ONONDAGA COUNTY
SETTLEMENT PLAN

THE REGIONAL PLAN
AND
PILOT PROJECTS

THE ONONDAGA COUNTY SETTLEMENT PLAN

prepared for the

SYRACUSE - ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY

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ONONDAGA SETTLEMENT PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Onondaga County Settlement Plan* was completed over a two-year period beginning in 1999. Its intention from the start was to create a document that would encourage and enable the thirty-five municipalities of Onondaga County to improve their residents' quality of life through a renewed emphasis on neighborhoods. Specifically, the Plan began by acknowledging that the County's greatest strength was its tradition of historic neighborhoods, and then focused on providing the tools that could most effectively reinforce that tradition. It was preceded and inspired by the County's *2010 Development Guide* -- adopted as the County Plan in 1998 -- which emphasized the goal of cost-efficient infrastructure, and recognized how that goal mandated the reinforcement of existing urban centers. This *Settlement Plan* was created to move the intentions and policies of the 2010 Development Guide into concrete action.

This Plan begins with the recognition that, in its long history, Onondaga County has experienced only two models of growth: the traditional neighborhood and suburban sprawl. The dominant model until the second world war, the traditional neighborhood is characterized by its diversity of use, pedestrian scale, and clear identity. The dominant model in recent years, suburban sprawl is characterized by the strict separation of land uses, the resulting dependence on the automobile, and a feeling of placelessness. While the neighborhood model -- represented by the County's villages, hamlets, and urban neighborhoods -- is associated with the high quality of life which many residents enjoy, suburban sprawl is associated with an erosion of that quality of life, best represented by increased traffic, decreased environmental quality, excess taxation for infrastructure, and inner-city deterioration. The *Onondaga County Settlement Plan* represents the determination of the County and its citizens -- as demonstrated in the *2010 Development Guide* -- to limit suburban sprawl in favor of the traditional neighborhood model of growth.

This is an ambitious task, but the *Onondaga County Settlement Plan* brings together a series of planning tools that have been demonstrated to affect positive change elsewhere. In the hands of effective leadership, these documents will prove more than adequate to the task of redirecting the County's growth.

Taken together, the three documents of the *Settlement Plan* described below provide a complete tool kit for Onondaga County's return to the traditional neighborhood pattern of growth. Most American counties are suffering from suburban sprawl, but Onondaga County has shown unique initiative in creating this *Plan;* if it is followed, the area could become a model for the nation. Now the task falls to the City of Syracuse and the individual towns and villages within the County to make use of these tools in their own way. The Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency stands ready to assist them in adapting this Plan to their local situations.

The Regional Plan and Pilot Projects

Most land use decisions in Onondaga County are made at the local government level. This degree of autonomy is beneficial in that it allows individual towns and villages to enact change with great efficiency, but it ignores the fact that most people live their lives at the scale of the metropolis, sometimes crossing municipal boundaries several times a day. Similarly, natural systems such as rivers and wildlife corridors pay no attention to municipal boundaries. For these reasons, certain decisions made at the local level must refer to a larger vision of the structure of the metropolis. This vision is provided in the *Regional Plan.* In addition, the *Plan* acknowledges the primary way in which the County does have influence on growth, through its transportation policy. Most settlement patterns are the direct result of transportation and linear infrastructure, and thus the County can most

directly curtail suburban sprawl through its own capital investment. The Transportation Policies included herein intended to direct the County's infrastructure expenditures while also providing a model for cities, towns, and villages to emulate in their own street policies and decisions.

An essential component of the *Regional Plan* is the collection of *Pilot Projects* that accompany it. Municipalities within the County face a variety of planning dilemmas: how to preserve farmland and open space; how to revitalize struggling urban neighborhoods; how to redevelop abandoned industrial sites; how to reclaim a village or neighborhood from high-speed traffic; how to replace a dying mall; how to humanize a commercial strip; how to grow a village or hamlet in a way that strengthens its character. In order to address these abstract issues in a concrete way, *Pilot Projects* were commissioned at specific locations. Each *Project* by necessity presents a somewhat customized solution, but also demonstrates a generic approach and technique that can be used in similar situations throughout the County.

The Traditional Neighborhood Development Code

Onondaga County has experienced half a century of suburban sprawl. Most of this sprawl occurred in direct accordance with existing zoning and subdivision regulations that effectively outlaw traditional neighborhood development. Clearly, an alternative set of regulations is necessary to allow and encourage the construction, extension, and revitalization of the County's neighborhoods. Such regulations were first created over a decade ago by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co., and have been continuously refined and most recently customized to the conditions of Onondaga County. Those municipalities that wish to provide an alternative to suburban sprawl will adopt the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code* and incentivize its use.

The Traditional Neighborhood Development Guidelines

The *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code* is a technical document designed to attain specific built results in a heavily regulated legal environment. As such, it is written in a way that expedites its use, not in a way that fully explains its intentions or teaches its users the general principles and techniques of community-making. This role is played by the *TND Guidelines,* which are designed to quickly and easily communicate the philosophy and practice of Traditional Neighborhood Development. As a guideline, it is more descriptive and less precise than the Code, and is best used as an educational tool for citizens, public servants, and developers. It should be distributed as widely as possible.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE REGIONAL PLAN

Residents of the Syracuse area are governed at the scale of the municipality, but they live their lives at the scale of the metropolis. In recognizing that most planning occurs at the local level, the *Regional Plan* provides a County-wide framework within which individual municipalities can make wise decisions. The *Plan* begins with a section on **Intent**, which describes the philosophy and principles behind the *Plan,* principles which the County asks its municipalities to embrace. This is followed by the following sections:

Urban Structure and Municipal Framework: describes the existing settlement patterns, the parties responsible for land-use decisions, and their relationship to the County and to this *Plan.* It emphasizes that future growth should be focused at existing urban centers. It also describes how individual governments are intended to make use of the *Settlement Plan*, by creating a Municipal Settlement Plan like the one provided in the *Plan's* first *Pilot Project.*

Open Space Structure: outlines the natural areas at the County scale that individual municipalities are asked to incorporate into their Town Settlement Plans, and describes the process by which open space can be preserved. It also recommends specific techniques for farmland preservation, including the purchase of development rights and the redirection of growth into new hamlets and villages.

Transportation Policies: describe the policies that will govern the County's planning of its own transportation infrastructure, and which are recommended for use by individual municipalities as well. They focus upon the provision and maintenance of a transportation infrastructure that supports the health of neighborhoods primarily by encouraging pedestrian life.

Implementation: describes the role of the County and its individual municipalities in terms of utilizing each of the documents that comprise this *Plan.*

THE PILOT PROJECTS

Eight *Pilot Projects* were completed as a part of this Plan. It is important to understand what these Projects are and what they are not. The *Pilot Projects* represent ideal solutions to typical problems that face municipalities within Onondaga County. There is some merit in them individually -- their implementation is to be encouraged -- but their real value is as archetypal models to be emulated wherever similar problems exist. The specific Projects were chosen not based on their likelihood of implementation, but on their generic quality: their ability to represent an entire class of similar projects. Each teaches lessons that can be applied to many other sites within the County, and each municipality is encouraged to review the *Projects* as a whole to learn which ones might apply to problem areas within their jurisdiction.

One must continue to stress the universal quality of the Pilot Projects: to the degree that each can be implemented, in whole or in part, that is an unexpected bonus outcome of this exercise. However, it is unlikely that many of them are completely attainable, because in most cases certain peculiarities of the Project were intentionally ignored, so that the Project could maintain its generic quality. In other words, when unique circumstances threatened to make a *Pilot Project* no longer representative of an entire class of projects, those circumstances were sometimes disregarded in order that a more universal solution might result.

As universal examples, then, the *Pilot Projects* are not merely illustrative exercises, but rather are an essential part of the *Settlement Plan* itself. To read the Plan without thoroughly reviewing these Projects is to not partake of the meat of the Plan. The eight Pilot Projects can be summarized as follows:
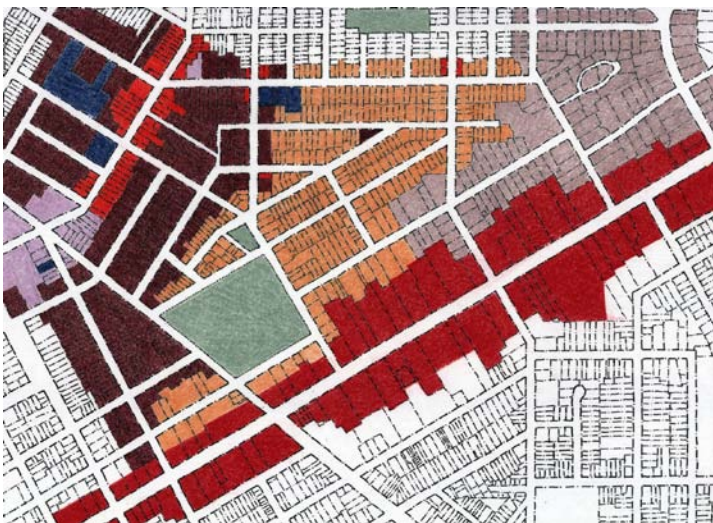
1. A Municipal Settlement Plan: Camillus

The Plan for the Town of Camillus is a settlement plan that all of the County's 35 municipalities should consider for its applicability to their own circumstances. Ideally, each town should complete such a plan, with each Village participating in the plan completed by its surrounding Town. The plan presents a single application of an approach which is thoroughly generic and can thus be used almost anywhere. The objectives are straightforward: the preservation and improvement of existing neighborhoods, the concentration of new development in appropriate locations, a reduction in large-lot sprawl, and the preservation of view corridors and other natural features. Whether or not the Town of Camillus chooses to apply this plan to their future growth, the County's other communities may apply the same methodology to create similar plans of their own.

A SETTLEMENT PLAN: THE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF CAMILLUS PRESERVES VIEW CORRIDORS BY CONCENTRATING NEW DEVELOPMENT AT ROADWAY INTERSECTIONS.

2. Urban Neighborhood Improvement: Butternut Sector

This project presents a planning technique that can be used to improve existing mixed-use neighborhoods, whether in the City of Syracuse or any of the County's other towns and villages. The technique is straightforward, and concerns itself with two separate qualities: urbanity and walkability. First, each street is classified in terms of its location on the urban-to-rural Transect, to create a zoning map for the application of the different categories of the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*. Second, each street is classified -- with the help of its residents -- in terms of its pedestrian viability, to determine what level of additional private maintenance the residents will hold themselves to. An additional discussion is provided on effective retail management techniques. Finally, a site specific intervention is proposed to save a historic building.

REVISED ZONING: THE REGULATING PLAN FOR THE BUTTERNUT SECTOR ASSIGNS A CATEGORY OF THE TND CODE TO EACH STREET WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

3. Brownfield Redevelopment: Harbor West

Harbor West demonstrates the appropriate techniques for planning a new neighborhood on an urban brownfield site. While almost every feature of the design is based upon its site conditions -- existing streets, waterways, even pre-existing master plans -- the design techniques employed are universal. These techniques are described by the *TND Guidelines* and guaranteed by the *TND Code*, and can also be applied to greenfield sites.

A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD: THE PLAN FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF HARBOR WEST CREATES A COMPLETE COMMUNITY OF MIXED-USE BUILDINGS LINING WALKABLE STREETS.

4. Village Retrofit: Liverpool

Liverpool currently suffers from a fate shared by other County villages: previously a pleasant, walkable community, it is sundered by the speed and volume of the state highway traffic that passes through it. The through-commuting needs of residents beyond Liverpool have been given unfair priority over the local community needs of Liverpool residents. The result is a main street that is barely crossable and a population that is afraid to walk. The solution is a site-specific application of a generic technique: the re-configuration of the highway into a traditional, pedestrian-friendly street design. In addition, some suggestions are made about taking advantage of certain opportunities unique to the current situation.

RETURNED TO ITS RESIDENTS: THE RE-CONFIGURATION OF HIGHWAYS THROUGH LIVERPOOL RECREATES A STREET NETWORK CONDUCIVE TO COMMUNITY LIFE.

5. Mall Retrofit: Fayetteville Mall

One of many "dead" malls in the County, Fayetteville is fairly representative of the group: bankrupted by a later generation of retail, a visual blight to its neighbors, but well located at a major intersection. This "100-percent corner" location means that the site would work well as a future town center, and that is what is proposed here. As could be attempted on any similar site, the mall's buildings are gradually replaced and integrated into a street network that requires minimal reconfiguring of infrastructure. The result is a self-sufficient urban neighborhood that can also serve as a resource to its surrounding suburban population.

TOWN CENTER: THROUGH THE GRADUAL REPLACEMENT OF BUILDINGS AND CONSOLIDATION OF PARKING, THE MALL BECOMES A MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD.

6. Shopping Center Retrofit: Bayberry Plaza

The Bayberry Plaza represents the first generation of suburban shopping centers, the strip mall, in which the stores face a sidewalk set back behind a deep parking lot. The grocery store and fast food franchises across the street are sited in the same manner, resulting in a "main street" which is too wide and ill-defined to serve as a comfortable pedestrian environment. As a result, the otherwise pleasant suburban development of Bayberry is split down its middle. The proposed solution is unique, but teaches lessons that could be used elsewhere, and in fact have been used successfully in previous similar rehabilitations.
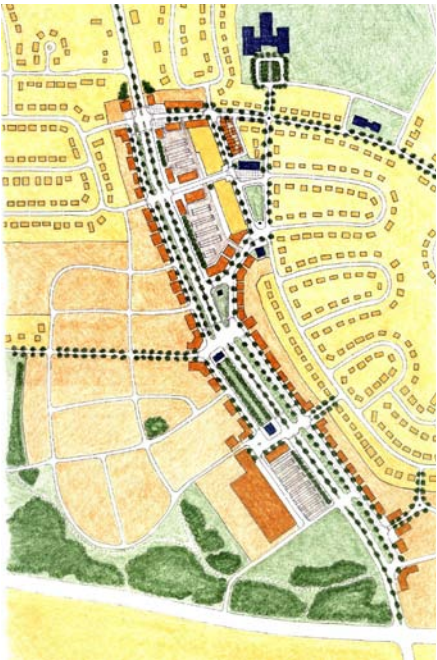
FROM STRIP TO BOULEVARD: THE REDESIGN OF BAYBERRY USES LANDSCAPING, ROADWAY RE-CONFIGURATION, AND ARCHITECTURAL INTERVENTION TO TURN A VOID INTO A SEAM.

7. Village Extension: Baldwinsville

Baldwinsville is one of many villages in the County that are slowly accumulating a detritus of sprawling pods at their periphery. This exercise demonstrates how such a community should instead grow according to the increment of the mixed-use neighborhood, in a form that emulates the urban pattern of the core village while supporting the affordable provision of transit. The plan is the result of applying the TND Code to open farmland. Ideally, this is the sort of plan that a municipality would complete in anticipation of private development, to be permitted as-of-right.

A FAIR EXCHANGE: THE EXCHANGE OF FARMLAND FOR A SUBDIVISION OR STRIP MALL HAS TO BE CONSIDERED A LOSS, BUT THE EXCHANGE OF FARMLAND FOR A TOWN CAN BE CONSIDERED AN EVEN TRADE.

8. Hamlet Extension: Jamesville

Typically, the County's hamlets grow through the slow accumulation of individual isolated housing pods, which place additional demands on existing roads without providing alternative paths for circulation. The proposed extension of Jamesville knits together previous growth and provides a framework for future development in an integrated road network, which also improves pedestrian access throughout the area. Again, this is the type of plan that could be prepared by the municipality in advance of growth, according to principles that are equally valid elsewhere.

GROWTH AS A NETWORK: LIKE THE GROWTH OF A TOWN, THE EXTENSION OF A HAMLET CAN BE DESIGNED TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT FUNCTIONS AS A VILLAGE.

INTENT

Onondaga County's greatest asset is its collection of traditional neighborhoods, embodied by the County's hamlets, villages, small towns, and urban communities. While the County is hardly unique in that regard, it is exemplary in the way that its residents acknowledge the attractiveness and value of these older places. For citizens and visitors alike, there is a powerful sense of connection to one's neighborhood, a physical environment that has somehow taken on a social and even a spiritual meaning. This is no accident, as the traditional neighborhoods in Onondaga County possess many physical qualities that contribute to the quality of life of their residents. While it is difficult to enumerate all of these attributes, they include the following:

Walkability: the organization of the neighborhood allows people to fulfill many of their daily needs as pedestrians or bicyclists, reducing time wasted in traffic, improving physical health, and granting independence of movement to the young and the old.

Diversity: traditional neighborhoods contain a wide range of land uses and housing types. As a result, walking is not only healthful but also useful, and one comes in contact with a full spectrum of residents of many different ages and incomes.

Community: According to sociologists, the above attributes have been associated with "the production of social capital." In other words, the presence of a diversity of uses and people in a walkable environment helps individuals to develop more ties to the community around them. People have more time and opportunity to create social bonds.

Economy: Most older neighborhoods were built at a time of limited wealth and were therefore constructed quite efficiently, without excess roadway infrastructure. Further, because traditional neighborhoods allow pedestrian activity and support the use of transit, every adult need not purchase a car in order to participate in community.

Environmental Health: Compared to recent growth, Onondaga County's neighborhoods are rather compact in their design; they displace considerably less farmland or forest than would be the case if they were built according to current standards. In addition, their walkability results in reduced greenhouse emissions from automobiles.

Worthy Destinations: Whether one walks or drives, it is important to have places worth getting to. The hamlets, villages, small towns, and urban neighborhoods of the County contain a proud collection of main streets, residential boulevards, squares, parks, and other memorable places that support and generate community life.

In these ways and others -- many not quantifiable -- the older neighborhoods of Onondaga County could be said to contribute to their residents' quality of life. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the growth that has occurred in the County in more recent years. Like most other American cities, the Syracuse area witnessed in the mid-20th century a comprehensive shift in its manner of growth. While, prior to the Second World War, most development took the form of traditional neighborhoods, after 1950, no more hamlets, villages or towns were built. Instead, growth has taken the form of individual settlements of precisely restricted use, primarily housing subdivisions, shopping centers, and office parks. This gradual accumulation of single-use pods has come to be known as suburban sprawl, a phenomenon that is now associated with a diminished quality of life. Among the demonstrated disadvantages of suburban sprawl are the following problems:

Traffic Congestion: The design of communities based upon mandatory automobile use causes the typical suburban household to generate 13 trips per day, about double that of a traditional neighborhood. Roads built to handle suburban vehicle loads are quickly overcome by traffic.

Wasted Time: Time is wasted in traffic jams, but even more hours are lost simply driving to distant shops, schools, sports fields, and other facilities that were once located close at hand.

Higher Taxes: The inefficient infrastructure of greenfield and leapfrog development rarely pays for itself, and is often subsidized by taxes from older neighborhoods. Limited tolerance for higher taxes often results in new roads and sewers being funded at the expense of neighborhood schools and parks.

Environmental Degradation: Farmland and forest fall to new development, while empty sites in built-up areas remain unused. Air quality falls and global warming worsens as automobiles introduce greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere.

Inner City Deterioration: New houses and jobs on the urban edge rob the inner city of its jobs and residents. Streets re-engineered to satisfy suburban commuting needs diminish the walkability of the neighborhoods they cross.

Isolation of Children and the Elderly: Unable to drive, the young and the infirm elderly lose independence of movement and become reliant on others for their physical and social needs.

Reduced Housing Affordability: The requirement of multiple-automobile ownership for each household (one car per adult) typically reduces mortgage qualification amount by over $50,000 per vehicle.

Diminished Physical Health: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report an "epidemic" of obesity among both adults and children, attributed in part to the disappearance of walking and bicycling as transportation options.

In sum, the lesson that the planning profession has learned from the past fifty years is that suburban sprawl does not serve its citizens well. For Onondaga County, that fact represents both an advantage and a danger. The advantage is that the County, in relative terms, contains only a moderate amount of suburban sprawl, so that people fleeing sprawl will rightly consider the Syracuse area as a haven. The danger is that the area's entire planning structure, as currently constituted, leads directly to suburban sprawl. If Syracuse had continued to enjoy economic development in recent decades, or were it again to witness substantial economic growth, the outcome of that growth would be sprawl. The planning and zoning codes in place, the practices currently favored by developers, and the business policies of lending institutions all point the County in that direction. These forces together form a mold that cannot help but turn economic energy into suburban sprawl. The objective of this *Plan* is to convert the mold so that future economic energy is formed not into sprawl but into a continuation of the County's tradition of urban neighborhoods, villages and hamlets.

Once the new mold is in place, economic growth need no longer be feared. In fact, it can be anticipated with greater sureness, because in today's increasingly mobile marketplace, it is the places with the greatest quality of life that are experiencing an influx of residents. For that reason, and for the benefit of those already living in Onondaga County, the strategy of this *Plan* has been to identify those physical criteria that contribute to a high quality of life -- well-organized communities, the neighborhood structure, close access to nature, etc. -- and to provide a plan that helps these to take form.

This *Plan* is focused on improving the quality of life, thereby bringing industry and growth to the County. If it is embraced and followed, economic growth should follow. If instead the County commits itself to sprawl -- to a city that becomes progressively decrepit and a landscape that is progressively consumed -- then it will need to invent another way of growing. But since a return to mining or heavy industry seems unlikely, it is more prudent for the County to concentrate its strongest commodity: the quality of life that exists here due to its traditional settlement patterns -- its neighborhoods, towns, villages, and hamlets.

As one reviews the *Pilot Projects* that follow, some may seem a bit outlandish. Certainly, many of the suggestions are bold -- turning shopping centers around (literally), remaking malls as main streets, re-configuring state highways, and the like. But, in a historical context, they do not seem ambitious at all, especially considering what the City of Syracuse and its surrounding settlements accomplished in their first century of urbanization. Beautiful town centers, well-organized residential neighborhoods, and inspiring civic buildings were all built as a matter of course, without any of the lending institutions, planning groups or government programs that exist today. When the County's greatest neighborhoods and buildings were

constructed, life was much more difficult, and funds were in shorter supply. In contrast, the challenge facing the County today is quite small, and the proposals that follow are rather modest.

