



Grand Junction

Addendum

to the Westfield Washington
Township Comprehensive Plan

April 2009

Executive Summary

Goal

Over the next 25 years, create a sustainable and compelling Downtown, the “Grand Junction,” that is the unequivocal centerplace of community life in Westfield and has significant regional appeal.

The Grand Junction is envisioned to be an integrated combination of uses and outdoor public spaces that physically express its core *brand promise*—that the Grand Junction is *a place where many kinds of connections are made*. These connections are:

- With family and friends.
- With the larger community.
- With nature.
- With great places to dine.
- With distinctive places to shop.
- With important regional trails and roadways.
- With Westfield’s historic legacy.

This Addendum is both feasible and flexible enough to adapt to marketplace conditions as they evolve. It should be noted, however, that while the assumptions are conservative, the challenges posed by current national, state and local financial and real estate markets cannot be underestimated. As plan implementation begins, it will be critically important to maintain experienced leadership and an advisory team in place to actively manage the process, maximize opportunities and adapt as necessary to the marketplace in a timely manner.

In addition, to the extent that the Grand Junction Master Plan conflicts with the recommendations in the downtown chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, the Grand Junction Master shall supersede the Comprehensive Plan.

Long-term Vision

Grand Junction Plaza

The crown jewel of the Grand Junction Addendum is a new civic plaza in the heart of downtown that captures the essence of the Grand Junction brand. As the focal point, central gathering space and compelling backdrop for important civic institutions, the Grand Junction Plaza provides a signature location for festivals and special events and, just as importantly, a place that brings the community together on a daily basis.

New Landmark-quality Civic Facilities

The Grand Junction Plaza provides a compelling backdrop for a new City Hall and a new Westfield Washington Library. These important civic facilities generate activity and strengthen downtown’s image and identity as the community centerplace.

Extended Trail System

Trails are another expression of the Grand Junction brand’s focus on enhanced connectivity. The Grand Junction has tremendous opportunities to create exceptional trail connectivity between the Monon Trail and the Midland Trace trail, and other local trails, businesses, civic institutions and residential neighborhoods.

Extended Street Network

In addition to new trails, improvements to the street network provide new ways to access and circulate within Downtown Westfield. These improvements include:

- A Poplar Street extension south that connects the proposed Lantern Commons commercial district to Main Street.
- A realigned and extended Jersey Street that provides a new east-west connection between Union Street and Cherry Street.
- An extension of Mill Street that adds a new connection between Main Street and Union Street.

Enhanced Stormwater Management Facilities

Open space along the Anna Kendall Creek provides prospective locations for regional stormwater management facilities that help enable desired patterns of development. These regional facilities have the potential to become attractive water features and recreational gathering places that epitomize the Grand Junction brand.

Signature Downtown Gateway Development

The four quadrants formed by the U.S. 31 and SR 32 interchange are highly visible downtown gateway locations. The quality of development at the interchange will have a significant impact on Downtown Westfield's overall image and identity. Larger scale, premium office buildings that feature landmark-quality architectural design are preferred at these locations. In particular, a signature hotel and conference center facility with strong physical and visual connections to the Grand Junction Plaza is highly preferred for the southeast quadrant of the intersection.

Sustainable Design and Development

Sustainable design and development best management practices provide opportunities to project the Grand Junction brand promise in a highly visible manner. Incorporating techniques such as permeable paving, green roofs and native landscapes will help ensure that the Grand Junction is an attractive and healthy destination that compels residents and visitors to return again and again.

Phases of Development and Returns on Investment

The Grand Junction Vision implementation will be a process of continuous, incremental improvement. All recommended improvements have been carefully vetted and prioritized to maximize the return on investment of public dollars, build investor confidence and create enthusiasm within the community for continued progress towards implementation.

Recommended improvements have been organized into three timeframes that are based on current marketplace conditions, the availability of public resources, and the degree to which related projects already underway can be leveraged.

Short-term Improvements

The first phase focuses on key infrastructure projects that will set the stage for private investment and future infrastructure improvements. These include:

- An enhanced Union Street streetscape
- Phase I of the Grand Junction Plaza
- Realignment of, and streetscape enhancements to, Jersey Street between Mill Street and Union Street
- Improvements to the parking lot south of Asa Bales Park that include a new trailhead
- A trail extension that links the Midland Trace trail to new residential development south of the trail

One of the most significant Grand Junction projects is the construction of a new Westfield Washington Public Library in the heart of downtown. The library will be a new civic landmark and signature expression of the Grand Junction brand—*a place where many kinds of connections are made*.

