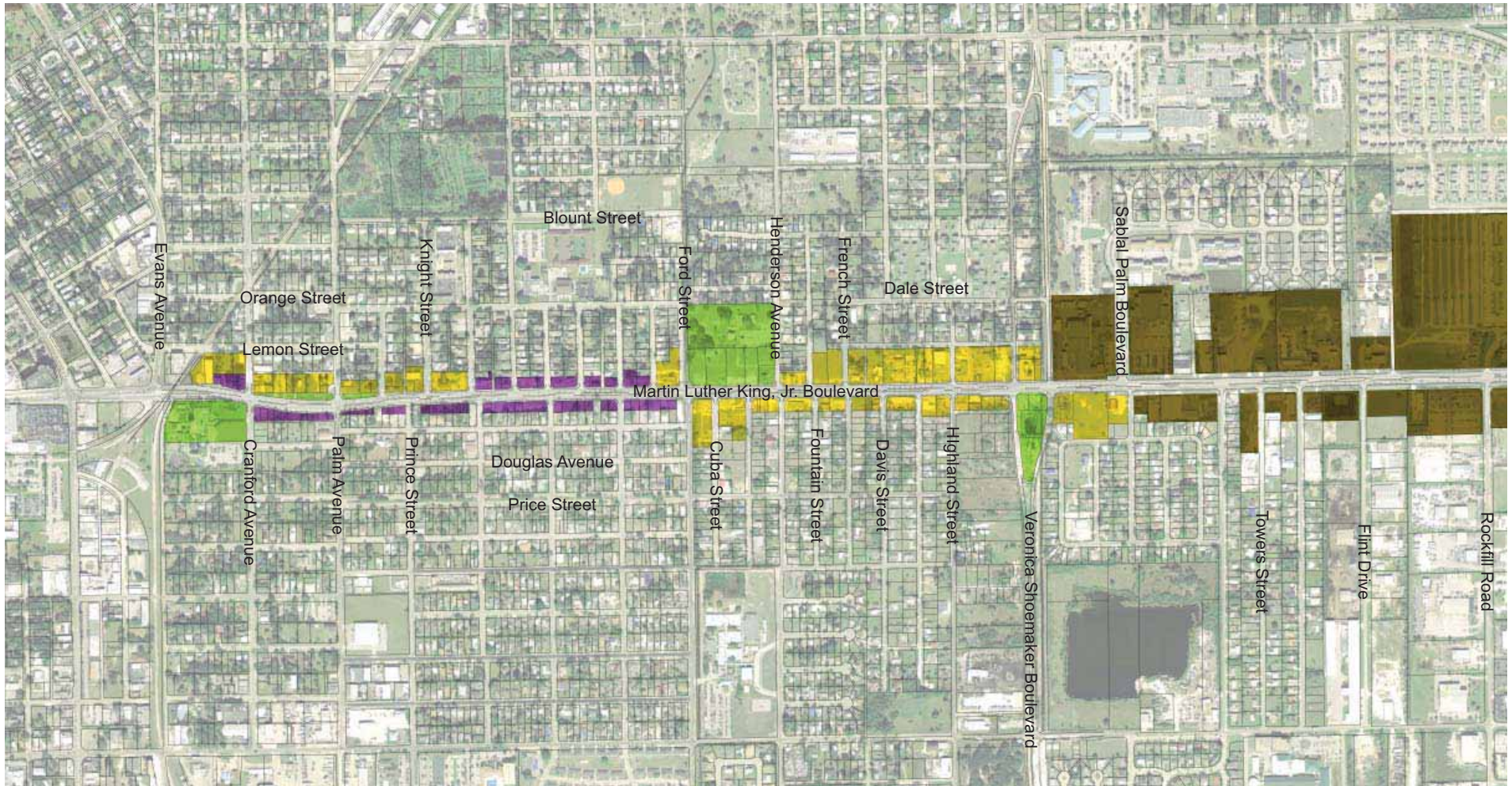
dows and doors facing the street as opposed to long stretches of blank walls. Shopfront windows should be transparent to provide clear views of merchandise and to provide natural surveillance of exterior street spaces. Page B.9 illustrates the elements of a healthy commercial street. Regulations to achieve these goals are often applied through simple design standards, but are more effective when part of a more complete form-based code.

Industrial uses found along parts of both corridors are important to the local economy; their continued location beyond residential neighborhoods should be encouraged. Specific design standards can be applied to industrial buildings to minimize the physical and visual impact on the corridors while not hampering the functionality of industrial uses. Page B.10 illustrates possible results of design standards for industrial buildings.

