



CHESTERTOWN MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT PLAN



AUGUST 2001

THE SARATOGA ASSOCIATES

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, AND PLANNERS, P.C.
SARATOGA SPRINGS ■ NEW YORK CITY ■ BOSTON



CHESTERTOWN MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT PLAN



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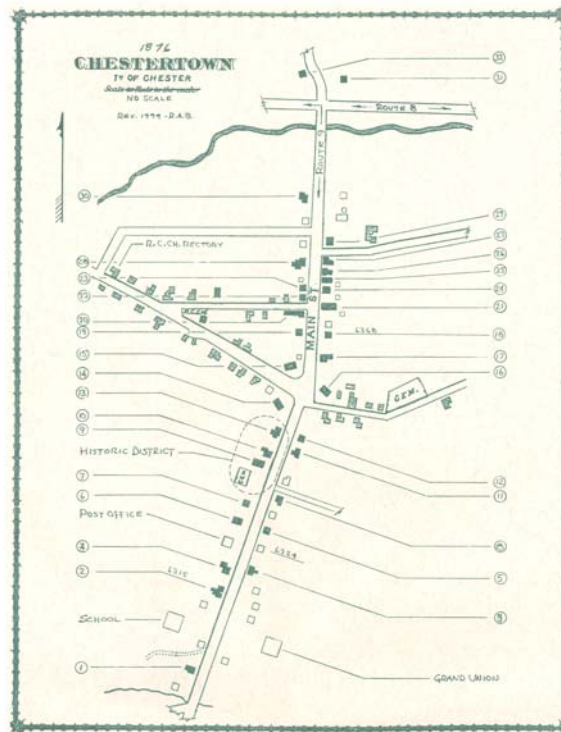
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I. OVERVIEW OF THE HAMLET OF CHESTERTOWN MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT PLAN

PROJECT PURPOSE

Chestertown is a community with an identity that is both reminiscent and persevering. Originally known as Chester Four Corners, the first settlers in the area were farmers trying to make their claim on the rugged Adirondack wilderness. As the climate and terrain proved to be unfavorable to farming, Chestertown eventually evolved as a stopover along the main stagecoach route between New York City and Montreal, which is now recognized as Route 9. Accordingly, many Inns, taverns and visitor-related establishments thrived in the hamlet of Chestertown. Today, Chestertown still reflects its heritage in the built environment and has the potential to again be a destination for travelers visiting the many outdoor-oriented

activities of the Adirondack region. The intent of this plan is to develop a strategy that will reestablish the Chestertown hamlet as a regional center and a gateway to a year-round outdoor-enthusiast destination, the Adirondack region.



COMMUNITY HISTORY & SETTING

Like many Adirondack communities, Chestertown has a rugged history with an entrepreneurial, community-involved mindset. Chestertown's history is built on the strong, robust outlook of a farming community looking for new opportunities. Despite the hardships of the Adirondack climate and terrain, these early settlers were committed to establishing a thriving, independent community they could call home. Some of these farmers brought men with special skills, like millers, blacksmiths, carriage makers, tinsmiths and shoemakers. To feed and clothe the family, some farmers raised sheep. Carding mills and tanning were later developments of these early needs. After the Civil War, dressmakers, milliners, watch tinkers, tailors, and

clothiers were attracted to the community. Meeting the needs of those traveling between New York City and Montreal, a number of inns and taverns were established. Livery stables were also popular institutions.

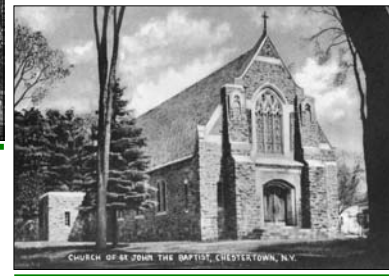
...reestablish the Chestertown hamlet as a regional center and a gateway to a year-round outdoor-enthusiast destination, the Adirondack region.

Early settlers like Mott Phelps, who invented and built a hand-drawn fire engine, and Addison Kingsley, who developed a “snowmobile”, set the ingenuity attitude necessary for an isolated Adirondack population to succeed. This creative community spirit is relevant among today’s residents. When the surrounding school district’s consolidated and built a new facility, the Central Chestertown School sat vacant for several months. Local leaders realized that this building represented an opportunity to bring the community together and create a focal point for the struggling Main Street. Through countless volunteer hours, the residents of Chestertown have remade the Central School into a vital community centerpiece, which is now the Town of Chester Municipal Center.

At one time Chestertown was the crossroads of two major routes, Routes 8 and 9; hence the original name, Chester Four Corners. These roads provided connections for travelers between New York City and Montreal. However, during the mid 20th Century, a new highway was constructed, I-87 (also known as the Northway). In the essence of efficiency,

Route 8 was upgraded and vehicles were diverted around the hamlet, effectively making the back of the hamlet the new “front door”. This upgrade significantly weakened the vitality of the hamlet center by fading the centers identity as a stopover for travelers. Many Main Street establishments are still recovering from these highway “improvements”.

The Chestertown hamlet has not only preserved its scenic beauty and architectural integrity over the years, but it has also welcomed new arrivals. Local establishments such as the Chester Inn Bed & Breakfast, Main Street Diner and Friends Lake Inn have brought renowned attention to the area. Local icons like Mary’s Pizza and the recently revived Swanee’s Ice Cream establish an entrepreneurial commitment to the success of the community. The combination of agricultural- and tourism-industries with today’s preservation of the hamlets historical character lends a unique experience to visitors of the hamlet, making it both authentic and interesting. Chestertown’s commitment to success, ingenuity and persistent dedication are the cornerstones for the renewal of Chestertown’s Main Street.



Chestertown’s commitment to success, ingenuity and persistent dedication are the cornerstones for the renewal of Chestertown’s Main Street.

II. CHESTERTOWN'S MAIN STREET VISION

THE MAIN STREET VISION: VALUE OF SETTING & LOCATION AS AN ECONOMIC ASSET

The hamlets of the Adirondacks are surrounded by vast, rugged open spaces. For most of the Adirondack's history, these small hamlets have played a vital role to an isolated population as centers of social and commerce-related activities. The scenic beauty that surrounds these hamlets has attracted visitors for centuries. As outdoor recreation and heritage tourism have become important economic generators in the Adirondack's, these hamlet centers still play their role as catalysts for social interaction and provide authentic Adirondack experiences. Further, as outdoor recreation and heritage tourism continue to evolve, places that can offer authentic experiences to tourists will be successful.

Chestertown has the advantage of being an intact commercial and retail core set in the backdrop of the beautiful Adirondack Mountains. World renowned for their beauty, the Adirondacks draw an international visitor base every year. Few locations have the

potential to offer a high-quality Adirondack experience with easy access to major transportation corridors such as I-87.

Consequently, maintaining and improving the quality of the Adirondack experience in Chestertown is the Town's source of long-term economic competitiveness for attracting and expanding visitor-based opportunities.

This will require a delicate balancing process. It means protecting the environmental quality and scenic views in the Town and maintaining the integrity of Chestertown's historical character, while nurturing and supporting a variety of relatively small-scale enterprises that serve both the community residents and the visiting population. This Main Street Enhancement Plan seeks to strengthen the Hamlet Center's role to

meet the needs of the local population as well as regional visitors, by building upon Chestertown's long-term strengths: commitment to success, ingenuity and persistent dedication.

...protecting the environmental quality and scenic views in the Town and maintaining the integrity of Chestertown's historical character, while nurturing and supporting a variety of relatively small-scale enterprises that serve both the community residents and the visiting population.



THE VISION APPROACH: PRESERVING CULTURE, CHARACTER, & SENSE OF PLACE

Since its founding in 1799 as a farming community, Chestertown has been a home for hardy, innovative entrepreneurs that have held strong beliefs in their heritage and character.

Each generation of residents and new arrivals enthusiastically pursued livelihoods that, over time, ranged from farmers, millers, blacksmiths, and tinsmiths to dressmakers,

tailors, and innkeepers. More recently, residents have welcomed visitors and a large second home population as well as a growing retirement

community. This openness and entrepreneurial nature has left a legacy that still shapes day-to-day life in Chestertown: a hard-working citizenry committed to making Chestertown a

community of distinction within the Adirondack's. Thus, the Main Street Enhancement Plan must address the critical issue of improving the

quality of life in the Town while preserving the culture and character that has defined the residents of Chestertown.

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Strengthening the Center of Activity as a Destination

The Main Street corridor should be able to provide the goods and services for both the visiting population and residents alike. The Main Street corridor should also define a sense of place, be pedestrian-oriented, include clearly defined directional signage and invite visitors to explore the community.

