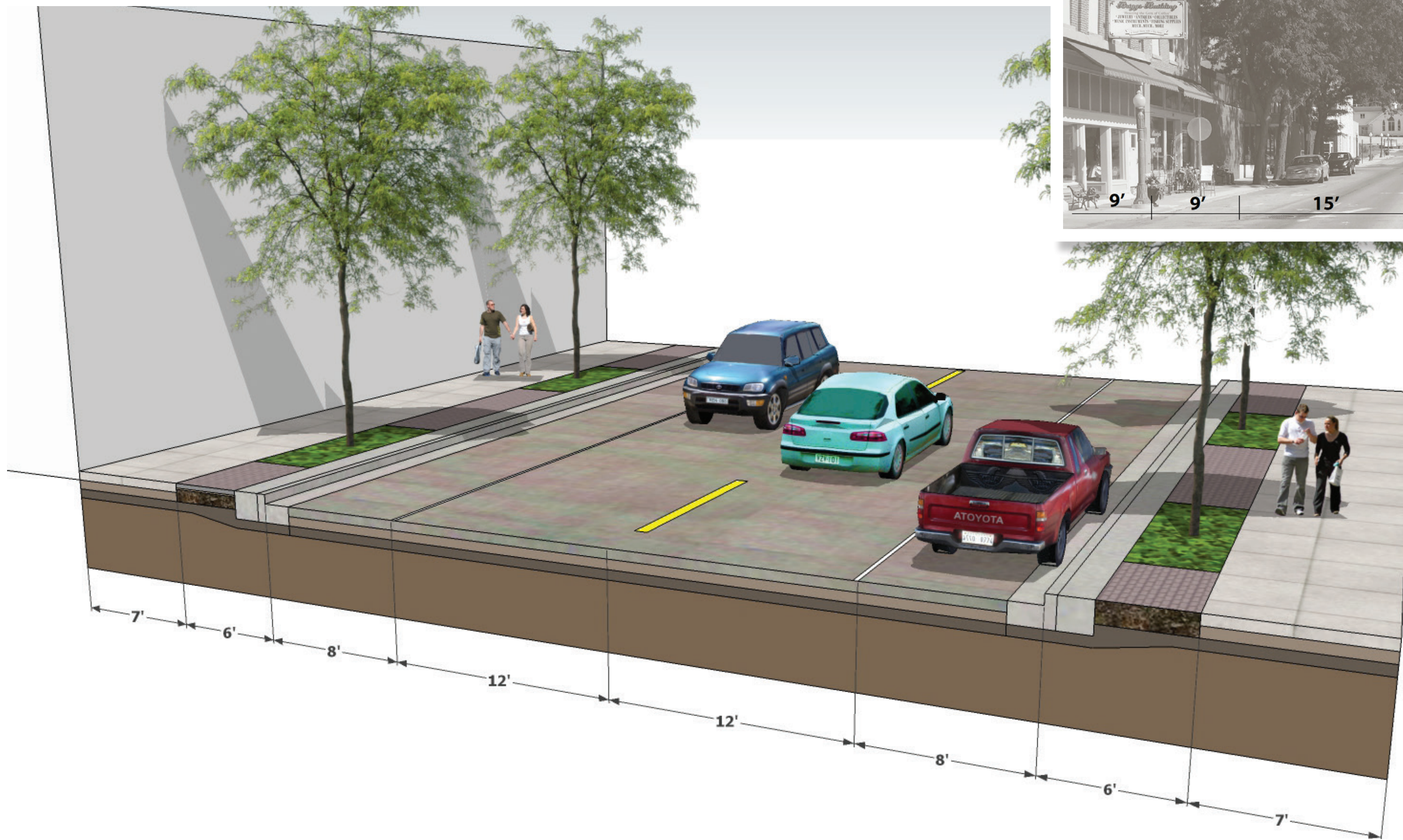


3D View of Proposed Downtown Streetscape Dimensions



Existing Street Dimensions



Downtown at Walnut and Howard Street, looking north



Before

## Downtown District

As mentioned on the previous board, Colfax has great potential for making downtown more pedestrian-friendly. Currently, Highway 117 is the main focus of this corridor. The oversized travel and parking lanes encourage speeding and negatively affect the safety of community members and visitors. In addition, only a few trees are planted in this corridor, promoting higher traffic speeds and creating an increased heat-island effect. The heat-island effect occurs when cities are largely made up of concrete or paved spaces and other built materials, which causes noticeable higher temperatures. Providing plant material, especially trees, allows that heat to be absorbed and provides micro-climates of shaded space to counteract the heat island effect.

The plan graphic on board #9 gives an all-inclusive view of the proposed improvements to the downtown district. The goal of this board is to illustrate more details of these improvements. Above is a diagram of the proposed dimensions for Hwy 117 where it passes through downtown Colfax. These dimensions are based on Iowa DOT minimum roadway dimensions for this type of construction and can be compared to the existing conditions shown at the top of the page. This transformation of space creates an additional zone for street tree planting, providing shaded, more comfortable places for people to congregate or pass through. The inclusion of street trees

such as these is proven to benefit business owners as well as increase safety in these types of environments.

At each intersection in the downtown area, the design team proposes constructing bump-outs at the crosswalks. Bump-outs serve as traffic calming measure, along with the aforementioned street trees and smaller travel lanes. The bump-outs become physical choke points for motorists and serve as protective barriers for the parallel parking spaces, while shortening the distance pedestrians have to travel when crossing the street. The bump-outs and segments of paved space around the tree planting areas can be constructed with concrete or clay pavers in order to add a decorative touch to the downtown and tie into the historical nature of the existing architecture.

In the diagram above, pavers are shown between the plant beds. If desired, the city could install permeable pavers to capture rain water and snow melt that is sheet-flowing from the adjacent impermeable surfaces. This would allow for a reduction in the amount of water that is sent to the storm sewer and in turn lessen the chance of flooding in the lower regions of town. The city could also choose to install tree grates over specific planting areas where there needs to be pedestrian

use. If pedestrian traffic will allow the space for an actual planting area, as shown in the image above, the city would have a great opportunity to plant perennials that give the downtown streetscape vibrance and color and alleviate extra work in preparing annual planters while achieving the same result each year.

These design concepts can easily translate from Highway 117 to the side streets of downtown as well. Creating a multi-block downtown experience allows the business district to grow without losing its cohesiveness as a historic space.

# Colfax

## Downtown Enhancements (2/2)

Landscape Architect and Intern: RDG Planning & Design - Bruce Niedermyer, PLA and Sara Davids

Iowa Department of Transportation

Trees Forever

ISU Landscape Architecture Extension

ISU Extension Community and Economic Development

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