Support for private sector redevelopment is strongly recommended. High quality redevelopment in the area northwest of the Main Street / Union Street intersection will set the standard for significant private sector investments that are anticipated during the next phases of implementation. The same is true for new residential redevelopment that is expected to occur on both sides of Anna Kendall Creek southwest of the new Grand Junction Plaza.

A number of critical issues must be successfully addressed in the early stages of plan implementation to help ensure momentum is maintained. These include public policy, financing, land acquisition, communications, water resources and stormwater management.

Intermediate-term Improvements

This phase will be driven by a number of important infrastructure projects that will firmly establish the Grand Junction brand and its image and identity for decades to come. These include:

- Phase II of the Grand Junction Plaza
- A new City Hall on a site that helps to frame the Plaza similar to the Westfield Washington Library
- Main Street roadway improvements and streetscape enhancements
- Extensions of Mill and Jersey streets
- Extension of the Monon Trail along Anna Kendall Creek west to U.S. 31
- Streetscape enhancements to Jersey Street, Park Street, Mill Street and Poplar Street
- Significant new regional stormwater facilities west of Anna Kendall Creek
- New public parking facilities on the periphery of downtown

Improvements to U.S. 31 are also expected to be completed at this time. The SR 32 interchange is Downtown Westfield's most visible gateway and the place where many visitors will form their first impressions of the Grand Junction brand. The design of the SR 32 interchange bridge and roadway—and especially the landscaping treatments along the edge of the corridor north and south of the new interchange—are important expressions of the brand. It will be critically important to work with Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) to help ensure the roadway improvements align with and strengthen the image and identity to which the Grand Junction aspires.

The Grand Junction will also see significant private sector investments that define its brand promise. Among the most important are the redeveloped properties in the four quadrants of the U.S. 31 and SR 32 interchange. The southeast quadrant is an especially critical location. This site will feature a hotel and conference center of signature quality architectural design that provides a bookend to the Grand Junction Plaza and adjacent uses. In between and along the Main Street corridor, new mixed use development provides commercial space that meets the contemporary needs of the marketplace, destinations that leverage the Plaza to attract new visitors and pedestrian-friendly public spaces that support vibrant street-level activity. In addition, significant new residential and multi-use development south of Park Street will leverage regional stormwater facilities and trail amenities along Anna Kendall Creek as they come online.

Long-term Improvements

The infrastructure improvements in the previous phase set the stage for additional high-quality private market redevelopment that creates retail destinations and a variety of residential options. The focus will be the area south of Main Street and east of Union Street where a trail extension along Anna Kendall Creek provides an attractive new recreational amenity adjacent to one of the Grand Junction's most compelling natural features.

In addition, new residents and visitors will help support the anticipated full build out of the Westfield Washington Library and create demand for more parking provided by a new structure south of Asa Bales Park.

Conclusion

The City of Westfield has a remarkable opportunity to transform its downtown into an exciting and memorable center place; however, everything cannot and should not happen at once. Many of our country's most sustainable places—environmentally, economically, socially and culturally—were built and continuously improved over many years' time.

Patience, perseverance and good communications are needed to create and sustain a program of continuous, incremental improvement. Extraordinary efforts will be required to engage stakeholders and maintain project momentum over time. The spirit of respect and cooperation that such an endeavor requires should be embraced by all. The Grand Junction can itself be transformative and energize a community for generations to come.

Opportunity Analysis Summary

Planning Objectives

Establish the “Grand Junction” Brand

A brand, at its most basic, is a promise. A clearly articulated brand promise can help Westfield successfully compete for its share of business, talent, tourists, investors, respect, attention and other precious resources. Project stakeholders expressed their belief that the downtown brand should revolve around the concept of a “Grand Junction,” the place where the Monon Trail and the Midland Trace trail connect. The Grand Junction can also be defined as a place where many other kinds of connections— physical and social—are made. These include connections with family and friends, the larger community, nature, great places to dine, distinctive places to shop and important regional trails and roadways.