The image at right helps to put the circumstances into perspective. It is a map of Syracuse, drawn in 1945, a well-crafted drawing, no more than ten inches square, that is full of ideas and predictions regarding the future of the City. During the design charrette, one of the local planners expressed his surprise that so much of what was imagined in this plan was actually built. Much of it is still around to admire, and some of it, interestingly, was built but subsequently demolished. The lesson to be learned from this experience is that Syracuse is not a city that fails to accomplish its goals. At one time, plans were made to build things, and they were built. At another time, plans were made to destroy things, and they were destroyed, with no particular delay. What is encouraging about this city, and this county, is that concepts are brought to life here with very little compromise. It is hoped that the *Onondaga County Settlement Plan* will be enacted and implemented in this same spirit.
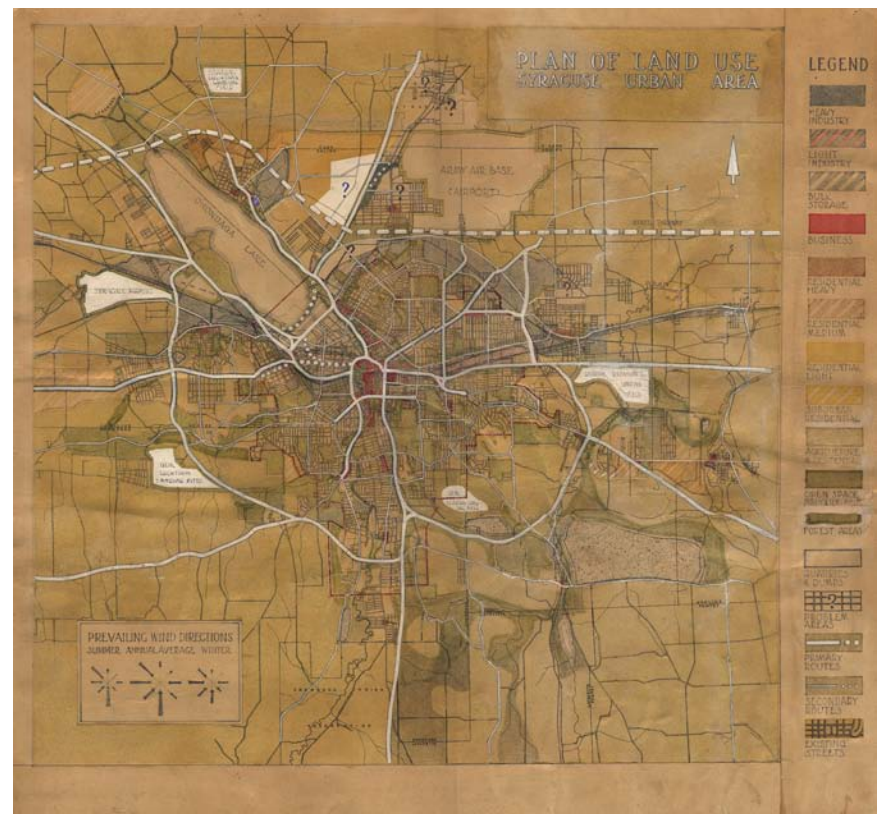
A 1945 VISION FOR SYRACUSE

URBAN STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

This section of the *Plan* describes the existing settlement patterns, the parties responsible for land-use decisions, and their relationship to the County and to this Plan. It emphasizes that future growth should be focused at existing urban centers. It also describes how individual governments are intended to make use of the *Settlement Plan,* by creating a Municipal Settlement Plan like the one provided in the *Plan's* first *Pilot Project.*
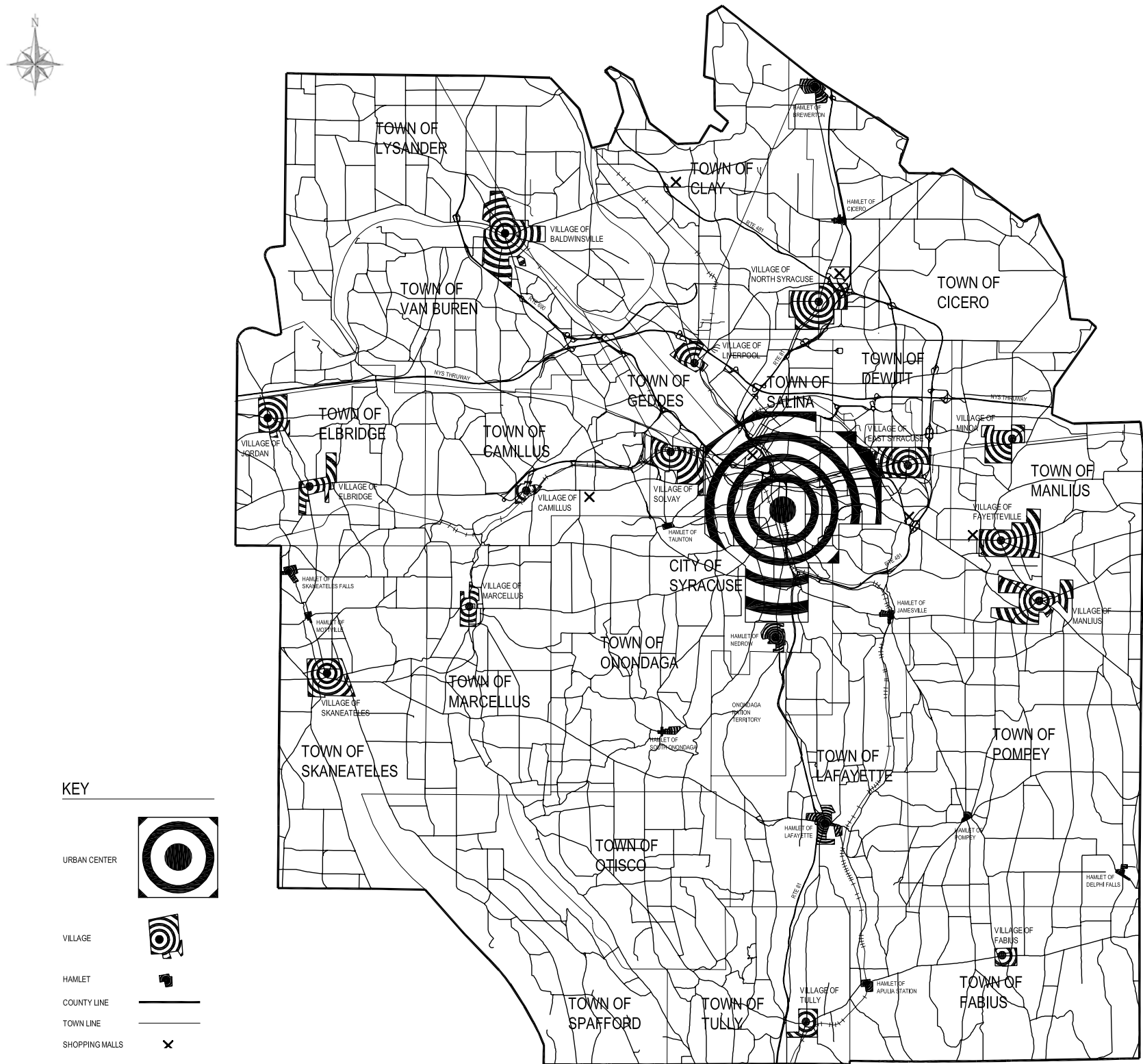
THE ONONDAGA COUNTY URBAN STRUCTURE MAP: WITH ONLY A MODERATE AMOUNT OF SPRAWL, THE COUNTY PRESENTS AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE THAT OTHER METROPOLISES WOULD DO WELL TO EMULATE.

Urban Structure

The map above indicates the borders of the County's municipalities and the trajectory of major roads. More significantly, it also shows the pattern of urbanization: the central city, surrounded by its satellite towns, villages, and hamlets. This system, easily taken for granted, is truly a textbook case of healthy urban organization, something that is missing in entire regions of America. It centers upon its city -- a great city with its university, institutions, and wealth of civic structures -- and contains the majority of places from which one is likely to commute to that city. The County is quite fortunate in this regard; its boundaries coincide fairly well with the true working scale of the metropolis, so that a County plan can also be an effective regional plan -- a rare occurrence.

What makes this diagram coincide so well with planning textbooks is that it does not show the suburban sprawl which exists between the satellite settlements. Fortunately, most neighborhoods, villages, and hamlets in Onondaga County still have fairly well-defined edges and are separated by scenic stretches of natural space and farmland. The disruptions to this

system have occurred primarily since the 1950s, and consist of single-use zones such as housing subdivisions, shopping malls (indicated with X's in the map), commercials strips, and office parks that have sprung up at the edges of urbanization and in the countryside. But these are relatively few, due to the County's limited recent economic growth.

As with all metropolises, the settlement pattern of Onondaga County was largely determined by its transportation system of canal, rail, and roads. This is particularly evident in the case of the County's hamlets, which can be characterized as the intensification of use at a crossroads. Before universal automobile ownership, settlement was more likely to occur in concentrations at rail stops and Erie Canal terminals. But with the equalizing effect of the car -- in which every roadside location has become similarly accessible -- the tendency is now towards dispersion and the disintegration of existing urban nodes. Public dissatisfaction over this trend was clearly reflected in the *2010 Development Guide,* with its mandate to reinforce existing centers.

Municipal Framework

The proceeding map, in addition to indicating the urban structure of the County, also shows its framework of governance, which almost coincides. The County contains the City of Syracuse, 19 towns, and 15 villages; the hamlets are not governmental entities per se. Each municipality makes its own planning decisions, which has been known here and elsewhere to make regional planning very difficult, the equivalent of herding cats. Indeed, the great challenge of this plan is to allow and encourage the individual actions of each municipality to adhere to a larger, metropolitan vision.

That said, the current system also presents planners with one major advantage. When one has to create a land-use plan for an entire county, one has to sell that plan to the entire county, and political opposition can keep all but the most watered-down plans from being approved. It is much easier to work with a single town, in which decisions are made by a relatively small number of people, and implement a new plan with little or no compromise. In this scenario, it is expected that one or two towns will take the lead, express a desire to be a success, activate the tools provided here, and serve as a model for others to emulate.

This strategy -- of thinking globally and acting locally -- served as a basis for this plan, and catalyzed a much more detailed design intervention than was originally anticipated. Rather than planning the entire County generally, the planners selected one town, Camillus, and created a specific plan for its preservation and improvement, a plan with simple steps that any other municipality can follow. This plan comprises the first *Pilot Project*, the most important one. Whether or not Camillus decides to adopt these recommendations, other towns can easily apply a similar methodology, as will be described ahead.

This focus on a single town makes obvious the local initiative that will be necessary for the Plan to fully succeed. As is further outlined in the Implementation page at the end of this document, each of the 35 municipalities within Onondaga County will make its own decision what to do with this Plan. Some may perhaps ignore it entirely, while others will try to implement it to the letter, collaborating with the County planners to achieve its goals. In the short run, there may be limited incentive to do so, as the benefits of wise planning always take time to appear. Eventually, however, the improved quality of life in those places that choose to plan wisely will manifest itself, and more municipalities will join the effort. Similarly, as the real estate community begins to experiment with traditional neighborhood design, its financial benefits will also become apparent. All that is needed at first is for one or two communities and/or developers to take up the challenge, so that results can eventually be shown. If this happens, one can have some confidence that the success of this *Plan* is only a matter of time.

OPEN SPACE STRUCTURE

This section of the *Plan* outlines the natural areas at the County scale that individual municipalities are asked to incorporate into their Town Settlement Plans, and describes the techniques by which open space can be preserved. It also recommends specific techniques for farmland preservation, including the redirection of growth into new hamlets and villages.
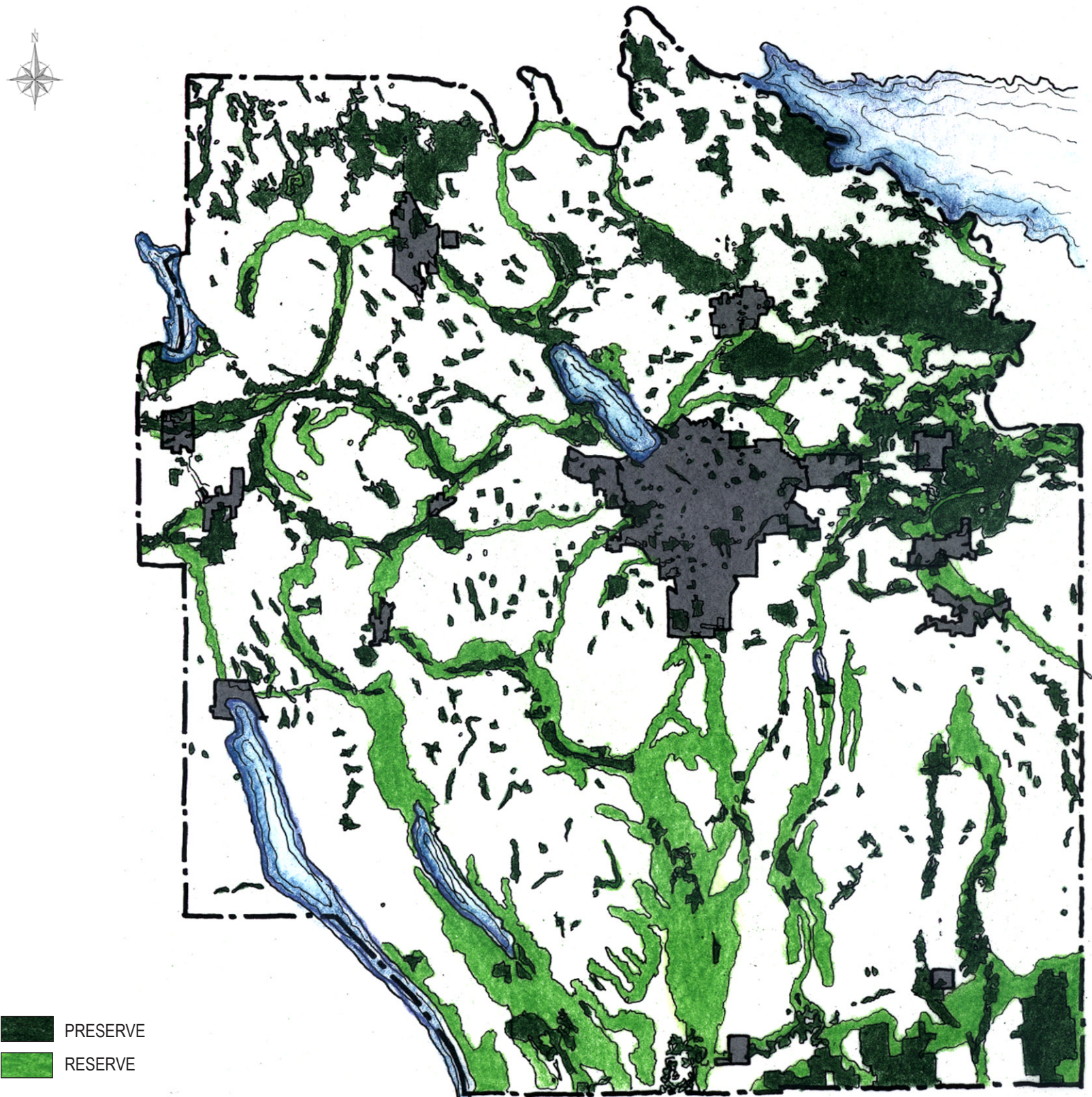

PRESERVE
OPEN SPACE
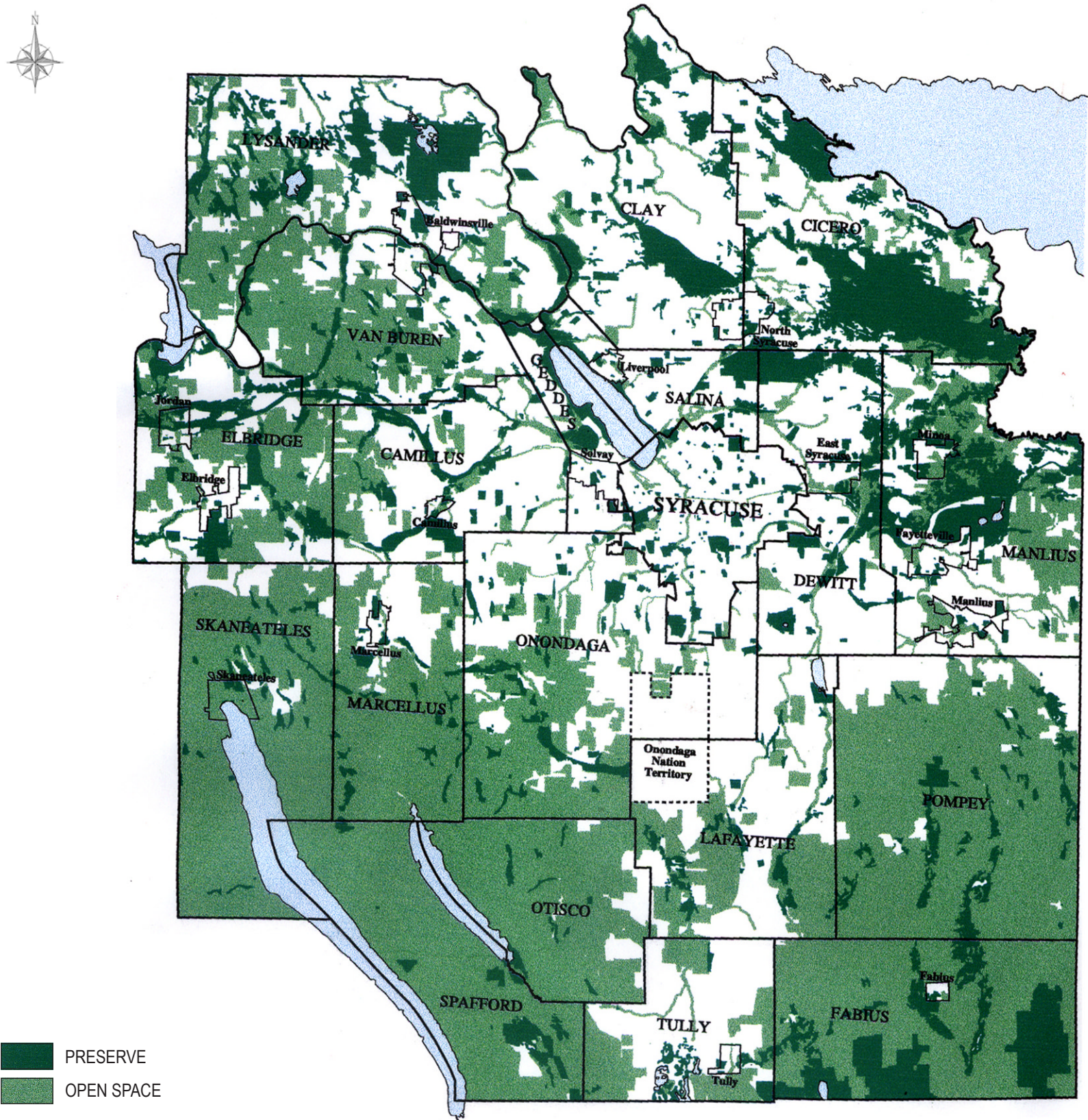
TRULY PRESERVED LAND VS. TEMPORARILY OPEN LAND: OF THE COUNTY'S MANY SQUARE MILES OF UNSPOILED LAND, ONLY THOSE AREAS SHOWN IN DARK GREEN ARE LEGALLY PROTECTED AGAINST DEVELOPMENT

Protected and Unprotected Open Space

The map above shows the areas of Onondaga County that are, and are not, truly preserved against future growth. In dark green are the lands that are currently protected, and will be remain as open space for the foreseeable future. In light green, however -- and in much greater proportion -- are the areas that many people presume to be preserved, but in fact are not. They may exist with in a temporary overlay condition of non-development, but they are indeed developable. In Onondaga County, one can actually remove almost any farm at any time, because the land is zoned to permit housing on one- or two-acre lots. Thus, one feature of the plan is to create a system whereby the open spaces of the greatest value can be identified and preserved as a key contributor to the County's quality of life.

PRESERVE
RESERVE

CONTINUOUS NATURAL CORRIDORS AND OTHER KEY AMENITIES: AN INITIAL MAP OF THE AREAS WHICH THE COUNTY'S MUNICIPALITIES SHOULD DESIGNATE AS PERMANENT OPEN SPACE, AND THEN WORK TO PRESERVE AND ENLARGE.

Preserves and Reserves

The map above represents a first attempt to analyze the open space in the County that is of the highest priority. It corresponds with the two categories of open space addressed in the County's *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*: Rural Preserves and Rural Reserves. The Preserves, simply transferred from the previous map, consist of those areas that are truly protected against future development. The Reserves, a small portion of the unprotected open space in the previous map, include those areas that are considered to be of the greatest significance to the County's environmental health and natural beauty. These areas were not selected based upon any political factors -- on whether one farmer or another has agreed to save his farm -- but on specific physical criteria: soils, slopes, ridges, valleys, natural corridors, flood plains, and a host of other elements. Key among these are the desire to maintain continuous natural corridors, which are essential to wildlife and other ecological systems.

This map is incomplete in two ways. First, it is only an initial attempt at establishing a Rural Reserve, based upon limited information and research. Second, it is considerably smaller than it should be -- only the most essential areas are shown. When completing their own town plans, the individual municipalities within the county should start with the information provided here and refine and enlarge it based upon their own research, in consultation with the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency and the Environmental

Health Council. The map shown here will be continually updated by the County to incorporate municipal input and decision-making.

The long-term goal for each municipality reaches beyond simply identifying its Rural Reserve, since that designation has no legal standing. In fact, all a Rural Reserve designation indicates is that a place should be protected when in fact it is not; it only remains open because the economy is not there to develop it yet. One such place is White Lake, a lovely spot enjoyed by many, that may be developed soon because most people incorrectly presumed that it was protected by deed covenant. Being placed in the Open Space Reserve category is thus the equivalent of a danger flag indicating where additional legal action is necessary if a place is to be preserved.

Therefore, in addition to merely establishing and enlarging its Rural Reserve, each municipality must work to gradually transfer as much of this Reserve as possible into the Rural Preserve category. This goal can be accomplished through a variety of means, including the purchase of lands by preservation trusts or by the municipality itself. Other potentially useful tools include the Purchase of Development Rights, the Transfer of Development Rights, and the concentration of growth at intersections. These techniques are discussed in the section that follows.

Open-Space Preservation Techniques

This section describes how open space within the County can best be preserved through the purchase of development rights and through incentivizing the development of hamlets at roadway intersections. It also shows how such a hamlet could grow over time into a village.

Purchase of Development Rights: The Purchase of Development Right (PDR) is a technique whereby a private party -- typically a benevolent organization -- can purchase the development potential of a property, guaranteeing its preservation. These efforts are often supported by government grants; the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets has created a program to provide financial assistance, and additional funds may also be available from the NYS Quality Communities Program. One farm in the County has already been preserved in this way, and two others have been identified as eligible for state funds. These efforts are laudable and should be pursued aggressively. However, one must be realistic about how much land these programs are capable of preserving. There is only a limited amount of funding available, and it is unlikely that enough will be found to save more than an small percentage of the County's farms. That is the case in most places: a farmland preservation trust purchases the development rights to an entire farm, one farm is saved and the rest of the region goes unprotected.

Current Development Practice: In order to devise a more promising system, it is useful to acknowledge the way rural land development takes place in Onondaga County. Farmers may continue to farm, but they periodically sell off portions of their farms for income, specifically for occasional expenses like buying a new tractor, sending a child to college, or getting out of debt after a bad crop. The portion they almost always sell is the road frontage, for several reasons: this does not require them to build any road to access the interior of their property and the municipal services are located at the street-front. This configuration could be called residential strip development. Like retail strip development, it is particularly destructive to an area's quality of life, because it takes a region with a tremendous amount of beautiful open space and effectively hides that resource from view behind a thin crust of development.

