

# CHAPTER 3: REDLANDS MALL

## 3.0. INTRODUCTION

The Redlands Mall site provides an opportunity to revitalize an under-performing site that occupies an important junction between the Downtown Passenger Rail Station, the Downtown commercial core, Sylvan Park, and the neighborhoods to the south. The Mall site originally consisted of six Downtown blocks that accommodated a variety of commercial and mixed-use buildings that were demolished in 1977 to make room for the Mall. With the exception of the CVS Pharmacy and some stores in the standalone retail building at the corner of Redlands Boulevard and Orange Street, the Mall is currently vacant, and has been since 2010.

This chapter provides a brief background and description of the existing conditions of the Mall site, a vision for the future redevelopment of the site, and a summary of important design considerations needed to generate development that is consistent with a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use, transit-oriented, downtown setting.

This Redlands Mall Chapter is comprised of the following sections:

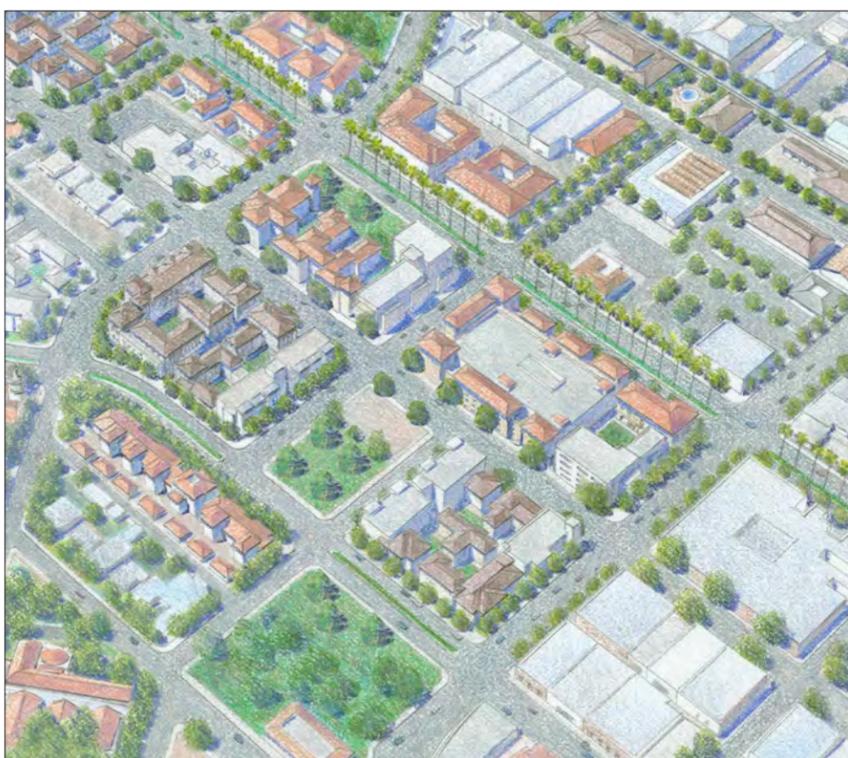
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*Bird's-eye view of the existing Redlands Mall site.*



*View of the Redlands Mall looking west from State Street towards Orange Street.*



*Bird's-eye view of a revitalized Redlands Mall site.*



*View of the redeveloped Redlands Mall site from State Street at Orange Street.*

### 3. REDLANDS MALL

#### 3.1. BACKGROUND

The Redlands Mall is located on an approximately 11 acre site bounded by Orange Street, Redlands Boulevard, Eureka Street, and Citrus Avenue. The site is located at the intersection of State Street and Orange Street – an intersection that from its earliest beginnings was Downtown’s most important corner. A 1888 Sanborn Insurance Map shows the intersection to be the only one that has buildings on all four corners (see page 3:3). Similarly, a birds-eye map from the same period shows Downtown’s principal commercial and mixed-use buildings lining State Street, focusing on the intersection with Orange Street.

