



About

Civic Lab Year 2

Civic Lab is an accelerator that helps cities, towns, and counties solve local problems. A project of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, Civic Lab works with teams from around the region to design and launch pilot projects that address regional challenges through action at the local level. In 2019, 12 teams from four counties are tackling the complex problems around bringing life back to tired commercial corridors and main streets.

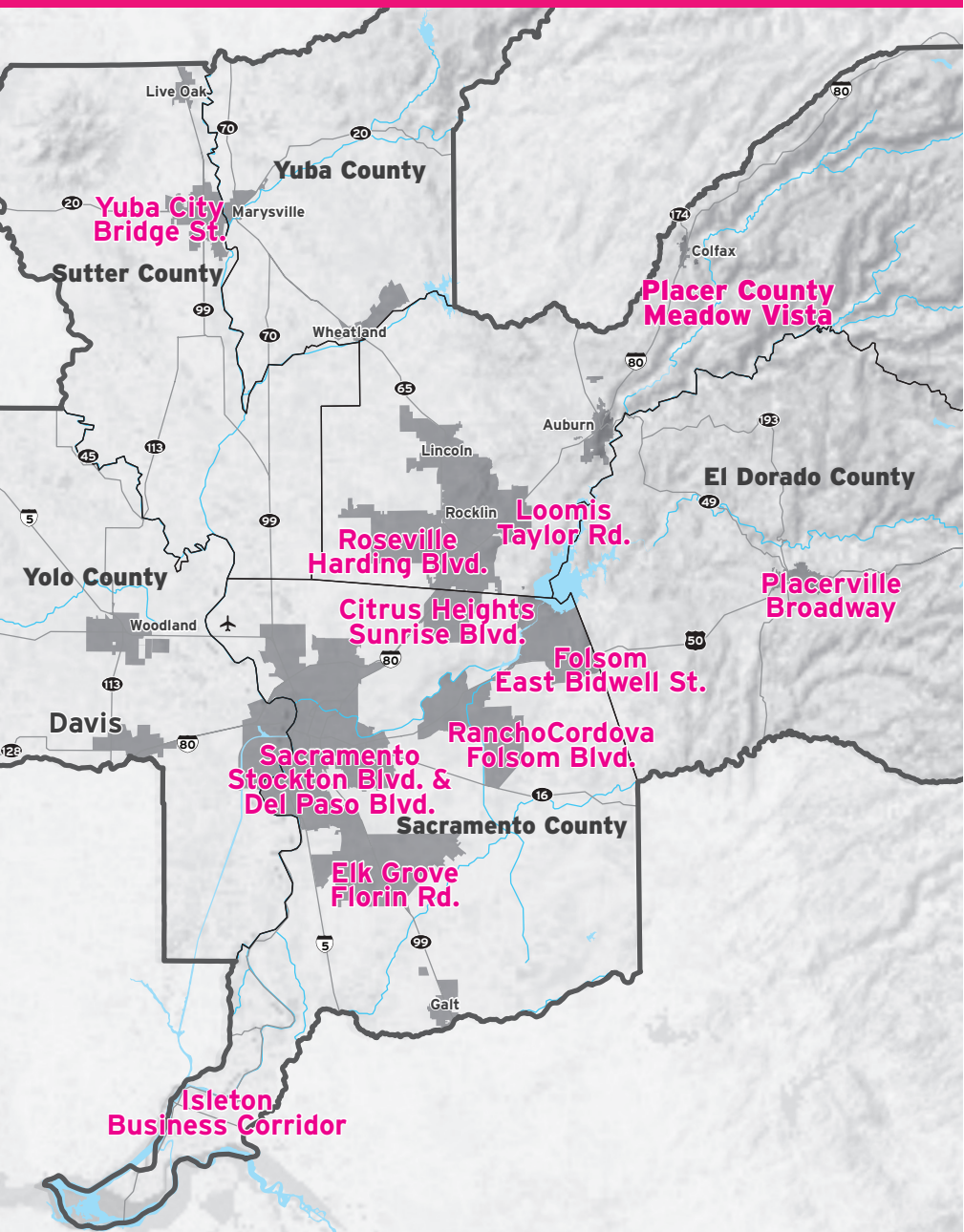
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Projects Map



Bridge Street

About the Corridor

The Bridge Street Corridor is a vital arterial for the public to traverse efficiently from Highway 99 to the newly improved 5th Street Bridge providing access to Marysville and beyond. There are a wide variety of retail services, eateries, and residential types that combine to create a unique neighborhood.