Connecting with Regional Destinations

The Main Street corridor should attract travelers and provide a sense of arrival into the community. The gateways into the corridor should serve as a transition for the traveler from the open road to a community setting. Further, integrating with other regional destinations and stakeholders will be critical to success.

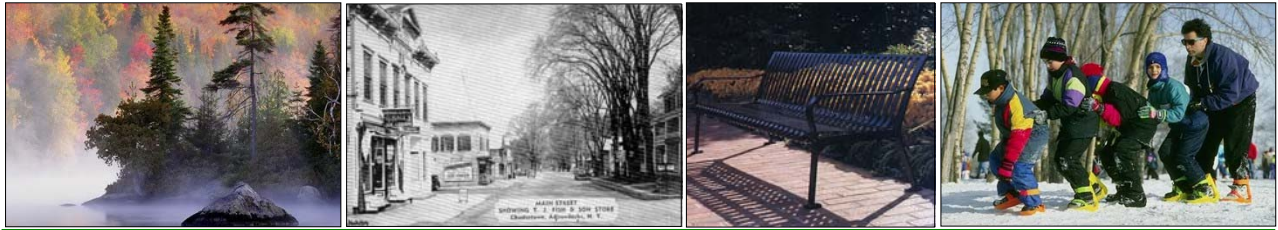
Maintaining & Improving the Historic Built Environment

Any developments along the Main Street corridor should promote high standards for “authentic” design and construction for both public and private ventures. Whether it involves civic institutions, commercial establishments, or residences, high quality design and materials will provide a net return to the success of the corridor. Projects that do not recognize the local character tend to become a burden aesthetically, socially, or financially.



Enhancing the Pedestrian Experience

Unlike many Adirondack hamlets, Chestertown provides strong pedestrian connections among its neighborhoods and commercial core, with streetscapes of one- to three-story buildings that lend a sense of historical significance without being overbearing. However, pedestrian connections to the community park need improvement. The Enhancement Plan should capitalize on these assets and strengthen their role in creating a built environment that is both inviting and functional to the pedestrian.



CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN

CHESTERTOWN

MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT



CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN



JUNE 2001

150 0 150 300 450 600 Feet



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III. CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Adirondack living has always been a challenging endeavor. Over the years, Chestertown has demonstrated its ability to connect with commerce activities that meet the needs of both the local citizenry as well as a traveling population. More recent times have brought new challenges to Chestertown, much of which has been driven by new technologies and a global economy. (Such as construction of the Northway, which effectively bypassed Chestertown and reduced its role as a stopover community for those traveling between New York City and Montreal). As opportunity dwindled, so too did the jobs. With little chance for new industry, each loss left the Town less able to provide the same number of jobs as in the past. This has contributed to the steady erosion of both the local population and investment in the Main Street corridor. Ironically, new technologies and changing demographics also are bringing new opportunities for places like Chestertown. (Such as fiber optic technologies and peoples preferences to live and work in smaller places.) These impacts have helped shape the challenges and opportunities facing the Town in a number of ways:

THE CHALLENGES: LINKING TO THE MARKET

Chestertown needs improved community identification at key intersections and gateways. New York State Department of Transportation data shows that roughly 2,500 vehicles travel *past* Chestertown on Route 8 every day. Many of these vehicles are visitors traveling to and from destinations west of Main Street. Improved signage should be developed to “capture” this crowd.

Chestertown has limited lodging and dining opportunities for a visiting population. Some time ago, Chestertown used to be a primary stop for travelers along Route 9. Accordingly, a number of Inns and restaurants evolved to meet their needs. Today many of these establishments have been replaced with other uses or simply lost to fires, never to be replaced. Some have been demolished. Others are simply underutilized, deteriorating structures. If Chestertown is to capture some of the tourist market, then establishments will need to be developed to attract them to the community.

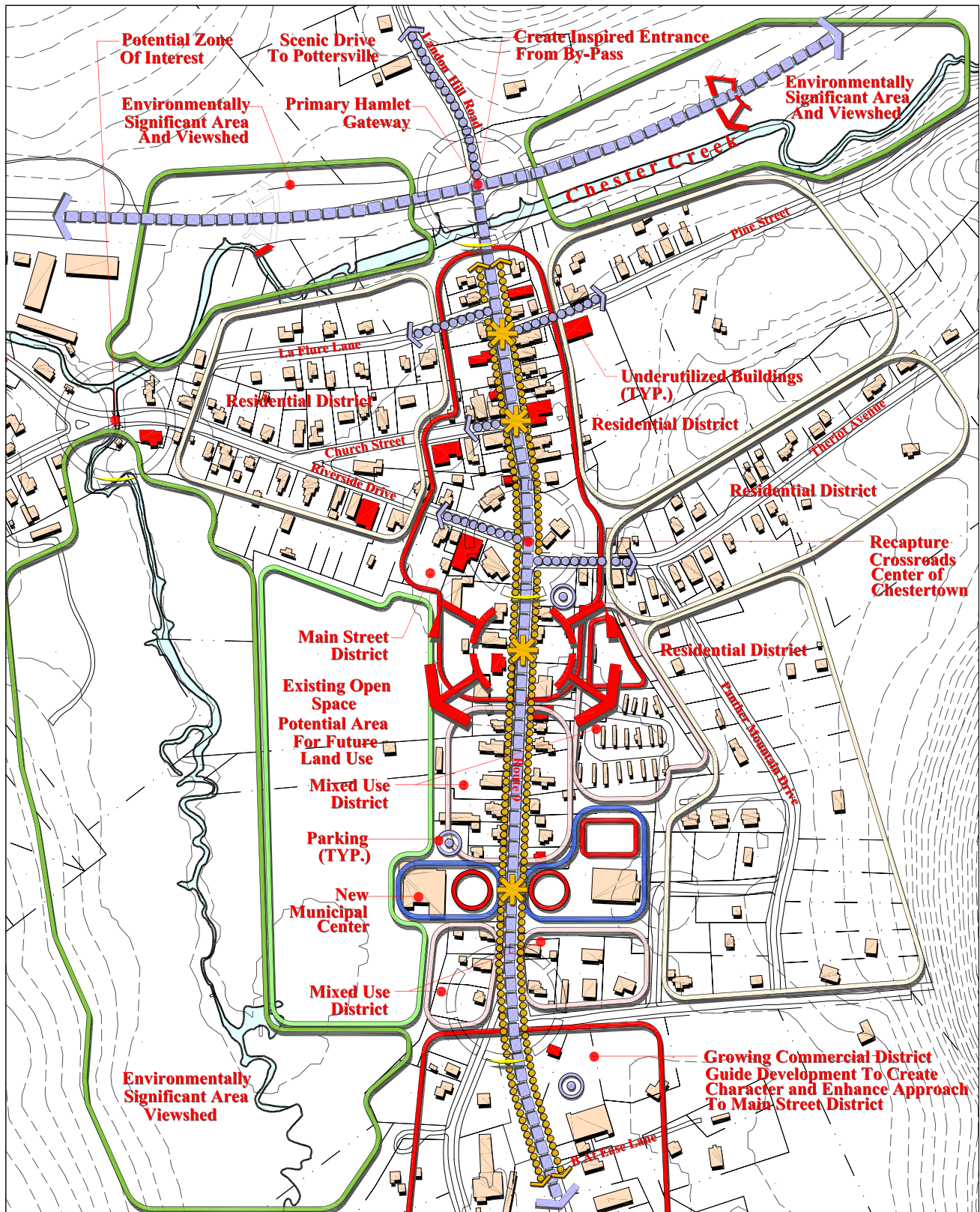
The commercial core has a limited amount of off-street parking. For most commercial core areas, parking is frequently an issue of concern. Whether the parking needs are real or perceived, they frequently form impressions of a visiting population if they cannot readily find parking. Although Chestertown is not currently experiencing parking pressures, it should enhance parking wayfinding signage and improve the edges of existing public parking facilities.

Pedestrian & bike connections to Dynamite Hill and neighboring communities need enhancements. Dynamite Hill is a significant recreation resource to the Town of Chester, and not far off Main Street. Whether using the rope tow to ski for free, ice skating, or sledding during the winter months, playing baseball, or sitting on the hillside to listen to the summer Sunset Concert series, Dynamite hill provides great family-oriented activities for residents or visitors alike. Improvements should be made to make the park more accessible for bike and pedestrian traffic from Main Street. The surrounding “Lake Communities” offer similar commercial and recreational opportunities that need improved connections.

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

CHESTERTOWN

MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT



OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS



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Pedestrian access to southern end of Main Street is not sufficient. The south end of Main Street essentially meets the needs of the local community with establishments like Stephens' Lumber Yard, CVS Pharmacy, NAPA Auto Parts, and Ace Hardware. Many of these sites include opportunities for infill and can extend the Main Street commercial corridor to include more restaurants, Inns, and other retail operations. Further, the suburban development character that defines the southern end of Main Street is not consistent with the Hamlet's architectural character and is eroding the quality of the Hamlet experience.