Modified Purchase of Development Rights: The fact that farmers tend to sell off only their road frontage suggests a potentially powerful modification to the PDR system. Rather than purchasing the development rights to an entire farm, land preservation organizations could instead focus only on the front 400 feet. In doing so, they could spread their dollars much further, along many miles of country road. Exactly how much further has yet to be determined, and would be based on the relative development value of the different parts of the property. Several organizations have already expressed an interest in testing this approach.

Large-Lot Frontages: Another possible modification to the PDR system is worth discussing: Rather than purchasing all development rights for the front 400 feet of a farm, organizations should consider purchasing a reduction in those development rights, such that houses would occur much less frequently, perhaps only once per quarter mile. While inferior to zero development, this solution at least allows travelers to see around the houses into the farmland beyond. Like the Modified PDR concept, this proposal is a realistic compromise that allows limited funds to be spread over a longer stretch of roadway.

Transferred Development Rights: It is necessary to briefly discuss the concept of the Transferred Development Right (TDR) here, as it is a tool that has been used effectively elsewhere. The TDR is similar to a PDR, but the development right is not purchased -- and then eliminated -- by a benevolent organization. Rather, it is purchased by a developer who wishes to transfer it to another property, thus increasing that property's development potential. This system is orchestrated in conjunction with a regional plan that locates TDR Sending and TDR Receiving areas, with the idea of limiting development in certain places and encouraging it in others. Unfortunately, TDR programs depend on the presence of a regional economy in which there is a demand for development rights, which is not currently the case in Onondaga County. Because most farmland is already zoned for one- and two-acre house lots, and because there is currently limited desire for smaller lots -- land is cheap -- few developers wish to purchase the ability to build at higher densities. This situation could eventually change, however, so the TDR should be maintained as a future option. In the meantime, municipalities that wish to encourage development in certain areas -- like at intersections, as described below -- should

increase those areas' capacity unilaterally through re-zoning. This effort, if performed in conjunction with the purchase of development rights nearby, could still be considered a form of TDR system, in which the municipality is able to justify a potentially controversial re-zoning by citing the PDRs nearby.

Incentives for Hamlet Development:

It is the stated goal of the Settlement Plan, like the 2010 Development Guide before it, to focus new development at existing centers, where it can be used first to revitalize struggling areas and then to re-inhabit brownfield sites. To the limits of their powers, the County and its municipalities should incentivize this type of infill development over new growth in the countryside. However, these powers are indeed limited, and the demand for new suburban housing is not about to disappear. A realistic approach to growth in Onondaga County must propose an alternative version of countryside development that is preferable to the status quo.

The alternative proposed here is a program that incentivizes the concentration of development at roadway intersections. The design of such new growth is the subject of the pages that follow. If rural development is to occur, it is most efficiently located at the County's major crossroads. This would continue the County's traditional pattern of development; most of its villages and hamlets began as growth around roadway intersections. Since there is a limited amount of new growth, most of it could be absorbed at the County's intersections were there proper incentives in place. The ultimate choice of incentives belongs to the individual municipalities, but they should consider the following:

Deferred Taxation: Currently, when one develops a farm and arranges for water service to be provided to new home lots, one's taxes rise immediately to reflect the potential value of the future homes. This practice is a disincentive to proper planning, because it means that if a farmer or a small landowner were to create a proper complete plan, he would have to pay taxes from day one on all of the resulting permanent lots, which could take years to sell. It actually encourages the worst possible practice, which is to model growth in the smallest increments of patchy development. That flaw could be turned to a town's advantage by leaving the current system in place, except for within a quarter mile of intersections, where it would be replaced by a more forgiving system. In these areas, new lots would not be assessed at a higher rate until new houses were actually constructed upon them. This approach is specifically authorized under Chapter 361 of the NYS Real Property Tax Code, which allows municipalities to defer such taxes until certificates of occupancy are obtained.

Packaged Sewer Service: Another current disincentive to compact development is the lack of sewer service to houses along country roads. Given the minimum site requirements for septic tanks, this condition tends to result in large, land-hungry house lots. Again, to encourage clustering around intersections, a municipality could approve sewer districts to support small package sewer plants servicing land within one quarter mile of intersections.

Increased Density: With package plants in place -- and deferred taxation -- it would become more efficient for developers to sell houses on smaller lots than the current one- to two-acre zoning allows. To further encourage clustering, the areas around intersections would be rezoned to accept higher density and mixed use of the type allowed by the Traditional Neighborhood Development Code provided as a part of this Plan.

One or all of these incentives, through all carrot and no stick, would tend to attract development to the intersections, which is the healthy organic pattern. To be truly effective, however, this effort would have to be married to one of the PDR programs discussed above. Again, in controversial cases, it might be necessary to implement this effort as a modified Transferred Development Rights system, in which the up-zoning of the intersection is balanced by the down-zoning through PDRs of the surrounding area. In this way, the intersection would become a TDR Receiving Area, while the surrounding farmland would become a TDR Sending Area, as illustrated by the diagram on the next page.

Intersection Transformation into a Hamlet and then a Village

The diagram at the right and the two illustrations that follow document how an intersection could absorb growth and develop along the lines of the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code* that is included as a part of this Plan. The diagram illustrates how increased density is encouraged within a quarter-mile radius of the intersection. A half mile from the intersection, rural frontage is preserved through the Purchase of Development Rights, creating either a zero-development scenario or a down-zoning to 12-acre lots, as described above. In the transitional area between on-half mile and one-quarter mile from the intersections, one-residential-unit-per-acre zoning has been allowed to remain.

The first step is to create a green or square -- a public space indicating that this is a center. It is recommended that this site be designated as a location for a farmer's market, as these markets have been effective as a precursor to development in recent years; literally hundreds have been created, and very few have failed to energize the areas around them. The loose pattern of farm houses continues to surround the intersection, but change is already beginning to occur at its center, where smaller-lot housing has been allowed to accumulate.
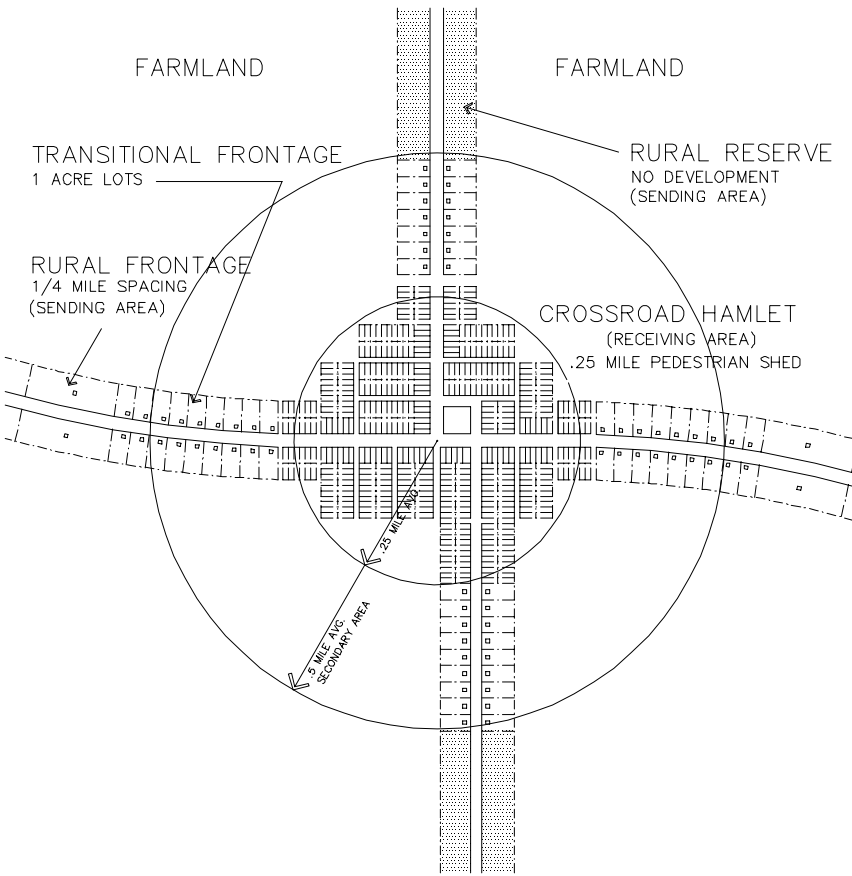
THE GROWTH OF A CROSSROADS: FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IS FOCUSED IN THE AREA WITHIN A QUARTER MILE OF THE INTERSECTION.

INITIAL TRANSFORMATION: A NEW GREEN MARKS THE CENTER OF THE HAMLET, AND THE FIRST HIGHER-DENSITY AND MIXED-USE BUILDINGS APPEAR AT ITS EDGES.

COMPLETE TRANSFORMATION: A NETWORK OF STREETS SURROUNDING THE INTERSECTION CREATE SITES FOR A NEW VILLAGE SUPPORTING A FULL RANGE OF USES AND BUILDING TYPES.

In the second illustration the intersection is now fully developed. As is appropriate, the square is now the site of a civic building, and the surrounding area has been settled at a higher density, as the *TND Code* allows. Towards the edge, one can still find single-family houses on large lots, but this is now just one of several housing options -- apartments, rowhouses, bungalows, large houses -- all within a five minute walk of the center, which is an ideal location for a transit stop. In contrast to suburban sprawl, the traditional neighborhood organization shown is designed to provide a broadening of choice. One can still live in a large house on a large lot, but now that house has a greater utility because it is within walking distance of retail and, potentially, transit. It is the best of both worlds: proximity to both nature and culture. This precise discussion is what this *Plan* refers to when it talks about growing the County towards a higher quality of life. Any municipality within the County that wishes to develop along this pattern -- it's traditional pattern, which is the opposite of suburban sprawl -- may do so by incorporating the *TND Code* and incentivizing the development of intersections.

At the back of the neighborhood center one can also see a rail line. Admittedly, this is wishful thinking, but it is a wish that is only possible in the context of traditional neighborhood development patterns. While sprawl never supports rail service, because no one can walk to the rail stop, there is at least a possibility for transit in this more urban framework -- if not trains, at least buses. If transit is to be viable, the neighborhood organizational pattern is a necessary first step.

The density within this image intensifies from the edge of the neighborhood to the center. From edges of the drawing to the middle, it ranges from large-lot houses to dense apartments. This transition, from nature to urbanity, which used to occur naturally in hamlets and villages, is what planners refer to as the Transect. In a true Transect, not only do housing densities change from edge to center, but so does the detailing of the street space. Open swales become curbs and gutters, trees start lining up along the streets, sidewalks widen, and buildings move closer to the curb. Due to the current nature of conventional real estate practice, this variety of urban environments does not happen naturally -- it must be planned. One of the characteristics of the *TND Code* is that it generates a Transect in the area where it is applied, so the outcome imagined in the picture is more than just a naive dream.
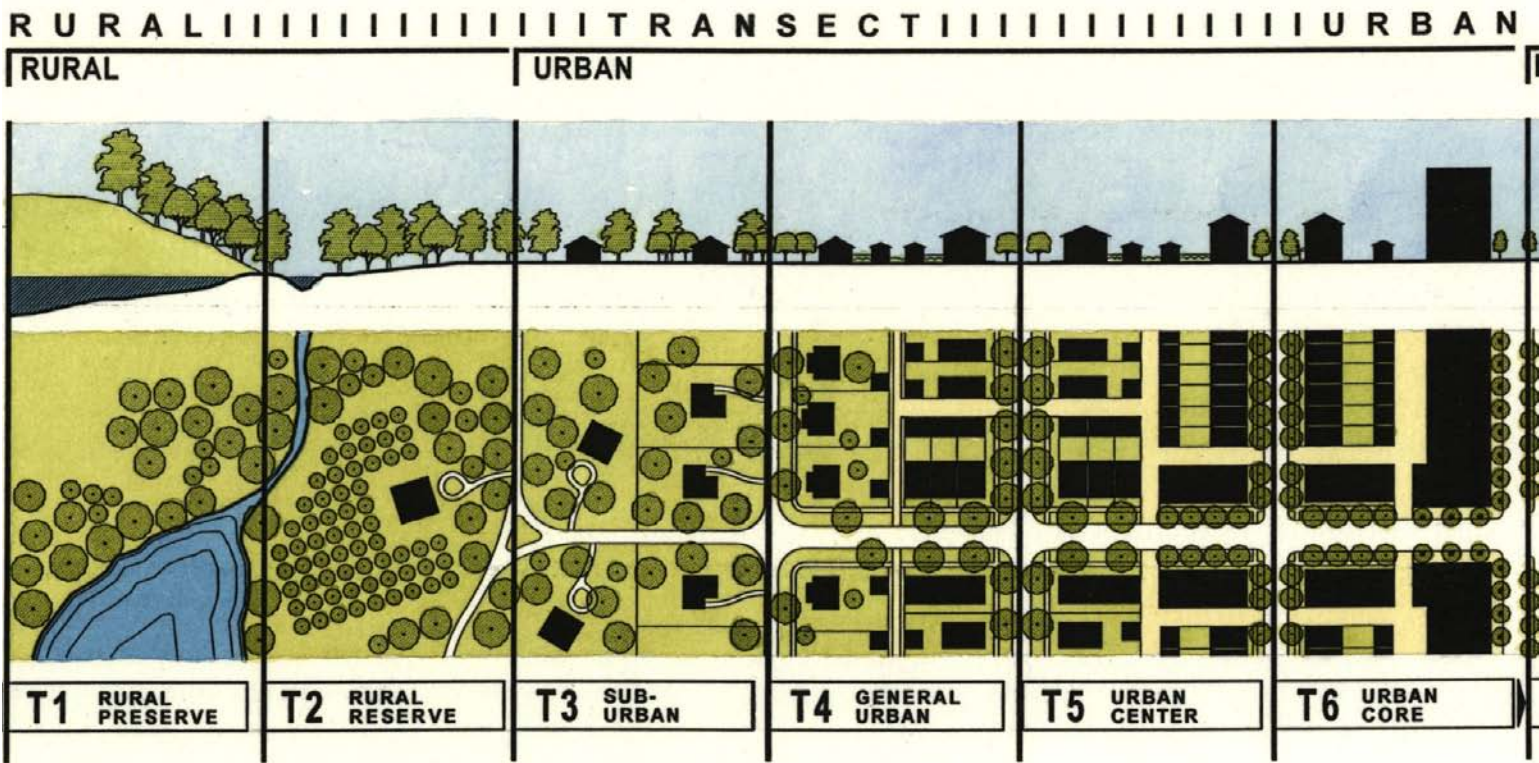
THE TRANSECT: THE BASIS FOR THE TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT CODE, THE TRANSECT DEMONSTRATES HOW THE QUALITIES OF A VILLAGE VARY FROM ITS RURAL EDGE TO ITS URBAN CENTER. SHOWN HERE IS THE COMPLETE TRANSECT, WHICH REACHES BEYOND THE VILLAGE CENTER ALL THE WAY TO THE CITY CORE.
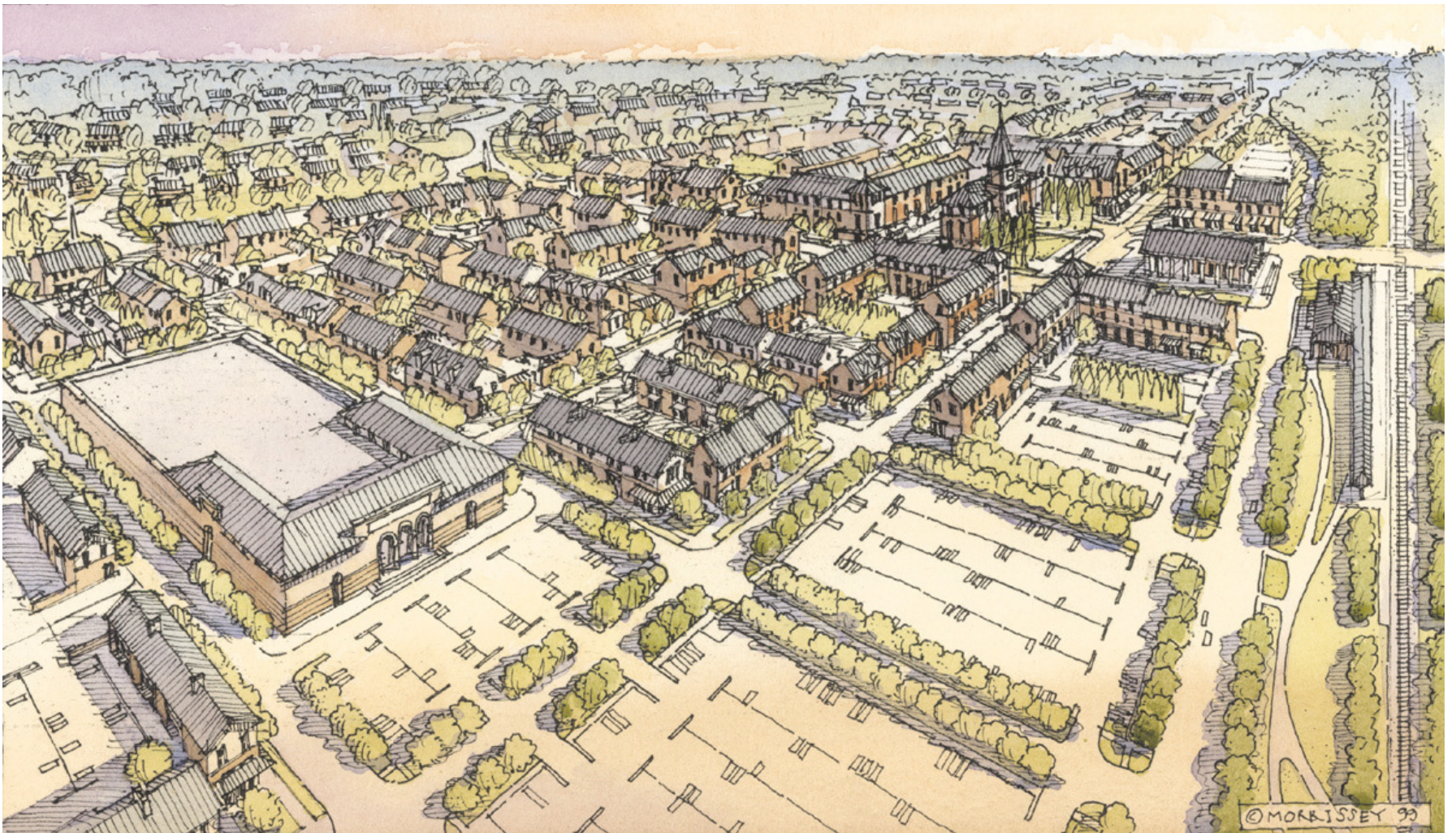
DOMESTICATED SPRAWL: WHEN BROUGHT ADJACENT TO A MIXED-USE COMMUNITY, AND SEAMLESSLY ATTACHED TO ITS MAIN STREET, BIG-BOX RETAIL CAN ACTUALLY LEND ECONOMIC ENERGY TO A TRADITIONALLY-ORGANIZED NEIGHBORHOOD.

Incorporating Big-Box Retail

This drawing depicts the same village, seen from another direction, where it is met by that infamous suburban phenomenon, the Wal-Mart. Obviously, one solution would be to outlaw big-box stores unilaterally, but this strategy is rarely realistic. Instead, one must ask: if Wal-Mart is inevitable, how can it be used to generate urban life rather than destroy it, as is usually the case. One solution is to attach it to a neighborhood, where the economic energy that it generates can be used to support a main street. Because so many people drive to the Wal-Mart, developers are always looking to locate additional retail there. Normally this retail consists of "pad" sites floating in the parking lot, but there is no reason why these stores cannot be re-configured as a main street that stretches from the Wal-Mart to the center of the hamlet. In this way, the big-box store lends energy to the hamlet instead of sucking it away. The Wal-Mart is still provided with its standard five acres of parking, but that parking does not interrupt what is now a continuous high-quality pedestrian sequence from the Wal-Mart to the neighborhood green.

This discussion brings up a larger point, which has to do with the approach one takes to the various components of sprawl, such as the Wal-Marts, the drive-through Burger Kings, and even the large used-car lots. The solution is not to ban these components of sprawl entirely but, as with the Wal-Mart, to allocate them to the appropriate place. The appropriate place for the used-car lot, like the Wal-Mart, is at the edge of the neighborhood, where it does not interrupt pedestrian continuity. Often, these uses are consolidated into a District, an area exempted from most of the pedestrian-oriented requirements of the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*. The discipline of the neighborhood is not about eliminating choice, but about expanding choice, and allocating each choice to the proper location.

Again, it must be stressed that this discussion of big-box retail, like the discussion of hamlet development that preceded it, is based on a painfully realistic understanding of current real estate development practice. It would be more pleasant to assume that no big-box retail is likely in Onondaga County, just as it would be preferable to assume that all new growth would occur as urban infill rather than along country highways. But because both of these negative outcomes are possible -- indeed likely -- it is essential that their impacts be mitigated through the techniques described here. It should be made clear, however, that it is the explicit policy of this Plan to discourage big-box retail, and also to rebuild and complete existing neighborhoods before constructing new ones.

THE ONONDAGA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION POLICY

This section of the *Plan* describes the policies that will govern the County's planning of its own transportation infrastructure, and which are recommended for use by individual municipalities as well. It focuses upon the provision and maintenance of a transportation infrastructure that supports the health of neighborhoods, primarily by encouraging pedestrian life.

Land-use patterns and transportation policy are inextricably intertwined, and it is impossible to affect one without addressing the other head-on. Many of the changes in the American built environment over the past fifty years can be linked to transportation planning practices that unintentionally ran counter to the formation and preservation of community. These practices were not designed to undermine community life, but they were the result of transportation policies that could have produced no other outcome. By preferencing vehicular mobility over both accessibility and livability, transportation policy allowed the ever-increasing demands of the automobile to be the primary determinant of regional and neighborhood structure. The results include highways built atop previously viable communities, and standards for residential streets that induce speeds that are too high to support pedestrian life. While this outcome is universally criticized, the policies that created it still hold sway in professional circles, especially in the fields of transportation planning, road design, public works, and emergency services. For that reason, a policy statement is necessary to serve as a foundation for future public decisionmaking on transportation-related issues in Onondaga County.

The policies that follow draw from a collection of recent documents created to reintroduce the goal of community health into transportation planning. They include the *Traditional Neighborhood Code* included herein, the *Charter of the Congress for the New Urbanism*, and the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Traditional Neighborhood Development Street Design Guidelines*, A *Recommended Practice*. The author of this third document, Chester Chellman, co-authored the Policies that follow. They are organized from general to the specific, beginning at the scale of the region, focusing next on the individual neighborhood, and finally addressing the detailing of the streets themselves.