Challenges

The City is trying to improve mobility through one of the City's main thoroughfares and to accommodate the increased traffic volume when the new 5th St Bridge is finished. The City is working to enhance the aesthetic character of the corridor, while improving multi-modal transit options that will incentivize infill project development along the corridor.

Corridor Readiness

- Frontage improvements
- Utility readiness
- Reduced impact fees (at least 50% less)
- Site plan pre-developed by City of Yuba City

Vision

A vibrant multi-modal corridor providing amenities and infrastructure that will attract economic development while maintaining the scale and long established residential neighborhoods.

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Yuba City

Broadway

About the Corridor

Broadway is one of the three major business districts in Placerville. Dotted with strip centers, the local community enjoys available parking with a mix of local and national retailers and services. Located on Highway 50, Broadway also has easy highway access and visibility. Having been developed during the 1950's and 1960's, the corridor hasn't changed much in 50 years and commercial properties reflect a mode of commerce that is outdated and auto-centric.

With current City investments (sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit stops) and with its proximity to the El Dorado Trail which connects to downtown Placerville, the Broadway corridor is already a walkable community. What it desperately needs is for its properties to be refreshed and made relevant, expanding housing and live/work options to create a new vibrancy that will attract new consumers and viable, quality tenants.

Challenges

Underutilized commercial and residential properties on Broadway in Placerville fail to maximize either their retail potential or provide relevant housing options within our commercial core where downtown Placerville is thriving. Property owners are not technically or financially poised to deal with the changing retail and housing landscape, and the City of Placerville doesn't have the resources or incentives in place to facilitate a transition to a higher and better use.

Corridor Readiness

Broadway is positioned for success, and these measures have been taken so far:

Multi-Modal Plan being implemented with corridor improvements planned for 2019:

City of Placerville

1. Sidewalks will be improved
2. Broadway repaved
3. Bike lanes and crosswalks installed
4. Transit stops were improved

Civic Lab Progress on Broadway:

1. Surveyed property owners
2. Met with property owners
3. Met with local architect
4. Have identified 3-4 owners willing to look at new possibilities

Vision

Transform an outdated, auto-dependent commercial strip corridor into a vibrant, walkable community that encompasses creative live/work options in an enhanced sense of place.

Potential Projects

- Professional services to develop a feasibility study for specific underutilized sites
- Financial analysis of improvements including identification of financial tools and lending options
- ROI analysis
- Conceptual drawings for targeted properties to help owners envision possibilities
- Creation of a cohesive streetscape plan for the corridor

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Del Paso Boulevard

About the Corridor

The Del Paso Boulevard corridor was once the thriving commercial downtown of the City of North Sacramento. The Boulevard was part of the Lincoln highway, the main highway connecting San Francisco and Sacramento with Auburn, Reno and the East. Del Paso Boulevard's decline began in 1947 with the opening of Highway 160, which allowed traffic to bypass North Sacramento. What followed was the annexation of North Sacramento by the City of Sacramento, massive business closures, and decades of decline, lack of development, and infrastructure investments, and neglect.

Challenges

The Boulevard suffers from an ecosystem that has grown stagnant. A perceived lack of safety and no cohesive plan or vision has led to an historic lack of investment from businesses that rely on foot traffic and apathy in the community. The corridor also faces a chicken-or-egg scenario of needing foot traffic for businesses while not having enough businesses that cater to foot traffic. Infill projects will bring fresh and unbiased sets of eyes and spirits to the corridor, catalyzing revitalization and rebuilding a healthy economic ecosystem.

Corridor Readiness

The Boulevard has benefited from multiple recent and current projects that make it ripe for new development and pilot projects. In 2013, streetscape improvements were completed that included new curb and gutter, sidewalk, street lighting, and landscaping improvements, increasing safety and adding additional aesthetic benefits. In addition to these recent improvements, multiple affordable and market rate housing developments have been proposed or approved along the Boulevard or adjacent Arden Way. Improvements and new developments aside, the corridor boasts three light rail stations within a one-mile radius that lead directly to Sacramento's bustling downtown.

