Semoran Boulevard – Unifying Themes

What unifying design themes will guide the Vision Plan for Semoran Boulevard?

The Semoran Boulevard Business District is more than just the sum of its parts. Although we have looked at Semoran "Piece By Piece" to evaluate its challenges and opportunities, the unifying themes that stand out are guided by the Planning Principles of the Vision Plan.

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What unifying design themes will guide the Vision Plan for Semoran Boulevard?

The planning principles that guide the Vision Plan are:

- Promoting a walkable, main street-style development pattern
- Visually de-emphasizing the automobile
- Promoting a mixture of uses
- Welcoming and guiding customers to the goods and services they need.

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Why is the Sidewalk Important to Your Business?

Many business owners say, “Why should I care about the sidewalk when almost all of my customers come by car?” This is a good question that deserves a good answer.

Yes, most potential new customers are drivers. The sidewalks and public spaces are the areas that they see first as they pass through the business district. Will this first impression make them want to stop at your business?

So you might say that the main audience for attractive sidewalks and public spaces isn’t really the pedestrians, but it’s the thousands of drivers that pass by every day.

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Promoting a Walkable Business District – Retail Districts

Sidewalks – Widen the public space by adding a "hardscape" behind the sidewalk. This hardscape includes brick pavement and a low "knee wall" to separate pedestrians from parking. The Vision Plan proposes this design for the public environment on the east side of Semoran Boulevard from Lake Underhill Road to Curry Ford Road. On the west side, this design is proposed from Kalmia Drive to Andora Street.

Street furniture and street trees put the finishing touches on the public environment.

Landscaping can make outdoor areas more attractive without blocking the customer's view of businesses. The Vision Plan includes guidelines for design and location of landscaping on business properties, as well as the types of plant material to be used.

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Promoting a Walkable Business District – Office Districts

Sidewalks – One way that the needs of Office Districts are different than those of Retail Districts is that a wider "public environment" is not needed here. Unlike Retail Districts, Orlando's Office District regulations require that both buildings and parking lots be set back from the public sidewalk.

Street Trees – The Vision Plan proposes a consistent canopy of street trees in both the Retail and Office Districts from Brosche Road (the Orlando city limits) south to Curry Ford Road.

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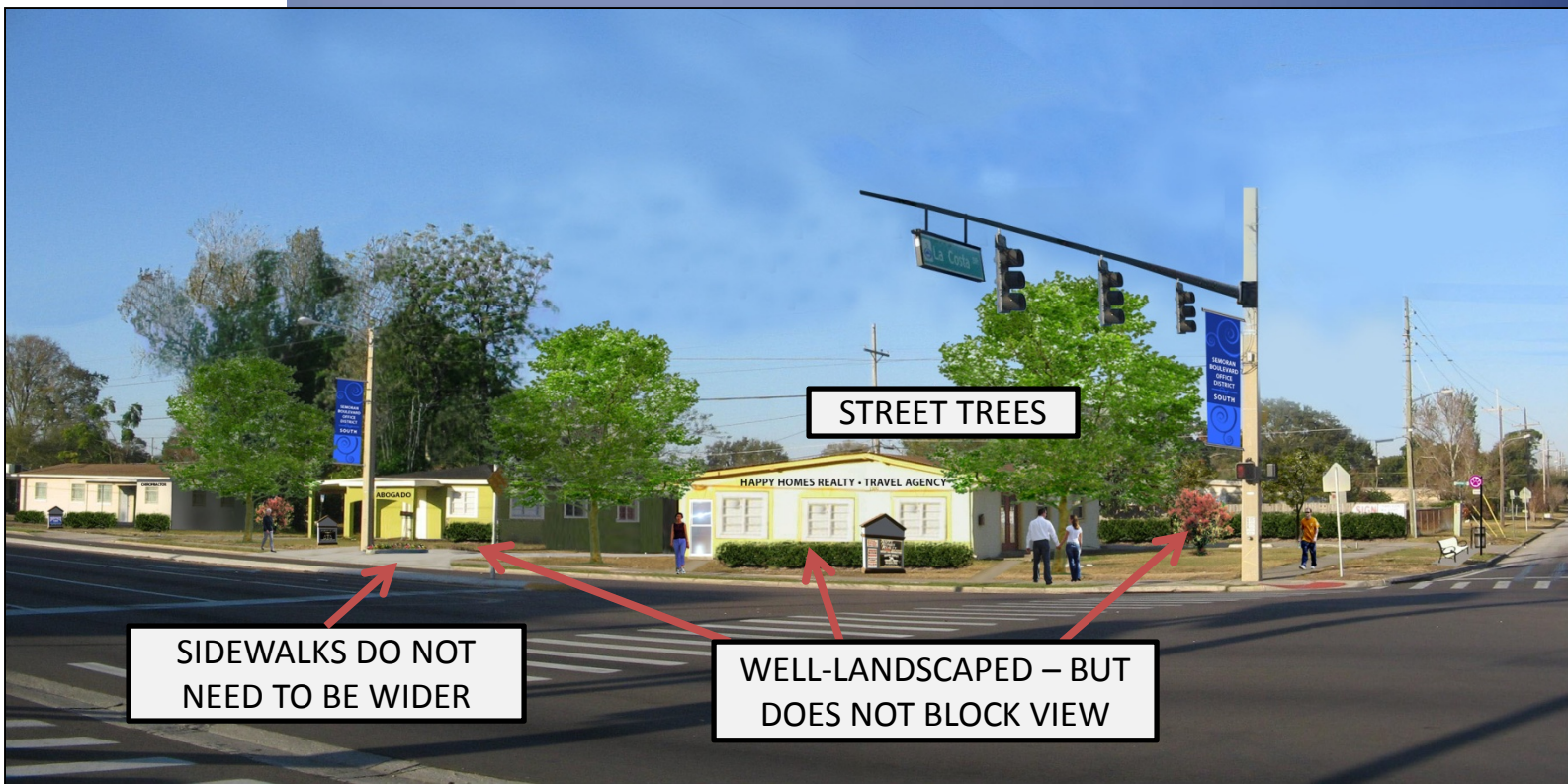

