4.8.3 Atlantic Boulevard

Along Atlantic Boulevard, the streetscape concept addresses the more auto-oriented character of the wide street and adjacent development. Tall trees would provide a sense of enclosure along the wide street, and hedges or stocky plants could create a buffer along the curb to separate pedestrians from traffic. Figures 4-31 and 4-32 illustrates the existing conditions and short-term solution for providing additional landscaping along the edges of existing parking lots fronting the sidewalk.

Figure 4-33 illustrates the existing cross-section and Figure 4-34 shows the recommended cross-section for Atlantic Boulevard. The following recommendations describe the overall Atlantic Boulevard streetscape concept:

- 12 feet pedestrian realm width open to the sky
- Tall shade trees such as London Plane or California Sycamores spaced 30 feet to 35 feet apart, depending on street lighting system spacing
- Hedge or stalky plants at the curb to protect pedestrians from traffic lane and help assuming illegal crossing
- New signal and pedestrian crosswalk between Hellman and Emerson as blocks are too long
- Landscaped buffers adjacent to the sidewalk, where existing parking fronts on sidewalk
- Additional landscaped medians
- Decorative pedestrian crosswalks at signalized intersections
- New street furniture at bus stops and near pedestrian gathering spaces
- New custom-designed contemporary street lighting or pedestrian lighting phased in with new projects
- A bridge near Garvey or Hellman connecting the second floors of the buildings on either side could be considered.
- No new below-grade shops along street frontages.
- New entry statement in median near Hellman
- Directories and signage guiding pedestrians and motorists to uses along Atlantic, other parts of Downtown, and to public parking
- Public gathering space/visible from the street
- Pedestrian-friendly uses and design for visual interest along the street frontage
- Small corner entry plazas at intersections

Figure 4-31. Parking along Atlantic Boulevard with no buffer between parking and sidewalk

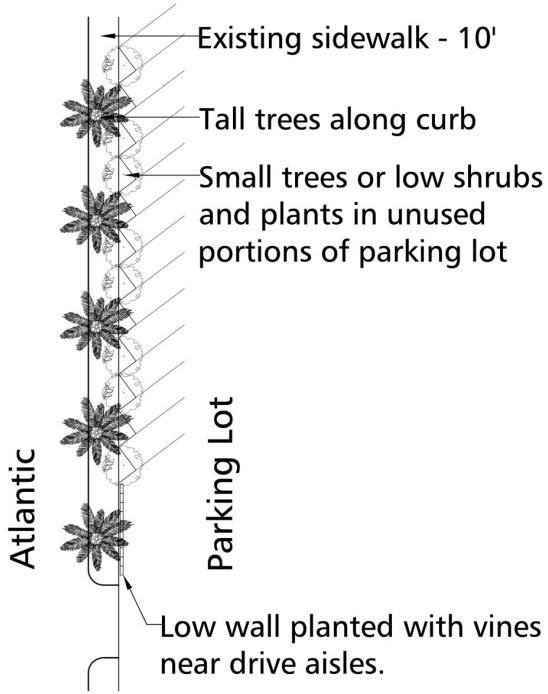


Figure 4-32. Landscaping concept for parking lots fronting on Atlantic Boulevard, providing a landscaped buffer between parking and the sidewalk.

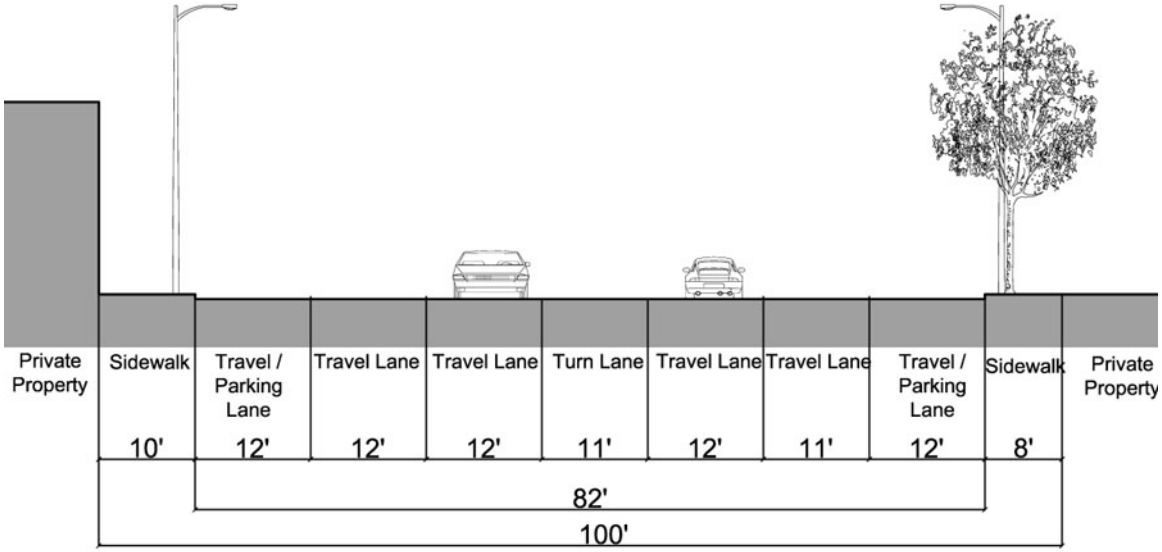


Figure 4-33. Existing cross-section on Atlantic Boulevard.