In endorsing the *Settlement Plan*, Onondaga County will use this Transportation Policy as a guide to inform and direct its own transportation planning. Not all of these policies concern issues that are within the control of the County, however. These are included nonetheless in hope that the County's municipalities, developers, school boards, and other concerned parties might incorporate them into their own planning decisions. Indeed, municipalities that wish for a future in which transportation investments improve neighborhood livability should adopt this Transportation Policy into their local plans.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. THE REGION

The structure of the region and the livability of its neighborhoods is determined in significant measure by the structure of its transportation network.   The policies below address those issues that must be considered when planning transportation at the regional scale.

I.1 Intermodal Balance

Transportation planning should seek to attain a healthy balance between transportation modes, including cars, transit, bicycles, and walking.

Like most places, Onondaga County has for many years focused on the private automobile as the primary means of transportation. More recently, the true costs of a car-dominant society have become apparent, as described in this *Settlement Plan*. While it is unrealistic to suggest that the car will soon cease to be necessary in Onondaga County, the costs of automotive orientation could be mitigated by focusing County policy on achieving a better balance among the full range of transportation modes.   This focus on intermodal balance should underlie all regional-scale planning in the County.

I.2 Mobility vs. Accessibility -- The Role of Land Use

Transportation planning should maintain as its primary goal the enhancement of all people's access to their daily needs.

Transportation planning has for years focused primarily on *"automobility"*: the provision of roadways to allow easy automotive access to destinations. Lately, the emphasis has shifted from automobility to *mobility*, the provision of multiple modes of transportation to provide such access.   But most recently, planners have come to realize that *mobility* is secondary to *accessibility*: the ability to access ones daily needs with the minimum amount of travel and cost.   In many cases, access is best enhanced not through the provision of mobility but through the avoidance of single-use zoning in favor of a fine-grained mix of land uses.   The first consideration should be how to enhance access without necessarily enhancing mobility.

I.3 Induced Traffic

All new roadbuilding and road-widening proposals should be evaluated in light of the phenomenon of Induced Traffic.

Induced Traffic is a recently-documented phenomenon acknowledged by transportation experts but often not considered in local planning decisions. It pertains to how most roadbuilding efforts intended to reduce traffic congestion fail to do so because the new roadway capacity is quickly absorbed by those drivers who were choosing not to drive because of the congestion.   It was demonstrated in a study covering thirty California counties between 1973 and 1990 which found that, for every 10 percent increase in roadway capacity, traffic increased 9 percent within four years time.   If Induced Traffic were fully considered as part of federal policy, many investments in new roadway infrastructure would perhaps be directed instead towards the repair of existing roadways or to other civic infrastructure. As a matter of policy, all new roadway construction designed to increase capacity should be studied in light of Induced Traffic.

I.4 The Highwayless Town

High-speed roadways should not be allowed to pass through neighborhoods.

Norman Bel Geddes, the designer of the U.S. Interstate system, declared in 1939, "Motorways must not be allowed to infringe upon the city." Where they do provide access to the city and other neighborhoods, highways must take on the low-speed geometries of avenues and boulevards, so as to not destroy pedestrian viability. As is evident, this rule was often forgotten throughout the United States, most obviously with the insertion of elevated interstates through city centers. Also quite damaging, though less obvious, has been the repeated widening of state and county roads to accommodate through-commuting to the detriment of local pedestrian life.   This latter practice must be avoided -- and in some cases reversed, as in Liverpool -- if the County's neighborhoods are to thrive.   High-speed roadways are often appropriate, but not within neighborhoods.

I.5 The Townless Highway

Rural highways should be kept free of roadside development.

As the highway should not enter the town, so should the town not allow itself to grow along the highway. Where high-speed roads pass through the countryside, roadside development should be discouraged, since it impedes through-traffic and blights the countryside.   Roads intended for through-traffic should be acknowledged as such and protected from such use wherever possible.   As discussed in the *Regional Plan*, any development along such roads should be concentrated in Hamlets at intersections.   The *Plan* describes at length how such development can be encouraged.

I.6 Regional Facilities vs. Local Needs

Roads should be planned to serve regional transportation goals, but these goals should not be allowed to trump the local need for healthy neighborhoods.

As described in *The Highwayless Town* (I.5), regional transportation goals must be questioned if they cause high-speed roadways to pass through neighborhoods. Most often, the proper solution is not the victory of the neighborhood or of the regional roadway, but the placement of the roadway at the neighborhood edge such that all needs are met. It must be remembered that ease of movement is of little value in the absence of worthy destinations.

I.7 Transit vs. Parking

The provision of parking facilities in urban centers should be considered in light of the fact that ease of parking discourages the use of transit.

While large-scale parking lots and on-site parking requirements may be appropriate for certain urban locations, they should not be considered in ignorance of their effect on transit ridership.   Clearly, any new large parking lot, roadway, or other facility which eases automotive commuting will reduce demand for transit.   Where efforts are underway to increase transit ridership, and such transit indeed provides a viable alternative to driving, parking facilities should not be encouraged.

I.8 Park and Ride

Due to the ineffectiveness of park-and-ride programs, transit planning should focus on receiving riders as pedestrians.

A 1978 study found that park-and-ride lots in and near Syracuse reduced weekday vehicle-miles traveled by less than 1%.   This is not surprising, as park-and-ride programs have rarely proven effective outside of the most heavily urbanized areas.   In most places, for transit to be well-used, riders must start as pedestrians.   The best way to achieve this end is to reinforce the neighborhood structure of areas around transit stops, such that they contain the widest possible range of uses in a walkable environment. Once again, transportation needs can best be addressed in the context of land-use practices.

I.9 Bicycle Network

Most destinations within the County should be accessible via bicycle in a thorough network of bike trails, bike lanes, and bike routes.

Bike *trails* are dedicated travel paths detached from high-speed roadways. Bike *lanes* are dedicated lanes within moderate-speed roadways.   Bike *routes* -- the majority of thoroughfares -- are low-speed streets that bicycles share with other traffic.   While not every thoroughfare can or should provide bicycle access, the bicycle network of trails, lanes, and routes should provide access throughout the County.   *The emphasis need not be on creating many expensive bike trails and lanes; a few key routes, combined with low-speed neighborhood streets, can constitute an effective network.* This network should be supplemented by the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities at major civic, work, and retail destinations. While bicycle ridership is not widespread in Onondaga County, the County's transportation decisions should acknowledge that such ridership is unlikely to increase in the absence of an effective bicycle infrastructure.

I.10 Freight Movement

Rail and Canal shipment of goods should be encouraged for freight movement, and large trucks should be discouraged from within neighborhoods.

It has been calculated that shipping goods by rail requires one fifteenth the amount of fuel that is needed to do so by truck. Given the economic and environmental inefficiency of trucking -- and its contribution to traffic congestion -- alternative modes of shipping should be encouraged. To the contrary, the U.S. Government, primarily through the construction and maintenance of roads, subsidizes the trucking industry approximately $300 billion per year. Given the circumstances, the County should make efforts to make rail and barge shipment more attractive. For local truck deliveries, where the presence of large trucks can damage neighborhood walkability, municipalities can choose to demand the use of smaller vehicles by distributors.

II. THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Central to the Onondaga County Settlement Plan is a focus on the preservation and enhancement of neighborhoods. This objective in no way runs counter to the provision of an effective transportation network. However, to avoid undermining neighborhood health, transportation planning must be informed by a thorough understanding of the structure and function of neighborhood environments.

II.1 The Neighborhood Structure

Transportation planning decisions should be made based upon an understanding of the traditional neighborhood as the fundamental pattern of settlement.

Often, transportation decisions that damage neighborhoods are the result not of misplaced priorities -- regional facilities trumping local needs (1.7) -- but of an innocent misunderstanding of the neighborhood structure: the location of its center and edges. This is particularly likely in areas where that structure has already been undermined by previous planning efforts. To avoid this error, transportation planners working in settled areas should begin their investigations by mapping the locations of existing neighborhood centers and edges. Once this structure is fully apprehended, planners can work with confidence that their efforts do not compromise pedestrian viability. Indeed, the proper identification of a neighborhood edge could perhaps serve to justify the improvement of a roadway to a higher-volume standard.

II.2 School Transportation

School planning decisions within the County should be made with due consideration to the burden placed upon roadways by school buses and parental drop-offs.

One need only drive to work on a school holiday to recognize what a great percentage of commuting-time trips are the result of children not being able to walk to school. The traditional concept of the neighborhood school within walking distance has until recently been forgotten in a nationwide trend towards large-scale education warehouses. Decisions to consolidate schools at an anti-pedestrian scale are often made in ignorance of the cost of busing -- estimated at $400 per student annually -- and the undue burden that regional school commuting places on roadways. To the degree that the County is able to influence educational facility policy, it should encourage the preservation and creation of smaller schools within walkable neighborhoods.

II.3 Avoiding Cul-de-sacs

Cul-de-sac (dead-end) streets are to be discouraged, as they overburden adjacent roads, damage social capital, and limit emergency-vehicle access.

While cul-de-sacs provide an environment of minimal traffic, they create a larger system in which very few roads carry the majority of the traffic and quickly become overburdened. They also limit emergency vehicle

access, since there is only one path to each destination, and add to the costs of policing, school busing, snow plowing and mail delivery. Finally, sociological studies have demonstrated conclusively that fewer neighborhood social ties are generated when pedestrian through-motion (from both ends of a street) is not possible. For these reasons, new thoroughfares within the county should connect to other thoroughfares at both ends unless prohibited by impassible site conditions.

II.4 Block Size

Within new developments, blocks should generally be small, typically less than 2000 feet in circumference.

Pedestrian activity is encouraged by a porous network of multiple paths between destinations. The most walkable towns and cities have small blocks; for example, Portland, Oregon has blocks 800 feet in circumference. While it is less expensive to build long blocks with fewer connections, these create inferior communities. Where long blocks are unavoidable due to natural conditions, mid-block pedestrian cut-throughs should be encouraged.

II.5 The A/B Network

Transportation planning should be made in light of an understanding of each thoroughfare's classification as Pedestrian Priority or Vehicular Priority.

As previously described, streets within neighborhoods should be designed primarily to support pedestrian life, while streets outside (and between) neighborhoods may be designed primarily as automotive corridors. Pedestrian-friendly thoroughfares can be classified as "A Streets", while automotive corridors can be classified as "B Streets." A large number of B Streets is possible, as long as the A streets form a continuous network of uninterrupted walkability. Once this A/B mapping is made, wise planning decisions can be made about which thoroughfares are able to accept vehicular-oriented or pedestrian-oriented improvements.

II.6 Traffic Calming

Traffic Calming should be considered to retrofit streets which are plagued by speeding, but new thoroughfares can avoid the need for such efforts by being designed to lower-speed specifications.

An entire discipline within transportation engineering has arisen in order to compensate for the widespread error of placing high-design-speed streets in otherwise walkable neighborhoods. Traffic Calming includes the construction of speed bumps, speed tables, chicanes, bulb-outs, roundabouts, and other impediments to through traffic in streets which are typically too wide. These expensive remedies are indeed useful in situations in which speeding is a problem, and should be considered fully. But greater efforts should be made to build and protect streets and intersections which result naturally in slower driving speeds. These are addressed more fully in Policies II.7 and III.1 - III.9.

II.7 Traditional Intersection Design

Traditional intersection design should be considered as a way to calm traffic in new neighborhoods.

Forks, staggered intersections, triangles, and other quirky traditional street configurations were once a mainstay of neighborhood design. More recently, with the prioritization of through-travel over walkability, these low-speed, low-volume intersections were ruled out in favor of a limited selection of simple configurations -- essentially right-angle crosses and T's. These intersections are indeed simpler, but their contribution to vehicular or pedestrian safety has not been proven. While it would be equally unjustified to discard such intersections in favor of quirky traditional configurations, traffic engineers should not rule out the latter as legitimate options within neighborhoods unless they can demonstrate a likelihood of increased risk.

II.8 Rear Lanes

In the construction of new neighborhoods of moderate density or higher, rear lanes should be built to avoid a streetscape of garage doors.

The city of Portland, Oregon recently outlawed "snout houses" -- houses whose front facade consists primarily of garage doors -- citing their contribution to an unfriendly, sociofugal environment Also common in Onondaga County, the garage-front house is the inevitable result of placing a 24'-wide garage on a 50' lot. While a larger lot can absorb a garage more easily, lots 50' wide or less should be accessed by a narrow rear alley (typically 12' of pavement in a 24' right-of-way) to avoid the snout-house syndrome.

II.9 Nature Preservation/Celebration

The trajectory of new thoroughfares should be based upon the preservation of natural features and the display of site amenities to their best advantage.

Too often, new streets are laid with inadequate consideration given to the preservation of natural topography, trees, and other site features. Instead of laying streets "lightly on the land," developers resort to mass grading, which kills trees and promotes erosion. Similarly, the beauty of a site is often hidden from view by, for example, placing the best views behind private houses rather than leaving them accessible to all. Builders that wish to maximize the value of their properties will place their new thoroughfares in a way that both preserves and celebrates nature.

II.10 On-Site Parking

While necessary in the auto-oriented suburbs, the on-site parking requirement can be harmful to downtown areas that wish to encourage pedestrian activity.

The renowned planner Neil Pierce has noted, "no great city has ever protected parking as an important right." As already discussed, the generous provision of parking discourages the use of alternative modes of transportation and also tends to create an unpleasant streetscape lined by parking lots. It also can result in empty sidewalks, since all visitors park directly adjacent to their destinations. In areas where transit and pedestrian activity are present but in need of enhancement, municipalities should consider eliminating requirements for on-site parking provision.

II.11 Reduced Parking Requirements

Reduced parking requirements should be considered for new developments that mix uses.

Suburban parking ratios of spaces-per-square-foot are necessary in areas where everyone drives, but they also tend to create environments in which no one will walk. Conversely, if one creates transit-viable environments in which walking is a pleasure, fewer parking spaces will be necessary. In encouraging pedestrian-friendly mixed-use areas, municipalities should lower these ratios to fully take into account shared parking (II.12), on-street parking, and reduced auto-dependence.

II.12 Shared Parking

Shared parking, the greatest contribution to reduced parking needs, should be taken fully into account.

As noted above, mixed-use areas benefit from shared parking, in which complementary schedules allow spaces to do double or triple duty. For example, a single space may serve an office worker during the day, a resident overnight, and shoppers during rush hour. Interestingly, in a truly urban environment, these could all be the same person, who then might not need to own a car at all. The parking efficiency of mixing complementary uses has been estimated as high as 170%, allowing the elimination of potentially three-fifths of the spaces planned. Municipalities should offer such reductions as an incentive for the creation of mixed-use environments. *The Settlement Plan's TND Code* includes a table for calculating shared parking ratios.

III. THE STREET

When one thinks of a neighborhood, one thinks first of its streets. Far from being simply conduits for vehicles, a neighborhood's streets are its public spaces. As such, their design must take into consideration the needs of all of their users, particularly pedestrians. The policies that follow address the design of streets within neighborhoods with the goal of enhancing neighborhood livability.

III.1 Vehicular / Bicyclist / Pedestrian Balance

Street design should reflect the goal of accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists as well as automobiles.

In recent years, streets have been designed by traffic engineers with the sole objective of moving cars. As a result, pedestrian and bicycle use suffered, as did the performance of businesses along them. It must be remembered that, in addition to being traffic ways, streets are also the location of American civic life. Within neighborhoods, streets should be designed with the interdisciplinary goal of supporting the widest variety of uses, not just driving. In most cases, this approach means providing narrow (slower speed) travel lanes, on-street parking, continuous tree cover, and ample sidewalks.

This policy, like many below, is reflected in the Thoroughfare Standards (Table B2) of the TND Code. Please refer to these for further illustration.

III.2 Design Speed

Thoroughfares accessible to pedestrians should have a design speed under 45 mph, and thoroughfares within neighborhoods should have a design speed under 30 mph.

Pedestrians do not feel comfortable walking where cars are speeding. Further, most drivers will not obey speed limits if a street is designed for higher speeds. The only sure way to control speeds in pedestrian environments is through the width, curvature, and detailing of the vehicular cartpath. While higher speeds should be allowed in strictly automotive environments, low-speed geometrics should be used to control speeds within neighborhoods.

III.3 Street Widths

The widths of new and reconfigured streets should reflect their desired design speed.

Far from increasing safety, wider driving and parking lanes ease vehicular motion and encourage speeding on residential streets. Within neighborhoods, driving lanes should not exceed 10' in width, and parking lanes should not exceed 7' in width (including the gutter). In certain conditions, 8' and 9' driving lanes should also be considered.

III.4 Shared Lanes

In limited-density residential neighborhoods, individual striped lanes should be replaced by a single shared lane that accommodates travel in both directions.

The standard highway engineers' manual, the AASHTO "green book," recommends shared lanes "where single-family units prevail," and describes them as containing a single 12' center lane flanked by parking lanes. By this measure, a roadway in a residential neighborhood should be 19' wide if it has parking on one side, 26' wide with parking on both sides. These measurements are often fought by fire departments, who demand a 20'-clear travel lane for their trucks, in order to speed response time. This objection was refuted by the recent Swift Report (of Longmont, Colorado), which demonstrated over an eight-year study how narrower streets increase public safety, and how fire response time was a statistically insignificant factor in this relationship. For this reason, new streets whose primary purpose is to provide access to single-family houses within neighborhoods should employ the single shared travel lane.

III.5 Curb Radii

Within neighborhoods, the radius of curvature of the curb at intersections should generally not exceed 15'.

Current roadbuilding ordinances tend to promote large curb radii, which ease large-vehicle access, but increase pedestrian crossing distances while allowing cars to speed around corners. For this reason, curb radii on new or rebuilt streets should be no larger than necessary to accommodate the largest vehicle that will typically use the street, which is most often a garbage truck. Within neighborhoods, where low-speed travel is encouraged, such vehicles can be expected to temporarily cross into the opposing travel lane in order to make a tight turn -- particularly fire trucks with sirens. As long as such access is provided, curb radii of 15, 10, and even 5' are often appropriate.

III.6 Parallel Parking

Except in rural areas, all new and rebuilt streets should contain parallel parking on at least one side.

Parallel parking protects pedestrians from traffic, causes cars to drive more slowly, reduces requirements for on-site parking, and increases pedestrian activity. Depending on the use and density of the neighborhood, parallel parking should be provided on one or both sides of the street, marked or unmarked. (Typically, when a shared travel lane (III.4) is used, the parking lanes are not marked.) All main streets in retail areas should of course have parking on both sides, and head-in parking may be justified in downtowns.

III.7 One-Way Streets

One-way streets should generally be avoided, particularly multiple-lane one-ways.

Like most American cities, Syracuse has reconfigured many of its downtown streets to one-way in order to speed through-traffic. The reversal of such reconfiguration is the first step that many American cities take in order to revitalize struggling downtown areas. Multiple-lane one way streets damage pedestrian life by encouraging speeding, and damage businesses by distributing evening traffic unevenly. One way streets are only justified when the paved surface (including parking) is too narrow to accommodate the level of through-traffic desired.

III.8 Curving Streets

Street curves, rather than being randomly imposed, should result from topography and not create undue disorientation.

Contemporary subdivisions tend to include randomly curving streets that disorient drivers. These are provided in order to terminate vistas, but that goal is better achieved through the use of traditional intersections, such that relatively straight streets aim at site features or notable buildings. On steep topography, however, curving streets are necessary to avoid mass grading, and these should be allowed to curve very tightly in recognition of design speeds as low as 10 mph.

III.9 Signal Timing

Most traffic signals within neighborhoods should be timed on cycles no longer than 60 seconds.

Current traffic management practice encourages the lengthening of traffic light cycles in order to limit interruptions to through traffic. While this approach is appropriate for highways, it causes great pedestrian and driver frustration in urban areas, discouraging walking and promoting speeding and "road rage." Just as maximum through-flow is not the only criteria for street design, it is not the only criteria for traffic management. Within neighborhoods, signal timing should be limited to encourage walking and ease driver frustration.

III.10 Skywalks

Skywalks and underground passages should not be provided when sidewalk access is safe and convenient.

A futuristic idea that has come and gone, skywalks and other sidewalk substitutes are only appropriate when no other safe passage is possible, as they create a redundant system than robs sidewalks of pedestrian life and undermines retail viability.

III.11 The Transect

New and rebuilt streets should be detailed in a manner that reflects their relative position in the Urban-Rural Transect.

Illustrated in the *Settlement Plan (page 13)*, the Transect describes how every aspect of the built environment changes as one moves from the country to the city. Sidewalks become wider, trees become more regular in their species and placement, open swales become closed curbs, parking spaces are striped, and building setbacks shorten as one nears a downtown area. Current subdivision guidelines tend to impose a universal standard that neglects these transformations, an error that should be avoided in new street construction.

III.12 Sidewalks

Within neighborhoods, most thoroughfares should include sidewalks on both sides.

In some cases, a low-traffic road can support both cars and pedestrians within the same paved area. Such a road is called a *Woonerf*, and is built with such a low design speed that such interaction makes sense. In other cases, low-density roads at the edges of neighborhoods, a one-sided sidewalk may be appropriate due to extremely light pedestrian load. But otherwise, all residential and commercial thoroughfares within neighborhoods need sidewalks on both sides. Sidewalks should normally be 5' wide in residential areas, increasing in width with residential density, and reaching a minimum 10' width on retail streets.

III.13 Crossings

All high-traffic areas expected to support pedestrian life should have marked pedestrian crossings.

While most intersections within downtown Syracuse are well marked, other heavily-used crossings within the County do not provide adequate indication of the pedestrian right-of-way. Any intersection that receives both heavy vehicular traffic and heavy pedestrian traffic should be striped; where crossing is deemed a hazard, they should be signalized. Bricked crosswalks may be appropriate in the most urban areas, but it is better to stripe many crossings than to brick only a few.

III.14 Street Trees

All streets should be lined with trees in order to enhance the experience of both pedestrians and drivers.

With the exception of very narrow urban streets and passages with inadequate space, all streets and paths should be lined on both sides with deciduous trees at an average spacing distance no greater than 30' on center. In suburban areas, such trees should be located in a continuous tree strip between the curb and the sidewalk; in urban areas, such trees should be planted in sidewalk grates. This suggestion is perhaps not compelling from a transportation-planning point of view, but it is very important from a livability and tourism point of view.

III.15 Lighting

Streetlighting in pedestrian areas should respond to the Transect, and should achieve desired lighting levels through the use of smaller light standards.

While infrequent powerful lights are the most efficient way to provide night illumination, they create an environment that discourages pedestrian activity and can thus contribute to crime. The solution is to use small light standards -- typically 8' to 15' tall -- in a frequency appropriate to the urbanity of the location. In a city center, a 30' on-center spacing may be appropriate; in rural suburbs, lights may be limited to intersections; in the country, lights may be eliminated entirely.   Only in strictly vehicular areas are large, powerful light standards appropriate.

III.16 Shielded Parking

Parking lots and structures should be shielded from view of sidewalk, by habitable building or, where this is not possible, by attractive walls or greenery.