The construction of important buildings at the intersection over the ensuing thirty to forty years – the First National Bank Building in 1914 and the La Posada Hotel in 1931 in particular – demonstrates the continued status of State Street and Orange Street as Redlands’ “100 percent corner.” These buildings not only welcomed visitor, but also marked Downtown’s presence for passing motorists, who may not be stopping in Downtown, but definitely knew they were passing through it. Even with the introduction of Highway 99 along Redlands Boulevard, which undoubtedly diverted through-traffic away from State Street, the important status of State Street and its intersection with Orange Street continued.

Downtown’s pre-World War II buildings, originally designed and built to accommodate people disembarking from trolley or train lines, were pedestrian-oriented. Typically set flush with the back of sidewalk with wall or projecting signage oriented toward pedestrians, their scale and ornamentation aimed to attract passing pedestrians. As automobiles replaced the trolleys and trains as the predominant form of transportation, Downtown continued to accommodate cars with on-street parking and signage oriented towards pedestrians and passing cars.

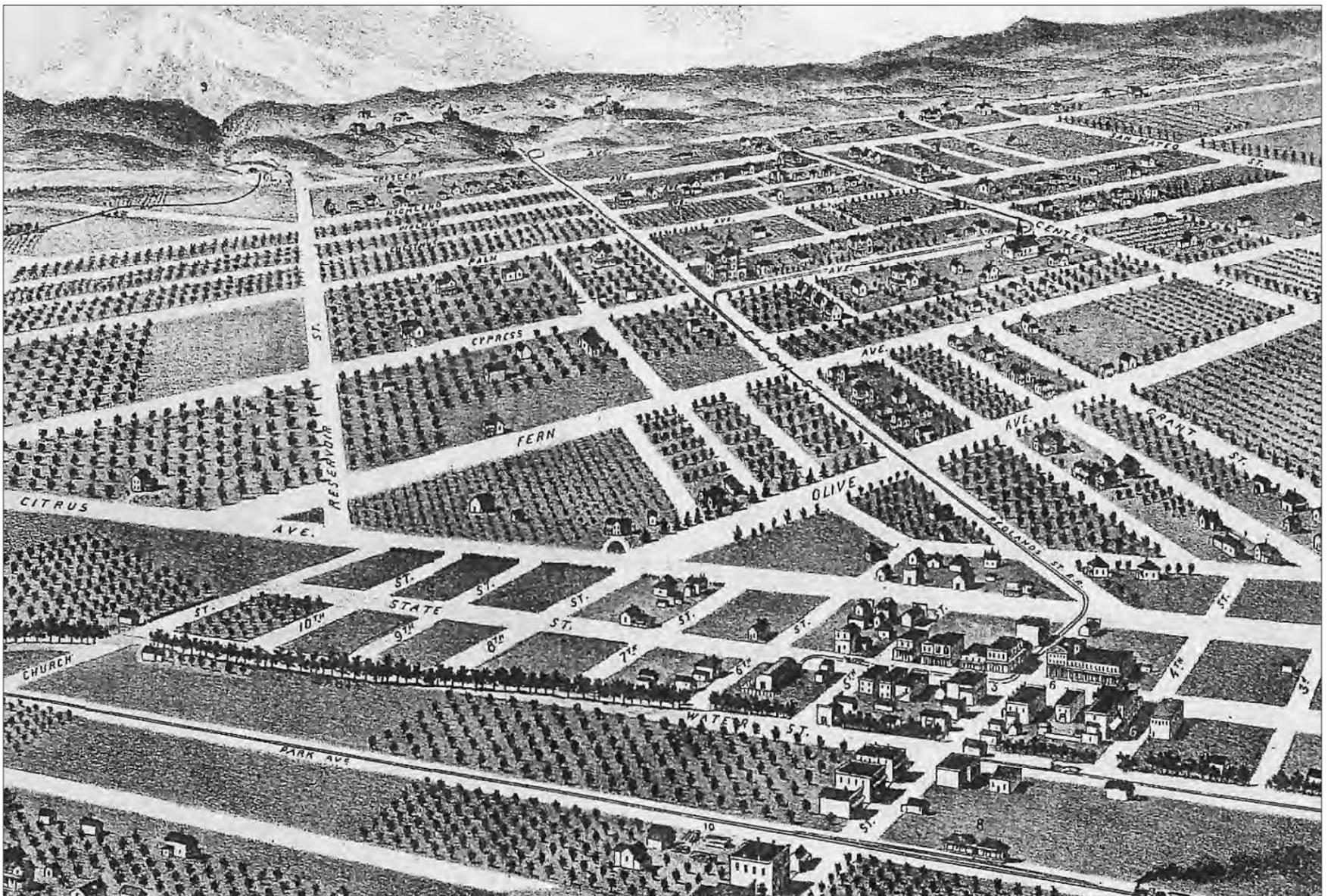
Following World War II, Redlands’ commercial built environment underwent profound changes. New construction expanded well beyond the original downtown commercial district, first following the new Highway 99 route along Redlands Boulevard, then shifting north to

