

Main Street Sayreville Existing Conditions & Economic Development Study

Produced for the Sayreville Economic & Redevelopment Agency (SERA) by Claro Ventures

10/1/24



Engagement



- Claro Ventures was retained by SERA to conduct a survey/analysis of the conditions along Main Street (from Washington Road to MacArthur Avenue) in Sayreville, New Jersey and to make a series of recommendations on how begin the process of a commercial revitalization effort.
- Key parts of the agreement included:
 - * Taking an inventory of all uses along Main Street
 - * Speaking to key stakeholders
 - * Taking an inventory of the existing streetscape and proposing additions/changes
 - * Interviewing all stakeholders, including merchants and residents
 - * Proposing Economic Development Recommendations

Agenda

- General Observations
- Inventory/Current Uses
- Survey Results
- Proposed Events
- Recommendations
- Next Steps
- Addendum





General Observations

General Observations

No Gravitation to Main Street

- Need more destination options

Perception of Speeding

- All merchants complained

Zoning Hodgepodge

- No consistency in Retail & Commercial

Merchants Fear Crime

- Every merchant stated crime as a concern

No Foot Traffic

- Everyone drives to their destination

65% of the Properties are Residential

- With an additional 14% Mixed-Use



General Observations

Only 3 properties are “stand-alone” Retail

- Only 6 are “stand-alone” Commercial

No Uniformed Signage or Lighting on Storefronts

- Would be a major upgrade

Lack of Parking

- Limited on side streets

Many empty tree pits

- Easy Fix

Sidewalks Could Use Upgrading

- But not a priority now

Old Infrastructure

- Wooden poles need replacing



General Observations

Dirty Streets

- Particularly around cross streets

No benches or beautification

- Limited locations to install

Lack of merchant communication

- But they appreciated the outreach

No retail or commercial from Borough Hall to MacArthur

- However strong residential community

Limited Event Space

- Only four options



The Good News

There is so much potential!!

- Large swaths of vacant land for events
- Significant residential nearby
- Opportunities for development through creative thinking
- Easy, short-term quick fixes to get momentum going
- Less vacancy than you think
- Centerpiece is a religious institution





Inventory & Current Uses

Description of Uses



Single Family Residential – one family home

Two-plus Family Residential/Apartments – any building with two or more rental units

Mixed Use – properties that have a combination of retail/commercial and residential uses

Commercial – properties occupied by non-retail businesses providing services to consumers

Retail – properties where goods are sold to consumers

Religious – properties occupied and/or owned by religious institutions

Public – properties occupied and/or owned by a government agency

Office – properties used exclusively for professional services

Medical – properties used exclusively for medical services

1. 4 types of Zoning
2. Only 6 Vacant Locations
3. 36 Occupied Businesses

Of the 116 Block & Lots surveyed, the USES were as follows:

47 - Single family residential

28 - Two-plus family residential/apartments

17 - Mixed-use (retail/commercial & residential)

6 - Commercial

7 - Religious

3 - Retail

2 - Public

3 - Office

3 - Medical

36 Occupied Businesses Include:

8 Hair Salons

4 Food to Go

3 Offices

3 Auto

3 Medical

2 Floral/Gifts

2 Café's

1 Bakery, Pharmacy, Restaurant, Bank, Dry
Cleaners, Private School, Tattoo Parlor, Funeral
Home, Grocery, Bakery, & Design





Survey Results

SERA Surveys & Interviews



The surveys returned and the interviews with SERA members and others demonstrate that there is a consistent, strong commitment to improve Main Street. Everyone wants to see it work!


Those who returned the surveys are in lock step on the priorities

Excellent guidance was provided which helped with our outreach and observations

Merchants and residents all complained about security, speeding and lack of foot traffic.