There is little greater deterrent to pedestrian life than an exposed parking lot or structure. All new parking structures should be designed to face the street with habitable building -- typically retail -- on at least the ground story. Upper stories, when not lined by apartments or offices, should be detailed in a manner befitting occupied buildings. All new surface parking lots should be hidden behind at least a thin layer of buildings; where this is not possible, the inferior solution of a decorative wall or shrub is preferable to no edge at all.

III.17 Parking Lot Quality

Surface parking lots should contain trees in ratio adequate to provide significant shade.

While they are a detriment to street life, parking lots are still public spaces and should be detailed as such. The most efficient way to enhance the parking environment is to provide trees between parking rows as along a street, at a typical distance of 30' on center. An alternative solution places tree-lined pedestrian passageways at cross-grain to the parking rows. Either approach contributes tremendously to the parking experience.

IMPLEMENTATION

While a review of the *Settlement Plan* in its entirety would suggest the best process for its implementation by individual municipalities, it is useful to outline that process here with absolute clarity. The paragraphs below describe the role of the County and its individual municipalities in terms of utilizing each of the documents that comprise this *Plan*.

THE REGIONAL PLAN: INTENT

County Role

Maintain a Smart Growth Library of books, articles, studies, and other documents that explain and demonstrate the distinctions between Neighborhood and Sprawl development patterns.

Municipality Role

Make the availability of the County's Smart Growth Library known to all mayors, councilors, planners and planning board members, public works and transportation officials, police and fire chiefs, planning consultants, architects, home-builders, and developers. Consider establishing a Municipal Smart Growth Library containing similar documents.

THE REGIONAL PLAN: URBAN STRUCTURE AND MUNICIPAL FRAMEWORK

County Role

Distribute the *Settlement Plan* to all 35 municipalities within the county. Arrange and lead a public workshop for all municipalities to present, explain, and answer questions regarding the *Plan*. Provide ongoing leadership, interpretation, and technical assistance as requested. Maintain a database documenting the interaction with each municipality in order to ensure regular and evenly distributed assistance. Record and publish success stories and lessons learned on a County-wide basis to assist municipalities in their planning processes.

Municipality Role

Act with recognition that the future of the metropolis will be determined primarily by local planning decisions. Commit to make planning decisions not in a vacuum but in consideration of their regional impact.

THE REGIONAL PLAN: OPEN SPACE

County Role

Distribute the Preserves and Reserves Map to individual municipalities and assist in its interpretation. Refine map over time to include additional data provided by individual municipalities. Assist municipalities in implementing the open-space preservation strategies discussed.

Municipality Role

Adopt the County's Preserves and Reserves map in concept, while committing to improve it in detail. In completing a Town Settlement Plan, refer to the Preserves and Reserves Map for the initial location and boundaries of the open space that the Town Plan should seek to reinforce. Enlarge and refine the boundaries of the Reserve and Preserve areas, using the open-space preservation strategies suggested. Provide the county with additional data about the shape of these areas.

THE REGIONAL PLAN: TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

County Role

Follow the Transportation Policies in all planning, maintenance, and investment in County transportation facilities. Distribute the Policies to individual municipalities and assist in their interpretation. Meet with all municipal transportation engineers and public works departments to discuss the influence of the Policies on their local transportation planning, maintenance, and investment decisions.

Municipality Role

Thoroughly review the Transportation Policies, and consider how they may be adopted and implemented. Reconsider and rewrite local zoning laws and subdivision guidelines to reflect these Policies. Consider following the Transportation Policies in all planning, maintenance, and investment in local transportation facilities.

THE REGIONAL PLAN: IMPLEMENTATION

County Role

Distribute the *Settlement Plan* to all 35 municipalities within the County. (In addition, distribute this page of the *Plan* independently to each municipality for posting in its planning department or town office.) Arrange and lead a public workshop for all municipalities to present, explain, and answer questions regarding the *Plan*. Provide ongoing leadership, interpretation, and technical assistance as requested. Maintain a database documenting the interaction with each municipality in order to ensure regular and evenly distributed assistance. Record and publish success stories and lessons learned on a County-wide basis to assist municipalities in their planning processes.

Municipality Role

Act with recognition that the future of Onondaga County will be determined primarily by local planning decisions. Commit to make planning decisions not in a vacuum but in consideration of their regional impact. (Post this sheet prominently as a ready reminder of implementation goals and responsibilities.)

THE PILOT PROJECTS

County Role

Distribute the *Pilot Projects* to individual municipalities and assist in their interpretation. Emphasize the universal quality of these *Projects* and their applicability to local conditions. Record and publish new projects of high quality as further models for emulation.

Municipality Role

Complete a Municipal Settlement Plan of the type demonstrated in the *Town of Camillus Settlement Plan*. County Villages should complete this plan in conjunction with the towns that surround them. Carefully review the other *Projects* for their applicability to local conditions, transferring lessons as appropriate. Communicate with the County regarding opportunities for creating additional projects of similar type.

THE TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT CODE

County Role

Distribute the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code* to all 35 municipalities within the county. Arrange and lead a public workshop for all municipalies to present, explain, and answer questions regarding the *Code*. Provide technical assistance, as requested, in the *Code's* local adoption.

Municipality Role

Thoroughly review the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code* and consider how it may be adopted and implemented. Some municipalities may elect to adopt the *Code* as a replacement to existing zoning and subdivision regulations; most should, at the least, adopt the *Code* as an alternative permitting path, and incentivize its use. Consult with the County on the process of adapting the *Code* to meet local legal requirements and on possible user incentives.

THE TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

County Role

Reproduce the *Guidelines* and distribute them widely, particularly to all mayors, councilors, planners and planning board members, public works and transportation officials, police and fire chiefs, planning consultants, architects, home-builders, and developers. Hold a County-wide seminar describing their intent and use. Keep a database of new projects that either illustrate or violate the *Guidelines*. Consider creating an annual "Smart Growth" award event.

Municipality Role

Distribute the *Guidelines* as widely as possible in the community. Require attendance at SOCPA educational events of all relevant municipal employees and consultants.

ONONDAGA COUNTY SETTLEMENT PLAN

PILOT PROJECT 1: CAMILLUS
A MUNICIPAL SETTLEMENT PLAN

SUMMARY:

The Plan for the Town of Camillus is a Municipal Settlement Plan that all of the County's 35 municipalities should consider for its applicability to their own circumstances. Ideally, each town should complete such a plan, with each Village participating in the plan completed by its surrounding Town. The plan presents a single application of an approach which is thoroughly generic and can thus be used almost anywhere. The objectives are straightforward: the preservation and improvement of existing neighborhoods, the concentration of new development in appropriate locations, a reduction in large-lot sprawl, and the preservation of view corridors and other natural features. Whether or not the Town of Camillus chooses to apply this plan to their future growth, the County's other communities may apply the same methodology to create similar plans of their own.

DISCUSSION:

Overview

Among the County's many municipalities, the Town of Camillus was chosen as the model for a Town Settlement Plan not because it is particularly healthy or unhealthy, or even because it had expressed a desire to be studied. Rather, it was chosen because it appears to have one of everything. Other towns have bigger problems, more beautiful villages, and more enthusiasm for change, but Camillus curiously has managed over the years to collect almost the full set of urban and rural conditions, advatages and disadvantages, that one can find throughout the County. As such, it is an ideal place to study.

Camillus has a traditional main street, West Genessee Street, that is not the most beautiful in the County, but is reasonably healthy and attractive. It also has suburban strip centers like Fairmount Fair, which is not the most unpleasant in the County, but is still a second-rate shopping environment. For the time being, Camillus also has view-sheds of tremendous quality, sweeping pastoral landscapes along the highway. Like in the rest of the County, however, these are continually threatened by the suburban growth that will come with economic growth if current development practices are not changed. Mostly, this growth takes the form of the "McMansion," a building type imported from North Dallas that sits in the middle of a one-acre plot.

Camillus also has the rolling topography that this region is known for, which is both an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage is its natural beauty. The disadvantage is how it displays suburban development to its worst effect. Unlike flat terrain, where one can hide a whole subdivision behind a single layer of houses, here the development is visible in its entirety. To stop this scenario from happening, certain beneficent organizations will occasionally purchase the development rights to a single farm, which is an admirable practice. Unfortunately, there are many more farms to save than there are dollars to save them, which is why this Plan proposes a way to use those dollars to their best effect, along the highway corridors.

Finally, Camillus also contains some visual blight which is somewhat necessary, public works buildings and other utilitarian structures that are unattractive but important. These facilities cannot be fought, but must be restricted to certain areas so that the visual damage is limited. Part of any town settlement plan is to designate a district -- an area dominated by a single type of use -- where these buildings can be located together.

WEST GENESE STREET, CAMILLUS

SUBURBAN STRIP CENTER: FAIRMOUNT FAIR

A RURAL HIGHWAY VIEW-SHED

IMPENDING SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT: THE "FOR SALE" SIGN IS THE X-RAY THAT SHOWS THE ONE-HOUSE-PER-ACRE ZONING LOCATED BENEATH THE SURFACE.

LARGE-LOT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

THE TYPICAL TOPOGRAPHICAL CONDITION OF ROLLING HILLS

ROLLING HILLS ALLOW RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS TO HAVE A MUCH GREATER VISUAL IMPACT


A FARM PRESERVED THROUGH PURCHASED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

A PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY: NECESSARY VISUAL BLIGHT THAT MUST BE SEGREGATED

Re-mapping Camillus

Pictured here is the existing plan for Camillus which, typical for such plans, is a fairly crude instrument. The existence of such a plan actually puts Camillus ahead of many other of the County's towns, which don't even have this much. This plan will be of little help, however, because it is actually an instrument for creating sprawl: four large areas of different zoning type, accompanied by rules concerning minimum subdivision standards and access to services. To control its growth in a way that improves quality of life -- or at least doesn't worsen it -- Camillus needs a more precise instrument, the first draft of which is suggested here.

The process for creating a Municipal Settlement Plan is described thoroughly in the Traditional Neighborhood Development Code's Appendix. This twelve-step process has been applied to the Town of Camillus to produce the Plan that follows. It is important to note that this work was done unilaterally, without the participation of the Town or many of its residents, and therefore can only be considered preliminary at best. True Municipal Settlement Plans should be completed through a fully participatory public charrette process. The key below explains the drawings that follow.
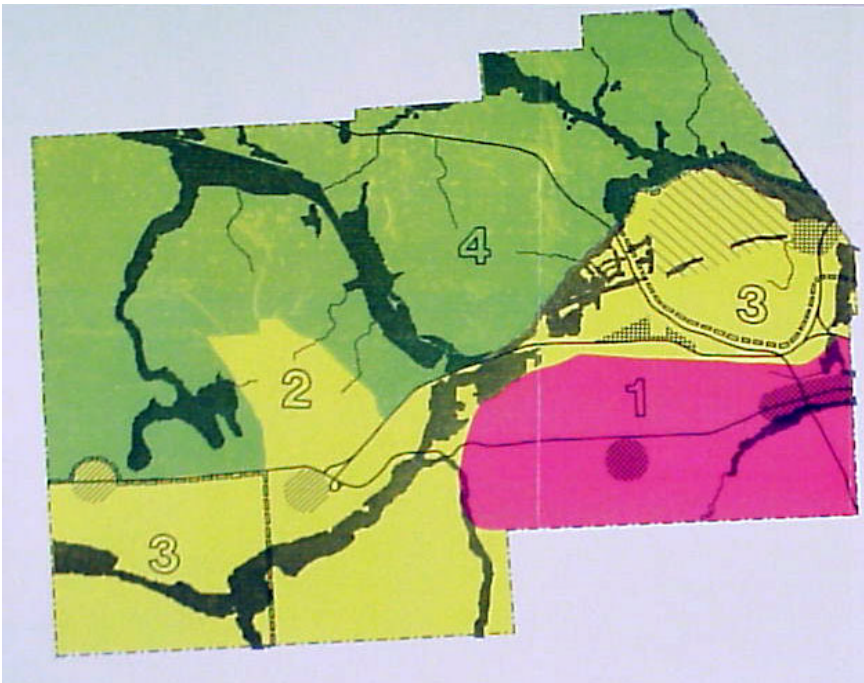
THE CURRENT CAMILLUS LAND PLAN.

RA, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS A
RA-1, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS A-1
RA-2, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS A-2
RA-A, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS A-A

*Municipal Settlement Plan key*

TOWN BOUNDARY	RURAL BOUNDARY LINE
THOROUGHFARES	REGIONAL FEATURE
RAIL LINE	CONVENTIONAL SUBURBAN DEV.
EXISTING BIKEWAY	DISTRICT
FUTURE BIKEWAY	INFILL OPORTUNITY
CANAL	FUTURE HAMLETS
RURAL PRESERVE	
TOWN RURAL RESERVE	FUTURE VILLAGE
COUNTY RURAL RESERVE	
	TRADITIONAL SETTLEMENTS

THE KEY FOR THE TOWN SETTLEMENT PLAN.

*Step 1: Identify and Designate the Current and Future Corridors*

Roadways, railways, the Erie Canal, and a popular bikeway all pass through Camillus and must be preserved. In addition, a future bike trail is identified for preservation. These manmade corridors are sometimes supplemented with natural corridors, which are designated and protected under the Rural Preserve and Rural Reserve sections ahead. The continuity of corridors is a topic that deserves special emphasis. While a town may feel that it deserves to have jurisdiction over everything within its boundaries, this impulse is destructive to the creation of a healthy region. In the *FOCUS Vision Fair*, the number one feature desired by County residents was trails of all types, something that can only be successfully provided by ignoring town boundaries.
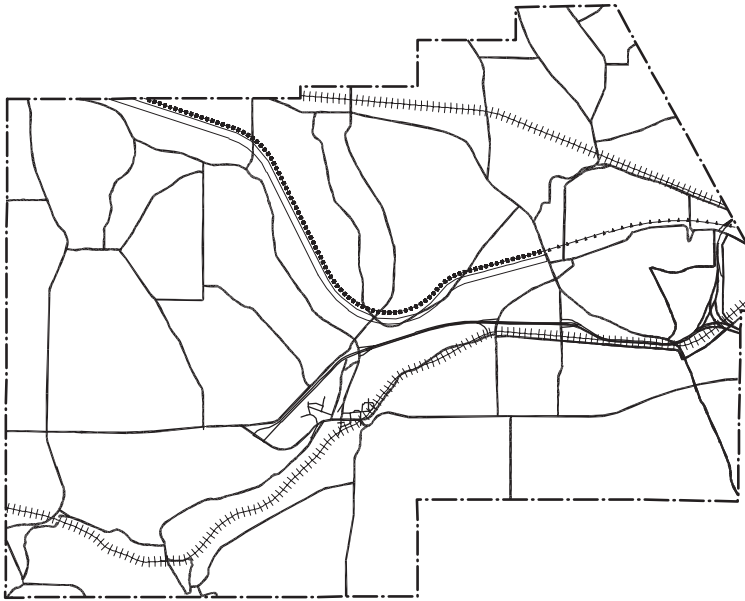
MAP 1. THE CORRIDORS THAT STRUCTURE THE CAMILLUS SETTLEMENT PLAN

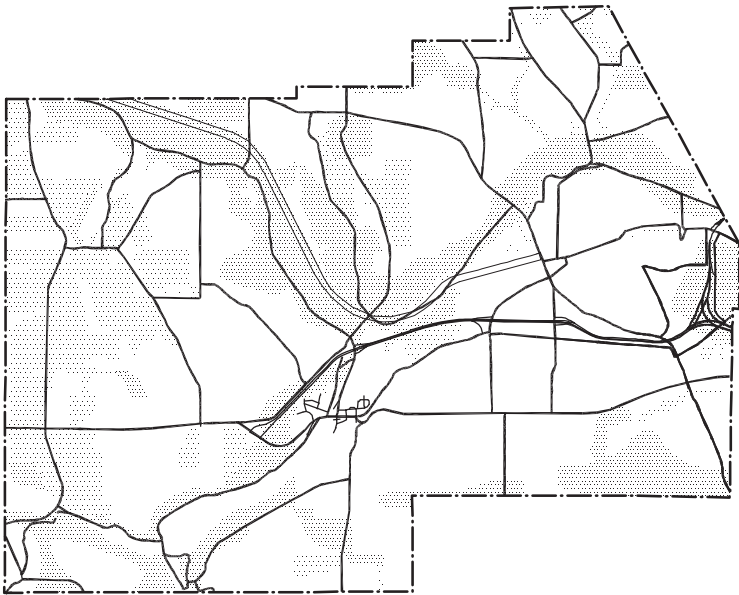*Step 2: Designate the Rural Preserve Zone (RP)*

The RP Zone is downloaded directly from the Rural Preserve Map provided in the *Regional Plan*. As discussed, it is the area of the Town that is truly protected against further development.
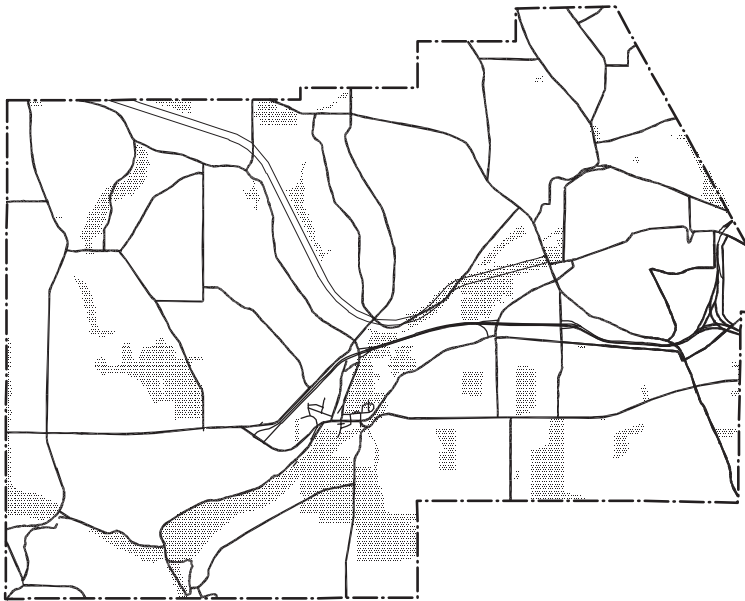
MAP 2. THE RURAL PRESERVE ZONE, TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM THE COUNTY PLAN.

Step 3: Designate the Rural Reserve Zone (RR)

The RR Zone consists of two areas. The first area is downloaded from the Rural Reserve Map provided in the *Regional Plan*. These include a low-lying and wet stretch of land that is known for its fishing, a true quality-of-life asset worth preserving. As discussed, this area is considered a bare minimum and is of limited accuracy. The second area, momentarily called the Supplementary Rural Reserve, contains those additional lands that the Town decides are worthy of preservation. Again, the Rural Reserve contains those areas that the Town will work over time to add to the Rural Preserve, since they are not currently protected legally.

MAP 3. THE RURAL RESERVE ZONE CONSISTS OF AN INITIAL AREA TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM THE COUNTY PLAN, SUPPLEMENTED BY ADDITIONAL AREAS CHOSEN BY THE TOWN.

Step 4: Designate the Rural Boundary Line

The Rural Boundary Line surrounds the Rural Preserve Zone (RP) and Rural Reserve Zones (RR). Note that the County Rural Reserve and the Supplementary Rural Reserve have been combined into a single RR Zone. The distinction between the two is now immaterial, as the combined Rural Reserve has been forwarded to the County so that it may update its RR map to match the Town's map.
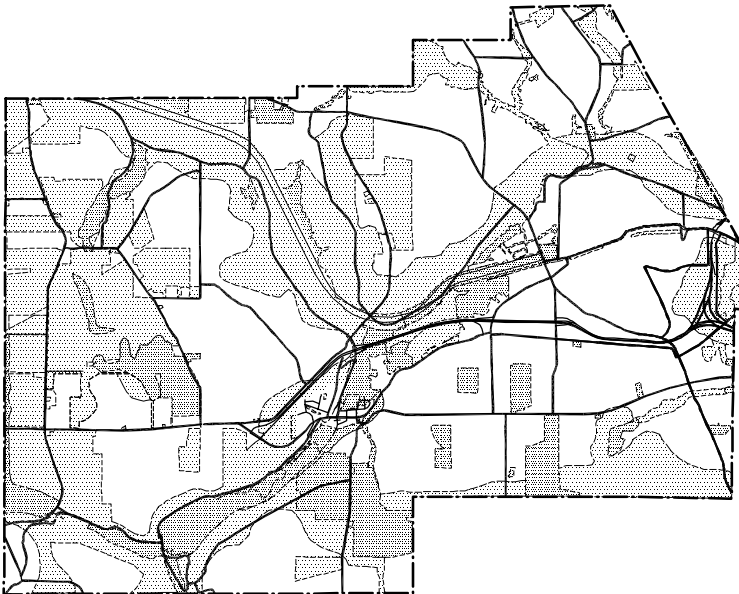
MAP 4. THE RURAL BOUNDARY LINE SURROUNDS THE RURAL PRESERVE AND THE COMBINED RURAL RESERVE.

