EATON
Community Revitalization Partnership
Team Visit

August 29 and 30, 2005

Team Members:
Mark Hoskin, Mark Hoskin Architects, Denver
Bob Matatall, Artisan Community Design, Denver
Chip Steiner, Fort Collins Downtown Development Authority
Barbara Silverman, CCRA, Denver
Thank you, for welcoming the CRP Team so graciously to Eaton!

The Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and Colorado Community Revitalization Association (CCRA) have teamed up to provide one to two day downtown revitalization assistance visits to non-Main Street communities under 20,000 population. The CRP goal is to enable towns to “break through” a troublesome issue or question thereby moving forward with their downtown revitalization.

The CRP team’s mission in Eaton is to focus its recommendations design suggestions and supporting material for façade renovations that Eaton can use in developing design guidelines to be used in establishing an overall plan for renovation of downtown.

The value of downtown revitalization – Why Do It? Your downtown is the living room and heart and soul of Eaton. It illustrates the pride of the community. Downtown represents millions of dollars of infrastructure and private investment. Improving the physical characteristics and beautifying downtown Eaton will create a sense of momentum to carry Eaton into the future by:

- Attracting new investment
- Attracting more consumers
- Increasing the self-esteem of Eaton as a community.
- Demonstrating local government’s commitment to the future of downtown.
- Integrating “old town Eaton” with the new commercial and housing developments.

Who is interested in the health and well being of downtown Eaton? Identifying your stakeholders (all who care about the future of your downtown) and involving them in planning Downtown’s future is vital.

- Residents
- Business and property owners
- Town Staff and elected officials
- The Eaton Area Historical Society
- Chamber of Commerce
- Churches and other non-profits
- Schools
Existing Conditions
There are several blocks of the existing downtown that are traditional commercial properties in relatively good condition. These existing properties form the basis for numerous opportunities for continuing the progress being made in the downtown for a cohesive pedestrian friendly environment. The downtown includes several blocks of residential style structures such as the museum and massage school above that will take a different tact to connect to the downtown.

FAÇADE PROGRAM
What Eaton has in place:
- Political will and Property Owner Interest
- Funding Partnership - 1/3 each
  - Lender/owner --- Town funds --- DOLA
What Eaton needs to consider:

- What projects to fund?
  - All?
  - Historic properties only?
    - Where are the historic properties/historic district?
  - Priority buildings?
    - Historic buildings first?
    - Key locations first?
    - First come, first served?
- Where are the historic properties/historic district?
  - Priority buildings?
    - Historic buildings first?
    - Key locations first?
    - First come, first served?
- Fronts? Sides? Rear? Signs?
- What design?
  - Historically accurate?
  - Historically sympathetic?
  - Does not matter?
- Who decides?
  - Planning commission?
  - Town Council?
  - Eaton Area Historic Society?
  - All of the above?
    - Appeal process
- Who designs? Who budgets?

Before money is spent!

- Identify historic or downtown district to determine eligible properties.
- Develop design guidelines
  - Helps determine which projects are funded.
- Establish basic groundrules: application process and what qualifies for funding (side, rear, façade, signage)
- Clarify decision-making process.

HISTORIC

- Conduct a historic survey/inventory (State Historical Fund may provide a grant to do this)
- Designate historic district (local at least; state and national if possible)
- Develop design guidelines.
- Develop, flesh out historic walking, biking tours. A good resource is the National Association for Interpretation, headquartered in Fort Collins.
- Use the Historic Eaton Walking Tour booklet to create interpretive signs in front of historic sites. Historic designation allows for additional funding, specifically State Historic Fund grants.
HOSPITALITY
- **Rest area on east side of 85 at Railway Park.** The idea here is to get through traffic to stop. Rest area should include map of downtown, list of shops, services, restaurants.
- **Recruit Hotel/B&B**—hotel on 85, B&Bs internal to the historic district
- **Restaurants**—recruit locally or regionally owned/operated restaurants/coffee shops into downtown. Restaurants can have regional draw as evidenced by the French restaurant in Berthoud and Bruce’s Bar in Severance.