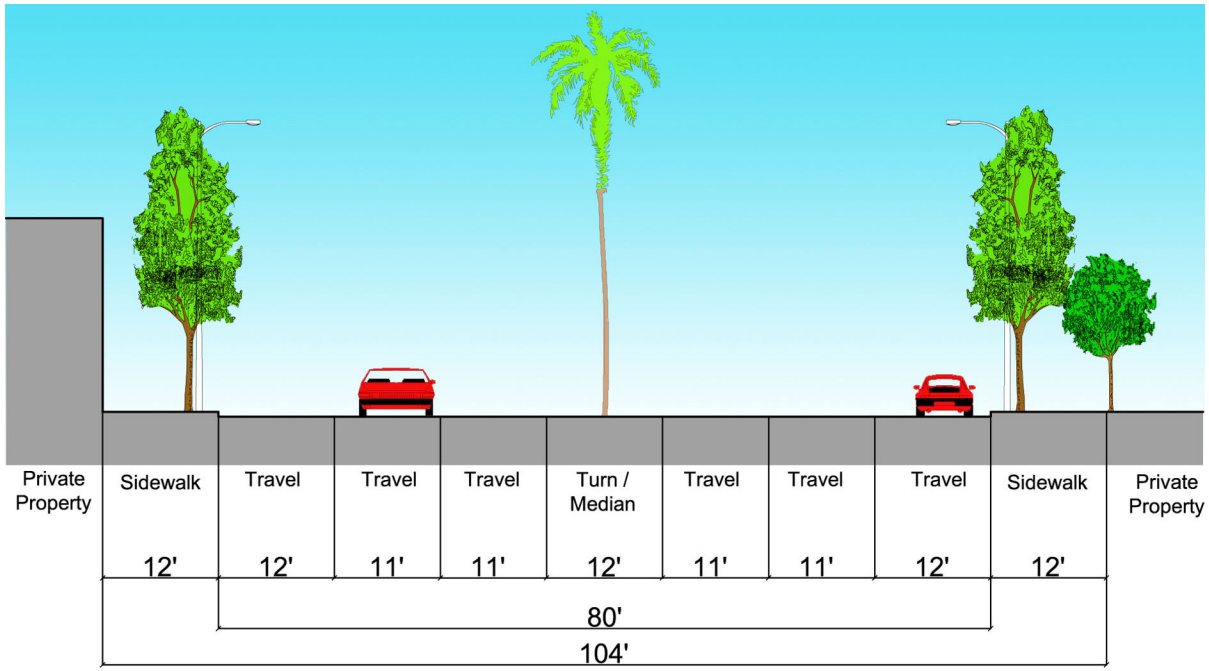


Figure 4-34. Recommended cross-section for Atlantic Boulevard.

4.8.4 Garfield Avenue

Similar to Atlantic Boulevard, the streetscape concept for Garfield Avenue should be compatible with a wide, busy street. Currently, Garfield's public realm with its narrow sidewalks does not provide adequate pedestrian linkages (see Figures 4-35 and 4-36). As development occurs, the roadway will be widened to General Plan standards (see Figure 4-37).

In the Downtown area, the sidewalk on each side of the street should be 12 feet wide (in excess of the General Plan recommendation) to reflect that Garfield will become an important pedestrian street, particularly as new development occurs at the intersection of Garvey Avenue and Garfield. Figure 4-42 illustrates the ultimate concept for Garfield south of Garvey as mixed-use development occurs around that intersection.

The following streetscape improvements are recommended for Garfield Avenue:

- Require 12 feet minimum public realm width including space for street trees
- Uniform species of street trees specified for all new development. Alternatives include (see Figures 4-38 through 4-41):
  - Mexican Fan Palms
  - Queen Palms
  - Evergreen Elm
  - Chinese Flame Trees
  - Brisbane Box/Tristania

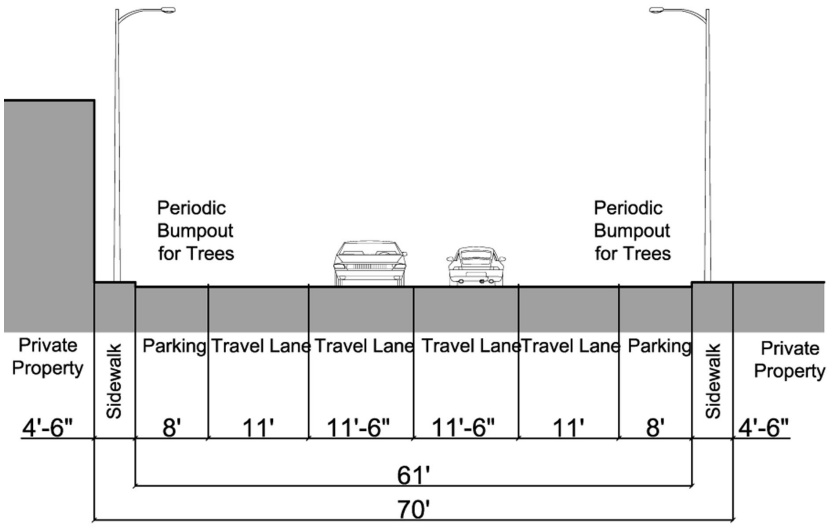


Figure 4-35. Minimum existing cross-section for Garfield Avenue.