*Step 5: Designate All Regional Features*

Both natural and manmade, Regional Features are locations outside of the Rural Boundary Line that are deemed to be of such significance that they should influence development. Prominent views, water ways, and landmark properties are all Regional Features, since future development should be asked to respect and accentuate their presence. In this preliminary study only two Regional Features were identified: the abandoned canal and the old trolley bed. A more thorough study would be likely to identify others.
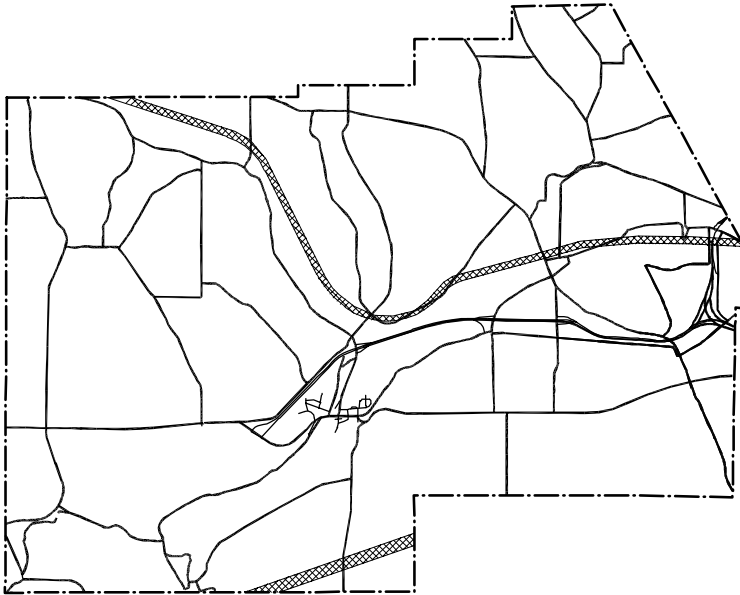
MAP 5. REGIONAL FEATURES, BOTH NATURAL AND MANMADE, ARE MARKED SO THAT THEY CAN INFLUENCE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

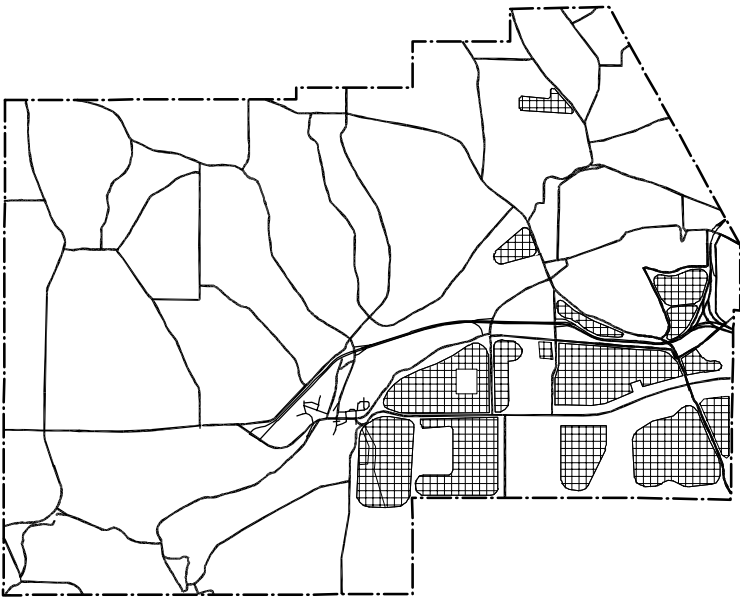*Step 6: Identify and Record Traditional Settlements*

Existing development along traditional neighborhood patterns -- typically completed prior to 1950 -- are marked and identified. These include Hamlets (intensification of use at intersections), Villages (defined as neighborhoods standing free), and the Neighborhoods that combine to form towns and the City. (Please note that these terms are used here to indicate urban form, not governmental status as is usually the case -- for example, a Village as here designated may or may not be a political entity.) In the case of Camillus, these traditional settlements are the Village of Camillus, Bennets Corners, and the other intersections marked. Neighborhoods are shown by indicating their centers and edges, and infill opportunities (underutilized land) are left empty for future designation.
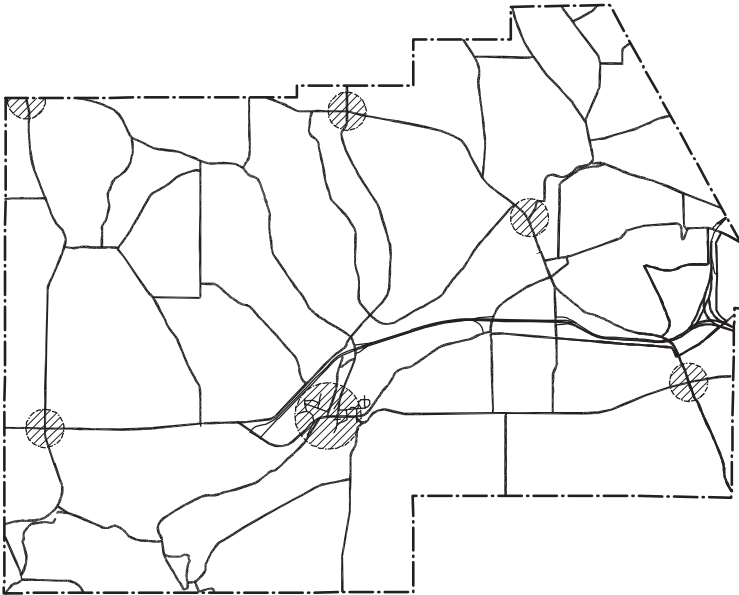
MAP 6. TRADITIONAL SETTLEMENTS ARE IDENTIFIED IN TERMS OF THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD STRUCTURE.

*Step 7: Identify and Record Conventional Developments*

These are typically single-use pods built since 1950 such as housing subdivisions, shopping malls, and office parks. While these areas do not have the potential to become Hamlets, Villages, or Neighborhoods in their current configuration, they might be considered for future *TND* categorization if they demonstrate a desire for redesign. For example, a dead mall may be redesignated as a neighborhood if it undergoes redesign as a town center, as in Pilot Project 5.

MAP 7. AREAS NOT CONFIGURED ACCORDING TO THE TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD PATTERN ARE IDENTIFIED AS CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS.

*Step 8: Identify and Record Existing and Future Districts*

Districts are Airports, Campuses, commercial strips, and other areas dominated by a single use, such as Camillus' large public works facility. These areas, while not typically organized along the neighborhood structure, are a necessary part of the Town Settlement Plan. Future Districts should also be designated in this map, but in this case none is planned for Camillus other than the expansion of the public works facility.
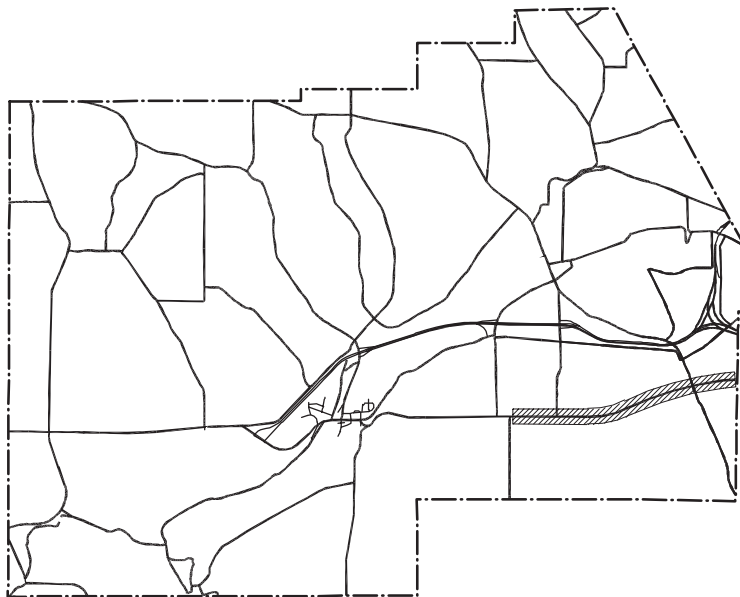
MAP 8. EXISTING AND FUTURE DISTRICTS

*Step 9. Designate Infill Opportunities*

Underdeveloped areas within existing urbanism are the first places where new growth should be promoted. These are designated and approved for development according to the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code.*
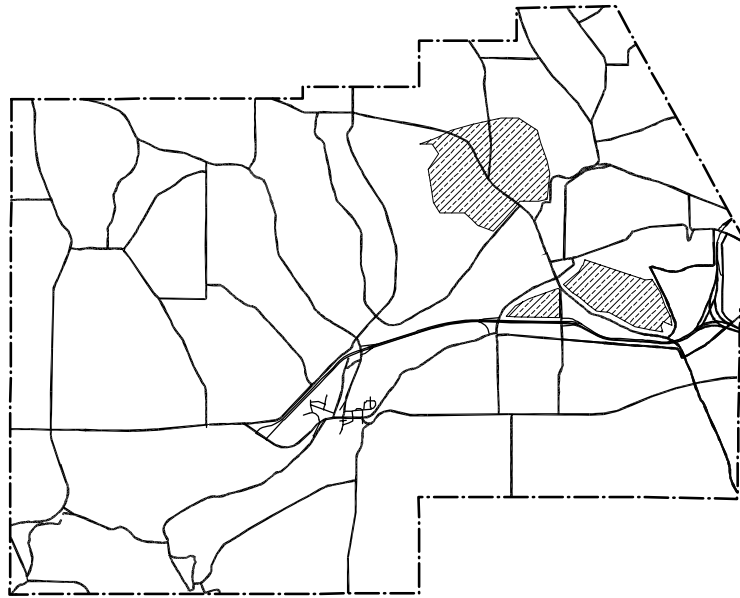
MAP 9. INFILL OPPORTUNITIES ARE DESIGNATED SO THAT THEIR DEVELOPMENT CAN BE PRIORITIZED.

*Step 10. Designate Future Hamlets and Villages*

Recognizing that greenfield growth cannot be effectively curtailed, the plan next designates the ideal locations for such growth, typically at places where infrastructure converges. In the case of Camillus, the Town's crossroads are identified as locations where future new development could occur along the lines of the Intersection Transformation section of the *Regional Plan*. At the moment, these are all imagined as small hamlets, with the exception of the intersection of Route 5 and Ike Dixon Road, where a traditional village development has already been proposed. Please note that all intersections have been indicated as potential hamlet sites because an adequate study has not yet been completed. A more final plan would eliminate certain locations and prioritize others based upon existing infrastructure -- drinking water, wastewater disposal, etc. -- and lack of natural impediments such as steep topography or difficult soils.
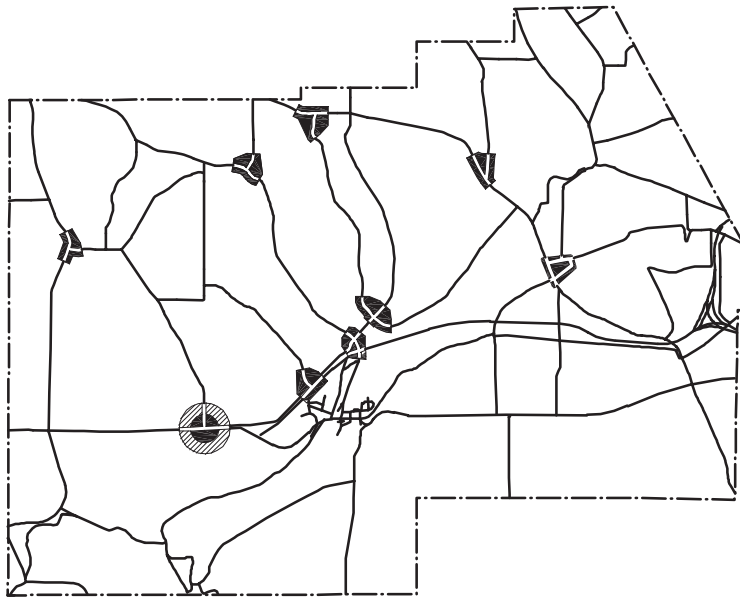
MAP 10. POTENTIAL VILLAGE AND HAMLET SITES ARE LOCATED AT MAJOR CROSSROADS.

Step 11. Designate All Remaining Areas as the Rural Transition Zone.

All areas outside of the Rural Boundary Line not already identified as Neighborhoods, Hamlets, Conventional Development, Districts, Infill Opportunities, Future Hamlets, or Future Villages collectively comprise the Rural Transition Zone. This area, while not incentivized for development, is also not discouraged from development, and is perhaps likely to accumulate Conventional Developments over time if other measures are not taken. The designation of the Rural Transition Zone thus calls attention to either the flaws or the flexibility of the Plan, depending on who is making the judgement.
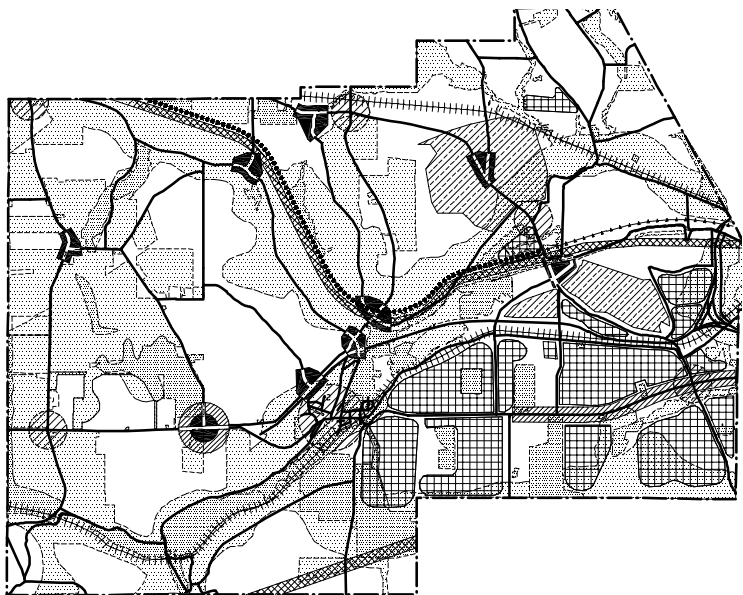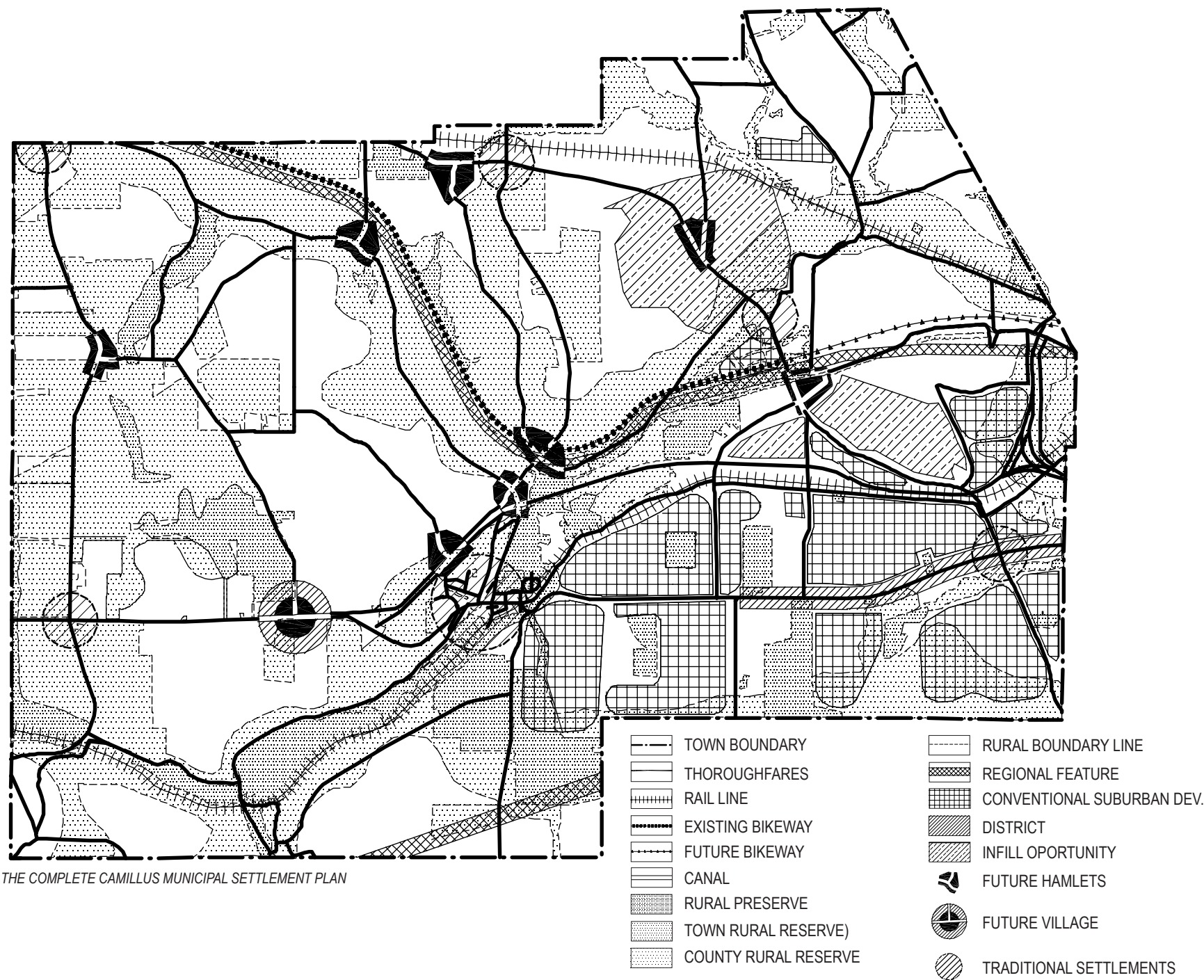

MAP 11. WHITE AREAS COMPRISE THE RURAL TRANSITION ZONE.

Step 12. Record the Attributes

The final step involves identifying and discussing the qualities, resources, and relationships of the Town and its components, identifying current land-use designations, the location of civic buildings, the designation of roadways, and other relevant information. It has not been completed here, but would form a part of the more thorough public plan-making process.

The final image below shows the plan as a whole, a combination of all of the previous drawings. Visible are the preserved road frontages, the rural preserve that has been incorporated from the *Regional Plan*, the additional rural reserve that has been locally decided, the thoroughfares and bikeways, the proposed village and hamlets, and even the places where people can live in suburban sprawl if they so wish. As stated, this is only a first draft, completed with minimal Town input, but it indicates the process and the type of outcome that should accompany such a plan, whether for Camillus or for any other municipality in the County.

Implied in the Camillus Settlement Plan is the local application of the revised TDR scenario described in *The Regional Plan's* Incentives for Hamlet Development. It shows the ideal outcome: all of the major road frontages have had their development rights purchased and transferred to the major intersections. The result is a preservation of the roadside view-sheds and the creation of a collection of new hamlets. This may well be a twenty-year plan, or even a fifty-year plan. The idea is not necessarily to spur development, but rather to redirect it to the appropriate locations. As discussed in the *Settlement Plan*, this outcome would require a number of incentives at the local level. Municipalities that wish to secure their future must first create a plan such as this one, and then determine what it is worth to them. A future of hamlets rather than sprawl should merit certain investments and concessions such as those described in the *Regional Plan*.

THE COMPLETE CAMILLUS MUNICIPAL SETTLEMENT PLAN

----- TOWN BOUNDARY	------ RURAL BOUNDARY LINE
THOROUGHFARES	REGIONAL FEATURE
RAIL LINE	CONVENTIONAL SUBURBAN DEV.
EXISTING BIKEWAY	DISTRICT
FUTURE BIKEWAY	INFILL OPORTUNITY
CANAL	FUTURE HAMLETS
RURAL PRESERVE	
TOWN RURAL RESERVE)	FUTURE VILLAGE
COUNTY RURAL RESERVE	TRADITIONAL SETTLEMENTS

IMPLEMENTATION

Each of the County's 19 towns should complete a Town Settlement Plan. Towns containing Villages should undertake this work jointly with Village government and residents. The Plan should be completed in a public, participatory planning process in order to produce a consensus outcome. While plans such as these are typically prepared by professional staff or planning consultants, it is imaginable that it could be completed by citizen volunteers as well, advised by County Planning staff.

The process of creating such a plan is completely straightforward, as outlined here. The necessary tools are this *Pilot Project* and, from the *Regional Plan*, the Rural Reserves and Preserves maps and the section on Intersection Transformation. In addition the Appendix of the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code* elaborates on this *Pilot Project*.

ONONDAGA COUNTY
SETTLEMENT PLAN

PILOT PROJECT 2: BUTTERNUT SECTOR
URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

SUMMARY

This project presents a planning technique that can be used to improve existing mixed-use neighborhoods, whether in the City of Syracuse or any of the County's other towns and villages. The technique is straightforward, and concerns itself with two separate qualities: urbanity and walkability. First, each street is classified in terms of its location on the urban-to-rural Transect, to create a zoning map for the application of the different categories of the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*. Second, each street is classified -- with the help of its residents -- in terms of its pedestrian viability, to determine what level of additional private maintenance the residents will hold themselves to. An additional discussion is provided on effective retail management techniques. Finally, a site specific intervention is proposed to save a historic building.

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF THE BUTTERNUT SECTOR.

Overview:

The Butternut area was selected because it embodies many qualities shared by neighborhoods throughout Syracuse. It contains almost all of the features that represent what is best about the city, and almost all of the features that represent what is going wrong with the city. It is a neighborhood that is on the verge, of either getting better or getting worse, and indeed it could easily go either way. It has some very healthy housing stock right next door to houses that have been abused and are ready for demolition. It has retail establishments that are struggling, and other retail establishments of regional significance that people travel great distances to visit. It is truly racially and economically mixed, as much as any neighborhood in the County. For these reasons, it is an ideal subject for study.

The Study Area

The tour of the study area begins at the corner of Lodi and Butternut Streets, a place that could be considered under assault. At this corner, one remaining traditionally-sited building, Lombardi's, is struggling to hold its own while the three other corners of the intersection have been literally "blown out" by the introduction of suburban building types, including a pair of dueling drug stores behind their parking lots.

One leaves the corner and heads north on Butternut Street, past buildings of alternately poor or excellent quality, including a wonderful library, a very fine bank, and a number of other historically significant structures. East on Park Street from this spot, across Dewitt Street, is a high-value residential neighborhood called Sedgwick Farms, one of the nicest residential neighborhoods in Syracuse, indeed, in all of upstate New York. A block away is James Street, which presents an entirely different sort of housing stock, a very high-density type.

