

**WEST 17<sup>th</sup> STREET VISIONING WORKSHOP**  
**Conducted at the Renaissance Building**  
**501 West 17<sup>th</sup> Street**

**May 24-25, 2004**

**A SUMMARY REPORT**

A Workshop Involving Commercial and Industrial Business and Property Owners and Nearby Residents,  
with assistance from:

The Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio

J Eppink Partners, Inc.

Riverview Group

City of Holland Department of Community and Neighborhood Services

*For further information, contact:*

The City of Holland-  
Jubilee Ministries-

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## **Recognition of An Opportunity**

Over the past six months, a growing interest and optimism about this West 17<sup>th</sup> Street commercial has captured the attention of property owners, businesses, nearby residents, customers, and City officials. Precipitously, several factors have come together to suggest this may be an opportune time for focused attention on the continuing revitalization of this gateway commercial district.

### **1. Recent and On-Going Revitalization Activity**

Several years ago, the City of Holland introduced some street improvements and traffic changes into this corridor along 17<sup>th</sup> Street that improved the condition and functionality of the roadway, introduced curbing and landscaped islands that began to define access to parking areas, and strove to introduce street-tree planting to help soften the visual impact of the considerable amount of paved surfaces. Since that time, the commercial district has been relatively stable and quiet, with minimal desire for public infrastructure improvement or other public attention. More recently, with a changing economy and with some key properties changing hands or being offered on the market, there has been a flurry of renovation activity and expressed desire of some property owners to make further improvements to their properties.

### **2. Acquisition by and Initiative of Jubilee Ministries**

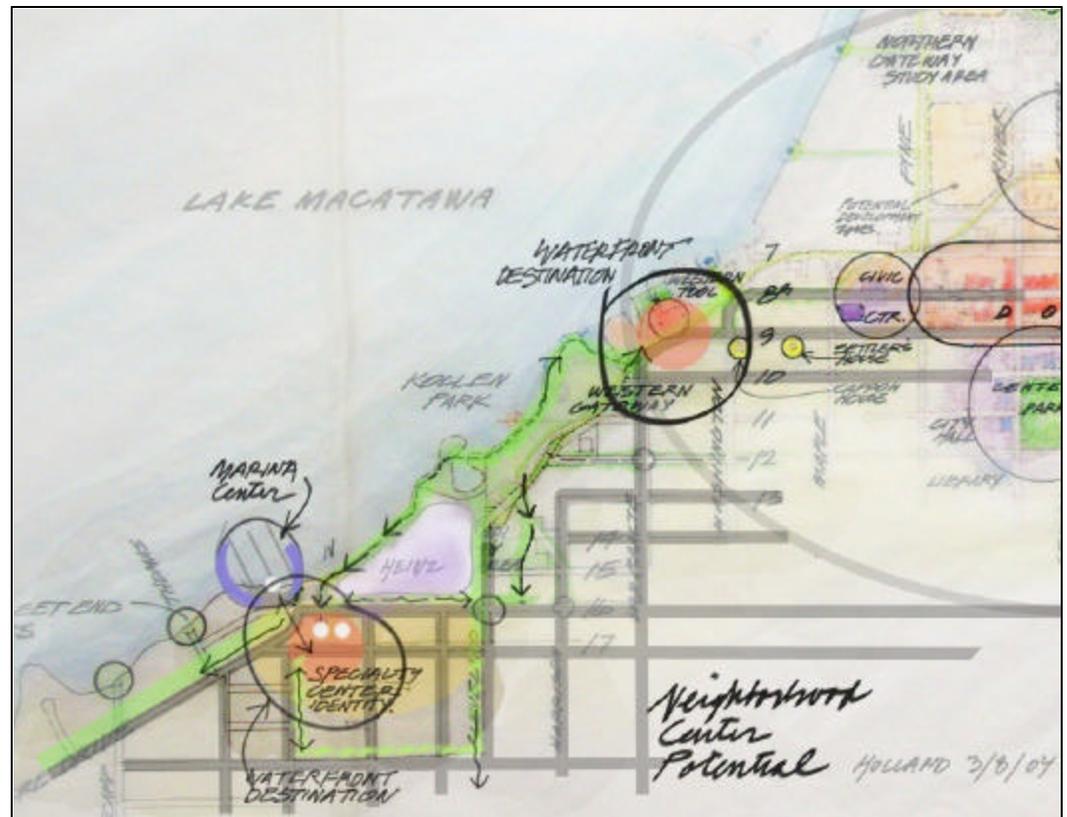
With the relocation of long-time business Sybesma's Electronics to larger, newly renovated industrial space south of this district along Ottawa Avenue, 501 West 17<sup>th</sup> Street became available. Increasingly active in the areas of neighborhood and commercial development, Jubilee Ministries- through the initiative of Rev. Dave Kool- has been aggressive in their examination of the opportunities for working with existing businesses and nearby industry to build upon the economically and ethnically diverse nature of this corridor in an effort to define new and expanded opportunities for enhancing existing and new businesses. In addition to on-going business assistance programs in this district, Jubilee purchased 501 West 17<sup>th</sup> and is eagerly pursuing a bigger dream for this area. Jubilee has been instrumental in bringing folks together in an effort to collaboratively define a vision for the future of this important commercial district. Through a series of four or five meetings, neighborhood property owners and business owners have come together to meet one another and to dream about the collective future of this area. Assisted at one point by William Johnson and City Staff, the group supported this initiative to generate a broader vision in which the collective owners could find direction and future opportunity.

### 3. City Focus on Neighborhood Commercial Districts

In December 2002, the City of Holland adopted a new Master Plan for Holland's Central Neighborhoods. One of the major recommendations of this Plan is to "elevate and re-establish the neighborhood commercial area as a viable center for neighborhood based commerce and provision of services". While this emphasis is not new (Washington Square and Central Place at 16<sup>th</sup> and River are past examples of elevated attention), this attention has been recognized as highly important and vital for the long term health of the City's neighborhoods. Certainly, the West 17<sup>th</sup> Street corridor serves as an important neighborhood commercial area serving not only immediately adjacent residential areas, but also the City's West End. Further, the City has committed \$75,000 through the 2004-05 Community Development Block Grant program to assist in the revitalization of these neighborhood commercial districts.