SERA Surveys & Interviews

- Restaurants, Coffee Shops & Retail Shops were the three most desired recommendations in the surveys
- Breweries, Ice Cream Shops and Medical offices also received multiple mentions
- Improved parking, better infrastructure and safety/security were listed as the top three priorities
- When asked to rank most to least important issues - Transportation, Beautification and Safety/Security received the most # 1 Rankings
- Advocacy and Marketing/Branding were the least recommended priorities

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1. 19 government/SERA officials responded
 2. While some merchants completed the survey, most provided un-signed feedback
 3. Several residents provided feedback as well

Government/SERA Survey Priorities:

- 1) Transportation
 - 2) Beautification
 - 3) Safety/Security
 - 4) Events
 - 5) Sanitation
 - 6) Marketing/Branding
 - 7) Advocacy
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Merchant and resident feedback mirrored that of the government/SERA members but with a slightly different priority order of :

- 1 - Safety/Security
- 2 - Transportation
- 3 - Beautification



Proposed Events

There are four existing locations that can be used for outdoor event space for family friendly and merchant events, as well as outdoor dining.



Location	Address	Audience	Potential Uses
Flagstar Sidewalk Space	77 Main Street	Under one Hundred	Outdoor Dining, Networking Events, Public Art
Flagstar Parking Lot	77 Main Street	Several Hundred	Networking Events, Music
Church Parking Lot	24 Main Street	Several Hundred	Music, Fairs, Car Show
Church Lot across from Church		Several Hundred	Music, Fairs, Car Show, Holiday Events

Outdoor Event Locations



Recommendations

Improvements

Issue	Count	Solution	Time Table
Empty Tree Pits	24	New Tree Plantings/ Flower Pots	Short Term
Raised Utility Covers	8	Repair	Short Term
Welcome Signs	None	Install Two - @ Washington & MacArthur	Short Term
Trash Receptacles	None	Install 6 @ Cross Streets	Short Term
Speed Limit Enforcement	Minimal	Increase	Short Term

Improvements:



Recommendations – Long Term

- 1) Enhanced crosswalks should be re-designed from Washington to Borough Hall. Repaint (consider optic yellow), flashing slow down/stop signs, reflection devices.
- 2) Quarterly events/promotions in which all merchants participate should be activated.
- 3) Additional “set-aside”, short-term customer parking spots should be designated near merchant locations. Consider hiring an Urban Planning firm that specializes in expanding parking on Main Streets.
- 4) Free, family friendly, inviting entertainment options should be offered at the aforementioned, large open spaces.
- 5) Replace wooden street poles with modern street light poles that you can hang promotional banners from.
- 6) Install additional visual improvements to slow drivers down.



Enhanced Crosswalks:

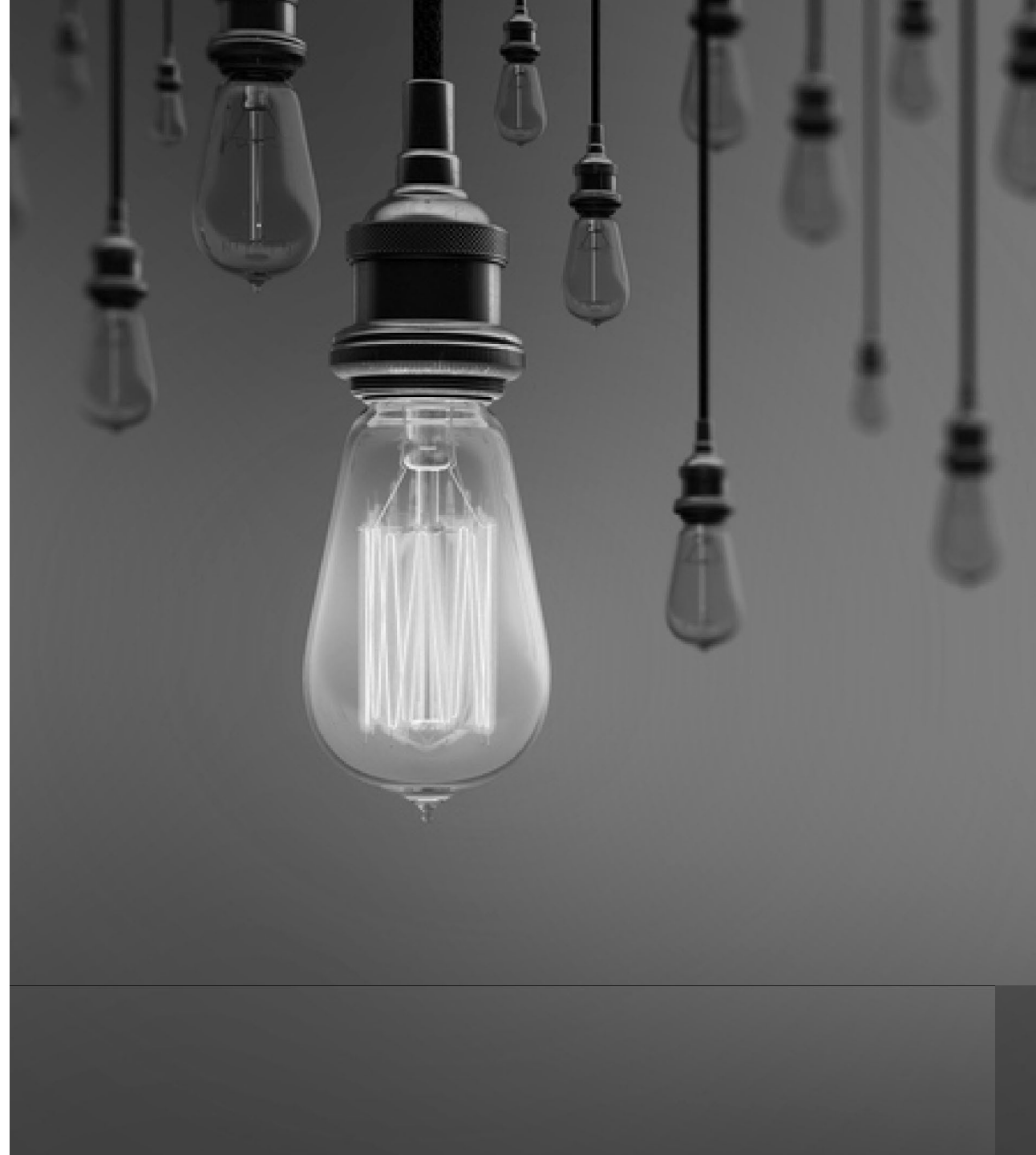





Be Different!

A Commercial Zoning Overlay should be initiated for both sides of Main Street (from Washington Road to Haag Street).

Relocate the Post Office and utilize that strategic corner as a community center/gathering place. (Note – this will free up the nearby public parking lot with 30 spaces).





Offer cash incentives and other benefits to attract targeted businesses.

Consider purchasing assemblages of properties and redeveloping them to draw targeted businesses and other developments.

Be Different!



Be Different with Street Furniture Too!