Showcase the Natural Environment

The environmental quality and natural features of the Grand Junction area will have a significant impact on its brand promise and image. Current research and trends indicate that emphasis on quality natural features helps to attract desirable uses and build investor confidence. New trails and outdoor recreational amenities mean that the Grand Junction will be continuously exposed to a large number of people throughout the year. These include prospective residents, investors and visitors, all whom have the potential to become enthusiastic supporters of, and salespersons for, the Grand Junction experience. It is critical that stakeholders establish a leadership position around the brand building value of Westfield’s key natural resources. Doing so will help to ensure that this aspect of Grand Junction’s basic brand promise is continuously validated and strengthened.

Create a Downtown that is Comfortable for People

A “pedestrian shed” is the distance that most people will walk to or between destinations. This is typically defined as a five to ten-minute walk, or a distance of one-quarter to one-half miles. A downtown core area of about 100 acres in and around the intersection of Main Street and Union Street meets this rule of thumb.

It is vitally important that key landmarks and uses within the downtown core area are maintained and strengthened, and that a desirable mix of new civic, commercial, residential and recreational destinations are added over time. In addition, the level of pedestrian activity on downtown streets will be a highly visible expression of a Grand Junction brand based on the theme of “many connections.” The needs of motorists and pedestrians must be carefully balanced to create comfortable walking environments that support the desired brand image of the Grand Junction.

Create a Mix of Engaging, Unique Destinations

We have concluded that, because of the proximity of significant existing and planned retail development in and around the City of Westfield, Downtown Westfield will not be a major retail destination. Rather, its success will revolve around a mix of specialty retail, dining, office, residential, institutional, cultural and recreational uses that are artfully and thoughtfully organized into a compelling place and experience that cannot be found in other areas.

Provide Exceptional User Hospitality

A key characteristic of successful mixed use centers is the ease with which they can be accessed and navigated by a variety of transportation modes. Although extensive trail connections are a key aspect of the Grand Junction’s brand, motorists must always be able to easily reach key destinations and park conveniently. For those who walk and ride bikes, the Grand Junction must be a safe, comfortable, attractive and highly enjoyable experience. For those without automobiles (youth, seniors, disabled), there must be provisions made for affordable and convenient public transport.

Maintain Financial Stability

Strategic public infrastructure investments within the Grand Junction will be needed to build investor confidence and stimulate significant private investment. The lack of predictability in the current market underscores the need for the Grand Junction Vision to balance implementation goals with the availability of capital resources.

Opportunities

Create a Signature Grand Junction Public Space in the Heart of Downtown Westfield

Westfield has a tremendous opportunity to create a compelling public space in the heart of the community that becomes the iconic expression of the Grand Junction brand. This public space, the Grand Junction Plaza, can take shape in the area southwest of the Main Street and Union Street intersection where the Anna Kendall Creek, the J.W. Thompson Creek, the Monon Trail and the Midland Trace trail converge.

The opportunity exists to leverage these natural resources and recreational amenities to create a destination that will not only draw visitors, but serve as a catalyst for private investment. What makes this opportunity unique is the convergence of not only the trails and natural features, but also heavy automobile traffic on Main Street and Union Street that can bring even larger numbers of users to the site.

Expedite Plans for an Extensive Local Trail System Linked to Regional Trails

The Monon Trail is one of the region's most popular and successful recreational amenities. That popularity can be reasonably assumed for its extension into Westfield and to other future trails. The City has positioned itself to capitalize on this trend for some time and has made extensive strides to create a network of trails within the community. An opportunity exists to expand the thinking about this trail system and start to adopt an attitude that Westfield is one of the state's premier destinations for trails and outdoor recreational activities.

Create a Street Network that Links the Grand Junction with Surrounding Neighborhoods, the rest of Westfield and the Region

In concert with an extensive trail system, the Grand Junction area can also have an exceptionally attractive street network that is easy to access and navigate. The mantra cannot be just "great trails" or "great roads." It must be both, and they must be designed with all potential users in mind.

Westfield's location at the frontier of Indianapolis' suburban expansion means pressure will increase to effectively address roadway congestion. The Grand Junction represents a magnificent opportunity to create the most extensive and attractive combination of streets and trails of any community within the region.

Plans to transform U.S. 31 into a limited-access interstate-style highway are already underway. Planned improvements to SR 32 are also in progress. These roadways are the Grand Junction's two most important vehicular gateways. Their high traffic volumes provide will significant levels of exposure for Grand Junction destinations and amenities. It is extremely important that planned roadway improvements align with and strengthen the Grand Junction's brand as a place where many kinds of connections can be made.

