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PORT ANGELES SHORELINE REHABILITATION PLAN

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NOAA
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401 SOUTH HOBSON AVENUE
CHARLESTON, SC 29405-2413

A PRELIMINARY DESIGN REPORT FOR THE CITY OF PORT ANGELES, WASHINGTON

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David T. Flodstrom

Planning Department

Paul D. Carr, Director

Consultant

Richard Carothers Associates, P.S.
Richard A. Carothers, Principal-in-Charge
Henry Boyar, Project Manager
Kirk Hackler, Project Designer

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Richard Carothers Associates
Planners/Landscape Architects/Urban Designers
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Purpose

The purpose of this preliminary design report is to present planning and design considerations for the restoration, rehabilitation, and improvement of the shoreline in the Port Angeles Central Business District Waterfront. The report is to be used during design of public improvements, review of private projects, projects and updating of local land use regulations, including the Shoreline Master Program, so that the Central Waterfront will provide improved public access to the shoreline, contain suitable uses, provide increased recreational opportunities, and more strongly relate to the rest of the Central Business District.

Need

Previous analysis of the 2½ block area of the Port Angeles Central Waterfront has identified an area with piles of broken concrete slabs, abandoned lamp posts, old pilings, miscellaneous storage sites, few inviting public access areas and underutilized properties.

Improvement of the Waterfront area would strengthen the vitality of the Central Business District, and the city, create public amenity for local residents and create a positive image of this country to visitors from Canada.

PORt ANGELES SHORELINE REHABILITATION PLAN

A. General Concepts

1. The primary goals of this document are to suggest improvements for the waterfront area and to strengthen it's linkage to other parts of Port Angeles.
2. Design improvements for the Waterfront can be of three types:
 - o Visual: Elements which add color and motion, which screen or add to important views; elements which unify the scene.
 - o Functional: Changes to routes, signs, street furniture and other usable elements.
 - o Land Uses: Control over land uses is indirect, relying on Shoreline Regulations, zoning, commercial opportunity or negotiations to bring about appropriate uses.
3. Port Angeles is an important transportation port, seen and experienced by many tourists. The impressions gained here are potentially key to the opinions formed about the Northwest region.
4. The Waterfront area is a commercial/working area. Designs and uses should integrate the best features of this "working waterfront" character and eliminate or minimize the conflicting activities.
5. Port Angeles is a Pacific Northwest waterfront. This strong sense of regional and local maritime history can be emphasized and portrayed.
6. Design guidelines should reflect the reality of implementation potentials. City-owned properties can achieve changes that would have to be negotiated with or volunteered by private owners. A high degree of cooperation by the private sector and a joint City/private sector effort will be necessary for success of the project. Funding sources are variable. A recent LID has already been completed. The City may have to initiate some key, high visibility project(s) first to show good faith and gain public confidence, support and contributions. Immediate high impact changes would show that intention and could maintain the momentum of the City Pier Project and the first two phases of the Downtown Improvement Beautification Project.

B. Existing Conditions

1. Railroad Avenue is the northern waterfront boundary of the Central Business District.
2. The waterfront and town lack a strong, prosperous maintained character or image when viewed from both water and land.
3. The Ferry generates a large amount of traffic and this causes a high degree of visibility for the town and waterfront.
4. The ferry wait presents an opportunity for drawing people from their cars for pedestrian recreational and tourist activities.
5. Large, open parking lots and vacant, gravel or undeveloped areas adjacent to sidewalks are uninviting to the public.
6. There is no particular visual intrigue and there are no clues to potential activity along the waterfront.
7. The North-South street corridors are not strong, when viewing from Railroad Avenue.

There exists:

- o a zig-zag wood stairway hillclimb at the south end of Oak Street.
- o a fountain and straight, long stairway at the south end of Laurel Street.
- o no local focus and an impression of disarray along Lincoln Street. There are seasonal views of the Olympic Mountains.

None of these presently define a destination or a link to or from the waterfront.

8. There are few public commercial uses on the waterfront or along Railroad Avenue - an important potential exists.
9. Public access to the water along Railroad Avenue is limited and uninviting - an important potential exists.
10. The Harborview Park site is undeveloped. There are unused pilings adjacent to both this site and the Black Ball ferry dock.
11. Other than the Black Ball Ferry Operations, the existing commercial uses on the waterfront do not suggest a "working waterfront" character. i.e. fishing, maritime, nautical. The railroad is not integral to this character.

12. Commercial truck loading activities park across the south sidewalk and block traffic on Railroad Avenue - a visual and functional barrier.
13. City pier and park is distant and unadvertised from most places along Railroad Avenue.
14. Present waterfront activities and architecture do not reflect a sense of historical tradition.
15. The public moorage has no tie to town and services.
16. Views over the water look to the harbor.
17. East end of Railroad Avenue has no visual terminus and has a natural vista in the distance.
18. West end of Railroad Avenue has no terminus, and has a view of industrial activities behind it.
19. The view of Port Angeles from the water is important because of the mass transit activity of the ferry.
20. Peabody Creek outfall is an undeveloped natural amenity.
21. Recent streetscape improvements have established a basic precedent for pedestrian amenities.