### 4. City Investment in Kollen Park Improvements

An additional exciting catalyst for attention to this 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Street commercial corridor is the City's investment in the rehabilitation and expansion of Kollen Park facilities along the Lake Macatawa waterfront. Through generous cooperation of the Heinz Company, the City has been able to develop plans for the realignment of Kollen Park Drive on the east side of Heinz creating a new entrance drive to the Park, and for the construction of a public boardwalk along the water's edge behind the Heinz facility connecting Kollen Park with 16<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side of Heinz. Both of these improvements create new opportunities for tying this commercial district together with the waterfront and Park improvements.



## Overview of Workshop Process

### Press Release:

On Monday evening, May 24<sup>th</sup>, the merchants and property owners of the West 17<sup>th</sup> Street Commercial District and the City of Holland Department of Community and Neighborhood Services will be hosting an important public input meeting to assist in the creation of a comprehensive vision plan for the commercial district bounded loosely by 16<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, Plasman Avenue on the west, and Harrison Avenue on the east.

The information / public input meeting will be led by the project's consultant, *The Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio*, from Ann Arbor, and will allow folks from the varied businesses in this district, along with nearby industrial and residential neighbors and city officials the opportunity to assist in crafting a vision of what future revitalization might occur in this gateway commercial area. This visioning session is the beginning of a process intended to enhance this area and to unify efforts of many property and business owners as they work to make their businesses and this neighborhood commercial district more successful.

This is your chance to help craft the future for this commercial area. This public input meeting will be followed by the City and consultant team working through a full day of clarifying and refining opportunities and vision for this district, followed by a reporting back to the community in a second public meeting Tuesday evening.

### Invitation

Vision Plan for Holland's West 17<sup>th</sup> Street Neighborhood Commercial District

#### **Public Input Session**

Come join us in shaping a Vision Plan for the continuing revitalization of the West 17<sup>th</sup> Street commercial area and nearby industrial, commercial, and residential uses. This public input meeting will allow you to express your goals and vision for the future of this commercial area extending from 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> Streets, from Harrison to Plasman Avenues.

**Meeting Date:** Monday, May 24th, 2004  
**When:** 7 pm - 9 pm  
**Location:** 501 West 17<sup>th</sup> Street (former home of Sybesma's Electronics)

A follow-up review of work prepared in response to your input will be held Tuesday evening, May 25 at 6:00 p.m. in the same location. Contact Phil Meyer, City of Holland Planning and Development Manager at 355-1363 for more information.



## **Monday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

- 11 am Project team and City Planning staff meet to discuss roles and responsibilities.  
Tour the project study area, sharing observations, discussing issues and opportunities.
- 7:00-7:15 Welcome and Overview: Phil Meyer, City of Holland  
Introduction of Team, Agenda, Visioning: Chet Hill, The Johnson Hill ■ Land Ethics Studio  
Examples of elements of other successful districts: Jim Eppink, J. Eppink Partners.
- 7:15-8:45 Identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities.
- 8:45-9:00 Discussion of next steps, adjourn and informal discussion.

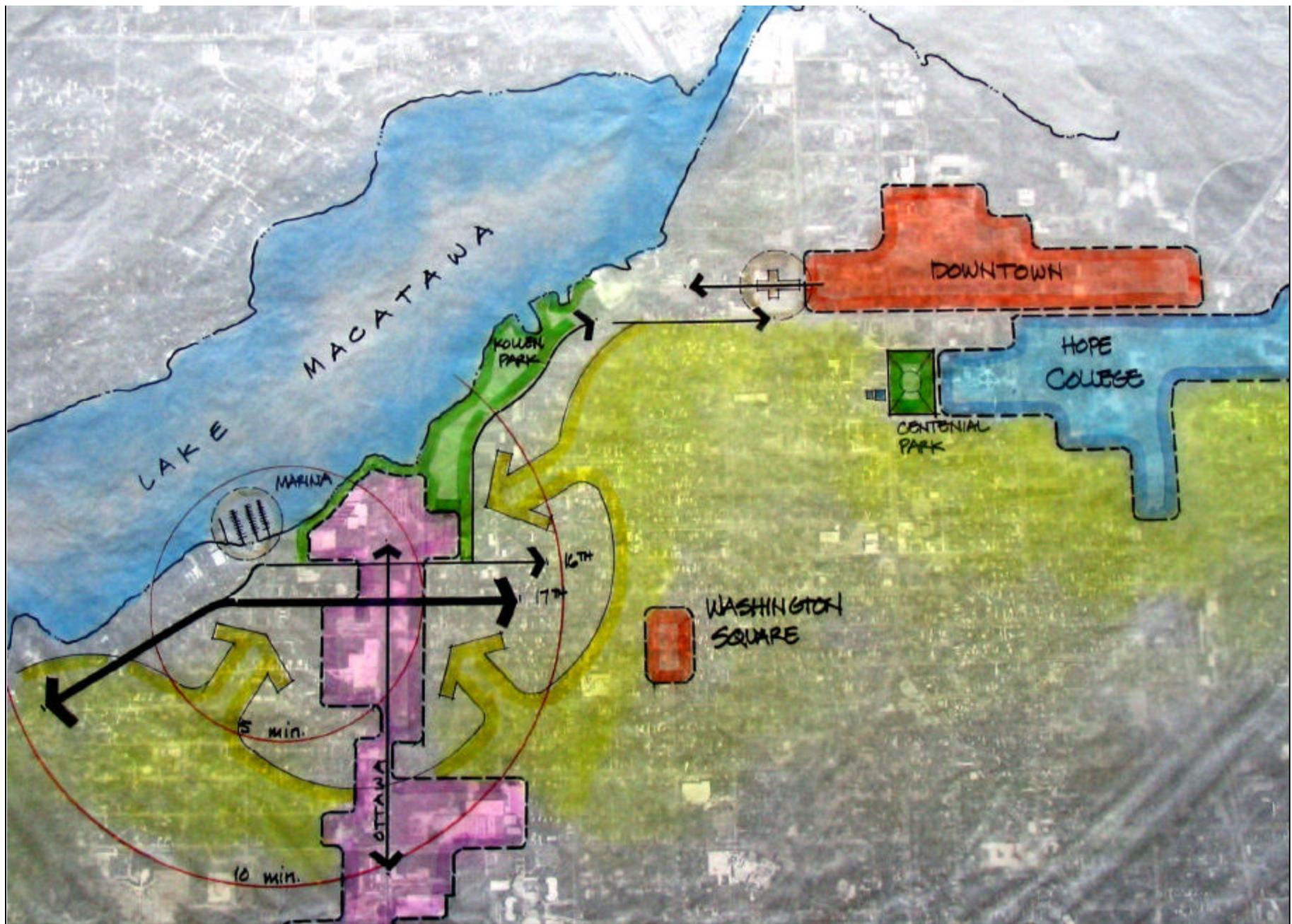
## **Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2004**