In addition to these larger roadways, a local network of "complete streets"—streets that accommodate all potential users and not just vehicles—can be constructed in a way that enhances Grand Junction connectivity and the marketplace awareness of the Grand Junction brand.

Incorporate a New Westfield Washington Library and a New City Hall into the Grand Junction

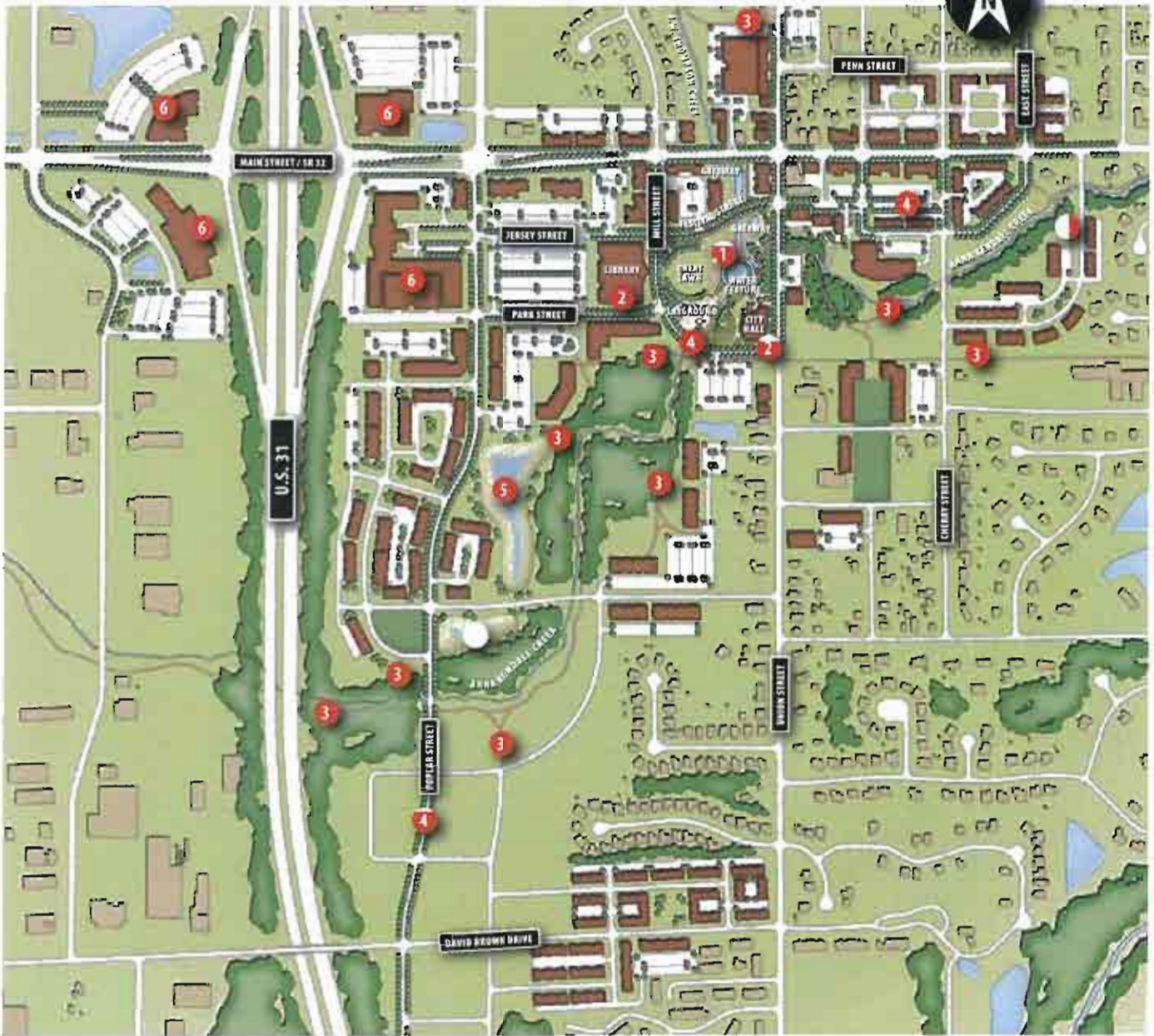
Civic buildings are classic downtown destinations that generate high levels of activity throughout the year. They are usually among a community's most significant landmarks and sources of civic pride. Due in part to its rapid rate of growth, the community of Westfield is at a point where decisions about future civic facilities have become critical.