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Visually De-emphasizing the Automobile

The preferred location for parking lots should be behind the businesses instead of in front. There should be enough parking to serve customers but not more than is needed. Outdoor areas should be attractive and inviting to customers arriving by car, by public transit or by foot.

The Vision Plan includes site design standards for new development, redevelopment and building renovations that will encourage better parking design.

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Promoting a Mixture of Uses

Semoran Boulevard already provides a wide range of goods and services. By promoting greater intensity and a mixture of uses as properties redevelop, the Vision Plan will encourage an even more vibrant and existing business district.

Imagine the wide range of uses that will take shape in the 2000-foot walk from Lake Underhill Road to the International House of Pancakes restaurant – the blue-roofed building in the far background of this photo.

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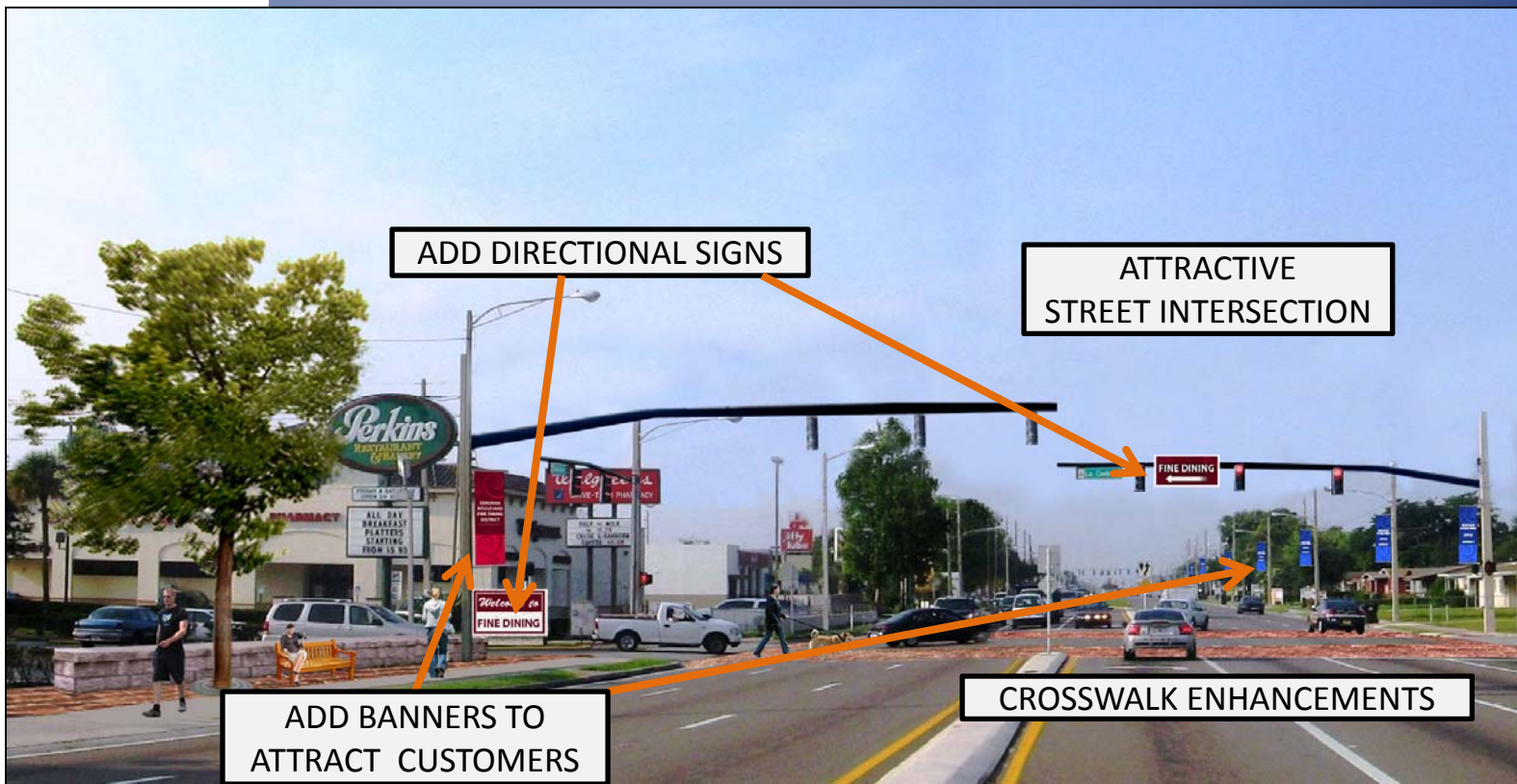
Welcoming and Guiding Customers to the Goods and Services They Need

Attractive Intersection – Overhead wires are replaced by mast-arms holding the traffic signals.

Crosswalk Enhancements – Another way to give the La Costa Drive intersection a "sense of place" will be to add simple enhancements like colored or stamped concrete crosswalks, special signs and/or banners.