

# Saratoga Village DESIGN GUIDELINES



ADOPTED BY SARATOGA CITY COUNCIL ON JANUARY 2, 1991

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Special thanks is given to former Councilmembers and Village Task Force and Beautification Committee members for assistance on this project .

Spacial thanks is also given to West Valley College Department of Architecture faculty and students.

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# INTRODUCTION

The Saratoga Village Plan was adopted by the City Council in May of 1988. The Plan established land use, zoning, circulation, parking and design policies aimed at preserving and improving the small-scale pedestrian character of the Saratoga Village, which is the town's historic commercial core located along Big Basin.

To implement the design policies of the Village Plan, the City Council established the Village Design Task Force (VDTF) to assist with the preparation of the Saratoga Village Design Guidelines. The seven member Task Force had representatives from the Planning and Heritage Commissions, Village Association, property owners, architectural profession, and a member of the original Village Beautification Committee. During the course of a year, from September 1988 to September 1989, the VDTF met with planning staff to develop the specific design guidelines. The guidelines were then reviewed by the Planning Commission at meetings with the Village Association and property owners, and ultimately adopted by the City Council on January 2, 1991.

The four major sections of the Village Design Guidelines are: 1) Pedestrian Environment; 2) Architecture; 3) Landscaping; and 4) Signage. Each section uses both text and diagrams to provide specific design guidance to property owners, merchants, developers, and designers who wish to build new structures or make improvements to existing Village structures. The Design Guidelines also provide a framework for the Planning Commission, City Council and City staff in reviewing the various applications that involve Village properties. The Guidelines do not impose specific styles or narrow choices of forms and materials. Rather, they clarify the design intent and permissible framework for development and renovation in the Village core.

The Saratoga Village Design Guidelines alone will not ensure that future development is in context with the Village Plan. Proper and sensitive application of the guidelines will require the collective and concerted efforts of both the public and private sectors. These efforts will involve financial and decision-making commitments from the City, the Village Association and private property owners. Where appropriate, the assignment of responsibility for the implementation of individual design projects in the Village has been noted in the text.

# GOALS

The goals of the Saratoga Village Design Guidelines are:

- To encourage new construction and renovation of existing buildings that is compatible with adjacent buildings, with the Village design context as a whole, and as examples of design excellence.
- To reserve street frontages for commercial buildings and uninterrupted pedestrian flow.
- To develop all parking facilities to the rear of buildings, with minimal visual exposure of parking facilities and vehicular ingress-egress from Big Basin Way.
- To preserve the existing buildings of historical significance.
- To create usable, attractive pedestrian open spaces wherever possible.
- To increase the use of landscaping, street furniture, ornamental paving, awnings and similar environmental elements that are designed to serve the convenience of pedestrians.
- To avoid large expanses of blank walls and extensive distances between doors, to emphasize display windows, plazas and similar focal points so that visual and functional interest for pedestrians will remain uninterrupted.
- To encourage the use of appropriate commercial and directional signage for the security and convenience of pedestrians and drivers.

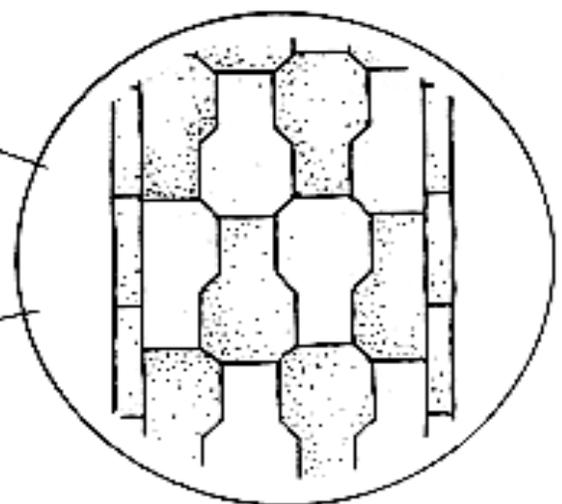
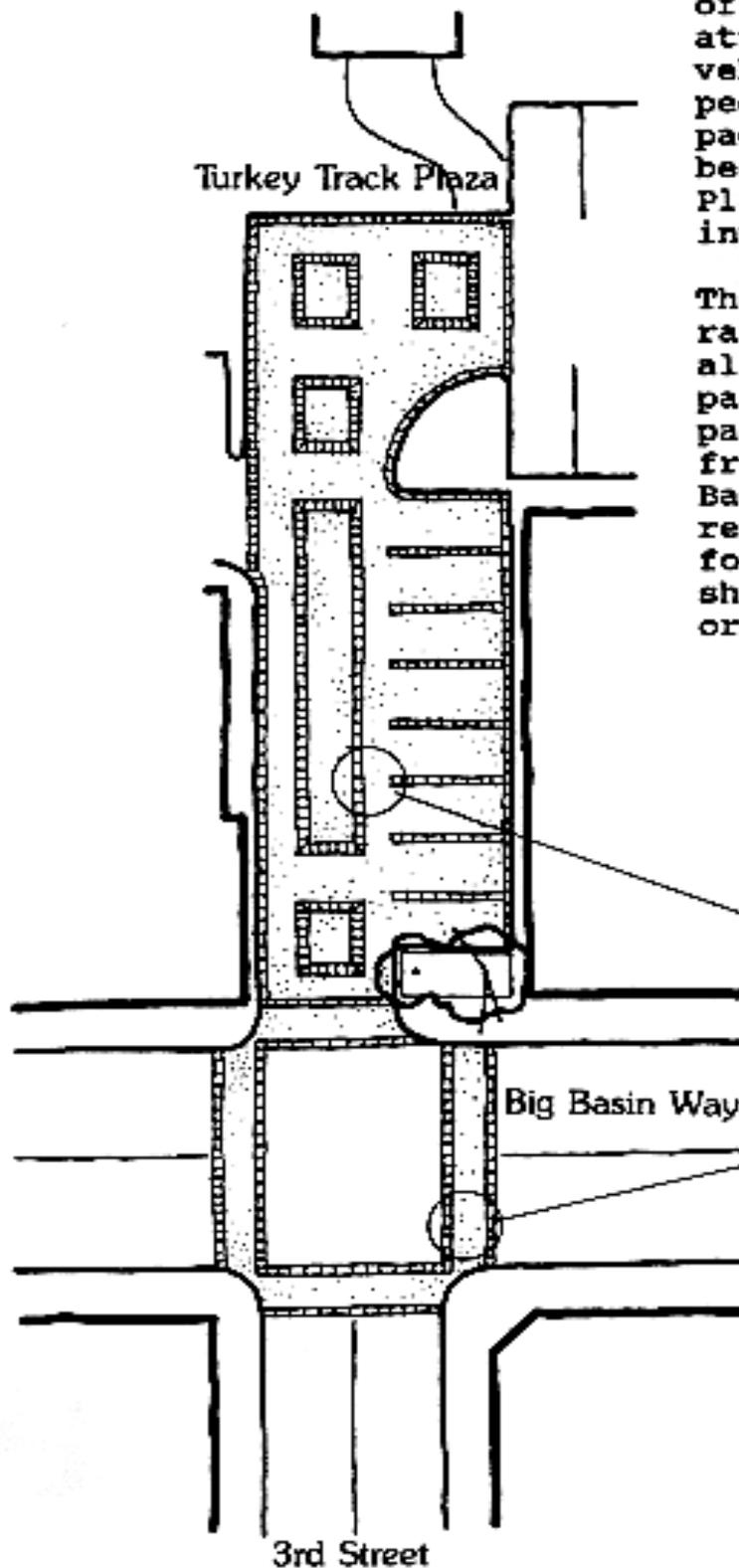
# PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

The Saratoga Village should be regarded as an environment in which the pedestrian comes first. This chapter of the guidelines focuses on environmental elements along Big Basin Way that will help to make the Village more pedestrian oriented, rather than automobile oriented. These elements include decorative crosswalks, sidewalks and tree wells, directories, public telephones, street furniture and street lights. Four-way stop intersections are also proposed for safer pedestrian access. The intent of these guidelines is to provide attractive and convenient pedestrian facilities, assure minimal maintenance costs, and achieve a visual simplicity and continuity within public rights-of-way and adjacent private pedestrian areas.

# Crosswalks and Paving

The use of decorative brick paving stones in crosswalks and parking areas enhances the pedestrian nature of the Village. The surface is very attractive, sturdy enough for vehicular use and comfortable for pedestrians. The diagram on this page shows how the paving stones have been installed both in Turkey Track Plaza and in crosswalks at intersections on Big Basin Way.