The city should use its municipal powers to control development via regulations, yet not over-use this power to the point of stifling investment or limiting creativity. Regulations can be far more than a routine permitting hurdle if they are linked to outcomes desired within their communities. Carefully written regulations provide the necessary control without requiring everything to be the same, either as to land uses, building types, or architectural styles.

The maps on the next four pages identify types of lots and existing land uses throughout both corridors. The matrix that follows the maps contains design recommendations keyed to these maps, with references to other parts of this report addressing similar topics. The remainder of this appendix includes illustrations of healthy patterns for streets and buildings.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BOULEVARD WEST



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small commercial lots compromised by road widening Existing residential lots fronting on MLK or VSS Parks and civic sites Large parcels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing residential lots with backs or sides facing VSS Commercial and industrial areas with buildings spaced far apart with fields of vehicle storage Small and medium sized parcels Public Housing |
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DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BOULEVARD EAST



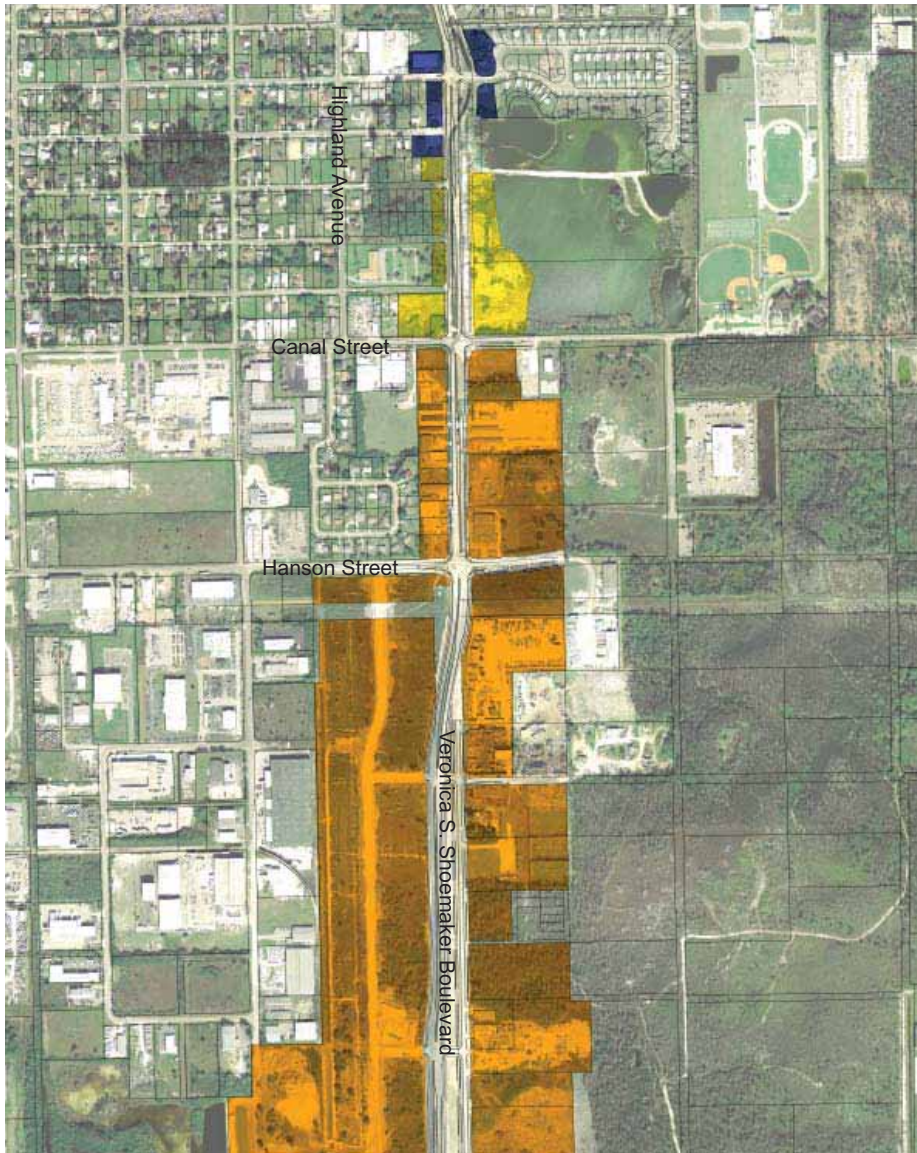
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VERONICA S. SHOEMAKER BOULEVARD NORTH



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VERONICA S. SHOEMAKER BOULEVARD SOUTH