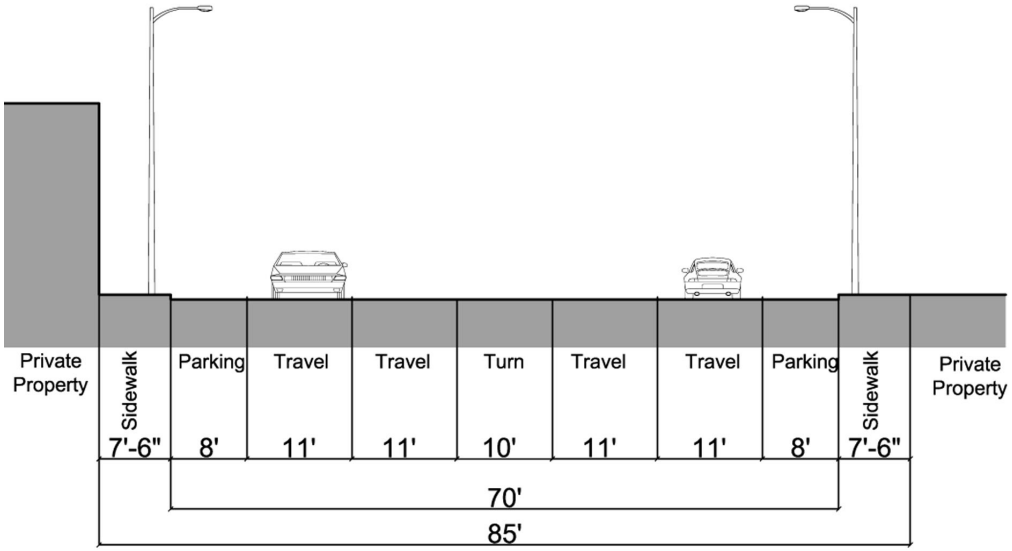


Figure 4-36. Maximum existing cross-section for Garfield Avenue.

- Tree grates same as Garvey in downtown area; use planting or river stones in tree wells outside of downtown.
- Street lighting in downtown area along Garfield same as Garvey BID streetscape
- Landscape medians added per block when major development occurs that widens street per General Plan standards. (General Plan widens ROW of + 70 feet to 114 feet to accommodate 6 traffic lanes, left-turn lane, 10 foot sidewalks, and a Class II bicycle path.)
- Consider green hedge or shrubs adjacent to the curb, as there is no parking at the curb to protect pedestrians from travel lanes. Shrubs should have sculpture qualities such as drought-tolerant stalking plants.
- New decorative crosswalks similar to downtown design

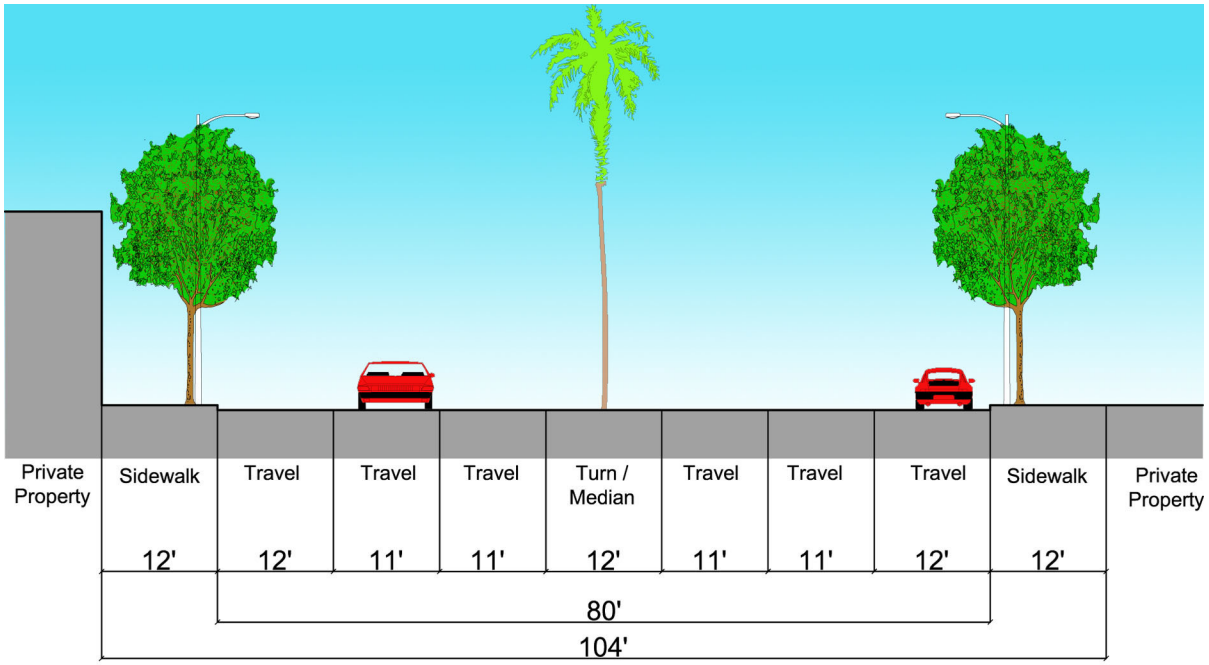


Figure 4-37. Recommended cross-section for Garfield Avenue.