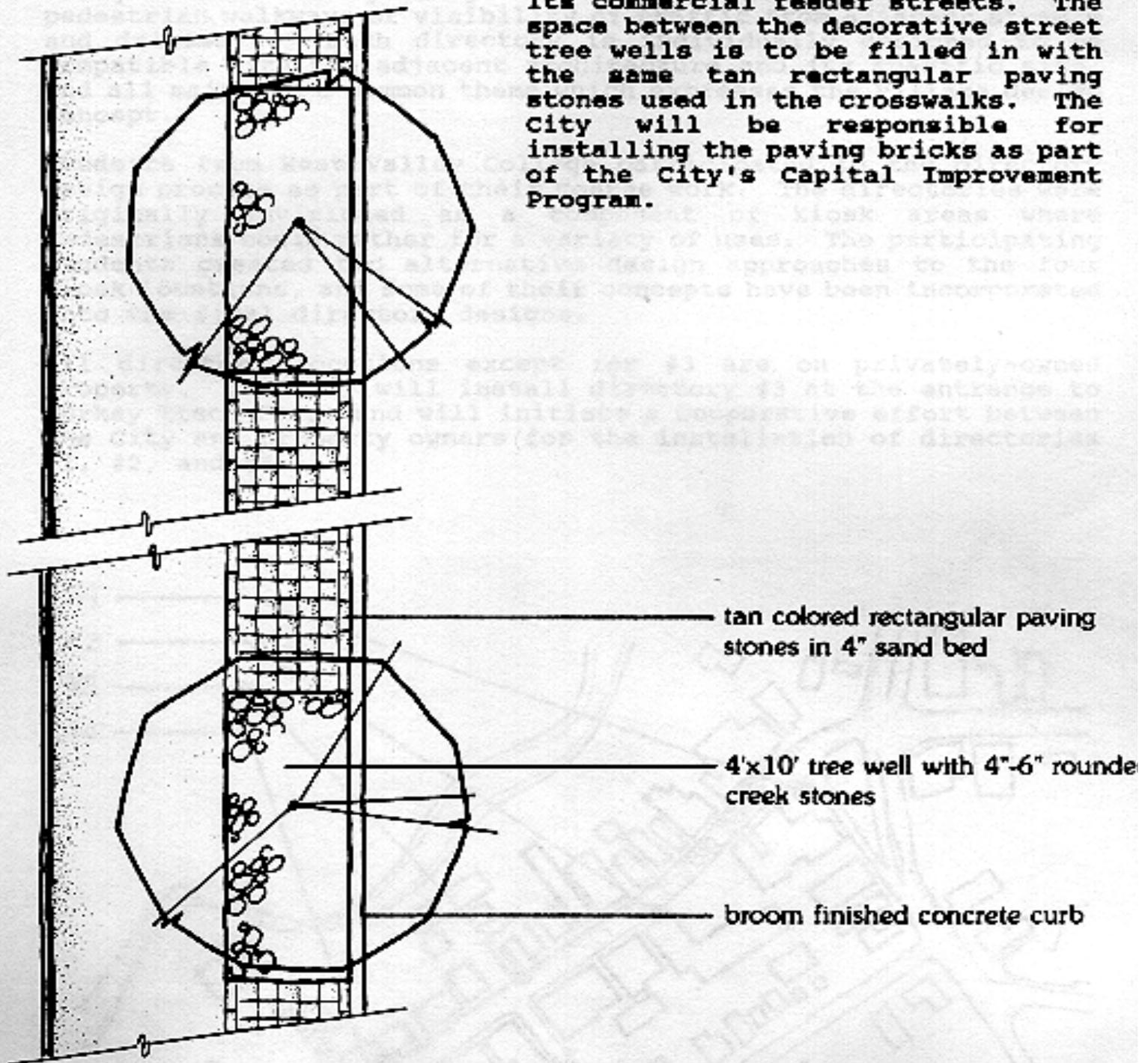
The use of decorative paving stones rather than concrete or asphalt is also encouraged for privately-owned parking areas and driveways, particularly for properties which front on, and are visible from, Big Basin Way. The "cobble" shape in a reddish broth color should be used for the field with a rectangular shape in a tan color for the header or edge of a field.



Interlocking Paving Stones

# Sidewalks

The diagram on this page shows how the decorative brick paving theme is continued from the crosswalks to the sidewalks along Big Basin Way and its commercial feeder streets. The space between the decorative street tree wells is to be filled in with the same tan rectangular paving stones used in the crosswalks. The City will be responsible for installing the paving bricks as part of the City's Capital Improvement Program.

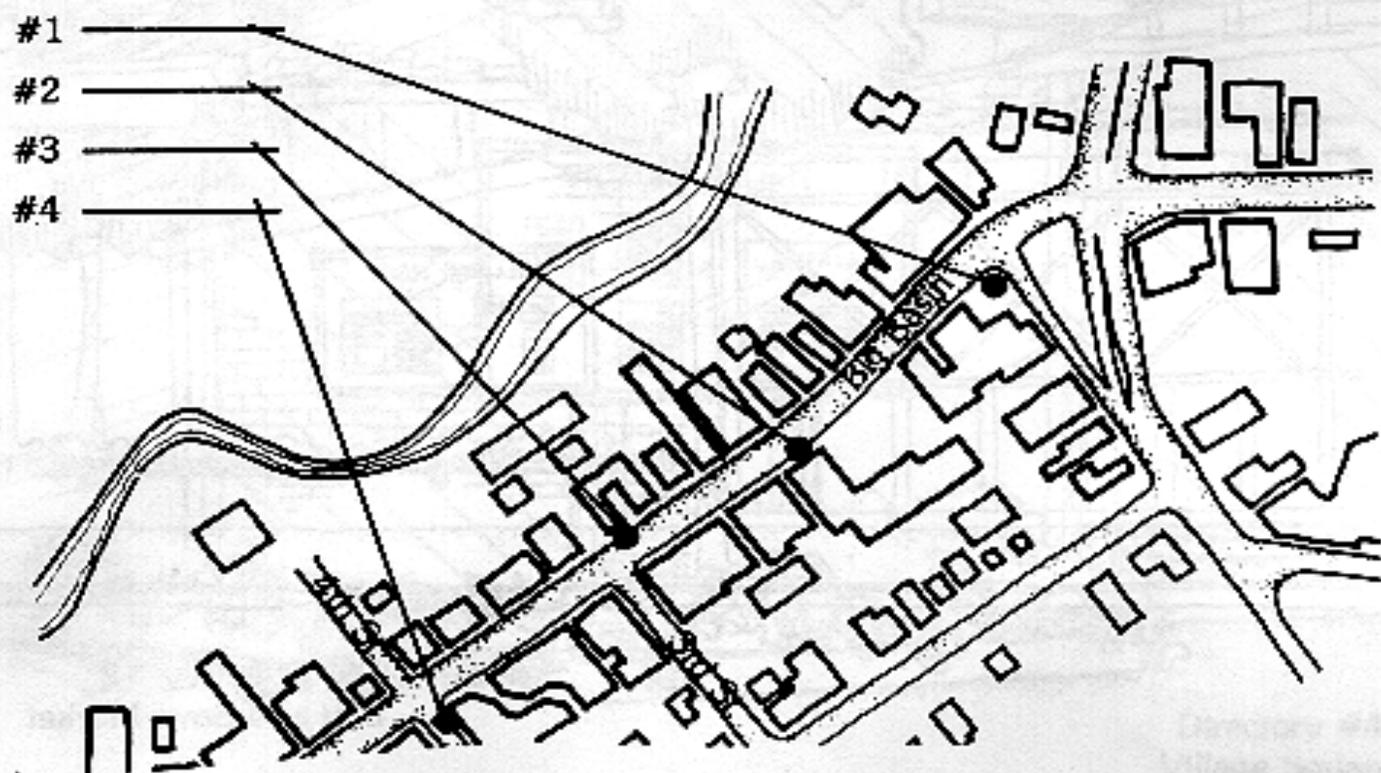


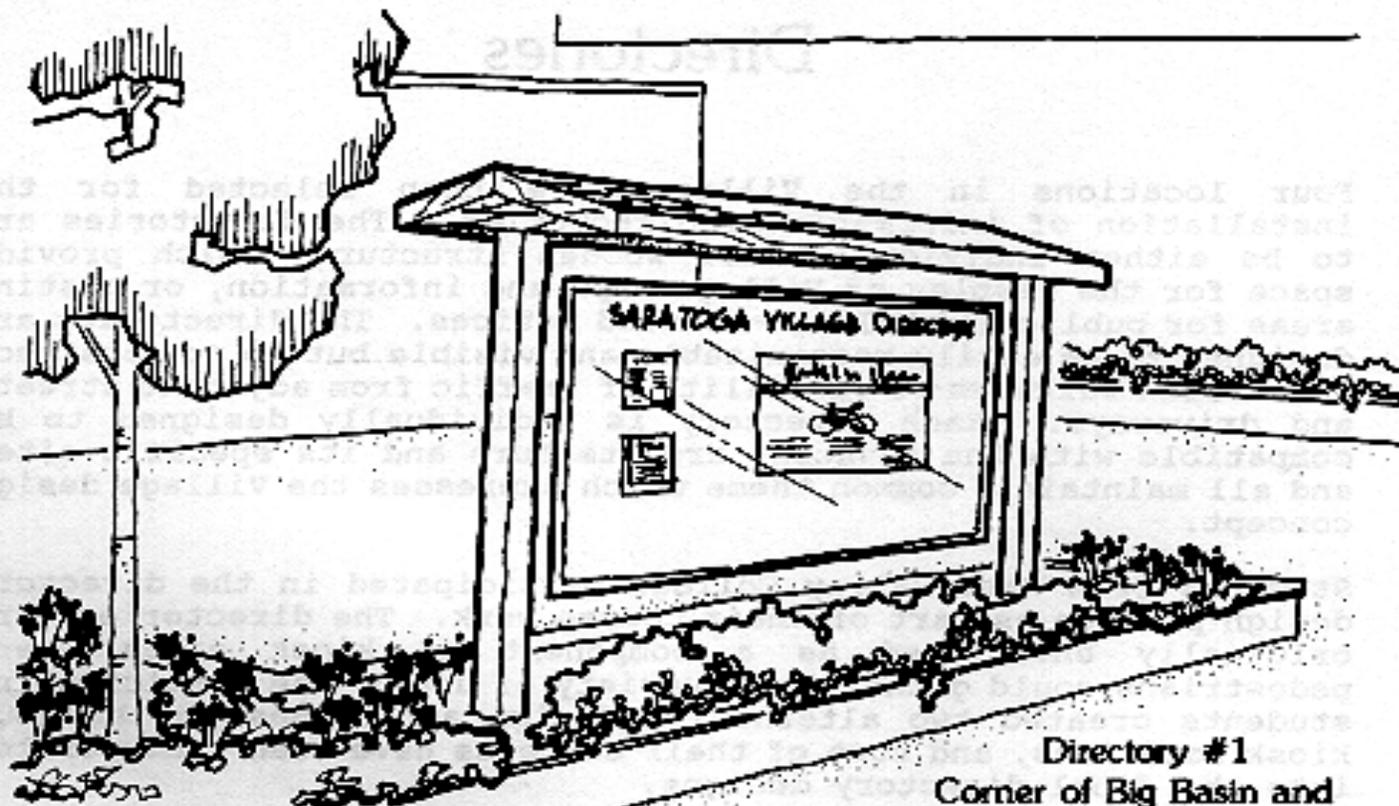
# Directories

Four locations in the Village have been selected for the installation of informational directories. The directories are to be either individual small wooden structures which provide space for the display of Village maps and information, or posting areas for public and Village-related notices. The directories are designed to be easily recognizable and visible but to not obstruct pedestrian walkways or visibility of traffic from adjacent streets and driveways. Each directory is individually designed to be compatible with the adjacent architecture and its specific site, and all maintain a common theme which expresses the Village design concept.