Historical architectural character and streetscape in need of repair. Walkable places with unique architectural styles are popular destinations for many tourists. In many ways, the built environment of Main Street still provides these features. Main Streets walkable form and historic architectural environment is a key source of quality of life and a potential competitive advantage that will be a focal point of this current redevelopment effort. However, some of Chestertown's physical assets need attention:

- Many of the existing vacant and underutilized buildings are strategically located in the commercial core or occupy prominent sites nearby. If redeveloped appropriately, these can stimulate private sector investment and result in meaningful long-term revitalization of some threatened neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- The location of certain wholesale and warehousing facilities tend to weaken the integrity of some neighborhoods and detract from the retail-merchandising environment.
- Along the Main Street corridor the streetscape needs upgrading. Investments made in public amenities like bicycle paths, improved landscaping, street trees, sidewalks, and public parks, can improve the value of individual structures.

THE OPPORTUNITIES: INCREASING MOMENTUM

Chestertown has a distinctive sense of place. Chestertown is a distinctive community that integrates the natural and built environment with:

- Authentic experience
- Historical/signature architecture
- Main Street with pedestrian oriented streetscape
- Unique and meaningful destinations
- Beautiful natural setting

These opportunities are unique and the community has the prospect of building upon these strengths to maintain momentum for higher levels of economic activity.



Warren County has a strong existing and growing tourism market. According to research conducted by the Warren County departments of Planning and Transportation, Warren County attracted nearly 9 million visitors in 1998. Of these visitors, 4.6 million (52 percent) were on day trips; the remaining 4.3 million stayed at least one night. Of those staying at least one night, 3.2 million stayed in hotels or motels.

According to a survey of tourism operators in the County, couples with children typically account for 35 percent of all visitors to tourism operations. Couples without children and retired couples each comprise 23 percent of tourism visitors. Over 80 percent of the tourism operators surveyed indicated that visitation by families, couples and retired couples is either a stable or growing source of business for their operations.

Chestertown has significant economic impacts associated with the prospects of visitors extending their stay in the hamlet. Research suggests that if just one percent of all overnight visitors extend their stay one night, it would add an additional \$1.4 million to the County's economy. If that single-day extension rate could be improved to five percent of overnight visitors, it could yield \$7.2 million to the County. Likewise, if one percent of all day visitors extended one night, the County's economy could realize \$1.6 million. If five percent of the day visitors stayed overnight, the County would realize a \$7.8 million gain.



Infill & Redevelopment Opportunities. Chestertown has some vacant and underutilized buildings that are strategically located along Main Street or in prominent sites just off Main Street. If redeveloped appropriately, these sites can stimulate private sector investment and result in meaningful long-term revitalization by creating a critical mass of activity. For instance, the innovative and cost-effective redevelopment of the Central School serves a variety of needs. This effort also demonstrates to the private sector the Town's commitment to remaking Main Street a central focal point.

Proximity to Existing Fiber Optics. A private telecommunications corporation has recently invested in new fiber optic cable following the Northway. Chestertown's relative proximity to this resource may provide opportunity to attract new professionals that need high-speed telecommunications and no longer want the complexities of a busy metropolitan community.



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sector investment and result in meaningful long-term
revitalization by creating a critical mass of activity.*

IV. THE MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

This Main Street Enhancement Plan recognizes Chestertown’s role as a regional focal point and gateway to the Adirondack’s by building on the hamlet’s distinctive community character that integrates the natural and built environment. The plan specifically builds on the community’s authenticity, historical architecture, pedestrian-oriented streetscape, unique destinations, and stunning natural setting.

...recognizes Chestertown’s role as a regional focal point and gateway to the Adirondack’s by building on the hamlet’s distinctive community character...

There are many aspects that, when combined, will contribute to the success of Chestertown’s

Main Street. Enhancing partnerships with both public and private organizations will be a key ingredient. Improving the public realm will help show the private sector the Town’s commitment

to revitalization. Providing finance opportunities and technical assistance to local businesses will help to stimulate revitalization and enhance the Main Street setting as an

identifiable place to shop, eat, and socialize. While larger projects will catalyze the continued renewal of the commercial core, much of its success will be achieved incrementally through a coordinated series of programs and promotions.

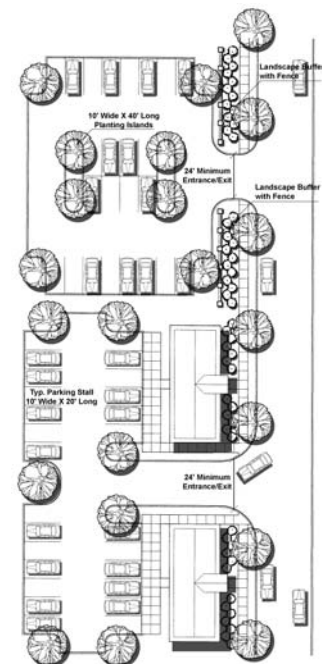
THE PUBLIC REALM

Chestertown’s Main Street Enhancement Plan encourages the maintenance and improvement of Main Street’s built environment to enhance Chestertown’s distinct historic architectural integrity and unique walkable character that promotes human scale and opportunities for social interaction. Consequently, redevelopment efforts should have a pedestrian focus in all phases of development. The following recommendations are intended to accomplish these objectives:

Improve the Pedestrian Streetscape

Public amenities play a strong role in defining commercial districts and help create a pedestrian friendly atmosphere. If a commercial district is pedestrian friendly, numerous benefits can result including:

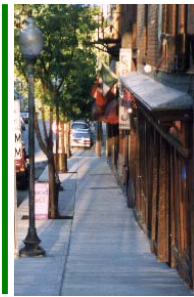
- Enhanced vitality of the area.
- A greater sense of community – with greater numbers of pedestrians there is increased opportunity for social interaction.
- Safer streets for pedestrians.
- Improved traffic flow.



Where the distance is reasonable, people will choose to walk if the connections are safe, comfortable, enjoyable, and if destinations are clearly linked by a network of pedestrian walkways. Combined with such amenities as benches placed in shaded areas and directional signage, these provisions can help create a successful commercial core. In addition, street plantings can improve the aesthetics immeasurably. The following recommendations are intended to enhance Main Street’s walkable pedestrian character.

Extend Sidewalk Network

Sidewalks play an important role in fostering human interaction and allowing visitors to “experience” a community. Most of Main Street’s commercial core is well connected with sidewalks, but the southern portion of the corridor does not include sidewalks, precluding opportunity for comfortable pedestrian circulation. The southern portion of the corridor also includes a number of sites that hold potential for long-term future infill development. Consequently, the timing of sidewalk extensions to the southern portion of Main Street should be coordinated with future build-out expectations.



Improve Crosswalks

The easier a street is to cross, the more inviting and safe it will be for pedestrians. While stop signs and traffic signals are helpful, their goal is usually to stop automobiles rather than to guide the pedestrian safely across the road. In response, a highly visible crosswalk standard should be designed which can be applied throughout the commercial corridor. It is recommended that the Town improve pedestrian crossings with either striping or stamped pavement at key (i.e., heavily traveled) intersections. The intersection of Main Street, Riverside, and Theriot is a good example. This intersection is also the historical “center” of



Main Street, locally known as *Chester Four Corners*. As such, the intersection can be considered the axis of the commercial core and should be enhanced with pedestrian amenities that facilitate movement between the commercial core (Main Street) and additional resources further up Riverside, such as the community theater. The graphic following page 24 (*Chester Four Corners*) illustrates how this intersection might be redeveloped to emphasize the role of the pedestrian and bring attention to a prominent intersection.

Provide Pedestrian Amenities

In addition to safe crosswalks and continuous sidewalks, it is important that the Town invest in amenities that make walking more interesting and enjoyable. Benches offer pedestrians a place to rest, talk, and people watch, and should be provided at various locations along Main Street. Attractive human-scale lighting enhances the aesthetic, and engenders a sense of personal security. Trees, planters, hanging flower baskets, banners, and attractive pavement also help enhance the pedestrian environment. Pedestrian-scaled wayfinding signage permits the casual visitor a sense of direction and improved comfort levels in unknown places. These amenities should be made available along the Main Street corridor and possibly extended further along Riverside Drive.



Landscape Edges

Parking lots often create a visual distraction and disruption along the streetscape. Where parking lots abut the sidewalk, a distinct border should exist between the two. Ideally, this border would be landscaped, creating a continuous edge to the sidewalk and enhancing



the aesthetic value. Such a border could take the form of a low hedgerow, a wooden or wrought iron fence, or a planting strip of shrubbery. This border would serve not only to improve the aesthetics, but also to create a physical barrier to separate pedestrians from parked vehicles.