C. Design Guidelines

1. ESTABLISH PEDESTRIAN ACCESS ZONES: areas of design/activity emphasis based on the length of time of a wait for the ferry and a pedestrian mode. This time-distance boundary can be influenced by natural, commercial and cultural potentials. The ferry location is central on the waterfront, making the entire waterfront within the bounds of this primary access zone. This has a mutiple benefit because this area is also targeted as a destination for use by the local Port Angeles residents.

The proposed boundary (see Plan p.10) includes the pier at the foot of Oak Street, the west side of Oak Street, the store fronts along the south side of Railroad Avenue, the beach area at the east end of Railroad Avenue, the Peabody Creek outfall, the main portion of the Port Authority pier, the entire Black Ball operation, and across the Harborview Park area. The end of the city pier is too distant based on this criteria, as is a walk very far into town. It is most likely that the main attractions will be central to the waterfront and that longer pedestrian trips will be limited to very long waits.

2. RAILROAD AVENUE

The existing condition and uses of this unique waterfront street do not fulfill its potential. The open, working, commercial character does not give the impression of a public activity area. The importance of broadening the experience and uses of this waterfront corridor is based on a public amenity and the vitality of an active waterfront. Ferry passengers with a long wait and a car that is 'a captive' in line provide a resource with both recreation and commercial needs.

The natural amenity of the shoreline and the people-water attraction presents the ideal setting for developing public recreational and commercial activities. This could be a year-round activity center for the residents of the City. It could tie the Central Business District and the waterfront together and be a logical extension of the improvement work started with the development of the City pier.

There are a wide variety of design strategies to enhance Railroad Avenue as a waterfront edge. They are:

- a. Make the sidewalk a "place" for people. Contain the edges adjacent to parking lots and open vacant areas.
 - o Use wood or metal bollards, strung with rope or chain in nautical theme.
 - o Wide paint stripe on curb.

- b. Add to and improve plants in existing planters and street trees. Choose hardy and resistant species.
 - o Add lines and groups of trees in tubs. Consider seasonal color in hanging pots and planters. Move this planting character into private property and use it to help define the shoreline edge.
- c. Add points of public access to water and views.
 - o Open Oak Street pier for overwater access.
 - o Use a "boardwalk" path as the common element to define the public shoreline edge.
 - o Develop Harborview Park with a boardwalk edge and platform using Fish Co. pier for windbreak.
 - o Link Black Ball pier and Harborview Park with overwater corridor and platform utilizing existing vacant pilings.
 - o Extend boardwalk edge and link Black Ball and Port Authority property.
 - o Open northeast edge of Port Authority pier for public access. Develop boardwalk and tie this edge to Peabody Creek and city pier.
- d. Signs, maps, and directories to give information and directions to activities and things of interest; such as:
 - o Locate a large display at the ferry terminal, along Railroad Avenue indicating public shoreline areas, at Oak, Laurel, Lincoln crossings describing downtown activities and in town on First Street at Oak, Laurel, Lincoln describing waterfront activities.
 - o Map and promotion hand-out or a map printed on back of Ferry ticket. Make it a souvenir.
- e. Visual and Auditory Displays
 - o Banners, flags, windsocks, fish and windchimes to add color, scale and movement to screen and enhance views.
 - o Banners and flags can have designs portraying a historical and regional context: sailing ships, fishing, trees, logging, birds, fish, area mountains ...
 - o Sponsor a competition to design banners, flags and visual elements, involve local school children and townspeople.
 - o Attach to existing poles, vertical hanging banners over south sidewalk along Railroad Avenue will screen and visually unify the long low building fronts along this side of the street. This south side is particularly visible from the waterfront sidewalk.

- o Use the visual displays as the single unifying element to signal activities and areas that are part of the Railroad Avenue waterfront zone.
- f. Improve pedestrian crossings to Oak, Laurel, and Lincoln Streets.
 - o Make wide crosswalks, change surface to brick or continue wood theme as a clear signal to pedestrians and cars of an intentional, safe, pedestrian route inviting people to cross Railroad Avenue.
- g. Encourage business and commercial buildings to adopt simple design standards to unify their image.
 - o At time of repainting, select a color that fits the design standards.
 - o Business signs can be painted on buildings and can portray a historical, nautical or thematic image.
 - o Awnings to add scale and a friendly, finished appearance.
- h. Maintain Peabody Creek basin as a natural-edge amenity.
 - o Access to creek edge at low tide from clearly established points to avoid destruction of vegetation on banks.
 - o Replant and improve existing plantings to enhance the sense of a natural edge.
- i. Build Bicycle Lane
 - o Implement earlier Urban Waterfront Trail Plan.
 - o Bike lane striping with bicycles and people on the street edge of the sidewalk will add to the pedestrian feeling and containment along waterfront edge sidewalk.
- j. Change commercial truck loading procedures to eliminate blocking sidewalk and Railroad Avenue.
 - o Use alleys behind Railroad Avenue.
 - o Enforce and/or amend ordinances for this purpose.
- h. Encourage diversification of land uses to include more Public Commerical and Public Access activities.
 - o Potential uses include: restaurants, markets, shops, professional offices, seasonal arts and crafts, fairs and marine uses.

- o All waterfront development should incorporate public access opportunities.
- o "Working waterfront" uses add variety and unique interest and should be retained and encouraged to develop with public access opportunity.