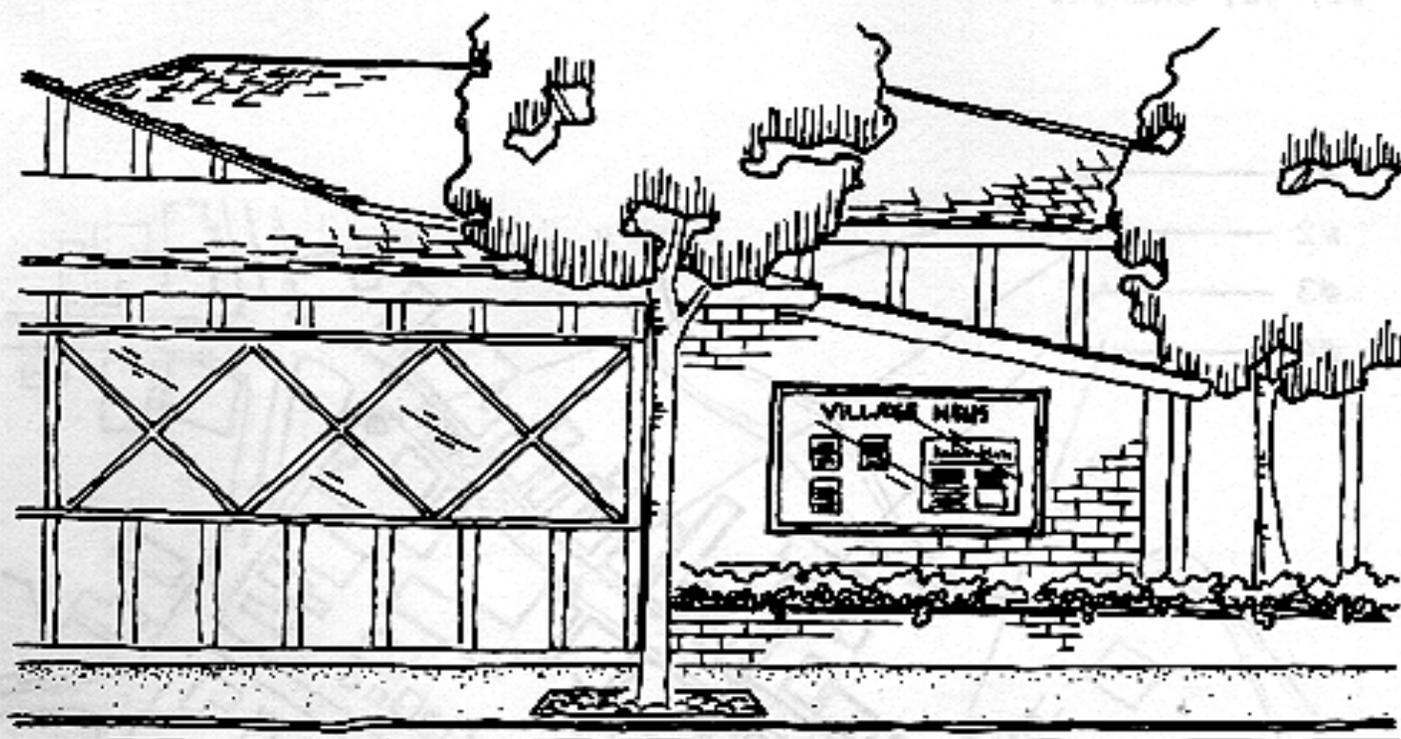
Students from West Valley College participated in the directory design process as part of their course work. The directories were originally envisioned as a component of kiosk areas where pedestrians could gather for a variety of uses. The participating students created two alternative design approaches to the four kiosk locations, and some of their concepts have been incorporated into the final directory designs.

All directory locations except for #3 are on privately-owned property. The City will install directory #3 at the entrance to Turkey Track Plaza and will initiate a cooperative effort between the City and property owners for the installation of directories #1, #2, and #4.

