
Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning



A Guidebook for the Planning of Main Streets and Commercial Districts

June 2008



Front cover, clockwise from top: Village of Scottsville (Ellen Micoli Soffa), Village of Livonia (courtesy Mayor Cal Lathan), City of Batavia (J. Haremza), and the Village of Medina (courtesy CEO Marty Busch)

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A report submitted to Genesee Transportation Council in fulfillment of Stage 2 of the Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning project, a 2004 – 2006 Unified Planning Work Program project.

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GENESEE/FINGER LAKES
Regional Planning Council

Mission Statement

The Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (G/FLRPC) will identify, define, and inform its member counties of issues and opportunities critical to the physical, economic, and social health of the region. G/FLRPC provides forums for discussion, debate, and consensus building, and develops and implements a focused action plan with clearly defined outcomes, which include programs, personnel, and funding.

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This report, along with other relevant project information, is available online at the following web address:

<http://gflrpc.org/Publications/PVMSFP.htm>

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning* project is designed to address the body of issues that could potentially arise when reconstruction or rehabilitation of roadways that traverse a central business district or “main street” area is going to occur. This guidebook presents the findings of the second and final phase of the project, providing an overview of the body of information relevant to the subject area. It has been preceded by two case-study reports for the Villages of Scottsville and Newark, comprising phase 1 of the project.

Chapter I of the report explains the objective of the *Preparing Village ‘Main Streets’ for Planning* project to the reader. The project’s structure and components are explained. In order to address several recurring terms early on in the report, the terms *rehabilitation*, *reconstruction* and *revitalization* are defined and explained with regard to their context.

Chapter II provides the reader with a comprehensive review of the significance of main streets over time. The historical context of main streets is described in detail, illustrating the influence that these spaces have had on and within communities since the 1800’s. Main streets are described in terms of the functions that they served – as both a commercial district for the exchange of goods and services and as a civic center that facilitated the convivial interaction between residents for the purposes of finance, worship, governance, relaxation, or celebration. The variety of economic conditions, societal trends, and national policies that brought a decline to main street areas after the mid-20th Century is briefly described. During this period of decline, and partly as a result of it, many main streets were adapted to serve primarily as transportation corridors. Physical alterations that were made to promote the safe and efficient movement of traffic came, at times, at the expense of their historic attributes, detracting from their overall character and ambiance. The chapter concludes with a call for developing effective solutions that address the needs of today’s main street areas. The development of an adaptive, context-sensitive approach that strikes a balance between transportation, commerce, public interest, and community character is identified as an amenable framework.

Chapter III, *What Makes a Great Main Street?*, is intended to familiarize main street stakeholders with key terminology and background information relative to roadway construction best practices, as well as the various options that may be before them pertaining to the structural and physical elements of their main street area. The chapter deconstructs the components of a typical main street area into three primary categories: roadway area, sidewalk area, and building area. The components that comprise each category are then described in detail. Issues such as traffic flow, pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, street signs, outdoor lighting, green infrastructure, local laws, and parking are among those described. The chapter includes a variety of photographs taken throughout the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region which illustrate facilities in place.

Chapter IV, *Preparing Your Main Street for Planning*, is intended to act as a primer for main street stakeholders, providing recommendations for local committee organization, public involvement, data gathering and inventorying of main street resources. The importance of encouraging a meaningful citizen/stakeholder role in the decision-making process is described in detail, including six key components of an effective public involvement program. The importance of creating and maintaining an effective main street committee or task group is emphasized and frameworks are briefly discussed. The

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project development process is described in detail, including explanation of when communities need to involve key parties in the planning process.

Once the interpersonal and chronological aspects of main street organization are understood, the physical aspects of the main street corridor can then be assessed. Delineating the study area, understanding the recent history of the corridor, and conducting a variety of corridor profiles are described as important initial steps. The types of profiles recommended to be conducted within the corridor include: a local regulatory profile; a transportation profile; an infrastructure profile; a land use profile; and a demographic and economic profile. Other important project corridor inventories are described in detail, including building footprint, parking, historic structure, façade, and tree inventories, among others.

Chapter V, *Lessons Learned in the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region*, describes two successful main street reconstruction projects – Routes 5 and 63 in Batavia and Routes 63 and 31E in Medina. Important aspects of the projects are described in detail, including project timeline, budget, partnering with agencies, difficult challenges, and facility installation. Descriptive pictures of the construction communities accompany the sections.

Chapter VI, *How to Guide Your Main Street Revitalization Effort*, describes important programmatic and organizational aspects of the main street revitalization process. A general overview of four common main street revitalization organizational structures is provided. The four frameworks described include the Business Improvement District, the Merchants Association/Partnership, the Free-Standing Non-Profit, and the Private Revitalization Organization. Each framework includes an example of an active organization in the Western New York which utilizes the described structure. Funding sources for main street reconstruction efforts are also included in Chapter VI. The Transportation Improvement Program and other federal and state funding sources are described in detail. A summary chart summarizing a variety of other possible sources that can be leveraged for a main street revitalization effort concludes the guidebook.

The *Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning* guidebook concludes with seven appendices, including a list of project technical committee members, a NYS DOT Village Survey tool, four individual evaluation worksheets created by the NYS Main Street Program (a program of the Division of Housing and Community Development), an example of a main street overlay district law from the town of Wellfleet, MA, a summary list of cited resources, a Works Cited list, and a combined glossary/list of acronyms.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Objective of the *Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning* Project

The primary objective of the *Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning* project is to engage communities that are considering strategic planning for their “main streets” or village centers while simultaneously anticipating future infrastructure updates, rehabilitation or reconstruction within these areas. Such construction projects typically require significant demolition of the street and sidewalk right-of-way and the new facilities erected therein are typically designed to last several decades or more, affording communities few opportunities to alter their design after the planning and construction phases have been completed. This project was therefore conceived as a means of empowering communities with useful information on planning and design for main street and community center renovations well in advance of significant construction projects.

A main premise of this project recognizes that significant alteration and investment in transportation and/or other street-side infrastructure creates a unique opportunity for a community to improve its overall function, vitality and character. Early intervention and public participation in the planning of new facilities is therefore recognized as a critical part of ensuring suitable and equitable outcomes. Furthermore, many of the guidelines advanced through the *Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning* project are put forth as best practices that are applicable to all main street communities in the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region, independent of plans or schedules for actual construction activities. These are goals that all communities should strive for as they work toward improving the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Project Structure and Components

Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning will build upon the work completed for *Main Street Transportation Tools* under the 2002-2003 UPWP and other “main street” projects.¹ This project will help facilitate more productive revitalization efforts by establishing a framework for action and providing communities with a greater awareness and understanding of the issues and options associated with various types of capital improvement projects that occur along local, county or state highways.

The project developed two primary products in separate stages. The first stage was comprised of two separate main street recommendation reports – one for the Village of Scottsville and its companion for the Village of Newark. The process of main street revitalization efforts within these two communities was approached in a generalized sense in an effort to identify and explore relevant topics and assist in synthesizing community vision with policy, design, and other services and resources. Performing community inventories, summarizing data, identifying potential resources and partners, and preparing community recommendations for revitalization efforts were achieved outcomes. Community input had been a key component in the development of the recommendations for revitalization. Both of these reports should be consulted in order to gain insight relative to specific strategies and tools that were applied to the Villages of Scottsville and Newark.

¹ “Main Street Transportation Tools.” Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council.
<http://gflrpc.org/Publications/MSTT.htm> Last viewed 7/26/06.

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This guidebook comprises the second and final stage of the *Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning* project. It is intended to act as a resource that details key main street revitalization components and is intended to be utilized “off the shelf” for any community in the region. The guidebook incorporates lessons learned from other communities that have experienced notable main street construction projects in the recent past and draws from circumstances observed in the two project case study communities of Newark and Scottsville. The guidebook further explores the variety of issues and trends present in main street and transportation infrastructure and design. Primary themes include the nexus between roadway, sidewalk and building area within a downtown space, as well as how the structure and scale of these spaces can help reinforce a unique “sense of place” for visitors.² Key resources, partners and other pertinent data relevant to main street rehabilitation have also been included throughout.

Reconstruction, ‘3R’ Projects, and Revitalization: What’s the difference?

Throughout this report, the terms *reconstruction*, *rehabilitation*, and *revitalization* are used frequently; it is important to note, however, that they are not interchangeable.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) was formed in 1914 in an effort to create a forum in which professionals from across the country could discuss and evaluate transportation efficiency and safety. Since then, AASHTO has continually been creating and refining uniform standards in highway maintenance, design and construction.

According to AASHTO, a variety of facts are weighed when determining if a street’s surface should be physically rehabilitated or whether it should be entirely reconstructed.³ *Reconstruction* of existing highways implies substantial changes to the three-dimensional features of the highway. Many reconstruction projects involve capacity expansion, such as widening from two lanes to four lanes. The overall age and history of the road will ultimately determine what alterations are necessary and when and where compromises in design can be made. Historic functional trends of the highway, such as safety records and operational performance, as well as context-specific conditions (historic buildings, landmarks, local character, etc.) are among those that should be taken into account.

In some cases, reconstruction will also include the replacement of a good deal of below-ground infrastructure – in particular, water, stormwater, sewer and gas lines. The lifespan of reconstruction projects are generally intended to be long and the work performed will almost always involve serious disturbance of the road right-of-way. Replacement of below-ground facilities during this period is therefore likely to become warranted in order to avoid further disruption of highway in the near future.

In most cases, a roadway does not require total reconstruction; it may simply require surface maintenance or treatment. AASHTO groups these projects – referred to as *resurfacing*, *restoration*, and *rehabilitation* (3R) projects – into the same general category. These projects typically leave the majority of below-ground infrastructure intact and focus on the street’s pavement, shoulders, and

² For more information on the concept of “Sense of Place,” refer to the article “The Nature of Sense of Place” at: <http://www.eslarp.uiuc.edu/la/la437-f95/reports/yards/main.html> Last viewed 7/26/06.

³ “A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design.” American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). May 2004.

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possibly curbing, signage or sidewalks as necessary. Regarding 3R projects, the AASHTO publication *A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design* states:

Such projects by definition do not include substantive changes in the geometric character of the road, but a very important consideration is that they enhance safety. Most [state DOT] agencies utilize special design criteria for 3R projects. Criteria generally reflect an acceptance of existing features regardless of whether they meet current agency criteria for a new highway. Of course, an important consideration in retaining an existing design dimension for 3R projects is the safety and operational performance of the existing road.⁴

In all cases, pavement and shoulder conditions are determined based on standardized, uniform field evaluation and compilation procedures, resulting in a determination of the road’s *level of distress*. This data is used in combination with other objective information to evaluate appropriate alternatives based on the life-cycles of said alternatives and other associated costs. A detailed explanation of the methodology and procedures used by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) can be found in the *Comprehensive Pavement Design Manual* at the address referenced below.⁵ Further explanation of roadway evaluation criteria is provided in Chapter IV of this report.

Finally, *revitalization* in the context of this report refers to a combination of factors which lead to an overall improvement of the vitality and character of a neighborhood or area. Factors typically include a mix of physical, aesthetic, commercial, political, regulatory and organizational initiatives which result in equitable and tangible improvements to the area’s social, physical and economic well-being.

Preparing Your Main Street for Planning

The information that follows in this report has been compiled with the intent of providing interested community members with a starting point for re-envisioning their main street areas and community centers. In effect, it is a course outline in the subject of main street renovation for both beginner and veteran citizen planners and local public managers alike. It will present readers with a way to approach and view the built environment of their downtown areas and consider a variety of options for the future. The report will also delve into important organizational and process-oriented considerations which often present local administrators with some of the most difficult challenges during major projects. Negotiating with important agencies, financing capital improvement projects and understanding key rules and regulations are areas that will be explored.

Earlier “recommendation” reports that were generated for the Villages of Scottsville and Newark targeted issues specific to those case study communities using the same resources and format outlined herein. Readers may find the specific insights and recommendations that were offered for those communities to be useful to some degree, depending upon the similarities between their respected places of interest. This *Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning* guidebook, however, is intended to serve as a general overview of the body of issues that pertain to main streets within the Genesee-Finger Lakes region.

⁴ AASHTO. Page 21.

⁵ “Comprehensive Pavement Design Manual.” NYS DOT Publications. Last viewed 7/28/06 at <http://www.dot.state.ny.us/cmb/consult/cpdmfiles/cpdm.html> .

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Together, these resources should provide interested stakeholders with an excellent starting point for approaching a variety of main street reconstruction, rehabilitation, and revitalization projects.

A Note to Readers

This document includes several queues to assist readers with terminology and special topics. Unique terms are printed in italics and, in most cases, can be found in the glossary in Appendix G. In some instances, important terms are “called-out” directly on the page through floating frames like this one.

Several inserts have also been included in the report regarding special topics or interesting stories relevant to main street revitalization and organization. These sections are denoted with a ‘’ symbol before the title.

Finally, at the end of various sections of the report, readers can find special lists of resource materials that can be consulted for more information on the subjects in that section. Each resource has concurrently been cited in alphabetical order in Appendix F. A “Works Cited” page can be found in Appendix E which alphabetically lists each document referenced in footnotes.

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II. MAIN STREET IN PERSPECTIVE: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

An Evolving Landscape

The Genesee-Finger Lakes Region of Western New York is home to a wide variety of historic main streets and village centers, each of which has its own unique feel, ambiance and vitality. Many of these spaces are also in various states of repair and may be enjoying thriving commercial success or struggling to find or maintain viable businesses. Some regional main streets have experienced significant refurbishment in recent years with assistance from concerned citizens, dedicated local officials, private engineering and consulting firms and state agencies such as the New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) and the New York State Division of Housing and Community Development. Other regional main streets are struggling to various extents, presenting a host of challenges and opportunities for communities that are willing to put forth the attention, effort, and investment.

Main street and downtown revitalization efforts typically involve a complex blend of expertise, organization, resources and effort over a protracted period of time before successes can be realized. Capital improvements such as street and sewer reconstruction are no exception to this rule and can easily overwhelm a municipality’s organizational or financial capacity. These operations can also test the patience and mettle of the community at large – businesses can lose patronage, traffic is often slowed and inconvenient, and an exposed roadway is typically unattractive, messy and hazardous to people and vehicles. All of these challenges underscore the need for a collaborative community-wide planning and outreach initiative in an attempt to manage the public’s expectations, build consensus and work toward long-term, sustainable project outcomes.

Successful main streets and downtown centers do not simply “happen” – they are created through concerted participation and effort at a variety of levels, typically over the course of many years. The Region’s main streets are evolving landscapes, molded and shaped by local inhabitants and outside agencies in order to meet and adapt to the needs of their users – at times with unintended consequences.

Indeed, since their inception, changes to these spaces have been occurring incrementally, with both positive and negative results. The shape that these spaces take and the functions that they serve in the future depend in large part on the decisions and efforts of their current inhabitants.

Striking a balance between modern, adaptive uses for these spaces while recognizing and respecting their heritage and the “initial intentions that called for their creation” is a major challenge for those involved in planning for main streets.⁶ The communities that succeed in doing so, however, will find that



*Row houses on South Main Street – Geneva, NY.
Source: www.visitfingerlakes.com*

⁶ Childs, Mark C. *Squares: A Public Place Design Guide for Urbanists*. University of New Mexico Press: 2004. 15.

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they have not only contributed to the immediate surroundings of their downtown landscape, but to the health and well-being of the entire community and to the Region as a whole.

The following sections provide further perspective and context to the issue of planning for main streets by describing their geographic, cultural, historic and economic significance within the American landscape.

Centers of Influence: Main Street as Commercial District and Civic Center

Human movement can be measured by two basic elements: time and distance. As our ability to travel greater distances in shorter periods of time has changed, so have the spaces upon which we travel.

Main streets have evolved in both purpose and function in order to accommodate the various needs of the day. Many main streets originated as regional transportation corridors – trails and later roads along which movement was either convenient or otherwise beneficial to its users. As these corridors proved successful with greater use and interconnections, they became established as regional hubs – central spaces recognized as strategic locations to trade, conduct business and provide the public with a variety of services.

Main street buildings were typically spaced close together and had occupants on all levels, including a mix of what were typically first floor retailers and second and third floors for offices and apartments. The presence of such institutions as the library, banks, and local and county level government offices provided a *critical mass* of users – both vehicular and non-vehicular along the central boulevard or thoroughfare. Complimentary services such as grocery stores, restaurants, haberdasheries, and repair shops reinforced these places as viable centers of social, economic and civic activity.

Key Terms:

Critical Mass is the scale or volume at which processes become self-perpetuating. In this context, the number of visitors necessary that allows a place to become self-sustaining in terms of commerce, civic activity and interpersonal engagement.

“Conviviality...” writes Mark C. Childs, “is the vibrant sense of belonging to a settlement.”⁷ As regional economies and their comprising cities, towns and villages thrived, local residents expressed their financial successes, local prominence, civic pride, and cherished values in the design and construction of their buildings and the surrounding public and private spaces. This phenomenon was all too common on American main streets. In combination with adjoining local streets, walkways, squares and parks, these spaces comprised a public sphere which essentially became greater than the sum of its parts in many communities. Main



Main St. – Oakfield, NY. Date unknown.
Source: <http://www.oakfield.govoffice.com/>

⁷ Childs, Mark C. 3.

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streets provided local residents and visitors with what is commonly referred to today as a *sense of place* – spaces that were “...firmly woven into the context in which they [were] located.”⁸

These common spaces typically made plentiful use of local resources. Building materials, such as local varieties of granite, sandstone or brick, and further, the various skills brought by local artisans and tradesman, coalesced to define the character of local main streets through their built forms. Moreover, the distinctions of local economies and regional markets had direct impact on the types of buildings that would be necessary to accommodate the various trades. Warehouses, mills, factories and merchants’ shops of various sorts stand as vestiges of a locale’s historic means of prosperity.

Many downtowns and main streets exhibit distinct pattern languages – repetitive symbols and design features in streetscape and architecture. While these pattern languages may have been repetitive across North America, each main street is as inextricably unique as the people who have lived and the stories that have transpired upon them through the decades. Many of these patterns have been well-preserved and can be observed throughout main street corridors today, to lesser or greater extents. Some of these spaces, on the other hand, have suffered significant distress and neglect due to a variety of causes, including economic decline, public policy, or from local disasters, such as fires or floods.

What Happened to America’s Main Streets?

Historically, main streets served as both the commercial and civic core of communities. As American society evolved, so did its landscape. Due in part to the increased use of automobiles and the creation of the Interstate Highway System, there was a movement of people and services away from the central core of communities along main streets. Roads that once connected neighborhoods mixed with stores and apartments in downtown areas now carried residents to outlying regional malls, shopping strips and subdivisions. Second and third floor living spaces were also becoming less appealing to renters and owners, and many were vacated or adapted for other uses, such as storage. By the mid-1960’s, the prominence of many Upstate New York main streets was beginning to erode in the face of other competing centers of social, civic and commercial influence.

The diversification of land uses and their proximity to the transportation network has given people more options with regard to where they can live, work and play. The consequences of these changes in movement can be observed along main streets, some of which have struggled to maintain businesses and patrons as a result. These implications do not stop there, however. The popular modern spaces built for commerce and interaction – such as the strip mall or corporate campus – have been heavily criticized for their lack in overall character and quality of design. While these spaces may serve their purpose in an efficient and functional manner, many of them fall far short of providing the public with the sense of place that historic main streets and their surrounding neighborhoods did so well. While proponents and detractors of modern building and development practices will continue to debate the merits of these forms of construction, it is difficult to deny that some common trends in road and building design – particularly those which cater to automotive as opposed to human scales – leave people with less security and comfort than they might otherwise have.

[Cont. on p 9]

⁸ Hannah, Gail Greet. “Creating the Built Environment: Issues and Trends in Design.” *Landscapeforms*. 18. Last viewed online 6/27/06 at http://www.landscapeforms.com/insites/whitepapers/create_built.htm

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Why are Main Streets Important Today?⁹



Given the increase in competition and diversity of consumer choices offered by modern “big box” developments and malls, how can traditional commercial districts remain relevant as centers of influence, commerce and interaction? The National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street CenterTM provides twelve reasons:

1. **Commercial districts are prominent employment centers.** Even the smallest commercial district employs hundreds of people, and often the district is collectively the community's largest employer.
2. **The commercial district is a reflection of community** image, pride, prosperity, and level of investment – critical factors in business retention and recruitment efforts.
3. **Main Street represents a significant portion of the community's tax base.** If the district declines, property values drop, placing more of a tax burden on other parts of town.
4. **The traditional commercial district is an ideal location for independent businesses,** which in turn:
 - *Keep profits in town.* Chain businesses send profits out of town
 - *Support other local businesses and services*
 - *Supports local families with family-owned businesses*
 - *Supports local community projects, like teams and schools*
 - *Provide an extremely stable economic foundation, as opposed to a few large businesses and chains with no ties to stay in the community*
5. **Main Street is the historic core of the community.** Its buildings embody the community's past and its visual identity.
6. **A historic commercial district is often a major tourist attraction.** When people travel or shop, they want to see unique places – especially ones that offer a unique shopping "experience."
7. **A vital Main Street area reduces sprawl** by concentrating retail in one area and uses community resources wisely, such as infrastructure, tax dollars, and land.
8. **A healthy Main Street core protects property values** in surrounding residential neighborhoods.
9. **The commercial district offers convenience.** Main Streets are often within walking distance of residential areas, providing easy accessibility for the community and reducing the reliance on auto-dependent shopping.
10. **The district is usually a government center** where city hall, municipal buildings, the courthouse, and/or post office are located. It often is an important service center as well for finding attorneys, physicians, insurance offices, and financial institutions.
11. **Main Street provides an important civic forum, where members of the community can congregate.** Parades, special events, and celebrations held there reinforce intangible sense of community. Private developments like malls and strip centers can and do restrict free speech and access.
12. **The commercial district represents a huge public and private investment.** Imagine how much it would cost to re-create all of the buildings and public infrastructure in your commercial district.

⁹ “Why are Main Streets Important?” National Trust for Historic Preservation.
<http://mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=1927> . Last viewed online 7/21/06.

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[Cont. from p 7]

Automotive-centered design is of particular relevance when considering populations such as the poor, elderly and disabled. These populations – some of which comprise a rapidly- growing segment of our communities – generally do not enjoy the same level of mobility that many Americans do. When considering the overall growth, development and maintenance of our communities, local officials, planners and developers must carefully examine the needs of the entire population as opposed to certain segments. This will involve a delicate balance between meeting the needs of an efficient transportation network with preserving the qualities that make our main streets unique, safe and friendly places for people to enjoy.

Transportation and Main Streets: From Thoroughfare to Highway

Transportation networks (such as local streets, county roads and state and federal highways) and transportation modes (such as air, rail, boat, bus, automobile, bike and foot) tie a community together and link it to other neighboring communities. Streets provide safe and reliable access to work, schools, shopping and residences. The livelihood of a community depends on how goods and services are imported or exported, thus there is a strong connection between main street viability and the transportation network.

Main streets, however, do not exist solely to meet the needs of the transportation system. As explored in previous sections, traditional main street design has come to serve a variety of benefits other than movement – in particular, providing convivial, meaningful spaces in which to meet, interact, relax or conduct business with one another. Because many main streets are typically along a state highway, these aspects can easily suffer at the expense of promoting an efficient, congestion-free transportation system.

These two goals – transportation efficiency and the preservation of comfortable public spaces – can sometimes be in conflict with each other. Indeed, many of the typical approaches to more efficient highway design, such as lane additions, land and shoulder widening, unobstructed sight lines, etc., are incompatible with a traditional main street landscape. Trees, shade, pocket parks, convenient parking, pedestrian facilities, and other elements or amenities that promote an atmosphere conducive to what could be described as a “community-friendly environment” have been sacrificed in the past in an effort to increase traffic flow or to maintain or improve the *level of service* of these roadways. Furthermore, weak or contrived attempts to interject components of traditional main street design in the absence of a comprehensive consideration of the historical, social or cultural context of the main street landscape are often met with displeasure and fall far short of their intended purpose. The results of such designs can often be perceived as incongruent with their surroundings or even frivolous, as opposed to genuine or harmonious in character.

Key Terms:

Level of Service is a measure used to determine the degree to which a roadway is meeting traffic demand. The measurement ranges from a determination of ‘free flow’ (best) to ‘stable flow’ to ‘forced or breakdown flow’ (worst).

Functional Classification refers to a system in which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they intended to provide.

Further description of these measurements and their applications can be found in Chapter IV.

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In response to the need to develop a more adaptive framework of meeting transportation and community development needs, the context sensitive solutions approach was developed. *Context sensitive solutions* (CSS) provides highway officials and main street advocates with flexible approaches that can complement both transportation efficiency and the preservation of main street character.