3. LOOKING AT PORT ANGELES FROM THE WATER

This land-water edge is highly visible especially to ferry traffic. The existing waterfront character does not present a positive public image. The newly rebuilt public pier is the exception and is a precedent for other renovations. The shoreline edge is particularly important. There is a lack of respect for this important juncture.

Design solutions include a general clean-up and attention to certain details as noted below:

- o Re-establish the shoreline areas with appropriate materials including: stone, wood or concrete bulkheads, including vegetation when possible.
- o Create a shoreline vegetation edge including planters on piers.
- o Painting of buildings and water facing signs express the character of the activity and where appropriate, present a maritime image.
- o Key visual displays at pier ends to add movement and color - flags, wind socks, and lights.

4. 'Portals' at Oak, Laurel, and Lincoln Streets.

- o A visual symbol to announce the waterfront area when looking from the Central Business District toward the waterfront, and to signal the unity of Railroad Avenue when viewing from within.
- o Banners over the street to symbolize passing into a special place.
- o This visual symbol can occur at mid-points along Oak, Laurel and Lincoln at pier ends and at the top of hillclimb stairs to create the perspective and sequential motion to draw people and establish a strong visual linkage to and from town.

5. Create views from the waterfront up Oak, Laurel, and Lincoln Streets.

- o Enhance the existing hillclimb stairways and fountain with plantings and other design elements to create a focal point.

- o Portals will create perspective and the sequential linkage in this direction too.
- 6. Create termini at East and West ends of Railroad Avenue.
 - o Strong focal points at both ends would add a sense of containment and visual unity.
 - o The East end has the natural edge of the shoreline with the hill behind it. A sculpture or special landscaped area would compliment this view.
 - o The West end is now open and weak. It would benefit if commercial activity would continue along the west side of Oak Street adjacent to the bus area. Again, the theme should be marine and harmonious with the balance of the waterfront. This would be a dynamic west terminus.

Implementation Phasing

The implementation of projects from these Design Guidelines would be spread out over a long period of time. Some projects would be accomplished by the City, other elements by private individuals and still others by joint efforts either public-private or cooperation within the private sector.

The many Guidelines can be separated into short term and long term improvements. Short term means those things that can be accomplished with a modest capital expenditure, few or no special permitting or approval constraints, and which are generally of a non-controversial nature. Short term implementation does not imply short term longevity of the product or benefit, only the time or energy to make it happen.

Long term improvements are more complex and expensive. They often require waiting for vacating of rights-of-way or property, special permits, large capital expenditures and are frequently more controversial in nature.