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small commercial lots compromised by road widening Existing residential lots fronting on MLK or VSS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing residential lots with backs or sides facing VSS Commercial and industrial areas with buildings spaced far apart with fields of vehicle storage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks and civic sites Large parcels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small and medium sized parcels Public Housing |
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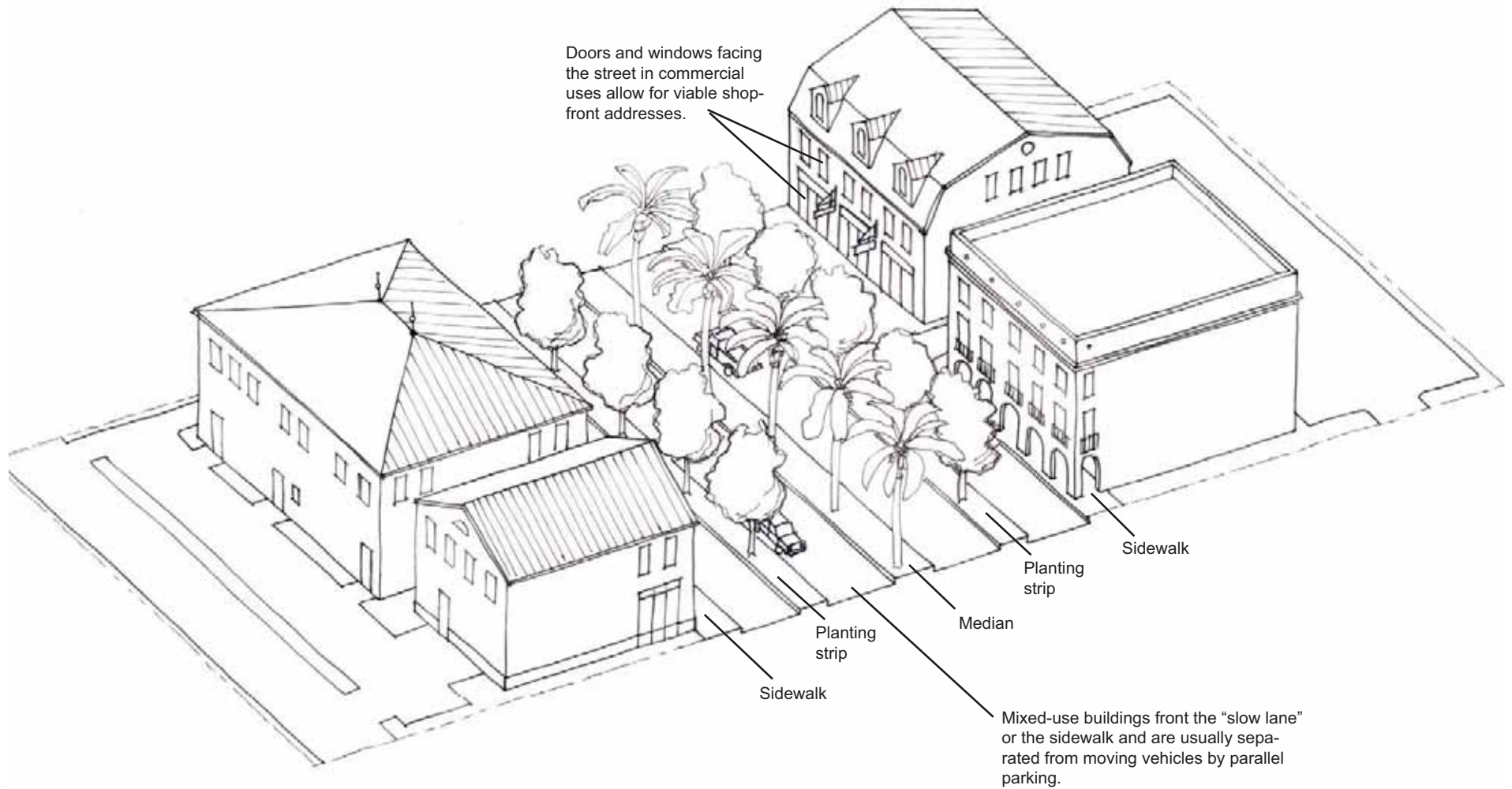
Existing Conditions	Recommendations for City Redevelopment	Recommendations for Private Redevelopment	Illustrated Recommendations
Small commercial lots compromised by road widening (Dunbar Historic Center)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shallow parcels too small for redevelopment may be utilized as park spaces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small mixed-use buildings with shared parking behind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 5, Special Places, page 5.3 & 5.9 • See Appendix B, Design Guidelines, page B.11-B.13
Existing residential lots fronting on MLK or VSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalks needed if not present • Street trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fences, hedges, or garden walls facing boulevard • Front porches & front door facing the street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 5, Special Places, page 5.10
Existing residential lots with backs or sides facing VSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalks needed if not present • Street trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscaping or garden walls to screen lots from MLK or VSS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 5, Special Places, page 5.23
Side street on Western MLK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalks needed if not present • On-street parking • Alley access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared parking for neighboring businesses, located in the mid-block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 5, Special Places, page 5.10
Large vacant parcels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalks needed if not present • Street trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop as Traditional Neighborhood Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block, streets and alleys • Parking: on-street, in the rear and/ or mid-block • Buildings fronting streets • Mixed-design & mixed-use & mixed-income • Walkability • Identifiable centers and edge • Contributing to high-quality public spaces • 1/4 mile walking circle • Extending the neighborhood grid for further extension to vacant lots. • Frontage street along MLK & VSS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 5, Special Places, page 5.16-5.19 • See Appendix B, Design Guidelines, page B.8
Small and medium sized parcels		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop as traditional Fort Myers block with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alleys • Parking: on-street, in the rear and/ or mid-block • Building fronting streets • Mixed-design & mixed-use & mixed-income • Walkability • Contributing to high-quality public spaces • Any historic building should be restored or re-used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 5, Special Places, page 5.10, 5.20, 5.26 & 5.27, 5.29 • See Appendix B, Design Guidelines, page B.8
Public housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-develop as Traditional Neighborhood Design, features should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block, streets and alleys • Parking: on-street, in the rear and/ or mid-block • Fronting streets • Mixed-design & mixed-use & mixed-income • Walkability • Center • High-quality public spaces • 1/4 mile walking circle • Extending the neighborhood grid for further extension to vacant lots 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 5, Special Places, page 5.13 & 5.14