Figure 4-38. Chinese Flame tree.

Figure 4-39. Evergreen elm tree.

Figure 4-40. Mexican Fan Palm.

Figure 4-40. Brisbane Box tree.

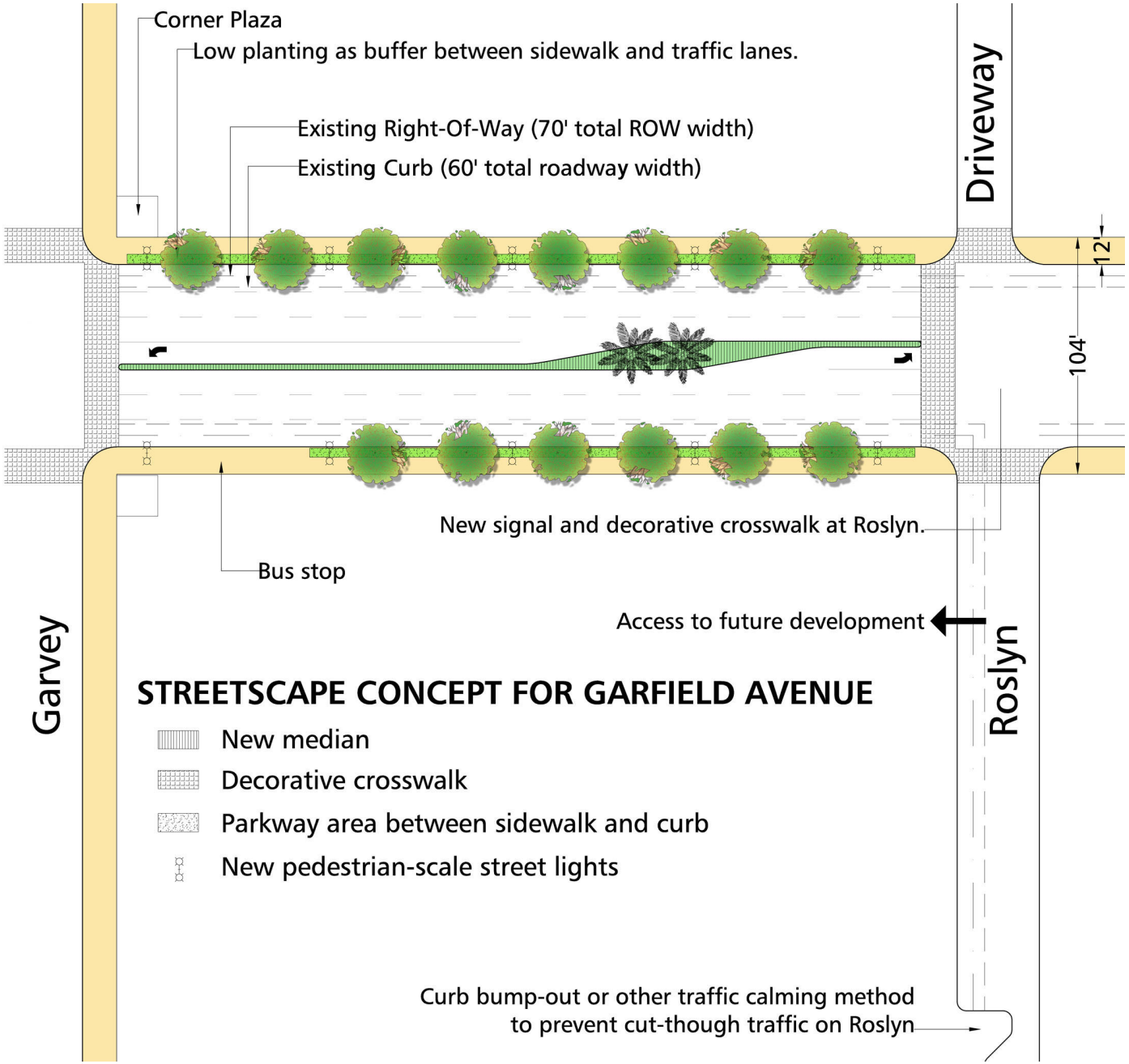


Figure 4-42. Streetscape plan for Garfield Avenue south of Garvey Avenue.