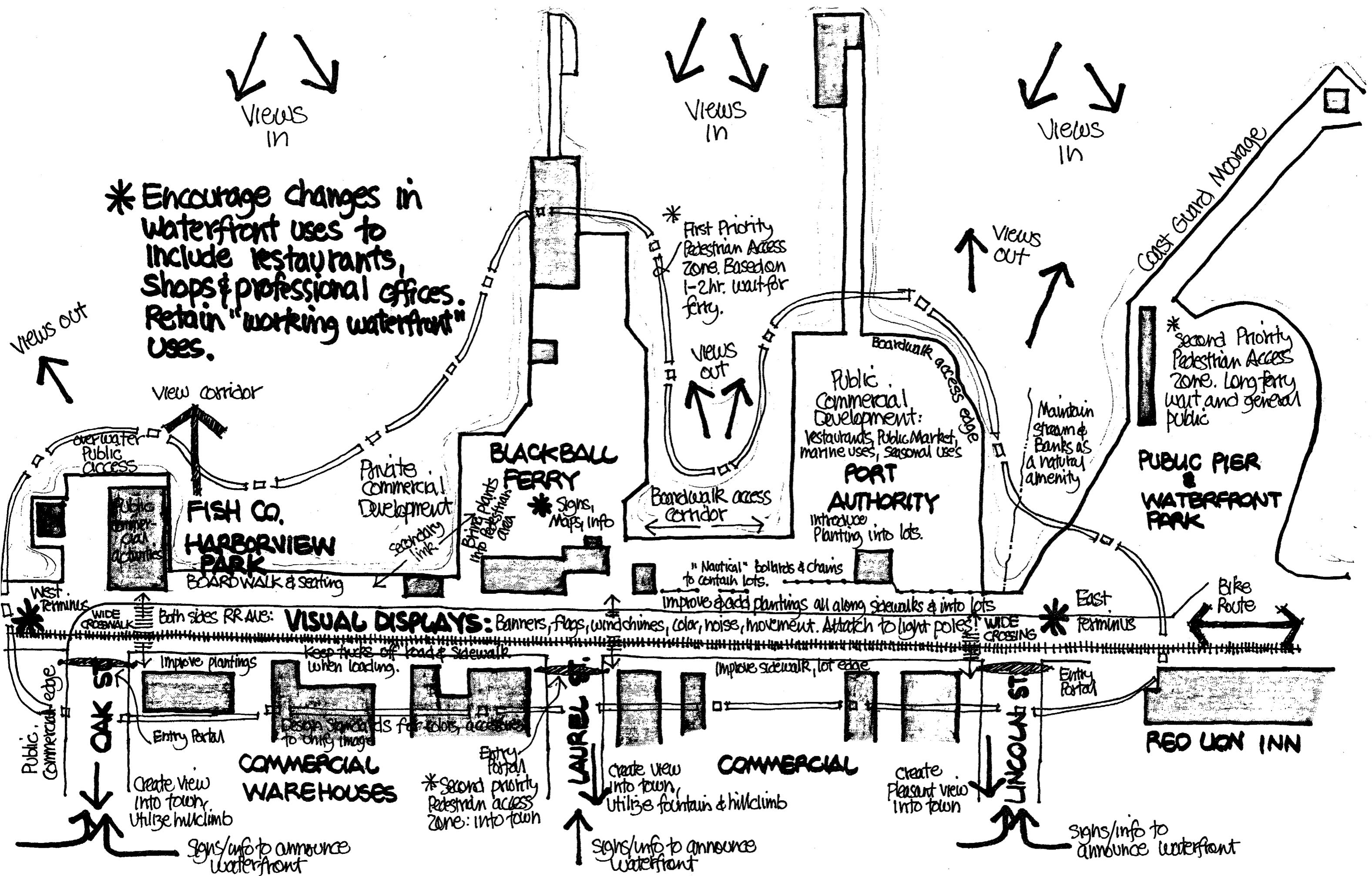
SUGGESTED SHORT TERM IMPROVEMENTS

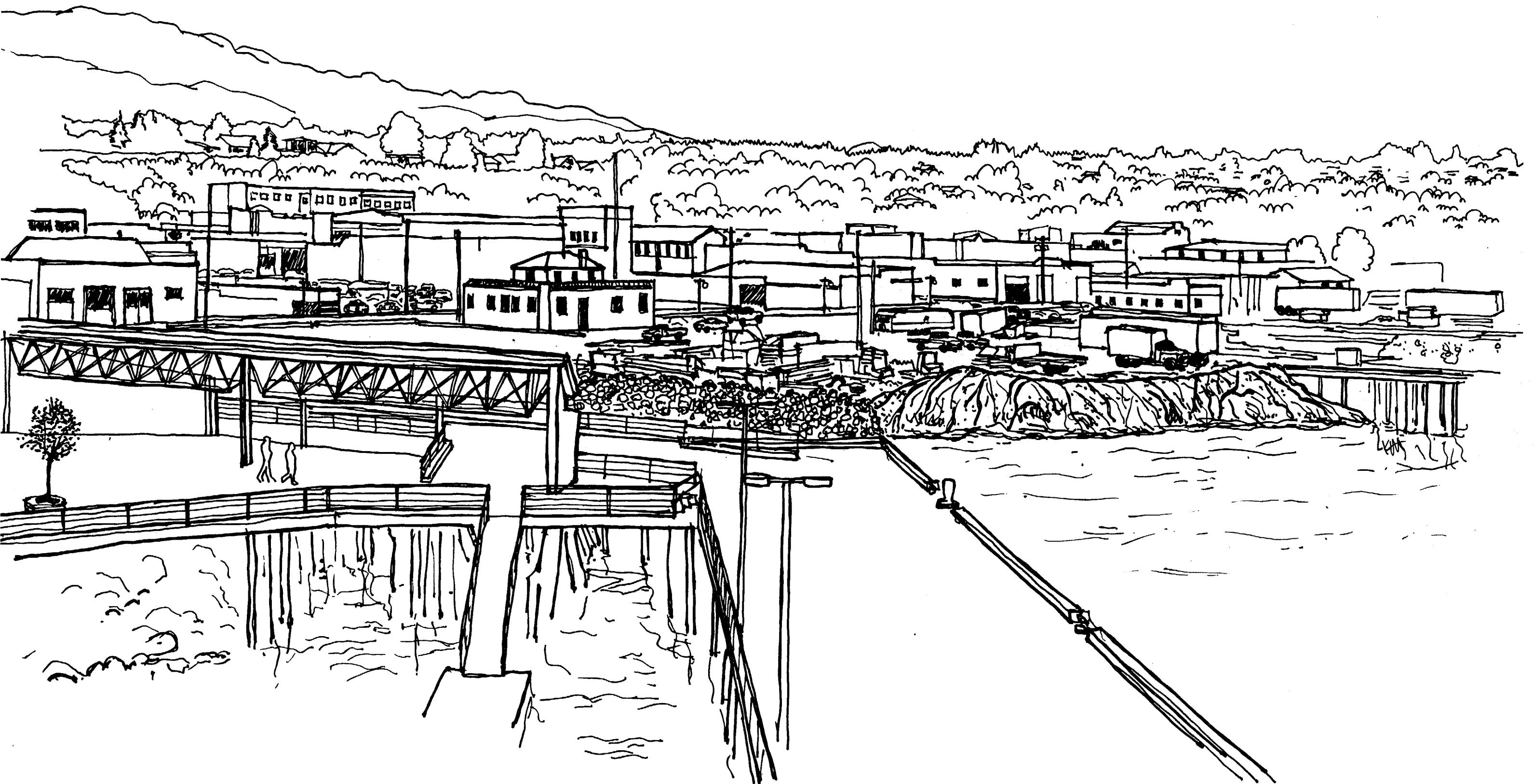
- o Establish Pedestrian Access Zones
- o Sidewalk definition: bollards, curb painting
- o Improve planting: sidewalk planters, shore edges, public and private
- o Public access to waterfront edge (on-going)
- o Boardwalks (ongoing)
- o Signs, maps, directories
- o Visual displays (banners, flags, windsocks, etc.): on streets, piers
- o Peabody Creek enhancement
- o Truck loading policies
- o Portals
- o North-South street-end enhancement: stairways, fountain, planting, portals
- o East end Railroad Avenue terminus

