



City Hall
208 North First Avenue
Alpena, Michigan 49707
www.alpena.mi.us

Planning & Development

AGENDA

City of Alpena Planning Commission

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, August 9, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

Alpena, Michigan

CALL TO ORDER:

ROLL CALL:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting June 14, 2016

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMISSION ACTION:

BUSINESS:

1. Discuss the proposed conversion of Second Avenue from Chisholm Street to Water Street to a Two-Way traffic pattern.

COMMUNICATIONS:

REPORTS:

1. Development Update
2. Redevelopment Ready Communities Update
 - a. Downtown Plan and Marketing Study
 - b. Development sites

CALL TO PUBLIC:

MEMBERS' COMMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:



MINUTES

City of Alpena Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
June 14, 2016
Alpena, Michigan

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Randy Boboltz, Planning Commission Vice-Chair.

ROLL CALL: PLANNING COMMISSION

Present: Hunter, Gilmore, VanWagoner, Boboltz, Lewis, Mitchell

Absent: Sabourin, Heraghty and Dort

Staff: Adam Poll (Director of Planning & Development), Don Gilmet (City Building Official)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The June 14, 2016, agenda was approved as presented.

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMISSION ACTION:

PC 16-SU-04: Chad Mischley has requested a special use permit be granted to allow the construction of a 40' x 60' building to be utilized for auto repair and wash facility and an outdoor vehicular sales area located at 928 W Chisholm Street.

Poll gave the staff report to the Planning Commission. Poll noted the applicant is requesting to construct a 40' x 60' building to be used for washing and repairing vehicles for Hudson's Auto. The applicant is proposing to set the building back 80' from the front property line along Chisholm Street and 20' from the alley. Poll noted that the applicant has indicated that the building would be a pole building design but would utilize decorative siding. The proposed plan shows a 0' side yard setback which would require that a setback variance is obtained. Poll noted that the applicant requested to have an outdoor vehicle sales area in front of the proposed building. The applicant has indicated that the auto repair would be for their own vehicles and would principally involve detailing, but some repair would be conducted as well.

Poll noted the property in question is zoned CCD Commercial Corridor District and the requested use of auto repair and outdoor vehicular sales is allowed in this district through the issuance of a special permit. The CCD district has a maximum setback for the Chisholm Street Corridor of 20', the applicant is requesting an 80' front yard setback and would have to have a variance granted. In this instance, the applicant has indicated that the new building is to support the primary use of outdoor automotive sales, and that maximum visibility for the cars is beneficial to the business. The proposed setback matches the

location of his existing sales office. The purpose of the 20' max front yard setback is intended to keep the commercial uses along the street and the parking in the side or rear. In this instance vehicular sales display is the commercial use, and it would appear logical to allow the greater setback.

Poll went over the supplemental regulations in place for auto repair and outdoor vehicular sales.

Poll noted the most affected property would appear to be a legal non-conforming residence located at 920 W Chisholm. The residence is owned by the applicant, who has noted that eventually he would like to incorporate the lot into the existing business. As it is still a residential use, a setback variance to allow a 0' setback is required.

Poll noted the new proposed vehicular sales area is currently shown extending to the property line of 920 W Chisholm. Commercial parking is required to have a 10' side yard setback from a residential district. As the property at 920 W Chisholm is a residential use, but in a commercial district, the 10' setback provision does not apply, however, a 5' parking setback is required. If the applicant wants a 0' parking setback they would have to request a variance.

Poll noted the applicant has indicated that they would utilize decorative siding, but did not indicate what type of siding would be utilized. They indicated they would like to also reside the existing office to match the new building. As this is a commercial area and the proposed use is commercial in nature, staff would prefer to add the condition that vertical metal siding cannot be utilized.