Developing Lasting and Effective Solutions for Today’s Main Streets

CSS provides a dynamic framework for addressing the range of issues that are likely to arise during a transportation project. Sometimes referred to as *context sensitive design*, a variety of interpretations and definitions of the framework exist, but most agree that the approach contains the following basic components:

- “Balance safety, mobility, community and environmental goals in all projects;
- Involve the public and stakeholders early and continuously throughout the planning and project development process;
- Use an interdisciplinary team tailored to project needs;
- Address all modes of travel;
- Apply flexibility inherent in design standards; and
- Incorporate aesthetics as an integral part of good design.”¹⁰

The CSS framework recognizes that conventional approaches to transportation projects rely primarily on objectives that support travel and traffic demand over most other considerations. As explained in the Institute of Transportation Engineers publication *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities*:

Conventional thoroughfare design is frequently driven by traffic demand and level of service objectives. The first two design elements of a thoroughfare are typically determined in the transportation planning process – functional classification and number of lanes. The outcome of this mobility-focused process influences the rest of the design process, from working with stakeholders to the final design. A pre-determined outcome can be a source of conflict with stakeholders that delays or even stops projects because the thoroughfare design may not be considered compatible with its surroundings or does not address the critical concerns of the community.

CSS-inspired thoroughfare design also begins the transportation planning process with an emphasis on identifying critical factors and issues before establishing design criteria. Certainly functional classification, travel forecasts and levels of service are factors to consider in CSS, and may be a high priority objective under many circumstances. Through an interdisciplinary approach, including a full range of stakeholders, the process seeks to identify the core issues/problems, develop a spectrum of alternatives and reach consensus on the best solution. The process may determine that level of service needs to be balanced along with environmental, historic preservation, or economic development objectives in the community. This process results in a well thought out and rationalized design tradeoff – the fundamental basis of CSS. (p9)

¹⁰ “Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities: An ITE Proposed Recommended Practice (Draft).” Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). 2006. 4. Last viewed online 10/10/2007 at <http://www.ite.org/bookstore/RP036.pdf>. First referenced through Minnesota Department of Transportation as published on the University of Minnesota’s Center for Transportation Studies Web site <http://www.cts.umn.edu/Education/ContextSensitive/#whatis>.

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CSS embraces a design process that places qualities such as walkability, pedestrian accommodations, mixed land and building uses, and other attributes that are common among traditional main street designs at the same level as the needs of the transportation system. The result is a framework that is both more readily capable of achieving a balanced approach to a main street or community center project.

Using a CSS approach to the planning and design process can help to “minimize problems and delays by ensuring stakeholder involvement, identification of issues and community values and evaluation of alternative solutions that meet the needs and purpose of the project.”¹¹ Perhaps more importantly, a CSS approach can also play a significant role in re-establishing village and town centers throughout upstate New York as important hubs for civic engagement, economic activity, and regional influence.

As American consumers continue to be offered a dizzying array of choices within the marketplace, producers struggle to find innovative ways to give their products a competitive edge. Communities are no exception to this rule; concepts in urban design such as mixed-use and walkability are attributes that many consumers and producers are searching for in today’s real estate market. Those towns and villages that can set themselves apart in the marketplace will significantly further the chances of their economic success. By embracing the traditional mixed-use paradigm that many modern developers are striving for in new developments, regional towns and villages can set themselves apart through the enhancement and promotion of their main street’s authentic elements and character, thereby taking full advantage of their community’s inherent sense of place.

¹¹ ITE 6.

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III. WHAT MAKES A GREAT MAIN STREET?

Generally speaking, municipalities can anticipate significant renovations of their main street infrastructure to occur every 30 to 50 years. During that period of time, routine wear and tear, facility obsolescence, or changes in area land use and local *levels of service* will each be a factor in determining the extent to which the roadway and its facilities (lights, sewers, sidewalks, etc.) will need to be repaired or replaced.

When that replacement occurs, municipalities should take great care and consideration to select the most appropriate elements for replacement or rehabilitation. New facilities need to not only compliment the commercial, historic or architectural context of the area, but they must also fit within the project budget. The following sections are intended to familiarize main street planners, local advocates, and other members of the public with key terminology and background information relative to main street redevelopment and highway construction best practices, as well as the various options that may be before them pertaining to the structural and physical elements of their main street area.

It is important to note that no one document can reasonably address every issue relevant to main street reconstruction, rehabilitation and revitalization projects in a comprehensive manner. Efforts have therefore been made to draw the reader’s attention to important source materials on the subject matter that focus on specific issues related to the highway rehabilitation/reconstruction process.

Characteristics of a Great Street

An excerpt from *Planning* magazine

A great street...

- Provides orientation to its users, and connects well to the larger pattern of ways;
- Balances the competing needs of the street – driving, transit, walking, cycling, servicing, parking, drop-offs, etc;
- Fits the topography and capitalizes on natural features;
- Is lined with a variety of interesting activities and uses that create a varied streetscape;
- Has urban design or architectural features that are exemplary in design;
- Relates well to its bordering uses – allows for continuous activity, doesn’t displace pedestrians to provide access to bordering uses;
- Encourages human contact and social activities;
- Employs hardscape and/or landscape to great effect;
- Promotes safety of pedestrians and vehicles and promotes use over the 24-hour day;
- Promotes sustainability through minimizing runoff, reusing water, ensuring groundwater quality, minimizing heat islands, and responding to climatic demands;
- Is well maintained, and capable of being maintained without excessive costs;
- Has a memorable character.

*Knack, Ruth, Executive Editor. “Great Streets: What makes them special?” *Planning* January 2008: 16.*

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Framing the Space: Approaching Main Street Planning and Design

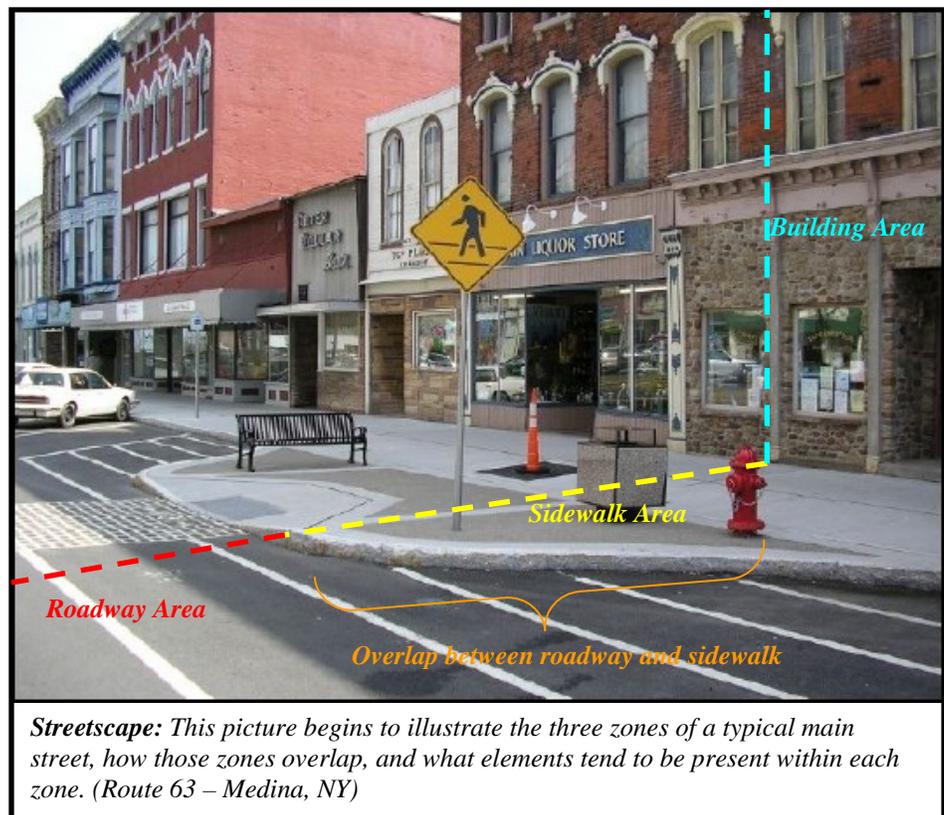
Main streets and other similar common spaces generally have distinctive, universal elements that comprise them. “Pattern languages” as described in Chapter II (or the “pattern of ways” as described in the first bullet under “Characteristics of a Great Street”) – in combination with uniform transportation facilities and other distinctive functional components – coalesce to create our main street thoroughfares. A successful main street is, in many ways, the embodiment of just the right balance between these various components. This section attempts to “deconstruct” the common patterns of a main street and separate these basic components. By doing so, local main street planners and advocates can begin to develop a systematic approach to main street planning and design.

Understanding the Components of a Streetscape

Before “re-envisioning” a streetscape, it is beneficial to break the area into separate components to better understand the different zones and how those zones function and interact with each other. A typical main street area can be separated into three distinct zones or categories:

1. **Roadway Area:** this is the actual pavement surface for motor vehicles; it is located between the curbs and is a publicly owned and controlled area.
2. **Sidewalk Area:** this is the area between the curb and the edge of the public right-of-way on both sides of the vehicular area; it is a publicly owned and controlled area.
3. **Building Area:** this is the part of the buildings visible from the public areas of Main Street; usually the front or façade of the buildings; except in the cases of public buildings (e.g. a library, firehouse or village hall), it is privately owned and controlled but subject to public regulation.

In order to facilitate explanation, each component is divided into a separate category – *although it is important to note that the boundaries of each area will often overlap into the*



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adjacent area(s). Together, these three areas make up the complete streetscape of common village thoroughfares. If these spaces are to be attractive, effective, and vibrant places, all three components need to work together and support the functions of the others. Furthermore, the specific needs of the users of each component (motorists, pedestrians, merchants, etc.) have to be well-understood and balanced for the entire system to function properly.

Roadway Area

Traffic Flow

The primary purpose of the roadway area is to provide for the safe and efficient movement of motor vehicles. As described in Chapter II, main streets developed as centers of commerce, and there is a strong connection between the commercial viability of a main street and the quality of its transportation network.

Access management refers to the management of traffic entering, leaving and crossing roads. It is also the control and regulation of the spacing and design of driveways, medians, median openings, traffic signals and intersections on arterial streets to improve safe and efficient traffic flow on the road system.¹³ A variety of resources pertaining to access management are available through Genesee Transportation Council (see footnote below).

Key Terms:

Access Management: a set of strategies to improve the safety and efficiency of traffic by reducing congestion and decreasing the number of accidents while simultaneously preserving community character through land use planning and site design.

Source: Genesee Transportation Council¹²

Traffic calming refers to a variety of physical measures intended to reduce vehicular speeds, primarily in lower-speed environments such as residential areas, parks, school zones or any area with considerable pedestrian activity.¹⁴ These features can also have the added benefits of reducing vehicle intrusion (noise, pollution, etc.) into the human realm. This is of particular relevance when considering the function of a main street, which ideally should provide visitors with a comfortable, welcoming environment to spend time in.

A common complaint voiced by drivers traveling through main street areas is aimed at traffic congestion during certain times of the day. Congestion, however, can be more of an issue of perception than reality; furthermore, traffic congestion should not be confused with momentary pauses in traffic flow. Complaints about congestion are very often a symptom of living in a fast-paced society that is accustomed to traveling great distances at high rates of speed. In reality, travel times are probably only modestly affected by the calming of traffic through main street areas. Furthermore, this calming effect has the positive benefit of creating a safer, more pleasant atmosphere for pedestrians and can aid in attracting visitors to local businesses.

¹² “What is Access Management?” Genesee Transportation Council, Transportation Information Resources. Last viewed online 7/7/07 at <http://www.gtcmpo.org>.

¹³ ITE 217.

¹⁴ AASHTO. May 2004. Page 19

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There are a variety of elements that can be incorporated along both the roadway and sidewalk area to induce traffic calming. Enhanced crosswalks are among the most common of roadway area improvements that can be incorporated to calm traffic. Other sidewalk area improvements can also impact excessive traffic speeds, such as trees, plantings or other near-street accoutrements. Features such as these impart physical changes in the streetscape and act as visual queues for drivers. Such improvements can also be more effective at changing driver behavior than sporadic police enforcement. As important, traffic calming helps to encourage pedestrian comfort and presence and makes crossing the street safer, particularly for children, the disabled or the elderly.

Complete Streets – Pedestrian and Bicycle Considerations

“Complete streets” is a phrase that refers to streets designed to safely accommodate a range of users, including not just vehicles but also bicyclists, people with disabilities, public transit riders and other pedestrians. Several primary elements of complete streets – the Americans with Disabilities Act, pedestrian safety, and bicycle accommodations – are described below.

Assuring that all pedestrians have a safe and deliberate right-of-way is becoming much more common in main street areas, predominantly due to Federal legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). According to the document *Special Report: Accessible Public Rights-of-Way Planning and Design for Alterations*:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. ADA implementing regulations for Title II prohibit discrimination in the provision of services, programs, and activities by state and local governments. Designing and constructing pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way that are not usable by people with disabilities may constitute discrimination. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504) includes similar prohibitions in the conduct of federally-funded programs... Thus, the accessibility objective in a new project is to design and build facilities that are ‘readily accessible to and usable by’ people with disabilities. Compliance is measured against the referenced standards.¹⁵

Publicly-funded right-of-way projects must therefore strive to accommodate users with a range of mobility. At times, physical and financial constraints may make this seem to be a difficult goal to achieve. A wide variety of innovative design solutions have been advanced since the ADA was passed, however, and their implementation in the field has been vetted and refined. Today, ADA compliant facilities are rather common in most public places.



This photo illustrates that ADA compliance can be achieved even under difficult circumstances. Space constraints did not discourage designers from creating street-side handicapped parallel parking complete with dual parallel curb ramps in Batavia, NY.

¹⁵ “Special Report: Accessible Public Rights-of-Way Planning and Design for Alterations.” Public Rights-of-Way Access Advisory Committee. 2007. page 2. Last view online 6/2/08 at <http://www.access-board.gov/PROWAC/alterations/guide.htm>

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Enhanced Crosswalks: *Curb extensions were used in Medina, NY (left) in conjunction with a hashed crosswalk to improve the visibility of designated crossing areas on the Village’s historic Main St. (NYS Rt. 63). In Boston, MA (center), a neighborhood association worked with the State DOT to choose a unique decorative printed crosswalk which also employs a refuge island. In Arlington, VA, (right) a brick asphalt stamp was used.*

One particular pedestrian accommodation that has grown in popularity in recent years is the *enhanced crosswalk*. Enhanced crosswalks are crosswalks which go beyond two simple parallel painted lines. Enhanced crosswalks can employ a variety of methods in order to distinguish the zone of safety for pedestrians, including brick or cobblestone inlays, stamped and colored pavement (asphalt or concrete), or uniquely textured and colored line patterns (“printed” crosswalks). In addition, an enhanced crosswalk can include a curb extension, sometimes referred to as a “bump-out” or “bulb-out.” Curb extensions provide several benefits: they provide an elevated zone of safety for the pedestrian to observe traffic; they allow drivers to see pedestrians more easily; and they shorten the crossing distance. Crossings along busy routes or with multiple lanes can be further enhanced with a pedestrian refuge island, which provides the pedestrian with a zone of safety half-way across a road. These areas can further be enhanced with signage or plantings.

Not only does this create an attractive pedestrian crossing, but the texture offered by an enhanced crosswalk also creates both a visual queue as well as an audible queue for the motorist. Drivers can see, hear and feel the crosswalk when traveling over it, reminding them to slow down and to be aware of possible pedestrians in the area. Furthermore, curb extensions can act as a latent traffic calming device, creating an hour-glass effect on passing traffic and slowing drivers down to more reasonable speeds.

It is important to note that while stamped, colored asphalt and concrete is attractive, its long-term performance is questionable when subjected to the harsh climactic variations typical in the Western New York region. Local officials and planners should therefore approach other communities that may have tried various methods in order to



Safe accommodations for bicyclists should be well-conceived and an integral part of the roadway in order for them to be successful. While the above picture illustrates a desire to accommodate bicyclists, the path provided is full of hazards.

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judge and compare their levels of performance.

Complete streets must also include accommodations for bicyclists. Indeed, current federal transportation regulations require state and local governments to consider accommodations for bicyclists throughout the planning, design, operation, maintenance and management stages of the transportation system. Providing clearly-marked accommodations for bicyclists increases the safety and visibility of the bicyclist as they travel in the roadway area. When bike lanes are well-delineated, motorists are much more likely to accept bicyclists as shared users of the roadway rather than hazards to avoid. Bike lanes also improve mobility for bicyclists by providing an efficient right-of-way devoid of obstructions. Furthermore, safe and efficient bicycle accommodations can help to encourage others to bike rather than drive, which has the potential to relieve traffic congestion and improve the public’s health.

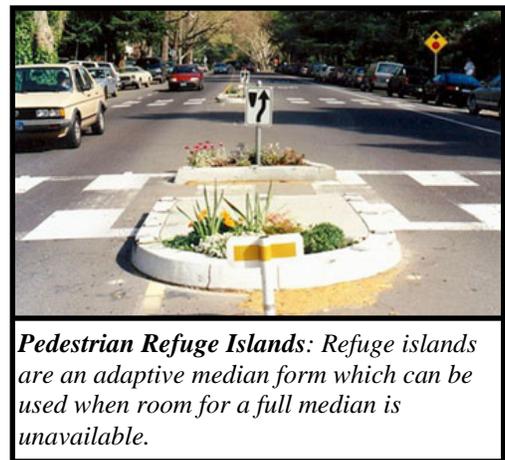
Medians and Roundabouts

When the width of a main street equals or exceeds four lanes, a median may be incorporated into the street design. The purpose of the median is to provide a physical separation between opposing lanes of traffic, thereby decreasing possible conflicts between vehicles traveling in opposite directions and controlling access points. They can also provide pedestrians with a place of refuge when crossing streets, allowing temporary shelter from traffic half-way across a street. As with curb extensions, such a median can have the added benefit of calming traffic along the roadway.

Median designs can range from nothing more than a raised cement or asphalt curb to prominent, landscaped areas. Pedestrian refuge islands are an abridged form of a median which can be used when room for a full median is unavailable. These can be particularly beneficial when employed within areas of high-pedestrian use, such as near parks, schools or other prominent areas of pedestrian activity or areas which are problematic when crossing by foot.

Circular intersections – commonly referred to as *roundabouts* – are an age-old roadway design that has been receiving renewed popularity by state and federal highway officials in recent years.¹⁶ Modern roundabouts provide a safe and attractive traffic control device that can calm traffic, improve pedestrian safety and yet still maintain an adequate rate of traffic flow. While roundabouts are relatively rare in most parts of the United States, their use has steadily been increasing due to improvements in design and recognized safety benefits.

A variety of detailed site requirements must be considered when assessing the viability of a roundabout at a particular intersection. Site considerations include (but are not limited to) terrain, capacity limitation, traffic volume, street alignment, and pedestrian issues. Equally as important, the community at large should



Pedestrian Refuge Islands: *Refuge islands are an adaptive median form which can be used when room for a full median is unavailable.*

¹⁶ “Roundabouts: Interim Requirements and Guidance.” NYSDOT. Roundabout Information Homepage. 2000. Website <http://www.dot.state.ny.us/roundabouts/round.html> last accessed 9/19/06.

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be engaged regarding the possibility, as circular intersections continue to instill a sense of trepidation among many drivers.

On-Street Parking

Ensuring an adequate supply of on-street public parking is an important concern for main street areas. “Inadequate parking” is one of the most common complaints from main street business owners when asked to consider problems or deficiencies associated with their location. The concern is that visitors will choose to take their business elsewhere if a convenient parking space cannot be found quickly. Unfortunately, the problem is often one of perception, as many downtown areas are found to have ample or excessive parking within a reasonable walking distance of the commercial center.

The two types of parking options that are likely to be found within a main street area are either parallel or angled parking. Angled (or diagonal) parking is becoming rare in main street areas and is generally discouraged when roadways are rebuilt, as it requires a very wide right-of-way in order to safely accommodate parked vehicles along with the other uses of the roadway. One obvious benefit of angled parking, however, is that it allows for a greater density of parking spaces along the street. Parallel parking is generally preferred for main street areas as it allows for better accommodation of a variety of roadway uses, such as wider sidewalks, tree planters, bike lanes, and turning lanes.



Outdoor Room: *On-street parking, in combination with the tree canopy along Main St. in Cooperstown, NY, helps to buffer the pedestrian "comfort zone" from the noises and hazards of the roadway. Picture source: www.visitcooperstown.com*

Below is a list of on-street parking considerations for main street areas. ***In general, on-street parking:***

- Is necessary, but excessive or intrusive parking can ruin the urban or historic feel of a main street area;
- Creates a buffer between the roadway and the sidewalk, enhancing the pedestrian safety zone and improving the pedestrian experience;
- Can be buttressed with a mix of private off street parking options;
- Should be regulated with well-enforced local laws that favor visitors over locals (deliveries and daytime employees should seek alternative parking, parking time limits should be imposed, etc.);
- Should be free in small commercial centers. If competition for spaces becomes an issue, however, the development of an innovative pricing system may be warranted.

It is unlikely that on-street parking alone can provide enough space to accommodate all users, particularly during peak business hours. Adequate off-street parking must therefore be considered in

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conjunction with street-side parking. Creating more surface parking areas is not always the optimum solution, however. Further detail pertaining to off-street parking management can be found under the “Building Area” section below.

Street Signs

As stated in the *NYS Supplement to the National Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways*:

Effective September 13, 2007, the provisions of the National Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (National MUTCD) were formally adopted by the State of New York. These regulations provide for a New York State Supplement to the National MUTCD to also become effective on that date. Combined, the two will comprise the “manual and specifications for a uniform system of traffic control devices” required by Section 1680(a).¹⁷

The NYSDOT defines a sign as “any outdoor display, device, figure, painting, drawing, message, placard, poster, billboard, or other thing which is designed, intended or used to advertise or inform, any part of the advertising or informative contents of which is visible from the main traveled way of a highway, whether the sign is permanent or portable.”¹⁸

Road signs are strictly regulated by the NYS Department of Transportation. Safe highways depend in part on uniform signage that conveys clear messages and direction to the driving public. Inappropriate or otherwise illegal signs can confuse motor vehicle operators, pedestrians and bicyclists, creating potentially hazardous circumstances. Historic places and other types of unique corridors (such as Scenic Byways) may also have additional layers of local or state regulation in order to control the appearance of the area.

The problems of excessive and contradictory signage are some of the circumstances that the *National Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways* and its associated state supplement attempt to address. Excessive signage not only clutters an area, but it can lead to signage fatigue – a situation where individuals start to ignore signs altogether. To be effective, a traffic control device should meet five basic requirements:

- Fulfill a need;
- Command attention;
- Convey a clear, simple meaning;
- Command respect from road users; and
- Give adequate time for proper response.¹⁹

[Cont. on p 22]

¹⁷ “NYS Supplement to the National Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways.” NYSDOT. Introduction. Last viewed online 12/12/07 at <https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/operating/oom/transportation-systems/repository/MUTCD%20SDM.pdf>

¹⁸ “New York State Scenic Byways Sign Manual.” NYSDOT: Scenic Byways Program. Last viewed online 12/12/07 at <https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/divisions/engineering/design/dqab/hdm/hdm-repository/ScenicByways.pdf>

¹⁹ “Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.” US Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/>

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Signals of Progress

Installing Custom Way-Finding Signage in the Fairport Business District (Rts 31F & 250)

Since its inception, the Fairport Village Partnership (FVP) had been developing strategies to improve business along Main Street. Developing custom street signage for the Business District was identified as a central component of that strategy, one that could potentially have a big impact on the look and feel of Fairport’s Main Street without investing a great deal of financial capital.



Uniform way-finding signage, it was thought, could help to establish the unique sense of place that Fairport wanted to impart upon visitors when arriving. A sign committee was reconvened to begin exploring the idea and to figure out where it needed to start. This proved to be considerably more difficult than most had imagined, however.

Local leaders and administrators were reluctant to embrace the idea at first. They initially referred to the same issue that often discourages most communities: NYSDOT controls the right-of-way and probably won’t allow a municipality to post its own signage upon it. Furthermore, any signage posted may increase local liability or would have to meet strict or unreasonable design standards, making the project untenable.

These reasons alone weren’t enough to deter the committee, however. Members were aware of other instances where communities had incorporated custom signage along state routes, so clearly this was something worth pursuing. After inquiring with neighboring municipalities, including the City of Rochester, a breakthrough was finally made.

“Knowledge of Home Rule was an important part of this process,” said Kal Wysokowski, former Partnership Director. “We found out that we needed to make some revisions to our local code first, and then we would have the ability to add signage in the corridor.” Routes 31F & 250 are considered “Non-State Owned Touring Routes” through the Village, putting them under local rather than state control. An amendment was eventually made to the local Vehicle and Traffic Law providing the Board of Trustees with the power to regulate traffic and the installation of official traffic control signals in accordance with each such resolution.²⁰

Signs were then designed by the committee, which included the owner of a local sign shop who would ultimately build the signs. Local colors were used along with images that captured the essence of the Village’s identity and character – the classic canal packet boat. Other details, such as height, lettering size, visibility, and weatherization were also addressed in detail. Fabrication of poles was done by the DPW. Most importantly, the design process was incremental, allowing the committee to test ideas, receive input and make alterations.