Increased demand for services due to growth represents an opportunity that can best be described as "win-win" for both the future of the Grand Junction and the institutions themselves. In the case of the Westfield Washington Library, a downtown location will provide easy access via the City's most important roadways (U.S. 31 and SR 32) and significant exposure facilitated by a signature location within a short walking distance of other key downtown destinations.

For City Hall, relocation would place this important symbolic civic use in the heart of the community and provide space that meets the contemporary needs of a growing community. Finally, for the Grand Junction itself, these institutional uses would help bring prominence, activity and connections to other downtown uses, which will help to define and differentiate the new Grand Junction brand in the marketplace.

Grand Junction Master Plan Vision

Key Initiatives



- | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| <p>1</p> <p>Grand Junction Plaza</p> <p><i>Key features include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New connections to the Monon Trail and Midland Trace trail. • A signature water element as a focal point. • A Great Lawn gathering space. • Highly visible gateway areas. • A family-friendly playground. • A realigned, specially paved Jersey Street. | <p>2</p> <p>New Landmark-quality Civic Facilities</p> <p>A new City Hall and a new Westfield Washington Library strengthen downtown's image and identity as the community centerplace.</p> | <p>3</p> <p>Extended Trail System</p> <p>Creates exception connectivity between the Monon Trail and Midland Trace trail, other local trails, businesses, civic institutions and residential neighborhoods.</p> | <p>4</p> <p>Extended Street Network</p> <p><i>Key features include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Poplar Street extension south to the proposed Lantern Commons. • A realigned and extended Jersey Street between Union Street and Cherry Street. • An extension of Mill Street that connects Main Street and Union Street. | <p>5</p> <p>Enhanced Stormwater Management Facilities</p> <p>Regional stormwater facilities help enable desired patterns of development, serve as attractive water features and provide convenient recreational space for nearby residents.</p> | <p>6</p> <p>Signature Downtown Gateway Development</p> <p>A signature hotel and conference center, along with premium office buildings, create a high quality downtown gateway at the U.S. 31 and SR 32 interchange.</p> |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|

The Grand Junction Vision: Grand Junction Plaza

The Grand Junction Plaza is the crown jewel of the Grand Junction Vision. As the Grand Junction's signature public space, the plaza is designed to be a regional destinations, a backdrop for new landmark-quality civic facilities and a catalyst for private sector investment. The Plaza also doubles as an important stormwater management facility.



Note: This artist's rendering is intended to illustrate only the broad, overall character of Master Plan recommendations.



The Grand Junction Vision: Downtown Westfield

In the first two phases of implementation, significant public and private sector improvements in the area between Union Street and U.S. 31 will establish and solidify the Grand Junction brand image and experience. Included are mixed use and commercial redevelopment on both sides of Main Street in the first two blocks east of Union Street, the result of opportunities created by right-of-way property acquisitions necessary to enable Main Street / SR 32 roadway improvements.

In the third phase of implementation, the attention is expected to focus more fully on commercial and residential development opportunities to the east of Union Street. This is especially true of residential development, where marketplace demand for a variety of high quality products is expected to because of the close proximity of shops, restaurants and signature Grand Junction recreational amenities.

Ultimately, Downtown Westfield will be a mix of older commercial structures with historic charm and character, and newer structures that provide space that meets the contemporary marketplace needs of retailers and restaurants. Close by, a similar mix of older homes and a variety of newer residences, are within easy walking distance of downtown's core area. A significant aspect of these new residential opportunities is that longtime Westfield residents who currently reside in single family homes will have the ability to stay close to family and friends as they as they enjoy their retirement years.

New downtown residential options also place prospective patrons closer to shops and restaurants and helps to create the vibrant, active streets to that strengthen the Grand Junction brand.