INFRASTRUCTURE
- **Underground** as many utilities as possible when opening streets for new water or other infrastructure work. Eventually underground electric in alleys and use them as a pedestrian network.
- **Widen** sidewalks/narrow curb-to-curb ROW (wider sidewalks accommodate patio dining. Narrower ROW slows traffic.
  - **Provides opportunity for outdoor patio dining**—brings visible street activity to passersby
- **Diagonal parking** on Collins and Elm.
- **Medians** on Collins at intersections of Elm and Maple

URBAN DESIGN/LAND USE
**Stress authenticity in everything you do. Understand and interpret history, culture, unique character of Eaton for residents and visitors. Do not have a “theme” other than authentic and genuine!**
- Murals, trompe d’oeil on blank walls
- Windows, entries on sides of buildings and maybe in alleys
- **Move** Town Square to detention pond with community feature in the center.
- **Relocate** Chamber/Visitor Center to middle of block between Elm and Maple on Collins
- Include bike racks and dog “parking” stations as streetscape elements.
- **Anchors:** grocery store, restaurants, entertainment venues, specialty shops
- **Community Market**—start ASAP
  - Talk with extension agent
  - Talk with state-wide farmer’s market organization (contact Jane Jenkins, 303-449-3774 Dir. of Boulder DT Business Improvement District)
- **Keep elementary school downtown.**
- Recommend town board of trustees adopt a “Downtown First” policy requiring the Town to look at downtown first before moving/relocating civic offices to new locations. Consider public facilities are downtown anchors, and employees are customers of restaurants and other businesses.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Auction** as a generator for weekend business—capitalize on 500 people every Sunday
- Capitalize on other downtown anchors: Mark’s grocery, Banks, Good Day Pharmacy, Town Hall, Schools, Museum, Library.
- **Enterprise Zone** incentives to attract jobs (much importance placed on ag-related businesses)
- Develop renovation incentives (including other resources, e.g State Historical Fund)
- **Economic Restructure Program**—Prepare to assist local businesses restructure/ relocate/expand as larger retailers come to Eaton. Develop a program to assist existing downtown businesses when/if threatened by suburban competition (e.g Mark’s Supermarket). This may be nothing more than identifying resources or it may involve some kind of financial assistance.
- **Financial programs**—explore use of downtown development authority, urban renewal authority, business improvement district, general improvement district, special improvement district or devise the town’s own program using a portion of reserves or a special assessment to fund it. Pros and cons of each should be weighed carefully and the political nature understood and carefully considered. For more information on special districts and authorities, use CCRA as a resource for further consultation.
- Once the details of the façade program are in place, implement façade incentive program.

DOWNTOWN DATA

- Gather data:
  - **Inventory** all businesses in downtown area of Eaton. Include type of business, products, square footage, lease rates, number of employees.
  - The above information can be used as basis to create a business listing and map (which might also show civic locations) to be distributed to every location you can think of! Many towns put this information in the form of a placemat which can be used in restaurants.
- **Assess** other communities with similar demographics and relationships to larger surrounding cities to assess types of viable retail, service, and residential products
- Conduct a GAP ANALYSIS which shows what types of businesses are good opportunities for downtown Eaton. Contact Chip Steiner, 970-484-2020, for information about firms that do gap analyses.

SIGNAGE

- **Signage, signage** with arrows: “<<<Historic District,” “<<<downtown,” “<<<parking,” “<<<shops, parking,” “<<<museum,” “<<<Visitor Center,” “<<<Chamber of Commerce,” etc.
  - On 85 at First Street, north and southbound
  - On Collins at Elm and Maple, east and westbound
Develop and implement a signage program that clearly identifies and provides direction to public parking facilities in the downtown area as part of an overall “way-finding” signage program for the downtown area. There is an entire array of signage that should be investigated by the town including:

1. “Logo” and Tourist-Oriented Destination Signage and local way-finding for Highway 85, Collins Street and local streets.
2. Gateway signage that identifies your entry into the downtown,
3. Directional signage to civic buildings and parking areas,
4. Interpretive signage for local points of interest and history.

Nolte Associates has developed a book entitled “When a Highway Runs Through Downtown” filled with information about working with CDOT, gateway and way-finding signage, traffic calming strategies, and streetscape information. Contact Michael Hussey at Nolte Associates, 719-268-8500, Michael.hussey@nolte.com for a copy.