This sector of the City -- which should be called a *sector*, since it overlaps several neighborhoods -- contains, in a limited area, almost all of the building types and conditions to be found in Syracuse, from rural to urban, from small to large, and from healthy to distressed. As such, it is an excellent laboratory in which to illustrate the application of the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code* to the City.
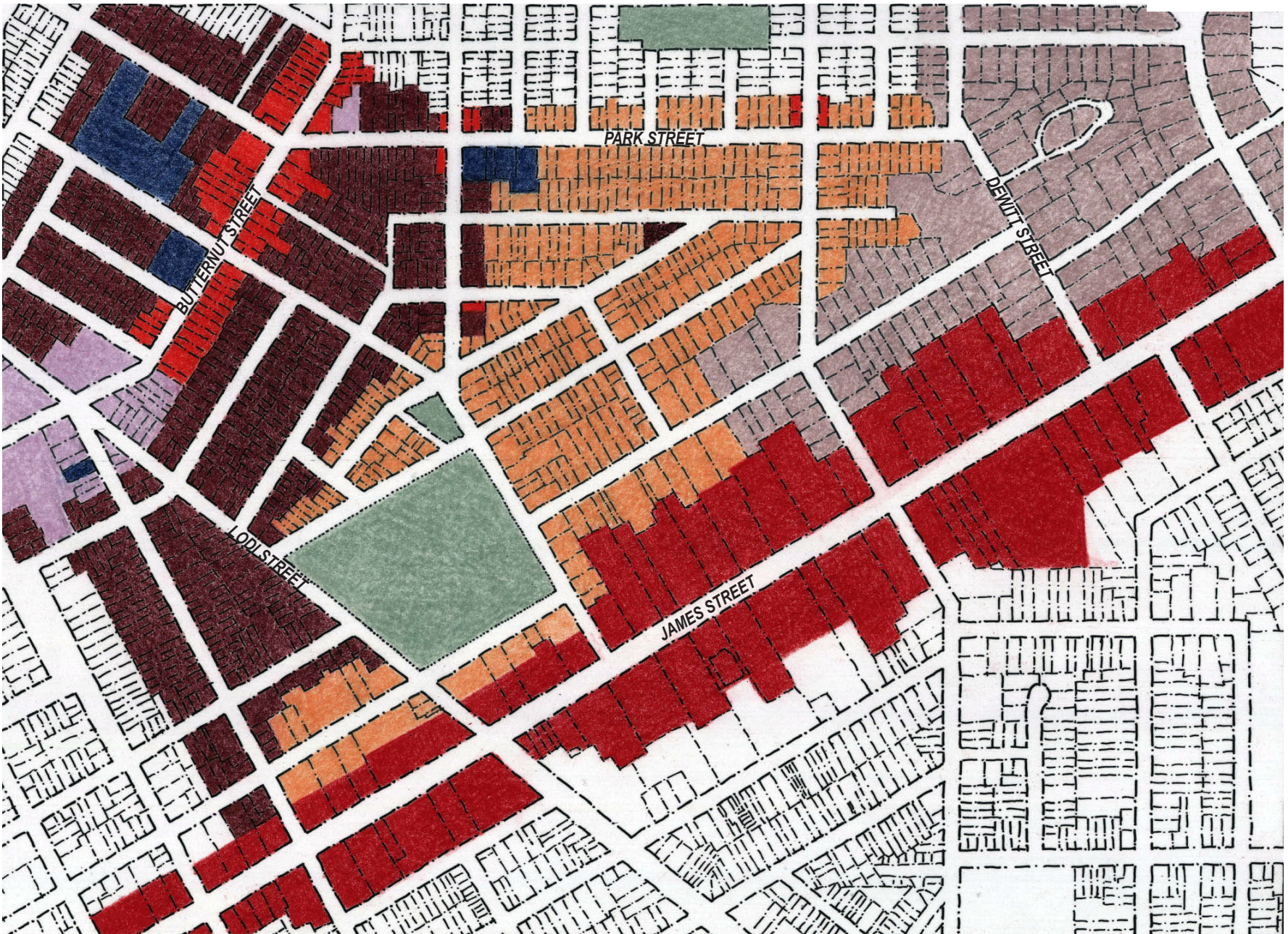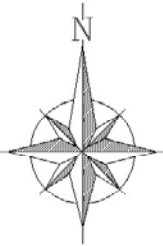
Zoning and the Transect

The existing zoning map for this area, in conjunction with the codes that regulate each zoning category, form a system that is not effective, because it does not acknowledge the physical complexity of the city. As the map key indicates, it focuses primarily on land use. It does not deal effectively with the different quality of the different streets, either in terms of their degree of urbanity or their pedestrian viability. The first of those issues is addressed by the overlay plan that is proposed below, which is more finely grained and is coded more precisely in terms of urbanity through the *TND Code*. Each color corresponds to a category in the *Code*, and the colors are distributed street by street, so that streetscapes are consistent on both sides. This is essential, since it matters little what is behind ones backyard, but it matters very much what is across the street.
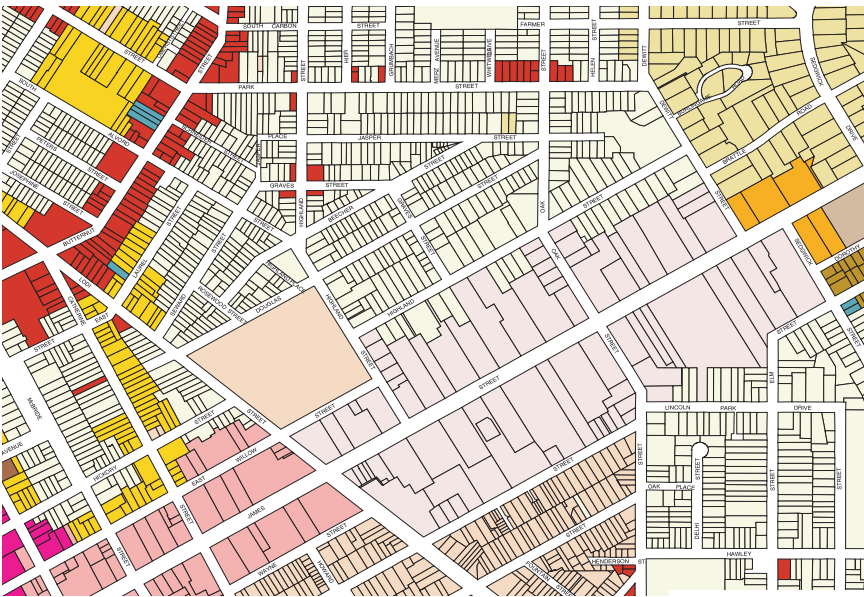
THE EXISTING ZONING MAP FOR THE BUTTERNUT AREA.

|	
RA, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS A	RS, RESID. SERVICE DISTRICT
RA-1, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS A-1	OA, OFFICE DISTRICT, CLASS A
RA-2, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS A-2	OB, OFFICE DISTRICT, CLASS B
RA-A, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS A-A	BA, LOCAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
RB, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS B	PID, PLANNED INSTIT. DISTRICT
RB-1, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS B-1	SPECIAL, MULTIPLE CLASS
RB-1T, RESID. DISTRICT, CLASS B-1	

THE PROPOSED ZONING MAP FOR THE BUTTERNUT AREA

The way that the different categories of the *TND Code* work is illustrated by the Transect. The Transect is the diagram that shows how almost every form of urbanism is acceptable, but each has its place, somewhere in the continuum from rural to urban. Building types, heights, setbacks, frontage types, and landscaping all vary in concert from neighborhood edges to centers, from rural to urban. Tall buildings are appropriate to certain more urban areas, while deep setbacks are appropriate in other, more rural places. Different urbanisms are not denied, but allocated; there is even a place for big-box retail, as already demonstrated in the *Regional Plan*.

Once one comes to recognize that planning is not about saying yes or no but about *allocating*, the planners job becomes much more clear. For example, there is nothing wrong with high-speed roads; the error is placing a high-speed road in the middle of a neighborhood. Similarly, as the Transect indicates, there is not one type of sidewalk appropriate to all areas, as most

■ URBAN CORE		■ SUBURBAN	
■ URBAN CENTER I		■ DISTRICT	
■ URBAN CENTER II		■ PUBLIC BUILDINGS	
■ GENERAL URBAN		■ PUBLIC SPACE	
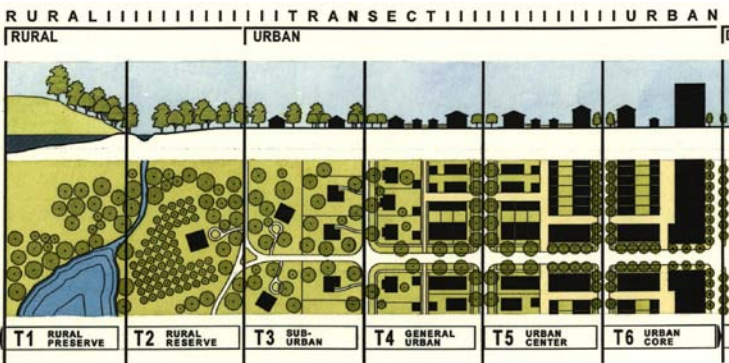
THE TRANSECT: FROM RURAL TO URBAN

building codes require. Wide sidewalks at the neighborhood center, with trees in planters, become narrower in the general neighborhood area, with the trees aligned in a continuous strip. Towards the neighborhood edge, the sidewalk gets narrower and, in certain conditions, can be allowed to disappear entirely, while the trees begin to be planted more loosely, in clumps.

Every urban element finds its place in the Transect. For example, one can imagine a scenario in which the City decides to specify new streetlamps, and the citizens are asked for recommendations. One citizen will come in with clippings of an elaborate cast-iron ornamental lamp on a decorative base. Another will recommend a very simple metal lamp atop a 4-inch thick pipe. Another will suggest a rustic tin-hatted light on a wooden post. Yet another will say, "I don't want a lamp at all; I want to look at the stars." In most cities, a decision would be made by choosing one of these alternatives as the city standard, when in fact each option is appropriate in certain parts of the city and inappropriate elsewhere. The correct methodology is to place the first lamp in the most urban, mixed-use areas, place the second lamp in urban residential areas, place the third lamp in suburban areas, and allow people in the countryside to see the night sky.

The Transect takes the continuum of urban to rural and breaks it down into four zoning categories called Urban Core, Urban Center, General Urban, and Suburban. (The Urban Center Zone is here further divided into Center I and Center II for the purposes of discussion). Based on this distribution, the *TND Code* is able to apply to the full range of situations, from the smallest hamlet to the densest core of Syracuse. The role of the local municipality or neighborhood is to download from the County the Transect categories that apply to them specifically. County planners will work with the individual municipalities to determine which categories these are. There are many advantages to this approach. One of them is that developers who learn to use the *TND Code* will be capable of working equally well in the town, village, and city. Right now, the opposite is true, as the codes to be found in different places vary so greatly.

The Transect in Butternut

The photographs at right demonstrate how the full range of the Transect can be found in the Butternut sector. The Urban Core is represented by James Street (1), with its offices and tall apartment buildings, appropriate to a major transportation corridor. It is a pity that so many of the street's original mansions were destroyed, but it must now be recognized that the dominant character of the corridor is urban and mixed use. Certain aspects of the streetscape still reflect the street's original residential character, but these are now the exception to the rule.

The Urban Center area is represented by Butternut Street (2), where mixed-use buildings of limited height sit up against a fairly wide sidewalk. The next few images represent a stroll from the Urban Center to the Suburban Edge**.** First, turning onto Park Street, one finds a more domestic vocabulary -- most of the buildings are take the form of one- or two-family houses -- but some, like Rileys (3), are used commercially and have wider sidewalks in front. Along the more residential part of Park Street, setbacks begin to increase as one enters the General Urban zone(4). Further down Park Street (5)**,** the streetscape has become increasingly Suburban, with houses more uniformly set further back from the street. Finally, in Sedgwick Farms (6), it is as if one has arrived in the middle of a rural town. This is actually a suburban subdivision -- one of the excellent planned communities of the early 20th -- but it is detailed like the country. According to this intention, the setbacks are very deep, with trees planted in picturesque clusters, and the curving streets calm traffic to such a degree that sidewalks are not necessary.

In just three blocks, one can walk from the city to the country, from a truly urban condition to a truly rural condition. This is a remarkable system, as it demonstrates the full range of ways that people can live in close proximity. Those who want country living need not go to the country; they can live in the rural edge of the Transect. Those who want city living -- the younger people who like the action, and the older people who need pedestrian access to their daily needs -- can live in the urban area. Families that want a house and a yard can live in the General Urban area. This wide range of people and households can all share the same neighborhood, the same streets, and the same stores, creating a diversity of interaction that is missing in the strictly-enforced monocultures of the new suburbs.

1. URBAN CORE: TALL APARTMENT BUILDINGS AND OFFICE SIT CLOSELY AGAINST A WIDE SIDEWALK FRONTING A HEAVILY-TRAFFICKED THOROUGHFARE. (JAMES STREET)

2. URBAN CENTER I: MIXED-USE BUILDINGS SIT CLOSELY AGAINST A WIDE SIDEWALK FRONTING A HEAVILY-TRAFFICKED STREET. (BUTTERNUT STREET)

3. URBAN CENTER II: MIXED-USE BUILDINGS AND HOUSES SIT CLOSELY AGAINST A MEDIUM-WIDTH SIDEWALK FRONTING A WELL-TRAVELED STREET. (PARK STREET)

4. GENERAL URBAN: HOUSES AND APARTMENTS SIT CLOSELY AGAINST A NARROWER SIDEWALK FRONTING A FAIRLY WELL-TRAVELED STREET. (PARK STREET)

5. GENERAL URBAN / SUBURBAN: LARGE HOUSES SIT BACK FROM A NARROW SIDEWALK FRONTING A QUIETER STREET. (PARK STREET)

6. SUBURBAN: LARGE HOUSES SIT WELL BACK FROM A NARROW COUNTRY ROAD WITH INFRE-QUENT SIDEWALKS. (BURLINGAME ROAD)

Public Buildings

There is another category in the *TND Code*, not yet mentioned, which is civic buildings. Sites must always be reserved and protected for civic buildings which, importantly, are not coded in the same way that private buildings are. They are exempted from the *Code's* rules regarding setback, shape, materials, and the like, because it is their responsibility to manifest the aspirations of their institutions. Churches, libraries, museums, concert halls, and other similar buildings constitute the sort of commission through which architects should be able to demonstrate their artistic ability. If they want to use strange forms, pull back from the street, or build a tower, the *Code* allows it. It is only the private buildings that are coded, to produce a harmonious backdrop for the civic buildings. This is a fundamental dialectic of authentic urbanism. Allowing every private building to be expressive creates a city that is chaotic, and also makes it impossible for civic buildings to stand out. In the Butternut Sector, the White Branch of the Onondaga County Public Library pulls back from the sidewalk behind a deep lawn, which distinguishes it from the private buildings around it, as is appropriate.

CIVIC USE: THE ONONDAGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY, CHARLES L. WHITE BRANCH

The Need for Physical Coding

James Street is an interesting corridor in that it provides a full range of examples of good and bad planning and architecture, and with it a testament to the need for a physically-based land-use code. Before World War II, there was an unspoken consensus among architects pertaining to the urban performance of their buildings. Buildings faced the street squarely with human-sized openings and attachments such as porches and balconies that welcomed the pedestrian and formed a useful transition between public and private space. Beginning in the fifties, buildings instead began to take the form of spaceships, industrial plants, and other models that celebrated the dawning of a modern age, at the expense of pedestrian life. While these buildings were momentarily fashionable, they have become regarded as a blight and a threat to real estate value.

The advent of such architecture is why physically based zoning codes -- codes that deal with building shape and articulation, rather than building use, parking ratios, and F.A.R. (floor area ratio) -- are necessary. People will not invest in a neighborhood without physical predictability, in other words, without some assurance that the building next door will not be replaced by a spaceship. This is a great advantage of the new suburbs, where land-developer-imposed covenants offer investors complete certainty regarding the surrounding lots. In order to compete against the new suburbs, the city should replace the existing physical free-for-all with a code that dictates physical performance, such as the *TND Code*. Since the *Code* is allocated according to the Transect, in response to the existing physical conditions, it provides predictability that neighborhoods will maintain their existing building typologies. Someone buying a Victorian fixer-upper in a neighborhood of porch-front houses can have some confidence that it will remain as such.

The *TND Code* is offered here as an optional alternative to existing zoning, for the County's municipalities to incentivize to the degree possible. However, the sort of predictability described above is only possible when the *TND Code* is the only option -- when it has *replaced* the existing codes. This is not politically possible at the county-level, but is very possible on a village, neighborhood, or sector level. A small municipality, city sector, neighborhood, or group of streets may collectively assent to adopt the *TND Code* locally, just as they might elect to establish a historic district or business improvement district. Citizens interested in maintaining and improving their real estate value should be motivated to lobby locally for the *TND* as a replacement code, for as large an area as they can achieve political victory.

TRADITIONAL PLANNING: EARLIER JAMES STREET BUILDINGS TAKE A FORM THAT SUCCESSFULLY DEFINES THE PUBLIC REALM AND ENCOURAGES PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY.

MODERN PLANNING: RECENT JAMES STREET BUILDINGS TAKE A FORM THAT POORLY DEFINES THE PUBLIC REALM AND DISCOURAGES PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY.

	T1 RURAL PRESERVE	T2 RURAL RESERVE	T3 SUB-URBAN	T4 GENERAL URBAN	T5 URBAN CENTER	T6 URBAN CORE
BUILDING TYPE						
Edgeyard	prohibited	permitted				
Sideyard	prohibited			permitted		
Rearyard	prohibited			permitted		
Courtyard	prohibited				permitted	
FRONTAGE TYPE	not applicable					
Common Lawn		permitted			prohibited	
Porch & Fence		prohibited		permitted	prohibited	
Stoop		prohibited		permitted		
Forecourt		prohibited				
Dooryard		prohibited				
Shopfront & Awning		prohibited			permitted	
Gallery & Arcade		prohibited				permitted
BUILDING HEIGHT	not applicable	1-2 stories max		1-3 stories max	3-4 stories	3-18 stories max / 3 - 10 stories max

BUILDING CONFIGURATION

TND SUMMARY: A TABULATION OF THE PHYSICAL PRESCRIPTIONS OF THE CODE, BY TRANSECT CATEGORY

The table pictured here is taken from the *TND Code*. It is a brief summary of the Code's physical prescriptions, which are broken down, category by category, along the Transect, in columns. A street, neighborhood, or municipality interested in implementing the *TND* would contact the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Office, who would assess which categories were appropriate and simply provide the appropriate columns. It is not so difficult to imagine a County in which, through such a process, a majority of the municipalities are all eventually making use of different parts of *the TND Code*. The details of the code -- setbacks, building heights, and the like -- could be tailored locally as necessary, but still, the overall outcome would be a coherent administrative coding system for the whole County, something that is currently lacking.

Maintenance and Management

Planners and architects are very quick to forget -- and citizens are quick to remind them -- that design is only half the picture. The other half is maintenance and management, which refers to the safety, cleanliness, and business practices of the public realm. Several maintenance failures are prevalent in almost all of the County's main street environments. One is sidewalks, which are a completely unpredictable experience. Why should one home- or shop-owner bother to fix their sidewalk with troweled concrete, when their neighbor is free to simply throw down used asphalt chunks and tamp them down with a shovel? Clearly some guidelines are necessary, as well as provisions for enforcement.

On the other end of the spectrum, retail is most successful in the presence of other successful retail, so merchants must be concerned about the business management practices of their neighbors. For example, a lamp store on Butternut Street is violating one of the most basic principles of merchandizing, by using its display windows as a storage bin. The business would do much better, and perhaps so would its neighbors, if it were to receive some basic merchandizing advice.

From streetscape maintenance to business management, there is a list of requirements and advice that are necessary. It is not very long, but it is often ignored. For example, lawns should not exceed five inches, parked cars should not be used as businesses, front porches should not be enclosed, and buildings should be painted regularly. These requirements range from the most fundamental and categorical to the rather luxurious and optional. Since different streets and neighborhoods aspire to different levels of maintenance, these requirements cannot be applied uniformly. Low-income residents cannot be expected to paint regularly, but they should be required to keep the lawn free of trash. Meanwhile, the residents of Sedgewick Farms would probably like to demand a higher level of maintenance from themselves and each other. Because of this discrepancy in quality, this plan recommends a method by which there are three different levels of maintenance. These would be applied street by street, according to the will of local property owners, who would together decide the standard that they wish to enforce.

The map on the right shows a preliminary recommendation of how five streets may wish to regulate themselves. Due to its powerful presence as an urban corridor, James street should probably hold itself to the highest standard. Other streets of less importance and less wealth may elect a less stringent code. Others would fall in between. In all cases, the implementation would be at the agreement of the street, which would typically be acting collectively in order to control one or two properties whose poor maintenance was perceived as a problem. This is not a prejudicial system in which streets are rated X, Y, or Z according to some arbitrary system. At any time, a street may elect to upgrade its status and hold itself to a higher standard.

A TYPICAL RETAIL STREET IN BUTTERNUT DEMONSTRATES THE NEED FOR BETTER MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT.

INFRACTION ZONES

━━━━━ X: MOST STRINGENT

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Y: MODERATE

───── Z: LEAST STRINGENT
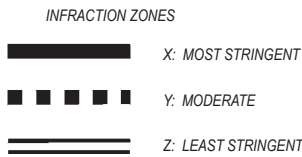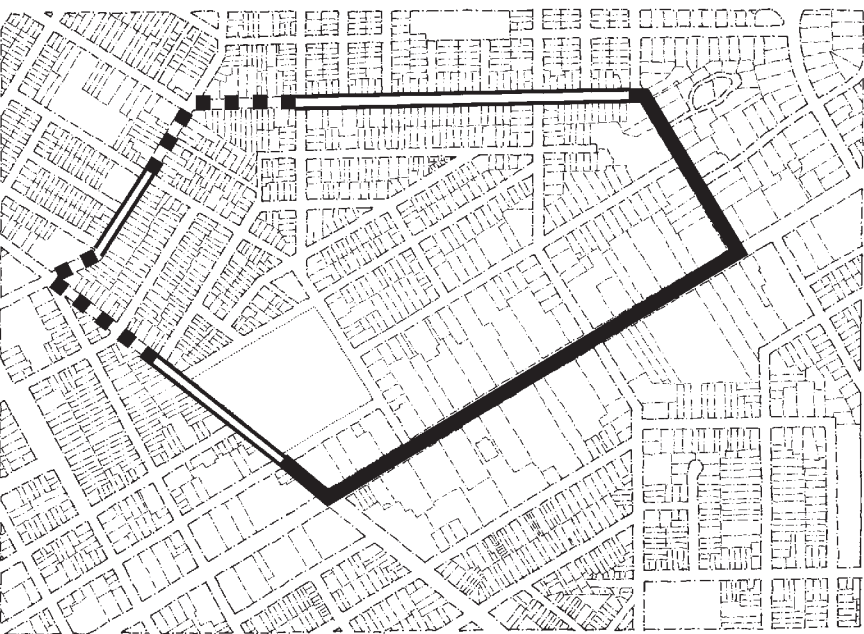
FIVE STREETS RATED ACCORDING TO RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF MAINTENANCE.

V I O L A T I O N

S Y R A C U S E	RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

DATE

NAME

LOCATION

OFFICER'S SIGNATURE

1. OCCUPANCY INFRACTIONS

Illegal multifamily building	$500.00
Exceeds number of allowable apartments in building	$500.00
Illegal enclosure of porch	$500.00
Illegal conversion of garage to residential use	$500.00
Illegal use of parked vehicle as residence	$100.00
Illegal use of parked vehicle as business	$100.00

2. MAINTENANCE INFRACTIONS

Failure to maintain paint	$50.00
Failure to repair wood trim	$50.00
Debris blocking front yard	$25.00
Debris blocking side yard	$25.00
Debris blocking alley	$25.00
Illegal storage on front porch	$25.00
Illegal shopping cart on property	$25.00
Grass exceeds five inch maximum height	$25.00
Exceeding two yard sales per year maximum	$25.00
Failure to trim back tree limbs from roof and chimney	$25.00

3. MANAGEMENT INFRACTIONS

Failure to post owner/manager information on building	$25.00
Failure to maintain owner/manager information on building	$25.00
Failure to provide manager for a building exceeding 4 apts	$25.00
Failure to provide minimum six month lease	$25.00
Illegal collection of rent on more than a monthly basis	$25.00
Failure to provide affidavit concerning lease	$25.00
Illegal lease to prostitute	$25.00
Illegal lease to drug user/dealer	$25.00
Illegal lease to persons with criminal records	$25.00
Illegal parking between sidewalk and curb	$25.00
Failure to park boat or camper in side yard	$25.00
Illegally parked bus, semitruck, etc.	$25.00

5. OTHER INFRACTIONS

	$___
	$___
	$___
	$___
	$___

N O T I F I C A T I O N

S Y R A C U S E	RETAIL SECTOR

DATE

NAME

LOCATION

OFFICER'S SIGNATURE

1. ILLUMINATION

- The storefront display should be illuminated by halogen lighting
- The facades of the building should be softly illuminated
- The display lights should be kept on at 60% until 10 PM
- Lighting emphasis should be on the window display and the back wall

2. MERCHANDISE

- The window display should not have a backdrop
- The displays of the entire store should be designed to be seen through the storefront
- Items should be displayed on tables and associated with life-style artifacts
- Name brands should be promoted with signs
- Merchandise on the storefront and the backdrop should be displayed in a coarse grain to increase legibility
- Shelves should be full but not crowded
- The cash register should be as far to the rear of the store as feasible

3. MAINTENANCE

- Failure to sweep sidewalks twice a day and/or machine-scrub them once a week
- Failure to wash the doors daily and/or wash the windows weekly
- Scuffing due to insufficient maintenance by painting

4. MANNERS

- Avoid signs with negative messages
- Failure to greet the customer

5. OTHER NONCOMPLIANCE WITH GUIDELINES

- ___
- ___
- ___
- ___
- ___
- ___

THE RESIDENTIAL E-TIQUETTE ENFORCES THE QUALITY OF A RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD THROUGH THE LEVYING OF FINES, GRADUATED BASED UPON THE QUALITY RATING OF THE STREET.