Poll noted that as the proposed use would appear to meet the supplemental requirements, and would allow an existing business to expand without negatively impacting any neighbors, staff would recommend **approval** of the request for a special permit at 928 W Chisholm Street to construct a 40' x 60' building to be utilized for an auto repair and wash facility and expand the existing outdoor vehicular sales area subject to the following conditions:

1. A setback variance is granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals for the front and side yard setback.
2. Vertical metal siding is not utilized.

FAVOR:

Chad Mischley, 920 W Chisholm Street, noted that he was the applicant. He noted that he resided in the home most affected by the proposed building and that he did eventually plan to utilize the property at 920 Chisholm as part of the dealership and it would not continue as a residential use after he moved out. Mr. Mischley expressed concern over the condition that vertical metal siding is not utilized and noted there were many varieties of attractive vertical metal siding. He noted that he understood the intent of the staff recommendation to keep the building looking attractive, but felt that eliminating all vertical metal siding was too constricting. He noted that he did not his building to resemble a pole barn, but asked that the staff condition be removed.

OPPOSITION:

None.

COMMISSIONER'S DISCUSSION AND ACTION:

Hunter questioned if the Planning Commission could impose design standards in the Commercial Corridor District. Poll noted that as the request required a special permit, design elements could be reviewed. Poll indicated that in the Central Business District design elements area required to be reviewed and that in this case being in a highly visible urban environment that would be something the Planning Commission could require. Poll noted that he did agree that there is some vertical metal siding on the market that may be appropriate, but wanted to get the applicant approval at this hearing and not make him go through another review process later.

Boboltz noted that he understands staff concerns regarding not allowing vertical metal siding, and noted that he is not opposed to the use of the metal siding on the rear of the building. Boboltz noted that the Planning Commission had placed some conditions on the highly visible portions of the auto repair facility of Washington Avenue, but also indicated the proposed building was significantly more set back from the street.

Van Wagoner noted that while he understood staffs position, he was ok with some vertical metal siding, and noted that he felt the applicant would not install a type of siding that would be detrimental to his business.

Hunter noted he did not think that the condition not allowing vertical metal siding should be required.

Motion made by Hunter, seconded by Mitchell to approve a special use permit be granted to allow the construction of a 40' x 60' building to be utilized for auto repair and wash facility and an outdoor vehicular sales area located at 928 W Chisholm Street with the condition that the appropriate variances are obtained from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Yays: VanWagoner, Boboltz, Lewis, Mitchell, Hunter and Gilmore

Nays: None.

Absent: Sabourin, Heraghty, Dort

Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

BUSINESS:

None.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

REPORTS:

Development Updates

Poll indicated that the former Alpena Power Office building demolition project underway with the asbestos abatement in the process. He noted that demo was anticipated to be completed in early July.

Poll noted that other grant projects were moving forward, with The Owl opening soon, and Alpena Furniture finalizing details with the MEDC.

CALL TO PUBLIC:

None.

MEMBERS' COMMENTS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m. by Vice Chair Boboltz.

Wayne Lewis, Secretary

To: Alpena DDA
From: Brad Strader, PTP, MKSK Studios
Date: June 6, 2016
Subj: **Draft** observations of downtown circulation and parking

MKSK Studios, along with the Chesapeake Group is part of the LSL Planning team that was asked to provide some recommendations for downtown Alpena. Our work is through our role as advisors for the MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Community Program. This memo outlines our thoughts about the downtown transportation and parking.

MKSK Studios and the rest of the consulting team have done downtown plans, market studies, economic development strategies, parking and circulation plans for many small towns in Michigan and other states. Our thoughts below are based on that experience along with observations, street measurements, and discussions during our recent visit to Alpena.

As noted previously, this is a fairly general analysis. A more detailed evaluation would require new turning movement counts at the signalized intersections during the AM and PM peak hours for typical traffic days. Those figures could be used in a computer simulation model such as "Synchro" that would estimate the future delays, outline the most efficient traffic signal timing, help identify how long the turn bays should be based on the number of turns etc. This type of analysis by a traffic engineer would give a higher degree of confidence before making changes. In addition, if the city wishes to pursue a conversion of the MDOT segments of 2nd and 3rd Streets to two-way, they may require that type of analysis by one of the MDOT pre-qualified firms. (If the city pursues that, we can help identify qualified firms for you).