Create a Community Green

Chestertown's Main Street serves a civic function of bringing people together. Public spaces help establish a sense of community by providing an opportunity for chance encounters and a place for visitors and residents to rest. These spaces can also help to enhance the visibility of prominent civic buildings, such as the recently renovated municipal center. The Main Street Enhancement Plan recognizes the civic, social, and aesthetic functions that these spaces can provide and recommends that a Community Green be developed at the core of Main Street, aligned with the new municipal center and existing grocery store.

In an effort to help define the edges of this space and



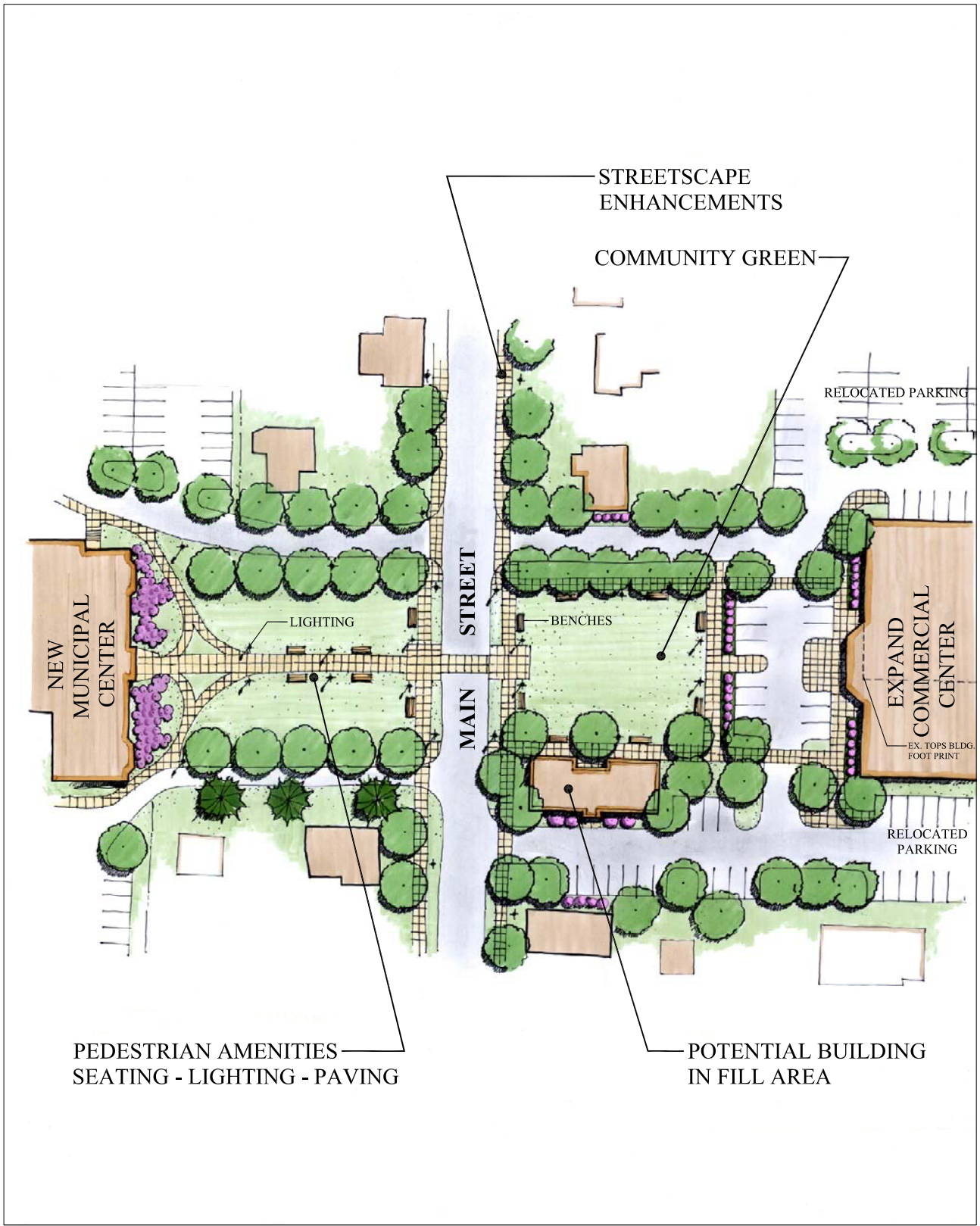
encourage public usage, the Town may also consider encouraging commercial out parcel development at the edges of the green. Possible uses may include a coffee shop, small bookstore, or antiques. The Town may also consider including some form of public art that recognizes the history of Chestertown. The space should be decorated with benches, historic/pedestrian scaled lights, trash receptacles, greenery and flowers. The intent is to create an outdoor public space where residents and visitors can relax and engage in conversation and establish a focal point for community pride. The graphic on the following page illustrates where this Town Green might be located.

...encourages the maintenance and improvement of Main Street's built environment to enhance Chestertown's distinct historic architectural integrity and unique walkable character, that promotes human scale and opportunities for social interaction.

**NEW MUNICIPAL CENTER &
PROPOSED TOWN GREEN**

CHESTERTOWN

MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT



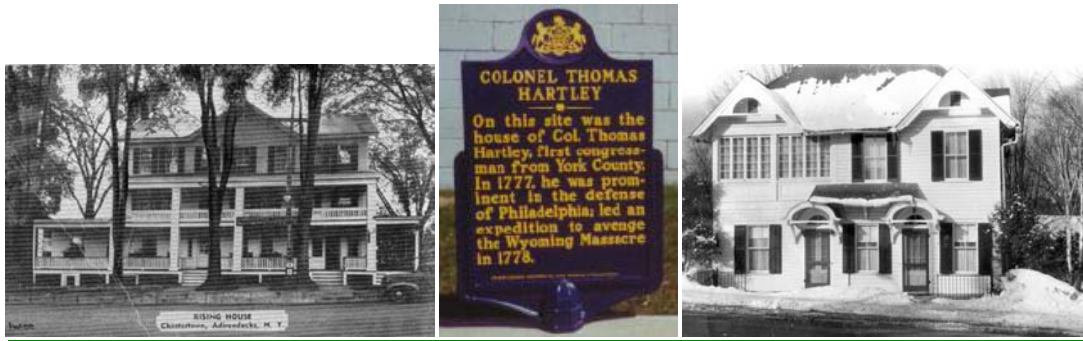
NEW MUNICIPAL CENTER/TOWN GREEN



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Create historic interpretive program

The history of Chestertown is a significant asset. This history should be made transparent to both community residents and visitors. Interpretive signage that recognizes buildings and places of significance should be incorporated as part of a larger wayfinding signage program that helps to orient visitors. Possible themes could include interpretations of early life as an “Adirondacker” and how that life has changed over time. The proposed information kiosk could include a map of the region showing points of interest and history. The intent is to provide historic and cultural learning opportunities for both visitors and residents alike.



Address utilities

Utility lines often deter from the physical attractiveness of commercial corridors. As Chestertown renews its Main Street corridor, it should consider alternatives to the location of existing utility lines. One solution may be to locate the power lines to the rear of buildings. Another, more costly method, involves burying the power lines. The relocation of existing power lines should be accomplished in coordination with the power utility company and New York State Department of Transportation.

Develop commercial design policies

Chestertown’s commercial core has a number of opportunities for infill development as well as building façade restoration. Consequently, it is critical that when development/redevelopment occurs, it is in synergy with the overall vision of the Main Street Enhancement Plan. In an effort to promote this synergy, the Town should develop a design manual to encourage a traditional pattern and character of development.

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Creating this manual is essential for Main Street to build long-term economic competitiveness. However, there are a variety of ways in which such policies can be implemented. The community design manual can be created as a mandatory policy, with those new construction projects that do not adhere to them subject to fines and/or other legal penalties. At the other extreme, the design manual can be implemented as suggested guidelines, encouraged by the Town but lacking the force of law. Finally, the standards can remain voluntary guidelines, with

incentives provided by the Town in terms of tax credits, variances in other criteria, etc., as a means of encouraging compliance with the guidelines. (Please see Appendix A for model design policies.)

Defining principles -- Traditional designs define and integrate public and private space in a way that feels comfortable to passing pedestrians. Buildings are built to the edge of the sidewalk with strong entrance transitions between the sidewalk and the buildings via stoops, porches, display windows, or other features. In Chestertown, building heights range between two and three stories, allowing ample natural light to reach street level. The spacing of buildings creates a protective wall along the sidewalk while subtle variations in building facades create a sense of rhythmic movement as pedestrians walk along. To promote these objectives, the Town should develop design policies that encourage future development to incorporate these principles. These standards should include the following:

Traditional designs define and integrate public and private space in a way that feels comfortable to passing pedestrians... To promote these objectives, the Town should develop design policies that encourage future development to incorporate these principles.