4.9 Traffic Recommendations

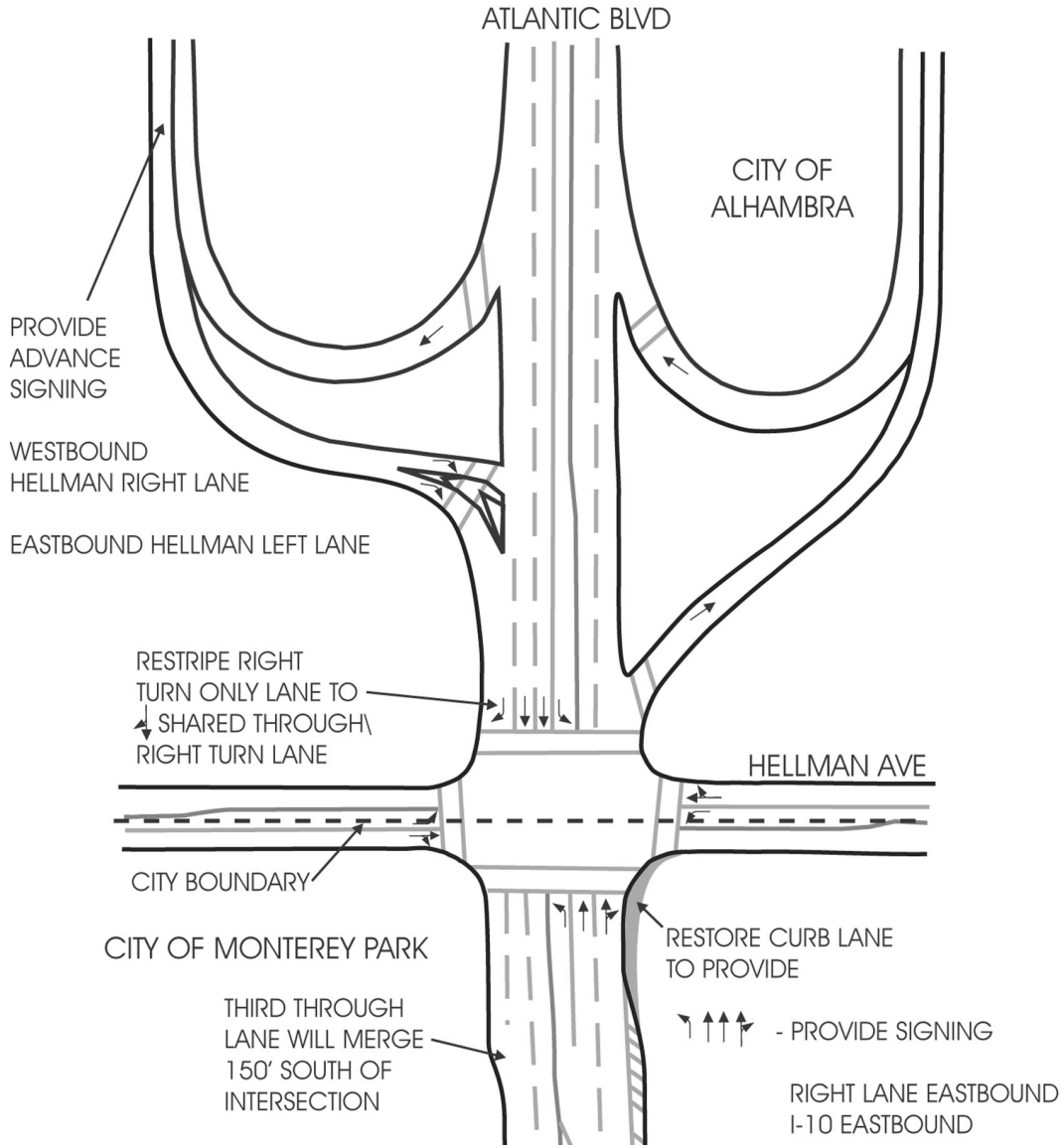
While the focus of this Plan is improving the pedestrian network in Downtown Monterey Park, relieving specific automobile traffic problems can reduce bottlenecks that prevent people from coming to Downtown in the first place. Furthermore, improvements to the traffic network can reduce the perceived chaos and danger of heavy traffic, making the public realm more comfortable for pedestrians.

4.9.1 New Traffic Signals

As shown in Figure 4-1, new traffic signals have only been recommended in two locations:

- **Atlantic (btw. Hellman and Emerson)** – This new signal would provide improved access to the future Atlantic Times Square project as well as potential future development on the west side of Atlantic. As this signal would improve access and traffic flow around new development, it would be installed and paid for as development occurs.

- **Garfield/Roslyn** – Like the signal at Atlantic, this signal would only be installed as new development occurs south of Garvey along Atlantic. It would improve traffic flow and access to potential new developments in the vicinity. This signal would need to be timed to operate in conjunction with the existing signal at the Garvey / Garfield intersection.



source: Meyer, Mohaddes Associates

Figure 4-43. Intersection improvements along Atlantic Blvd. at Hellman Avenue and I-10 Freeway.