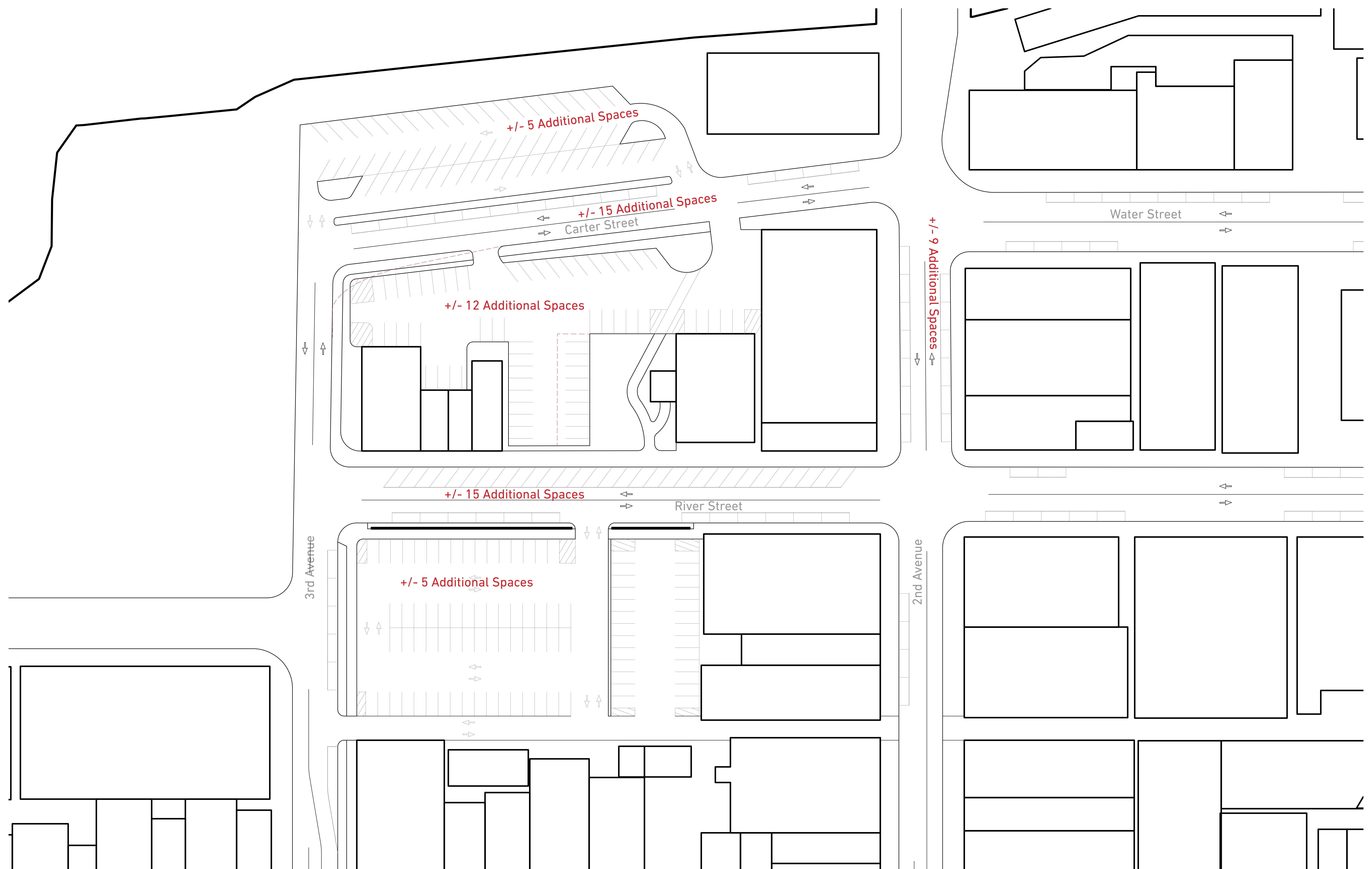
The goal for us was to evaluate changes to the circulation system that might be better in terms of downtown business vitality, improve walkability, retain or add parking and provide acceptable traffic flow. We will be preparing a more comprehensive report but wanted to get you some additional interim materials for your DDA meeting.