City of Sacramento

Vision

The Vision for Del Paso Boulevard is to be a walkable, safe corridor with strong businesses catering to both local neighborhoods and out-of-area consumers. The Boulevard will be a place where people live and work, with easy access to transit, bicycle paths, and other low-GHG transportation options. The community will establish and maintain a sense of place and economic diversity built upon the history of the Boulevard. Both ownership and rental housing options will be affordable to all socio-economic groups.

Potential Projects

- Tiny Home community on a vacant site
- A storefront activation and façade improvement program paired with local business training and incentives
- Game night event and bus or rail transportation to Golden 1 Center
- Coffee kiosk at the vacant triangle lot on 1500 Del Paso Boulevard
- Temporary pilot bike lane/bike route improvements paired with a festival

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East Bidwell Street

About the Corridor

The East Bidwell Street Corridor is a value-based shopping district located within an older commercial area within the central portion of the City. The Corridor includes a number of big box stores situated on larger parcels within integrated shopping centers in the southern portion of the study area intermixed with small mom and pop businesses on smaller lots in the northern portion of the study area. The Corridor is fairly dated in appearance and is lacking in adequate transportation infrastructure to encourage transit, bicycling, and walking trips.

Challenges

The primary challenge facing the East Bidwell Street Corridor is the underutilization of developed and vacant properties. Other challenges facing the Corridor include a lack of identity, a dated physical appearance, lack of adequate infrastructure associated with public transportation, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian connectivity.

Corridor Readiness

The City has recently updated the General Plan and created a mixed-use overlay district for the East Bidwell Street Corridor. The City is in the process of a Zoning Code Update that will provide for development of mixed-use, live-work, and residential development within the Corridor. The City has finished a Complete Streets study for the corridor which identified transportation, bicycle and pedestrian, and landscape improvement opportunities for the Corridor.

Vision

To enhance the economic vitality and physical appearance of the Corridor by identifying and vetting two or three parcels within the

City of Folsom

study area that are best suited for mixed-use, live-work, and/or residential development.

Potential Projects

- Land use market analysis to evaluate the feasibility of this type of development within the Corridor
- Review of development standards or establishment of modified infill standards
- Conceptual illustrations or visual simulations showing how the Corridor could be transformed over time to include mixed-use, live-work or residential development.

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Elk Grove Florin Road

About the Corridor

The Elk Grove Florin Road corridor is approximately one mile long and runs perpendicular to Elk Grove Boulevard, the main road through the City. Existing uses along the corridor include churches, restaurants, auto repair, schools, and offices.

Challenges

The corridor is tired and doesn't have a unifying character or story and does not have a long-term plan. It was developed as a traditional suburban retail strip corridor in the 1960s.

Corridor Readiness

The City incorporated in 2000. The corridor has never been studied by the City. Some initial conversations occurred with the community as part of the recent General Plan Update, but there was no tangible progress made.

Potential Projects

- Preparation of resident survey on ideal uses that people would frequent
- Property owner-survey – what does it take to invest in property and what would cause you to invest?
- Visual simulations for 2-3 locations along the corridor, informed by surveys, that identify a vision for the corridor

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City of Elk Grove

Folsom Boulevard

About the Corridor

Folsom Boulevard is the main East to West corridor through the City of Rancho Cordova. It is dominated by suburban retail and service businesses serving the northern neighborhoods of Rancho Cordova. Major businesses include WalMart, Safeway, Target and the Rancho Cordova branch of Folsom Lake College. The Boulevard has been recently upgraded and beautified by the City of Rancho Cordova to include landscaped medians, complete sidewalks, and on-street bike lanes. This corridor parallels the Regional Transit Gold Line light rail line and includes four light rail stations.

Challenges

Existing land uses, consisting of outdated strip centers, over parked big boxes, and automobile-oriented businesses, do not invite a walkable, activated atmosphere on Folsom Boulevard. Land values and market conditions do not support the long-term vision both for residential and commercial development and limited parcel sizes, fragmented ownership and lack of property owner vision/ambitions are limiting active development.