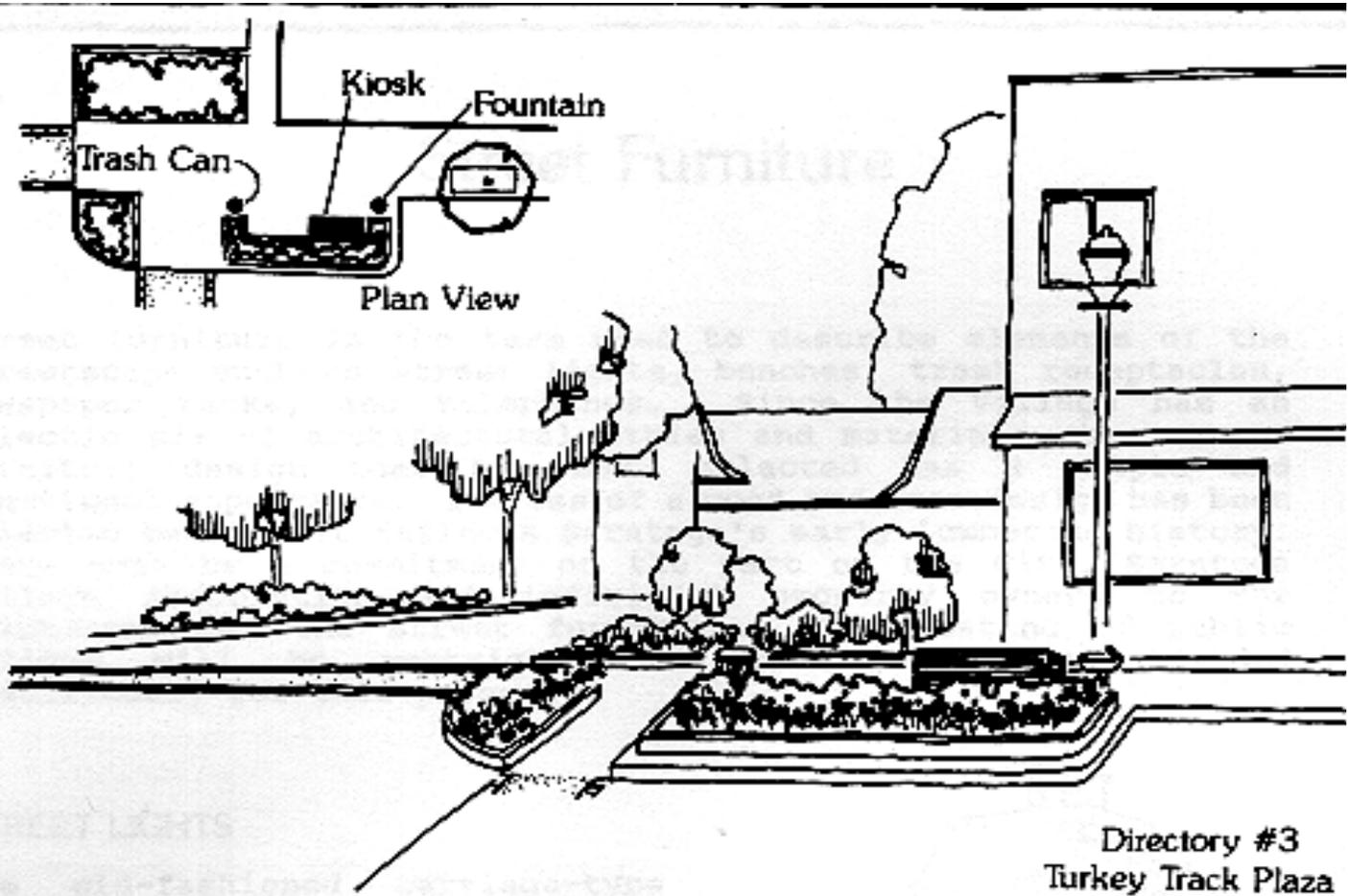




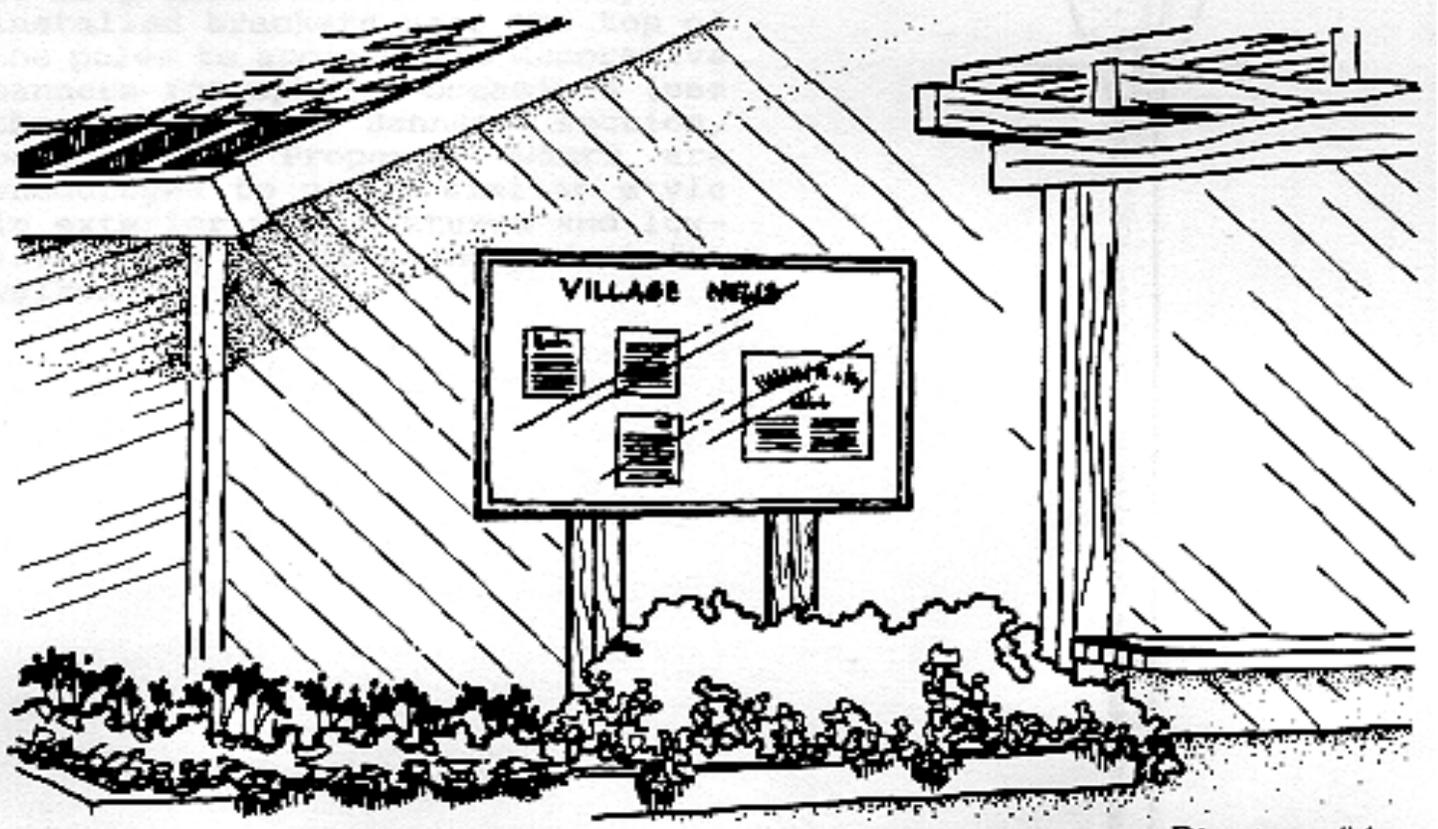
Directory #1  
Corner of Big Basin and  
Saratoga Los Gatos



Directory #2  
Buy and Save Market



Directory #3  
Turkey Track Plaza



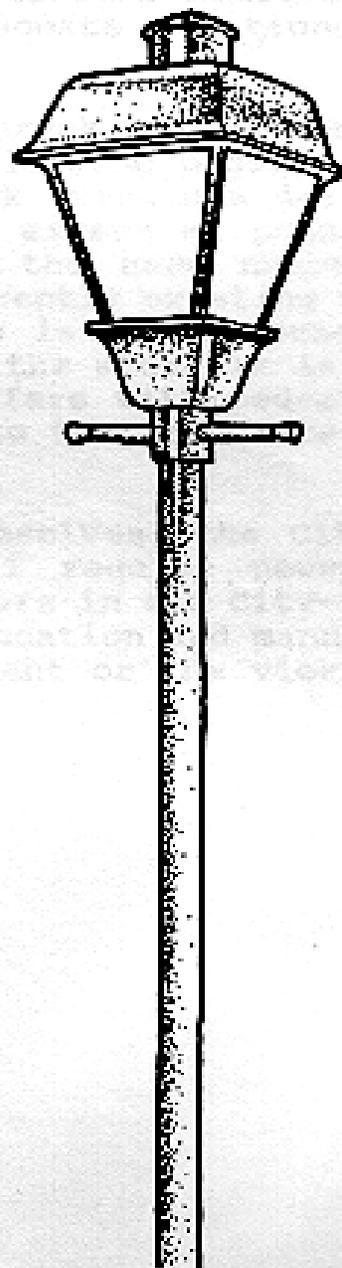
Directory #4  
Village Square

# Street Furniture

Street furniture is the term used to describe elements of the streetscape such as street lights, benches, trash receptacles, newspaper racks, and telephones. Since the Village has an eclectic mix of architectural styles and materials, the street furniture design that has been selected has a simple and functional appearance. The use of a wood and iron design has been selected because it reflects Saratoga's early lumbering history. There must be a commitment on the part of the City, Saratoga Village Association and individual property owners to the maintenance of the street furniture. The posting of public notices will be restricted to the directories provided specifically for this purpose.

## STREET LIGHTS

The old-fashioned carriage-type street lights along Big Basin Way are maintained jointly by PG&E and the City. This type of light standard will continue to be used in the Village, and will continue to be painted black. The City has installed brackets near the top of the poles to accommodate decorative banners for special occasions (see the Murals and Banners section, page 47). Property owners are encouraged to use a similar style in exterior wall fixtures and low-level pole lights along pedestrian walkways.



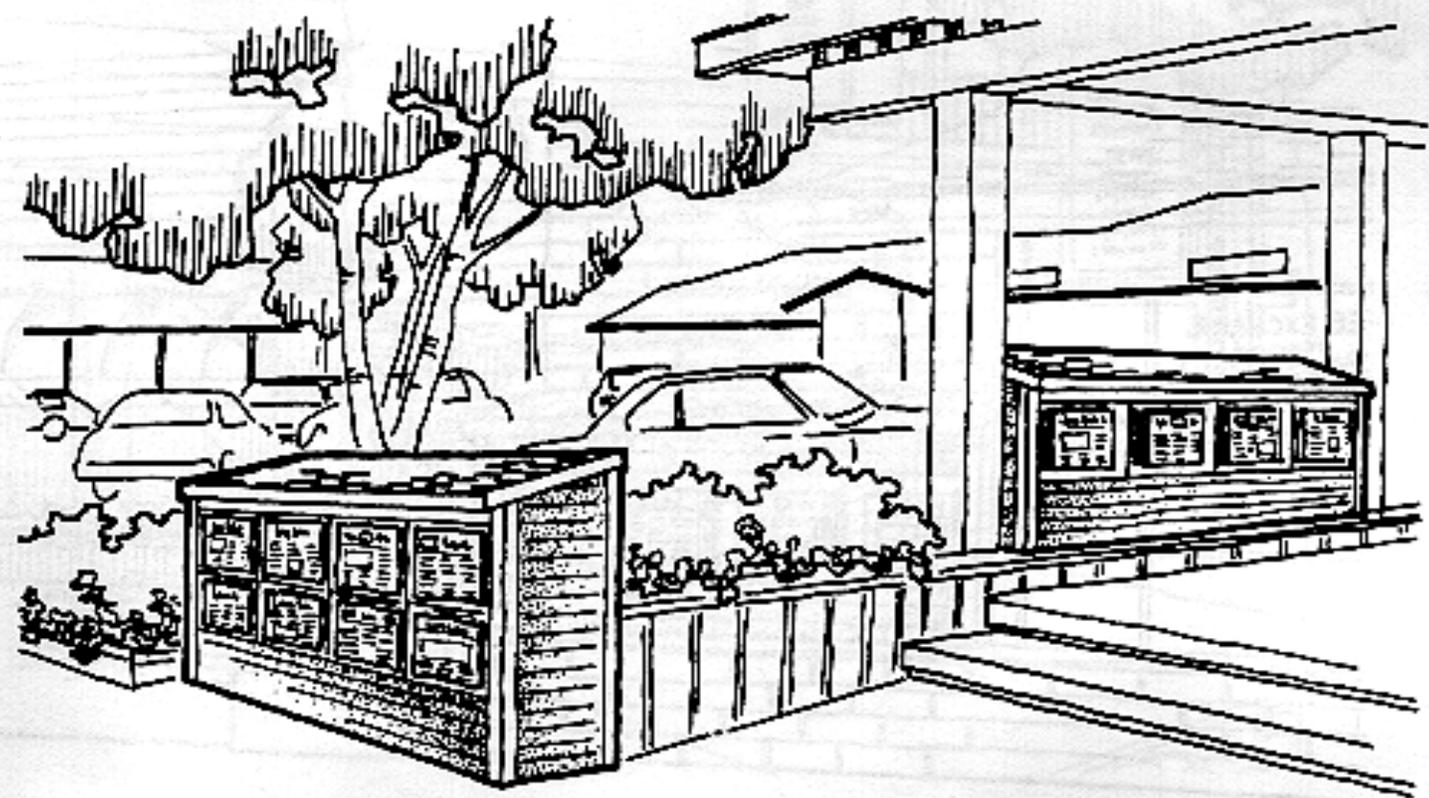
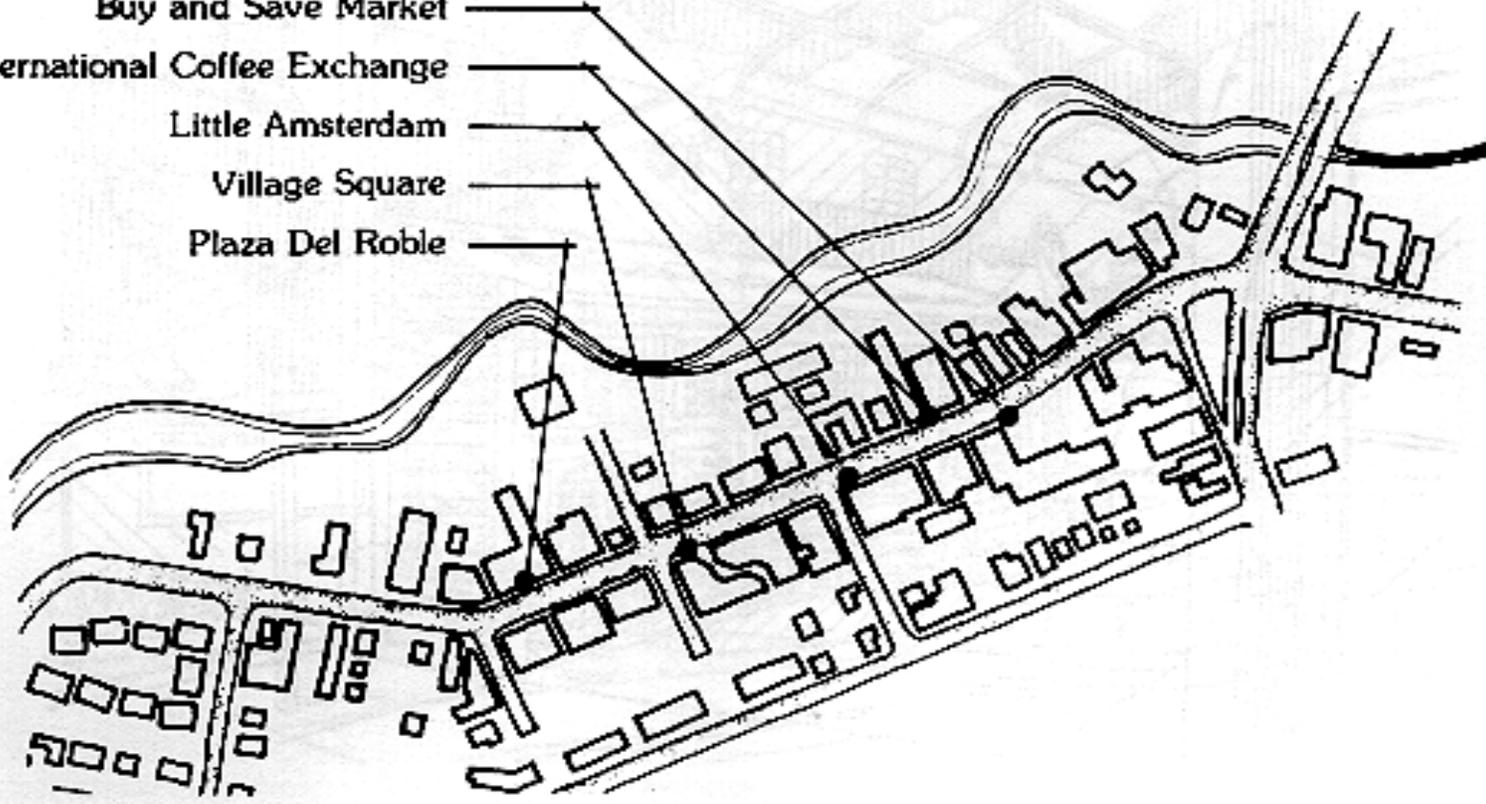
## NEWSPAPER RACKS