Existing Conditions	Recommendations for City Redevelopment	Recommendations for Private Redevelopment	Illustrated Recommendations
Commercial and industrial areas with buildings spaced far apart with fields of vehicle storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalks needed if not present • Street trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If buildings are to face MLK or VSS, construct frontage lanes with on-street parking. Position buildings within 20 feet of frontage lane. • If the sides or backs of buildings are going to face MLK or VSS, screen the frontage with walls or landscaping. Set back buildings and parking areas minimum of 50 feet from property lines fronting MLK or VSS. • Parking in the rear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 5, Special Places, page 5.11, 5.28 • See Appendix B, Design Guidelines, page B.9 & B.10
Parks and civic sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to neighborhood needs with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active and passive recreational uses • Provide shade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surrounding houses should face the park to provide a public edge to the park • On-street parking for visitors, instead of large off-street parking lots that use valuable park space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Chapter 5, Special Places, page 5.2, 5.4-5.8, 5.20
Vacant 50 feet wide lot with single family zoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify code – See Action Step 13, Chapter 6, Implementation, page 6.x 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family homes on single or double lots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Appendix B, Design Guidelines, page B.14
Adjoining 50 feet vacant lots where duplexes are permitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify code – Allow duplexes only if they conform to design restrictions – See Action Step 11, Chapter 6, Implementation, page 6.x 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplexes on double lots (where permitted) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Appendix B, Design Guidelines, page B.15