- Sites should be redeveloped at high densities by minimizing lot area and maximizing building coverage.
- New buildings should be two- to three-story -- building up rather than out.
- New buildings should be located close to the street and close to each other -- minimizing lot frontage and setbacks.
- Whenever possible, development should include mixed-use development, with commercial/retail operations at the ground level to foster greater pedestrian opportunity and residential and office on upper levels.
- On-site parking should be minimized and shared parking between establishments should be encouraged.
- If a parking lot is to be developed, then it should include landscaped edges so as not to disrupt the flow and rhythm of pedestrian movement.



CONNECTING WITH MARKET OPPORTUNITY

Develop a targeted marketing program

The Adirondack region has become a significant destination for tourists. The Warren County Departments of Planning and Transportation indicate that nearly 9 million visitors came to Warren County in 1998. Further analysis, using data from the American Travel Survey, suggests several strategies to expand tourism in Warren County. Using these findings as a foundation, Chestertown should develop a targeted marketing strategy that attracts visitors. The strategy should:

- generally focus marketing on families and couples from upper income households;
- focus primarily on the New York City/Long Island markets, which contain the highest concentrations of person trips by upper-income households to Warren County; and
- promote opportunities for outdoor recreation and sightseeing as well as an “authentic” Adirondack community experience. However, understanding that "rest or relaxation" travelers remain a large generator of vacation trips, it is important that opportunities for rest and relaxation be included as a secondary message in all of these promotional efforts.



Gateway improvements

Gateways play an important role in forming first impressions and welcoming visitors and residents alike. Both the form and the character of a gateway can influence the overall experience of a particular area. Currently, Chestertown’s Main Street gateways do not establish a clear expression of the corridor and do not entice passersby to visit. Generally, the goal should be to create signature gateways, particularly at the north end, that give an enlivened feeling and attracts visitors. Two key gateways should be addressed, including:

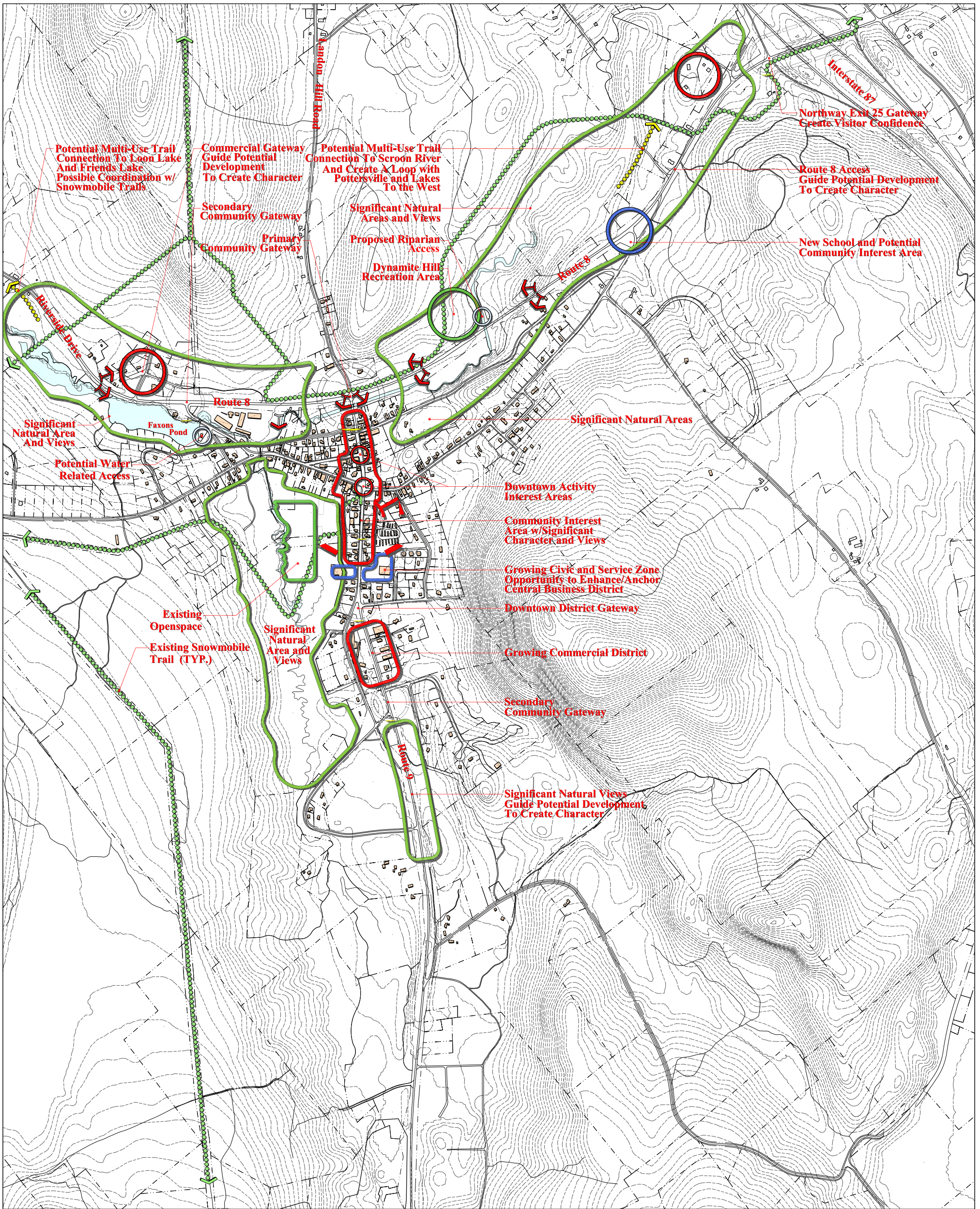
North Gateway: The north gateway is the primary gateway to Main Street, located at the intersection with Route 8. New York State Department of Transportation statistics indicate that roughly 6,000 vehicles travel between Route 9 (Main Street) and the I-87 Exit 25 on a daily basis. This data suggests that a significant amount of market potential travels either past or through the Chestertown Main Street corridor every day. The current intersection arrangement does very little to attract these passersby into the Main Street corridor. Consequently, the gateway should be remade with improved lighting, landscaping, and signage to capture this audience. The graphic following page 9 illustrates proposed North Gateway enhancements.



COMMUNITY GATEWAYS

CHESTERTOWN

MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT



COMMUNITY GATEWAYS



APRIL 2001

400 0 400 800 1200 1600 Feet



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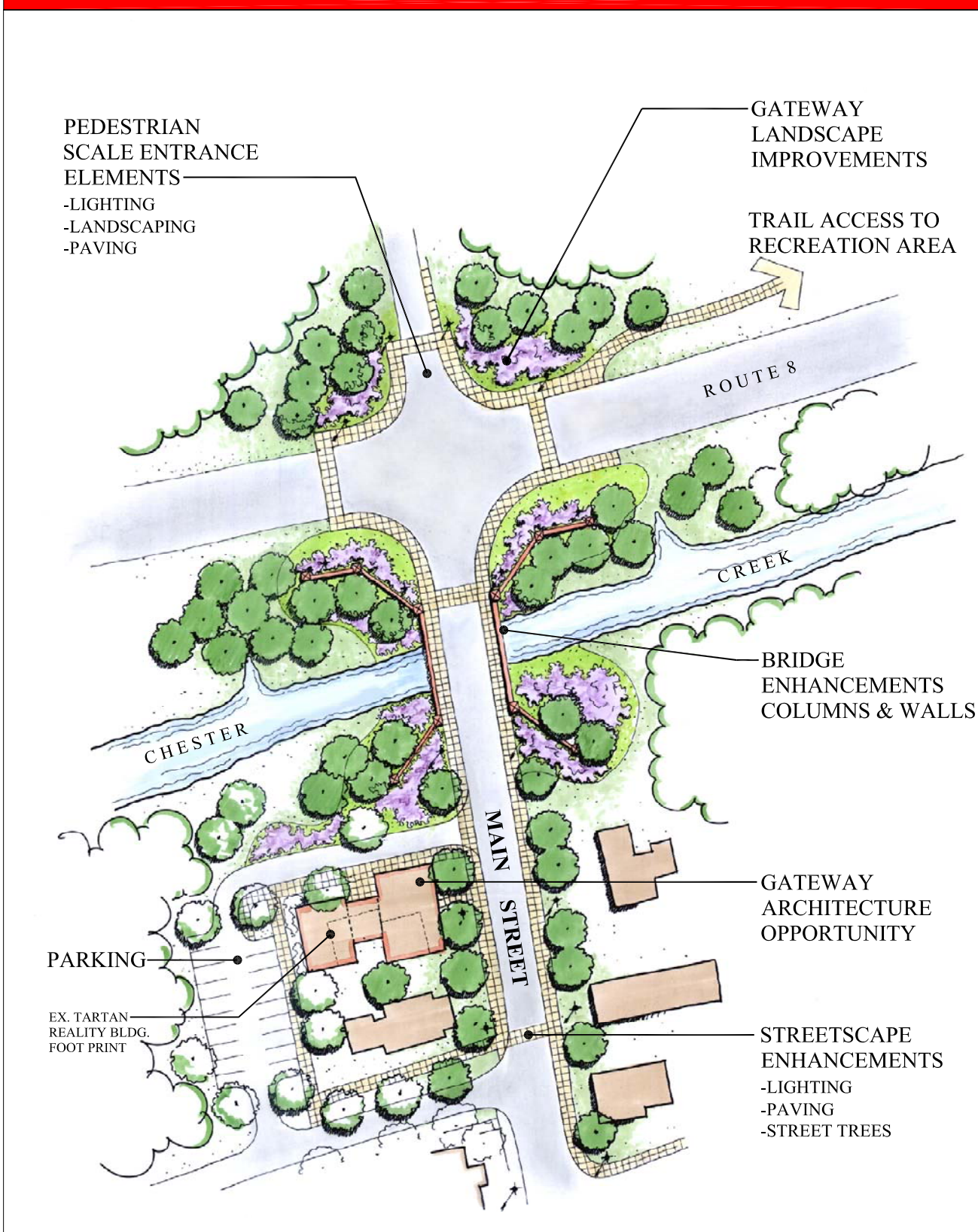
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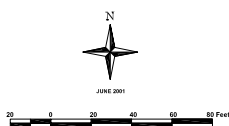
NORTH GATEWAY