There are currently 34 individual newspaper vending racks along Big Basin Way. These are clustered in six locations: Buy and Save Market, Village Rendezvous, Little Amsterdam, International Coffee Exchange, Village Square, and Plaza del Roble. The uncontrolled placement and maintenance of newsracks on public sidewalks can be a physical and visual nuisance to pedestrians. The clutter and congestion of the numerous disparate types of newsracks on the sidewalks is unsightly and not in keeping with the historic character of the Village. However, the use of the sidewalk is traditionally associated with the sale and distribution of newspapers and other publications, and access to this area for such purposes should not be prohibited. It is the intent of this section of the Village Design Guidelines to provide for newsrack facilities of uniform and coordinated construction and appearance, and to further provide adequate locations and accessibility for these facilities.

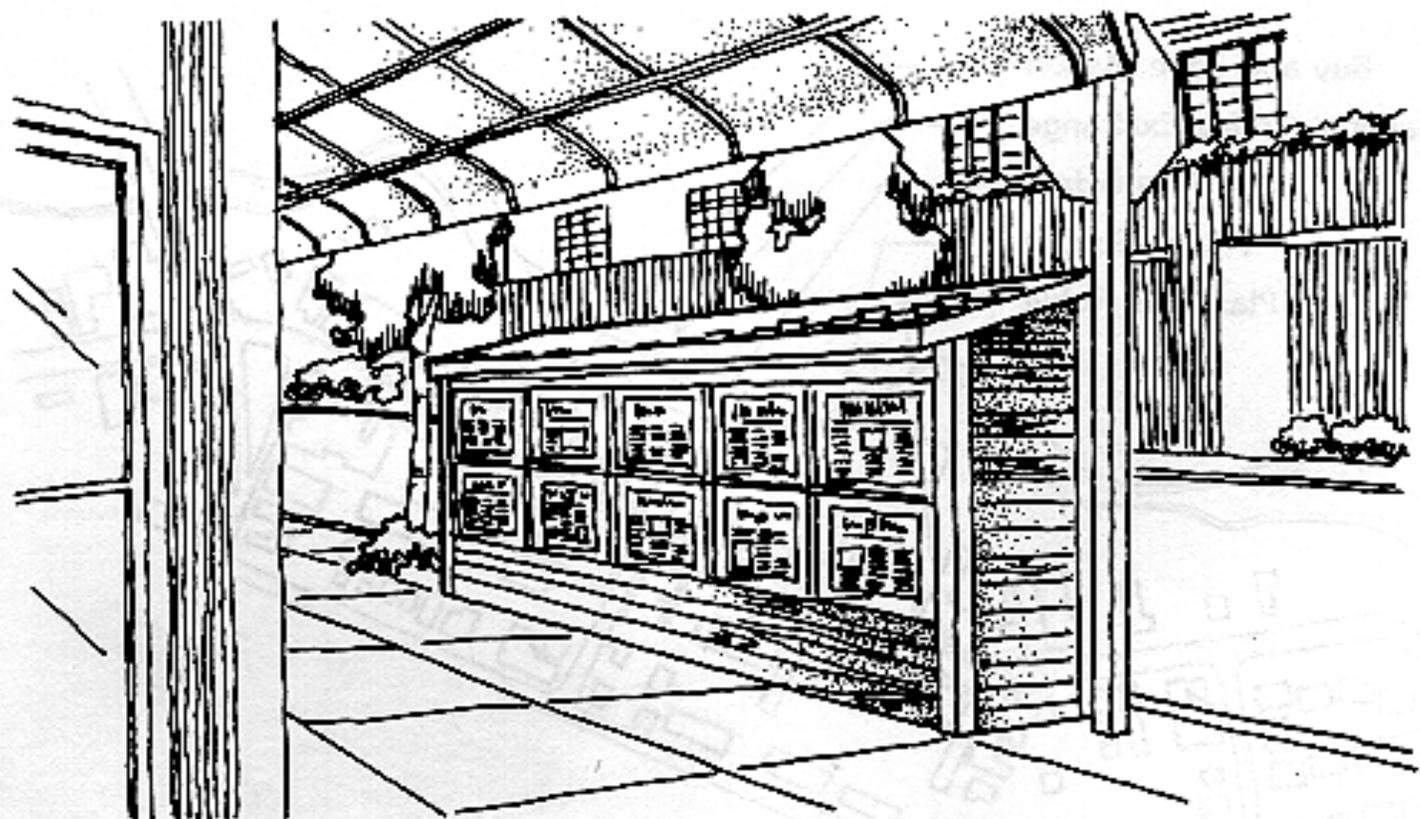
There are five proposed locations for newsrack enclosures, as shown in the map and the sketches on the following pages. Each of the locations will accommodate a newsrack structure designed and installed by the City. To as great an extent as possible, structures will have space to accommodate the same number of newsracks in the same locations that are currently existing along Big Basin Way. The only exception to this is the newsrack in front of the Village Rendezvous restaurant; the sidewalk is very narrow in this location and the racks interfere with pedestrian travel. These racks can be incorporated into the structure near the Buy and Save Market.

In addition to the newsrack structures themselves, the City is developing a newsrack ordinance which will require newspaper vendors to obtain licenses to sell their papers in the City-owned racks. This license will control only the location and manner in which the newspapers are sold, not the content or the viewpoint of the newspaper itself.