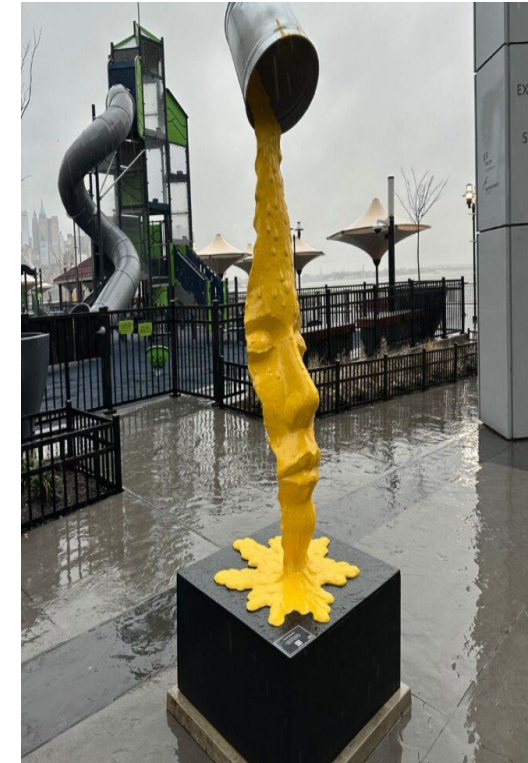
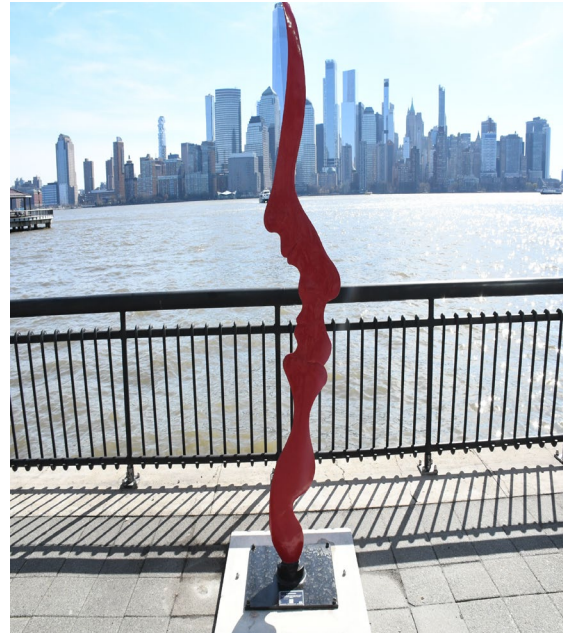
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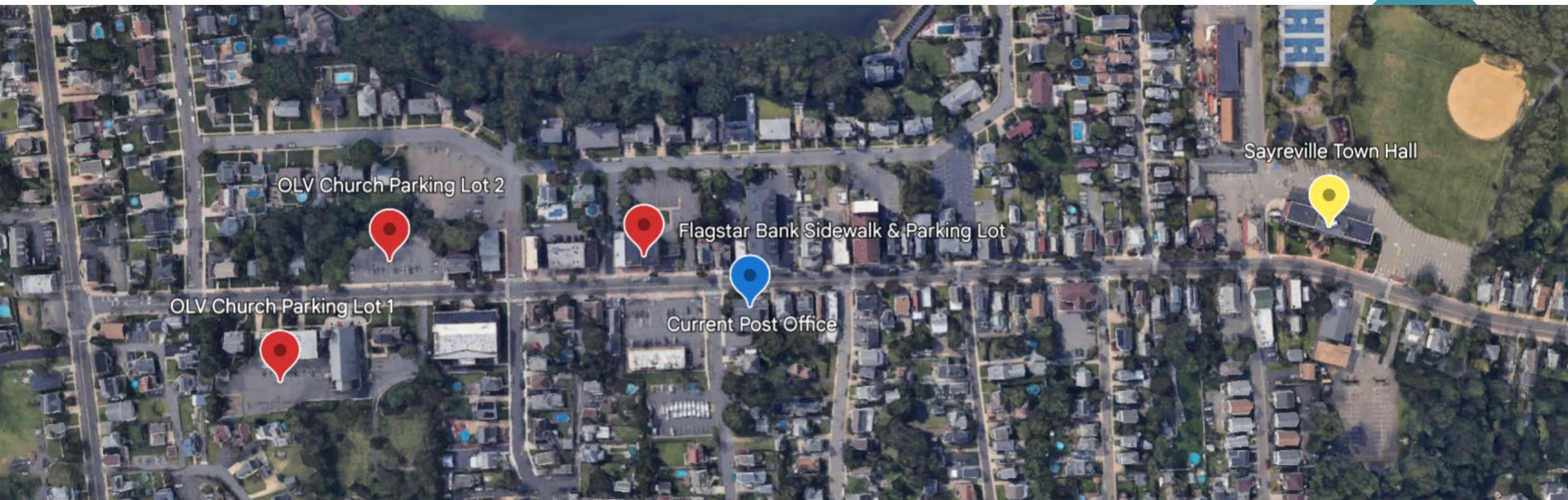


Public Art Always Works!!