The Committee also started small. The first signs were two “Welcome to Downtown” signs; more signs were erected later after a trial period. These helped to orient visitors toward parking and other unique points, like the waterfront. Sign styles and patterns were drafted and demonstrated over the course of several months. “We realized after the first signs were up that the paint needed to be reflective for effectiveness at nighttime. That’s now being addressed in all new signs, and older signs with non-reflective paint will eventually be refurbished when their number comes up on a maintenance cycle,” said Wysokowski.

“Overall, though, the program has been a huge success. The signs have helped to reinforce the identity and character of our Main Street area. They provide a subtle queue to pedestrians and motorists that they’ve just arrived someplace special, a place that local residents and business owners are all very proud of.”

At present, a kiosk is being designed for placement within a new pocket park in the Business District. The structure will incorporate all of the sign themes used previously, capitalizing on a few great ideas and many lessons-learned.

²⁰ See Laws of New York, Article 39 Vehicle and Traffic Law, § 1640 “Traffic regulations in all cities and villages” for enabling statute(s).

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[Cont. from p 20] The New York State Department of Transportation recognizes several different categories of signs. *Official Signs* are those that are erected and maintained by public officers, departments or agencies within their territorial or zoning jurisdiction for the purpose of carrying out an official duty or responsibility. These types of signs must be used in accordance with state and federal laws. Other types of signs include *Tourist Oriented Directional (TOD) Signs* and *Specific Service (LOGO) Signs*. Each of these signs is described on the New York State Department of Transportation website.

In very limited circumstances, certain types of traffic control devices can be designed in a manner that celebrates the local identity and unique features of a place.

Local roads and state roads designated as Non-State Owned Touring Routes, for example, are not under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transportation, providing municipalities with a greater degree of leeway as to the types of signs that can be erected therein.²¹ It is extremely important that all traffic-control devices conform to basic standards, however. New York State Department of Transportation regional offices should therefore be contacted well in advance of posting any type of local or customized sign along the road right-of-way.

Detailed information is available regarding the sign planning process and what signage can or should be used along specific routes through several publications of the New York State Department of



Custom street signs on Center St. in Lewiston, NY help to establish a unique local character that leaves visitors with a distinct impression and sense of place.

Useful Roadway Sign Resources

National Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways – 2003 Edition. Available through the NYS Department of Transportation website: <http://www.nysdot.gov>

New York State Supplement to the National Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways – 2003 Edition. Available through the NYS Department of Transportation website: <http://www.nysdot.gov>

Municipal Control of Signs. January 2006. Part of the NYS Department of State James A. Coon Technical Series. Available through the NYS Department of State website: <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/>

New York State Scenic Byways Sign Manual. Available through the NYS Department of Transportation website: <http://www.nysdot.gov>.

New York State Signs Program. Website devoted to explaining the regulations that govern this program. Online at: <https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/programs/nys-signs> .

Special Report: Accessible Public Rights-of-Way Planning and Designing for Alterations. July 2007. Published by the Public Rights-of-Way Access Advisory Committee and available online at: <http://www.access-board.gov/PROWAC/alterations/guide.htm>

²¹ See the “Over Size/Over Weight Prescreening Tool” – an interactive mapping tool made available through the NYS Department of Transportation – for highway classification types across New York State. Last viewed

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Transportation (cited below). Other information pertaining to signs can be found in the Building Area section on page 28.

Sidewalk Area

Maintaining Pedestrian Comfort and Safety

Curb extensions, enhanced cross walks, refuge islands, and other components of “complete streets” that were mentioned in the “Roadway Area” section will play an important role in maintaining pedestrian comfort and safety throughout a main street or commercial area (and not just on sidewalks). As stated, attributes within each of the three areas have a tendency to overlap. Just as vehicles can expect relatively seamless passage over barriers like rivers and other roadways, pedestrians should be able to experience a similar level of comfort and continuity while traveling along sidewalks within a pedestrian area.

Important attributes that will enhance the pedestrian experience in a main street area include trees for shade and protection, directional signage (including a map or business directory), and various other accoutrements such as benches, planters and possibly artwork such as sculptures or water elements.

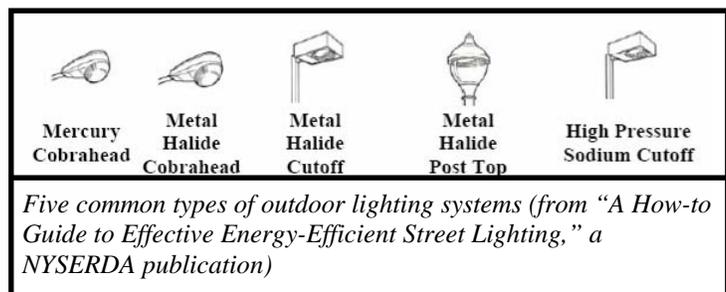


In the absence of street-side parking, a mix of benches, trees, garbage receptacles, plantings and other facilities helps to buffer the busy street from the pedestrian zone along Main St. in Batavia, NY.

Outdoor lighting will also be an important consideration that can enhance pedestrian comfort and safety as well as improve the overall aesthetic of a main street space during evening hours.

Outdoor Lighting

Often when municipal officials begin to consider outdoor lighting options, the primary element of concern pertains to the style or appearance of the pole and fixture. Pole and fixture styles can vary a great deal, and new styles are constantly being introduced to the market. While the selection of the pole/fixture style is obviously an important consideration, an equally if not more important determination is how to achieve the most desirable and appropriate lighting quality while maintaining overall cost and energy efficiency.



The following section summarizes some of the factors that need to be considered when selecting the proper outdoor lighting source, drawing heavily from NYS Energy Research and Development

4/4/08 online at <https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/transportation-partners/nys-transportation-federation/permits/over-size-over-weight/osow-layers>

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Authority’s *Guide to Effective Energy-Efficient Street Lighting* (one targeted toward municipal officials and another toward planners and engineers). These guides – which have been cited at the end of this section – should be consulted for greater depth and information on street lighting systems as well as further resources.

Pages four and five of the NYSERDA guide for municipal officials identify six common characteristics of well-designed, effective energy-efficient street lighting systems:

- **Color Rendering Quality** – refers to the hue or spectrum of light that the bulb produces in combination with its level of wattage. Current metal halide lamps have better color properties than older mercury vapor lamps and high pressure sodium lamps. These lights cast a more natural spectrum of light on surfaces, making them more attractive to visitors and motorists. This quality is extremely important in commercial districts or historic areas where a positive visitor experience should be a primary goal.
- **Energy efficiency** – Many light bulbs available today are much more energy-efficient than their predecessors. As within many households, street departments commonly use lamps (light bulbs) originally designed and installed 30 or more years ago.
- **Optical control** – High-quality fixtures, utilizing new materials and designs, can maximize the amount of light reaching the intended target (road surface, building surface, sidewalk, etc.) while minimizing glare, trespass, and light pollution.
- **Non-cycling lamps** – Many older lamps do not burn out, but “cycle” on and off, which can result in repeated maintenance calls with little action taken.
- **Long life lamps** – Lamps that last longer result in increased savings to municipalities.
- **Cost savings** – Energy efficiency, longer life, decreased maintenance, and overall appropriate lighting selection can add up to significant savings to municipalities.

Key Terms:

Cutoff: the degree to which light is allowed to escape into the atmosphere (“full cutoff” means no light escapes beyond the intended target area)

Light Trespass: either unwanted light that is allowed to enter adjacent properties or light that is excessively bright

Glare: excessive bright light shining directly into a person’s field of view that either reduces visibility or causes annoyance

Source: NYSERDA

It can be easy to become overwhelmed by the issue of outdoor lighting when confronted with the vast array of options that are available to municipal consumers. One way to begin to address the issue in an organized manner is by working with a lighting professional in developing a “family” of lights for specific districts and purposes. As described in the IESNA guidebook *Lighting for Exterior Environments*:

The [lighting] families should include products that illustrate thematic styles, with equipment colors and pole heights as applicable for roadways, parking lots, and pedestrian areas. The main issues are: style (contemporary, historic, transitional, or some combination), hierarchy (major road, local road, bike path, etc.), appropriate size of bulb and pole, appropriate light distribution per application, lamp

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selection (wattage and type), source color, and light shielding appropriate to light trespass and light pollution goals.²²

Goals that a community would like their lighting system to achieve should also be carefully considered, as it will determine the ultimate selection of products. Pedestrian and vehicular safety, security and crime prevention, light pollution, and historic preservation are some common goals. Once goals have been established for specific districts or areas, the information can be incorporated into a municipality’s comprehensive plan, design guidelines or zoning as necessary, thereby facilitating future and current planning and decision making.

Useful Lighting Resources

A How-to Guide to Effective Energy-Efficient Street Lighting for Planners and Engineers. NYS Energy Research and Development Authority. October 2002. 31 pages. Last viewed 2/27/07 online at <http://www.rpi.edu/dept/lrc/nystreet/how-to-planners.pdf> .

A How-to Guide to Effective Energy-Efficient Street Lighting for Municipal Elected/Appointed Officials. NYS Energy Research and Development Authority. October 2002. 29 pages. Last viewed 2/27/07 online at <http://www.rpi.edu/dept/lrc/nystreet/how-to-officials.pdf>.

Lighting for Exterior Environments: An IESNA Recommended Practice. Illuminating Engineering Society of North America. RP-33-99. 47 pages. Available (at cost) through <http://www.iesna.org/>.

Roadway Lighting Design Guide. American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials. October 2005. Available for purchase online.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is an ever-growing area of interest among municipalities interested in improving the quality of life of residents and decreasing local environmental impact on the surrounding environment. The term has a number of different connotations. Green infrastructure is broadly defined as the “interconnected network of natural areas and other open spaces that conserves natural ecosystem values and functions, sustains clean air and water, and provides a wide array of benefits to people and wildlife.”²³ This can be understood to include a system of open spaces and trails (often referred to as greenways), natural preservation areas (such as wetlands or forests), and engineered facilities that can lessen the impacts that the built environment has on the natural environment. Used in this context, it is this final subset that can best be applied to main street areas.

Stormwater Management

Paved, impervious surfaces such as roads, sidewalks and the roofs of buildings capture and transfer rain and snowmelt into various types of conveyance systems, such as ditches or storm and sanitary sewerage systems. Eventually, all of this water reaches local waterbodies, bringing with it all of the pollutants and debris that it may have picked up along the way. This is referred to as non-point

²² “Lighting for Exterior Environments: An IESNA Recommended Practice.” Illuminating Engineering Society of North America. RP-33-99. pages 5-6

²³ Benedict, Mark A. and Edward T. McMahon. Green Infrastructure: Linking Landscapes and Communities. Washington: Island Press, 2006. (1)

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source water pollution, and it is one of the primary causes of river, lake and stream impairment throughout the United States. In accordance with the US Clean Water Act, state laws have been enacted that require entities to address this issue when certain types of construction activities occur.

In some cases, major reconstruction will require the redesign or extension of the municipal separate storm sewer system. This is an expensive process, one which will generally require the full opening of the paved street area and replacement of the below-ground conveyance pipes. In some instances, redevelopment of previously developed sites will present opportunities to incorporate alternatives to installing complex stormwater mitigation infrastructure.

A variety of solutions exist in special circumstances when physical constraints of a site do not allow proper sizing and installation of more routine management practices. Rain gardens, stormwater planters, permeable paving, and other innovative products and designs can be incorporated into main street areas.

Trees

Types of streetscape features can and should vary in order to suit the character of the location, project budget constraints and the likes and needs of visitors and residents. One type of streetscape feature that is widely appreciated and generally affordable is trees. In combination with benches, stand-alone planters and other elements, trees can provide a calming effect on otherwise busy streets. They provide an important benefit to the pedestrian comfort zone by shading visitors from the sun as well as creating a physical buffer between the road and the sidewalk. The shade they provide can also help to decrease energy costs on nearby buildings. Below-ground planter boxes can further play an important role in stormwater treatment and reduction. Aesthetically pleasing by themselves, trees can also be decorated with lights during the holiday season or year-round.



Rain Garden: This sidewalk/curb/tree planter in Portland, OR was retrofitted to capture and treat stormwater runoff from the street. Source: “Green Streets Tour Map.” Portland, OR Green Streets Program.
<http://www.portlandonline.com>

Larger varieties of hardwoods can be difficult to sustain in paved areas due to their complex root structure (which can crack the sidewalk and interfere with below-ground utilities). Considerations that should be taken into account include the size of a mature canopy, the species’ tolerance of urban pollutants (such as road salts), the rate of growth, and seasonal duration of foliage. In general, a tree should be selected based on its ability to grow quickly and its ability to keep its leaves for an extended period of time in the Northeastern United States.²⁴

²⁴ Visit the Urban Horticulture Institute website at Cornell University for a comprehensive guide to urban forestry, including recommended tree species, planting and care. Last viewed 3/18/08 at <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/departments/faculty/bassuk/uhi/index.html>

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Finally, communities may want to consider creating a local tree committee to spearhead species selection, replacement, and even a “tree banking” system, which involves a system of local tree propagation, thereby cutting local costs and creating an ample supply of young trees for planting.

Other important tree considerations include:

- Soil type – “structural soils” may work well in locations that might otherwise not be suitable for planting a tree due to surrounding pavement;
- Permeable pavements can be used in conjunction with structural soils in order to plant trees in difficult areas AND capture and treat stormwater;
- Utilities such as irrigation and electric can be incorporated into the underground planter box to aid future care and decoration; and
- Fruit-bearing trees will likely require maintenance and disposal after the fruit appears and may create excessive mess within the adjacent area. The fruit may also attract wildlife, which can become hazardous to animals and motorists within the transportation corridor.
- Many communities often have local tree or garden committees in place which should be consulted for new variety selection and care of existing species.

Useful Green Infrastructure and Stormwater Resources

Stormwater

New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual. NYS DEC. This manual details technical standards for managing stormwater. Available online at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/29072.html>

Using Smart Growth Techniques as Stormwater Best Management Practices. US EPA. This guidebook provides a comprehensive overview of innovative approaches to stormwater management. Available online at <http://epa.gov/piedpage/stormwater.htm>

Managing Wet Weather with Green Infrastructure. US EPA. This webpage contains a wide variety of key resources pertaining to green infrastructure. Available online at http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=298

Green Streets Program. City of Portland, Oregon. This webpage explains the city’s approach to retrofitting streets and sidewalks with unique and attractive stormwater treatment systems. <http://www.portlandonline.com/BES/index.cfm?c=eeeah>

Trees

Human Dimensions of Urban Forestry and Urban Greening. Website created by the College of Forest Resources at the University of Washington. Relates the importance and benefits of urban forestry to subjects including transportation, civic ecology and the enhancement of commercial environments. Online at <http://www.cfr.washington.edu/research.envmind/index.html>

Urban Horticulture Institute website at Cornell University. Provides a comprehensive array of resources relative to the study and practice of urban forestry, including recommended tree species, planting and care. Last viewed 3/18/08 at <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/department/faculty/bassuk/uhi/index.html>

Available documents: *Using Porous Asphalt and CU-Structural Soil®; Recommended Urban Trees; Creating the Urban Forest.*

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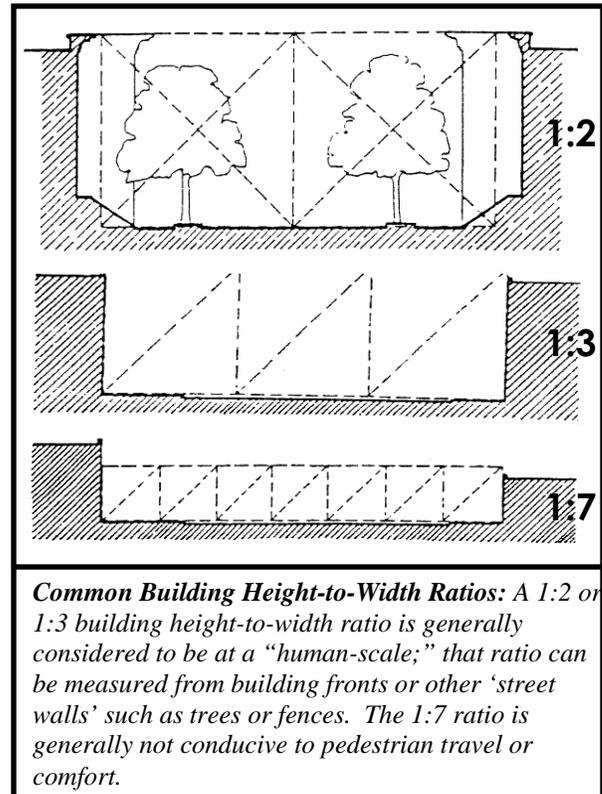
Building Area

The building area of most streets generally falls outside of the public right-of-way, making comprehensive planning, zoning and other land use control mechanisms a critical aspect of planning for this portion of a main street area. In light of this, it is important that communities construct an amenable regulatory and organizational framework for building or maintaining an attractive downtown or main street, providing property owners with clear direction and adequate resources.

Maintaining a Human-Scale Environment

Human scale environments are those which are conducive to human interaction and promote personal comfort. People find such environments to be safe and comfortable places in which to spend time due to a combination of their scale, amenities, and general atmosphere (privacy, shade, etc.). Maintaining convivial, human-scale environments should be a central goal for every main street area.

Pedestrian friendly, village-scaled communities depend on what are called “continuous street walls.” People like to walk next to stores with display windows and houses with front lawns. People do not like to walk next to blank walls and parking lots. Furthermore, people are more likely to walk further distances if their routes include interesting scenery. By considering some of these and other issues, communities can begin to gradually bring the building areas of their main streets into a more pleasing mix of uses and space.



Enhancing Public Spaces

As described in Chapter II, main street areas have historically served as commercial areas and provided space for civic engagement. As Mark Childs eloquently writes in his book *Squares*:

As places of joyful celebration, heartbroken communion, civic discussion, and as places to exercise the rights of assembly and free speech, civic places are essential to participatory democracy and the good life. Vital civic places – squares, the post-office steps, farmers’ markets – are the great advantage of life in town. The architecture of civic places can support or frustrate these convivial uses. (page 3)

Main streets are therefore not just important transportation corridors or commercial spaces, they are important *public spaces*. Communities can do much to enhance the functionality of these public spaces by addressing a variety of elements. Pocket parks, civic art, squares, gazebos, restrooms, public kiosks, and other elements are among those that should be considered for inclusion or enhancement within a main street area.

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Promoting a Mix of Uses

“Mixed use” is a term that refers to the cultivation of a diverse array of uses and activities within a downtown, commercial or main street area. Stated in quite simple terms – people prefer options. Encouraging a mix of uses such as public offices (city hall, library, post office, etc.), traditional services (real estate, law offices, financial, etc.), retail (restaurants, shops, etc.), and entertainment venues increases the public attraction of the space. More uses provide visitors with more reasons to not only come to the area, but to stay in the area for a longer period of time and to return in the future.

Mixed use also refers to a mix of building uses. Many historic main streets have underutilized or vacant second and third story “upper floors”. Traditionally these spaces were used as office and meeting spaces or actually housed the proprietors or their tenants. A number of main streets have found that the re-establishment of these spaces as living quarters can have positive impacts, both for the building owner’s bottom line as well as for the overall character and vitality of main street. Main streets are closer to attaining a *critical mass* (see page 6 for description) of users in the area when people live there full-time.



Using the Local Land Use Law Framework on Main Street

Chapter III of this report summarized the components of local law that should be reviewed as part of a main street inventory. The comprehensive plan and zoning law are the two primary components of local land use regulation that can be used to good effect in a main street area. Several other regulatory and planning tools can also be applied in main street areas.

The Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan sets forth the broad vision of a municipality. Zoning and other local laws must be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan in order to guide a rational and deliberate land use paradigm. New York State statutes broadly define a comprehensive plan as the:

[M]aterials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, report, and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices, and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth, and development of the [municipality].²⁵



²⁵ Refer to Village Law § 7-722, Town Law §272-a and General City Law § 28-a.

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As stated in Chapter III, the comprehensive plan is often best thought of as a “blue print” for a community that contains actions and notes responsible entities to implement those actions. Such a document can be extremely useful in preparing a community for a reconstruction, rehabilitation, or revitalization project, even if one is not scheduled to take place in the near future. Comprehensive plans should be thoroughly reviewed and updated as necessary before a project takes place.

With specific regard to main streets, the comprehensive plan can contain guidelines as to the design and construction of buildings, plans for ensuring a positive pedestrian experience, broad strategies for economic development, and a variety of other useful guidelines. The comprehensive planning process should always involve as many members of the community as possible, drawing heavily from stakeholders’ impressions of how they would like the community to evolve in the future (ten to twenty years).

Zoning Laws

The primary purpose of a zoning law is to protect the health, safety and general welfare of citizens. Zoning laws separate land uses in a municipality in order to avoid potential conflicts between those uses. Zoning district laws will typically address two primary issues: area standards (such as building heights, setbacks, density, etc.) and use standards (residential uses, commercial uses, industrial uses, mix of uses, etc.). Most zoning laws are written in a manner that will allow use variances, which allow properties to be used for activities that are otherwise prohibited in a zoning district. Zoning district regulations are governed by a local committee known as the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Some considerations that can be addressed through zoning codes within a main street area include setbacks and building permeability. Zoning codes should be structured so that new buildings conform to the existing main street building pattern: typically, buildings fronting directly on the sidewalk. Buildings along main streets also need to have entrances and fenestration along the sidewalk to encourage walking and contribute to an attractive streetscape.

For example, the zoning code for a main street business district might require that 70% of the wall area between 2 feet above the ground and 8 feet above the ground be clear glass and that a person be able to see through the window and into the structure for at least 5 feet. Also, it should be required that buildings have their primary entrance on the public sidewalk.

Key Terms:

Building Setback: distance that a building must stand away from a property line, curb, shoreline or other boundary as defined by law.

Building Permeability: ability to see into a building, in particular, offices, shops and restaurants in commercial districts

Fenestration: the design and placement of windows within a building.

Main Street Overlay District

Overlay districts are commonly used to protect areas of unique interest or value, such as environmentally-sensitive areas. The purpose of an overlay district is to identify a special resource or development area and adopt new provisions that apply to that area *in addition to* the provisions of current zoning law. The provisions of an overlay district can be more restrictive or more permissive than those contained in the existing zoning district.²⁶

²⁶ Nolon, John. Well Grounded: Shaping the Destiny of the Empire State. White Plains: Pace University Press. 1998. pp 184

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Some general goals of a Main Street Overlay District would be to achieve or maintain a unique, unified and pleasing aesthetic/visual quality in landscaping, architecture, and/or signage; to promote pedestrian activity; or to allow special uses in main street buildings, such as 2nd and 3rd floor residences. An example of a Main Street Overlay District used in the Town of Wellfleet, Massachusetts has been included in Appendix D of this report which addresses many of these goals.

Planned Unit Developments (PUD)

A PUD is a land use tool that is intended to provide builders with more flexibility when developing large lots. This can be particularly useful in commercial areas that may be suffering from significant vacant or underutilized space. A PUD ordinance can be written to allow developers to combine different types of land uses (such as residential and commercial) on a large parcel and to develop that parcel in a manner that would otherwise be excluded through the conventional local zoning code. This level of flexibility creates an economic incentive for the developer and creates an opportunity for the community to receive a more dynamic building scenario and other possible benefits. PUDs are generally allowed to be built at a greater density than would normally be allowed (thus allowing the developer to garner greater income through more rents and sales). Municipalities, on the other hand, can require the developer to compensate the community for this allowance, perhaps through infrastructure or other types of needed facilities (such as green space).²⁷

Other Regulatory and Planning Mechanisms



Sign Regulations

The style and scale of signs that are allowed within a main street area is an important consideration for municipalities. Excessive signage, poor materials, or improper placement can seriously detract from a main street's ambiance. By enacting a local sign ordinance, municipalities can begin to influence the types of signs that businesses can use.

There are two distinct types of signs that influence business operations: on-premise signs and off-premise signs. **On-premise signs** are those which are located on the property of the activity that they advertise, or signs that advertise the sale or lease of the property that they are on. These types of signs can be regulated by local laws or ordinances, at the discretion of the municipality.

Off-premise signs are those which are not located on the same property as the activity advertised. These signs can display a wide range of messages and are commonly referred to as “billboards” or outdoor advertising signs.” A sign is considered to be off-premise even if it is on a separate property owned by the same business owner.

²⁷ Nolon, John. p. 203

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The New York State Department of State publication “Municipal Control of Signs” provided a comprehensive overview of the legal and practical aspects of sign regulations (cited below).

“The communities that are best positioned to take advantage of funding and other opportunities are those that have done their homework. This means creating a dynamic and very public vision of what the community wants the main street to be – and committing to that vision.”