CHESTERTOWN

MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT



NORTH GATEWAY AREA



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Drawing 1 of 001 (Landscape Architectural Plan)

South Gateway: The south gateway provides access for those traveling between Chestertown and Warrensburg; which is just over 8.5 miles. New York State Department of Transportation data indicates that roughly 1,900 vehicles travel this corridor on a daily basis. This gateway does not need to function as an attractor for passersby, like the north gateway, but instead should provide a clear indication of arrival into the Chestertown commercial district.



Improvements here should protect community character and begin to persuade travelers to stop and visit the commercial core. The graphic on the following page illustrates proposed enhancements.

Parking

Preliminary inventory of the parking facilities available in Chestertown suggests that insufficient parking exists for today’s visitors and public off-street parking is not clearly defined. Consequently, improved public parking signage should be developed to draw the visitor to these facilities. Further, existing parking lots should be made more inviting and visually appealing with plantings that flower in the summer months. Finally, a strategy should be developed that recognizes the increased parking needs of large community events.



Cross promote Town events with regional events and points of interest

Tourism has become an important component of the regional economy. Many communities and organizations have recognized this trend and are organizing events and/or programs to improve visitation, such as Warren County’s efforts to develop a scenic/ski railroad connecting points of interest along the Hudson River. Route 9 offers easy connections to Warrensburg and Route 8 provides a direct connection to Gore Mountain from Interstate 87. Numerous Lake George events also attract significant amounts of visitors. In an effort to draw these visitors to Chestertown’s Main Street and extend their visitation in the region, the Town should coordinate efforts with these organizations.



Enhance Regional Connections

As the region continues to promote various events and activities, some visitors may be looking for opportunities to view the regional landscape at a slower pace than that offered by vehicles. Trail development is becoming increasingly popular in many communities. In Warren County, for instance, vast networks of snow mobile trails presently exist or are under development. As snowmobiles continue to grow in popularity, Chestertown should consider enhancing connections to attract these recreationalists. Improved trail connections from Main Street to the Dynamite Hill recreation area should also be developed. Finally, as bicycling continues to grow in popularity, Chestertown should further explore the possibility of developing a bicycle trail that connects the various “lake communities” in the region (such as Loon Lake, Friends Lake, Schroon River, Pottersville, and Chestertown).

SOUTH GATEWAY

CHESTERTOWN

MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT

GATEWAY
ARCHITECTURE
POTENTIAL
BUILDING IN FILL
AND PARKING
AREA

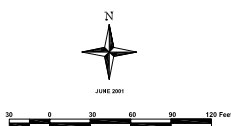


UNIFY EXISTING
BUSINESSES
THROUGH
STREETScape
ENHANCEMENTS
INCLUDING

- STREET TREES
- LIGHTING
- SIGNAGE
- ARCHITECTURAL MATERIALS

GATEWAY
LANDSCAPE
ENHANCEMENTS
INDICATE ARRIVAL
THROUGH PEDESTRIAN
SCALE ELEMENTS

SOUTH GATEWAY AREA



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Infill development

Activity generates curiosity; curiosity attracts people. Main Street has a number of sites that are not being utilized to the fullest potential. New uses for these sites should add to the local tax base and/or create new civic opportunities for the community residents. In most cases, market forces, the public approval process, and physical characteristics of the site and the availability of financing will determine the use of these sites. However, to help create activity along the Main Street corridor, the Town should encourage mixed use of any new buildings, which includes residential and office uses on the upper floors and retail uses on the ground floors. Encouraging mixed uses would provide two distinctive benefits. First, from an investor’s perspective, a mix of uses will allow the building owner to receive maximum return on investment in the building. Second, from a civic perspective, the building will contribute to the vitality of the street at ground level with retail establishments while creating residential opportunities in the commercial core areas, thereby creating the opportunity for local residents to contribute to a more active street environment. Some needed infill uses may include an outdoor recreation supply store, a photo supply store, a dry cleaner, a small book store, a hair salon/barber, and a sports/fitness gym.

Recreate Chester Four Corners as a corridor focal point

Main Streets intersection with Riverside Drive and Theriot Lane was historically the focal point for social and commercial activity, providing the varied necessitates of those traveling between New York City and Montreal. Efforts to induce activity back into Chestertown’s commercial core and establish a sense of liveliness should begin with efforts to renew Chester Four Corners as a focal point along the corridor. As travelers are attracted from Route 8 with gateway enhancements, they should be drawn further down the corridor to “discover” what lies ahead. Improvements should begin at the public realm with enhancements in landscaping, lighting and pedestrian crossings. Property owners should be encouraged, through incentives, to make improvements such as enhanced landscaping and building façade improvements that reflect the historical character of the community.



When visitors arrive in a new setting they are often disoriented. To help familiarize visitors with both Main Street and the region, an information kiosk should be developed in conjunction with public parking lot enhancements at the Chester Four Corners intersection. The kiosk should also include wayfinding signage indicating points of interest along Main Street. The intent is to provide a wayfinding system that clearly and easily directs the visitor around the commercial core and informs the visitor of community events and activities. Although there will be a visual linkage, appropriate directional signage can help remove any "guesswork" and make the visitor's experience more enjoyable.