SUGGESTED LONG TERM IMPROVEMENTS

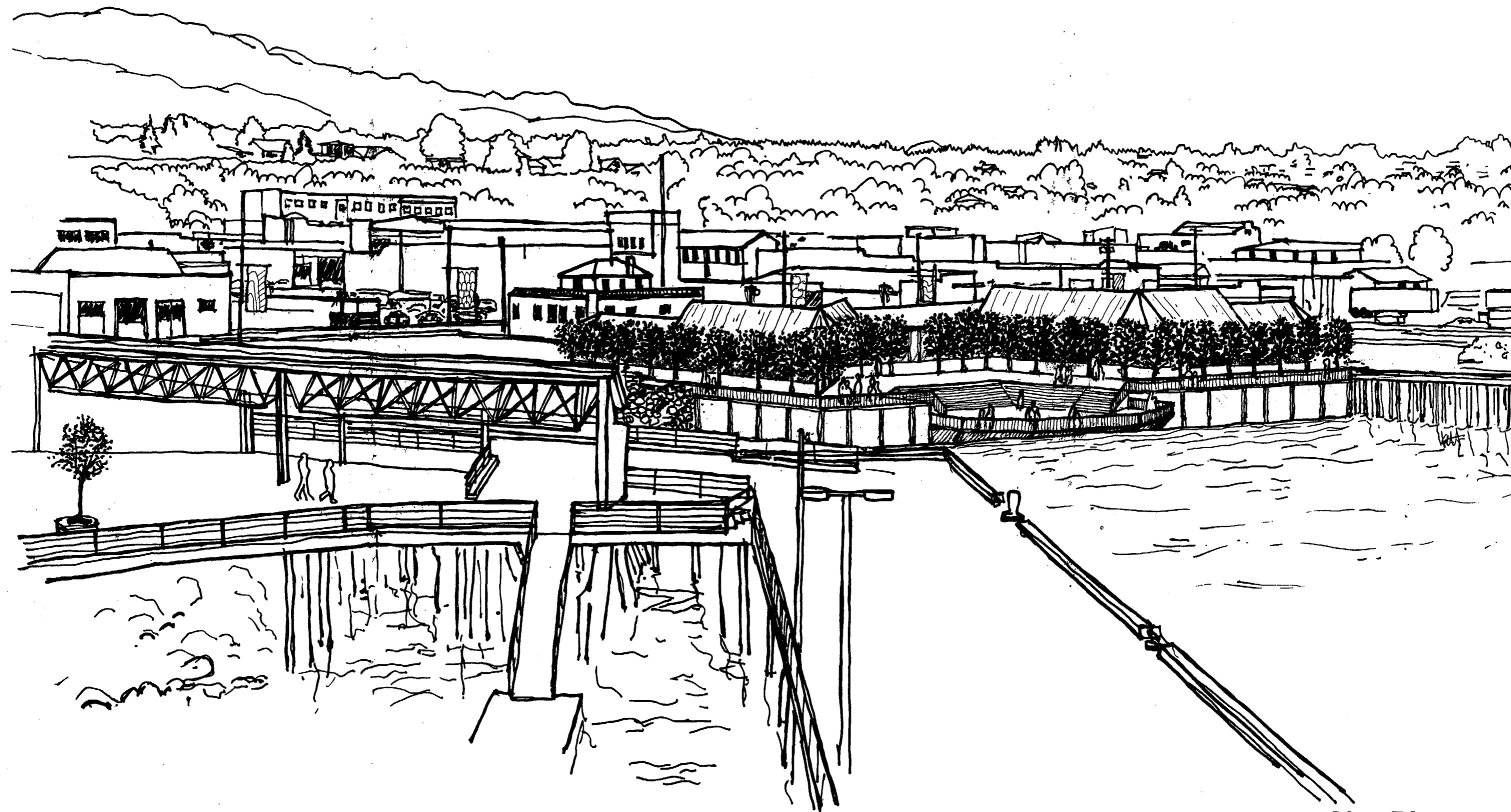
- o Public access to waterfront edge (ongoing)
- o Boardwalks (ongoing)
- o Public commercial uses of Port Authority property
- o Connection of Blackball lot and Port Authority land
- o Other changes in waterfront land use (ongoing)
- o Visual displays (ongoing)
- o Paint buildings and install awnings
- o Bike lane
- o West end Railroad Avenue terminus
- o Re-establish shoreline edges

* Encourage changes in waterfront uses to include restaurants, shops & professional offices. Retain "working waterfront" uses.





Port Authority & CBD from City Pier
BEFORE



Port Authority & CBD from City Pier
AFTER



Looking West on Railroad Ave. at Lincoln St.
BEFORE



Looking West on Railroad Ave. at Lincoln St.