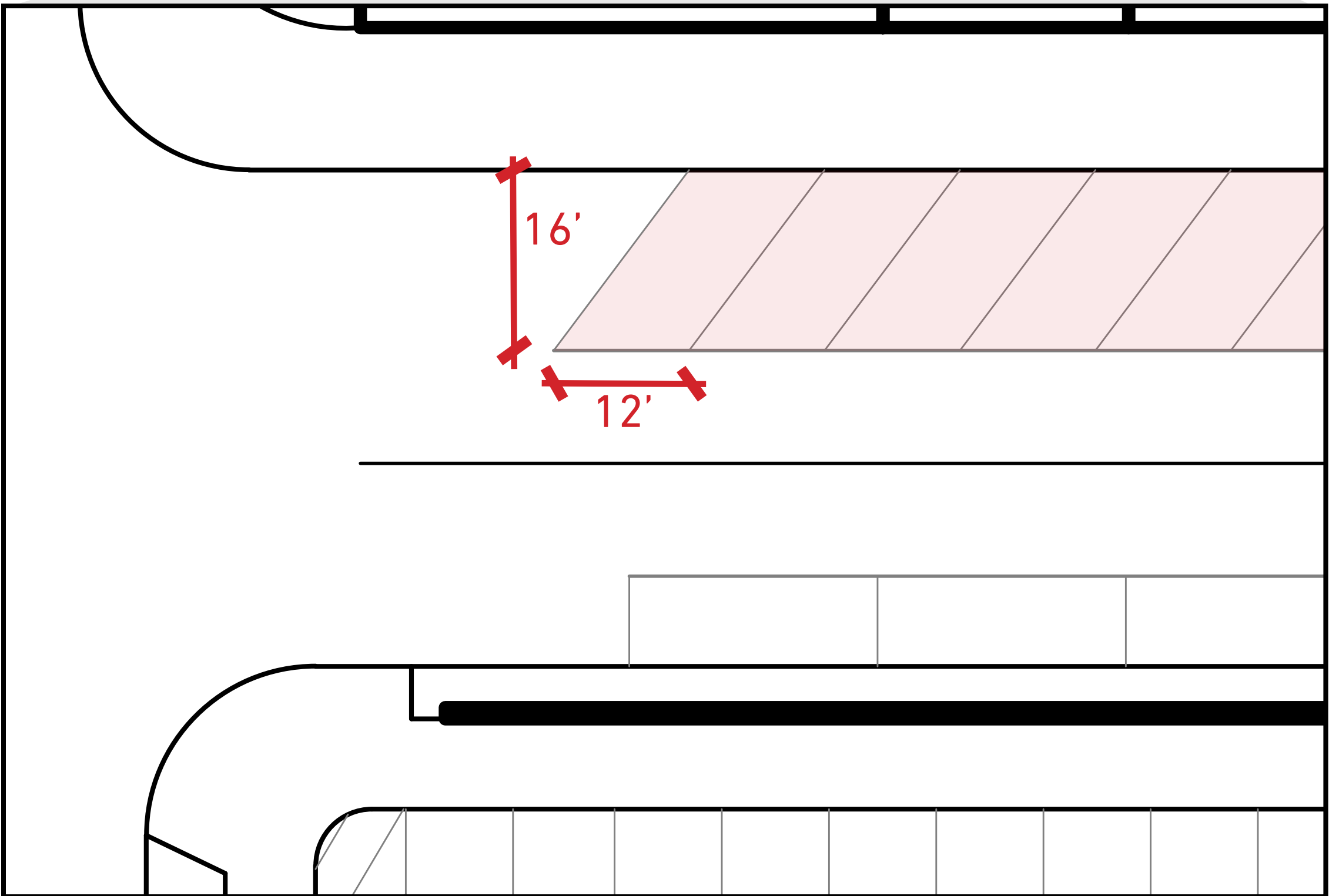