From Main Street...when a highway runs through it: A Handbook for Oregon Communities. pp 7

Main Street Design Guidelines

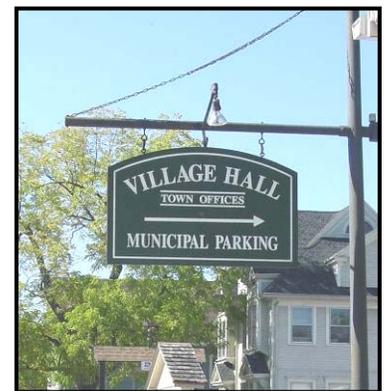
Design guidelines refer to a written course of action that will help institute a variety of physical and spatial attributes in order to help define a location and reinforce a collective theme. Guidelines can be applied to buildings (their color, architecture, functionality, etc.), street signage (interpretive, directional and informational), civic art and accoutrements (suitable locations, themes and varieties), sidewalks (width, location, construction), and other permanent roadside structures. All of these attributes should be deliberate in their conception and complementary to the historic context of the main street area. Design guidelines are a means of instituting these attributes through a consistent and coherent process, involving local business and property owners and other pertinent community stakeholders along the way.

It is also important to recognize that the implementation of design guidelines can – and perhaps should – occur incrementally. This

provides the public and local leaders with an opportunity to observe and measure the benefits and utility of imposed guidelines while also spreading out the financial burden over a period of time. Guidelines can focus on specific elements or subjects, such as historic preservation or architectural style and materials, and can be voluntary or mandatory in nature. Guidelines can be incorporated into the comprehensive plan, within specific sections of the zoning code, a stand-alone law, or a set of recommended practices, depending on the needs and interests of the community.

Off-Street Parking

The maximum retention of parking spaces is always a primary concern for municipalities facing reconstruction projects, particularly among merchants that depend on ample public parking near their business. The issue of parking provision is full of subtle contradictions, however. Professionals specializing on the subject often note the reluctance of individuals to shop in downtown areas because of the perceived difficulty of finding a parking space and the assumed long distances necessary to walk. Large mall parking lots, on the other hand, may seem convenient, but they often force customers to search long and hard for spaces that still require them to walk considerable distances. Parking lots are rarely considered to be convivial or otherwise redeeming places; however, many of us have probably complained on a number of occasions about the need or desire for more parking in a certain location. In most instances, the amount of parking that a particular building must have is stipulated in local code. In some instances, local codes call for far more parking than is reasonably necessary.



Todd Litman, author of *Parking Management Best Practices* and Executive Director of the Victoria Transport Policy Institute writes:

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Conventional parking planning tends to focus primarily on quantity. It assumes that, when it comes to parking, more is always better, and there can never be too much. This type of planning relies primarily on generous minimum parking requirements and public subsidies to provide abundant parking supply. *Parking management* focuses equally on quality, such as the ease of obtaining parking information, the convenience and safety of walking from a parking space to destinations, and the attractiveness and security of parking facilities.²⁸

Seeking solutions through innovative parking management approaches offers a variety of benefits for main street planners and stakeholders. Parking management practices can:

- Reduce development costs and increase affordability;
- Support more compact, multi-modal community planning;
- Encourage alternative modes of transportation and reduce vehicle use;
- Improve user options and quality of service, particularly for non-drivers;
- Improve design flexibility, creating more functional and attractive communities;
- Accommodate new uses and respond to new demands; and
- Reduce impervious surface and related environmental and aesthetic benefits.²⁹

Key Terms:

Parking Management includes a variety of strategies that encourage more efficient use of existing parking facilities, improve the quality of service provided to parking facility users, and improve parking facility design.

Source: *Parking Management: Strategies for More Efficient Use of Parking Resources*.

The chart below illustrates some interesting new approaches to parking, many of which have specific relevance to main street areas:

Comparison of Old and New Parking Paradigms	
Old Parking System	New Parking System
“Parking problem” means inadequate parking supply.	“Parking problem” can mean inadequate supply, inefficient management, inadequate user information, or other types of problems associated with parking facilities and activities.
More parking is better.	Too much parking is as harmful as too little.
Parking costs are incorporated into building costs.	As much as possible, users pay directly for parking facilities.
Parking is available on a first-come basis.	Parking is managed to favor higher-priority uses and encourage efficiency.
Parking requirements are applied inflexibly, without exception or variation.	Parking requirements reflect each situation and are applied flexibly.
Traditional solutions are favored. New approaches are discouraged.	Innovations are encouraged, since even unsuccessful experiments often provide useful information.
Parking management is used only as a last resort when it is too costly to increase supply.	Parking management programs are widely applied to increase efficiency and prevent problems.
Transportation means driving. Dispersion of destinations is considered acceptable or even desirable.	Driving is one of many transport modes. Dispersed, automobile-dependent land-use patterns are considered undesirable.

Litman, Todd. “Parking Management Best Practices.” *Planning* October 2006: 40-45.

²⁸ Litman, Todd. “Parking Management: Innovative Solutions to Vehicle Parking Problems.” *Planetizen*. <http://www.planetizen.com/node/19149>

²⁹ Litman, Todd. “Parking Management: Strategies, Evaluation and Planning.” Victoria Transport Policy Institute. <http://www.vtpi.org/>.

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Useful Resources

Municipal Control of Signs. New York State Department of State. This guidebook provides a comprehensive overview of the legal and community issues associated with municipal sign control. Available online at:
<http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/books/munisigns.htm>

Model Sign Ordinance. Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council. A model sign ordinance was designed for use by municipalities within Seneca County as part of the Canal Corridor Economic and Market Analysis for a portion of Seneca County, NY. See Appendix E . Available online at:
<http://www.gflrpc.org/Publications/CanalCorridorAnalysis.htm>.

The Preservation of Historic Signs. National Park Service. Part of the National Park Service’s “Technical Preservation Series,” this resource covers regulatory and preservation issues pertaining to historic signs and signs on historic buildings. Available online at:<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief25.htm>

NPS Technical Preservation Series. National Park Service. Series of preservation briefing papers that cover a wide variety of subjects pertaining to main streets and main street historic preservation. Available online at:
<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>

A Citizen’s Guide to Protecting Historic Places: Local Preservation Ordinances. National Trust for Historic Preservation. Part of the “Smart Growth Tools for Main Street” series.

Creating the Community You Want: Municipal Options for Land Use Control. New York State Department of State. Part of the James A. Coon Local Government Technical Series. Available online at
<http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/pdfs/municipl.pdf>

Parking Management: Strategies for More Efficient Use of Parking Resources. Last viewed 2/27/07 online at
http://www.vtppi.org/tdm/tdm28.htm#_Toc128220474

Opportunities Waiting to Happen: Redeveloping Abandoned Buildings and Sites to Revitalize Communities. New York State Department of State Division of Coastal Resources. Last viewed 2/27/08 online at
http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/communities_abandonedbuildings.asp

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IV. PREPARING YOUR MAIN STREET FOR PLANNING

Preparing for a significant capital improvement program such as a highway rehabilitation or reconstruction project involves a great deal of organizational expertise. Many agencies can be involved in the process, including several local government departments, county and state Departments of Transportation, utility companies, and a variety of other key state agencies such as the Department of Environmental Conservation or the State Historic Preservation Office. Very likely, private engineering and consulting firms will also be brought on to assist the municipality. Local business owners who operate storefronts along the construction area will want to be kept informed throughout the process, as will local residents who travel through or live near the area. Coordination between all of these parties requires an early and well-organized planning and project development process.

The following chapter is intended to act as a primer for main street stakeholders embarking on the main street planning process, be they municipal officials, local business owners, or citizen planners and activists.

Getting Started: Effective Main Street Organization

A dedicated and well-informed group of staff and volunteer committee members is a critical component of any successful capital improvement project. Successful rehabilitation or reconstruction projects – those which meet the public’s expectations, are managed well, are completed on time and reasonably within budgetary constraints – can often be attributed to an organizational structure that communicated effectively both vertically and horizontally between internal departments, outside agencies, and with the public. The following recommendations briefly cover the importance of establishing or maintaining successful partnerships when embarking on main street revitalization projects.



Establishing and Maintaining an Open, Active, and Effective Main Street Steering Committee

A key component of the case-study community stage of the *Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning* project was the establishment of a local main street steering committee. A successful main street project depends on a collaborative decision-making process with active dialogue between local governmental officials (mayor/supervisor, department of public works supervisor, clerk/treasurer, etc.), business owners, residents, consulting engineers, the state DOT, the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization, the roadway owners and – depending on the particulars of the project – a host of other relevant agencies (including but not limited to: local schools, businesses and business associations, the State Historic Preservation Office, neighboring municipalities, state economic development agencies, the US Postal Service, utility companies, etc.). This glut of players, combined with the complex logistics involved in a redevelopment project, can quickly and easily overwhelm the organizational capacity of a municipality. Having one visible main street steering committee (or

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“task force”) in place to help make decisions, encourage dialogue between stakeholders, identify local priorities, and evaluate options is therefore a critical managerial component.

While many of the issues associated with road construction and community planning are indeed complex, an active main street steering committee can become familiar enough with the issues to act as an effective liaison between transportation officials, elected board members and the community at large.

This main street steering committee should consist of an array of stakeholders that are representative of various sectors of the community, thereby offering different perspectives and knowledge from which to draw from. Some good examples include: business owners, who can offer perspectives on meeting customer and business owner needs; student leaders, who can add the opinions that area youths have regarding main street; and selected local officials (department of public works employees, town board members, etc.), who can offer professional expertise and also relay important information and concerns between parties.

Finally, an active and effective main street steering committee can help to alleviate the burden imposed upon local officials, who are likely to be restrained by routine job duties. A steering committee can inject fresh insight and ideas into the planning process. It can also provide a level of oversight and assurance on behalf of local residents in an effort to ensure that the process is being managed in an open manner with the municipality’s best interests in mind. The steering committee can also continue to be active long after planning and construction, measuring and evaluating success and progress in the areas of beautification and economic development throughout the municipality over time.

Consideration of a Long-Term Main Street Organizational Program

Main street improvement does not begin or end with construction – it is a long-term, iterative process. Furthermore, there are a variety of stakeholder and organizational structures that can be employed in order to encourage this process. In many respects, the best lesson to keep in mind when developing a main street program is that, although there may be core fundamentals, each community is different and different approaches to organization, stakeholders and concentration areas is appropriate.

Main streets that are filled with small retail businesses may think it best to use a merchant’s association while others may find a business improvement district (also known as a B.I.D.) to fit their needs. The stakeholders and concentration areas of a main street revitalization effort will also vary. In some cases, bringing in a residential component, especially for mixed-use main streets, may be appropriate while other towns and villages may find that parking is the issue on which they should focus. For every main street that exists, there is a different mix of organizational structure, stakeholders and concentration areas.

Some of the more standard organizational structures include business improvement districts (BIDs), chambers of commerce, merchant’s associations, types of free-standing non-profits, and private/independent organizations. Further elaboration on how these structures can work in a community has been included in Chapter VI of this report.

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Encouraging a Meaningful Citizen/Stakeholder Role in All Decision Making

Early and effective stakeholder identification and outreach must be fully-integrated with other engineering and environmental project development tasks.

Involving the public in the planning process should not include any appearance of happenstance or afterthought. The public needs to be engaged in a meaningful and equitable manner if the end results of the project are going to be received with any sense of legitimacy and success.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) have identified

public participation as an integral component to project development. As such, the Association has identified several key components of an effective public involvement program, summarized as follows:³⁰

1. Develop a Public Involvement Plan

A public involvement plan is a blueprint of all project activities related to the project. The public involvement plan should clearly specify individual responsibilities, planned staff and other resources, and the roles of agency and any consultant staff. The plan should be tailored to meet specific project and public needs and should be geared to understanding community values. Not every project requires extensive public involvement campaigns; the plan should therefore be geared toward the scale of the project.

2. Tailor the Public Involvement Program to Meet Specific Project and Public Needs

Many proposed transportation projects will have long-lasting effects on the project area residents and their neighborhoods. Meaningful public involvement puts people first in all stages of planning project development, leading to an enhanced transportation project. The public will inform the consultant or transportation agency by pointing out local values, desires and concerns. Conversely, the consultant/transportation agency will educate the public, potentially causing them to reassess their responses as professionals develop plans to accommodate local and regional needs.

Community involvement is most effective when there are multiple opportunities to share information and work out solutions.

3. Build Community Consent through Open Communication

The consultant and/or transportation agency must be responsive to local desires, as well as to the issues of safety and the efficient operation of the highway. The agency must determine the desired objective of any public involvement process. Properly defining the problem is 90% of the solution.

“...[P]roducing a true context-sensitive solution is possible only through early and effective public involvement integrated with all phases of the planning, design, and environmental process.”

From A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design. A publication of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. p 26

³⁰ A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design. American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. May 2004. pp. 30 – 35.

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The *team* must:

- Obtain the right participants
- Agree on the problem(s)
- Agree to openly discuss the process
- Accommodate the views of others

Throughout project development, the project development team has the responsibility to build community consent on major issues such as project purpose and need, the development of alternatives, and resource mitigation measures. A demonstrated commitment to openness creates one *team* comprised of all project stakeholders working as partners, rather than fostering a divisive “we” and “they” atmosphere.

4. Strive for Inclusiveness

Seeking out and including marginalized groups is a critical component to the development of an effective public involvement program. Agencies that seek out and include disparate groups demonstrate a clear, defensible position at the conclusion of the project and increase the project’s overall legitimacy. *Environmental justice* – acknowledging and addressing various inequalities that are faced by marginalized citizens – is a central concept to inclusiveness. Considerations may include improving mobility and access for the physically challenged (including the aging population), low-income populations, minorities, non-English speaking citizens, and zero-vehicle households.

5. Maintain Continuity in the Public Involvement Program

Effective public involvement occurs not just during alternatives development, but throughout the project development process to construction. Public involvement continues during preliminary design, during which traditional engineering activities are integrated with community and agency involvement to develop solutions consistent with the project’s purpose and need. Public involvement even continues during construction, when the adverse impacts (noise, dust, detours, driveway closures, etc.) are most evident, yet the benefits of the project are not yet apparent.

6. Provide and Communicate Clear, Structured Decision-Making Processes

It is essential that the public and all stakeholders understand and consent to their roles on the project. An effective public involvement process explicitly addresses who will make the decisions on alternatives, what mechanisms or procedures will be followed, what data will be used, and how the decisions will be reached, documented, and communicated. The role of the advisory committee members (i.e. the main street planning committee) and representatives of local units of government should be clearly spelled out.

Understanding the Project Development Process

Typical Project Development Process

As stated in the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials publication *A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design*:

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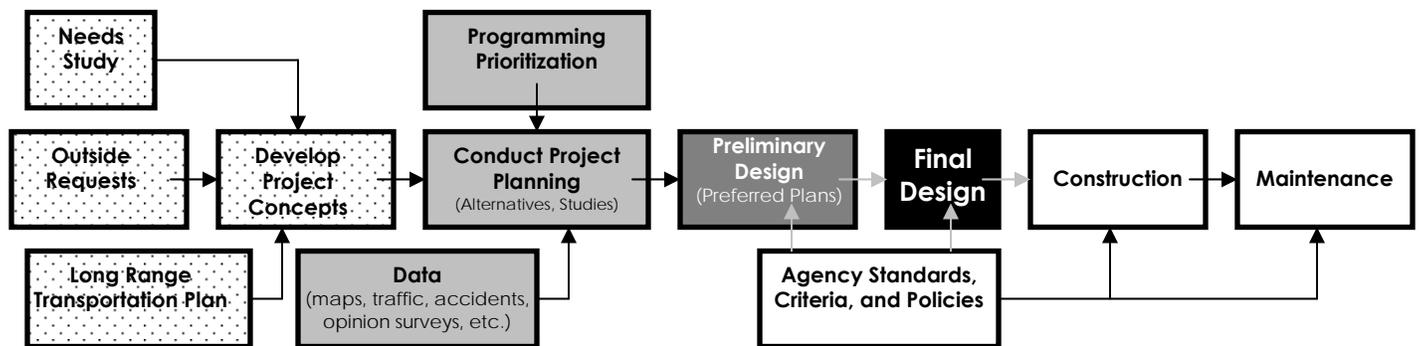
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The construction of a highway or street project is the culmination of a design process that is often lengthy, complex, and involves many agencies and individuals. During each stage of the process, important decisions are made that affect subsequent stages and the overall design outcome...

The highway project development process can be characterized as having four distinct stages, as illustrated [by the diagram below]. The four stages – concept definition, planning and alternatives development, preliminary design, and final design – generally apply to all projects from inception through construction and maintenance. Note that, depending on the size and complexity of a project, the overall process can take months to several years.³¹

The flow chart below begins to illustrate the many development stages of a typical reconstruction project. Public input is an iterative component to this process; transitions between different stages in the development process (denoted by different color shades) indicate critical junctures for municipal involvement, public input and evaluation of remaining future alternatives. As the process progresses over time, opportunity to make significant changes to the design decreases substantially. It is therefore critical that the public, local officials and key stakeholders are aware of the project development process and committed and engaged during the early stages of project development.

*AASHTO’s Four Stages of the Typical Project Development Process*³²



-  **Concept definition:** The identification of a project, including its need, geographic limits, and other specifics to enable studies to begin.
-  **Planning and alternatives development:** The broad range of activities that result in the selection of a preferred plan that meets regulatory requirements and is sufficiently detailed to proceed with final design and construction.
-  **Preliminary design:** The initial stage of the final design process to confirm right-of-way needs.
-  **Final design:** Completion of design documents and specifications for construction of the project.
-  **Post-project development:** Actual construction management, as-needed maintenance, and routine assessment of project success and/or further needs.

³¹ AASHTO, pages 1-5

³² Diagram and stage descriptions adopted from AASHTO, pages 1 – 2.

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The *Concept Definition* stage of project development begins as the actual need for the project surfaces. Project need can be dictated by a number of factors – public complaints, poor road condition, deteriorating infrastructure, poor safety, or recent growth and the resulting increases in traffic volume and/or land use changes. Many projects are typically developed as a result of the combination of several or more of these needs. It is at this stage that one or more agencies or governing bodies will begin to develop a clear definition of the need for the project. Outside requests (public concerns, etc.) as well as information from the Long Range Transportation Plan will be important components.

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) serves as the framework for guiding the planning and implementation of transportation improvements on a regional scale. Federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are responsible for the development and maintenance of the LRTP for their respective geographic regions. As stated in the *Long Range Transportation Plan for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region: 2005-2025*, “The purpose [of the LRTP] is to provide a 20-year perspective of existing and projected transportation system capabilities, needs, and associated objectives, as well as recommended policies and actions to meet these objectives...”³³ Consultation with the LRTP and the regional MPO will therefore be an important first step among communities considering possible roadway rehabilitation or reconstruction.

Local, state and federal departmental budgetary constraints will also be an important factor in determining the scale and scope of work that is to take place. These budgets are planned out far in advance of actual project implementation; the agencies in charge of them are not likely to accommodate unforeseen requests in short order. If the corridor’s needs are identified far enough in advance, however, it should be possible to identify and leverage the necessary mix of local, state, and federal funds and grant dollars in order to maximize project outcomes and public benefit. Regional transportation officials at the MPO can offer significant insight and assistance to the funding of projects and walk communities through the application process (further elaboration on funding may be found in Chapter VI of this report).

The *Planning and Alternatives Development* stage of the roadway planning process is intended to develop possible options and scenarios for reconstruction. As stated by AASHTO, “During this stage, the greatest opportunities and challenges for a flexible transportation solution occur.”³⁴ Public involvement is critical at this stage in project development because concepts and ideas raised here will begin to dictate preliminary designs. It will become much more difficult (i.e. costly) to diverge from such design scenarios

“Incorporating public input into the project begins early on during the planning and alternatives development stage. Indeed, context-sensitive project teams make an effort to fully understand community values before any concepts or solutions are proposed. This assures that the project will be developed to represent the needs of the highway users (both local and through travelers), as well as the community at large.”

From A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design. A publication of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. p 3-4

³³ Genesee Transportation Council. Long Range Transportation Plan for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region: 2005 – 2025. 2004. page 6. Available online at www.gtcmpto.org .

³⁴ AASHTO, page 2

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once they are established. All concepts put forth by the public will likely have to conform to a set of criteria developed by the transportation agency. These project design criteria are based on the original needs of the project (i.e. roadway safety, functionality, etc.).

Data gathering and input will be an important aspect to *Planning and Alternatives Development* stage; the sections that follow will elaborate on the type of data sets that communities should strive to establish in advance of a project. The *Preliminary Design* stage of the project commences after the *Planning and Alternatives Development* stage has been completed and a preferred plan has been selected. Specific issues pertaining to utilities, property owner concerns, business operation during construction and other similar issues will be addressed during this stage. The *Final Design* stage of a project and eventual construction represent the culmination of what is likely to be several years of planning and preparation.

Project Development Stakeholder and Partner Checklist

Below is a list of potential partners and stakeholders that should be brought into the planning process in some way. In some instances, these entities may be able to offer vital knowledge, assistance or resources; in other instances, stakeholders will want the opportunity to have their concerns heard and accounted for in an official capacity. While this list is large, it is not necessarily comprehensive and will likely vary from place to place and over time.

Primary partners and stakeholders have been highlighted in **bold text**.

Federal

- Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor (US National Park Service)
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- US Postal Service (regarding a downtown location or relocation)
- USDA Rural Development

State

- Empire State Development (ESD)
- Canal Corporation
- Department of Environmental Conservation (regional office)
- Department of Health (walkability and healthy communities)
- Department of Transportation (regional office)**
- Division of Housing and Community Renewal
- Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
- Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC)**
- State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation**

Local

- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Highway Department/Department of Public Works**
- Historical Society
- Planning and Zoning Board Chairs**
- Planning and Zoning Office**
- Public Safety (police/fire/ambulatory)**

County

- Historical Society
- Economic Development Office
- Emergency Management Office
- Planning Department**

- Public Transportation Service Provider**
- Real Property Office**
- Transportation or Highway Department**

Regional

- Metropolitan Planning Organization**
- Public Transportation Service Provider**
- Regional Planning Council

Private

- Adjacent Land Owners and Neighboring Residents**
- Corporate Franchise Owners**
- Local Businesses (within corridor and surrounding the corridor)**
- Consulting Planning and Engineering Firm**

Utility Companies

- Communications (phone, fiber, cable, etc.)** **Electric**
- Gas** **Rail** **Water** **Sewer**

Community Stakeholders

- Chamber of Commerce (and/or equivalent local business associations)**
- Citizens**
- Neighborhood Associations**
- Schools, Colleges and Universities**

Other

- Cornell Cooperative Extension (tree inventories and other tree services)**
- Local Media Outlets (printed press, newsletters, etc.)**
- Neighboring Municipalities**
- Regional Community Design Center**

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Assessing the Main Street Corridor

A comprehensive assessment of the corridor should be one of the first steps in the planning stages for a rehabilitation or reconstruction project committee or task force. Corridors and an approach to planning for them can be described as follows:

Corridors are transportation pathways that provide for the movement of people and goods between and within activity centers. A corridor encompasses a single or multiple transportation routes or facilities (such as thoroughfares, public transit, railroads, highways, bikeways, etc.), the adjacent land uses and the connecting network of streets.

According to the New York Department of Transportation, corridor planning is the application of multiple strategies to achieve specific land use and transportation objectives along a transportation corridor, combining capital improvements and management strategies into a unified plan for the corridor.³⁵

What follows are important components of a corridor assessment, including useful tools and resources that can be used to facilitate the inventorying process and to convey the information gathered. In many instances, municipalities and their respective steering committees and stakeholders will find that a wide array of commercial consultant firms are available to conduct professional analyses if such an expenditure is warranted. The components listed in the following sections are intended to familiarize communities with the types of tools and resources that are likely to be used if such an analysis takes place. In some cases, local steering committees may find it most beneficial to conduct basic field inventorying and research by themselves; in other cases, attaining professional assistance from an engineering, planning and development firm will be warranted.

In an attempt to frame the discussion of local needs and priorities before a transportation project commences, Region 9 NYSDOT developed a comprehensive survey for use by municipalities and municipal consultants. This resource has been included in Appendix B of this report and stands as an excellent starting point that can be used in conjunction with some of the tools mentioned here.

Delineating the Study Area

Main streets do not exist in isolation – as described earlier in Chapter II, main streets are part of a larger transportation network. Understanding the role of a main street in relation to this larger transportation network is therefore an important first step. Very often the network will dictate the land uses, building types and overall character of the surrounding area. Delineating the study area will be an important first step in order to conduct a logical separation and evaluation of the various construction project components and how they will relate to surrounding land uses. If the study area is not clearly delineated, it will be extremely difficult to manage project goals and outcomes and to focus public discussion.

Understanding Recent History of the Corridor

Local main street stakeholders should conduct a comprehensive inventory of recent planning and development documents relevant to the corridor. This accounting should include some or all of the following elements:

³⁵ ITE 26.