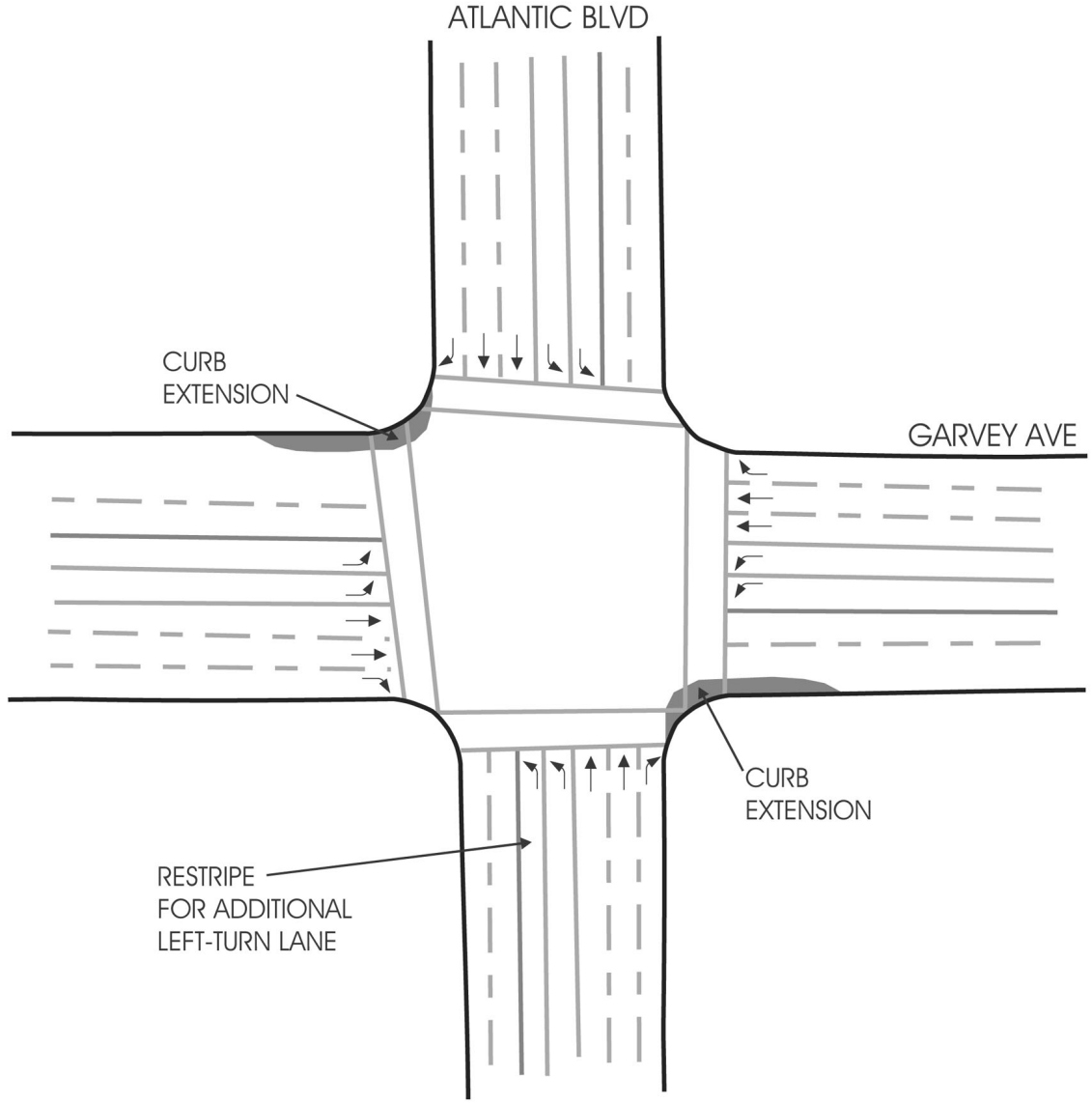
4.9.2 Intersection Improvements

The following recommended intersection improvements are "low-cost" improvements, generally costing less that major investments such as street reconstruction and property acquisition. Generally, they involve street restriping:

- **Atlantic/Hellman** – Restripe the southbound Atlantic Boulevard approach to provide one left-turn lane, two through lanes, and one shared through/right-turn lane. The three southbound through lanes would merge into two lanes approximately 150 feet south of the intersection. Also, restore the northbound Atlantic Boulevard approach to provide one left-turn lane, two through lanes, and one shared through/right-turn lane. The curb lane would be designated for the EB I-10 on-ramp or eastbound on Hellman (see Figure 4-43) Note that the northern half of this intersection lies in the City of Alhambra. Improvements north of the intersection would be implemented by Alhambra.

- **Atlantic/Ralphs Driveway** – Restripe the westbound approach (Ralphs driveway) to provide one left-turn lane and one shared through/right-turn lane.

- **Atlantic/Garvey** – Restripe the northbound Atlantic Boulevard approach to provide two left-turn lanes, two through lanes, and one exclusive right-turn lane (see Figure 4-44). The improvement will improve the morning



source: Meyer, Mohaddes Associates

Figure 4-44. Intersection improvements at Atlantic Blvd. and Garvey Ave.

peak hour V/C ratio but the evening peak hour remains unchanged (northbound lefts are not the critical movement during the PM). Allows curb bump-outs on Garvey.

- **Chandler/Garvey** – Restripe the eastbound Garvey Avenue approach to provide one left-turn lane, two through lanes, and one exclusive right-turn lane. The eastbound departure would also require restriping in order to keep the through lanes aligned.

- **Ynez/Garvey** – Restripe the north and south legs (Ynez Avenue) of the intersection to provide one left-turn lane and one shared through/right-turn lane in both the northbound and southbound direction.

- **McPherrin/Garvey** – Restripe the north and south legs (McPherrin Avenue) of the intersection to provide one left-turn lane and one shared through/right-turn lane in both the northbound and southbound direction. Also, restripe the westbound Garvey Avenue approach to provide one left-turn lane, two through lanes, and one exclusive right-turn lane. The westbound departure would also require restriping in order to keep the through lanes aligned.

- **Garfield/Garvey** – Restripe the eastbound and westbound Garvey Avenue approaches to provide one left-turn lane, two through lanes, and one exclusive right-turn lane. Both departures would also require restriping in order to keep the through lanes aligned.

- **Garfield/Avondale** – Restripe the southbound Garfield Avenue approach to provide one left-turn lane, one through lane, and one shared through/right-turn lane. Also stripe the eastbound and westbound Avondale Avenue approaches (the westbound approach is assumed to be a driveway for a future development) to provide one left-turn lane and one shared through/right-turn lane.