Corridor Readiness

The City of Rancho Cordova has taken a number of steps to prepare for and encourage the types of development we envision. The City has purchased several sites along the boulevard, including two one-acre parcels and one ten-acre parcel, and has adopted a specific plan for the corridor that offers considerable flexibility for a variety of project types.

Vision

Our vision is to create authentic placemaking that will transform Folsom Boulevard into a vibrant commercial corridor.

City of Rancho Cordova

Potential Projects

- Placemaking that will transform Folsom Boulevard into a vibrant urban and commercial corridor
- Construct housing opportunity on a 1-acre parcel
- Pop-up activity center in the Mills Station shopping center – entertainment/ public activity/art focused that does not create competition to existing businesses)
- Branded theme for the City and Folsom Boulevard
- Analysis of City fee reductions for infill development and work with Regional San (sewer) and County Zone 40 (water) and other service providers to negotiate reduced infill fees.
- Review development standards and establish either modified infill standards or a process to apply reduced standards to pilot projects.

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Harding Boulevard

About the Corridor

Harding Boulevard is a four lane arterial that runs approximately 1/4 of a mile and is centrally located with in Roseville, near the retail hub of the City. The corridor is developed with a mix of uses including commercial, housing, retail and offices.

Challenges

The corridor is not located within a specific plan area and does not have prescribed standards to help direct future development activity. In addition, the corridor suffers from unengaged residents and property owners, limited incentives to encourage reinvestment in the corridor and declining infrastructure.

Corridor Readiness

The corridor is primed for development opportunities based on infrastructure and capacity availability.

Vision

Tap into the heritage and local history while also creating an area the is uniquely authentic providing cultural opportunities unavailable in other parts of the city.

Potential Projects

- Establish a specific plan, area design guidelines, or a development strategy for the corridor
- Promote development options for live/work or multi-use housing projects
- Create a vibrant corridor with mixed-use opportunities that provides affordable housing.
- Focus on redevelopment efforts through public/private partnerships.

City of Roseville

- Redevelop a vacant building by creating a co-op working design/studio space that is unique to the region and will bring people to the area.
- Create opportunities for regional events and entertainment

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Historic Business District

About the Corridor

Conveying a strong sense of time and place, this federally sanctioned historic district reflects a period in Delta history when Asian-American commercial districts played a vital role along the riverboat. The story of Isleton's Main Street Commercial Corridor is one of ongoing rebirth and renewal. Most of the buildings standing now were built after a devastating fire razed most of old Main Street in 1926. The town was rebuilt in a distinctive mid-century architectural style. This period marked a boom time for Main Street businesses where the corridor was at its most vibrant. When the local canneries that formed the backbone of Isleton's economy closed down in the 50s and 60s, the City saw a steady decline in population and commercial activity which lasted until the end of the century.

During this time however, the City re-orientated itself to take advantage of the natural beauty of its surroundings and catered to a tourist economy. Large events like the Crawdad Festival drew hundreds of thousands of visitors to Main Street. A renewed sense of vibrancy and community activity hit another roadblock when the City faced the vicissitudes of the 2008 recession. Today, Isleton is rebuilding itself. New entrepreneurs are moving to town and standing side by side with long-standing residents and business owners. The acquisition of neglected properties by a wave of new stakeholders means new restaurants, a buzz-worthy bar, curio stores, art studios, cannabis dispensaries, and a premium day spa are helping to reinvigorate our historic corridor.

Challenges

Isleton is working to draw visitors into the California Delta by offering its unique historical and environmental setting and further establishing its culture and community while creating a recreational destination worth the day trip. The historic nature of the corridor means many of the buildings need a lot of love, façade improvements and renovations that prove to be financial barriers to

City of Isleton

new investors. Vacant storefronts and absentee ownership has led to portions of Main Street looking tired and in need of reactivation—Main Street needs to look like an attractive investment to accelerate infill of these properties. Sidewalks and streets need repair, and the corridor could use more pedestrian amenities like trees, benches, and other landscaping to improve visitor experience.