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- Timeline of major and minor physical improvements (this should attempt to go as far back in time as possible, but emphasis should be focused on changes since the last major renovation)
- Recent maintenance history and condition of facilities
- Local laws, documents, policies and reports relevant to the study area (see also the following section, *Conducting a Local Regulatory Profile*)
- List of local groups and committees (public and private) that are active in or may be interested in main street issues
- List of other remaining stakeholders, which may include bordering municipalities or other entities that have an indirect stake in the project or overall enhancement of the area

Conducting a Local Regulatory Profile³⁶

A regulatory profile involves inventorying existing local land use documents that are currently in effect within the municipality and identifying any portions therein which may regulate uses or activities within the construction/revitalization study area. Comprehensive plans, zoning laws, and subdivision regulations are the documents that establish a community’s overall vision and means for that vision’s implementation. Among these tools, zoning and the comprehensive plan are most likely to affect main street construction, rehabilitation and revitalization projects. In addition, stand alone or targeted laws can also affect use and activity within a main street area.

The body of local laws can be used to advance best practices in both the physical design and development of main street facilities as well as private properties. Furthermore, with few exceptions, state and federal agencies will have to abide by a municipality’s local laws. It is therefore in the best interests of the municipality to review its body of local laws early on in the planning stages of the project. New York State Highway Law (Article 52), Vehicle and Traffic Law (Article 39) and other State laws may also come to bear on the project and should therefore be considered thoroughly.

The following components of local law should be considered (more detailed information on these components is included in Chapter IV):

1. The Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive plans should establish broad goals and collective vision of a community. They should be developed with widespread citizen input, and used by the land use decision makers in a community (planning board, zoning board of appeals, conservation board, code enforcement officer, planner, municipal board, and elected officials). The plan should reflect current conditions and issues of the municipality, where the community would like to be, and how to reach those goals. Specifically, it should identify the type and intensity of development to be accommodated. A comprehensive plan which is too generalized may not serve to effectively guide future development.

The comprehensive plan is often best thought of as a “blue print” for a community that contains actions and identifies responsible entities to implement actions. Such a document can be extremely useful in guiding a community through a reconstruction, rehabilitation, or revitalization project, even

³⁶ This section has been adapted from Section 3 of the G/FLRPC publication “Protecting Water Resources through Local Controls and Practices.” <http://www.gflrpc.org/Publications/LocalLaws/Guidebook.htm>

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if one is not scheduled to take place in the near future. Comprehensive plans should be thoroughly reviewed and updated as necessary before a project takes place.

2. Zoning

Traditional zoning is the most common and extensively used local technique for regulating land use and development in towns, cities and villages. Zoning also serves as an important means for implementing the comprehensive plan. Zoning regulates the use, density of use, siting, and form of development on individual land parcels. It accomplishes this by dividing the municipality into districts and establishes regulations within such districts.

To help make the leap from comprehensive plan to zoning implementation and enforcement, the zoning law should be written in a way that is concise and easy to understand. Including graphics to illustrate concepts, and simple things such as page numbers and tables of contents help make zoning easier to use and understand.

There are two important sub-sections that are usually but not always included in zoning that merit further discussion: *site plan review* and *overlay zoning districts*.

Site Plan Review

Site plan review addresses the layout and design of development on a single parcel of land. The site plan review process is one of several means of plan implementation that communities may use. Site plan review is a process of greater municipal scrutiny and review for certain uses and/or structures. It is commonly considered supplemental to other land development guidance controls and is usually included within a community’s zoning law. It may, however, be a stand-alone law, especially in communities without zoning.

Overlay Zoning Districts

Overlay zoning districts can be delineated by a municipality for a specific geographic area. Their purpose is to provide additional protection or oversight to address a topic of particular concern, such as an environmentally sensitive area, a floodplain, or a historic district. An overlay zone, as the name suggests, overlaps other, underlying zoning districts, and does not affect the uses allowed within such underlying zones.

3. Stand Alone or Targeted Laws

In addition to the three building blocks of land use control, municipalities can also adopt stand alone local laws to address practices, activities and uses in main street areas. There are many different laws of this type; historic preservation districts, adult businesses/uses, sign control, and building design controls are relevant examples.

Conducting a Transportation Profile

A profile of the transportation corridor needs to consider the study area in relation to the surrounding transportation network. The inventory should include an analysis of traffic and pedestrian safety and include a history of accidents. The age, condition, and adequacy of highway facilities (such as pavement, markings, drainage, width, etc.) should be fully evaluated. In many instances, inspectors will find a correlation between the safety level of the corridor and its physical condition or design. All nearby transportation facilities should be inventoried and mapped, including major and minor

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roadways and pedestrian facilities such as trails and bike lanes. As these facilities are mapped, they will begin to show their relation to surrounding land uses.

Below are several common tools and resources that can be used when developing a transportation profile. It should be mentioned that some of the tools described in the following sections are highly technical in nature. To this end, transportation engineers and other design professionals or project consultants should be paying close attention to the subtleties and details of these issues. It is important, however, that local officials, citizen planners and others outside of the professional realm understand these tools and how they can be applied.

1. Who Owns Main Street?

The term “right-of-way” is often used in describing the boundaries of the roadway. Actual ownership of roadway segments, however, is rarely considered by those who travel over them. Roadways are like any other type of real estate – they have owners, and the owners establish the rules and regulations of how that property can be used. Roadway ownership can vary significantly from place to place. In some instances, the State of New York assumed ownership over the right of way in many villages traversed by a state highway; this is not necessarily the case for all village across the State, however. Detailed information on the rules and procedures associated with state-owned highways (including an inventory of all road segments which are state-owned) can be found in the Laws of New York State – Highway Law (HAY).

Assistance in determining who owns the right-of-way and what the exact right-of-way boundaries are can be obtained from the Real Estate Office within the Department of Transportation’s Engineering Division.

2. Transportation and Planning History

Understanding the historical context of a community’s main street corridor is an important first step. The corridor’s history will reveal important clues that can clarify questions pertaining to the placement of structures, alignment of rights-of-way, and other potential mysteries that have come to bear upon the corridor’s current state. By establishing a thorough understanding of where a community’s main street has been historically, planners will be much more prepared to make appropriate decisions for its future.

A comprehensive analysis of the corridor’s history should also include an inventory of transportation-related plans and studies that have been completed. Access studies, industrial development studies, inventories, and accident and traffic counts are among the types of transportation-related reports that may already exist. If they do exist, it is quite possible that valuable information has been compiled for the corridor which may assist and inform future activities. Typically local, county and regional planning agencies and the regional DOT office will be aware of the reports that have been conducted within the transportation corridor.

3. Existing Roadway and Traffic Conditions

- *Awareness of the Transportation Network*

Communities should attempt to gain a comprehensive understanding and awareness of the existing transportation network in and around the study area. The transportation network refers to the

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complete system of routes that accommodate all various types of transportation forms and how those forms relate to each other. The network includes (but is not limited to): roadway features; traffic control devices; transit/streetscape/gateway treatments; public transit accommodations; bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and other relevant environmental factors.

- *Basic Traffic Circulation and Safety Data*

It is important to have an accurate vehicular and pedestrian safety record in order to determine what, if any, traffic or pedestrian safety improvements are needed within the study area. Data sources for accurate statistics will vary. Generally speaking, however, there are four reliable sources for this data: the local, county and state police departments; a local hospital or emergency room; the regional Department of Transportation office; and local and regional planning agencies. A community should be looking for things such as a high-frequency of collisions (major and minor) or any serious accidents that may have resulted in personal injury or death within the study area. In the later instance, trends do not need to be evident in order to illustrate the existence of a potential problem.

Basic information with regard to the volume of traffic experienced on the roadway over time should also be gathered and analyzed. This information is generally available for most major highway segments through the New York State Department of Transportation’s website. Specific traffic data requests can be sent directly to the New York State Department of Transportation’s Engineering Division – Office of Technical Services. Assistance with other data acquisition or generation can be provided by the regional MPO.

- *Highway Sufficiency Ratings*

Highway Sufficiency Rating reports are comprehensive surveys of state highway conditions. Quoting the Introduction of the *2004 Highway Sufficiency Ratings for New York State*:

The New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) annually conducts a highway condition survey in cooperation with the US Department of Transportation. The purpose of this survey is to determine the surface condition for each section of highway on both the New York State Touring Route and the New York State Thruway, and the overall surface condition of these systems.³⁷

Furthermore, these ratings provide the necessary information to determine the Level of Service (as described on page 9 in Chapter 2) and Functional Classification of a highway. Details are provided for individual road segments of specified lengths (generally <1 mile) on characteristics such as the material pavement type, road sub-base, number of lanes, condition of pavement, repair history, traffic volume, and other relevant information.

Other types of roadway information that a community should analyze and map include an overall inventory of the existing transportation network, including roadway features; traffic control devices; transit/streetscape/gateway treatments; bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and relevant environmental factors.

Interested readers can find actual data taken from the *2004 Highway Sufficiency Ratings for New York State* for the Villages of Newark and Scottsville in Chapter III of the “recommendation” reports (Phase 1 of this project).

³⁷ “New York State’s 2004 Highway Sufficiency Ratings.” Region 4 NYS DOT. 2004. 1.

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Functional Classification System: Hierarchy of Streets and Roads

An Excerpt from “Planning and Urban Design Standards,” a publication of the American Planning Association

Functional Classification System for Urban Streets

The functional classification system developed by the Federal Highway Administration in 1962 is widely used to define the traffic-carrying function of streets. For urban streets, there are four classifications: principal arterials, minor arterials, collector streets, and local streets.

Principal Arterials

Principal arterials provide long-distance “trunk-line” continuous routes within and between urban areas. Typically, but with some important exceptions, they carry high volumes of traffic at high speeds. Freeways, including interstates, are principal arterials.

Minor Arterials

The backbone of the urban street network, minor arterials are continuous routes through urban areas. They are frequently designated as touring (i.e., US or state-numbered) routes. Accounting for only 10 percent of street mileage, they carry more than half of all vehicle miles of travel. They may be state, county, or city streets.

Most trips include arterial streets. They contain most of a city’s commercial and institutional uses. The traffic function of minor arterial streets is challenged because of their attractiveness as business addresses, an attractiveness fostered by the traffic function of the street itself.

Collector Streets

With continuity over short segments (one-fourth to one-half mile), collector streets are minor tributaries, gathering traffic from numerous smaller (local) streets and delivering it to and from minor arterials. Seldom designated as numbered touring routes, collectors are usually city or county streets. Most collectors are bordered by properties (both business and residential) with driveways to the street.

Local Streets

Local streets include all streets not on a “higher” system. They comprise 90 percent of the total vehicle mileage but carry less than 10 percent of the total vehicle miles of travel. These streets may be short in length or frequently interrupted by traffic control devices (stop signs or signals). Travel distance on local streets is short, typically to the nearest collector street. Speeds are low (20 to 30 mph). Usually, local streets are city streets, and seldom are part of a numbered touring route. Local streets often have numerous driveways, as they are the addresses for most homes, as well as many nonresidential land uses (professional office, small industrial, churches) not requiring visibility to large numbers of passing motorists.

From *Planning and Urban Design Standards*. American Planning Association, 2006 p. 226. Originally developed by Walter Kulash.

Conducting an Infrastructure Profile

Some of the most important elements of a main street are completely hidden from view. Critical infrastructure such as drinking water, waste water, communication, electric and natural gas lines, as well as a variety of other types of infrastructure such as storm water, cable lines, and fiber optic lines, will likely be present within the study area. Understanding the location, age, condition, and ownership of above- and below-ground infrastructure will therefore be a critical step in the planning process, one that requires early involvement of the respective owners and operators in order to ensure optimal outcomes.

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A 1999 report on the impacts of utility relocations on highway and bridge projects conducted by the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) noted that over half of all federal-aid highway and bridge projects involved the relocation of utility facilities.³⁸ In a survey conducted by the GAO, 41 states responded that early planning and coordination was one of the most beneficial measures that could help mitigate construction delays resulting from utility relocation.

States cited the following important planning and coordination actions:

- Providing [utility companies with] much earlier – *in some instances 5-year* – notices of upcoming projects;
- Inviting utility companies to meetings early in the design phase of a project;
- Holding monthly, quarterly, or other periodic planning/coordination meetings [with utility companies];
- Providing advanced right-of-way and utility relocation funding before the highway and/or bridge construction work was funded; and
- Improving coordination efforts and working relationships. (GAO, p 21)



What Lies Beneath? Much can lay hidden beneath the surface, and even the most comprehensive utility surveys can still yield incomplete or inaccurate results. (Pictured: storm and sanitary sewer construction in the Village of Livonia – Photo courtesy of Mayor Cal Lathan).

Overall, early coordination can provide for more efficient highway design, economical utility relocation, and reduced construction costs. Profiling your main street’s infrastructure will therefore be an important step during the initial planning stages of a project. An infrastructure profile should include some of the following considerations:

- Determination of the type, location, ownership, and jurisdiction of utilities
- Anticipation of present and future needs early on in an effort to avoid conflicts between new and competing utilities in a confined area;
- Determination of the operational budget costs associated with replacement and who will be shouldering those costs (the municipality, the utility, state/federal, or a mix).

Conducting a Land Use Profile

While the primary focus of a main street transportation project may be the right-of-way of the transportation corridor, a main street’s character is largely dictated by the surrounding buildings and other privately-owned properties. Furthermore, alterations in the street or sidewalk right-of-way, underground utility work, and the establishment of staging areas will all be influenced to some degree by property ownership. It will therefore be crucial to have a full understanding of land ownership before a project commences. Analyzing land use patterns in and around the study area will also be an important step given that transportation and land use are inherently connected. A comprehensive inventory of buildings and properties can serve to assist main street planners with local goal

³⁸ “Transportation Infrastructure: Impacts of Utility Relocations on Highway and Bridge Projects.” United States General Accounting Office. 1999. page 4.

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formation, needs assessment, and other special projects (historic preservation planning or trail/bicycle planning, for example). Entering this information into a geographic information system (GIS) and/or acquiring relevant GIS data will be essential.

1. Creating a Comprehensive Land Use Inventory

A comprehensive land use inventory compiled and conveyed through a GIS will be a central tool of any main street planning initiative. In most cases, the information necessary for conducting such an inventory can be made available by a local planning or zoning office, the county planning office, or a private consultant. In some cases, this information will have to be created, which can be resource-intensive. Once the information is established, however, it will become a valuable tool that can be used outside of the project for which it was created.

A standard land use classification system should be utilized, of which there are several. Categories of such a system identify the predominant use of a specific parcel (commercial, industrial, residential, mixed, etc.). The categories used by the system can be generalized or made more specific, depending on the needs of the users. Basic land use attributes that should be included in a land use inventory include: municipal boundaries; zoning district boundaries; current land use (i.e. public, private, commercial, etc.); public rights-of-way and trails; and natural hazards (flood zones, creeks, etc.).

Once a dependable land use inventory has been created, it can act as a digital inventory and “base map” for other types of inventories and project-specific information.

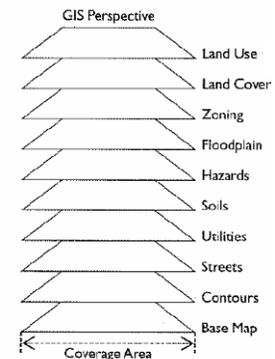
2. Other Land Use/Project Corridor Inventories

An inventory or survey is a process of identifying and gathering data on an area’s various attributes or resources. Depending on project goals and local needs, a variety of inventories will be created pertaining to the project area. Some of these will be strictly utilitarian in nature intended for use by construction crews and engineers. Specifications pertaining to the location of catch basins, fire hydrants or light poles, for example, will comprise the bulk of information for a project and will be overwhelming in their level of detail. Other types of inventories or surveys may be more goal-specific: historic preservation, signage/visitor way

What is a GIS?

A Geographic Information System (GIS) is a collection of computer hardware, software, and geographic data for capturing, managing, analyzing, and displaying all forms of geographically referenced information.³⁹

Examples of geographic data sets:



Commonly-Used Land Use Classification Systems

- ~ New York State Real Property System (RPS)
- ~ Land-Based Classification Standards – American Planning Association
- ~ Land Use and Land Cover Classification System – USGS
- ~ Standard Industrial Code/North American Industrial Classification System (SIC/NAICS)
- ~ Locally-created, customized systems

³⁹ For more information on geographic information systems, visit ESRI at <http://www.gis.com/whatisgis/>.

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finding, parking, or general beautification. Below is a summary of the types of inventories and surveys that a local main street committee may want to consider.

Building Footprint Inventory

A building footprint illustrates the shape of a structure’s first floor. The footprint will also show the orientation of the building in comparison to other buildings, the street, sidewalk or the lot upon which it stands. An inventory of building footprints can stand as the foundation for other inventories, such as a historic structure report, façade inventory, or business owner survey.



Building Footprints: This diagram illustrates building footprints along with conceptual land use areas within a section of the Village of Arcade, NY. **Source:** Arcade: A Strategic Plan for Downtown. <http://gflrpc.org/Publications/ArcadeStrategicPlan.htm>

Historic Structure/Historic Resources Inventory

Historic structure inventories are intended to identify, document, and assess a community’s historic resources. As explained in the National Park Service publication “Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning:”

A historic resources survey can define the historic character of a community or a particular area and can provide the basis for making sound judgments in community planning. Survey data can be used to construct a preservation plan that helps the community identify the historic, cultural, aesthetic, and visual relationships that unify and define its component areas, and to establish policies, procedures, and strategies for maintaining and enhancing them. It can lead to an increased understanding and awareness of the human environment by officials and citizens within the community and an increased commitment to preserving it.⁴⁰

A comprehensive historic structure/historic resources inventory can be a valuable tool when determining final main street construction plans. Such reports can also be used as leverage for state and federal grants for revitalization projects.

Worksheets created by the New York State Main Street Program on conducting building profiles have been included in Appendix C of this report (see tables C3 and C4).

Façade Inventory

Façade inventories may also be warranted. Similar to a historic structure report, a façade inventory considers the condition, architectural style, building materials, colors, and other vital information needed for the systematic analysis and improvement of an urban building streetscape.

Parking Inventory and Analysis

Parking is often a top-tier issue during main street/downtown revitalization projects. Very often commercial establishments in main street areas are concerned about a lack of parking, which can have the tendency (either real or perceived) to discourage visitors from stopping in a commercial district. A comprehensive parking analysis can begin to address the issue of adequate visitor/customer

⁴⁰ “Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning:” US Dept of Interior. Page 3.

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parking. There are a number of factors that main street stakeholders need to consider before conducting such an analysis, including:

- Specific study area (entire main street, or a specific block?)
- General on-street and off-street usage and capacity
- Average visitor time-in/time-out duration
- Paid vs. free parking
- Parking regulations for the area, including location, size, and ratios
- A business owner survey of parking concerns

While adequate parking is important, too much parking can detract from the charm and ambiance of a historic main street area. Alternatives to large-lot parking areas should be considered as well as possible methods for parking space management. Further information on managing off street parking in main street areas can be found on page 32 of this report.

Tree Inventory

As explained in Chapter III, trees are a very important part of a comfortable urban landscape. They provide the public with a wide array of benefits, including shade, a traffic buffer, and an aesthetically-pleasing atmosphere. Before construction takes place, trees within the study area should be inventoried in order to determine the health and long-term viability of the plant. Information on how to approach a tree inventory in an urban landscape can be found through the Cornell University Community Forestry Program.⁴¹

Green Space and Trails

A comprehensive inventory of green space in and around the study area should be conducted in order to facilitate the protection and enhancement of those spaces. When properly mapped, improving connections and gateways to and from these spaces will also become a much easier process. Most of the green space in a municipality will become evident after a land use inventory is conducted. This inventory should be reviewed in order to make certain that all publicly-recognized parks, vistas and similar spaces are identified. Trails – both formal and informal – should also be taken into account and rated based on their condition and use. Establishing safe and deliberate connections to these corridors should be a goal.

Conducting a Demographic and Economic Profile

Establishing a reliable demographic and economic profile of the main street study area and the municipality in which it lies can be a useful tool when undertaking a main street project. The New York Main Street Program has created several useful worksheets that can help communities create a basic residential and commercial profile for their downtown area. From this profile, general conclusions can be drawn regarding the present condition of the area and its future needs.

The Program makes the following recommendations when using the worksheets:

- Employ data for more than one year to enable the summary to include trends
- Compare the main street study area to the surrounding business district, municipality, and/or larger economic market area

⁴¹ “Conducting a Street Tree Inventory.” Cornell University Community Forestry Program.
<http://www.hort.cornell.edu/commfor/inventory/download.html>

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- Include measurable data elements – such as vacancy rates or commercial rents per square foot – that will illustrate progress after project completion.

As the last point indicates, any study should strive to complete a comprehensive assessment in advance of project commencement in order to illustrate changes in the conditions of the study area. Such changes may include a decrease or increase in foot traffic or a loss of businesses.

Worksheets pertaining to demographic, commercial and building profiles can be found in Appendix C.

1. Other Demographic Profile Tools

Community Preference Survey

How do local citizens perceive their main street? Do they consider it to be a safe place for themselves or their children to walk? Are they satisfied with the mix of businesses in the area? How would they feel if zoning was changed to allow residential use of second-story buildings? Would they be willing to shoulder a higher water rate or an additional bond in exchange for improved street-side enhancements? Answers to these types of questions can be ascertained through the use of a community preference survey. Surveys can provide important input on local attitudes toward design features such as signage, parking, and landscaping. They can be targeted toward specific audiences and customized based on need; they can also help to publicize the planning process, solicit volunteers, and convey a wide array of information. The design of the survey should be given plenty of thought, however, and should not be too narrow or too broad in scope.

Business Owner or Visitor Survey

Determining the sentiment of the people who spend time in a main street area will be an important step. Opinion surveys can be used to gather information on policies and practices related to current main street conditions and future possibilities. Issues such as parking, building aesthetics, safety (personal and traffic), business vitality and diversity, and many, many more can be addressed through a well-designed survey tool. Targeting a specific audience – merchants, visitors, or residents – will be an important determination when crafting survey questions. The survey can also be used as a means of conveying ideas to a wide audience and generating publicity for and interest in an upcoming project.

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Will Main Streets Be Prepared for the Coming “Age Boom”?

As stated by the US Census Bureau: “Today’s older Americans are very different from their predecessors, living longer, having lower rates of disability, achieving higher levels of education and less often living in poverty. And the baby boomers, the first of whom celebrated their 60th birthdays in 2006, promise to redefine further what it means to grow older in America.”⁴²

It has been estimated that by 2030, approximately 1 in every 5 Americans (71.5 million) will be over the age of 65. This is a critical local planning issue indicating that communities should not only be thinking about how to accommodate resident retirees so that they can *age in place*, but also how to attract or promote new commercial markets that they will be demanding to serve their needs. The US population age 65 and older is expected to double in size within the next 25 years. As seen in the chart below, the financial circumstances of this very large age cohort is mixed. Regardless of the specific financial standing of individuals within this cohort, it is clear that the baby boomers will undoubtedly influence markets – housing and services in particular – as well as new and unforeseen markets that have not yet emerged.

*Savings Levels of United States Workers, Excluding Home Value*⁴³

	All Workers	Ages 25 – 34	Ages 34 – 44	Ages 45 – 54	Ages 55+
Less than \$25,000	53%	73%	49%	44%	42%
\$25,000 – \$49,000	12%	11%	14%	14%	8%
\$50,000 – \$99,999	12%	7%	16%	12%	12%
\$100,000 – \$249,000	11%	4%	12%	15%	12%
\$250,000 – or more	12%	5%	9%	16%	26%

Communities that are able to effectively cater to the baby-boomer generation will capture a relatively large, stable and – in some cases – affluent segment of the population. Concepts such as mixed-use development, walkability, accessibility, pedestrian safety, diversity in housing choices and convenience in the location and type of facilities present communities with an effective means of attracting and retaining the baby boomer demographic, encouraging them to “age in place”.

Each of these concepts is inherently tied to traditional main street design patterns.

⁴² US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Dramatic Changes in U.S. Aging Highlighted in New Census, NIH Report. Last viewed online 9/18/06 at <http://www.census.gov>.

⁴³ Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute and Mathew Greenwalk & Associates, 2006 Retirement Confidence Survey. Presented at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York Annual Conference, 11/1/06 by Sandra Timmermann, Ed.D, Dir. MetLife Mature Market Institute.

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Useful Resources

Design and Development: Infill Housing Compatible with Historic Neighborhoods. Beasley, Ellen. National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Design Review in Historic Districts. Cox, Rachel S. National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Arcade: A Strategic Plan for Downtown. Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council.
<http://gflrpc.org/Publications/ArcadeStrategicPlan.htm>

Conducting a Street Tree Inventory. Cornell University Community Forestry Program.
<http://www.hort.cornell.edu/commfor/inventory/download.html>

Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning. US Department of the Interior. National Park Service. Interagency Resource Division. <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb24/>

How to Develop a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan. US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. FHWA-SA-05-12. February 2006. Last viewed online June 6, 2007 at
<http://drusilla.hsrc.unc.edu/cms/downloads/howtoguide2006.pdf>

Reviewing New Construction Projects in Historic Areas. National Trust for Historic Preservation.. Information Series No. 62, 1992.