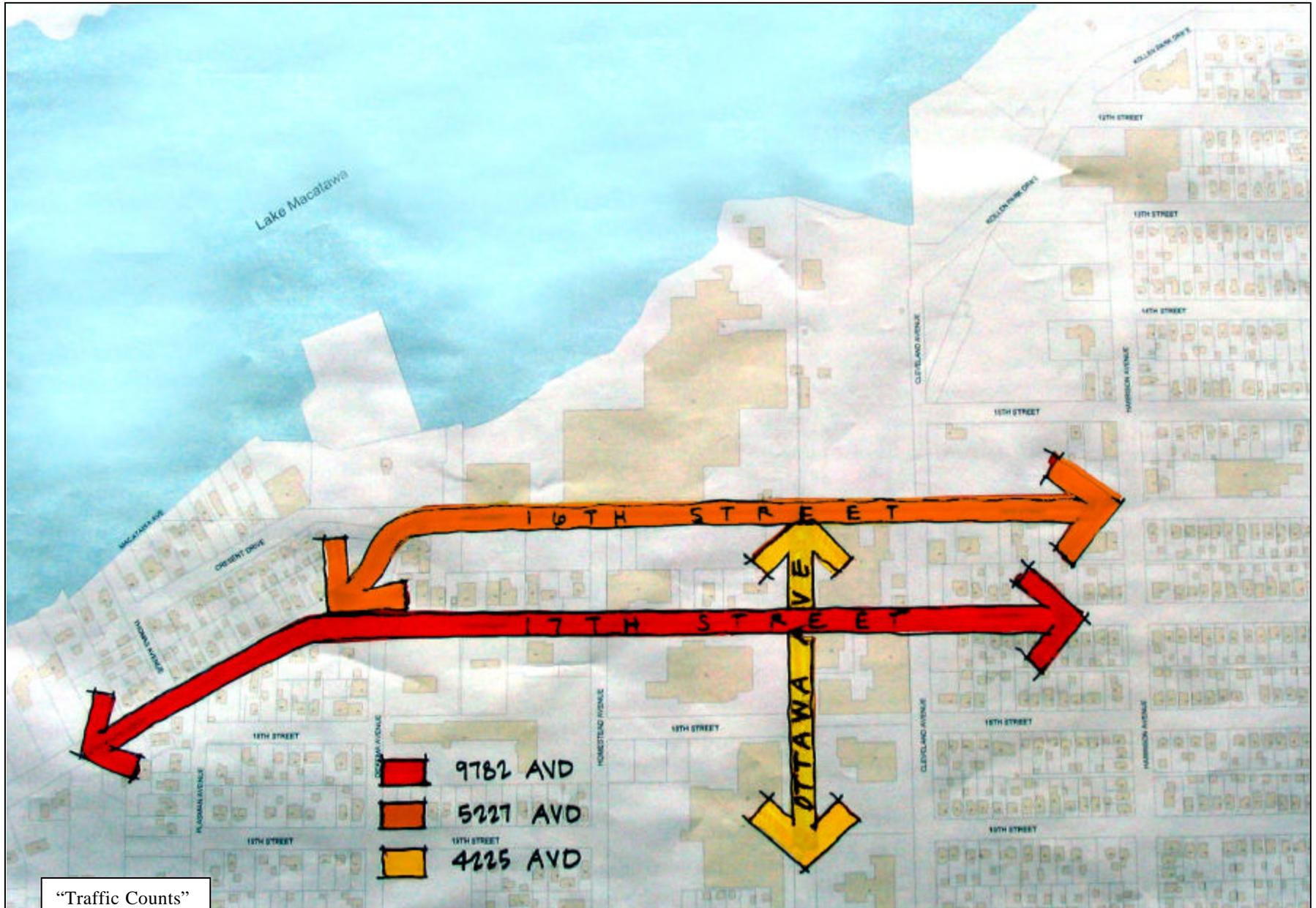
- 8:00 - 8:45 Meeting with Commercial District Property Owners: Briefing. Issue identification and visioning clarification.  
Determine long and short term goals. Define a program for proposing physical design solutions.
- 8:45 – 9:00 Principles of the Mainstreet Program and applicability to this area of Holland: an organizational framework:  
Patty Seiter Fitzpatrick, Holland DDA/MainStreet Program and Tina Perry, Holland Neighborhood Commercial District staff.
- 9:00 – 6:00 Team Summary of Workshop Ideas and Preparation of Presentation.
- 6:00 – 7:00 Public Meeting: Presentation of the results.

### **Follow-up:**

The Johnson Hill ■ Land Ethics Studio will prepare a concise visioning workshop summary document of the two-day process.