cater to traffic on Interstate 10 (completed in 1962). Meanwhile, many existing buildings within the original commercial core were demolished, making way for construction on various scales: single buildings on single lots, multi-parcel parking lots, and shopping centers occupying one or more entire blocks. Chief among these was the Redlands Mall.

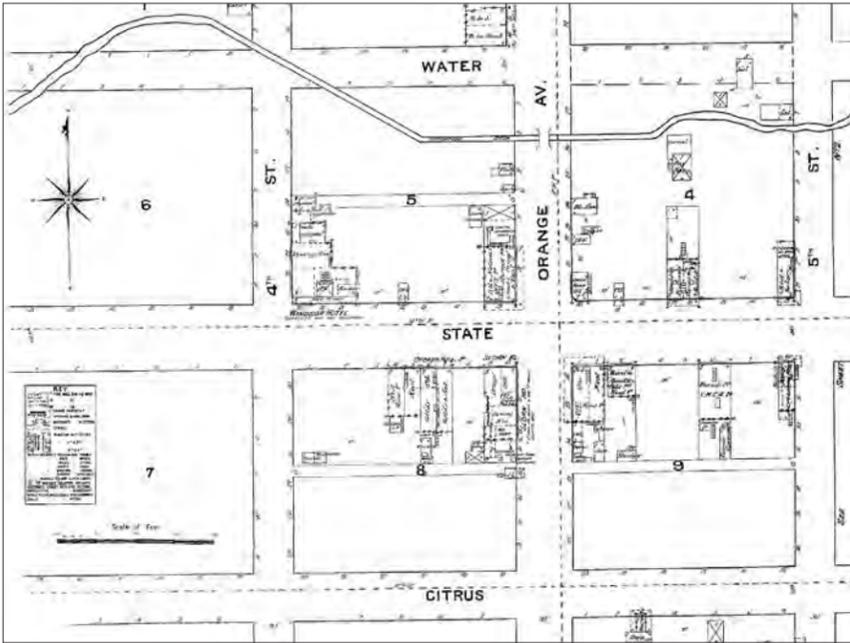
Completed in 1977, the Mall was built according to the urban renewal principles of the 1960s and 1970s of “clearing away” under-performing, “obsolete” buildings to make room for expanded civic centers, apartments, and new retail, typically in the form of shopping malls. The development of the Mall resulted in the leveling of six Downtown blocks, including the First National Bank building, the La Posada Hotel, and the Redlands Elks Club, as well as numerous stores and businesses. The “100 percent corner” status of the intersection – eroded away by the presence of surface parking lots between the sidewalk and the windowless Mall building – was immediately lost.

Planned with the intention of revitalizing Downtown Redlands, the two-story Mall contained more than 173,000 square feet of enclosed leasable space, including space for a department store anchor (first Harris’ and then Gottschalks), and a 12,586-square-foot freestanding retail building at the corner of Orange Street and Redlands Boulevard.

