

Helena's 6th Ward: Preserving and Promoting with Paintings

Helena's Sixth Ward district, just east of Montana Avenue and south of the railroad tracks, had become a neglected and blighted area of Helena. With the creation of an Urban Renewal District (2016) accompanied by a tax increment financing (TIF) district by the City Commission, the district is changing its look with the addition of several new businesses that attracts a variety of customers.

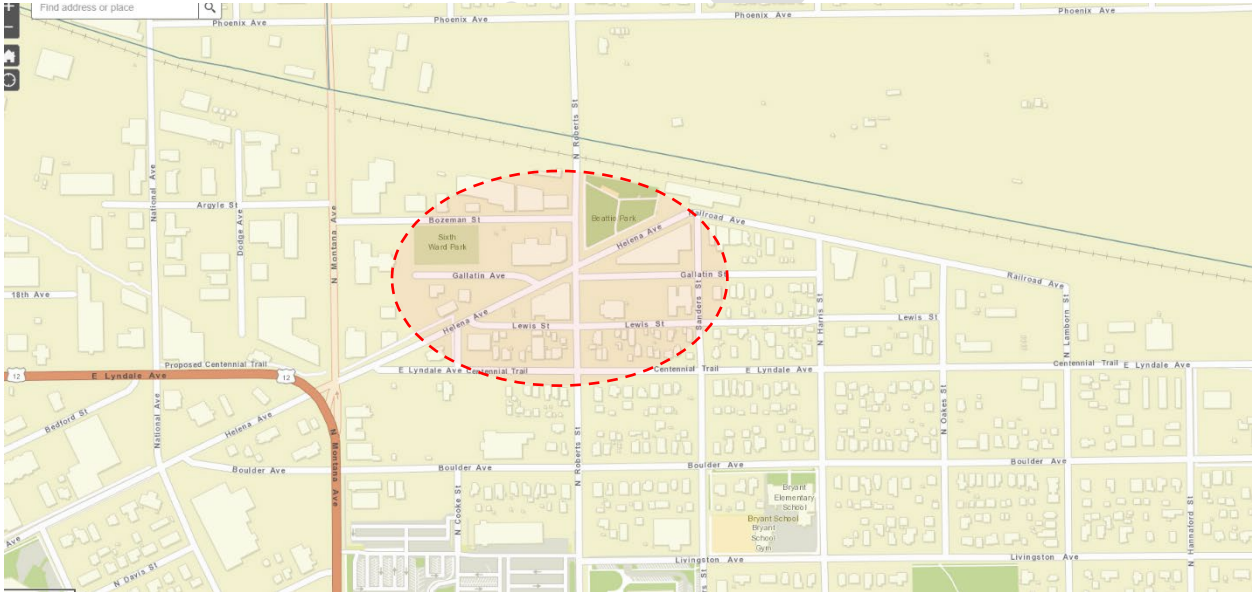
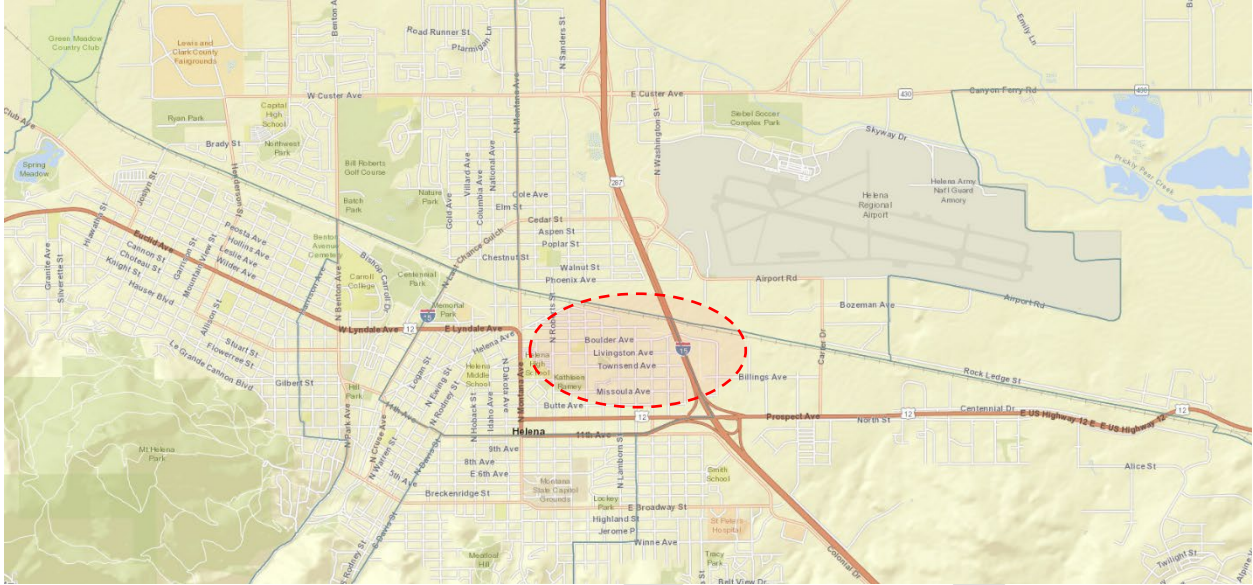


Driving Northeast on Helena Avenue you enter the 6th ward and are welcomed to the following new features from within the last ~5 years:

- trendy bakery/café (The Vanilla Bean)
- female-focused co-working space (The Virago Collaborative)
- locksmith and security company (Burdick's Locksmith)
- IT consulting group (Rocky Mountain Computers)
- A community garden
- A vintage market (Mae & June)
- Architect Firm (Slate Architects)
- Construction design and workshop (Pentecost Construction)
- Non-profit Center: provides state of the art office space at low costs for non-profits including Big Brothers Big Sisters and NAMI (National Association on Mental Illness)
- Newly designed 70-seat theater (Helena Avenue Theatre) for the Montana Playwrights Network

A new steak restaurant and butcher shop featuring Montana ranchers' livestock is being planned to move into an existing storage warehouse. This array of business owners not only took the financial risk to invest in this district, but also have become a community promoting the area.

Within a few blocks of the district you will find Helena College, Helena High School, Bryant Elementary School, and an eclectic neighborhood of homes built decades ago with tenants yearning to see upgrades to the commercial space that had dilapidated around them. Helena's Centennial Trail – which provides a safe off-street corridor running east-west across Helena – will run adjacent to the district.



Now, imagine driving into the 6th Ward and actually being LURED by its attractiveness. We are requesting matching funds to support a community inspired design and installation of 2 murals on the west sides of the buildings as you approach the district:



Murals make for amazing entrances and are markers of an area's history and significance of a community. The "Woman's mural" in the southwest corner of downtown Helena provides a good example:



What would the design of a 6th ward mural look like? We will hire a muralist to provide the designs with a theme of "Preserving and Promoting the 6th Ward"

Additional examples below only help promote the concept:



A mural to welcome children as they walk into school



A mural in remembrance of the chinese culture that once flourished in the neighborhood...

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