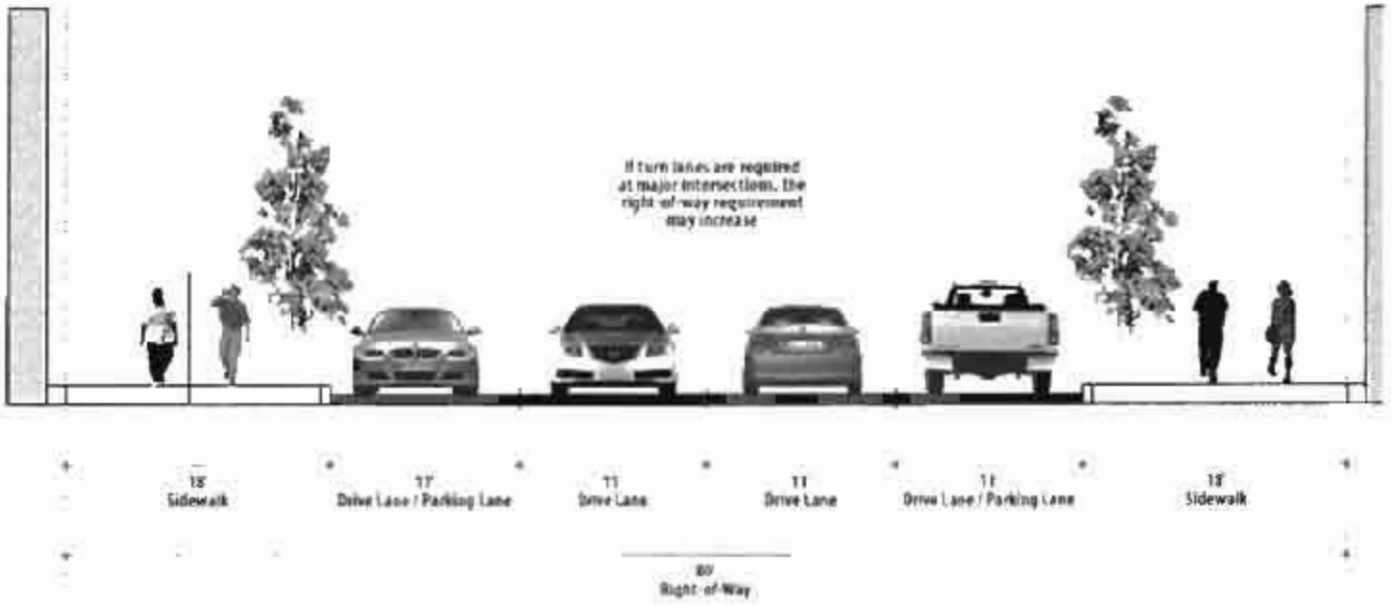
The Grand Junction Vision: Main Street / SR 32 Improvements

Planned roadway improvements to Main Street / SR 32 will have a significant impact on the character of Downtown Westfield. It is vitally important that these improvements help to create a downtown core area that is comfortable for people and one that provides exceptional user hospitality. Both are principle objectives of the Master Plan and cornerstones of the brand promise—that the Grand Junction is *a place where many kinds of connections are made*.

To facilitate the movement of pedestrians and trail users across Main Street, it is strongly recommended that the overall roadway cross-section remain as narrow as possible between Mill Street and East Street. This will likely reduce right-of-way acquisition costs and provide more space for sidewalks and streetscape elements. In addition, the narrower roadway cross-section will allow for wider sidewalks. The wider sidewalks will provide the space for streetscape enhancements such as parkway trees, curbed landscape planters, benches and other streetscape enhancements that will help to create the pedestrian-friendly environment envisioned by the Master Plan.

The diagram at right illustrates how an 80' right-of-way provides sufficient space for 18' sidewalks and four 11' drive lanes. A turn lane at major intersections adds an additional lane. Note that the outer lanes are identified as both drive lanes and parking lanes. This approach allows for four drive lanes with restricted turn movements during peak travel times, and two drive lanes with merchant-friendly, on-street parking during non-peak travel times.





The Grand Junction Vision: Streetscape Enhancements

In addition to the Main Street / SR 32 improvements, premium streetscape enhancements are also needed for other downtown streets to create the pedestrian-friendly Grand Junction brand experience envisioned by the Master Plan

This especially true of the streets that encircle and / or provide direct connections to the Grand Junction Plaza, including Union Street, Mill Street and Park Street. Jersey Street, realigned to bisect the plaza, is to include high-quality paving treatment so that it can be closed and used as expanded plaza space during festivals and special events.

The Grand Junction's image and identity will also be highly influenced by the appearance of the U.S. 31 / SR 32 interchange. Planned intersection improvements provide the opportunity to create an iconic and memorable gateway experience that strengthens the Grand Junction brand in the marketplace.