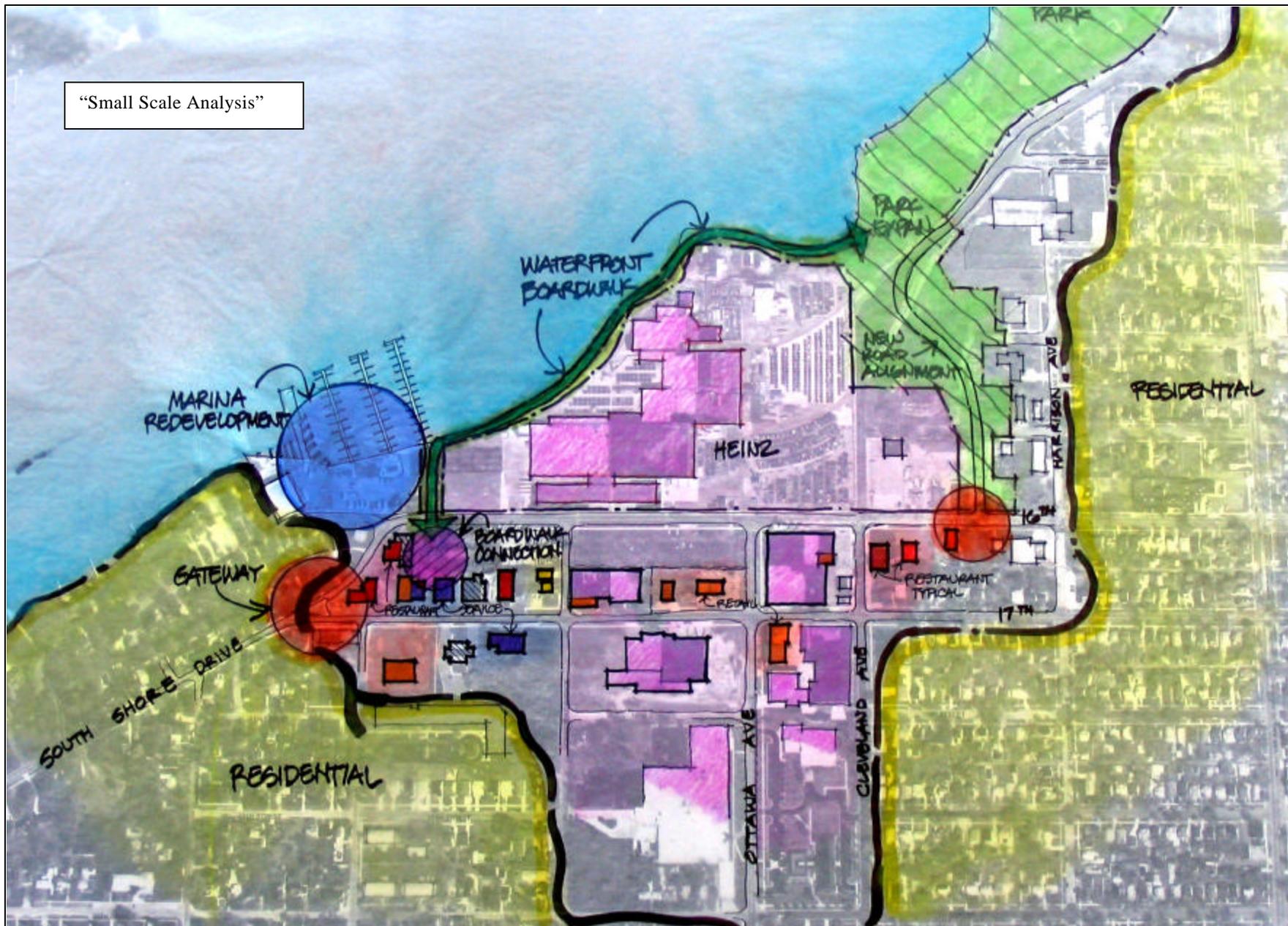
The following four graphics reflect background work and contextual information used to familiarize the design team as they began to understand the opportunities and ambitions of this area.





“Traffic Counts”

“Small Scale Analysis”







**Weaknesses:**

- Buildings disconnected, haphazard
- Transient businesses
- Not much retail to offer
- Commercial and industrial mix
- Lack of lighting
- Vacant buildings
- Attitudes of people
- Increased traffic with park development
- Chain stores take away uniqueness of the area
- Keeping a good quality mix of businesses
- Marina storage of boat racks is unsightly
- No basic services such as a bank or gas station available
- No theme to the area, needs identity
- No trees, flowers, or green space
- Need better way for pedestrians to move along and across 17<sup>th</sup> Street
- Need for signage/better identity/visual reference points
- Need curb appeal
- Want unifying architectural styles
- Need to slow traffic
- Parking layout/inefficient
- Amount of parking for restaurants
- Area is dated, tired, “Ratty” look of the district
- Some errors in the streetscape
- City ought to work with instead of against businesses and the area
- Flow of traffic/end of 16<sup>th</sup> Street at “Y” is stupid
- Graffiti
- Differing parking needs ranging from 3 minutes to an hour for customers
- The marina could be a catalyst for the area, but now it is rundown and a negative



- Address the needs of teenagers
- Huge area at Homestead Apartments available for a park for teenagers
- The public appeal of port cities, City owned marinas and boardwalks
- City should acquire the Crescent Shores Marina and convert to a municipal marina
- Have a Southside Captain Sundae
- Not a neighborhood district, but instead a destination district
- What could Heinz become? How could it better connect to the area? Can they open a store on their property?
- Restaurant district
- Back alley walkway
- Clear the area to open up better views of the water for new more intensive development
- Build up the south side of 17<sup>th</sup> Street
- Large number of employees in the area
- Affluence of the South Shore Drive area
- Housing infill
- Clean up the back side of the businesses
- Make this a 'remodeling corridor' because already have Repco-Lite, Standard Lumber, old Holland Bar Stool property

## **Key Planning Ideas**

The following ideas should be considered in future planning efforts and should provide guidance in refining plans and creating a neighborhood vision or revitalization framework.

### **1. Identity/Name:**

At present, this study area is not identified by a common name. It will be important for the Task Force to develop a process for reaching a consensus on a name for the area.

### **2. Physical Changes/Improvements**

**a. Public infrastructure** – There are numerous opportunities for improving the physical infrastructure of the area, including the creation of and changes to sidewalks in the area, lighting, landscaping with additional trees, flowers, and other plants, etc.

**b. Private buildings** – There are also numerous opportunities for private property owners to improve their facilities. While many are in very good condition, others simply need to be painted, or some more comprehensively updated with new facades, space reconfigurations, building additions or even building replacements. There are also several very underutilized and developable lots which ought to be examined for their feasibility to support new construction. For example, in addition to enhancing present businesses and uses, it is possible that new construction could include new uses in the district, such as housing and an incubator office/service center.