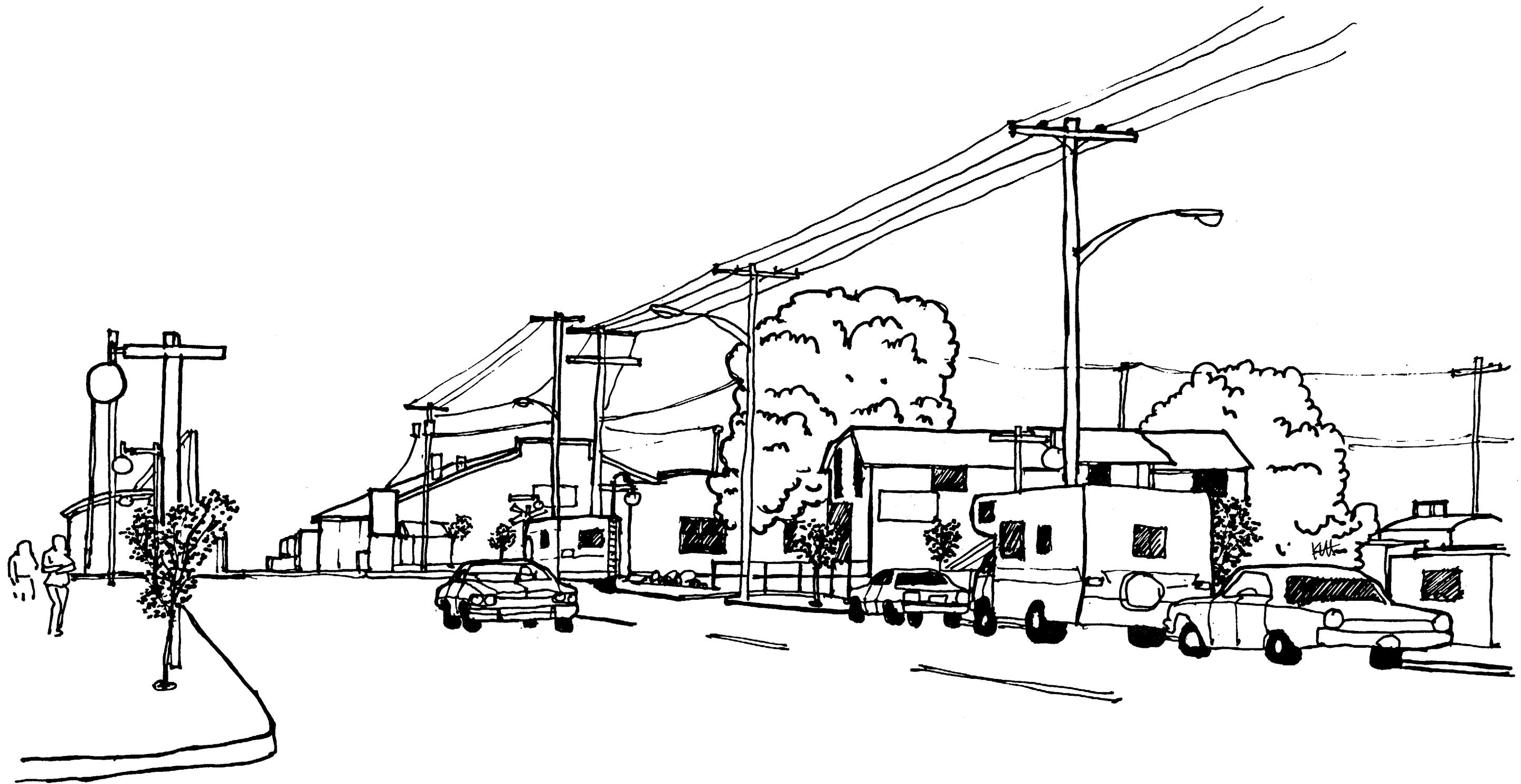
AFTER



Harborview Park from Oak St.
BEFORE

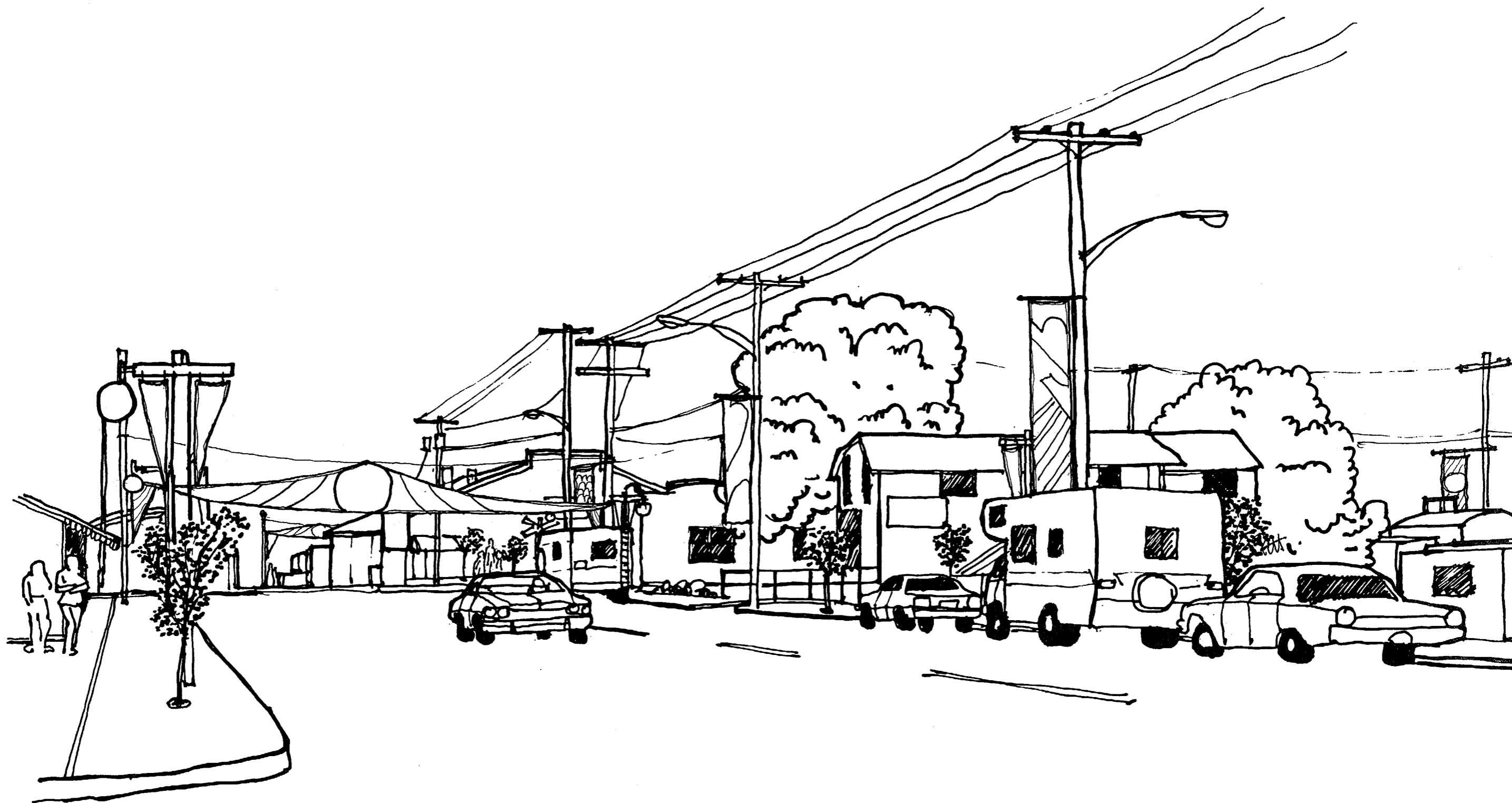