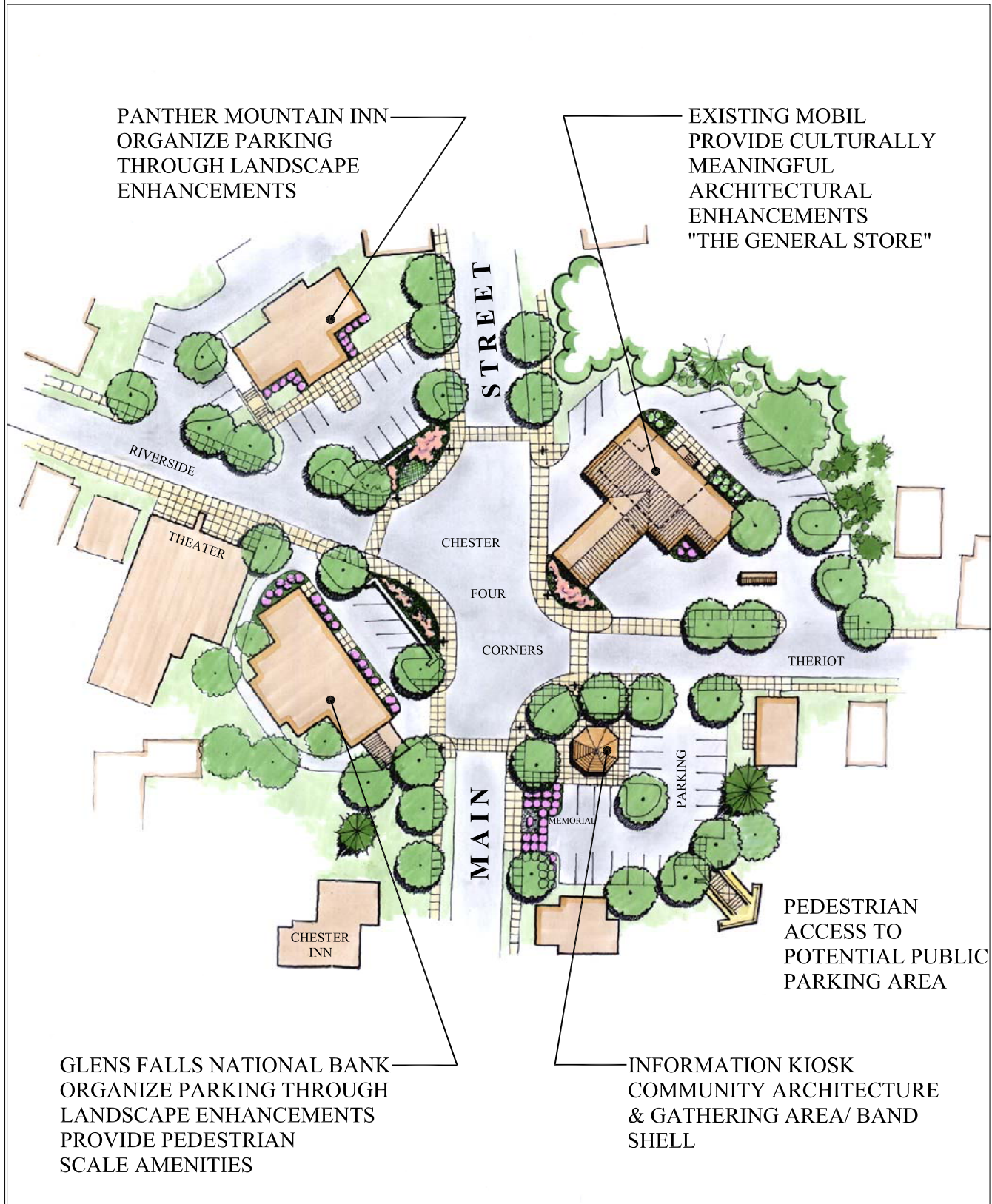


The graphic on the following page illustrates the proposed enhancements.

CHESTER FOUR CORNERS

CHESTERTOWN

MAIN STREET ENHANCEMENT



CHESTER FOUR CORNERS



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V. IMPLEMENTING THE MAIN STREET VISION

The vision for the Chestertown Main Street corridor is to continue the momentum already started and enhance the Main Street corridor with activities that meet residents needs for household goods and services, as well as meet their civic and social needs and reconnect with the visiting population by maintaining Main Street’s unique sense of place and Adirondack experience. The plan recommends that the Town promote shopping and social opportunities for all members of the community as well as the visiting population. To accomplish this, the Town will need to build the capacity to promote and monitor the long-term development of Main Street. Building this capacity will be one of the most challenging components of this plan. To be successful, it will be important to develop partnerships and call on the residents of Chestertown continued volunteer efforts. Further, it cannot be expected that the Town will be able to carry all of the financial burden for the projects proposed within this plan. To meet these financial requirements the Town will need to continue its creative thinking and develop partnerships with both public and private sector entities while always ensuring that the type and location of investments are being made consistent with Main Street’s long-term vision. Finally, cooperation at the Town level of government is essential to successful implementation of this plan.

...the Town will need to build the capacity to promote and monitor the long-term development of Main Street. Building this capacity will be one of the most challenging components of this plan.

Plan Adoption

As a first step of demonstrating the Town’s commitment to renewing Main Street as a community focal point, the Town Board should formally adopt the Main Street Enhancement Plan. This plan will then be used in the future as *the* policy guide for Main Street redevelopment. In addition, the plan can strengthen future grant applications for various projects by displaying to potential funding sources that the proposed project is part of a larger project which has undergone a rational planning process.

Monitoring the Plan

While this plan seeks to reestablish Main Street as a vital community focal point in which residents’ social and every day needs are met, it also seeks to reestablish Chestertown as a regional center. To succeed, the Town will need to make a number of strategic investments which:

- demonstrate the Town’s commitment to revitalization;
- create a more attractive “address”; and
- result in an increased tax base.

Leadership, administration and oversight of this plan will ultimately come from the Town Supervisor and Town Board. However, this plan will require considerable attention to meet its goals and objectives, some of which may be insurmountable for the Town Board to effectively accomplish independently. Consequently, it



will be necessary to build support among community residents and establish an ad hoc committee which has the capability to monitor activity and lead initiatives outlined within the this plan.

Given the complex nature of plan implementation, it is critical to create an Advisory Committee of citizens that are recognized as community leaders and have the ability to coordinate and creatively realize the policies and projects outlined in this plan. The primary responsibility of the Advisory Committee should be to advise the Town Board and keep the Main Street Enhancement Plan current. Good examples of such a committee are the volunteer efforts involved in developing this plan and those put into place for the renewal of the Central School as the Chester Municipal Center. Developing long-term partnerships with state and federal agencies as well as private sector investors will also be critical to the long-term realization of Main Street’s revitalization.

Given the complex nature of plan implementation, it is critical to create an Advisory Committee of citizens that are recognized as community leaders and have the ability to coordinate and creatively realize the policies and projects outlined in this plan.

Over time, conditions along Main Street will change and new opportunities will emerge. Accepting that this plan should be dynamic and reflective of the times, the Advisory Committee should be responsible for updating the Main Street Enhancement Plan to reflect contemporary thought and identify new projects. These consistency and goal-setting reviews should occur on an annual basis, but a more comprehensive review and update should also take place every five years. A “report card” should be included during these annual reviews, which catalogs achievements to date and recommendations yet to be accomplished, reinforcing to the community the Town’s commitment to success.

Implementing Plan Projects

The programs and policies called for in this plan will require significant monitoring and leadership from within the Town. Acknowledging the complexity of plan implementation and project development, this plan recommends that the Town create an advisory committee as well as develop partnerships with public and private sector organizations. These partnerships should be infused with a shared commitment to win-win agreements and mutual, long-term understanding. Essential to these partnerships will be consistency and dependability.

Coordinated Efforts will be critical to effective planning and project development. Although ultimate implementation of the Main Street Enhancement Plan will be determined by consistent enforcement from the Town Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Planning Board, it will be necessary for other agencies associated with the Town to put some initiatives into action. Coordination partners should include neighboring jurisdictions and the Warren County Planning Department. The proposed Advisory Committee should be encouraged to cultivate these coordination efforts.

Recognizing that, due to financial and time constraints, not all of the components of the project will be completed at one time, a phasing plan is recommended. The intent is to identify immediate (within one to

two years), short-term (between three and five years), and long-term (between six and 10 years) components. Understanding the timing of each component will help the town anticipate future grant programs.

Immediate (one to two years)	Target Year
Create Advisory Committee	2001
Cross promote town events with regional events	2001
Pedestrian amenity improvements (trash receptacles, benches, pedestrian lights, etc.)	2002
Develop commercial design policies	2002
Create historic interpretive program	2002
Enhance parking lot signage	2002
Promote infill development opportunities	2001-2002
Recreate Chester four Corners as corridor focal point	2001-2002
Short-Term (three to five years)	
Develop a targeted marketing program	2003
Implement marketing program	2003
Crosswalks improvements	2003
Develop gateway enhancement construction documents	2003
Pedestrian amenity improvements (banners, flower baskets, wayfinding signage)	2003
Implement historic interpretive plan	2003
Implement gateway enhancement program	2004
Landscaped parking lot edges	2005
Promote infill development opportunities	2003-2005
Recreate Chester four Corners as corridor focal point	2003-2005
Long-Term (six to ten years)	
Extend sidewalk network to South Main Street	2006
Address utilities	2006
Develop construction documents for Community Green	2006
Create a Community Green	2008
Enhance regional connections (trail development)	2009
Promote infill development opportunities	2006-2010
Recreate Chester Four Corners as corridor focal point	2006-2010