### **3. Water/Marina**

The proximity to the Lake Macatawa waterfront is a key differentiating feature of this area. Additionally, the City of Holland commitment to build a new pedestrian boardwalk from Kollen Park, around the Heinz property, and connecting to the area next to the Marina is a singularly important component of future change in this area. It is critical for the area to take advantage of this physical location and the boardwalk project to strengthen water-related businesses opportunities, appropriate community events and activities connected to Lake Macatawa, and begin to integrate the nearby presence of this water into near term and longer term strategic plans for the entire area.

### **4. Improve pedestrian circulation and connections.**

Participant feedback indicated and the study team confirmed an inadequate pedestrian network in the area. There are minimal sidewalks in the area, and certainly no continuous safe pedestrian walks along or across 17<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets. A pedestrian network

ought to be planned and implemented. It is important that the planned waterfront boardwalk be integrated into this comprehensive non-motorized plan.

#### 5. Parking

The area is marked by a series of stand-alone parking lots dedicated to individual businesses and locations, there are no shared lots nor planned parking synergy between properties. While several properties on the north side of 17th Street share parking informally, there is no organized system of shared parking resources or supply. It is important that such a parking system be planned and implemented. Such a system plan would identify all existing lots and their capacities, as well as potential opportunities for improvements, enhancements and/or expansions of present parking facilities.

#### 6. New businesses and uses

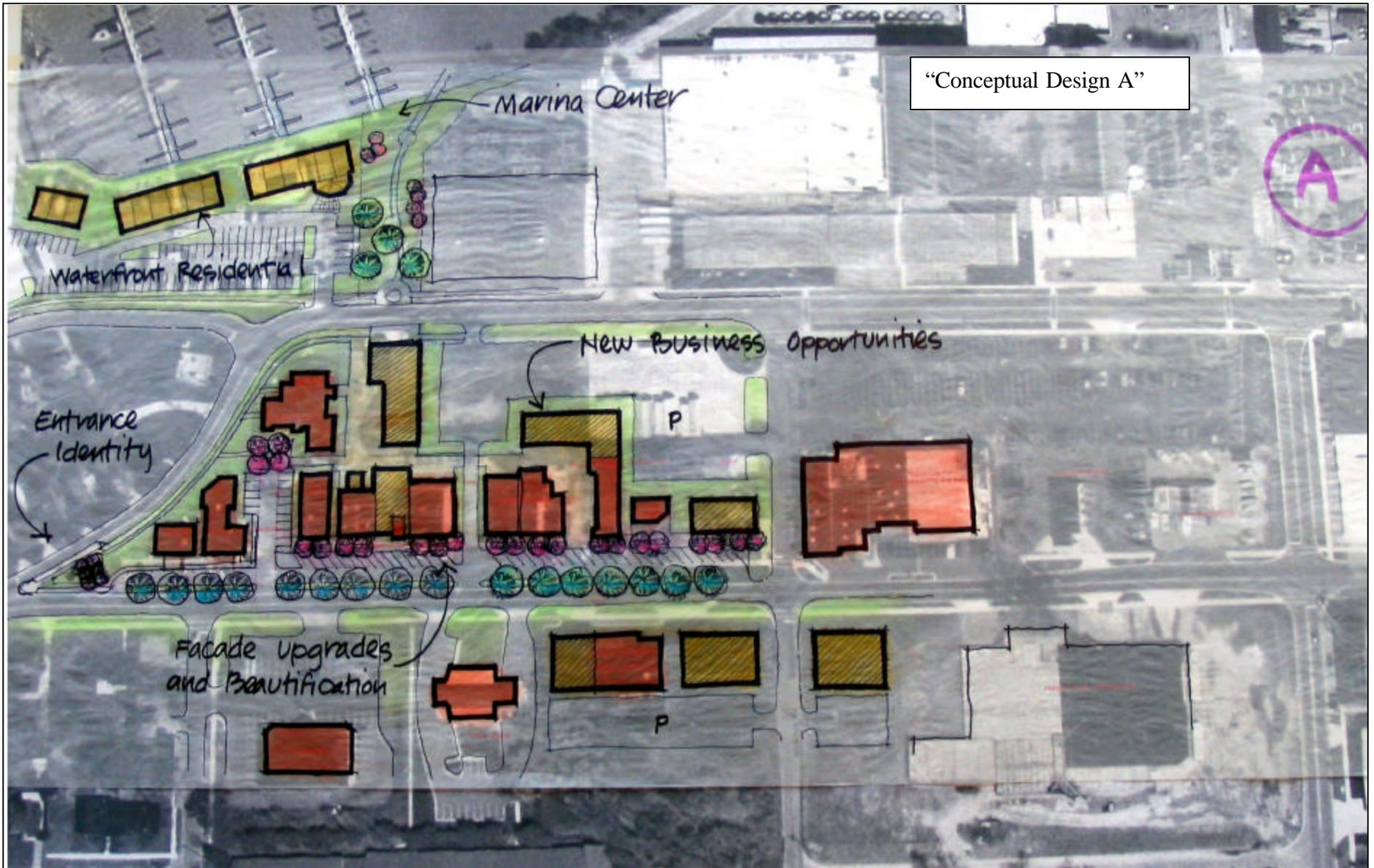
Several new business opportunities and potential new uses were mentioned during the workshop. These include a coffee shop, bank/ATM, shared financial/mortgage/real estate offices, and more restaurants. In addition, there was a strong feeling that additional housing in the area might make sense, particularly because of the vibrant commercial district and the proximity and planned waterfront improvements. Such residential uses might be integrated into upper floors of mixed-use buildings where the ground floors could integrate existing and/or new commercial uses while the upper floors could take advantage of views out to the Lake.