Corridor Readiness

Isleton is implementing its downtown improvement program; the city has recently submitted its packet to become a “Certified Local Government” in which a portion of National Park Service revenues can be used for historic preservation. The city parking lot is being renovated and may include charging stations for electric vehicles. The City is also forging transit links with its nearby urban centers—Sacramento and the Bay Area. A number of new businesses are moving into town and actively renovating buildings within the historic district.

A number of family oriented venues and festivals are scheduled. City staff and Main Street stakeholders are looking at “tactical urbanism” strategies to transform spots of Main Street into interactive parklets.

Potential Projects

Isleton continues to develop a downtown improvement program which includes corridor visualization, beautification, sidewalk activation and retail pop-up to include the following ideas:

- Sidewalk and crosswalk repair
- Street Trees Program
- Phase I Façade Improvements Program with Phase II developing a means to incentivize occupancy of vacant storefronts.
- Highway Signage

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Meadow Vista

About the Corridor

Meadow Vista is a hidden gem off the I-80 corridor. Originally developed in the 1950s and '60s with second homes for hunters and fisherman looking for respite from summer heat, it began developing with residential subdivisions and schools in the 1980s and '90s. Small parcel maps (division of four or fewer properties) carved the landscape into the bedroom community that it is today. The corridor is vibrant and enlivened with people such as families at soccer games on the weekends, outdoor enthusiasts on road bikes, hiking trails, or riding horses (yes, through town!), and volunteer efforts for events like Pioneer Days annual parade, family movie nights, trick-or-treating among the business community, and holiday celebrations.

Challenges

The community speaks out about no safe places for pedestrians and bikes; library services have been cut; and there are land use limitations based on septic capacity.

Corridor Readiness

Locals have formed a Safety and Beautification Committee and county staff have held several workshops over two years with the Municipal Advisory Committee, mainly pertaining to safety-related infrastructure improvements. The Community Plan was amended in 2018 to support pedestrian and bike-friendly street design and design work on streetscape improvements is currently underway. These improvements include measures such as bulb-outs, sidewalks, bike lanes, enhanced crosswalks, and a gateway feature to introduce users to the entryway to Meadow Vista's unique town center.

Placer County

Vision

To enhance existing businesses and promote new sustainable businesses that serve the local community while retaining rural character. To make it possible to experience the corridor on foot or bike and to enhance gathering and community spaces.

Potential Projects

- Enhance the sense of place for Meadow Vista through small, unique, and consistent features along Placer Hills Road that would bring uniformity to the town's image (i.e. flower beds, flags, local artwork, wayfinding signage, etc.) and generate a unifying brand for the community.
- Host a pop-up business resource event that would bring experts in small business development to Meadow Vista for a few days. The experts would work one-on-one with the existing and potential future business owners to address their challenges and implement solutions.
- Begin to identify complementary and desirable land uses, with consideration for septic capacity, rural character, and scale.
- Create a toolkit of strategies to enhance rural commercial corridors throughout Placer County (Meadow Vista, Foresthill, Newcastle, Penryn, Alta, Sheridan).

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Stockton Boulevard

About the Corridor

A once vibrant and booming highway connecting the City of Sacramento to the City of Stockton is now a struggling, aging commercial corridor. The lack of investment over several decades contributed to the underutilized vacant lots and dilapidated buildings, all of which contribute to the overall blight and criminal activity.

Even with recent interest and investment, the core of our commercial corridor, located along Stockton Blvd between Lawrence Drive and Fruitridge Road, is still in need of infill projects to develop the 11 acres of vacant land.

Challenges

The Stockton Blvd study area between 22nd Avenue and Fruitridge Road currently consists of vacant and underutilized blighted properties. The area lacks a sense of safety and connectivity with surrounding residential neighborhoods, including Mark Twain Elementary and West Campus High School. The built environment was created to move vehicular traffic quickly and does not sufficiently consider a mobility experience other than by car.

In 2009, the Urban Land Institute completed a study of Stockton Boulevard and two reports have been generated on the former San Juan Motel Opportunity Site.