- Buy and Save Market
- International Coffee Exchange
- Little Amsterdam
- Village Square
- Plaza Del Roble



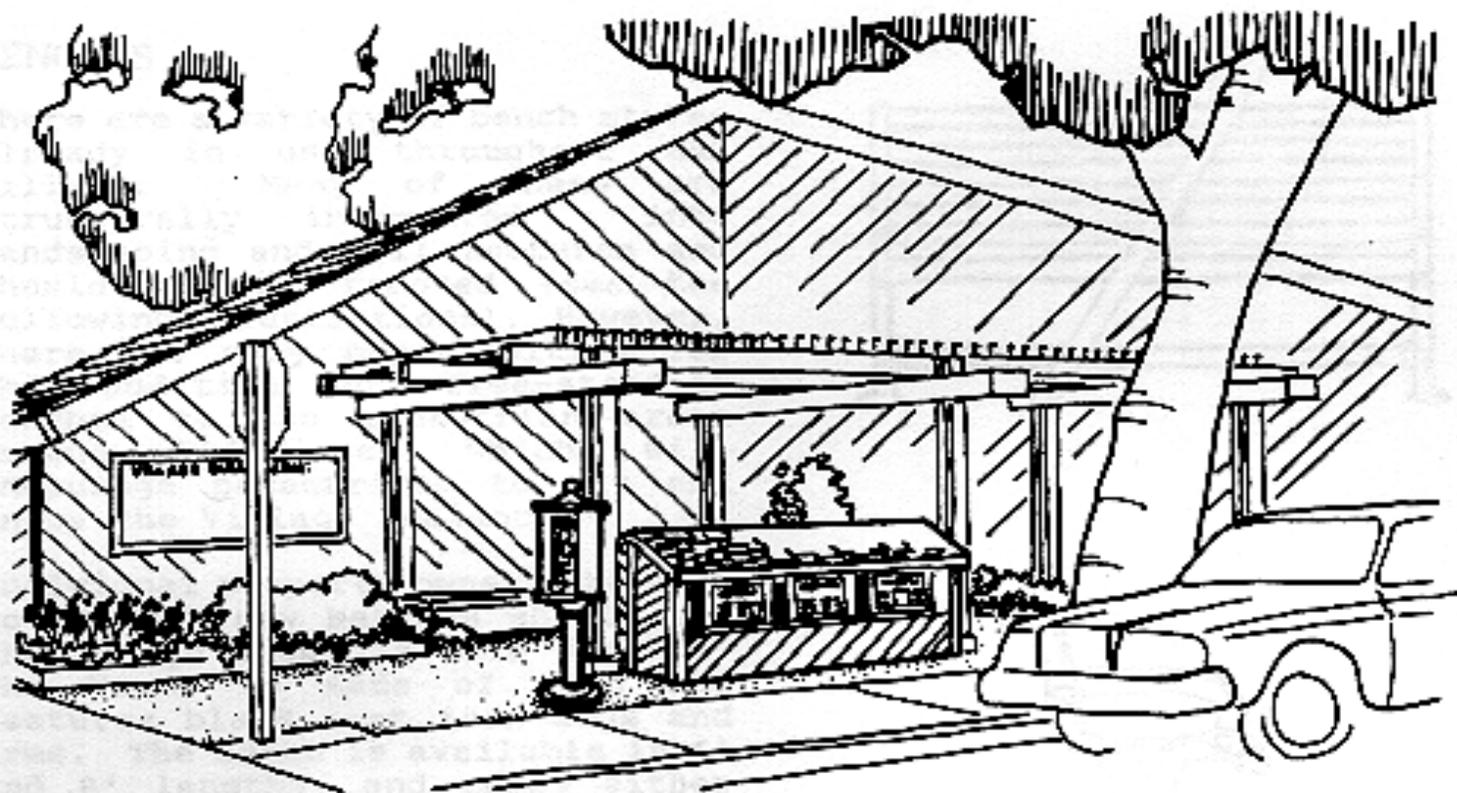
Buy and Save Market



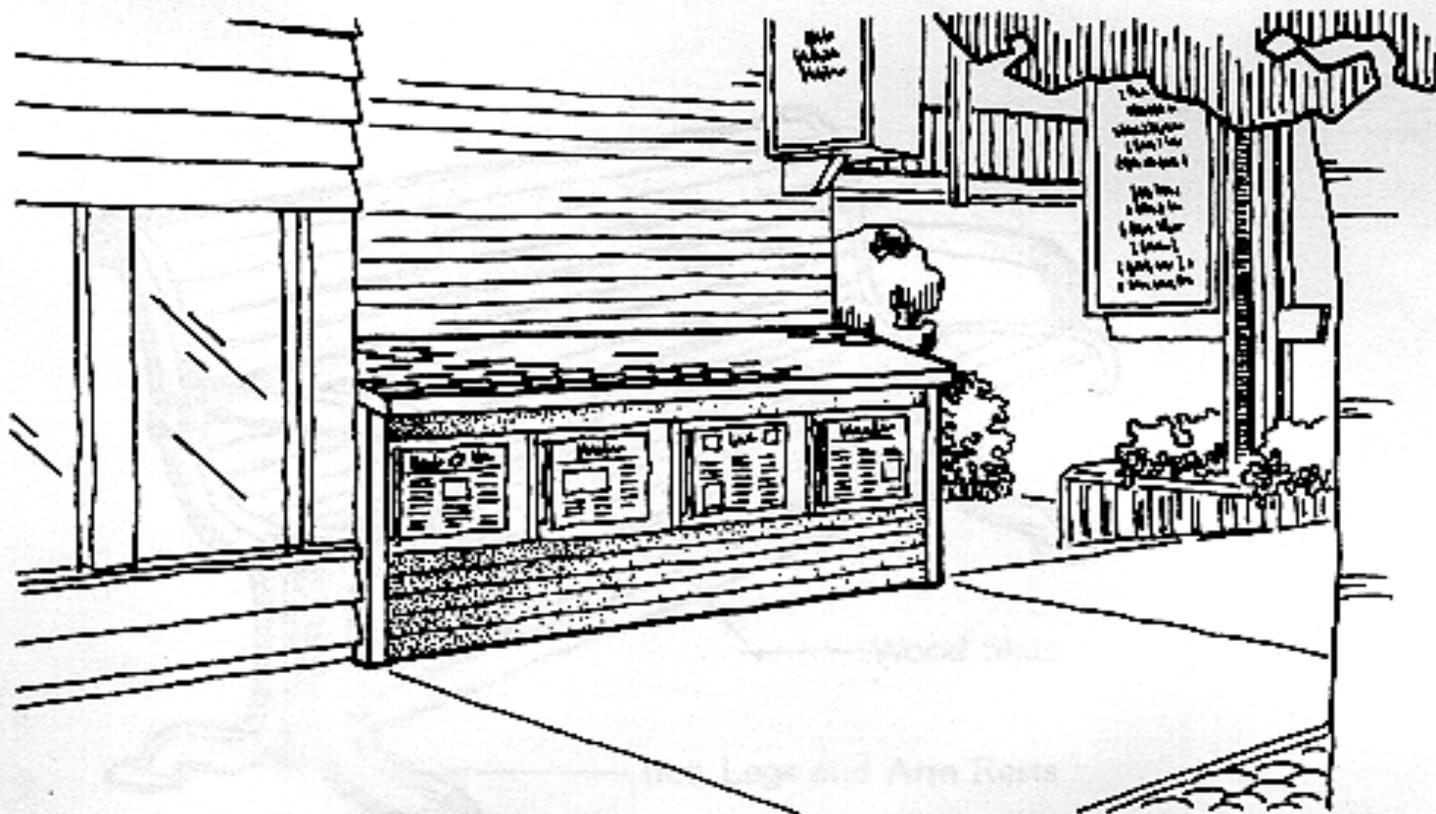
Little Amsterdam



International Coffee Exchange



Village Square

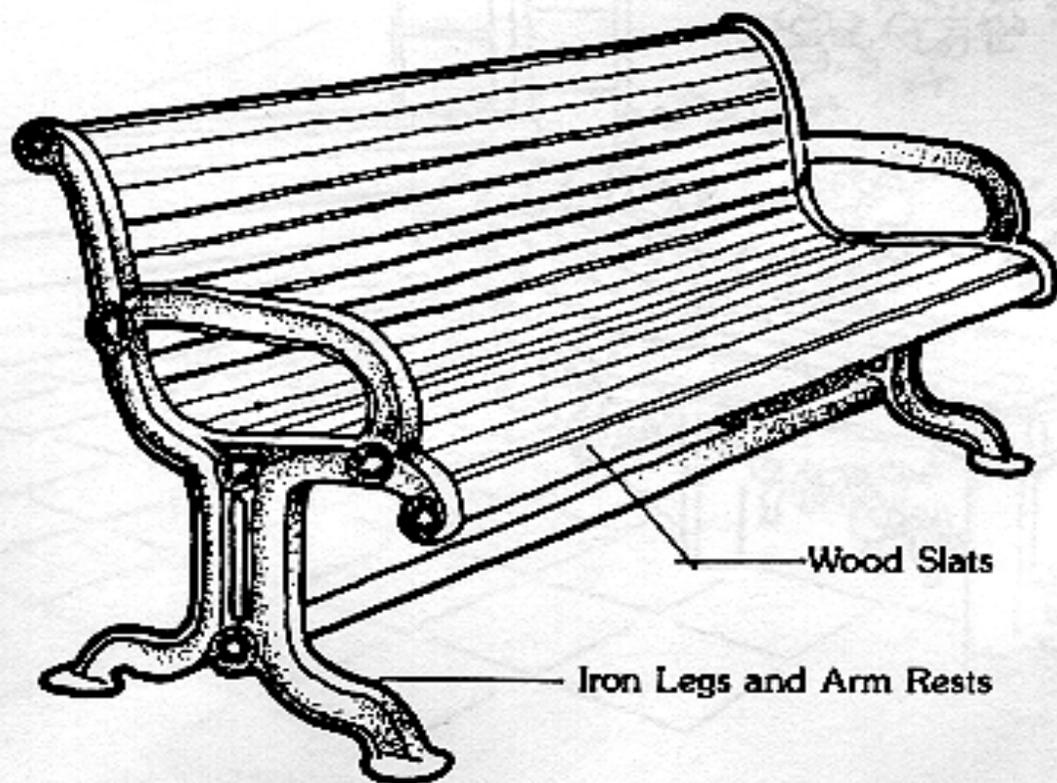
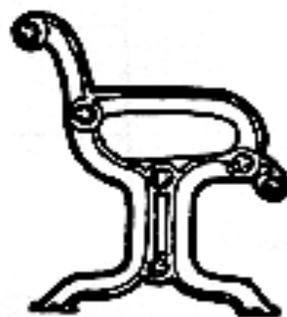
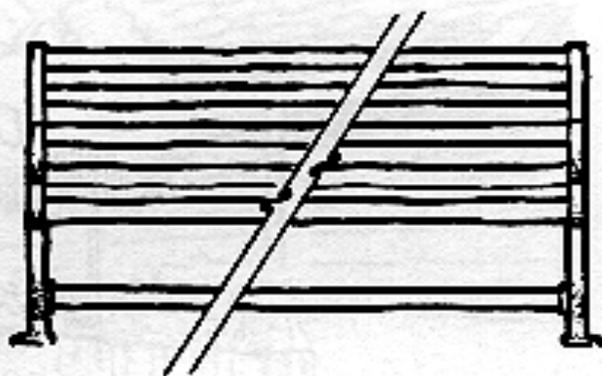