#### 7. Expand partnerships with industry

The industrial businesses within and adjacent to this commercial district already play a key role in the area through their own employment strength and diversity, as well as by providing customers to the commercial businesses. The workshop indicated an opportunity to expand the presence and impact of these industrial neighbors by encouraging them to become more involved in the district by considering a retail presence in the area (a Heinz store, for example... or an expanded West Michigan Uniform retail facility), by allowing tours of facilities/plants, and by encouraging employees to take advantage of the offerings of the commercial district. It was felt that deepening these connections and tapping these resources would be mutually beneficial for all participants.

#### 8. Organization

In order for these ideas and concepts to become strategic action plans and ultimately “facts on the ground”, it is critical that an organization be created, nurtured, and supported by both public and private stakeholders in the area. Workshop participants demonstrated a very good level of interest, and many others can be invited to join this vibrant initial process. The City of Holland planning staff and key business leaders must be involved and build on the solid momentum shown during the workshop.



“Conceptual Design A”

Marina Center

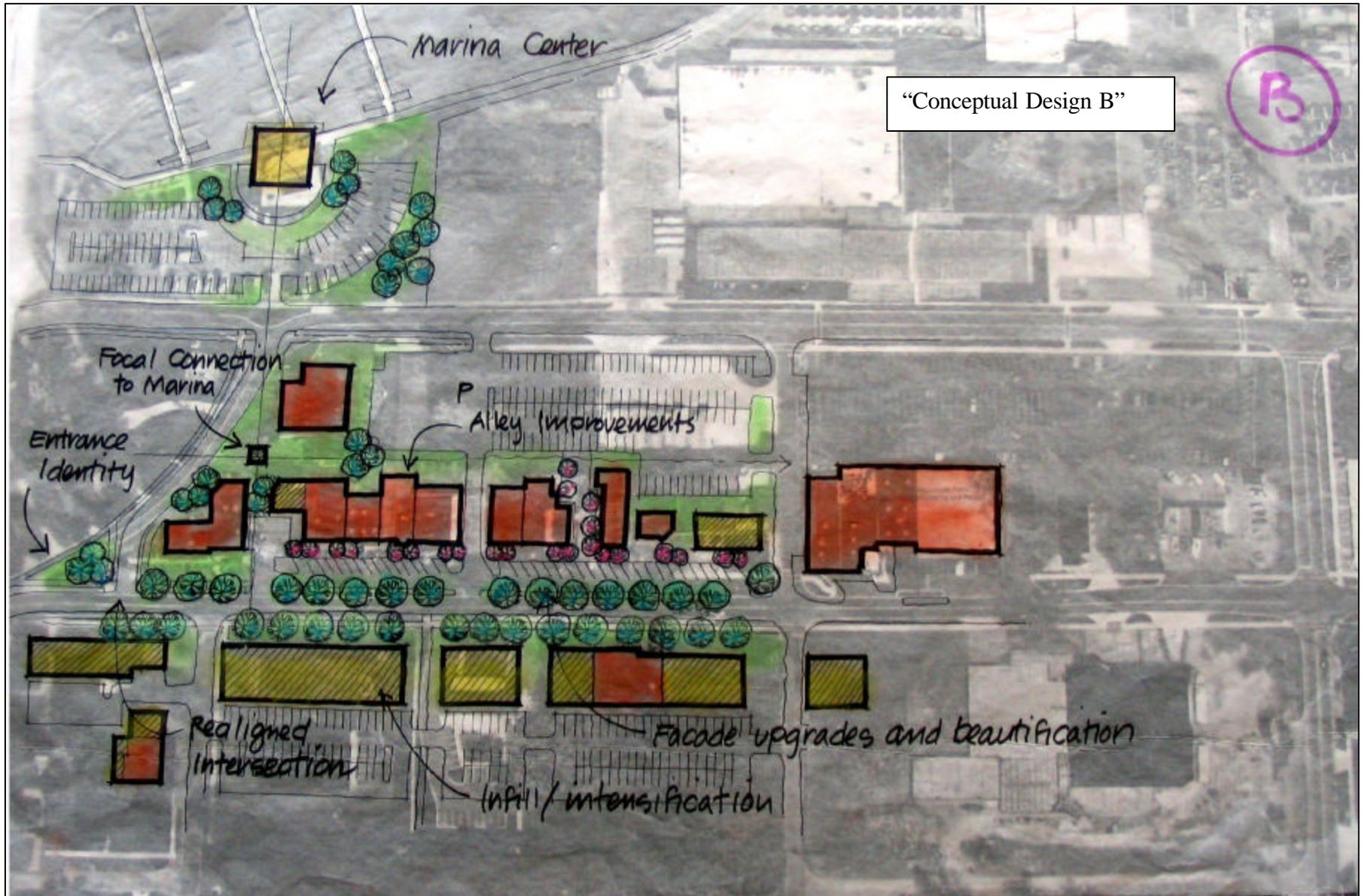
Waterfront Residential

Entrance Identity

New Business Opportunities

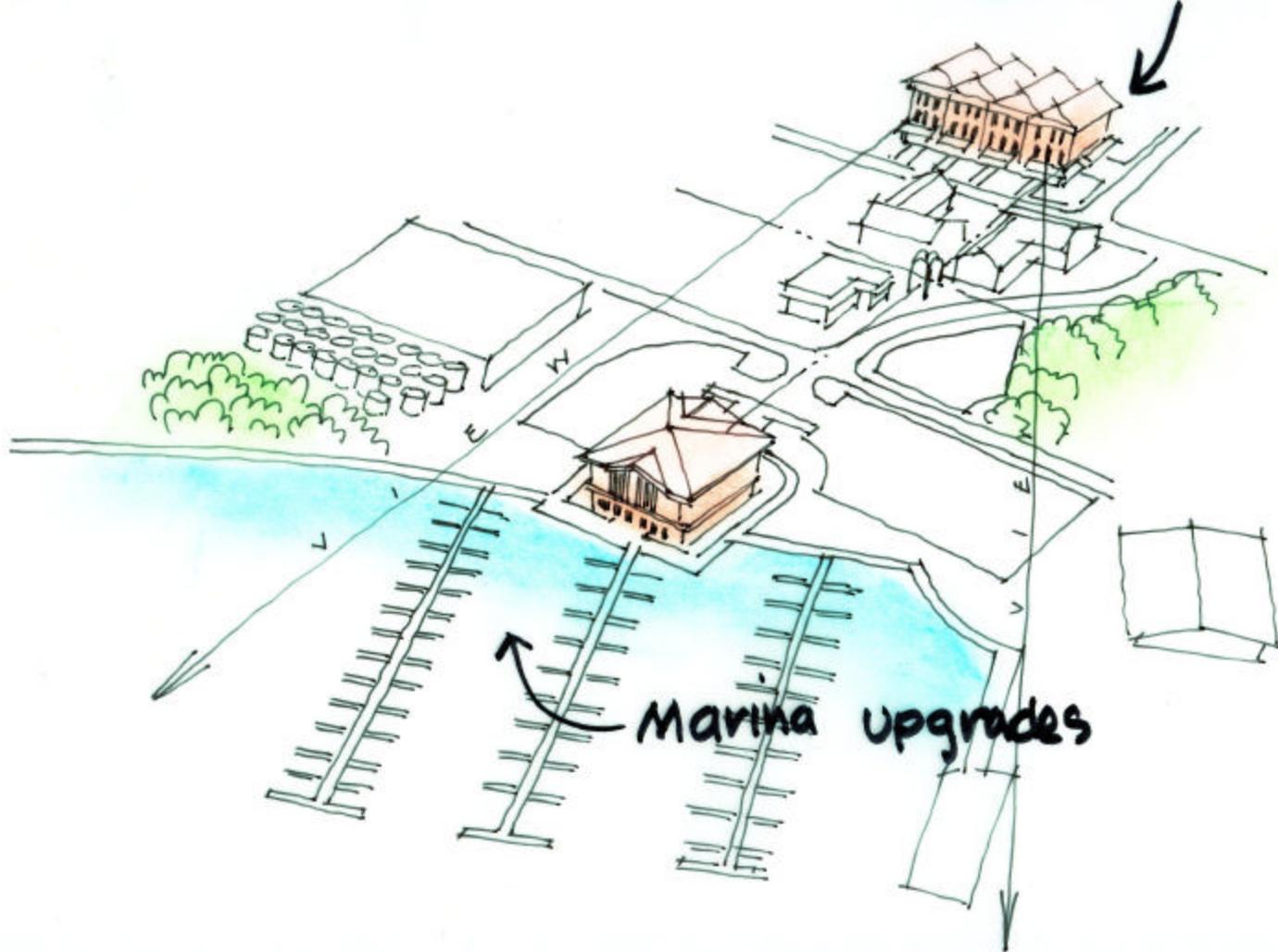
Facade Upgrades and Beautification

A

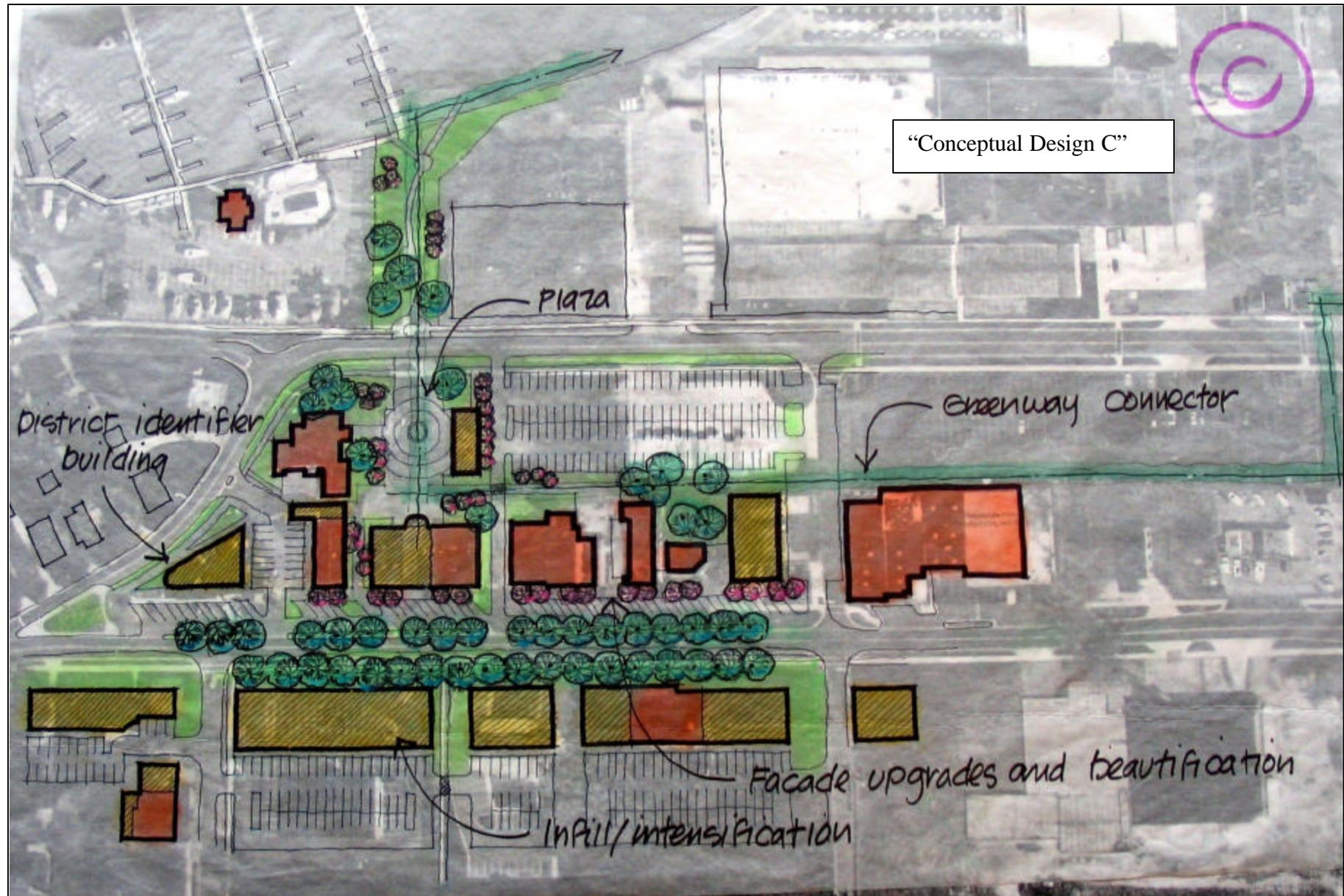




Residential infill with  
views to water



Marina upgrades



“Conceptual Design C”