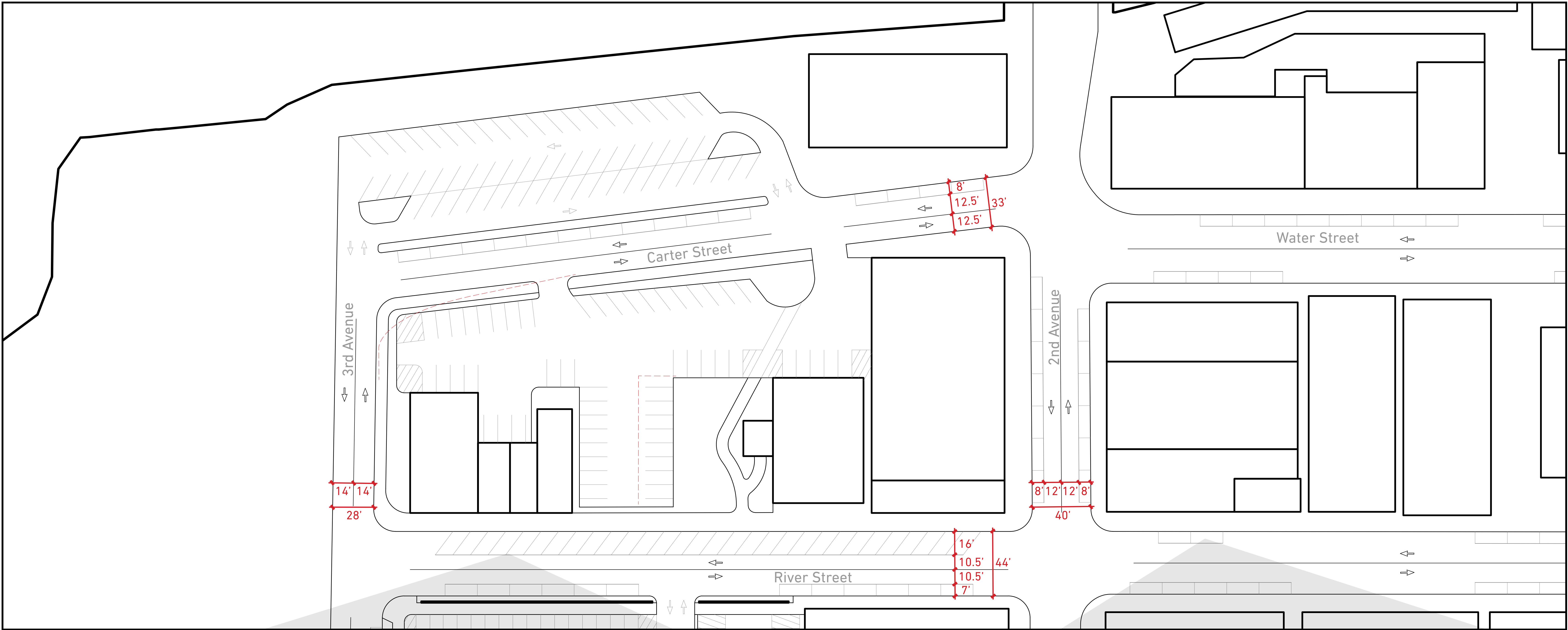
Our findings and ideas:

1. Typically one-way streets generally have higher capacity (more traffic can be processed per minute of green time at traffic signals, traffic speeds are a bit higher), and may allow more on-street parking. One-way streets may allow deliveries from the street since traffic has another lane to travel around a stopped delivery truck. One-way streets are generally thought to have a negative impact on businesses, especially in towns with a high volume of visitors/tourists like Alpena.
2. Two-way streets typically have lower capacity (less green time per let at the traffic signals because traffic enters the intersection from 4 legs instead of 3), may have a few more crashes and often mean less on-street parking (because of the need to have turn lanes and clear zones near the intersections). If delivery trucks are from the street, it can block traffic. So understanding how businesses receive deliveries is important. The prevailing attitude these days is that 2-way traffic is much better for businesses because it is easier for shoppers to navigate. Thus many cities are converting one-way streets to two-way and few are converting two-way to one-way.

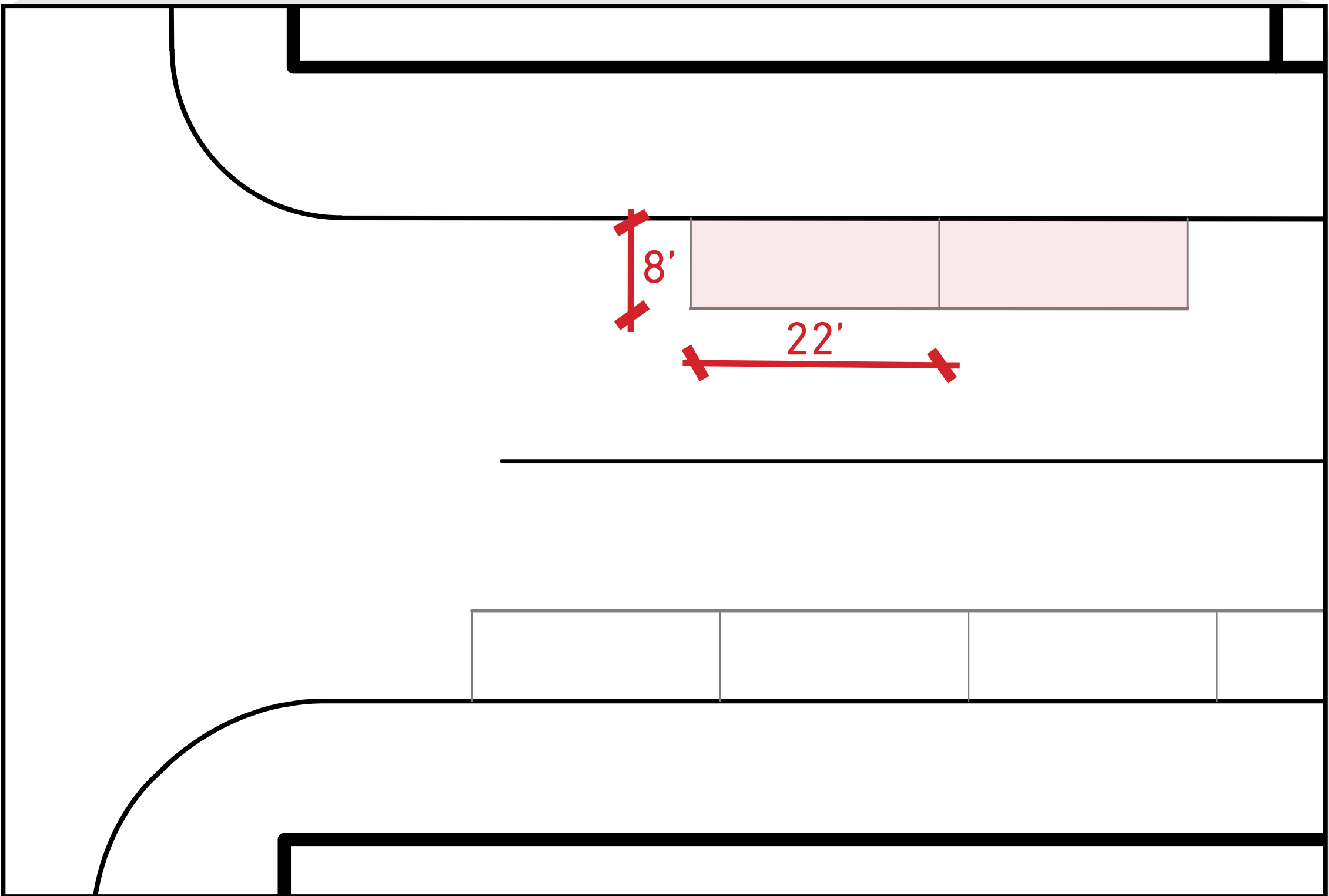
3. The limited traffic volumes data we have seen indicates traffic counts in the city are less than years ago when the streets were converted to one-way. Current traffic volumes in the city and the width of the street support converting the one-way streets to two-way. The attached drawings illustrate generally how that could be laid out and the resulting on-street parking. We are showing short left turn bays on the north and south legs of 2nd and 3rd Streets at Chisholm.
4. If the city pursues conversion of 2nd and 3rd Streets, in my opinion it would be sensible to do this for both the city and MDOT segments of the street. This would be less confusing to the public. It would also be more cost effective than changing the traffic signals once, then doing it again if the MDOT segments are changed later. I suggest a discussion with MDOT to obtain their input on how to proceed with that option. Perhaps such a meeting could be scheduled with MDOT and the city engineer when we are next in Alpena.
5. My general opinion is that it would be easier to make a change to two-way after Labor Day so that the local residents and businesses can become familiar with the change before the next tourist season. That also would give the city time to work on the signal timing and design details before the peak traffic time of the year.
