

DOWNTOWN ARCATA IMPROVEMENT PLAN

ARCATA, CALIFORNIA

Downtown Arcata, California is already an attractive, dynamic and healthy commercial and cultural center of the city.

Urban Design Kilday Studios' assignment was to refine, review, and extend the adopted Plan. Through an intensive four day charrette conducted in a vacant storefront in the heart of the Downtown, designers and planners along with UDKS interviewed over forty individuals, from organized merchants, commissioners and council people to actual users. Those interviewed identified strengths and weaknesses of their downtown as well as recent trends in undesirable factors such as vagrancy and crime. UDKS synthesizes the various concerns into specific recommendations for the Downtown. Specifically, UDKS selected appropriate street furniture, landscape materials, paving materials and coordinated public sign program complete with cost estimate and a phasing program.

Crime and vagrancy are addressed by raising light levels around the plaza and placing seating in highly visible, well lit areas. A heavy aggregated concrete paving material, causing an uneasy ride for skateboarders, is used around the center plaza therefore reducing this potential nuisance.

In addition to actual physical improvements, UDKS prepared design review guidelines for site planning, architecture, storefront design, and signs. A richly illustrated final report (executive summary) was submitted to the City.

Client: City of Arcata, CA

