

# UC Berkeley

## Places

### Title

South Broadway Streetscape Project [Streets: Old Paradigm, New Investment]

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## Nathalie Rozot

South Broadway in Yonkers is the kind of street that is part of almost every city but has been largely forgotten. A mile-long strip of neighborhood-oriented shops and auto-related businesses, it is also a route for trucks and buses leading to New York. The street is lined with low-rise buildings, parking lots and a park.

Two years ago Yonkers sought proposals for reconstructing South Broadway. Our concept addressed the way pedestrians and drivers would experience moving along the street. Many of the following design details, unfortunately, were left out during construction.

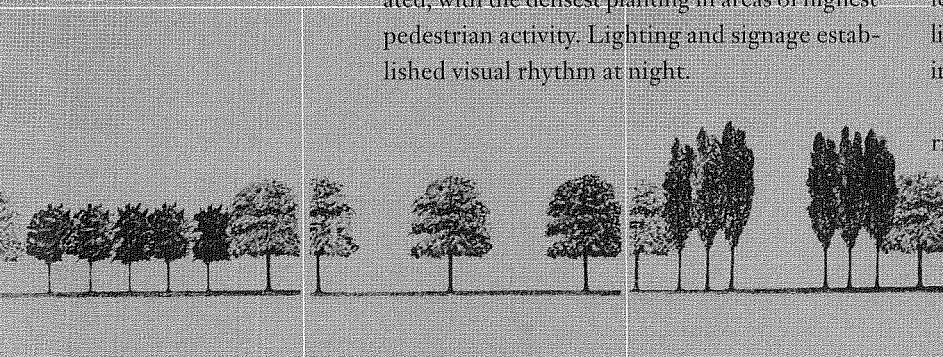
We gave the street a strong visual rhythm, pacing it with six evenly spaced, specially treated activity areas. Each corresponded to a functional element, such as a city gateway or municipal parking lot and bus stop. We lined the street with trees but varied the species in the various segments between the activity areas. The tree spacing fluctuated, with the densest planting in areas of highest pedestrian activity. Lighting and signage established visual rhythm at night.

The activity areas were given special treatment. The city gateway consisted of a series of tall signs on both sides of the street, then a series of banners, both depicting activities that occur along the street. Their spacing tightened as motorists proceeded into the city to create a dynamic of densification.

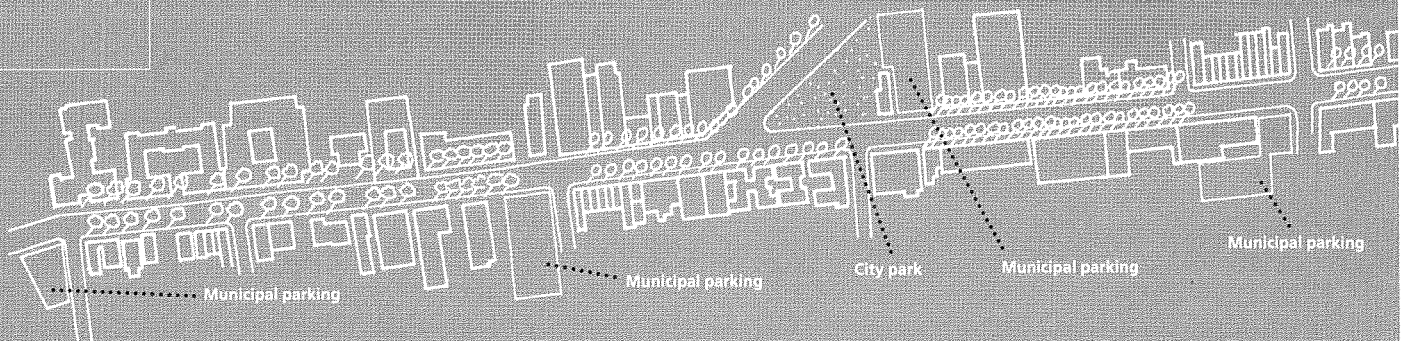
The five other areas are also gateways — parking lots and bus stops where people leave vehicles and become pedestrians. They were left free of trees and marked by lines of dense, low, cool lighting (10-foot poles, mercury vapor lamps), which contrasted with the high, warm lights (30-foot poles, high-pressure sodium vapor lamps, cobra-head fixtures capped with blue toplights) that march down the street in pairs every 100 feet. In front of each parking lot the pedestrian space was widened by six feet to accommodate amenities such as seating and lighting and signage that would lead pedestrians into adjacent commercial areas.

We emphasized the use of quintessential materials and equipment for street furniture and signage to ensure low and cost-effective maintenance. Poles, fences and trash receptacles were brushed aluminum and hot-dipped galvanized steel. Gateway, bus stop and parking lot signs consisted of reflectorized adhesive material on aluminum sheets, like those typically used for highway signage. We also highlighted the six specially treated areas with horizontal markers — sandblasted text in the concrete sidewalk to mark the parking lots, reflective delineators and carpets of giant letters (reflective material, like that used for highway striping, affixed to the asphalt) spelling out “South Broadway” for arriving pedestrians and motorists.

Landscape architects and planners:  
Abel Bainnon Butz (Nathalie Rozot, design consultant).  
Graphic designers: Russell Design  
Civil engineers: Eberlin Eberlin  
Mechanical and electrical engineers: Wesler Cohen

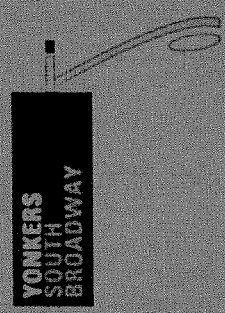
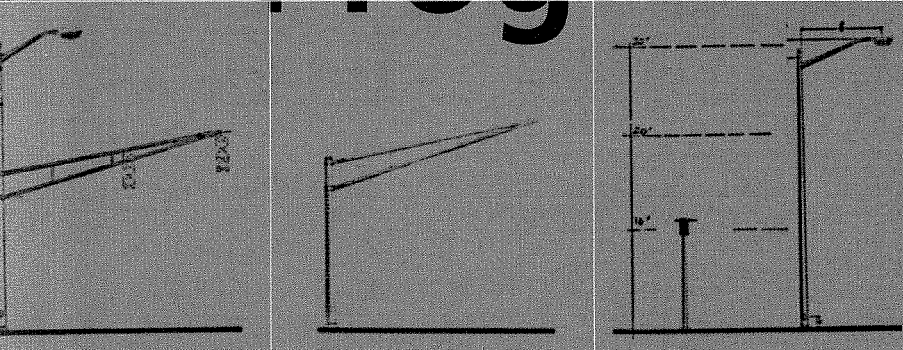


The spacing of trees and graphics varies in plan depending on the character of the street. Trees are spaced more closely in busy pedestrian zones to create a stronger sense of enclosure and slow traffic. Large signs and banners greet motorists entering the city. Graphics courtesy Russell Design.



Where possible, bus stops and parking lot entrances were coupled to create entry areas. These places are marked by expanded sidewalks, which allow busses to drop off passengers without pulling over, as well as special signage, lighting and street trees that lead pedestrians into adjacent commercial areas.

# South Broadway Streetscape Program



Signage and lighting are scaled into horizontal bands that respond to the varying speeds of movement of pedestrians and vehicles. Informational signage is located at bus stops and parking lots, where people begin their pedestrian journeys along the street.

