

Downtown Enhancements

Downtowns with active businesses are important in generating economic activity which in turn creates greater tax revenue for a city—an essential component for sustainability. In turn, attracting people and creating social activity in a downtown is important to supporting those same businesses.

Garrison is fortunate to still have many of the original downtown buildings intact from 1911, though many are showing signs of their age and are in need of some repairs and restoration. Like many other downtowns in small rural communities, most of the downtown buildings that were once used for commercial purposes with storefronts have now been abandoned and transformed for private use.

Garrison's downtown provides a unique opportunity to preserve the historic buildings and character of the downtown while fostering downtown renewal and reinforcing a stronger sense of place. The Mercantile, which is located at the corner of Main Street and Sycamore Avenue, is a good example. With the increase and ease of mobility, it is unlikely that the revitalized downtown will be like the downtown of yesteryear where the staples necessary for everyday living were sold. Instead, Garrison's downtown business model may be based on entertainment and hosting art/music venues or other events. The opportunities and potential are abundant.

The community visioning design team generated a variety of ideas for Garrison's public spaces to help attract visitors who are necessary to supporting the existing Mercantile and fostering growth and new opportunities for the downtown area. The concepts shown on this board as well as on boards 10 and 11 illustrate some of these ideas.

Elements proposed for the downtown concepts all include a small plaza space in front of the Mercantile to aid in spillover for events, accent plantings, improved circulation and accessibility for pedestrians and motorists, integration of art (murals, statues), benches, trash receptacles, planters, ADA-compliant ramp, handrails on steps, and decorative lighting with banners.

Empty walls on buildings offer a number of opportunities for incorporating murals, as illustrated in conceptual photo edit 5. This edit also shows proposed enhancements that can be done in the interim to improve the streetscape without the reconstruction proposed and illustrated in other concepts.

Conceptual photo edits 6 and 7 and the associated plan views show two different concept options for the vehicular traffic flow. The two-way street concept keeps current traffic patterns but defines the parking on both sides of the street with parallel parking on the south and angled parking on the north. The one-way street concept changes the traffic patterns and implements larger "bump-outs," all to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety. This concept incorporates angled parking on both sides of the street to allow for more parking spaces than the two-way concept.



Existing conditions downtown.



Existing conditions downtown Main Street.

Legend

- Maintained Lawn
- Perennial or Annual Plantings
- Permeable Paving
- Existing Roadway



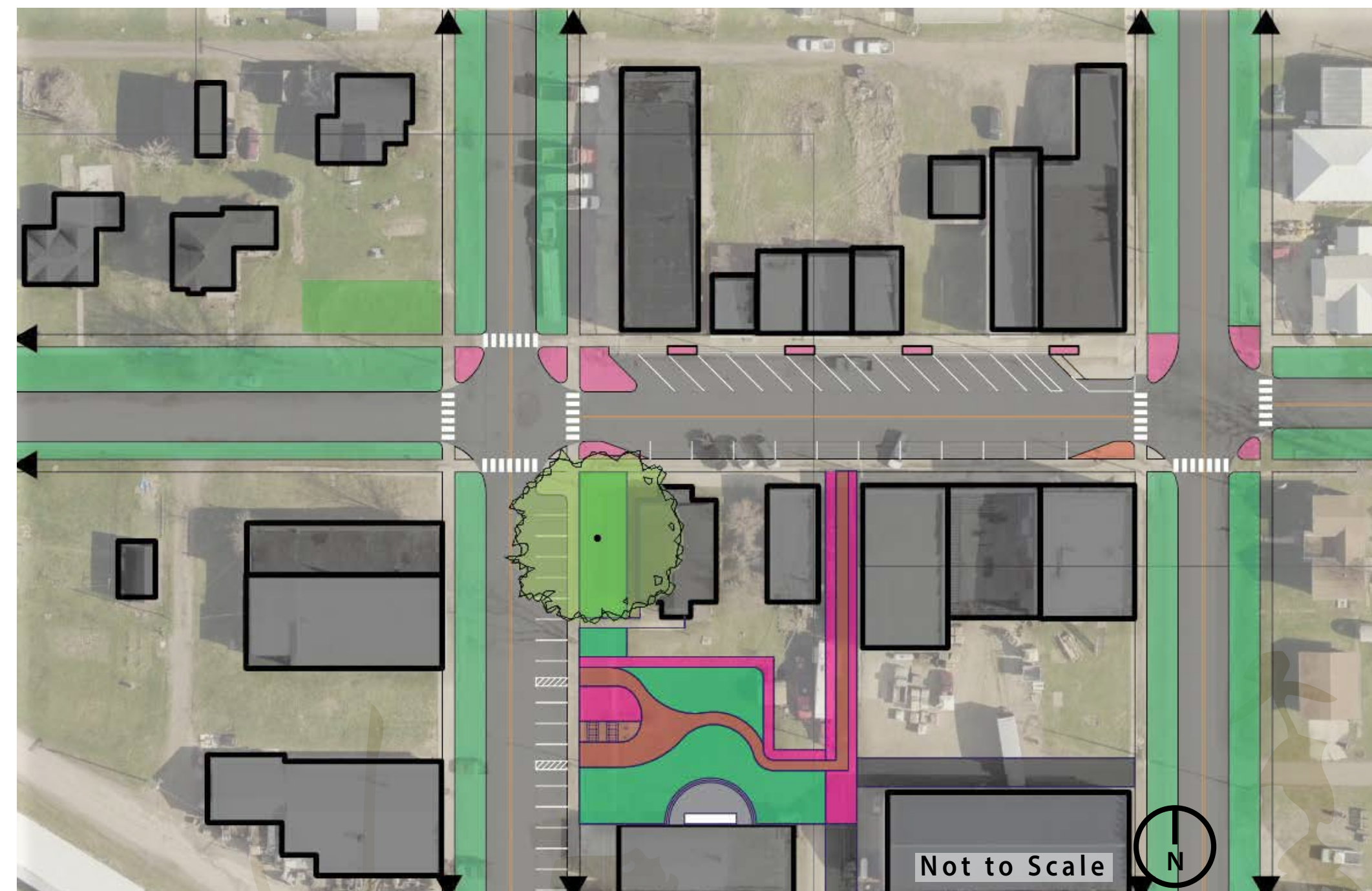
Conceptual photo edit 5.