**PARKING**

As additional development occurs and parking becomes more of an issue these are some projects/activities that you might want to consider:

- Complete a parking management plan that realistically identifies parking needs, the current supply, and opportunities for additional parking inventory.
- Create and enforce parking time limits to encourage turnover of spaces.
- Provide incentives for business owners and employees to park in off-street parking areas. Examples of a wide variety of employee parking incentive programs and creative solutions are available through the National Main Street Center website: [www.mainstreet.org](http://www.mainstreet.org).
- Investigate shared parking opportunities.
- Utilize alleys behind buildings for rear entrances and parking opportunities.
- Make necessary improvements to the alley to create a mixed pedestrian/service environment, such as requiring dumpster and utility screening or enclosures.
THINGS TO DO

ACTIVITIES
Farmer’s Market
Historic House Tour
Events Around Sunday Auction

PROJECTS
Water Main
  Underground other utilities
Develop Town Square Concept
Relocate Chamber Building
Collins Street Improvements
  Medians
  Raised Crosswalks at Elm and Maple
  Diagonal Parking
Rest Area on East Side of 85 at Railway Park
Redesign supermarket orientation and parking lot (commercial and viewshed)
Signage at
  First and 85
  Collins and Elm
  Collins and Maple
Widen Sidewalks/narrow curb to curb ROW
  First, Second, Maple, Elm, Oak?
    Allows for patio dining
    Sidewalk sales
    Bike racks, Dog parking stations, benches
    Handicap ramps

PROCESSES
Conduct historic survey/inventory
Designate historic district
Develop design guidelines
Designate downtown business district
Conduct business inventory
Develop marketing program
Begin by creating map of downtown and list all businesses by category

Develop restructuring program
   To assist downtown businesses that need to relocate
   To assist downtown businesses effected by big box suburban development

Recruit Hotel and B&B’s and restaurants

Develop incentive program
   DDA, URA, BID, GID, SID
   Special internally structured program
   Enterprise Zone

Implement Façade program

Check out other communities of like size and regional relationships with bigger cities

Conduct a gap study
**Orientation Map**

Mapping the major landmarks, circulation routes and locations to each other helps inform the key relationships of elements under consideration. Some key observations included on this map include:

- The downtown is generally centrally located to all portions of the community. A specific downtown district is proposed that is a pedestrian priority zone that accommodates autos and deliveries but a priority is a walkable environment.
- A boundary for a potential historic district based on the original town platting is proposed.
- Highway 85 bisects the community on the east edge of downtown and needs to address the vehicle orientation of through traffic.
Collins Ave. is the main entry from the west and is not a state highway, so can be “calmed” to provide a gateway into downtown that slows traffic, providing a safer environment around the elementary school, but also begins to act as a zipper to connect the new neighborhood to the south with the existing to the north. Park Ave. has an additional 8’ of R.O.W. width affording an opportunity for a residential tree boulevard for the historic district and providing some traffic calming in front of the high school. A bike path or on street lane can be included connecting residents to City Park. Key intersections are highlighted for crosswalk improvements. Pavement treatments can be used for traffic calming through changes in surface texture. Locations for gateway entry signs/monuments are highlighted to denote transitions into the downtown. A list of elements to include in a street furniture design package was suggested.

Existing studies and proposals
Eaton is in a growth period and different from many small towns is looking less at how to encourage things to happen as figuring out how to steer the direction of development. The above three proposals, some conceptual some soon to be built illustrate that the town is moving in a very positive direction. The first diagram shows a proposed super market for the center of town only blocks away from downtown. The middle diagram shows one idea for a large town plaza, and the picture on the right shows that the new recreation center and police department is an infill design that respects the pedestrian nature of downtown by using standard commercial facade elements.