- **Alhambra/Garvey** – Restripe the eastbound and westbound Garvey Avenue approaches to provide one left-turn lane, two through lanes, and one exclusive right-turn lane. Both departures would also require restriping in order to keep the through lanes aligned.

4.9.3 Signal Timing Enhancements

The City of Monterey Park is part of the San Gabriel Valley Signal Forum – Advanced Traffic Management System. New technologies which allow improved monitoring and coordination of traffic signals in an area can substantially improve traffic flow. As the City of Monterey Park continues to work with other San Gabriel Valley cities to establish a coordinated system to traffic signal management, improvements to traffic flow can be anticipated.

In addition to changing signal timing for the benefit of traffic flow, timing can be adjusted for the benefit of pedestrians. Consideration should be given to providing additional time at intersections for pedestrians to cross in order to assist the high proportion of seniors living in Downtown. Also, as pedestrian traffic increases, consideration could be given to implementing scramble-phase pedestrian crossings of intersections such as Baltimore/Garvey or Ramona/Garvey which may have high pedestrian traffic without substantial auto cross-traffic.

4.10 Traffic Calming Recommendations

Downtown Monterey Park is located directly south of the I-10 Freeway. While its proximity to the freeway provides Downtown with good access to the region, it also causes substantial cut-through traffic on Downtown streets during peak periods. Drivers pack not only Garvey Avenue, but also collector streets such as Emerson and Newmark Avenues in an attempt to circumvent freeway traffic.

4.10.1 General Traffic Calming Solutions

One of the major comments for community members was that not only is traffic heavy on major streets such as Garvey, Garfield, and Atlantic, but during peak period traffic spills over into local collector streets such as Newmark and Emerson. The following traffic calming strategies could be implemented on the collector or major streets, particularly at the

traffic calming locations shown in Figure 4-1. The resulting slower, more orderly traffic flow with discourage cut-through traffic and make the streets safer and more welcoming for pedestrians, including the many children in the area. Traffic calming strategies for collector streets include:

- **Enforcement** – Police presence to monitor speeds and issue citations. *Pros: Effective while officer is actually monitoring speeds; Flexible measure that can be implemented in almost any location at short notice. Cons: Temporary measure; Not self enforcing; Fines do not typically cover cost of enforcement; Disrupts efficient traffic flow on high volume streets; Effect is short on motorists' memory when enforcement officer no longer present. Costs are high primarily due to the staffing requirements.*

- **Photo Radar** – Radar triggered camera to document vehicles and motorists who are exceeding the speed limit. Issues speeding tickets to violators or vehicle owners. *Pros: Speed enforcement with minimal staffing; May have widespread effectiveness due to mobile nature; Difficult to anticipate. Cons: Public perceptions related to invasion of privacy; Vehicle owners may receive the ticket when they were not driving; Legal issues need to be addressed before implementation. Costs are moderate to implement system. Costs may be low if contracted.*

- **Speed Trailer** – Mobile trailer mounted radar display that informs drivers of their speed. *Pros: Educational tool; Good public relations; Effective for temporary speed reduction needs. Cons: Some motorists may speed up to try to register a high speed; Duration of effectiveness may be limited; Not self enforcing. Costs are moderate to use due to staffing requirements. Expensive to enforce.*

- **Neckdown or Curb Extension** – Segments of roadway narrowing where curbs are extended toward the center of the roadway. *Pros: Pedestrian visibility increased and crossing distance reduced; Narrowed roadway section may contribute to vehicular speed reduction; Can create pavement for pedestrian and streetscape amenities; Breaks up drivers' line-of-sight. Cons: Creates drainage issues where curb and gutter exist; May create a hazard for bicyclists. Costs are medium to high depending on landscaping, pavement treatments and storm drainage considerations.* ***One of the more applicable long term strategy, however note the concern for bicyclists.***

- **Chokers** – Raised island built to narrow roadway. Islands are detached from curbline to allow for drainage or bike lanes to continue behind choker. *Pros: Pedestrian crossing distance reduced; Narrowed roadway section may contribute to vehicular speed reduction; Breaks up drivers' line-of-sight. Cons: May create a hazard for bicyclists who are less visible to cross street and turning traffic; Debris builds in bikelane between the choker and curbline, creating hazard for bicyclists.* ***Similar to above, Chokers are applicable long term strategy, however note the concern for bicyclists.***

- **Speed Humps** – Speed humps are areas of pavement raised 3-6 inches in height over a minimum of 8 feet. The height, length, and approach ramps will vary the speed a vehicle can comfortably go over the hump. They are supplemented with signs and pavement markings. *Pros: Slows traffic; Self enforcing; Requires minimum maintenance. Cons: Increases emergency response times; May damage emergency response vehicles if not carefully designed; May increase traffic noise in vicinity of hump. Costs are low to moderate.*

- **Raised Crosswalks** – Flat-topped speed hump built as pedestrian crossing. *Could be used at the all-way stop controlled intersections along Newmark Avenue. These intersections are located at Chandler Avenue, Ynez Avenue, McPherrin Avenue, Ramona Avenue, Alhambra Avenue, and Orange Avenue. Pros: Slows traffic; Increases pedestrian visibility in the crosswalk; Clearly designates the crosswalks; Requires minimum maintenance. Cons: Increases emergency response times; May damage emergency*

response vehicles if not carefully designed; May increase traffic noise in vicinity of crosswalk. Costs are moderate.