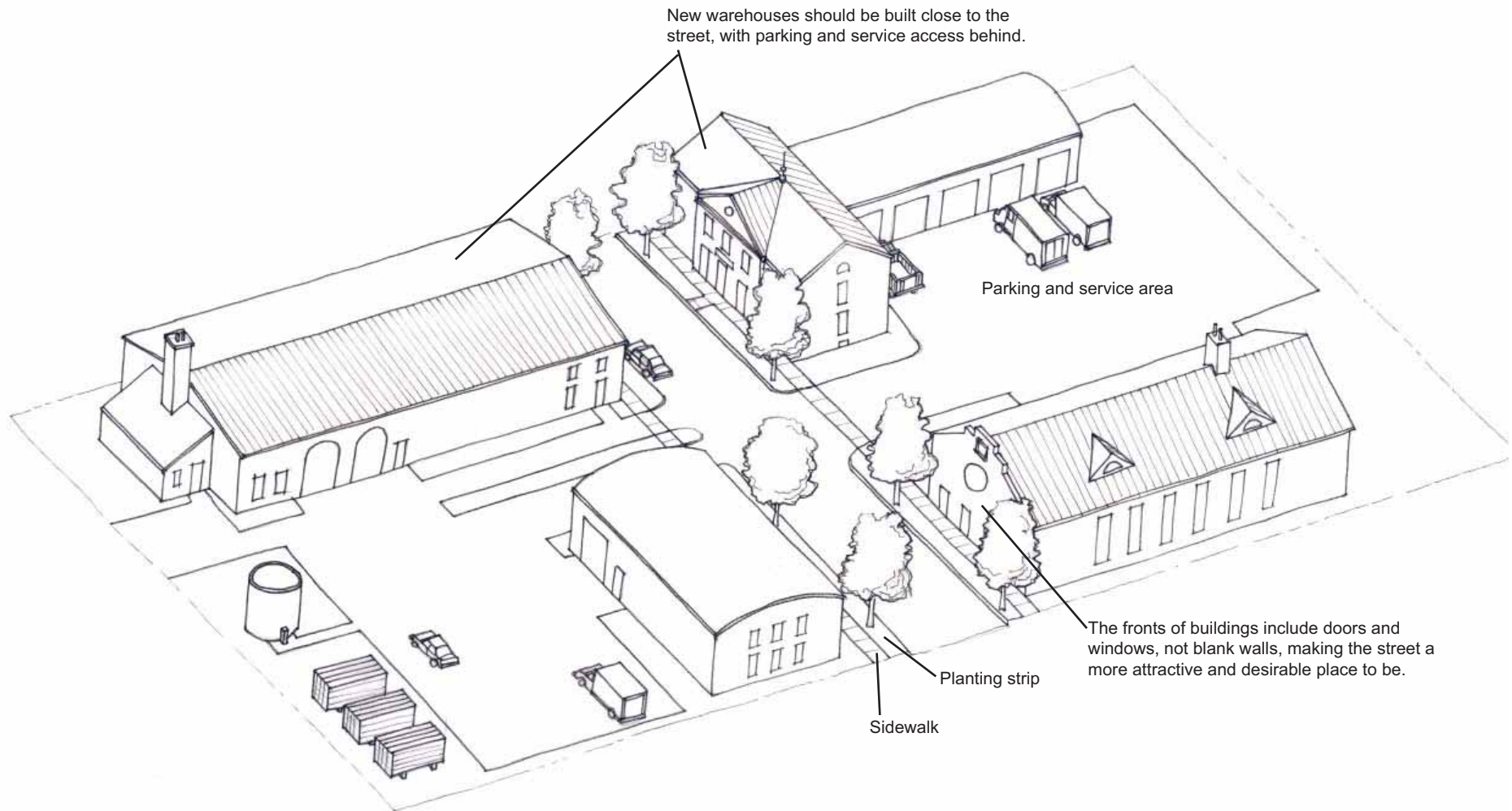
RESIDENTIAL STREET ELEMENTS



COMMERCIAL STREET ELEMENTS



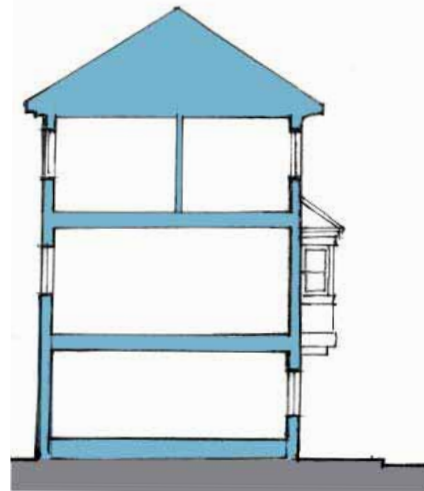
INDUSTRIAL STREET ELEMENTS



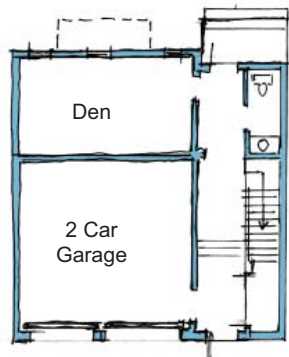
MIXED-USE BUILDINGS ON NARROW LOTS



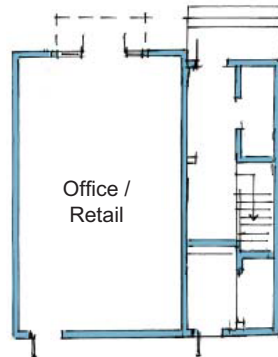
Rowhouse - Elevation



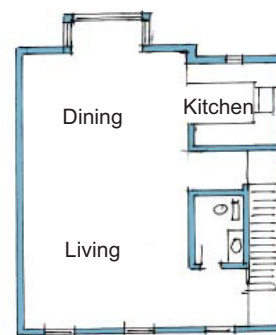
Rowhouse - Section



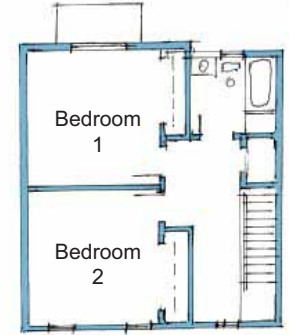