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V. LESSONS LEARNED IN THE GENESEE-FINGER LAKES REGION

A number of successful reconstruction projects have taken place throughout the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region over the past decade. Within each project lies a wealth of “lessons-learned” pertaining to subjects such as the types of facilities used, the performance and effectiveness of new materials, financing, management of public funds, working with teams of contractors and involving the public. Two notable reconstruction projects are therefore highlighted in the following chapter in order to provide insight to the challenges and rewards associated with these projects.

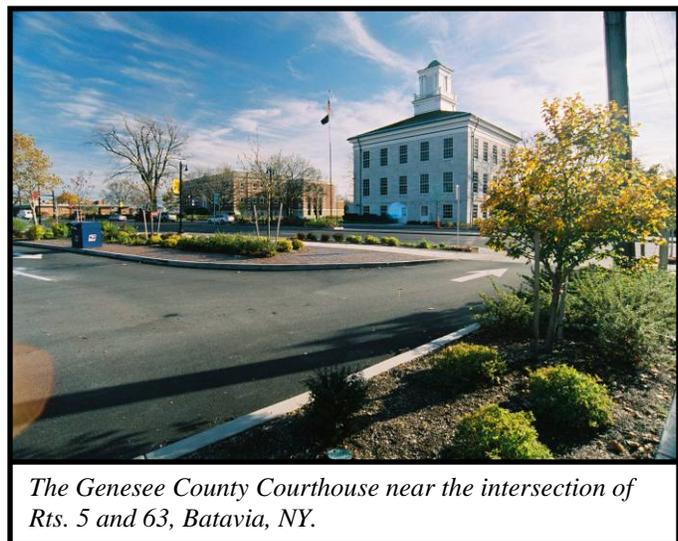
City of Batavia, New York • Reconstruction of NYS Route 5 and 63

The following text has been adapted from the 2004 American Public Works Association Awards Program application for ‘Public Works Project of the Year,’ as written and submitted by Erdman Anthony and Associates, Inc, the lead project consultant for the City of Batavia. Additional information was gathered through two separate interviews: the first with Mr. Don Burkel, Business Improvement District Manager and the second with the City of Batavia’s Director of Public Works Mr. B. Leonard Walker and Assistant City Engineer Mr. Raymond Tourt.

NYS Route 5, Main Street, is a state-owned east/west corridor through the Town and City of Batavia in Genesee County, New York. In addition, NYS Routes 33 and 63 overlap portions of Route 5, Main Street within the project limits with traffic volumes ranging up to 34,000 vehicles per day. This project reconstructed 3.75 miles of this four and five-lane urban arterial, beginning 0.75 miles west of the City line and ending 0.2 miles east of the City at the bridge carrying NYS Route 5 over the CSX railroad.

Project Description and Coordination

The project included intersection improvements to address accident/safety and capacity concerns, and provided a structurally adequate driving surface. Accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians were improved, drainage deficiencies were addressed, and the overall highway section was improved. Streetscaping amenities and landscaping enhancements throughout the corridor with an emphasis on the City’s downtown Central Business Districts (CBD) were provided. The City replaced the watermain infrastructure and improved the sanitary sewer system along the project length.



The Genesee County Courthouse near the intersection of Rts. 5 and 63, Batavia, NY.

This project was one of many municipal rehabilitation/reconstruction projects that resulted from the New York State Department of Transportation’s (NYSDOT) ongoing program to improve state highways and address the needs of local municipalities within the Region. In 1998, the City formed a Business Improvement District (BID), a formal downtown management association charged with

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revitalizing and promoting business activity in the downtown area including the portion of Main Street within the City’s CBD (see Chapter VI for a detailed description of the Batavia BID). Prompted in part by the newly formed BID, the City of Batavia and NYSDOT entered into a partnering agreement in 1999, whereby the City would administer the design and construction. The consultant team was selected by the City in 1999 to provide scoping, preliminary and final design, and construction support and inspection services. The lead consultant was responsible for the overall project design and development including scoping, preliminary and final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction phase engineering and inspection services. Other tasks were split between two consultant firms. Initial community outreach and streetscape/landscape design was handled by one firm, while another provided environmental engineering services, assisted in the final design of traffic maintenance, signs, pavement marking and traffic signal plans, and assisted with construction inspection.

The primary challenge throughout the design and construction was coordination and communication with the general public. In addition, communication with affected property and business owners was required to develop a project that met the needs of the community. To facilitate community involvement and decision making throughout the design process, three Local Advisory Committees (LACs) were formed. These three committees, East Side, Central and West Side, were formed on the basis of the distinct nature and character of land uses and community interests present along the project corridor. Each committee was made up of local officials, business owners, and affected special interest groups and residents. With input and guidance from the LACs, the consultant team developed a project “Mission Statement” and a community-wide questionnaire to stimulate and gather public input.

In addition to the new utility and roadway infrastructure provided by the project, the most significant objective for the community and businesses was improving aesthetics and enhancing economic viability. The consultant team accomplished this through the application of context sensitive design solutions, with an emphasis on aesthetics, streetscape, and improved pedestrian mobility. The most apparent need for this was within the City’s CBD, which also fell within the newly formed Business Improvement District. In the early 1970s, a two-block length of buildings along the north side of the Main Street CBD were demolished and replaced by an enclosed “urban” mall known as the Genesee Country Mall. This “urban” mall proved to be architecturally, aesthetically, and functionally challenging to the economic environment of the City’s CBD. In addition, the wide expanse of the downtown pavement section (five lanes wide plus adjacent parking lanes) contributed to an unattractive and challenging area for pedestrians.

Working closely with the Central LAC and the BID, context sensitive design solutions were developed to enhance the aesthetics and attractiveness of the downtown area for motorists and pedestrians, including:

- Raised median islands, which are complemented with decorative street light poles, brick pavers, trees, and plantings;
- Bump-outs at intersections to shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians;
- Extensive landscaping including street trees and planting beds for trees, shrubs, and flowers, including an automatic irrigation system;

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- Colored concrete brick pavers;
- Decorative street light poles with arms for both banners and planted flower baskets which also featured an automatic irrigation system;
- Painted traffic signal poles with decorative bases and street light fixtures; and
- Street furnishings such as benches and trash receptacles.

Another project objective developed during the early scoping and community outreach process was to improve overall traffic and safety conditions. This was successfully accomplished through signal elimination/consolidation and innovative parking management strategies. One example of parking management involved the proposed creation of a short-term off-street parking lot to replace unsafe on-street parking. This proved to be a controversial and complex alternative to justify to the affected stakeholders. Ultimately, the consultant team demonstrated through a series of meetings with stakeholders, the Central LAC, BID representatives, and City Council, that the loss of parking could be mitigated. In addition, a high benefit/cost ratio could be achieved through accident reduction via the traffic signal elimination and the relocation of the on-street parking to an off-street location.

Another major concern of the LACs was the potential construction duration adversely affecting businesses. To mitigate those concerns, the consultant team recommended that the project be divided into four segments, whereby work progressed from one segment to the next with no more than two adjacent segments affected by construction at any one time. It was recommended that incentive/disincentive provisions be incorporated into the construction contract. This proved to be a very effective means in attaining a contractor with the resources (labor and equipment) and with previous incentive/disincentive contract experience. This resulted in the substantial completion of this \$21.6 million construction project in an eighteen-month period covering two construction seasons from May 2003 through October 2004.

The BID played a critical role in maintaining a positive relationship between project coordinators, merchant owners and the community at large. The Chamber of Commerce and the City became involved in feeding information to the public through a project webpage that was updated weekly and

regular e-mail blasts. Further assistance was provided by the Main Street Reconstruction Committee, which developed a “Business is Open” campaign utilizing yellow construction caps that businesses could put on display throughout the City. The local newspaper – The Batavia Daily News – also played a significant role in promoting and explaining the project.

Other significant accomplishments provided or resulting from the project included:

- Improving safety and mobility through a reduction in the number of signalized intersections from eighteen to sixteen;
- Minimizing the duration of construction



Several ‘pocket parks’ like this one significantly improve and beautify otherwise neutral or under-utilized spaces in Batavia.

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- impacts by dividing the construction into four sequential segments and by incorporating incentive/disincentive provisions into the construction contract; and
- Spurring economic development by way of new building construction along the project corridor and by new businesses locating in the City’s downtown area.
- The current redevelopment of another portion of the old Genesee Country Mall as an authentic Italian restaurant;
- Relocation of the local radio station in early 2004 to an existing downtown coffee shop and art gallery, with on-street seating for patrons; and
- The 2004 construction of a new three-story building for the Bank of Castile.

Village of Medina, New York • Reconstruction of NYS Routes 63 and 31

The following text has been adopted from the 2007 American Public Works Association Awards Program application for ‘Public Works Project of the Year,’ as written and submitted by Erdman Anthony and Associates, Inc, the lead project consultant for the Village. Additional information was provided through interviews with the Village of Medina Superintendent of Public Works Paul Nowak and Clerk-Treasurer E. Margaret Crowley.

The subject project is located in the Village of Medina in Orleans County. The project was comprised of two construction contracts. Contract 1 involved reconstruction of 3.1 kilometers (1.9 miles) of NY State Route 31, 31/60 Overlap, 63/31E Overlap and 31E, and also included two local streets owned and maintained by the Village of Medina: Main Street (Center Street to West Avenue) and Commercial Street (West Avenue to Prospect Street). Contract 2 involved reconstruction/rehabilitation of 3.7 kilometers (2.3 miles) of NY State Route 31, 31E and 63.

Project Description

The project included roadway and intersection improvements to address accident/safety and capacity concerns and provided a structurally adequate driving surface. The team improved and/or provided new accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians and addressed geometric deficiencies to significantly improve the overall highway section. Significant drainage and utility improvements were included in the project. This involved installation of a new storm water sewer system and replacement of all existing water main and sanitary amenities and landscaping enhancements throughout the corridor, with emphasis on the Village’s downtown Central Business District (CBD), which included lighting, benches, and tree installations.

Project History

This project was one of many municipal rehabilitation/reconstruction projects that resulted from the New York State Department of Transportation’s (NYSDOT) ongoing program to improve state highways and to address the needs of local municipalities within the



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region. The Village of Medina and NYSDOT entered into a partnering agreement in 1999, whereby the Village would administer the design and construction. In 1999, the Village selected a lead consultant, which consisted of several firms. The lead consultant was in charge of providing scoping, preliminary and final design, and construction support and inspection services. Supporting firms were responsible for the overall project design and development including scoping, preliminary and final design, streetscape/landscape design, and construction phase engineering and inspection services, project survey and mapping, right-of-way acquisition, environmental engineering services, assisting in the final design of drainage systems, traffic maintenance, signs, pavement marking plans, and assisting with construction inspection. In addition, water main and sanitary sewer infrastructure improvements were designed for the Village in a manner that provided seamless coordination between roadway drainage systems and underground infrastructure.

During the scoping phase of the project, the Village was concerned that construction activities would significantly impact the operation of the Village. Since the roadways included in the project traverse through the entire Village, local officials feared the negative effects of having residents continually traveling through construction activity on all major Village roads at the same time. To eliminate this concern, the project team separated the project into three distinct construction contracts, allowing minimal overlap between construction projects to reduce disruption. The plan recommended the work commence at the center of the Village and proceed outward to the Village limits. In addition, water/sewer improvements and utility relocations were completed in advance of the highway work, which reduced the duration and impact of the major construction.

Coordination, Outreach and Partnering

The primary challenges throughout the stages of the design and construction process were coordination and communication. To facilitate community involvement and decision making throughout the design process, three Citizen’s Advisory Groups (CAG) were formed. These three groups – East & West Center Street CAG, CBD CAG, and Maples Ridge/Prospect/North Gravel CAG – were formed on the basis of distinct areas within the Village and community interests present along the project corridor. Each committee was made up of local officials, business owners, and affected special interest groups and residents.

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Coordination, outreach, and partnering efforts on this project began in 2000 and continued with several public information meetings, individual group meetings, and one-on-one property owner meetings. The first public information meeting was intended to kick-start the project and to provide an opportunity for the residents of the Village to meet the consultant team and offer concerns, opinions, and improvements for the project. During the scoping phase of the project, two additional public information meetings were held to address specific issues related to the various areas of the Village that the project covered.

Once the scoping process was complete, a public hearing was held to present final recommendations to the public. Village residents gathered one final time to hear about project objectives and proposed improvements and to discuss the schedule for construction activities.

A critical objective for the community and businesses was to preserve the integrity of the Village and the historic CBD. During the scoping and design phases of the project, the project team spent countless hours coordinating with the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO).

The project included several historically sensitive areas, such as the historic district of the CBD, the “historic eligible” district of West Center Street and several historical sites on both Prospect Avenue and South Main Street.

To communicate with SHPO, the project team prepared colored renderings of proposed improvements and provided historical references to justify the inclusion of proposed elements. One of the major proposed improvements involved the inclusion of Main Street “bump-outs” located at intersections and mid-block crossings. The purpose of these features was to significantly shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians and to preserve a long history of mid-block crossings within the CBD. The design team provided SHPO with pictures from the 1800s that show these types of features existed along Main Street. As such, SHPO agreed to inclusion of these features in the project.



Downtown Medina, late 1800s. While the DOT had strict parameters for roadway design and SHPO had similar rules for historic preservation, historic images similar to this one helped the local design team make its own case for roadway and sidewalk design.

Photo source: <http://www.eriecanalmedina.com/>

An important matter to Village officials and CBD tenants during construction was the maintenance of economic viability. Working closely with the CAG, the design team worked diligently to develop a

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plan to adequately maintain traffic while considering the needs of the contractor, the traveling public, and the local businesses.

Project Highlights and Successes

Success of the project was attributed to working closely with the CAGs, SHPO, and representatives from the Village. The consultant team applied context sensitive solutions to maintain economic viability in the downtown business district and developed solutions to enhance the aesthetics and attractiveness of the downtown area for motorists and pedestrians.

Geometric Improvements

In many instances, it was not clear where the separation was between the travel way and parking areas or other asphalt surfaces. The project provided for the narrowing of these pavement areas to define travel lanes and shoulders. Issues such as sight distance, roadway skew, and vehicle access were addressed throughout the corridor.

Aesthetics and Landscape Improvements

The project included extensive aesthetic and landscaping improvements. Items such as street furnishings, appropriate street trees, planting beds, shrubs, flowers, textured concrete areas, and benches were included as features to enhance the overall view of the Village setting.

One of the most noticeable features was the replacement of the existing street lighting which was replaced with decorative street light poles that provide accommodations for both banners and planted flower baskets. Reclamations of sandstone curbing for planting beds was also a historic preservation technique incorporated into the project. Pocket parks were developed along Main Street in the “bump-out” areas and behind sidewalk areas.

Traffic Signal Upgrades

Improvements to traffic signals involved the replacement of the existing “spanwire” design with a mast arm style of signals. The new traffic signal at the Center Street and Main Street Intersection included decorative “curved octaflute tapered mast arm” signal poles and matching street light fixtures.

Signals installed at other intersections consisted of painted traffic signal poles and decorative bases, as well as matching street light fixtures to match those in the CBD. This was a cost saving measure that allowed the team to provide poles that were similar in appearance throughout the corridor at a fraction of the cost.

Bridge Improvements

The project included one bridge, Route 31 over Oak Orchard Creek. Inspection of the bridge during project development revealed that the deck system and bearings needed to be replaced. In addition, it was identified that the existing railing system did not meet current standards and was in need of upgrades.

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Due to the historic nature of the CBD, the team decided that replacing the existing standard bridge railing with “Texas” style bridge railing was a cost effective measure that allowed the bridge to stand out as one approached the historic CBD.

Railroad Improvements

The project included several improvements to an at-grade railroad crossing owned and operated by the Falls Road Railroad. The railroad crossing, located along Main Street (NY Route 31/63), was in need of repair and exhibited several safety issues affecting both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Improvements involved narrowing the pavement section to better define travel lanes and shoulders and installation of a new concrete railroad crossing, warning gates, and safety lights. Amenities around the railroad crossing were incorporated into the final design. Bollards, benches and landscape beds were installed as a means to enhance the crossing and provide a pocket park area for pedestrians with interest in watch train crossings.

Parking and Pedestrian Facilities

Another project objective that was developed during the early scoping and community outreach process was to improve overall traffic and safety conditions. Existing diagonal parking within the CBD provided ample parking for patrons at local businesses.

Initial alternatives suggested the removal of the diagonal parking as a measure to increase safety and minimize the potential of accidents occurring as vehicles backed out of parking spaces onto the state highway. It was suggested that parallel parking be installed to increase overall safety, yet the change would result in a significant reduction in the number of available parking spaces, although ample off-street parking was available.

The CBD CAG challenged this alternative. The group felt strongly that a significant reduction in parking spaces would discourage patrons from the business front and jeopardize the economic viability of the CBD.

The outcome of the controversy involved a compromise between the state and the business owners wherein the diagonal parking was maintained, but adjacent sidewalk width in front of the businesses was slightly reduced, allowing for the installation of a 1.5 meter (5 feet) buffer between the travel lane and the parking space. Reducing the sidewalk width requires pedestrian space to be maximized through flush tree grates in the CBD. This alternative allowed parking cars to back up a bit and enhanced the view of traffic prior to entering the travel lane.

A significant addition to Main Street involved the inclusion of “bump-outs” at intersections and three mid-block crossings. The purpose of these features was to significantly shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians, thereby increasing pedestrian safety. In addition to increasing safety, these features provided area for benches, trash receptacles, and hydrants. High visibility “streetprint” pavement markings were also included in the project as a means to heighten the safety of pedestrians crossing the street.

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Utilities

The project included a significant improvement to the existing utility systems throughout the Village. Before the reconstruction, existing roadway drainage was collected and treated as part of a Village-wide combined storm/sanitary system. Over the years, the Village had been separating the systems as roadway improvements were made within the Village. Installation of a new closed drainage system throughout the project limits allowed for the separation of a significant piece of the existing combined storm/sanitary system. This new drainage system resulted in an overall reduction in sewer flows at the Village waste water treatment plant, allowing the Village to reduce operation and maintenance costs. In addition, this improvement reduced the sewer overflow discharging into Oak Orchard Creek.

In addition to drainage improvements, the Village replaced the entire water and sanitary system throughout the project limits. These systems were quite old and required constant maintenance on the Village’s part. Consequently, due to the age of the systems, the project team felt strongly that the underground infrastructure should be replaced prior to placing a new pavement structure. Water improvements included installation of new water mains, hydrants, and appurtenances. Many streets within the project had dual parallel water mains running on both sides of the street. The project addressed this issue by combining these systems into one main.

Like the water system, the sanitary sewer system was badly deteriorated and needed to be addressed. Again, constant maintenance was required and several pipes were deteriorated beyond repair. As such, a new sanitary sewer system was installed throughout the full depth reconstruction limits of the project.

In order to expedite the highway reconstruction project, the Village completed the water and sewer improvements in a separate construction contract a year before the highway work was started. Another measure taken to expedite highway construction was to initiate early coordination with Niagara Mohawk (utility poles), Verizon (utility poles and underground systems), Time Warner Cable (overhead cable) and New York State Electric and Gas. Once conflicts were known, utility companies agreed to complete relocations in advance of the actual highway reconstruction process. Advance utility relocations cleared the way for the highway contractor and reduced construction time and delays to the Village residents.

Transfer of Jurisdiction

The project involved a unique situation where maintenance and ownership of two highways were swapped between the state of New York and the Village of Medina. The state highway involved was NY Route 63 which traversed through the Village as a designated truck route. Turning was difficult for tractor trailers due to geometry and the close proximity of adjacent buildings. The state and the Village therefore agreed to relocate NY Route 63 so that traffic could flow more freely. Before the transfer of jurisdiction could take place, both parties agreed to improve the roadways to meet the standards of each municipality.

Construction Activities

The construction inspection staff held weekly meetings with the contractor to discuss construction related activities including problem areas, needs, and adherence to schedule and minority goals

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established for the project. Safety was also major concern for the Village. The inspection staff and the New York State Department of Transportation completed routine inspections to insure that public and worker safety was a top priority during the construction phase. Since the project involved reconstruction of the main Village business district, the contractor extended “above and beyond” measures to ensure pedestrian safety.

VI. HOW TO GUIDE YOUR MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION EFFORT

As stated on page 4: “Successful main streets and downtown centers do not simply “happen” – they are created through concerted participation and effort at a variety of levels, typically over the course of many years.” Every community is different in its physical form, economic structure, and available social and political capital. These and other factors will influence how a community can or should organize and structure a main street revitalization effort. The following section cites several examples of common organizational frameworks that have been used successfully to move community main street planning efforts forward.

Evaluation of Main Street Organizational Structures

There are a variety of stakeholder and organizational structures that can be employed to propel and implement main street revitalization. In many respects, the best lesson to keep in mind when developing a main street program is that, although there may be core fundamentals, each community is different and different approaches to organization, stakeholders and concentration areas is appropriate.

Main streets that are filled with small retail businesses may think it best to use a merchant’s association while others may find a business improvement district (BID) to fit their needs. The stakeholders and concentration areas of a main street revitalization effort will also vary. In some cases, bringing in a residential component, especially for mixed-use main streets, may be appropriate while other towns and Villages may find that parking is the issue on which they should focus. For every main street that exists, there is a different mix of organizational structure, stakeholders and concentration areas.

Some of the more standard organizational structures are described below.

Business Improvement District

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), also known as special improvement districts, special assessment districts, business assistance districts, business improvement zones or special services districts, are private non-profit organizations that formed as a response to deteriorating downtown areas that were trying to compete with suburban shopping options, namely large indoor malls. As commercial activity left downtown areas so did the tax revenue generated by it. This left many local governments unable to pay for services to maintain or revitalize these areas.

BIDs developed as a response to this by creating an organization where the private sector can provide services for realization activities that the local government is unable to provide. A district is created and the properties within the district pay a special tax assessment for the services provided through the BID. Members of a BID may include residents, developers, or commercial businesses in the district. In order to create a BID, legislation must be passed by both the state and local government. In New York State, the establishment of a BID can be found in Article 19-A of the New York State General Municipal Law.

The role of a BID and how it interacts with local government varies. In some instances, BIDs are completely independent of local government and provide the financing and management of specific projects. In other cases, BIDs partner with local government and raise the revenue for a project that

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will be administered and implemented by the local government. Some BIDS may serve the purpose of the Chamber of Commerce while others will partner with them.

BIDs provide a steady source of revenue for revitalization efforts (including capital projects or programmatic areas) which make the budgeting of projects and programs easier. The benefits of BIDs include maintenance and improvement of public spaces, delivery of services that the public sector can not provide, a clear vision and voice for downtown business interests and financing of capital improvement projects. There is controversy as to whether a private interest group should be allowed to have such control over the public sphere, but this organizational model has been gaining popularity throughout the country with over 1,200 BIDs currently known to be in existence.

The ways in which a BID functions, as well as their program areas varies greatly. The example of the Batavia BID below provides a model of a successful BID in the region.

Batavia Business Improvement District

The City of Batavia passed local legislation to enable the formation of a BID in December 1997. In 1998, the BID’s first order of business was to create a revitalization plan with its focus on “retaining and expanding existing businesses and attracting new niche retailers, artists and designers, restaurants and entertainment, high technology, and professional services that cater to the residents, work force, shopper and visitors to western New York.”⁴⁴ The plan focused on economic, marketing and preservation issues facing downtown Batavia.

The Batavia BID chose to partner with the City of Batavia, the Genesee County Chamber of Commerce and downtown business owners. Membership is extended to both property owners in the District as well as tenants; there are currently over 140 members. The BID is governed by a 14 person Board including nine property owners in the District, one at-large position, three appointed public representatives and a Chamber of Commerce representative. In addition, there is one paid position, an Executive Director.

The BID’s programmatic focus areas are based on the National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street program. The Batavia BID has 5 areas on which they focus with five separate committees. The first committee is the Business Development Committee. The BID developed a revitalization plan when it was first formed and retention and recruitment were a large part of the plan. The Business Development Committee furthers the plan through its implementation.

The second committee is dedicated to Design and is involved with activities to improve the aesthetics of the District. In the past, the BID has engaged in four programs to further this goal. The first and one of the largest programs of the organization is a façade improvement project. A third committee is the organizational committee. This committee works closely with the City of Batavia to cultivate leadership throughout downtown.

Parking is often a big issue in downtowns and the Batavia BID decided to address this with its own committee. The main purpose of this committee is to review proposals to the District and determine

⁴⁴ Batavia BID website: <http://downtownbataviany.com/>

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their effect on parking. The last committee is the Promotional committee. The Promotional Committee is charged with developing and promoting downtown activities and events.

Merchants Association/Partnership

Merchants Association’s function much like BIDs, in that they are non-profit organizations established to represent the interests of the main street area. The largest difference is that they are not financially supported by a special tax assessment and legislation is not necessary for their formation. In some cases, there is a membership fee but no financially binding fees are levied.