Plaza

District identifier building

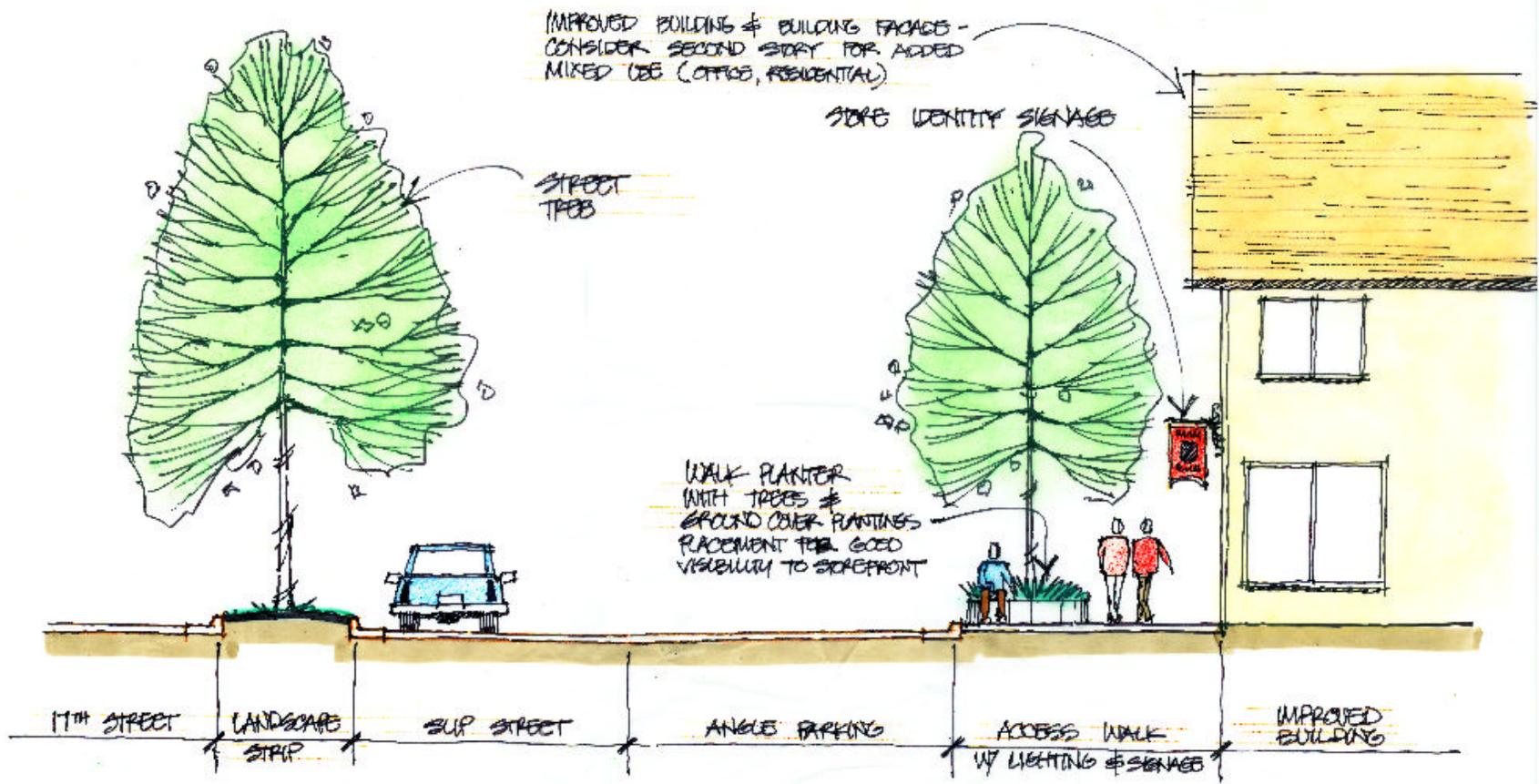
Amenity connector

Facade upgrades and beautification

Infill/intensification







## *Next Steps*

- Distribute Workshop Materials
- Reconvene “Stakeholders”
  - Organization: Define a Steering Committee
  - Mission Statement and Identity
  - Vision Clarification
  - Projects:       Immediate  
                      Long Term
  - Collaborations/Alliances
- Planning Grant
- Cool Cities Grant 2005

## **Participants (to-date...)**

Amy Alderink, Holland City Planning Commission  
Nicki Arendshorst, Holland City Planning Commission  
Ed Balint, H. J. Heinz  
Jaime Brown, The Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio  
John Burdick, Holland Sentinel  
Bob Byars, King's Cove  
Shannon Chaoa, H. J. Heinz  
Jim Eppink, J Eppink Partners, Inc.  
Patty Seiter Fitzpatrick, City of Holland  
Caleb Garcia, Gina's Beauty Salon  
Carl Heideman  
Lara Helmus, Jubilee Ministries  
Chet Hill, The Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio  
Greg Holcombe, Riverview Group  
Maggie Hollis, Maggie's Ribs  
R. L. Hollis, Maggie's Ribs and Hollis Car Care  
Pat Johns  
Mark Johnson, The Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio  
Jerome Kobes, Holland City Council  
Darlene Kolean, Jungblut Chiropractic Clinic  
David Kool, Jubilee Ministries  
Barry McAlpine,  
Phil Meyer, City of Holland  
Tina Perry, City of Holland  
Jay Peters, Holland City Planning Commission  
Alonzo Salinas, Margarita's Mexican Restaurant  
Gina Solano, Gina's Beauty Salon  
Carol Stewart, Waycup

Dean and Norma Van De Brake  
Mark VanderPloeg, City of Holland  
Ken Van Tuinen, West Michigan Uniform, Inc.  
Dave Altena, Repco Light  
Craig Smith, DDS.