Jeff Koons, Balloon Dog (Orange)





OLV Church Parking Lot 1

OLV Church Parking Lot 2

Flagstar Bank Sidewalk & Parking Lot

Current Post Office

Sayreville Town Hall

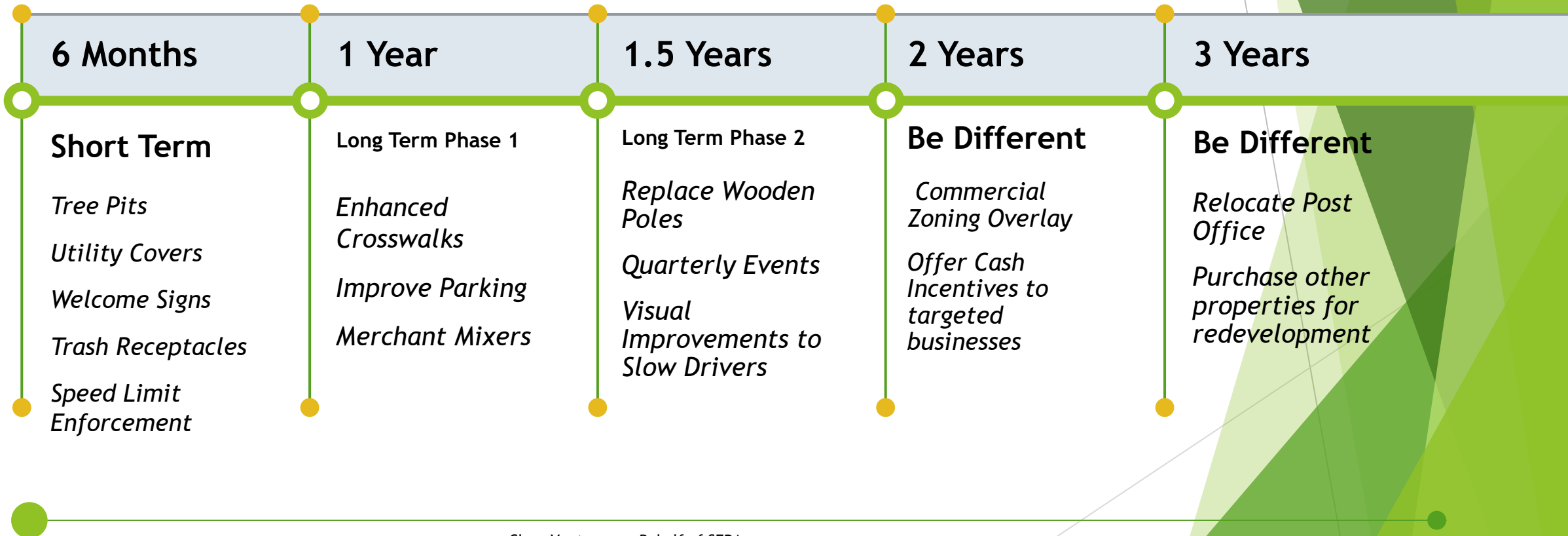
Next Steps:

- 1) SERA should oversee and implement all the Short-Term Improvements.... Immediately.....to show momentum
- 2) SERA should create a Downtown Visioning Committee to implement the Long-Term Improvements and the “out of the box – Be Different” concepts
- 3) Share this report with Merchants
- 4) Hold regular meetings with developers to discuss redevelopment options, incentives, etc
- 5) Only begin the marketing/branding campaign once the short-term tasks are completed and the long-term projects have been initiated.
- 6) Keep thinking different!



SERA Main Street Accomplishment Timeline

Be Different!



Addendums:

- 1) Survey of Uses
- 2) Main Street Improvements
- 3) Merchant Survey
- 4) Stakeholder Survey



Thank you

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