1st Floor



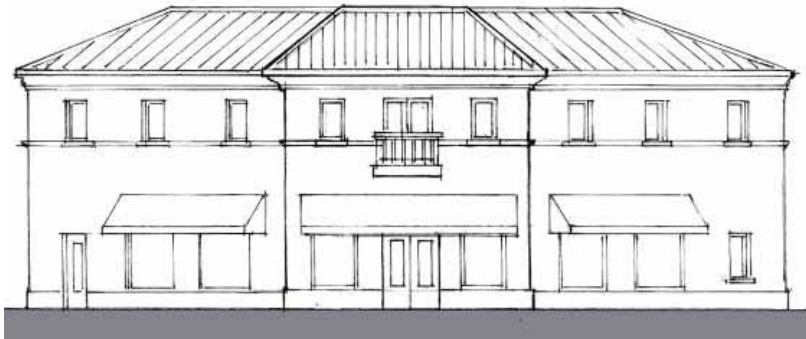
Alternate 1st Floor



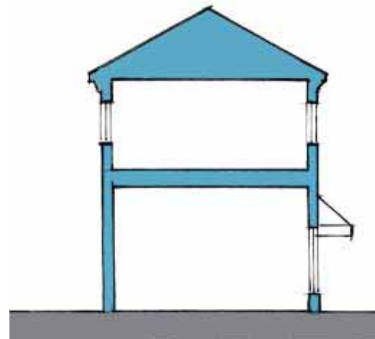
2nd Floor



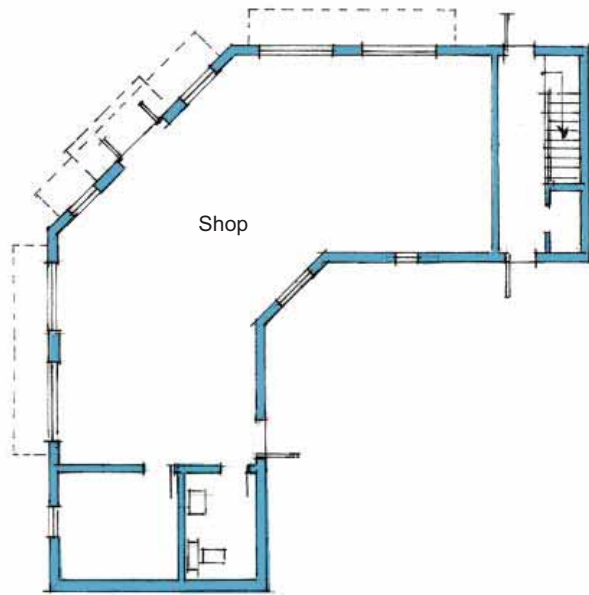
3rd Floor



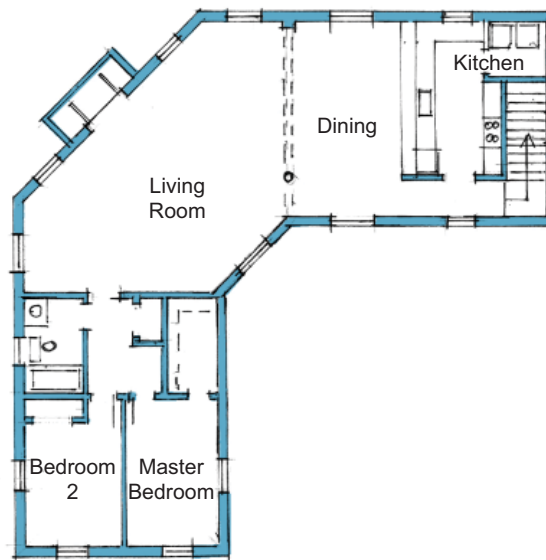
Corner Building - Elevation



Corner Building - Section



Alternate 1st Floor



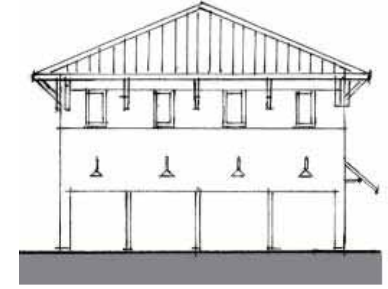
2nd Floor



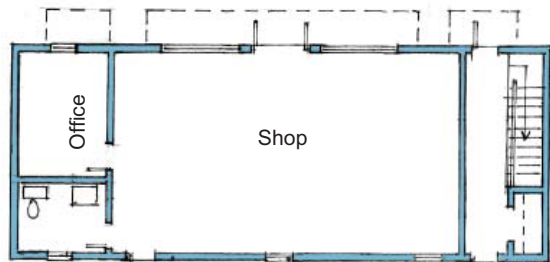