A merchants association, in many respects, is a natural origination for a main street program since it is a private interest group that has a vested interest in the area’s health. There are two possible drawbacks to the merchant association organizational structure. The first is that funding is less secure. There are fees levied, and often partners which provide some sources of funding, but it is not steady.

Environmental Sustainability and Corporate Accountability on Main Streets

“Butterflies, interrupted” – from *City Newspaper*

By Christine Carrie Fien

Imagine Monroe Avenue [Rochester, NY] as a colorful corridor where butterflies alight up and down the street. That’s what Carolyn Curry and the Monroe Village Task Force had in mind when they planted butterfly-friendly gardens on Monroe – two at the Dunkin’ Donuts on the corner of Monroe and Alexander.

“It was beautiful,” says Curry, who is president of the Task Force.

The Dunkin’ gardens were planted over two years and involved landscape designers, a grant, donations, and the guidance of the Strong national Museum of Play.

But when the Monroe Dunkin’ Donuts franchise changed hands, the new owner pulled out the plants.

“Oh, my God, people went crazy!” Curry says. “They put so much work into it.”

Henry McCartney, who has been legislative aide to City Councilmember Lois Giess, says there were 93 plants in the second garden.

A Dunkin’ Donuts representative says the new owner didn’t know how important the gardens were to the neighborhood. The gardens have been replaced with some new plants and mulch.

McCartney says it’s a symptom of a larger problem – lack of investment in home communities by national chains.

“To be good neighbors, these national brands ought to participate, try to understand the community,” he says. “We see no evidence of it from any of the national brands on Monroe Avenue.”

The Task Force wants the gardens brought back or for the chain to reimburse the group for the grant money it spent. The city is looking into whether the new owner’s actions breach the store’s site plan.

City Newspaper. January 2-8, 2008, Vol. 37 No 14: p2.



Volunteers planting trees on Monroe Ave, Rochester, NY during Clean Sweep 2006.

<http://www.monroeavenue.com/taskforce.html>

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Another possible issue with merchants associations is that they represent one interest group, automatically making the main street agenda very retail-focused. Promotion and events may receive more of a focus than design or streetscape under such a model. This is a possible issue but collaboration with municipal officials, community development corporations, and other community organizations can help to overcome this potential bias. Also, collaboration works to present an image to the public that all facets of the downtown area are being represented and addressed.

Fairport-Perinton Merchants Association and Fairport Village Partnership

One example of an active merchants association is the Fairport-Perinton Merchants Association (FPMA). This is a civic organization that is a collaboration of the Village of Fairport and the Town of Perinton. Membership is open to both retail merchants and other business owners. Members receive benefits which include shared and subsidized advertisement and promotions, association seminars, and information sharing with other local businesses through networking events.

FPMA sponsors a variety of events in order to promote downtown activities. Fairport is located on the Erie Canal and reaps the tourism benefits of such a location. FPMA takes advantage of this location by sponsoring the successful Fairport Canal Days which is a weekend festival which hosts an estimated 200,000-plus people. In addition to FPMA seeing themselves as a promotional engine for area merchants, they also consider themselves to be stewards to the community and its residents and engage in various volunteer activities.

The organization has been in existence for over 15 years and, from it, the Fairport Village Partnership, another organization, has emerged. The Fairport Village Partnership has a similar purpose as FPMA but solely serves the Village of Fairport. The Fairport Village Partnership has five primary goals:

1. Strengthen the existing village businesses;
2. Promote the Village as a great place to live, work and invest;
3. Enhance the visual and aesthetic appearance of the Village’s downtown business district and public spaces;
4. Ensure long-term funding for the Partnership; and
5. Pursue land uses consistent with community objectives.

The Partnership has a committee for promotions, communications and outreach, design, and economic restructuring in order to reach those goals.

The Fairport Village Partnership was founded by and financially supported by the Fairport Industrial Development Agency, Fairport Merchants Association, Fairport Municipal Commission and the Village of Fairport. The organization has two paid staff and seven members on its steering committee who represent merchants, professional service businesses and the public sector.

The Fairport Village Partnership offers a variety of resources through local, county and New York State programs. The Village offers loans to businesses and has a thriving façade grants program. The Village not only offers financial assistance but is also dedicated to offering technical assistance to small businesses. They provide this through the collection and dissemination of data and hosting a

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Small Business Resource Center, through partnership with the Small Business Development Corporation, at the municipal library.

Free Standing Non-profit

Another option for an organizational structure is to create a free standing non-profit organization whose sole goal is downtown revitalization. A stand alone organization can be very desirable because this way the organization can create a mission, goals and agenda that is tailored to their revitalization efforts. In addition, it can cast a wide net in recruitment efforts, ignoring traditional organizational structures.

Forever Elmwood

A model of a free standing organization is Forever Elmwood in the historic Elmwood Avenue of Buffalo. It was founded as an all volunteer organization in 1994 with membership from business owners and area residents. The organization is different from many downtown/main street revitalization organizations because it incorporates residential stakeholders and, therefore, housing and other community development related issues. The organizers that founded Forever Elmwood realized that in order to make Elmwood Avenue (a commercial corridor) into an economically and culturally vibrant street, they would have to address the surrounding streets and make it a neighborhood effort.

Preservation and protection of the neighborhood are the main goals of the organization and the strategies that they use to accomplish these goals center on civic engagement and commercial revitalization. One of the goals of the organization is to collaborate more with different government offices as they see partnering with the government as a way to yield positive returns.

The organization has changed over time. It started as a local organization but in 2000 obtained a national sponsor. Forever Elmwood commenced a relationship with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) through their Neighborhood Main Street Initiative. This allowed Forever Elmwood to hire its first paid employee, an executive director, in 2000. The City of Buffalo is also a partner.

Forever Elmwood brought together LISC, the City of Buffalo, merchants and residents to implement its four-point approach which focuses on design, organization, promotion and economic restructuring. There are also eight guiding principles to direct the program. The program’s guiding principles mandate that the group strives to be:

1. Comprehensive, a series of programs;
2. Incremental, small projects that build on one another
3. Self-help, local leadership is involved
4. Public/private partnership, strong partnership
5. Identifying and capitalizing on existing assets, provide the foundation
6. Quality, high-quality work performed
7. Change, shift perceptions and habits
8. Action-oriented, visible changes

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Forever Elmwood also has seven committees. The first is a Neighborhoods Committee which is present because of the program’s residential emphasis. This committee is responsible for the neighborhood having its own Buffalo Housing Court Liaison. This has helped the neighborhood better address issues of code violations, blight and crime.

A Design Committee is another element of Forever Elmwood. This addresses both the aesthetic and preservation goals of the program. The Design Committee is responsible for a façade improvement program, urban design literacy program and a Smart Growth speaker series which addressed the economic benefits of design, mixed-use development and good transportation practices.

Other committees are Economic Development, Merchants, Marketing, Events and Farmers Market Committees. The Economic Development Committee is responsible for ensuring the economic health and vitality of the commercial corridor and the surrounding neighborhood. The Merchants Committee shares many of the same goals as the Economic Development Committee but concentrates solely on the needs of the merchants. One of the main programs available to merchants is a matching grant for façade improvements to storefronts.

Another committee is the Marketing Committee. Marketing of the Elmwood area is seen as both important to the neighborhood as well as the city. This is why Forever Elmwood entered into a partnership with the Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo and the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation to work on a branding campaign for Elmwood Avenue. Two related committees are the Events committee which plans special events, and coordinates the large amount of volunteers to run the events, and a Farmers Market Committee which is charged with operating the weekly Saturday morning farmers market.

Private Revitalization Organization

Another option for a downtown/main street revitalization effort is to form a privately funded organization. The strengths of this structure are that there is relative autonomy for the organization and since they are not funded by a public entity they can more easily set their own agenda. Another positive element is that people donate both their time and money to the organization and effort; this means that they have made a personal investment in its success. Conversely, individuals and private organizations who give money to an organization and/or expect certain outcomes to the organization are not completely independent from outside pressures. Another issue with a private organization is that they are trying to make changes in the public sphere where they do not have any real control outside of citizen control. This can be addressed if the organization maintains transparency and open lines of communication with the local government and organizations and the citizenry.



In 2007, the Elmwood Village of Buffalo, NY was named one of “America’s 10 Greatest Neighborhoods” by the American Planning Association, due in large part to the efforts of Forever Elmwood. Photo from www.foreverelmwood.org

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Clyde Capital Improvement Limited Partnership

There are many forms that a private revitalization organization can take but one example from the Village of Clyde in Wayne County, New York provides interesting insight into the organic growth, formation and structure of a private organization. The Clyde Capital Improvement Limited Partnership (CCLIP) was started in 1995 by a group of long-term residents who had seen the village go from a vibrant center of commerce and activity to one of vacant storefronts and dilapidated buildings.

This group of retired professionals decided to become the financiers of downtown Clyde and established a limited partnership. Shares were sold for \$1,000 each to local citizens. The monetary investment by its citizens into the Village was seen as a way to truly vest citizens into the redevelopment of their Village. CCLIP yielded \$85,000 from the sale of shares and the money was used to apply for a grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and leverage an additional \$205,000. Three buildings were renovated with this funding and that provided a visible example of redevelopment to the community.

Along with a plan to increase capital investment, there were three other elements included in the Clyde redevelopment plan. They are industrial development, commercial development and municipal development. Industrial development was seen as a crucial component since a strong tax base would be necessary to continue with capital projects. The strategy used was to revive the Clyde Industrial Corporation which had an institutional history (it was formed in the 1960s) but had not been active in recent years. They set a goal to annually attract or grow one business and have seen a growth of 25-30 jobs in the last decade.

The second element was commercial development. Vibrant commercial activity is a key to any main street/downtown area. The strategy used was to tap an underutilized community asset, the Clyde Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber existed in Clyde but in 1995 it only had eight members. By 2005, the Chamber had increased its membership by 1,000% to 80 members. The reinvigorated Chamber was then able to take responsibility for acquiring banners, signs, lights, trash receptacles and other items related to the Village’s appearance.

The third component focused on municipal government and enabled a group of private citizens to better engage with public agencies and create collaboration between the two groups. There were two major elements under this component. The first was with the Village Board which led to the drafting and approval of a Village vision and logo. This allowed the Village to set a common goal, along with the private investors, and also had a branding component. The second element was focused on regulatory matters, including changes to the Village’s comprehensive plan and zoning code and its enforcement of them. The new code assisted with both preservation and consistency goals. Regulation is only effective when it is properly enforced and the Village garnered support for better enforcement and had buy-in from elected officials and the Village Courts to ensure that there were consequences for non-compliance.

One of the most positive outcomes from the program was increased communication between local institutions and leaders. Regular and ongoing communication was established between the Mayor of the Village, the Town Supervisor, the Superintendent of Clyde-Savannah Schools, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, and the President of the Industrial Development Corporation.

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The Village of Clyde has dealt with many tough issues and has met with much success. The relationships fostered between many of the leaders in the community ensure that they will effectively be able to address issues that arise.

The National Trust Main Street Center™

The National Trust Main Street Center™, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has been developing innovative and comprehensive strategies for main street and commercial district revitalization since the 1970's. Their approach stresses a preservation-based framework, but recognizes that an effective strategy must address several areas in order to be successful and sustainable. The Center has developed its own approach to main street revitalization called “The Four Points,” which has been included below. Coincidentally, the four points of the Main Street approach correspond with the four forces of real estate value, which are social, political, physical, and economic.

*The Four Points*⁴⁵

The National Trust Main Street Center offers a comprehensive commercial district revitalization strategy that has been widely successful in towns and cities nationwide. Described below are the four points of the Main Street Approach which work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.

Organization

Organization involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program. A governing board and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of the volunteer-driven program. Volunteers are coordinated and supported by a paid program director as well. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

Promotion

Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the Main Street district. By marketing a district's unique characteristics to residents, investors, business owners, and visitors, an effective promotional strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in the district and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

Design

Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets – such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets – is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere, created through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping, conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include instilling good

⁴⁵ “The Four Points.” National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street Center. Last viewed online 4/3/08 at <http://www.mainstreet.org/content.aspx?page=47>

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maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.

Economic Restructuring

Economic Restructuring strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The Main Street program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers' needs. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district.

Funding Your Main Street Revitalization Effort

While financing a capital improvement program is probably at the top of the list when municipalities consider revitalization efforts, in many respects, funding should follow a well-conceived organization and community visioning process. As a community's vision for its downtown and main street area begins to coalesce, and as local needs and priorities are clarified, the proper funding sources will be easier to identify and applications and proposals will be more likely to be successful.

It is important to note that state and regional transportation authorities have strict timelines and budget constraints that guide their work. In many cases, work is planned many years in advance. Funding sources described below such as the Transportation Improvement Program are subject to Federal budgetary constraints and cyclical allocations.

Local Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

While state and federal transportation agencies will provide considerable funding for the construction and maintenance of their roadways, the construction of non-critical local facilities (referred to as “betterments”) will typically be the responsibility of the municipality. Communities should therefore look to the framework of a capital improvement program (CIP) as a means of identifying and saving adequate capital early enough in the project development process.

As stated in *Planning and Urban Design Standards*:

Capital planning involves the purchase or construction, major repair, reconstruction, or replacement of capital items, such as buildings, utility systems, roadways, bridges, parks, landfills, and heavy equipment, which are expensive and have a long, useful life...

The capital improvement program is a five to six year schedule of capital projects. The first year of the CIP is the capital budget, which the local government formally adopts and implements, along with the operating budget. The CIP is one of the most powerful tools for implementing a local comprehensive plan. Advanced planning and scheduling of community facilities may avoid costly mistakes. A systematic, organized approach to planning capital facilities provides a number of practical advantages.⁴⁶

Some of those advantages include:

⁴⁶ *Planning and Urban Design Standards*. American Planning Association. 2006. p. 637-638.

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- Using taxpayers dollars wisely;
- Focusing on community needs and capabilities;
- Obtaining community support;
- Encouraging economic development;
- Increasing administration efficiency;
- Maintaining a stable financial program; and
- Taking advantage of federal and state grant and loan programs (better positioning for using matching funds).

Examples of federal and state grant and loan programs follow in the sections below.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The following text has been adopted from the Introduction of the *2007 – 2012 Transportation Improvement Program* guidebook, a publication of Genesee Transportation Council.⁴⁷

Federal regulations require that the urban transportation planning process include the cooperative development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a staged multi-year program of projects consistent with the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).⁴⁸ This region’s TIP is developed cooperatively by a team lead by the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) staff and New York State Department of Transportation Region 4 staff (NYSDOT-4).

What is the TIP?

The TIP identifies the timing and funding of all highway, bridge, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, air quality improvement, and other surface transportation projects scheduled for implementation in this region over the next five years that use federal transportation funds.

The TIP reflects the priorities and direction of the region and its state and federal partners in the transportation planning process. The TIP and the projects it contains must be consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the current LRTP for the region.

The TIP is part of this region’s effort to establish and maintain the planning process required by the federal government as a condition for receipt of federal transportation funding. The federal government requires that the TIP be updated at least every two years, and adopted by the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – in this region, the Genesee Transportation Council. The TIP development process involves only projects eligible for federal aid.

What types of projects should be included in the TIP?

Federal regulations require that any transportation project within the TMA that is to be funded with U.S. Department of Transportation funds (federal transportation funding) must be included in the TIP.

⁴⁷ “2007 – 2012 Transportation Improvement Program Guidebook.” Genesee Transportation Council. August 2006. Requests for copies should be submitted to GTC staff. Visit <http://gtcmppo.org/> for contact information.

⁴⁸ “Long Range Transportation Plan for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region: 2005-2025 (LRTP: 2005-2025).” Genesee Transportation Council. Available online at <http://gtcmppo.org/>.

Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning

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The types of projects listed below are eligible for federal transportation funding. Any municipality or agency desiring federal transportation funding to advance any of the project types listed below should submit a project proposal to be considered for inclusion in the TIP.

- Projects on the federal aid system (e.g., road and bridge construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, preventive maintenance, Intelligent Transportation Systems deployment, etc.)
- Public transportation projects (e.g., vehicle maintenance and operations, capital improvement projects, mass transit system construction, etc.)
- Projects that are not on the federal aid system but may be eligible for federal funding for other reasons (e.g., bridge projects, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, Intelligent Transportation Systems deployment, air quality improvement, etc.)
- Bridge preventive maintenance projects that address Element-Specific Bridge Work (as delineated by NYSDOT Engineering Instruction).

NYSDOT-4 has specific guidelines for developing project cost estimates. These costs are guidelines only and may need to be adjusted for proposed projects. Applicants should specify the source of the project cost estimate; realistic project cost estimates with appropriate contingencies are required to properly evaluate project proposals.

Who can submit project proposals?

Any county, city, town, or village in the seven-county TIP region (Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Wayne, and Wyoming counties) as well as NYSDOT, the New York State Thruway Authority, and the Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA) can submit project proposals for the TIP. Private individuals and organizations can submit project proposals if the project is sponsored by the local government in which the project will be located.

How are projects selected for the TIP?

The GTC/NYSDOT team scores all project proposals pursuant to set Project Evaluation Criteria. The resulting scores provide a preliminary basis for ranking project proposals within each mode (e.g., Highway projects, Bridge projects, Public Transportation projects, Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation projects, Intelligent Transportation Systems projects, Goods Movement projects, Air Quality Improvement projects, and Other projects).

The preliminary rankings are reviewed and discussed with the TIP Development Committee and adjustments to rankings are made as necessary to reflect overall funding considerations, geographic balance, and other factors not specifically captured by the Project Evaluation Criteria. Based on estimates of available revenue, funding is then assigned to the ranked projects in accordance with funding availability and eligibility restriction.

A draft TIP document is developed and made available for public review and comment, including one or more public meetings, in order to solicit input on the proposed program of projects. The draft TIP, public comments, and suggested revisions (based on the public comments) are presented to and reviewed by the GTC Planning Committee. The GTC Planning Committee then sends its recommendations to the GTC Board for adoption of the TIP.

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Many of the surface transportation improvements identified along village main streets are eligible for specific federal funding programs through the TIP. The programs include the following:

The Transportation Enhancements Program (TEP)

Quoting the Introduction of the Transportation Enhancements Program Guidebook for 2008:

The Transportation Enhancements Program was created in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), and continued in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

Through the Transportation Enhancements Program, Congress provided innovative opportunities to improve the transportation system through the implementation of a specific list of activities intended to benefit the traveling public, to increase transportation choices and access, to enhance the built and natural environment, and to provide a sense of place. Transportation enhancement activities offer communities funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices, such as safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic routes, beautification and other investments that increase recreation, accessibility and safety for everyone beyond traditional highway programs. Communities also may use transportation enhancements funds to contribute to the revitalization of local and regional economies by restoring historic buildings, renovating streetscapes or providing transportation museums and visitors centers.⁴⁹

The twelve eligible enhancement categories for project proposals include:

1. Provision of Facilities for Pedestrians and Bicycles
2. Provision of Safety and Educational Activities for Pedestrians and Bicycles
3. Acquisition of Scenic Easements and Scenic or Historic Sites (including Historic Battlefields)
4. Scenic or Historic Highway Programs (including the Provision of Tourist and Welcome Center Facilities)
5. Landscaping and Other Scenic Beautification
6. Historic Preservation
7. Rehabilitation and Operation of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures or Facilities (including Historic Railroad Facilities and Canals)
8. Preservation of Abandoned Railway Corridors (Including Conversion and Use thereof for Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails)
9. Inventory, Control and Removal of Outdoor Advertising
10. Archaeological Planning and Research
11. Environmental Mitigation to Address Water Pollution due to Highway Runoff or Reduce Vehicle-Caused Wildlife Mortality while Maintaining Habitat Connectivity
12. Establishment of Transportation Museums

TEP funding rounds are cyclical. For further information on funding, the rules & requirements, an application, the Guidebook for application preparation, a list of NYSDOT Regional TEP Coordinators, and, when available, workshop schedules, refer to the reference included on the bottom of the previous page.

⁴⁹ “Transportation Enhancements Program Guidebook.” NYSDOT. (1).
<https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/re/tep>

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National Highway System (NHS)

The NHS program provides funding for improvements to rural and urban roads that are part of the NHS, including the Interstate System and designated connections to major intermodal terminals. Under certain circumstances, NHS funds may also be used to fund transit improvements in NHS corridors. Projects involving highway safety improvements and/or bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities are eligible if they occur on the National Highway System. Some villages throughout the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region may be included in the NHS.

Surface Transportation Program – Rural (STP-Rural) or Flex (STP-Flex)

STP funding is allocated into four categories: Urban, Small Urban, Rural, and Flex. STP funds can be used on all facilities except roads functionally classified as local or rural minor collector. Eligible projects in villages could be allocated STP-Rural or STP-Flex funds. Examples of eligible projects include highway and transit safety improvements and programs, transportation enhancement activities, and construction or reconstruction necessary to accommodate other transportation modes. Alternate mode projects eligible for funding include bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities and modification of public sidewalks to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning

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Other Possible Funding Sources for Your Main Street

Program	Organization	Details	Additional Information
<i>Brownfields Econ. Dev. Initiative</i>	US Department of Housing and Urban Development	To assist cities with the redevelopment of abandoned, idled and underused industrial and commercial facilities.	http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/bedi/index.cfm
<i>Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup Grants</i>	US Environmental Protection Agency	These grants may be used to address sites contaminated by petroleum and hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants (including hazardous substances co-mingled with petroleum).	http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicat.htm
<i>Making Smart Growth Happen</i>	US Environmental Protection Agency	To prevent and redevelop vacant properties to state, regional, and/or national level applications.	http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sg_implementation.htm
<i>Certified Local Government Grants Program</i>	NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau	To identify, evaluate, nominate, and protect cultural resources.	http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/programs/certified.asp
<i>Historic Preservation Grant Programs</i>	NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau	To improve, protect, preserve, rehabilitate or restore properties on the State or National Register for park, recreation, conservation or preservation purposes.	http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/programs/historic.asp
<i>NYS Small Cities Program</i>	NYS Governor’s Office for Small Cities	To implement community and economic development activities directed toward neighborhood revitalization, economic development and improved community facilities and services.	http://www.nysmallcities.com/FundingOpportunities/fundingavailability.asp
<i>NYS Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program</i>	NYS Departments of State and Environmental Conservation	To provide financial and technical assistance to municipalities and community-based organizations.	http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/grantopps_BOA.asp
<i>Energy\$mart programs</i>	New York State Energy Research and Development Authority	To help utility customers solve their energy and environmental problems while developing new, innovative products and services.	http://www.nyserda.org/programs/Default.asp
<i>Green Building Initiative</i>	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation	To ensure that new buildings are designed and constructed to save energy and minimize their impact on the environment.	http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/218.html
<i>Architecture, Planning and Design Program</i>	New York State Council on the Arts	To stimulate and promote excellence in design and planning in the public realm.	http://www.nysca.org/public/guidelines/architecture/index.htm
<i>National Preservation Loan Fund</i>	National Trust for Historic Preservation	To provide funding for a variety of preservation projects, including establishing or expanding local and statewide preservation revolving funds, acquiring and/or rehabilitating historic buildings, sites, structures and districts.	http://www.mainstreet.org/MediaLibrary/NtlTrustLoanFunds.pdf
<i>Bank of America Historic Tax Credit Fund</i>	National Trust Community Investment Corporation and Bank of America	To make tax credit investments in projects, such as apartment lofts, office and retail use, mixed-use development and governmental and nonprofit facilities.	http://www.ntcicfunds.com

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Program	Organization	Details	Additional Information
<i>NYS Main Street Program</i>	Housing Trust Fund Corporation, Division of Housing & Community Renewal	To provide financial and technical resources to help community’s business districts.	http://www.nymainstreet.org
<i>Revolving Loan Funds</i>	Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, IDAs, other county or city specific loans	To provide gap financing to small and medium sized manufacturing and service businesses. <i>Note: Retail businesses are often not eligible.</i>	http://www.gflrpc.org/ProgramAreas/EconomicDevelopment/RLF.htm
<i>Main Street/ Commercial District Revitalization</i>	National Grid	To assist communities in developing “smart growth” and private sector investment in central business districts and commercial corridors; provides matching grants of up to \$50,000 to non-profit and municipal organizations that are undertaking efforts to revitalize commercial corridors.	http://www.nationalgridus.com/niagaramohawk/business/ecdev/documents/Mainstreet%20Revitalization.pdf
<i>Preserve New York</i>	Preservation League of New York State and the New York State Council on the Arts	To provide projects including historic structure reports for public buildings, historic landscape reports for municipal parks and cultural resource surveys of neighborhoods with funding	http://www.preservenys.org/funding.htm
<i>Hope VI Revitalization Grant</i>	Department of Housing and Urban Development	To revitalize site with public housing, improve living environment for public housing residents, provide housing for very low income families	http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/hope6/index.cfm
<i>Environmental Restoration Projects Program</i>	Department of Environmental Conservation	To advertise the availability of State funding to investigate and/or fix hazardous substances on municipality held property	http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8444.html
<i>Environmental Services Unit</i>	New York State Department of Economic Development	To support projects that lead to pollution prevention and economic development	http://www.empire.state.ny.us/pdf/polution_prevention_recycle/2003_PROG_GUIDE.pdf
<i>Look Upstate NY</i>	New York State Electric and Gas/ Rochester Gas & Electric	Assistance and incentive programs for funding building rehabilitation, brownfield redevelopment, utility infrastructure investment, and other public and private community development projects.	http://www.lookupstateny.com/

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PROJECT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning project Technical Committee:

Jeffrey Adair	<i>Monroe County Legislature, 12th District</i>
Joan DuPont	<i>New York State Department of Transportation, Region 4</i>
Julie Gotham	<i>Assistant Program Manager - Community Transportation Planning, Genesee Transportation Council</i>
Dan Hallowell	<i>New York State Department of Transportation, Region 4</i>
Richard Perrin	<i>Executive Director, Genesee Transportation Council</i>
Joseph Rizzo	<i>Economic Development Manager, Rochester Gas and Electric</i>
Don Scalia	<i>Village of Mt. Morris Clerk/Treasurer (retired)</i>
Peter Siegrist, AIA	<i>Landmark Society of Western New York (as of December 2005)</i>
Robert Traver, P.E.	<i>NYS Dept. of Transportation, Region 4</i>
Kal Wysokowski	<i>Fairport IDA/Office of Community and Economic Development</i>
David S. Zorn	<i>Executive Director, Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council</i>

Many sincere thanks to the members of the technical committee who contributed their time, energy and expertise to the oversight of project progress and review of project materials. Their efforts helped to produce a more accurate and informative Guidebook.