It is only because these opportunities are underway that it was possible for the CRP team to suggest ways to carry these ideas even further in reinforcing the downtown.
Observations
The several conceptual designs for the proposed town plaza put the location on Collins Ave. without making changes to Collins to fully connect the properties around the future super market and surrounding neighborhood. The CRP team felt the size of the new park property was quite large and while located close to the existing downtown was not doing enough to connect surrounding areas into the downtown. The above diagram suggests several measures to carry the town plaza idea further that include:
• Put a new town hall in the center of a civic park space on the north side Collins Ave. Utilize the existing visitor center (rehabbed church) by centering it in the newly purchased space to the north of Collins Ave. Replace the steeple element as a cupola to match that on the existing town hall.
• Utilize the existing drainage green on the south side of Collins as a more developed civic space. Include a performance space in the center that utilizes the sloped edges for seating.
• Add medians along Collins Ave. with trees except for the block that contains the park. Add parallel parking, for the park block and diagonal on others.
• Line the side wall of the supermarket adjacent to the green with pedestrian oriented retail to activate the space and create a sense of urban enclosure.
• Introduce additional vertical mixed use development on the north and east side of the park.
• Encourage more townhouse residential downtown.
Infill study
The property at the corner of 1st and highway 85 is a very important entry corner to the downtown when approaching from the north or south. This property is presently a very viable and successful business. A quick study was undertaken to show how a new building could be considered for this location that accommodates the present use for RV’s, be designed to better fit downtown commercial principles and be utilized later as a multistory mixed use building that converts RV service bays into storefronst with either offices, or residential.
Facade recommendations
A sketch of recommended changes to a typical storefront was produced for D.J.’s Flower Shop. Improvements included a new side window, a side facade sign and down lighting and removal of the wood covering the original front facade. The existing sign can be fit between the newly exposed architectural details and new down lighting over the sign for the front.

Last thoughts
Two final recommendations were to one, look at the above house located in the heart of downtown for use as a B&B as there are presently no accommodations in the downtown. Two is to look again at all possible options to save the sugar beat factory. The possibility of a new steel structure within the existing walls may provide structural options that allow for a completely modern facility within the historic facade. Once this is gone it can never be replaced and a similar cost new façade will not have the same quality of architectural character It represents the best remaining example of Eaton’s early history.
RESOURCES
(Information, Technical assistance, Funding)

American Institute of Architects (AIA), publications, architects, etc.
American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), Landscape Architecture magazine
Colorado Brownfields Association – Environmental assessments and grants
Colorado Community Revitalization Association (CCRA), technical assistance, Colorado Main Street program
Colorado Historical Society (historic surveys, preservation, tax credits, etc.)
Colorado Preservation Inc. (advocacy, state preservation awards, etc.)
Department of Local Affairs (technical assistance, Energy Impacts Assistance grants, Community Development Block grants, etc.)
Downtown Idea Exchange/Downtown Promotion Reporter publications
Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Trust Fund (parks, trails, recreation, open space grants)
US Department of Housing & Urban Development (Housing development, HUD Economic Development Initiative grants, etc.)
Historic Georgetown, Historic Boulder, Historic Denver, Inc. (organizational development for advocacy, building restoration projects)
International Downtown Association (IDA)
League of Historic American Theaters (successful preservation, adaptive re-use projects, national conferences & workshops)
Main Street 101 Training
Market Analysis (many good private consultants).
Downtown Market Analysis Toolbox (a Do-It-Yourself tool) www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/dma
National Main Street Center (National Town Meeting on Main Street-Baltimore; publications on Organization, Design, Promotions, & Economic Restructuring)
National Trust for Historic Preservation (small grants, Preservation magazine)
State Historical Fund (grants for surveys and historic preservation)
TEA-21 Enhancements (grants for trails, transportation corridors, adaptive re-use of bridges, rail corridors, etc.)
Traditional Building magazine
Urban Land Institute (ULI)
Small Business Development Center(s)
Eaton CRP Team Bios

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Bob Matatall, Artisan Community Design, worked as an urban designer for RNL Design and in the planning departments of Telluride, Breckenridge and Boulder. A certified planner, he also has provided architecture, urban design and planning services to numerous communities as a self-employed consultant. Bob taught historic preservation in the environmental design program at CU-Boulder.

Bob holds two graduate degrees from the University of Colorado at Denver, a master’s degree in architecture and a master’s degree in urban and regional planning, and has started work on a Ph. D. in design and planning. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree in fine arts from Northeastern University.

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Barbara Silverman is the executive director of Colorado Community Revitalization Association (CCRA). Established in 1982, CCRA is a nonprofit, membership organization dedicated to building better communities through cultural and historic preservation; economic vitality; sustainability; quality; and respect for community identity. CCRA works with downtown development authorities, urban renewal authorities, business improvement districts and other downtown organizations throughout the state and administers the Colorado Main Street program. Barbara has over 25 years experience in the nonprofit and public sectors creating and directing a wide variety of programs including downtown revitalization and Main Street programs, economic and community development, housing, and land conservation. Barbara worked with the Trust for Public Land in New York and Minnesota, and started TPL’s 12-state regional office in Minneapolis. In addition to Colorado, she has worked with state Main Street programs in Minnesota and New Mexico.