6. While closing off Carter Street has been suggested, we recommend it remain open. It could though be just westbound to help reduce conflicts at the intersection with 2nd and Water Street. Keeping Carter open gives an option to River Street (helpful if angled parking is added) and would help distribute traffic. If Carter were narrowed as a one-way or removed as a through street, the parking lots on either side could be reconfigured to add a bit more parking. The choices probably need more discussion.
7. We noticed many people crossing Chisholm at mid-block instead of at the signalized intersections. One idea to make that crossing safer would be to add in short pedestrian crossing islands in between 1st and 2nd and also between 2nd and 3rd Streets. These could be added because there are no driveways that require a left turn lane (i.e. the left turn lanes are longer than needed). This could be done as a seasonal (summer) design with well-marked crossings and signs that instruct motorists to yield to pedestrians. This would require MDOT approval.
8. We took a look at ways to add parking through reconfiguration of some of the parking lots and also a conversion of the north side of River Street to back-in angled parking. Back in angled parking almost doubles the number of spaces along that 200 feet or so. This type of parking is safer than regular angled because it is easier to back out. It has become more and more common in the last decade, in places such as Vancouver, Seattle, Tuscon AZ, Indianapolis, Columbus, Akron OH and many more. I worked on a project in 2015 in Findlay Ohio where we added back-in angled parking to a side street similar to River Street and it has been well received. But even though the entering maneuver is similar to parallel parking, some motorists find it difficult. Recently the village of Paw Paw in Southwest Michigan removed this type of angled parking after complaints during a trial period. (a sample brochure that explains this type of parking is attached). We are showing these spaces as very wide, 12 feet instead of the usual 10 feet. This extra width will make it easier for people to negotiate the backing maneuver. Over time, the width could be reduced as it becomes more familiar, so that a few extra spaces could be added.

So that is our preliminary set of recommendations. We will be happy to discuss this once you have a discussion with the city administration and the DDA.





REVERSE ANGLED PARKING



PARELLEL PARKING