During the mid 1990s the mall began showing signs of decline as popular, nationwide stores began to gradually be replaced by independent tenants. In 1998, Gottschalks acquired Harris’ and the Mall’s Harris’ store was replaced by Gottschalks. The Mall’s decline continued into the early 2000s as sales dropped to precipitously low levels. In 2009, Gottschalks filed for bankruptcy and closed all stores, including the Redlands Mall location. After struggling financially following the closure of Gottschalks, the Mall was closed for good on September 30, 2010 and all leases were immediately terminated. Except for the CVS Pharmacy and the stores in the freestanding retail building at the corner of Redlands Boulevard and Orange Street (Denny’s, Union Bank, and a Mattress Showroom), the Mall remains closed to this day.



1888 Bird's-eye view of Redlands looking southeast. The most important intersection (“100% corner”) of Redlands’ original town center can be seen at the at the intersection of State Street and Orange Street (A.K. Smiley Public Library Archives).



1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Note buildings on all four corners of States Street and Orange Street.



1959 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. The brown parcels along the west side of Orange Street at State Street are the First National Bank (south) and La Posada Hotel (north).



The La Posada Hotel, originally located on the northwest corner of State Street and Orange Street, was demolished in 1975.



The First National Bank Building, originally located on the southwest corner of State Street and Orange Street, was demolished in 1975.



State Street looking west towards Orange Street during the 1940s. The First National Bank Building can be seen to the left and the La Posada Hotel to the right. State Street beyond Orange Street was vacated in 1977 to make room for the Redlands Mall (A.K. Smiley Public Library Archives).

### 3. REDLANDS MALL

#### 3.2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Surrounded on all sides by surface parking lots, the Mall building is located at the center of the site, is completely internally oriented, and lacks street-facing windows. When it was still open for business, the Mall was accessed from one entrance on the east side and two along the north and south sides (one into the Mall and the other directly into the anchor store). A vine-covered trellis connects the Mall's Orange Street entrance to Orange Street along the State Street alignment.

In stark contrast to Downtown's traditional, pedestrian-oriented blocks and buildings located to the east of Orange Street, this configuration inhibits north-south circulation (between the Downtown Station, Smiley Park, and the neighborhoods to the south) and east-west circulation (between Downtown, the Esri campus, and neighborhoods to the west), and has compromised the "100% corner" status that Orange Street and State Street once held.

Currently the surface parking lots along Orange Street provide visitors with convenient parking across the street from Downtown stores, restaurants, and businesses located east of Orange Street, as well as for special events such as Market Night.

In addition, there is a stormwater easement on the southeast corner of Eureka Street and Redlands Boulevard. Construction on the corner can only occur if the subterranean stormwater pipe that crosses through the easement is relocated.

The Redlands Mall along Redlands Boulevard currently serves as Redlands' transfer center, providing timed transfers between four bus lines – see Section 5.5 (Transit Network) for more information. Because of the urban unfriendly design of the Mall, the bus stop is an uninviting and unappealing place to wait for and transfer between buses.



*The demolition of the First National Bank Building.*



*The vacant Redlands Mall (photo courtesy San Bernardino Sun).*



*The entrance to the Gottschalks entrance, boarded up since 2009.*



*Vine-covered arcades provide pedestrian access between the Mall and Orange Street.*



*The Redlands Mall fronts Redlands Boulevard with a blank, windowless wall, and a surface parking lot.*



*The Redlands Transfer Center is an uninviting and unappealing place to wait for and transfer between buses.*

### 3.3. VISION

Located within easy walking distance of the Downtown Station and various bus and bicycle routes, Smiley Park, and restaurants and stores along State Street and Orange Street, the Mall site is transformed into a vibrant pedestrian-oriented extension of Downtown, reminiscent of what existed prior to the construction of the Mall in 1977. Key features include:

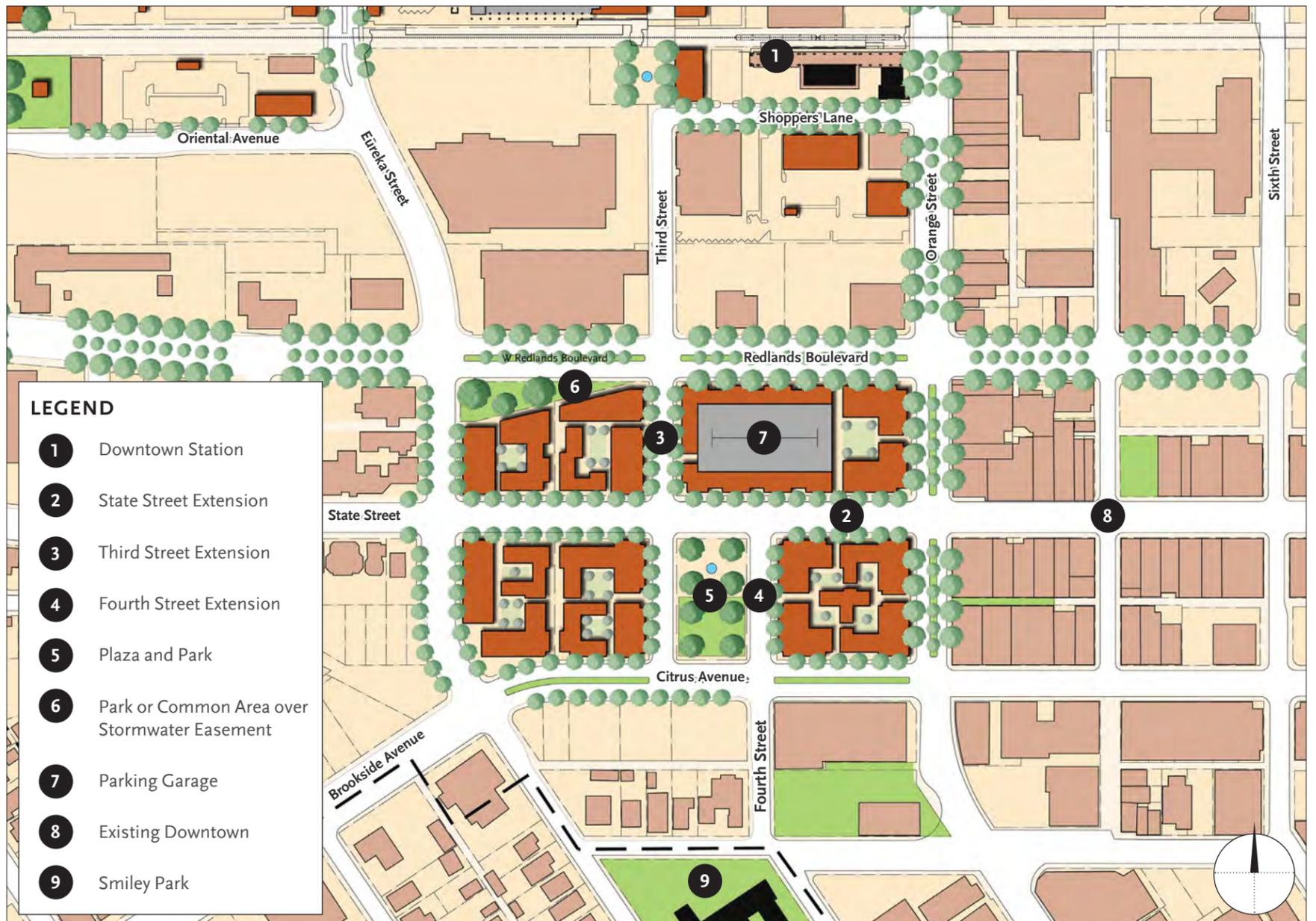
- The extension of State Street, Third Street, and/or Fourth Street into the site, resurrecting the interconnected block network that existing prior to the Mall, encouraging pedestrians and others to move through and into the site, rather than being forced to traverse around the site.
- The extension into the Mall site of the landscape character of State Street east of Orange Street (large canopy trees located in the street between angled parking spaces).
- New streets (whether public or private) detailed with sidewalks, curbs, street trees, street lights, and, as applicable, street furniture.
- A plaza or park that provides outdoor space for Downtown residents, employees, shoppers, and visitors and that can accommodate events and activities such as Redlands' annual New Year's Eve festivities. A market hall or civic building could be introduced adjacent to the plaza or park. A park or common area for the adjacent housing can also be introduced over the stormwater easement.
- New mixed-use and multi-family buildings that are located next to and accessed directly from the sidewalk and face the street and proposed plaza/park with ample windows and ground floor frontage elements that provide a pedestrian-friendly transition from the sidewalk to the building – shopfronts for retail and restaurant uses, and stoops or lobbies with articulated entries for residences. Ranging from three to five stories in height, these buildings employ massing strategies in character with Redlands' historic buildings.
- Parking in a subterranean garage(s) and/or a garage(s) located at the center of the block and lined with retail, office, and/or residential uses in order to provide sufficient parking and to enable the creation of a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented public realm.