4.10.2 Reducing Congestion Due to Cut-Through Traffic

Cut-through traffic is particularly frustrating to local community members and business owners because few of these drivers intend to stop and shop in Downtown. However, any attempt to control cut-through traffic must also recognize that individuals who would want to patronize Downtown would also use the same streets. Over-restricting traffic flow in Downtown could drive away potential customers as well.

4.11 Traffic Analysis for Development Scenarios

Meyer Mohaddes Associates (MMA) has conducted an analysis of the potential traffic effects of the development scenarios in the Downtown area (see Section 3.2), including recommendations of ways to reduce the effects of additional development on the traffic network (see Sections 4.9 and 4.10). The results of the analysis show that likely levels of mixed-use development in Downtown can be accommodated by the traffic network with the implementation of a set of low cost improvements.

4.11.1 Proposed Scenarios Fit Within the General Plan Traffic Analysis

Each of the development scenarios analysis for this Mixed-Use and Pedestrian Linkages project fits within the overall scale of development that the 2001 City of Monterey Park General Plan proposed for Downtown, for which a formal Environmental Impact Report was completed and certified. These hypothetical scenarios take a more focused look at the possible distribution of new development, and also an overall look at potential development, giving the City an idea of the traffic effects of a set of developments rather a single development at a time.

These overall development scenarios allow for the formulation of specific measures for improving traffic flow that are compatible with a pedestrian-oriented livable community as the City envisions in Downtown. These measures can be recommended, as needed, to developers when actual developments in Downtown are proposed and a formal traffic impact analysis in conducted.

4.11.2 Mixed-Use Development Scenarios

As described in Section 3.2, the locations selected for development were based on an analysis of existing conditions in the area (such as vacant or underutilized parcels), as well as input from the Economic Development Department and members of the community. The scale of development was based on intensities allowed by the General Plan, as well as known proposed developments and our understanding of today's market conditions. The three scenarios provide a range of development intensities, described as specific square footages for commercial and residential development at each location, as well as the number of units.

4.11.3 Traffic Analysis

For each development scenario, the new daily trips generated in each development location were calculated, with a focus on AM and PM peak hour traffic. These new trips were then added to a future baseline of traffic built off of existing traffic conditions. For each scenario, MMA calculated the level-of-service (LOS) at the 16 signalized intersections that would result from the combination of overall future traffic growth and the development proposed by that scenario.

Without improvements to the traffic network, the increase in future traffic combined with the development proposed in each scenario results in poorer levels-of-service at many intersections in Downtown. In the three scenarios considered, the number of intersections operating at LOS E or F would increase from 6 (existing conditions) to between 11 and 14 (future conditions). Notably, however, because mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development allows individuals to walk for some trips (shopping, work) that they otherwise would have made by car, the proposed development scenarios are substantially less degrading to the traffic network than comparable intensities of all-commercial development.

4.11.4 Traffic-Mitigating Recommendations

Although each development scenario combined with future traffic increases would result in

lower LOS at many intersections, a variety of potential improvements that would help improve traffic have been recommended, generally returning future traffic to its existing conditions LOS. Essentially, three types of traffic improvement have been considered:

- Low cost improvements, typically involving restriping of the existing roadway to improve traffic flow (see Section 4.1.5)
- Signal system improvements, based on the City's ongoing involvement in the San Gabriel Valley Signal Form – Advanced Traffic Management System. These improvements to signal timing were assumed to provide a overall 10% increase in system capacity.
- General Plan improvements, which involve widening both Atlantic and Garfield to three lanes in each direction through the Downtown area

For each scenario, the effect that each type of improvement would have on traffic LOS was considered. They looked at each improvement type in various combinations, allowing the City and developers to get an idea of the full range of improvements needed to keep traffic flowing at existing or improved LOS.

4.11.5 Improvements Effect on LOS

For each scenario, a combination of improvements that would keep traffic overall at its current LOS was identified, even without the General Plan improvements. The analysis shows that with a combination of low-cost restriping improvements and signal timing improvements, all traffic scenarios would be returned to roughly existing conditions, with 6 of 16 intersections operating at LOS E or F, like today.

Although called for in the General Plan, the widenings of Atlantic and Garfield are major undertakings that will require many years of investment by new development and the City. However, regardless of the time frame, new developments should begin the process of meeting the General Plan standards for Atlantic and Garfield. With that requirement in mind, how the General Plan improvements would affect traffic in the most intense scenario was considered. MMA found that with General Plan improvements alone, only 8 of 16 intersections would operate at LOS E or F, compared to 6 of 16 today. If expected signal timing improvements were also made, only 3 of 16 intersections would operate at LOS E or F – a substantial improvement over traffic even today.

As stated earlier, the traffic analysis conducted by MMA was designed to take a more focused look at potential traffic effects of proposed mixed-use development in Downtown Monterey Park, looking at the effect of specific, if hypothetical, development scenarios on specific intersections. The analysis shows that with an array of low-cost improvements such as restriping and continued participation by the City in advanced signal system improvements, future traffic within even the most intense likely development scenario could be maintained at current LOS. In addition, the analysis shows that as new development occurs in Downtown, the City should require developers to provide the right-of-way needed for the General Plan widenings.