NYSDOT Region 9 Village Survey Project

Spurred by the Regional Capital Program Committee's (RCPC) desire to understand the unique nature of the Region's villages, and their impact on planning proposed infrastructure improvements, the Village Committee was created. This Committee was tasked with coming up with a means of prioritizing work within the Region's 46 villages. These villages have, as their "Main Street", a State highway.

The first report presented to the RCPC looked at the villages from three traditional perspectives, i.e. population, Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), and pavement surface score. The Committee also developed a "weighting" factor to take into account the impact of higher traffic volumes on the various routes. This information was presented to the RCPC at their monthly meeting, and generated a valuable dialog.

The focus of this dialog centered on what could be categorized as "Context Sensitive Issues", such as "cultural / historical context", "green space", "landscaping", "bicycle / pedestrian issues", "streetscaping" etc. The preceding elements create the context, which characterize these villages as unique places to live, work and visit. To that end, the committee developed the "Village Survey".

This "Village Survey" was developed in a collaborative manner with input from both committee members, and the village officials. One of the desired outcomes of the survey was to provide a context for meaningful dialog between Department Staff and local officials. A second desired outcome of this work was to make this information available to the Department's Project Developers, Designers and Resident Engineers as we develop our multi-year transportation program. This web page will accomplish that end. Lastly, this information will be used to aide in project prioritization.

What you see on this page is a result of those dialogs. These surveys were conducted in the villages, with locally elected officials and their staff. Also present were the Resident Engineer and his assistant for the subject village's county. The Resident Engineers provided invaluable insight regarding the "day-to-day" operation of our maintenance forces, while at the same time strengthening the link between the Department and its stakeholders.

Finally, when all of the surveys have been completed, the Village Committee will again report to the RCPC with its findings, identifying those "themes/issues" common to all the villages.

At the time of this posting, villages within Broome and Chenango counties, and the Delaware South Residency area have been surveyed. The "Village People" will soon be performing surveys in Otsego, Schoharie / Delaware North and Sullivan counties. When these are completed they will be added to this web page.

APPENDIX B: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION VILLAGE SURVEY

Proposed Implementation Plan

1. To gather input on the Village Survey document, we would contact a small segment of Village representatives and other pertinent local, county or regional agencies.
2. Revise and finalize the Village Survey.
3. Once the survey is finalized, a letter would be sent to the Mayor of each Village with the Village Survey enclosed.
4. Meet with Village representative and collect data. Appropriate staff would collect data (a committee member and additional staff - to be determined).
5. Data collector should consult with subject matter expert to discuss photos or notes taken during the survey.
6. Compile data electronically/identify who would maintain data. The information would be incorporated with the Region's "Long Range Comprehensive Plan" update.
7. Compare and analyze data with TVWI (Traffic Volume Weighted Index) to better prioritize future Village projects.
8. Share findings with RCPC before sharing with internal stakeholders.
9. Reassess:
How did we do?
How can we improve?
Was there value added?

APPENDIX B: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION VILLAGE SURVEY



REGION 9 VILLAGE SURVEY

New York State Department of Transportation

Date _____

Village: _____
County: _____
State Route: _____ *(provide separate form for each state highway in Village)*
AADT: _____ **Year:** _____
Population: _____ **Year:** _____
Surface Score: _____ **Year:** _____
Attach photos, narrative descriptions, and extra sheets where appropriate.

■ **Lighting**

Is Highway lighting present? Y N
 Is it adequate? Y N
Is Pedestrian lighting present? Y N
 Is it adequate? Y N
 Is it decorative? Y N

Notes: _____

■ **Parking**

Is it present? Y N
 Is it adequate? Y N
 Off street On street
Is park & ride present? Y N
Is it needed? Y N

Notes: _____

■ **Landscape Elements & Plantings**

Are they present? *(i.e. signs, benches, planters)* Y N
If yes, describe what exists and location.

APPENDIX B: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION VILLAGE SURVEY

Are they adequate?

Y

N

Notes:

■ **Special Use Areas**

Is it present? (i.e. park, kiosk, monument)

Y

N

If yes, describe what exists and location.

Notes:

■ **Utilities**

Water Age _____

Y

N

Is it adequate?

Y

N

Sanitary Sewer Age _____

Y

N

Is it adequate?

Y

N

Gas Age _____

Y

N

Is it adequate?

Y

N

Electric

Y

N

Is it adequate?

Y

N

Is it underground?

Y

N

Partial

Telephone

Y

N

Is it adequate?

Y

N

Is it underground?

Y

N

Fiber Optics

Y

N

Is it adequate?

Y

N

Cable TV/Internet

Y

N

Is it adequate?

Y

N

APPENDIX B: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION VILLAGE SURVEY

Is it underground? Y N

Other _____

Notes:

■ **Snow Storage** Y N

If yes, is it paved or grassed? _____

Is it adequate? (3' minimum) Y N

Notes:

■ **Drainage**

Open (*i.e. swales, ditches, curbs, gutters*) Y N

Is it adequate? Y N

Closed (*i.e. culvert, catch basin, drain inlet*) Y N

Is it adequate? Y N

Notes:

■ **Traffic Signals/Control Devices**

Are they adequate? Y N

Notes:

■ **Geometry/Traffic Channelization**

Is it adequate? Y N

Notes:

APPENDIX B: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION VILLAGE SURVEY

■ **Perceived/Real Congestion /Delay Issues**

Delay Low Medium High

Notes:

■ **Perceived/Real Accident Problems** Y N

Number of PIL's _____

Accidents Low Medium High

Notes:

■ **Roadside Commercial Development** *Provide inventory of existing commercial establishments.*

Is it present? Y N

Level of Development Low Medium High

Notes:

■ **Walkability (Pedestrian Access & Mobility)**

Sidewalks Y N

If yes, describe connectivity, width, condition.

Are they adequate? Y N

Ped Crossings - signalized Y N

Are they adequate? Y N

Count-down timers Y N

Are they adequate? Y N

Curbs & Curb extensions Y N

APPENDIX B: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION VILLAGE SURVEY

Are they adequate? Y N

Crosswalks Y N

Are they adequate? Y N

Type (*i.e. color, texture, mid-block*) _____

Notes: _____

■ **Designated Scenic Byways** Y N

Notes: _____

■ **Bicycle Facilities**

Bike Lanes Y N

Are they adequate? Y N

Bike Parking facilities (*i.e. lockers, racks*) Y N

Are they adequate? Y N

Designated Bike Routes Y N

Notes: _____

■ **Other Multi-Modal**

Bus Y N Local Intercity

Air Y N

Rail Y N Freight Passenger

Notes: _____

■ **Is there a Master Plan ?** Y N

APPENDIX B: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION VILLAGE SURVEY

Last Updated _____

Are there any currently planned projects? Y N

Is the Village seeking other funding? Y N
(i.e. grants, enhancements, multi-modal)

Notes: _____

■ **Infrastructure Projects done recently** Y N

Notes: _____

■ **Historic & Cultural Context** Y N

(i.e. historic buildings, sites, landmarks, monuments, cultural themes, wall murals, sculptures, art)
If yes, describe what exists and location.

Notes: _____

■ **Economic Sustainability** *(Describe as appropriate)*

- Economic Opportunities
- Economic Condition
- Tax Base Info
- Tourism
- Zoning
- List Industrial Sites

Notes: _____

■ **Miscellaneous** *(Describe as appropriate)*

- Special Events
- Open Spaces
- Gateways
- Institutional *(i.e. school, hospital)*
- Bridges *(i.e. historic, signature)*

Notes: _____

APPENDIX B: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION VILLAGE SURVEY

■ **Comments**

How can DOT assist in achieving your transportation vision in your Village?

Notes:

■ **Contributors**

Name/Title: _____
Organization: _____
E-mail/phone: _____

APPENDIX C: NYS MAIN STREET PROGRAM WORKSHEETS

C1. Main Street Demographic Profiles Worksheet

Refer to the US Bureau of the Census American Factfinder for information on your community

	COUNTY	City, Town, Village or Hamlet
Population		
Total housing units		
Occupied housing units		
Vacant housing units		
Pct Vacant housing units		
Owner-occupied housing units		
Pct Owner-occupied housing units		
Renter-occupied housing units		
Pct Renter-occupied housing units		
Pct Unemployed		
Median household Income (\$)		
Individuals below Poverty		
Pct Individuals below Poverty		
Occupants per room		
1.01 or more (overcrowded)		
Pct 1.01 or more		
Monthly Owner Costs as a Pct of HH Income 1999		
30.0 or more		
Pct 30.0 or more		
Median Gross Rent (\$)		
Gross Rents as a Pct of Household Income		
30.0 or more		
Pct 30.0 or more		
Number of Household below \$24,999 in income		
Pct HHs below \$25,999 Income		
Est. Number of Rental Properties below \$625 in rent (a)		
Est. Pct Rentals below \$625 in rent		
Pct Households Moved into Unit since 1995		

SOURCE: US CENSUS 2000: Demographic Profiles 1,2,3,4
<http://censtats.census.gov/pub/Profiles.shtml>

Notes:

(a) To estimate the number of rental units between \$500 and \$625, use ½ the number of rental units in the category \$500 to \$749

APPENDIX C: NYS MAIN STREET PROGRAM WORKSHEETS

C2. Main Street Target Area Commercial Profile

Target Area	Y/N	If Yes: Name/Description	Yr Completed		
Summary Completed					
Market Analysis Completed					
Target Area is within:					
	Y/N	If Yes: Name	Yr Started or Designated		
Commercial Business District					
Business Improvement District					
Empowerment Zone					
Enterprise Community					
NYS Empire Zone					
Historic District					
CDBG Low/Med Area					
NPC Area					
RPC Area					
Other: Specify _____					
TARGET AREA					
Number of blocks long:	_____ Blocks: ___ one side of street or _____ both sides of street				
Number of Vacant Lots					
Total Number of Buildings					
Number of Bldgs Fully or Partially Occupied					
Number of Bldgs Vacant					
Pct Bldgs Vacant					
	Year _____	Year _____	Year _____		
Number of Establishments/ Businesses					
Est. Number of Employees					
Commercial Vacancy Rate					
	Retail Vacancy Rate	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	
	Office Vacancy Rate	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %	
Rent Per Sq Foot					
	Retail	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____	
	Office	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____	
Current Services:	Y/N	If N: est. distance to closest Store in blocks or miles	Public Transportation: Indicate Public Transportation		
Supermarket		_____ blocks/miles	In Target Area (Y/N)	Within _____ Blocks/Miles of Target Area	
Convenience Store		_____ blocks/miles	Buses		
Pharmacy		_____ blocks/miles	Trains		
Restaurants		_____ blocks/miles	Subways		
Current Econ. Development Investments or Major Business Improvements in or near Target Area					
NAME	DESCRIBE		STATUS**	In Target Area (Y/N)	Within _____ Blocks/Miles of Target Area

**Status: State whether proposed, started or completed. If proposed, state percentage of funding committed.

APPENDIX C: NYS MAIN STREET PROGRAM WORKSHEETS

C4. Main Street Target Area Individual Building Profile

BUILDING ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

Owner:			
Owner Address	ZipCode _____		
Year Purchased			
Bldg Currently:	_____ Occupied _____ Vacant _____ years/mos.	Owner Occupancy: (Y/N)	___ Owner is Business Occupant ___ Owner is Residential Occupant

Yr Built _____		Number Stories _____	
Historic Designation (Y/N) ___ If yes, specify _____		Elevators (Y/N) _____ Residential _____ Freight	
Structure Type: _____ Brick _____ Wood Frame _____ Steel _____ Other Specify _____		Building Type: ___ Mixed Use ___ Residential _____ Commercial _____ Civic	

Describe Bldg Physical Condition: *
Commercial Units:
Residential Units:
Systems/exterior

List Current Businesses:

		CURRENT CONFIGURATION	INDICATE IF ANY:	
			CHANGES PROPOSED	MAIN ST ASSIST.**
Commercial Units	Est. Comm. Sq. Ft.			
	Number Comm. Units			
	Number Comm. Units Vacant			
	Length of time vacant (yrs/ mos)			
Residential Units	Number Res. Units			
	Number Res. Units Vacant			
	Length of time vacant (yrs/ mos)			

*Current Condition:
Exc= Excellent
VG= Very Good
F= Fair
P= Poor

**Indicate type of Main St Assistance:
F= Facade
R=Rehabilitation
A= Anchor
ND= Not yet Determined

APPENDIX D: MAIN STREET OVERLAY DISTRICT EXAMPLE – WELLFLEET, MA

9.2 MAIN STREET OVERLAY DISTRICT

9.2.1 Purpose and Intent

This by-law enables the development and redevelopment of Wellfleet's village center (a portion of Main Street) in keeping with its historic development patterns, including the size and spacing of structures and open spaces.

9.2.2 Overlay District Defined

The Main Street Overlay District shall extend along the south side of Main Street, one lot in depth, from Bank Street to Holbrook Avenue. The Main Street Overlay District established by this section is shown on a map entitled "Main Street Overlay District In the Town of Wellfleet", dated April 2006, which is on file in the office of the Town Clerk. Within the Main Street Overlay District, special permits are required under this by-law for all uses and structures required to obtain a special permit by the underlying Central District zoning district.

9.2.3 Special Permit Granting Authority

The special permit granting authority for this bylaw shall be the Zoning Board of Appeals.

9.2.4 Special Permit Criteria

In addition to the Special Permit criteria listed in Section 8.4.2 of this Zoning By-law, applicants for Special Permits in the Main Street Overlay District must meet the following requirements:

9.2.4.1 Pedestrian Access. Provision for safe and convenient pedestrian access shall be incorporated into plans for new construction of buildings and parking areas and must be designed in concert with landscaping plans noted below. New construction should be consider of pedestrian access to buildings, sidewalks and parking areas and should be completed with considerations of pedestrian safety, handicapped access and visual quality.

9.2.4.2 Landscaping and Appearance. Landscape design plans should ordinarily be prepared by a landscape architect, although the Zoning Board of Appeals may accept a plan prepared by one other than a landscape architect if it believes the plan meets the design guidelines noted below and is in concert with the intent of this regulation.

(a) A landscaped buffer strip or some other type of screening may be required adjacent to adjoining properties. This buffer strip shall be planted with a combination of grass, appropriate height shrubs, shade trees or other type of screening.

(b) Exposed storage areas, machinery, garbage "dumpsters," service areas, truck loading areas, utility buildings and structures shall be screened from the view of abutting properties and streets using plantings, fences and other methods compatible with the goals of this regulation.

(c) To ensure that landscaped areas are maintained, the Zoning Board of Appeals shall include as a provision of any special permit granted that a condition of said special permit is the maintenance of the landscaping as approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

9.3 Height, Setback and Building Coverage within the Main Street Overlay District:

9.3.1 Height

The maximum height of any new or expanded existing structure shall be 28 feet.

9.3.2 Minimum Yard Requirements

The front yard setback of any new or expanded existing structure may be reduced to a zero line setback to continue the existing development pattern. The sideline setback shall be 6 feet, and the rear line setback shall be 15 feet.

9.3.3 Building Coverage

APPENDIX D: MAIN STREET OVERLAY DISTRICT EXAMPLE – WELLFLEET, MA

Maximum building coverage within the Main Street Overlay District shall be 33%. Building Coverage shall be calculated using the entire area of the lot (upland and lowland) exclusive of any areas on a street or way open to the public.

9.4 Parking Requirements

Recognizing that parking requirements in the underlying zoning district may hamper development of village-style land use and development, the Zoning Board of Appeals is authorized to reduce or waive the parking requirements specified for the use or structure proposed. In determining the appropriate reduction, if any, the Zoning Board of Appeals may give consideration to the hours of usage of the proposed use or structure, hours of usage of other uses or structures within the Main Street Overlay District, amount of "shared" parking with other uses, the opinions of merchants, residents and municipal officials as to the adequacy or inadequacy of parking spaces within the specific area of the proposed use or structure, as well as other relevant information to assist the Zoning Board of Appeals in determining the need for additional parking for motor vehicles.

9.5 Allowable Uses

Recognizing that village-style development entails a mixture of uses, the Zoning Board of Appeals is authorized to allow a mix of residential and non-residential land uses within the Main Street Overlay District. Allowable uses shall be those listed in the underlying Central District within Section 5.3 of this Zoning By-law and the following:

Conversion of Dwelling Unit	Guesthouse, Private
Arcade	Guesthouse, Public
Inn	Nursing Home
Restaurant, Indoor	

9.6 Severability

The invalidity of any section or sections or parts of any section or sections of this by-law shall not affect the validity of the remainder of Wellfleet's zoning bylaw.

Visit the Town of Wellfleet, Massachusetts website for more information on their local laws and planning efforts: <http://www.wellfleetma.org>

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APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

Glossary

Access Management: a set of strategies to improve the safety and efficiency of traffic by reducing congestion and decreasing the number of accidents while simultaneously preserving community character through land use planning and site design. (Genesee Transportation Council)

Best Practices: Methods that have been determined to be the most effective, practical means of meeting their intended goal or outcome.

Building Permeability: ability to see into a building, in particular, offices, shops and restaurants in commercial districts

Building Setback: distance that a building must stand away from a property line, curb, shoreline or other boundary as defined by law.

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS): Collaborative, interdisciplinary process that involves all stakeholders to design a transportation facility that fits its applicable setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources while maintaining safety and mobility. CSS respects design objectives for safety, efficiency, capacity and maintenance while integrating community objectives and values relating to compatibility, livability, sense of place, urban design, cost and environmental impacts. (from *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities*. Institute of Transportation Engineers.)

Critical Mass: The scale or volume at which processes become self-perpetuating. In this context, the number of visitors necessary that allows a place to become self-sustaining in terms of commerce, civil activity and interpersonal engagement.

Cutoff: the degree to which light is allowed to escape into the atmosphere (“full cutoff” means no light escapes beyond the intended target area)

Fenestration: the design and placement of windows within a building.

Geometric Design: The highway, vehicle, and individual users are the three integral parts of transportation safety and efficiency. The "Geometric Design" program area investigates, incorporates and promotes tools to improve safety performance and cost-effectiveness into the conventional transportation planning and design process. (Federal Highway Administration).

Glare: excessive bright light shining directly into a person’s field of view that either reduces visibility or causes annoyance

Human Scale: How humans perceive the size of their surroundings and their comfort with the elements of the natural and built environment relative to their own size. In urban areas, human scale represents features and characteristics of buildings that can be observed within a short distance and at the speed of a pedestrian, and sites and districts that are walkable. In contrast, auto scale represents a built environment where buildings, sites, signs, etc. are designed to be observed and reached at the speed of an automobile.

(from *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities*. Institute of Transportation Engineers.)

APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

Infill Housing: New housing that is situated in vacant or underutilized parcels of land, resulting in a more densely-populated area.

Level of Distress: A qualitative measure describing the physical condition of a road surface. Conditions such as cracking and fault formation are taken into account in order to arrive at an overall level of distress for pavement segments.

Level of Service: A qualitative measure describing the operational conditions within a traffic stream and their perception by motorists and/or passengers and other transportation users. Conditions such as speed, travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, and comfort and convenience are used to describe levels of service. Levels of service are characterized as ‘A’ (free flow, little delay) through ‘F’ (breakdown, forced flow), with ‘E’ representative of operation at capacity.

Light Trespass: either unwanted light that is allowed to enter adjacent properties or light that is excessively bright

Mixed-Use: The combining of, or zoning for, retail/commercial and/or service uses with residential or office use in the same building or on the same site either vertically (with different uses stacked upon each other in a building) or horizontally (with different uses adjacent to each other or within close proximity).

(from *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities*. Institute of Transportation Engineers.)

Outdoor Room Concept: This concept stresses the creation of an outdoor environment using built and natural forms (buildings, trees, benches, landscaping, etc.) to provide individuals with a sense of comfort and safety in the outdoor environment as well as focal points of interest that captivate or encourage interpersonal contact.

Parking Management: a variety of strategies that encourage more efficient use of existing parking facilities, improve the quality of service provided to parking facility users, and improve parking facility design

Pattern Language: A structured method of describing good design practices within a particular domain. Styles in architectural and urban design that display similar characteristics reflect a distinct pattern language. North American main streets are an example of a distinct pattern language; several distinct patterns in building materials and design can be found within such spaces.

Pocket Parks: Small green spaces accessible to the general public that are often of primarily environmental or aesthetic importance rather than recreational

Scenic Byways: New York State Scenic Byways are transportation corridors that are of particular statewide interest. They are representative of a region's scenic, recreational, cultural, natural, historic or archaeological significance. The New York State Scenic Byways Program was created by the NYS Legislature in 1992. The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States.

APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

Sense of Place: While there are many intricacies to this concept, *sense of place* may best be defined within the present context as “defining oneself in terms of a given piece of land...Landscape acts as teacher in shaping our perceptions of place. Analysis suggests that four major components contribute to a sense of place...[including] (1) toponymic – related to naming places; (2) narrative – involving personal or group stories or legends; (3) experiential – associated particularly with dependence and survival; and (4) numinous – spiritual. Definition adapted from Yan Xu’s essay “Sense of Place and Identity.” (citation provided on page 3.

Traffic Calming: The combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. (ITE State of the Practice, 1999)

Tree Banking: system whereby a municipality or group develops an ongoing propagation system of choice tree species. The system keeps a number of trees of an ideal age for planting at the ready for transplant. As trees mature, they can be sold, donated or composted. Tree banking may result in a modest cost savings to the municipality; its primary purpose, however, is to ensure an ample and immediate supply of trees when needed.

Walkable/Walkability: Streets and places designed or reconstructed to provide safe and comfortable facilities for pedestrians, and are safe and easy to cross for people of all ages and abilities. (from *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities*. Institute of Transportation Engineers.)

Walkable Communities: Desirable places to live, work, learn and play, and therefore a key component of smart growth. Their desirability comes from two factors. First, locating, within an easy and safe walk, goods (such as housing, offices and retail) and services (such as transportation, schools, libraries) that a community resident or employee needs on a regular basis. Second, by definition, walkable communities make pedestrian activity possible, thus expanding transportation options and creating a streetscape that better serves a range of users – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and drivers. To foster walkability, communities must mix land uses and build compactly, and ensure safe and inviting pedestrian corridors. (from *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities*. Institute of Transportation Engineers.)

APPENDIX G: GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

Acronyms

AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
ACEC	American Council of Engineering Companies
APWA	American Public Works Association
BID	Business Improvement District
CBD	Central Business District
CAG	Citizen’s Advisory Group
CCLIP	Clyde Capital Improvement Limited Partnership
CSS	Context Sensitive Solutions
ESD	Empire State Development
FPMA	Fairport-Perinton Merchants Association
GAO	United States General Accounting Office
G/FLRPC	Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council
GTC	Genesee Transportation Council
IESNA	Illuminating Engineering Society of North America
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
LACs	Local Advisory Committee
LISC	Local Initiatives Support Corporation
L RTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MUTCD	Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
NYS DOT	New York State Department of Transportation
NY SERDA	New York State Energy Research and Development Authority
NYS RPS	New York State Real Property System
PUD	Planning Unit Development
RPS	New York State Real Property System
RGRTA	Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
SIC/NAICS	Standard Industrial Classification/North American Industry Classification System
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office (NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation)
TEP	Transportation Enhancements Program
TIP	Transportation Improvement Project
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
US EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USGS	United States Geologic Survey