Front Elevation



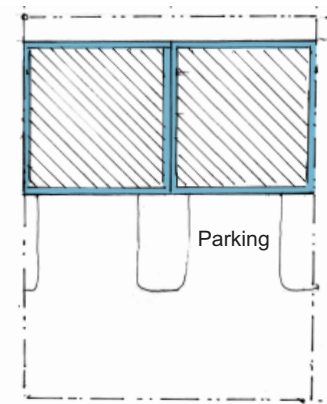
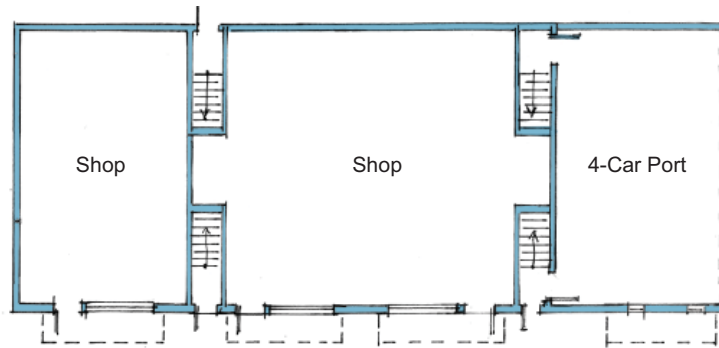
Front Elevation



Side Elevation



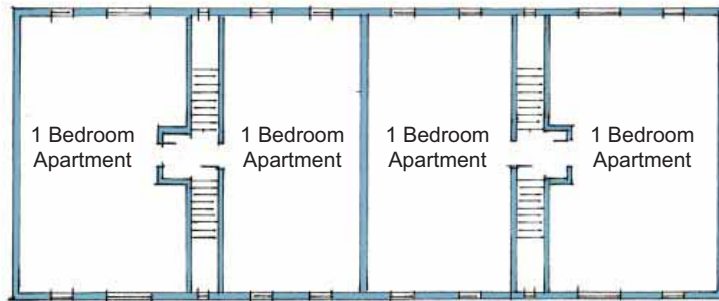
1st Floor



Alley



2nd Floor



Parking in the rear

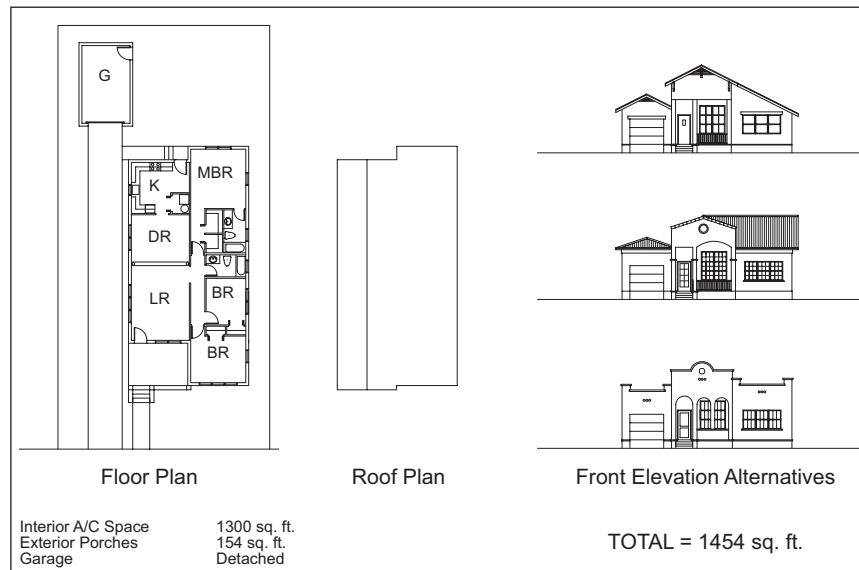
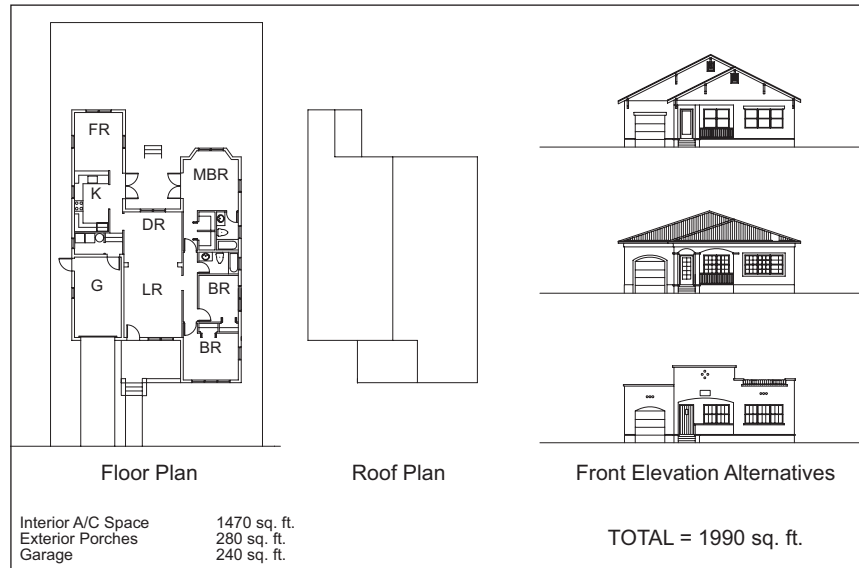
SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES FOR NARROW LOTS