Corridor Readiness

In 2019, the City of Sacramento Public Works Department is initiating the Stockton Boulevard Complete Streets Plan (4-mile stretch of Stockton Boulevard from Alhambra Blvd to 47th Ave) and Sacramento Regional Transit is initiating the Bus Route 51 Study and will consider the feasibility of bus rapid transit.

City of Sacramento

Vision

The area between Lawrence Drive and Fruitridge Road will be a connected, vibrant, activated, and safe complete neighborhood for residents, families, businesses and shoppers, and visitors.

The existing retail establishments will be connected to the surrounding residential areas and neighborhood schools via walkable and bikeable paths that are safe, vibrant, and well lit at night. The increased connectivity and vibrancy will encourage the development of infill housing and other positive private investment to create an enhanced sense of place.

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Sunrise MarketPlace

About the Corridor

Sunrise MarketPlace (SMP) is centrally located in the heart of Citrus Heights along Sunrise Blvd. and Greenback Lane and includes Sunrise Mall. The challenge is to identify and implement opportunities to spur this corridor into a thriving, vital destination. This area was *the* place to be in the 70s and 80s, teeming with activity during the day and a vibrant nightlife. To this day, there are strong regional collective memories rooted in the Sunrise MarketPlace. Today, the corridor is feeling its age. While its looks in some ways reflect the ravages of time, the corridor also reveals a number of private and public investments at work to transform the area into a premier destination. We have a vision of accentuating the corridor's solid roots in the region and capitalizing of the array of opportunities to inspire transformation.

Challenges

The corridor's public infrastructure in the medians is in need of a major face lift. We have many vacant office and building spaces ripe for innovative new uses to come in and inject energy and excitement into the corridor. The corridor is difficult to navigate as a pedestrian/bicyclist or transit rider due to the lack of pedestrian friendly sidewalks and bike lanes on the public streets as well as within the commercial spaces. We have a 100 acre mall site, with a dis-invested ownership, businesses within that are struggling and high vacancy rates.

Corridor Readiness

This corridor is ready for some innovative, disruptive attention. We have a strong Property Based Improvement District (PBID) celebrating 20 years this year. The PBID regularly does strategic planning and visioning and are committed to support fresh, new ways to spur economic revitalization of the corridor. Multiple businesses, property managers and property owners are active in the PBID and are ready to partner with Civic Lab to test out some

City of Citrus Heights

pilot projects in the Sunrise MarketPlace. The ownership and rental housing options will be affordable to all socio-economic groups.

Vision

The SMP Board have expressed their commitment to incorporating graphic design into the built environment in the form of striking gateway features and other signage, recognizing the need for a consistent visual appeal throughout the District. The city and the PBID envision the transformation of the corridor through the use of the public infrastructure, such as the creation of a median nightscape with LED lighting of the palm trees. The team also envisions creative new uses for opportunity sites within the SMP, such as vacant parcels and units within the various commercial centers and parcels along the corridor. We see this corridor as a place with a unique regional nostalgia that can be leveraged to bring public interest back to this corridor and can be built upon to forge new relationships with current and future generations.

Contact

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Taylor Road

About the Corridor

The Town of Loomis Downtown Commercial Corridor includes all of Taylor Road (north to south within the Town limits), the area east and west of Sierra College Boulevard, and the commercial area west of I80, along Horseshoe Bar Road to its connection with Taylor Road. The corridor has a new vibrancy with updated streetscape, several businesses that are coming up, and forward thinking leadership. The Town has made a number of recent changes to relax ordinances to spur businesses.

Challenges

There is a lack of a cohesive plan to revitalize downtown while maintaining existing charm and historical roots.

Corridor Readiness

The corridor has several well established, popular destinations and the Town has recently improved the roadway with a complete street makeover including streetscaping. Additionally, the Town sponsored the Facade Improvement Program to provide business/property owners funds that have been well utilized.

Vision

To continue outreach programs with business owners, property owners, and the community that will lead into a full economic development Master Plan, which will include specific policy changes to accelerate economic development including:

- Outreach to residents on housing needs
- Businesses to ask how we can help
- Working with other jurisdictions that are our choke points
- Identify assistance for property/business owners
- Workshops with the community, town council and planning commission of housing

Town of Loomis

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Notes

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