Plaza Del Roble

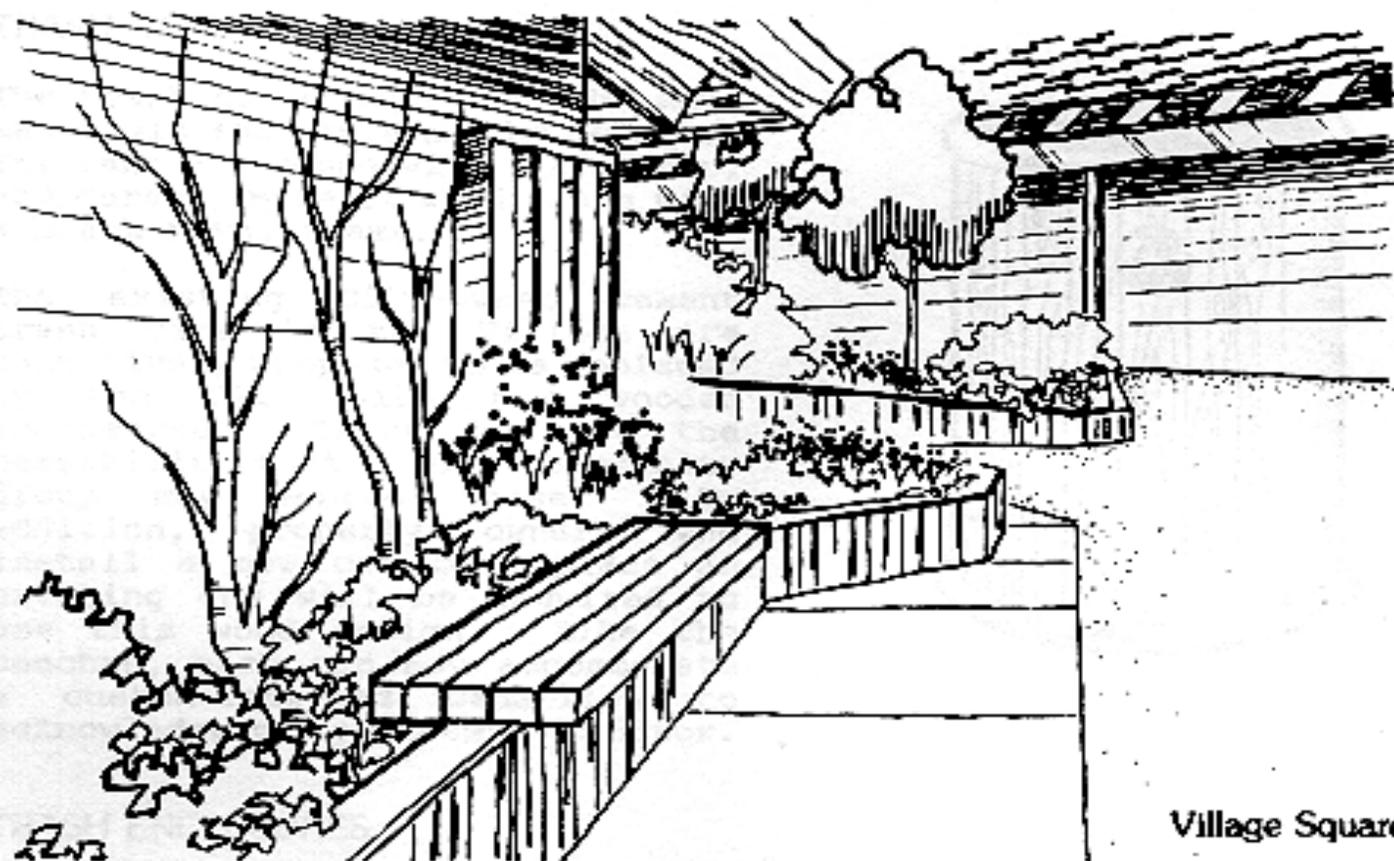
## BENCHES

There are a variety of bench styles already in use throughout the Village. Many of these are structurally integrated into landscaping and wall features and should not be removed (see the following illustrations). However, there are many opportunities for the addition of free-standing benches to the pedestrian areas around buildings, which will encourage pedestrians to sit and enjoy the Village ambiance.

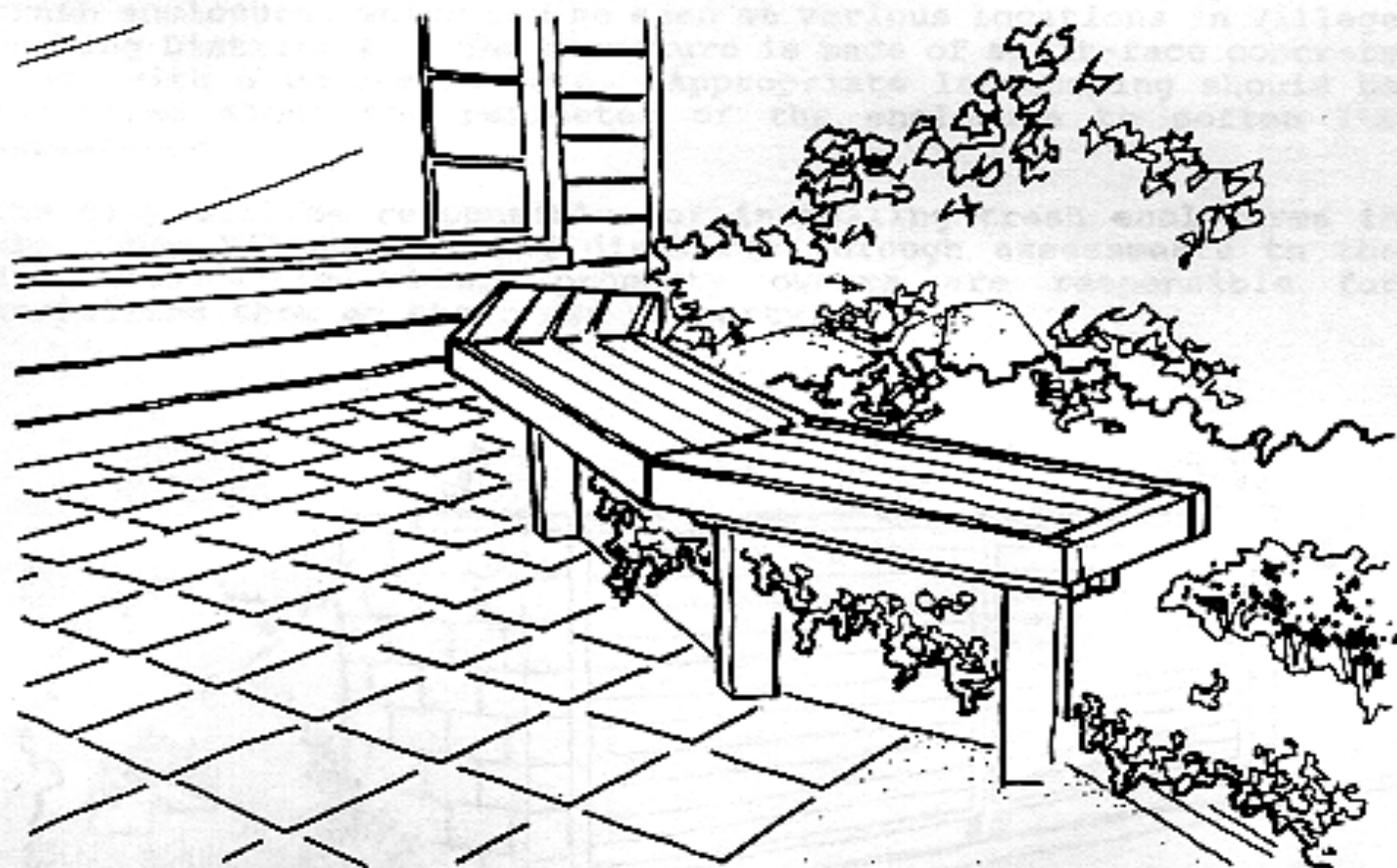
Individual property owners who wish to install new benches should use the design shown in this diagram. The bench is made of wood and features black cast iron legs and arms. The bench is available in 6' and 8' lengths, and comes either with or without a back. Each bench can be custom engraved or lettered to acknowledge the purchaser or donor.