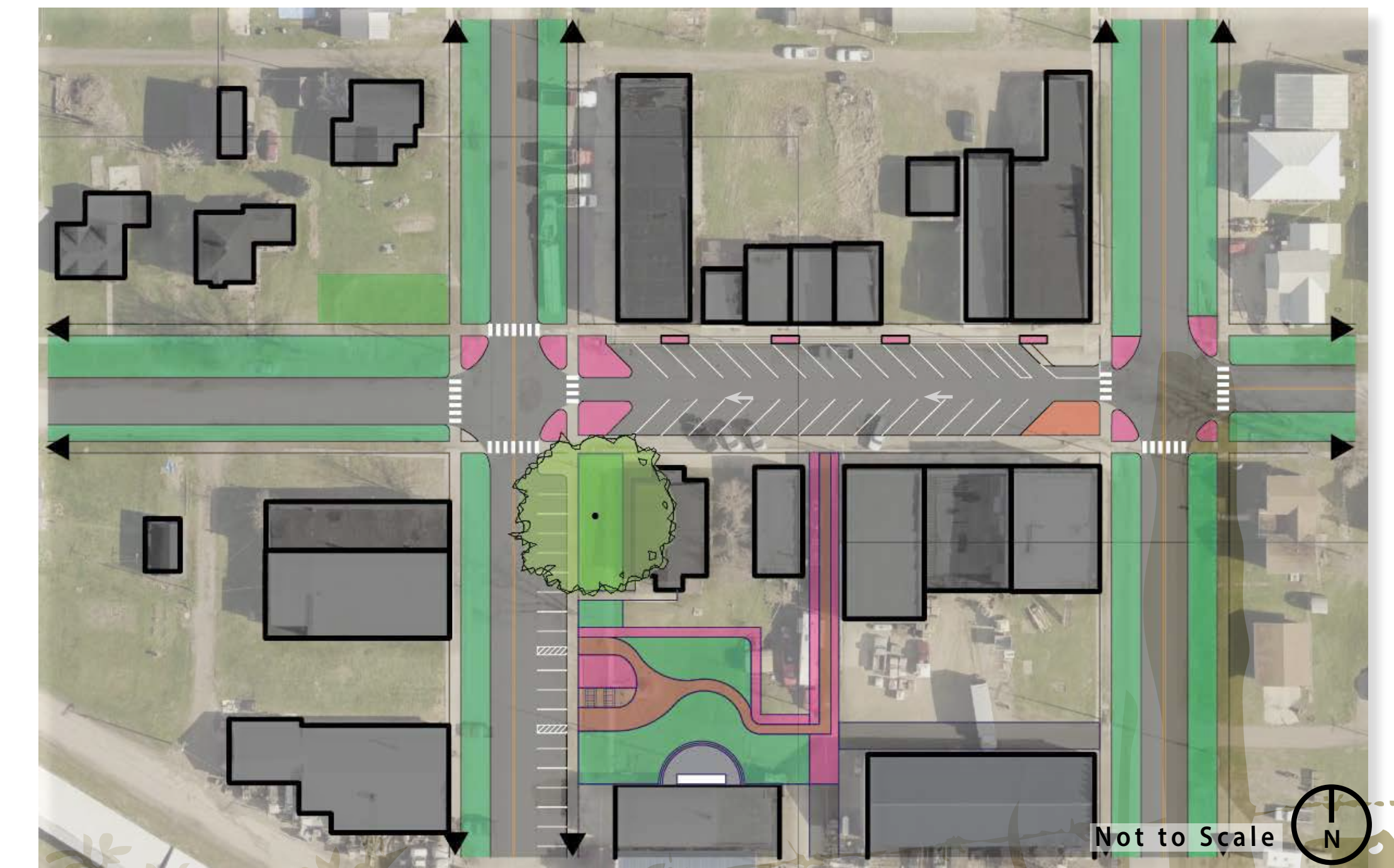
Conceptual photo edit 6.



Conceptual photo edit 7.



Proposed concept for downtown two-way (see conceptual phot edit 6).



Proposed concept for downtown one-way (see conceptual phot edit 7).

Garrison Downtown Enhancements

Landscape Architect: Meg Flenker, PLA, CPESC, CPSWQ Interns: Erika Birnbaum and Amanda Holtman - Flenker Land Architecture Consultants, LLC

Iowa Department of Transportation Trees Forever ISU Landscape Architecture Extension ISU Extension Community and Economic Development Iowa's Living Roadways Summer 2016