The landscape of State Street is extended westward into the Mall site.



Example of an urban plaza (Healdsburg, California).



Illustrative Plan of the revitalized Redlands Mall site.

### 3. REDLANDS MALL

#### 3.3. VISION (CONTINUED)



Bird's-eye view of a revitalized Redlands Mall site.



Active sidewalks.



A market hall building.



An urban park.



New building on Mall site reminiscent in design to the demolished La Posada Hotel.

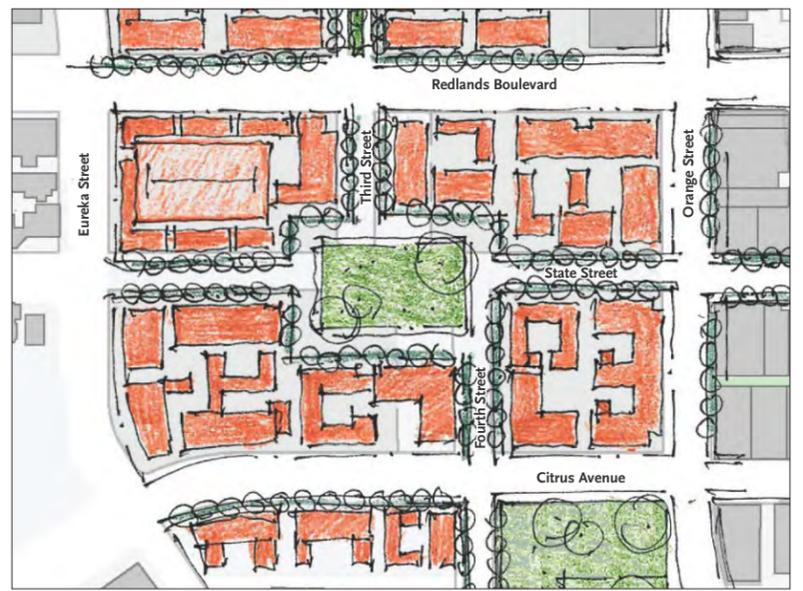
**A. Alternatives.** The Illustrative Plan on the previous page and the three alternatives on this page show three of many different ways the Redlands Mall could be redeveloped into a walkable, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use, transit-oriented destination. Key attributes of each alternative are:

- Alternative 1.** State Street and Third Street are extended through the site with the section between Third and Eureka streets being pedestrian-only. A new plaza or park is introduced on the west side of Orange Street, centered on State Street and terminating the vista from either direction. Cars navigate around the north and south sides of the plaza or park. A park is also introduced on the stormwater easement that crosses the southeast corner of Eureka street and Redlands Boulevard. A new lined parking garage is built on the block bounded by Orange Street, Redlands Boulevard, State Street, and Third Street.
- Alternative 2.** State Street, Third Street, and Fourth Street are extended into the site. Like Alternative 1, a plaza or park is introduced centered on State Street, but at the center of the site. A new lined parking garage is located on the block bounded by Eureka Street, Redlands Boulevard, Third Street, and State Street, assuming the stormwater pipe is relocated.
- Alternative 3.** State Street, Third Street, and Fourth Street are extended into the site. A north-south linear park flanks the Third Street and Fourth Street extensions, connecting Redlands Boulevard to Citrus Avenue. Like Alternative 2, a new lined parking garage is located on the block bounded by Eureka Street, Redlands Boulevard, Third Street, and State Street, assuming the stormwater pipe is relocated.