BENCH PERSPECTIVES



Village Square

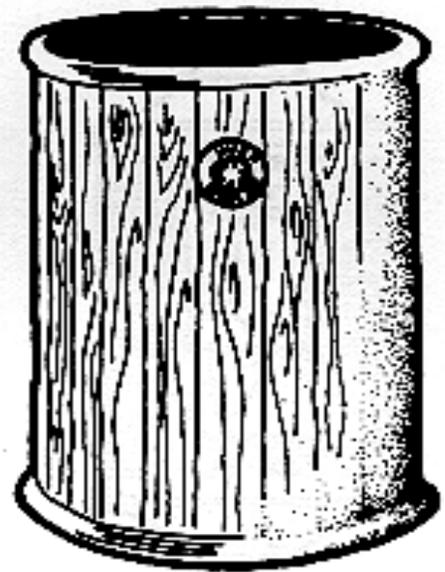


Village Design Center

## TRASH CANS

The trash can design uses the same materials and style as the benches. The cans are round with a flat top, and durably made of wood slats with a black metal frame.

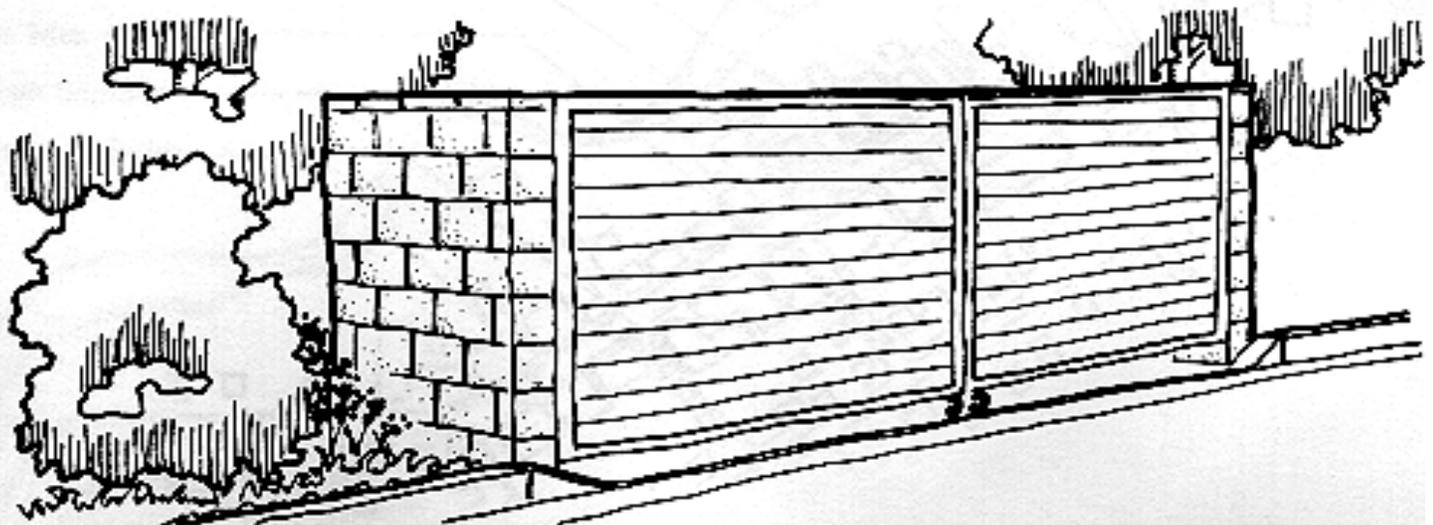
The existing City-owned cement trash cans in the Village are tentatively proposed to be replaced by the City with new wooden enclosures. There is also the possibility that a local community group may donate these. In addition, property owners who install a new can or replace an existing one will be required to use this wood design. Like the benches, each can may accommodate a custom-lettered medallion to acknowledge the purchaser or donor.



## TRASH ENCLOSURES

All garbage dumpsters are required to be enclosed and screened from public view. This diagram shows the selected design of the trash enclosure, which can be seen at various locations in Village Parking District #3. The structure is made of split-face concrete block with a wood-slat gate. Appropriate landscaping should be installed along the perimeter of the enclosure to soften its appearance.

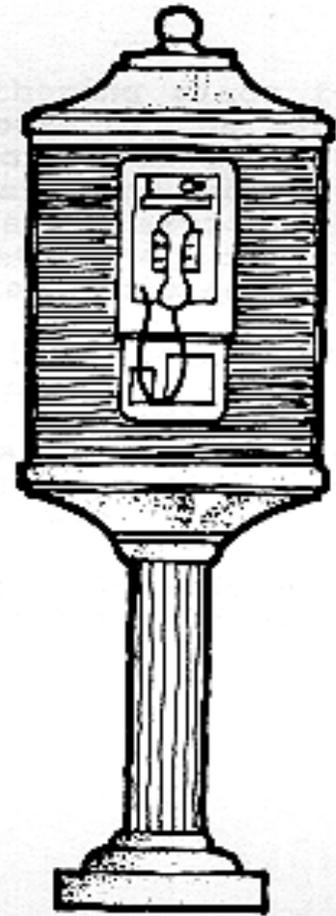
The City will be responsible for installing trash enclosures in the other Village parking districts through assessments to the districts. Individual property owners are responsible for installing them on their own property.



## TELEPHONE ENCLOSURES

The City of Saratoga is developing a contract with a private telephone company for the installation and ongoing maintenance of specific public telephones in the Village. These phones are specially designed to provide public telephone service without being visually obtrusive. Their design promotes the historic Village context and is compatible with the design of the street lights and other street furniture.

There are four proposed sites for these new telephones, each with high visibility and accessibility to the public. The locations are: Plaza del Roble, Village Square, Buy & Save Market, and International Coffee Exchange. The existing pay phones at the Bike Shop and Bella Mia should be replaced with the new design as soon as practical because they are not in keeping with the Village design theme. Other telephones at service stations and the Post Office may remain.



### PROPOSED LOCATIONS

Buy and Save Market

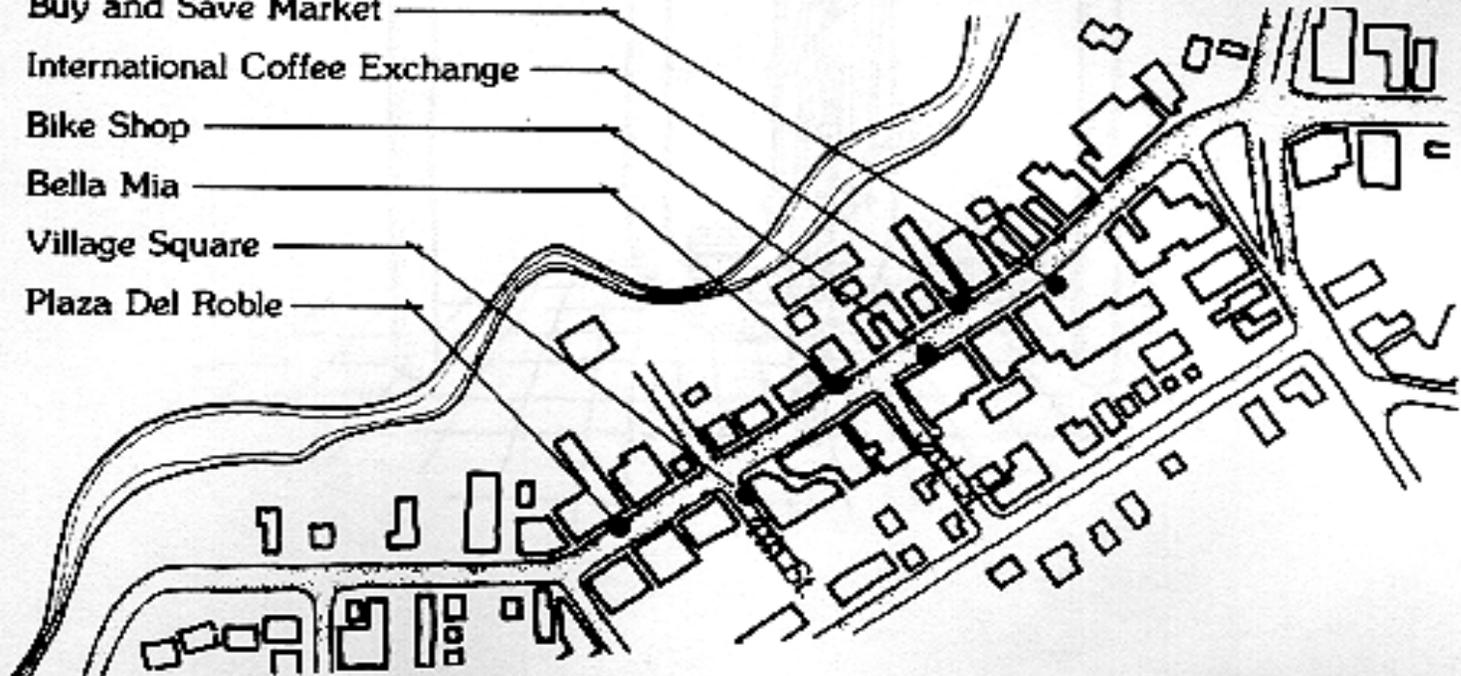
International Coffee Exchange

Bike Shop

Bella Mia

Village Square

Plaza Del Roble



# Bicycle Facilities

The Saratoga Village has become a regular gathering place for recreational bicyclists. Its setting at the base of the Santa Cruz Mountains makes it an ideal destination point for cyclists from all over. Currently, however, there are not adequate facilities for bicycle parking within the Village, particularly along Big Basin Way, between the Buy & Save Market and 4th Street, where there seems to be a concentration of parked bicycles.

An option to correct this lack of bicycle facilities would be to encourage new development to include a percentage of bicycle parking racks, just as you would for automobiles. The City should also take the initiative to provide bicycle parking facilities within Parking District #3, even though it would be preferable to have the parking facility visible from Big Basin Way.

Since space along Big Basin Way is limited, parking islands would provide highly visible parking and also serve as a "Choker" island to slow automobile traffic.