Harborview Park from Oak St.
AFTER



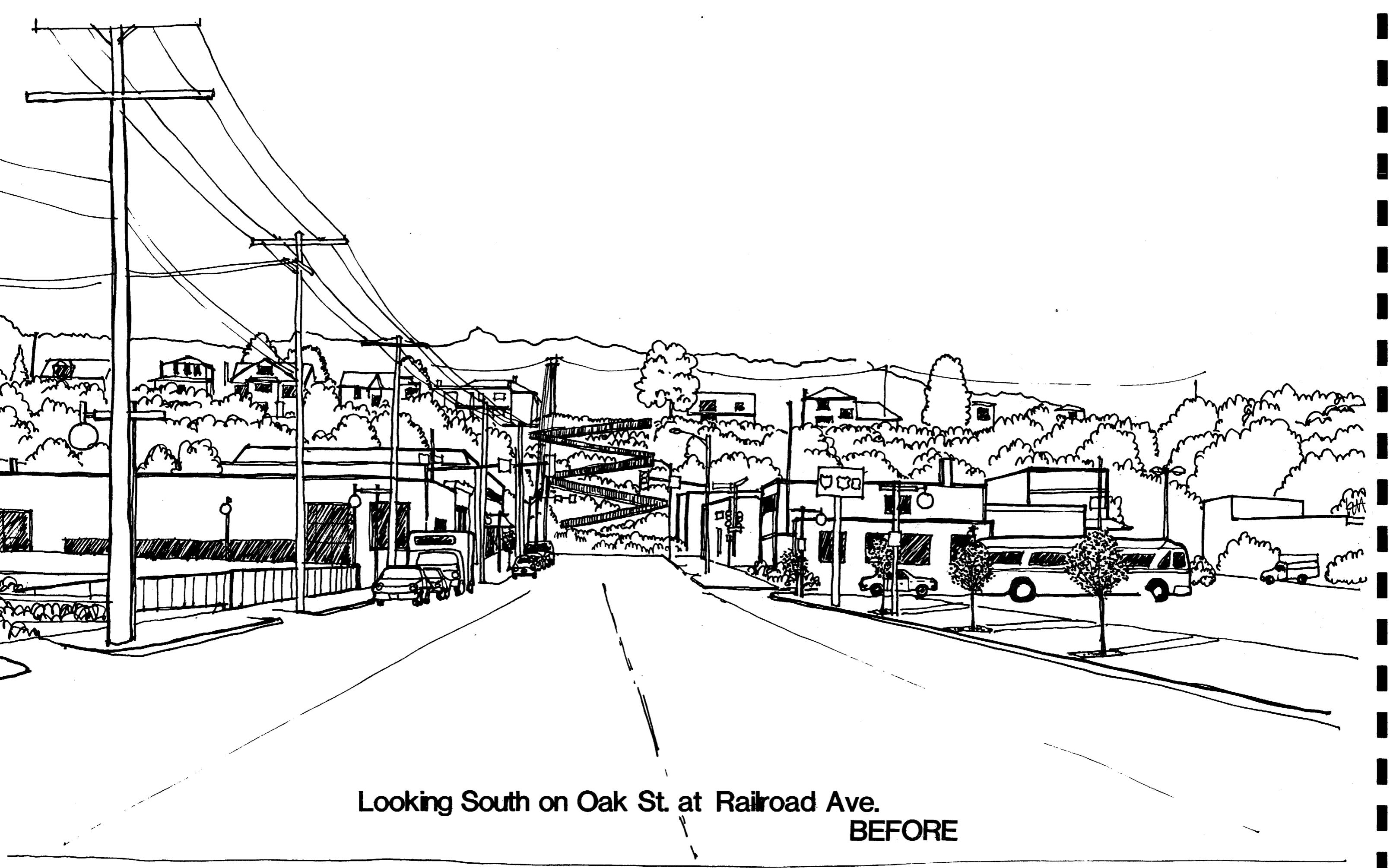
Looking North on Oak St. at Front St.