All of the alternatives extend the existing landscape character of State Street into the site, provide new buildings with pedestrian-oriented ground floors and massing that is consistent with Redlands' historic buildings (both existing and demolished), and provide a comfortable and attractive place for transit riders to wait for buses and other transit options along Redlands Boulevard. Regardless of how the site develops, proposed designs must adhere to the principles of transit oriented development described in Section 2.1 and to the standards of the Development Code (Chapter 4).



Redlands Mall Illustrative Alternative 1 (with pedestrian paseo concept).



Redlands Mall Illustrative Alternative 2 (with central park/plaza concept).



Redlands Mall Illustrative Alternative 3 (with connected parks concept).



A parking garage located at the center of the block and lined with commercial uses.



A new building with varied massing.



State Street extension through the Redlands Mall site.

### 3. REDLANDS MALL

#### 3.3. VISION (CONTINUED)

**B. Design Considerations.** The pedestrian-scaled, downtown character envisioned for the Mall site requires that new buildings, open spaces, and streets be designed together to generate a walkable, pedestrian-scaled environment. Key design considerations, further elaborated in the Development Code (Chapter 4), needed to achieve this end, include:

- 1. Building Design.** New buildings on the Mall site must be designed not as over-sized, monolithic structures, but as a series of smaller scale buildings, similar to those currently found in Downtown and to historic buildings that have been demolished over the years. This is achieved by introducing multiple buildings on each block, or designing single buildings to appear like multiple buildings. Strategies for achieving this include:
  - Employing interesting building articulation strategies.
  - Assigning unique architectural styles or design treatments to individual buildings or portions of buildings.
  - Accentuating corner buildings and/or providing corner plazas.
  - Providing a variety of frontage elements, and varying their type, design, and/or detailing.
  - Varying how residential buildings are accessed, including direct access from the sidewalk through a stoop or porch, or through a common lobbies.
  - Designing buildings along Orange Street to be compatible with the massing and scale of the historic buildings along the west side of Orange Street (across the street from the Mall site).

See Section 4.5 (Building Articulation and Massing Standards), Section 4.6 (Frontage Standards), Section 4.7 (Building Design Standards), and Section 4.15 (Special Lot Conditions)

- 2. Open Space Design.** The Mall's plaza or park must be designed as an attractive, inviting, comfortable outdoor room. Key design components include:
  - The park or plaza must be at least one third of an acre in size (0.33 acre) and must front at least one street.
  - Visibility from one side of the park or plaza to the other is essential. Hedges, walls, and other visual impediments must be kept low and to a minimum.
  - Adjacent buildings must face the park or plaza with windows, doors, and appropriate frontage types. Park-facing ground floor uses should be retail and/or restaurant uses.
  - Access to the park or plaza must be provided from adjacent sidewalks by accessible paths that are consistent with the design theme of the park or plaza and with its urban, downtown setting.

See Section 4.16 (Park, Plaza, and Open Space Design Standards) of the Development Code for more detailed requirements.

- 3. Block Design.** A street and block network must be introduced in order to generate a walkable, interconnected, Downtown environment. New streets must accommodate automobile traffic and on-street parking, although State Street between the Third Street alignment and Eureka Street may be pedestrian-only. See Section 4.14 (Block Design Standards) of the Development Code and Section 5.6 (Street Types) for more detailed requirements.
- 4. Street Design.** The design of new streets within the Mall site and new streetscapes along existing surrounding streets must be designed to promote an inviting, active, walkable, downtown environment. Key design components include:
  - Street trees that provide shade, do not uplift sidewalks, and can thrive in an urban environment.
  - Pedestrian-scaled street lighting.
  - Street furnishings such as benches, waste receptacles, bicycle racks, and similar items that help to define pedestrian use areas. Additional and optional amenities include tables, chairs, umbrellas, kiosks, and planters.

See Section 4.16 (Street and Streetscape Design Standards) of the Development Code for more detailed requirements.



*A mixed-use building with a corner tower element.*



*A multi-family building with varied floor heights.*



*A downtown plaza hosts an evening concert.*



*A new street detailed with curbs, street trees, and street lights.*