Projects	Funding Strategies	Notes
Immediate (one to two years)		
Create Advisory Committee	N/A	Appointed by Town Board
Cross promote town events with regional events	N/A	Coordinate with County Tourism
Pedestrian amenity improvements (trash receptacles, benches, lighting, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NYS Legislative Line Items ■ Municipal budget ■ Niagara Mohawk ■ Community donations/fund drive 	Residents may be willing to purchase items (w/names embossed) such as benches or receptacles if they feel a sense of ownership in the hamlet's renewal.
Develop commercial design policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NYS Council on the Arts 	Architecture, Planning and Design Program.
Create historic interpretive program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NYS Council on the Arts ■ NYSOPRHP – Environmental Protection Fund (Append. C) ■ National trust for Historic preservation (Append. E) 	See Appendix C and E for grant application and details
Enhance parking lot signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ Community donations/fund drive 	
Promote infill development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New York State Economic Development Corporation ■ Chamber of Commerce ■ Community donations/fund drive 	Ongoing coordination with County Chamber of Commerce and NYS EDC
Recreate Chester Four Corners as corridor focal point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ Community donations/fund drive ■ NYS State Council on the Arts ■ NYS Department of State ■ Local Businesses and corporate philanthropy 	Developing relationships with key corporate and local business owners will help make site and building improvements
Short-Term (three to five years)		
Develop a targeted marketing program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ Community volunteers ■ Chamber of Commerce 	Working closely with the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses to develop the strategy will be important
Implement marketing program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ Community-owned businesses ■ Chamber of Commerce 	
Crosswalks improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ TEA-21 	
Develop gateway enhancement construction documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget 	
Implement gateway enhancement program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ Community volunteers ■ Chamber of Commerce ■ TEA-21 	
Pedestrian amenity improvements (lighting, banners, flower baskets, wayfinding signage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NYS Legislative Line Items ■ Municipal budget ■ Niagara Mohawk ■ Community donations/fund drive 	
Landscaped parking lot edges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ TEA-21 	

Short-Term (three to five years) continued	Funding Strategies	Notes
Promote infill development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New York State Economic Development Corporation ■ Chamber of Commerce ■ Community donations/fund drive 	Ongoing coordination with County Chamber of Commerce and NYS EDC
Recreate Chester four Corners as corridor focal point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ Community donations/fund drive ■ NYS State Council on the Arts ■ NYS Department of State ■ Local Businesses and corporate philanthropy 	Developing relationships with key corporate and local business owners will help make site and building improvements
Long-Term (six to ten years)		
Extend sidewalk network to South Main Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ Municipal labor ■ TEA-21 	
Address utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Municipal budget ■ TEA-21 ■ Corporate coordination 	
Develop construction documents for Community Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Chamber of Commerce ■ Community donations/fund drive 	
Create a Community Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TEA-21 ■ NYS Council on the Arts ■ NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation ■ Chamber of Commerce ■ Municipal budget ■ Community donations/fund drive ■ American Planning Association: The City Parks ForumK catalyst Grant Program ■ Corporate philanthropy ■ Foundations 	
Enhance regional connections (trail development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New York State Economic Development Corporation ■ Chamber of Commerce ■ Community donations/fund drive 	
Promote infill development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New York State Economic Development Corporation ■ Chamber of Commerce ■ Community donations/fund drive 	Ongoing coordination with County Chamber of Commerce and NYS EDC
Recreate Chester Four Corners as corridor focal point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New York State Economic Development Corporation ■ Chamber of Commerce ■ Community donations/fund drive 	Ongoing coordination with County Chamber of Commerce and NYS EDC

Finding Other Funding Opportunities for Local Projects

Use of in-kind donations and force account will help to reduce outlay of municipal funds and meet matching grant requirements:

- Use of Town force account for labor
- Use donation of materials, equipment, additional labor
- Integrate into BOCES/School system training programs
- Utilize NYS Department of Corrections work program for clearance, clean-up, painting and day labor, etc.
- New York State Legislative Member items

Private Sector Opportunities:

Another important source of funding for many projects are the vast number of foundations and corporate philanthropy. Finding these funding opportunities can be a daunting task. The statistics from private funding sources are impressive. Foundations in New York State alone hold over \$44.5 billion in assets, and make annual contributions of \$2.7 billion. Many of the largest foundations in New York State

Another important source of funding for many projects are the vast number of foundations and corporate philanthropy.

are among the largest in the country. In more recent years corporations have taken special interest in community activities. Many corporations have been providing funding for local projects in an attempt to enhance their image, influence opinion makers, or to build business-community relations. It is important to note that many award recipients have developed long-term relationships with funding sources. For Chestertown to improve its chances of receiving funding from private sector sources, the Town should develop working relationships with targeted foundations and/or other private sector institutions. The following resources serve as a complement to the public sector funding sources listed above and should be reviewed annually for potential project funding. Linda Braun, supervisor of the cooperating collection at the New York State Library, developed the following text regarding private sector funding sources.

Private Giving and Foundations

The Foundation Center was begun in 1956, as a nonprofit service entity that was charged to make the most comprehensive, accurate information on grantmakers available to any interested individual who might want or need it. Central to the Foundation Center's mission of serving the needs of the general public with current, reliable, factual information about the foundation field is the network of field office libraries and cooperating collections located throughout the nation. Of the five Center libraries, one is located in New York at 79 Fifth Avenue, New York City. It is open to the public, and offers educational programs on the funding research process, proposal writing, grantmakers, and related topics. It offers visitors free access to Center publications, a variety of supplemental materials, periodicals, how-to guides, foundation annual reports, 990-PF IRS returns, and CD-ROM and internet resources. Those who cannot

visit a Center library can usually find a Center cooperating collection nearby. The nearest cooperating collection to Chestertown is located at:

New York State Library
Humanities Reference
Cultural Education Center, 6th Floor
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12230
(518) 474-5355

Two Foundation Center guides that can serve as an introduction to published resources are:

1. The Foundation Center's User-Friendly Guide: A Grantseeker's Guide to Resources. 4th ed. Foundation Center, 1996. It is a basic primer on the grantseeking process. There is a quick introduction through the use of a "Frequently Asked Questions" list.
2. Foundation Fundamentals: A Guide for Grantseekers. 5th ed. Foundation Center, 1994. It is an overview of the funding process that incorporates sample pages from most of the Foundation Center major resources.

Center directories can help local governments find private funders close to home that are more likely to have a greater interest in local problems:

Foundation Directory. Foundation Center, 1999.

The classic guide in three volumes. The main volume covers the most influential funders. Over 8,600 foundations with \$2 million in assets or giving \$200,000 or more annually. Part 2 covers over 4,900 mid-sized foundations with assets over \$1 million or grant programs over \$50,000 to \$200,000. Updated entries appear later in the year in the Supplement.

Foundation Grants Index. Foundation Center, 1999.

Recently awarded grants can provide an indication of future funding priorities. Since 1970, this source has presented grants in broad subject areas listed geographically by state and alphabetically by name. The type of support/geographic index directs you to foundations that have made the kind of grant needed in your district. Four times a year, the Index is updated by the Foundation Index Quarterly keeping your office abreast of key changes in foundation staff, giving policies and more.

Guide to U.S. Foundations, Their Trustees, Officers, and Donors. Foundation Center, 1999.

Master list of the decision-makers who direct America's foundations. Lists over 40,000 private, corporate, operating and community foundations, many smaller ones not elsewhere described. The smaller foundations are especially important to localities. Arranged by state and total giving. The companion volume with its comprehensive name index will help you discover the hidden connections to foundations of local families and community leaders.

Of particular interest:

New York State Foundations, 5th ed. Foundation Center, 1997.

Comprehensive guide to active grantmaking foundations in New York State. It is arranged by county, and then alphabetically. The geographic index immediately locates the grantmakers for any city. Grantmaker portraits include addresses and contact names of key officials and includes giving limitations and financial data. Many entries include descriptions of recently awarded grants.

Corporate Philanthropy

Corporate Foundation Profiles. 10th ed. Foundation Center. 1998.

Multi-page profiles offer comprehensive grants analyses showing the amount of grant money a foundation directs to specific population groups and programs. Includes sponsoring company profile, corporate giving program and corporate foundation within entries.

Corporate Giving Directory. 20th ed. Taft Group, 1999.

Information on types of support, areas of interest funded, financial information, contact person and sample grantees.

Corporate Giving Yellow Pages: Guide to Corporate Giving Contacts. 14th ed. Taft, 1998.

Contact names and addresses, telephone and fax numbers for nearly 3,500 of the largest corporate giving programs in the country. Indexed by headquarters, operating location and industry.

Directory of International Giving in America and Abroad. 10th ed. Taft, 1999.

Information on giving by foreign-owned firms and United States subsidiaries and affiliates of multinationals. Not available from any other source. Ten indexes locate the information contained in company profiles; grant recipient by state may be of particular interest. Can be used to link the new global independent sector with community-level activities.

National Directory of Corporate Giving. Foundation Center, 1997.

Describes over 1,905 corporate foundations and over 990 direct giving programs. Recently awarded grants that may indicate future giving priorities. Includes parent company name and address, local plant and subsidiary locations.

National Directory of Corporate Public Affairs. Washington DC: Columbia Books, 1999.

Lists about 1,900 companies with corporate foundations and giving programs, assets and total giving, and corporate contacts. Political contributions, PAC data and independent lobbying data. Geographic and industry indexes.

Most of these sources will be found in local cooperating collections or in business collections at local colleges.