▲ View South of Union Street South of Jersey Street

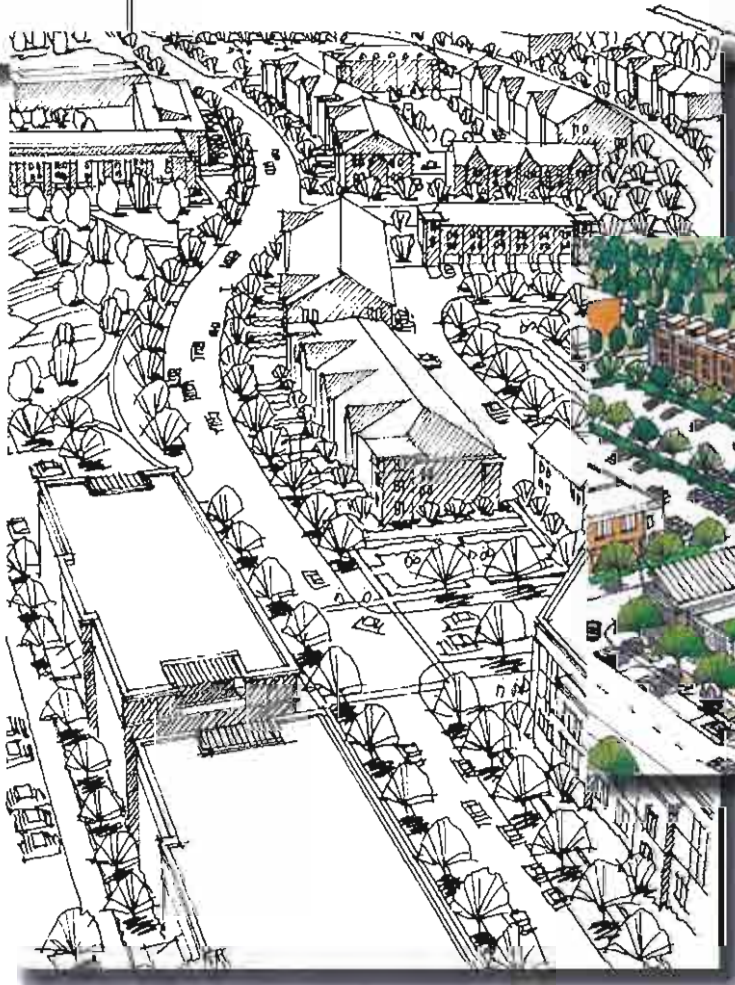
The streets that encircle and / or lead directly to the Grand Junction Plaza will include premium streetscape features.

▶ View Southwest of the SR 32 / Union Street Intersection Towards the Grand Junction Plaza

A significant amount of the Grand Junction brand experience will occur in public spaces. The bird's eye at right perspective captures the premium streetscapes envisioned by the Master Plan for the streets around the Grand Junction Plaza.



▲ **View North Towards the U.S. 31 / SR 32 Interchange**
 Planned interchange improvements provide the opportunity to create a memorable gateway to the Grand Junction.



▲ **View southeast from the SR 32 / Union Street Intersection**
 New development, including parking lots, provides opportunities to incorporate sustainable design elements such as native landscaping, bioswales, permeable pavers and dark-sky lighting.

▲ **View South of Poplar Street South of Main Street / SR 32**
 Premium streetscape enhancements to Poplar Street, extended south to David Brown Drive, will help to bring the Grand Junction brand experience into the neighborhoods that surround of downtown.

The Grand Junction Vision: Signage and Wayfinding

Hospitality has a tremendous impact on the impressions that visitors form about a given place. The ease with which pedestrians and motorists can find and comfortably reach desired destinations informs perceptions of quality. A thoughtful signage and wayfinding system is one of the most important aspects of hospitality, especially for environments that expect to attract many new visitors on a regular basis. Signage is also one of the most visible applications of an identity system that aligns with and supports a brand's strategic goals.

Similarly, signage and wayfinding should enhance Grand Junction visitor hospitality and reinforce the core brand promise that revolves around the concept of connectedness. In practical terms, this means sufficient signage should be provided to enhance visitors' ability to comfortably navigate the Grand Junction. High production values will help to ensure the signs convey the message of quality. Perhaps, most importantly, the graphics should be not only legible, but also convey the message that the Grand Junction is an inviting place with urban amenities surrounded by an attractive natural environment.