BEFORE

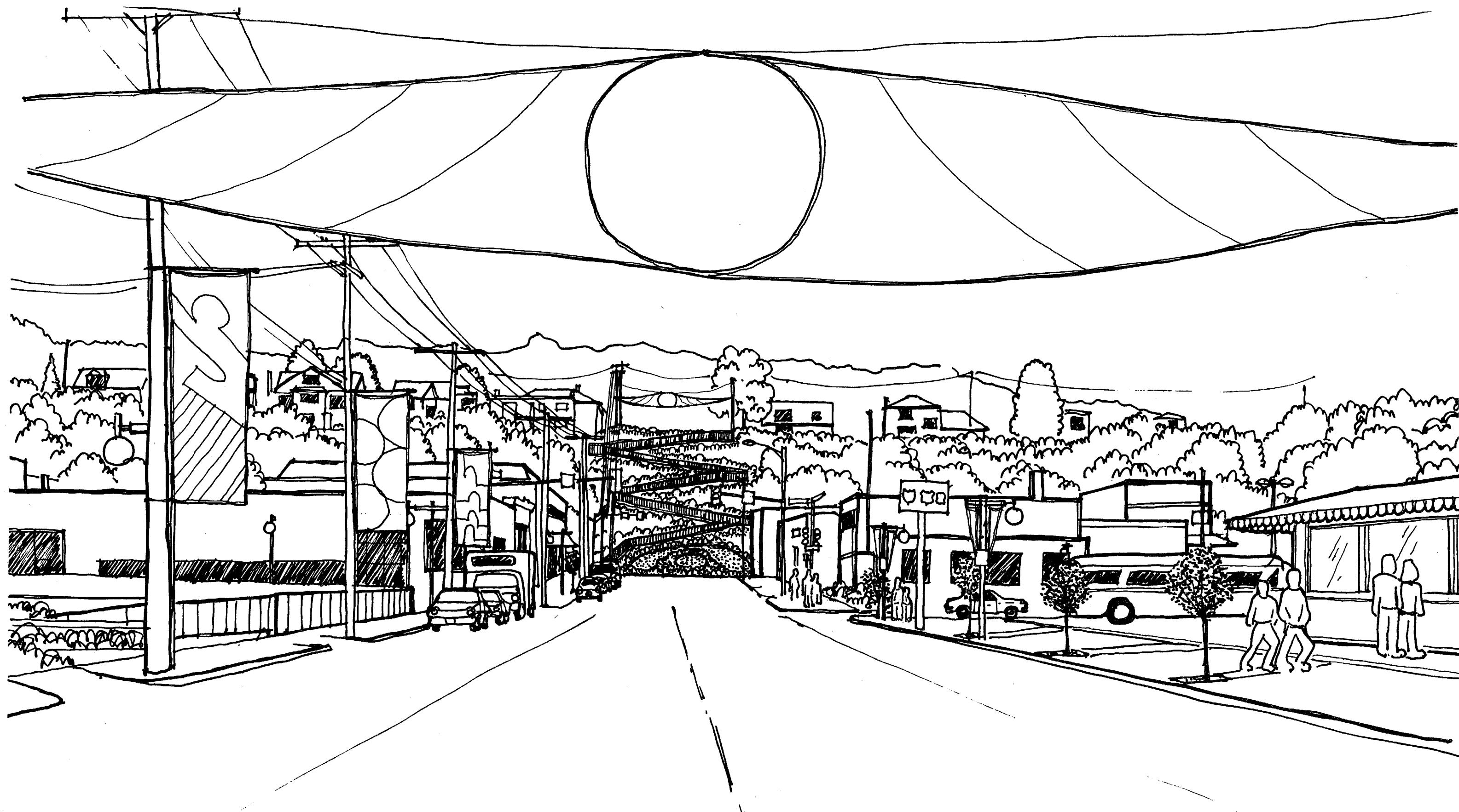


Looking North on Oak St. at Front St.

AFTER



Looking South on Oak St. at Railroad Ave.
BEFORE



Looking South on Oak St. at Railroad Ave.
AFTER