Most of the residential neighborhoods north of Canal Street were platted with lots that are somewhat narrow but quite deep compared to recent suburban standards (see Table 1 on page 6.2).

The latest trend in neighborhood design is a return to narrower lots. In part this is a reaction to rising land prices, but it also due to dissatisfaction with neighborhoods that have become less walkable due to overly wide lots and front yards that are dominated by multiple garage doors or parked cars instead of neighborly front yards and porches.

A key feature to avoiding the parking-lot-as-front-yard syndrome is the careful placement of garages, either behind the homes or off to the side. The homes shown on this and the following pages all will fit on a typical Fort Myers 50' lot without garages dominating the fronts of houses.

Note that this careful placement of garages does not depend on any particular style of house. Each house plan is shown here with three different facade styles. Many communities adopt design regulations or guidelines to ensure that new homes fit with existing neighborhoods. At a minimum, Fort Myers can insist that homes that are built on lots acquired from the city are suited to the narrow but deep lots.

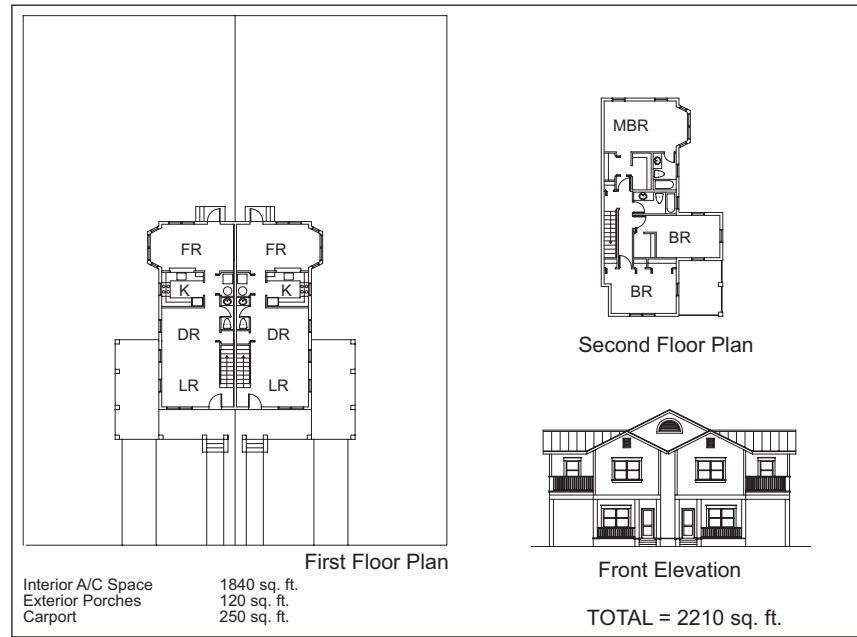


DUPLEXES FOR TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Duplexes can provide more variety in housing but they have proven problematic when not designed to fit into single-family neighborhoods and especially when rentals are poorly managed or the buildings are not maintained.

At present, much of the residential land along the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard corridor allows new duplexes without restrictions that would ensure that they are in scale with their neighborhoods. In the newly annexed neighborhoods of Dunbar and Bellevue, this absence of restrictions led to the outright prohibition of new duplexes despite 50 years of zoning that had allowed duplexes.

The drawings on this page illustrate how duplexes can be designed to fit on pairs of adjoining 50' lots while matching the scale of detached homes, providing more yard space, and avoiding paved front yards through careful placement of garages.



ACTION STEP # 18 DESIGN STANDARDS FOR DUPLEXES

Duplexes can provide more variety in housing, but they have proven problematic when not designed to fit into single-family neighborhoods. Strict design standards for new duplexes can resolve this incompatibility.

- The city's Growth Management Code should be modified to include strict design standards for duplexes and to reconsider the decision to forbid new duplexes on newly annexed land.