THE RETAIL E-TIQUETTE IMPROVES THE QUALITY OF A RETAIL STREET THROUGH THE EFFICIENT PROMULGATION OF MERCHANDISING ADVICE.

This system of self-regulation would be enforced through the use of management tickets that work like traffic tickets. These tickets would list violations to urban etiquette -- and are thus called E-tiquettes -- and corresponding fines. On X-quality streets, the list of finable offenses would be the longest, and the fines the largest. On Z-quality streets, very few of the offenses would be finable. None of the fines would be huge, but they would be large enough to cause pain, like a parking ticket causes pain. A suggested format for such a ticket is shown above.

Implementation could work several ways. Certain municipalities may elect to enforce these on a town-wide basis, in which case they would employ staff to do so. At the other extreme, a street or neighborhood electing to set a self-imposed standard would designate a private individual to make rounds. Also imaginable is a hybrid situation, in which a municipality

decides to centrally enforce the individual standards established by its constituent streets and neighborhoods.

A second ticket, shown above, deals with retail management, focusing not on enforcement but on advice. There are a limited number of principles regarding retail merchandising which are universally recommended by experts but rarely implemented by traditional main-street stores. Mall retailers receive such advice regularly, but mom-and-pop stores, lacking retail management, usually don't hear it. These items are listed on the second ticket, which can be handed out by a concerned retailer to his neighbors. This ticket is only a start, as what local retailers really may need is central management. It is hoped that the utilization of this ticket may in some cases represent the first step that local merchants take towards managing themselves collectively.

Retail Management

The sad fact is that the newest, most spectacular suburban shopping center would fail within a few months if it were managed as haphazardly as the typical main street. In order for Main Street to compete against the mall, it should be run with all the expertise lavished on the mall. Since malls survive by killing other malls (and main streets), they have refined the techniques of merchandising to a science. Mall designers know that, upon entering, people tend to turn right, and walk counter-clockwise. They know that visitors will most likely purchase sunglasses if they are near the restrooms. They know that women's clothing stores will fare badly if placed near the food court. How can Main Street possibly compete? Fortunately, many of the concepts and techniques that mall designers use can be easily adapted for the benefit of older areas. The merchants, chambers of commerce, and municipal planners of Onondaga County are asked to consider the following general retail advice:

Centralized Management: While centralized ownership of real estate may be the ideal, as in a mall, a central management agency can be nearly as effective. In its weakest form, this would be nothing more than an interested chamber of commerce. In its strongest form -- which may not be necessary -- it would be an agency legally empowered to coordinate hours of operation, security, maintenance, landscape, storefront design, and even the location and mix of stores. The following techniques can only be implemented effectively under unified management.

Joint Advertising and Merchandizing: Shoppers are attracted to malls by an advertising strategy that emphasizes the variety of merchandise available at a single location, what experts call a "park-once environment." Inside the mall, directories and "You Are Here" maps help customers find their way. Further incentive to shop is offered through coordinated sales and festival days, as well as concerts, celebrity appearances, and the like. In many ways, Main Street provides a public atmosphere that is much more natural than the mall for festival-oriented marketing. Instead of offering *mall events* for shoppers, downtown merchants can organize *town events* for all.

Anchors: Almost every mall gives away locations rent-free to the so-called anchor tenants that will bring shoppers from a distance. Downtowns should also be prepared to offer subsidies -- even free leases or land -- in order to secure a major retail draw. Many national retailers and cinema chains have "rediscovered downtown," but they still may need enticement. Of course, existing anchors should be handled with great care and, in some cases, given incentives to stay in place, as the cinemas are in Portland. This should not be seen as socialism for capitalists, or even as a subsidy, but rather as the city operating competitively within the reality of a cutthroat marketplace.

Strategic Relation of Anchors and Parking: All malls place anchor department stores at the extremities and cluster the small stores in the middle. In Miami's Cocowalk, the cinema is located on the third floor, the ticket booth on the ground floor, and dozens of shops and restaurants in between, where they are practically unavoidable to the impulse buyer. Meanwhile, most cities that attempt to revitalize their downtowns with a convention center, sports arena, or movie theater unthinkingly place all parking immediately adjacent to the site. This strategy robs the city's merchants of potential customers passing by. For this reason, the self-sufficient Astrodomes of the sixties and seventies did nothing for their cities; the promised neighborhood revitalizations never occurred. Any new anchor downtown must be designed to maximize street activity, with parking at least a block away, the exact opposite of what most zoning codes require. Downtowns must be arranged cunningly, with a strategic separation of origins and destinations. The only caveat here is that the gap between anchor and parking must be lined with continuous pedestrian-quality street frontage, so that the walk is pleasurable.

Proactive Leasing and Retail Mix: When a mall first opens, or when a vacancy occurs, space is not simply leased to the first qualified applicant that comes along. Rather, the management carefully determines what type of store will best contribute to the mall's retail mix and seeks it out, often offering incentives for relocation. In addition, mall management recognizes that certain stores fare better or worse in proximity to certain other stores, and arranges shops according to a careful merchandising plan. Mutually-supportive stores are clustered to form such places as fashion districts and entertainment districts. While this approach may seem unwieldy on Main Street, with its patchwork of ownership interests, an effective merchants association can monitor the store mix and actively seek the ideal businesses to fill vacancies as they arise.

Retail Continuity: The American shopper has an attention span surpassed in brevity only by that of the American male television viewer. Experience suggests that most strolling shoppers will not walk down dead-end streets -- thus the need for big stores at the ends of malls. In addition, they will turn around and head back to their cars rather than walk past fifty feet of blank wall. This explains why malls generally do not include post offices: stamp posters are simply too boring to walk past. While malls turn down the U.S. Mail, Main Street has to incorporate banks, brokerage houses, travel bureaus, and real-estate offices, with their plain walls and boring displays. These must be located so as to not interrupt retail continuity for more than the shortest stretches: either dispersed in small increments, or collected in a harmless location off the main shopping trajectory.

Incubators: Push carts serve a purpose in suburban malls, which is to incubate new businesses until they do well enough to afford their own storefront space. The same process can occur on Main Street, supplemented by additional incubators such as live/work units and artists' cooperatives. The Torpedo Factory in Alexandria is one such example of an industrial-loft-turned-arts-incubator which has become a tourist anchor. Often, for such ventures to be successful, fledgling businesses must be allowed to occupy older buildings without upgrading fully to the latest building code. Farmers' markets located in old or temporary quarters, such as in West Hollywood or Philadelphia's Reading Terminal, are almost always effective in energizing their downtowns.

One Possible Intervention

In the *Settlement Plan*, Onondaga County has at its disposal a collection of principles, techniques, and tools that will make it possible to control sprawl and reinvigorate the County's older towns, villages, hamlets, and urban neighborhoods. All of this will be useless, however, without local leadership, actual human beings who pick up the ideas mentioned here and move them forward. What follows is one example of the type of site-specific idea that can only be achieved through localized intervention.

There exists a well-loved Syracuse institution called Lombardi's, which is housed in an older building at the corner of Butternut and Lodi. This building pulls directly up to the sidewalk in the traditional manner, defining the street edge and creating a viable pedestrian environment. Unfortunately, this environment is undermined beyond repair by the three other corners of the intersection, each of which house a suburban building type pulled back behind a vast parking lot, including two competing pharmacies, one of which will soon put the other out of business. From the walkability perspective, this intersection is a dead loss and should be written off. This automotive environment is clearly unsuitable for a business of Lombardi's quality and heritage.

Meanwhile, just down the street, in a retail environment that stands at the verge of success or failure, is a handsome historic structure, the Loos Building, which used to house Kacey's Drug Store, built in 1895 and in danger of demolition. If this building is destroyed, not only will Syracuse lose an important piece of its architectural heritage, but a second intersection will begin to go the way of Butternut and Lodi. Is it possible to imagine that someone might take Lombardi's out of its current quarters, and give them a deal that they couldn't refuse to occupy the Loos building? Further, what if a second nearby destination tenant, Biscotti's, also isolated on an anti-pedestrian corner two blocks away, were offered a similar deal? The outcome would be a retail corner of the highest quality, and a viable social center for the Butternut neighborhood.

Who makes things like this happen? Right across the street from the Loos building is the Key Bank, a respected Syracuse institution in a remarkably fine building. This bank is suffering due to the struggling neighborhood around it, and has no desire to see its historic neighbors destroyed. Could someone put together the bank, which is in the business of making loans, with the two creditworthy local merchants? Taking advantage of historic preservation tax credits and the other incentives that are available for renovating older buildings, it would perhaps not be unprofitable to bring these bodies together in order to create a corner that could serve as a retail anchor for the whole area.

If this seems out of the question, it is worth repeating that this is exactly what mall managers do when they are proactively leasing. They find mutually supportive retailers and strategically relocate them next to each other, with excellent leases and free physical improvements, in order to create a destination. In this case, the destination would be the corner of Butternut and Park Streets, and all of the surrounding merchants would benefit. It is clear that such an outcome is far from impossible, and it is strongly recommended that the demolition of the Loos building be put on hold until this and similar options are thoroughly investigated.

LOMBARDI'S: A MUCH ADMIRED LOCAL INSTITUTION CONTAINED WITHIN A TRADITIONAL BUILDING TYPE THAT MEETS THE SIDEWALK IN A PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY WAY.

THE "BLOWN OUT CORNER" ACROSS THE STREET FROM LOMBARDI'S CREATES AN ANTI-PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT.

THE LOOS BUILDING, A HISTORIC STRUCTURE BY ARCHIMEDES RUSSELL, IN DANGER OF DEMOLITION, AND AN IDEAL RELOCATION SPOT FOR LOMBARDI'S.

THE FIRST TRUST BANK BUILDING, NOW THE KEY BANK, NEXT DOOR TO THE LOOS BUILDING. A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF CAPITAL FOR THE MOVE.

IMPLEMENTATION

This *Pilot Project* is relevant to every urban neighborhood within the County. Each neighborhood that wishes to maintain and improve its value should implement the process described above. This effort can be initiated by local government or by residents, but the mapping efforts must be completed in a public, participatory planning process in order to produce a consensus outcome. While plans such as these are typically prepared by professional staff or planning consultants, they could be completed by citizen volunteers as well, advised by County Planning staff.

The process described above can be broken down into four main steps for the neighborhood to follow: 1. mapping itself in terms of the *TND Code*; 2. passing the *TND Code* as an alternative to current zoning; 3. mapping itself in terms of pedestrian quality; and 4. adopting a maintenance program for each quality level. The necessary tools are this *Pilot Project* and the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*. The largest question facing each municipality is whether to pass the *TND Code* as an optional alternative or a mandatory overlay. The former is more politically feasible, but only the latter will truly ensure the quality of a given neighborhood. While replacing existing zoning codes with a mandatory *TND* has proven difficult at the municipal level, it is much more feasible at the scale of the individual street or neighborhood.

ONONDAGA COUNTY SETTLEMENT PLAN

PILOT PROJECT 3: HARBOR WEST
BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY

Harbor West demonstrates the appropriate techniques for planning a new neighborhood on an urban Brownfield site. While almost every feature of the design is based upon its site conditions -- existing streets, waterways, neighbors, even pre-existing master plans -- the design techniques employed are universal. These techniques are described by the *TND Guidelines* and guaranteed by the *TND Code*, and can also be applied to greenfield sites.

DISCUSSION

Overview

Harbor West was chosen as a *Pilot Project* less for its universal quality than for its significance. There are other brownfield sites that are more generic, but the choice was directed toward this particular one because it is happening now. The area has already been master planned -- and not badly -- and is already qualified for the receipt of various subsidies that make its redevelopment seem imminent. It is adjacent to Franklin Square, a neighborhood that has been experiencing the best kind of redevelopment, old lofts being transformed into offices and apartments. And it has the amenity of the canal, which should help it to become a desirable residential neighborhood for "urban pioneers" and the other professional types who are moving back into cities all across America.

The Context

In the aerial photo, Franklin Square is visible to the lower right. Ideally, the Harbor West redevelopment, as attractive as it may seem, should not begin until Franklin Square is complete. This potentially unpopular statement is made with a full knowledge that events in cities rarely occur in the ideal way, but it is a simple rule of good planning that one should finish what one starts before moving on. Franklin Square is currently halfway redeveloped, and is directed at the same audience that Harbor West hopes to capture.

When complete, it will generate the sort of energy that Harbor West needs to succeed. The implied danger is that Syracuse will end up with two mediocre new neighborhoods of spotty development, rather than one place that really works. That said, one should not avoid describing the ideal way in which Harbor West should grow. The specific plan described here -- a variation of the existing master plan -- is particular to this site and its circumstances, but the techniques and tools used to design and manage it could be applied to any other brownfield site in the area.

At the top left of the aerial photo is the Carousel Mall, which is to be extended to the south, in a move that will make it one of the largest malls in the country. Whether or not this effort is successful will depend initially on the vagaries of the financing process and eventually on the mall's ability to attract visitors from a much larger trade area, like the Mall of America does. If the mall becomes a mega-regional draw, it could actually contribute to the prosperity of the Syracuse area. If it merely grows -- without vastly increasing its draw area -- it will probably accomplish more of what it originally accomplished, which was to put local last-generation malls and main-street merchants out of business. Regional retail is a zero-sum game; the only hope is to increase the size of the draw area, which this expansion is attempting to do.

If the mall expansion succeeds, then there is the possibility that it could lend energy to the Harbor West area. One must say *possibility* because it is a rare mall that gives off energy -- most malls function more like vacuum cleaners -- and this is due to the way they are designed, surrounded by a sea of parking. However, if the southern edge of this mall were designed to create a viable pedestrian-friendly interface with the Harbor West site, then some mutually-supportive activity would be possible.

A more trustworthy amenity at the site is the canal, with its park at the southeastern edge. This park will be landscaped more completely and should be modeled after successful urban water's edges such as the Charles River Parkway in Cambridge, a linear park for leisure, recreation, and events. This park currently continues up the southwestern side of the canal, where it need not be very wide, but it must be maintained as a public linear element, a continuous corridor at the water's edge.

At the southern edge of the study area is a small residential neighborhood or, more accurately, a collection of fairly healthy residential streets, none of which continue successfully for more than a single block. It is the beginnings of a neighborhood, quite delicate, and it needs to be treated very gently by any future redevelopment. There is even a small corner store serving local residents.

The Question of Scale

In approaching this site, the planning team took the scale of the surrounding residential neighborhood as a starting point, recognizing that it contained a great deal of wisdom. Given that this is a large site, that the land is not particularly expensive, and that there is a limited market for new urban apartments, it simply does not make sense to introduce a dramatically higher density to the site. The buildings constructed here should be designed to consume empty ground, which is exactly what tall buildings fail to do. When land is plentiful and empty -- like in most American cities -- there is no reason to build much higher than three stories.

In addition, the new building types that are introduced should rarely require individual lots more than a quarter acre in size, so that the increment of investment can be small. This is in contrast to the great error of most inner-city work of the seventies and eighties, in which cities designated super-blocks in anticipation of the arrival of an out-of-town developer with a city-saving mega-project. Few of these were actually ever completed successfully, and those that were absorbed a whole generation of urban growth into a single self-contained building, contributing little to the street life around them.

Instead, urban brownfield plans should anticipate a minimal increment of investment, in order to involve the greatest number of small local developers. Each gets its own loan, buys its own lot, pools its resources, and becomes a homeowner or a landlord, without all the profits being tapped by some absentee corporation. That is the beauty of small lots. The large-scale developer is not ruled out -- he can always buy ten or twenty adjacent lots to build something larger -- but the small scale of investment also becomes possible.

In such a system, the townhouse lot, approximately 24' by 100', is the standard increment of platting. The next step up is the 72'-wide lot, which is quite efficient because a double-head-in-parking lot is about 64' wide, and because it allows for freestanding apartment buildings of a width that allows every unit to be a corner unit. Further, buildings of this size can be constructed by carpenters -- standard house framers, with hammers and nails -- rather than requiring the involvement of the heavy, expensive steel and concrete industries.
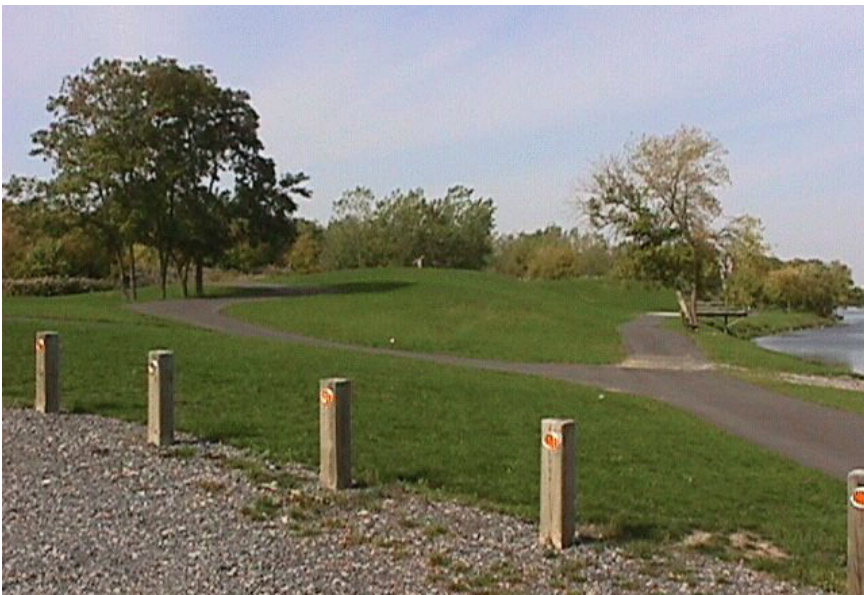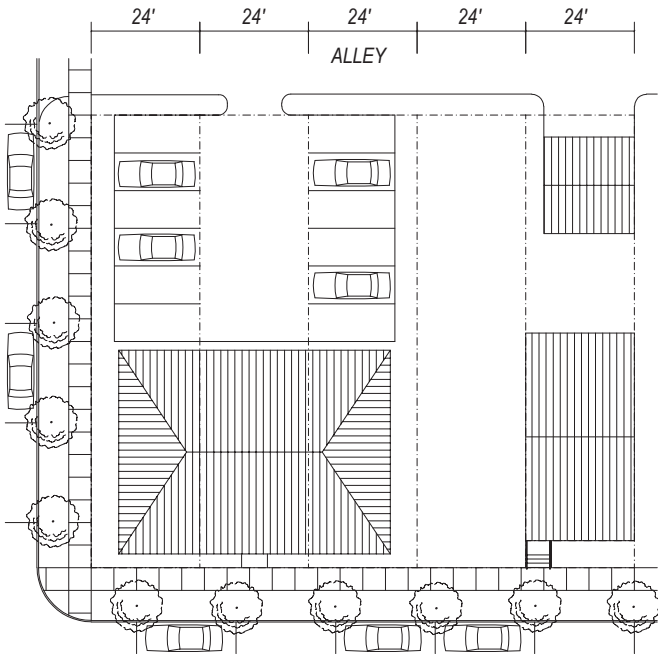

THE PARK EDGE OF THE CANAL.

ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL STREETS, HEALTHY BUT DISCONTINUOUS

A TRADITIONAL CORNER STORE, STILL FUNCTIONING BUT IN NEED OF MORE CUSTOMERS

THE 24'-WIDE LOT, IDEAL FOR TOWNHOUSES, CAN BE CONSOLIDATED INTO A 72' APARTMENT BUILDING LOT.

THE MASTER PLAN FOR HARBOR WEST

The Plan

As shown, the plan represents a simple organization of the existing and proposed buildings and lots into a logical and pedestrian-friendly street network. Drawn in yellow are the existing houses, with which the new neighborhood seamlessly connects. In orange is the new construction, much of which consists of six-plex apartment buildings on 72' lots, with parking behind -- the type shown in the previous illustration. At the southern entry is a small urban square, which is in many ways the heart of the neighborhood. Because of all the traffic anticipated in this area, the neighborhood commercial center is planned adjacent.

Also shown is the neighborhood school, which is an essential amenity if one is to convince families to move downtown. Whether or not such an institution exists now, a site must be reserved for it near the neighborhood center. If there is no demand for it now, there will be one eventually, when the neighborhood's first new residents start having children. It can be a public school, a charter school, or even a private school, but in any case it must be a place that neighborhood children can walk to. The site selected is not large, as city schools should not be expected to provide the same amounts of parking and playing fields that one finds in the suburbs. Such vast sites -- often five acres or more -- interrupt neighborhood pedestrian continuity, and do not belong in the city. The chosen site presents an advantage in this regard, in that playing fields and a park are provided only two blocks away, on Onondaga Creek. In any case, the chosen school site is designed so that it can be expanded to the west or south if more space is needed.

Along the northwest edge of the neighborhood is Bear Street, a high-speed thoroughfare that needs to be traffic-calmed if it is to support residential use. This is accomplished by the insertion of a small square at Van Rensselaer Street, beyond which the building lots on either side are given deep front yards to provide a buffer to the traffic. To the east of the canal basin,

developed from the existing master plan, is the mixed-use area already envisioned, with one major intervention: the water's edge, rather than being just a pedestrian street, is a real street, with cars moving slowly. This change is based on the observation of similar waterfronts in other cities, where the most vital situations arise not from river walks -- which seem to require high densities to succeed -- but from environments in which pedestrians and cars are both welcome. Retail generally needs cars to survive. Essential to this model is that the street be designed so that it is uncomfortable to speed upon, with wide sidewalks and parallel parking. In addition, these streets are not cut-through streets, shortcuts from one place to another, but rather they require some effort to get into. This is another technique taken from waterfronts that work, that generally results in the road being taken only by drivers who are not in a hurry.

To the north of this commercial area are office buildings, mostly L-shaped, that create a clear front and back condition. The strategy in use here is to decide which of the city's streets will be pedestrian-friendly and which will not. Due to parking requirements, it is rarely possible for every street to be nice. Rather than having a city made up of entirely mediocre streets, it is the planner's responsibility to overlay an A/B grid, a grid that gives certain streets away to the demands of the automobile so that the remaining streets can be excellent. Most cities have to give up on at least one third of their streets. This is no real sacrifice, because as long as the A streets form a continuous network, the pedestrian viability remains intact. In this plan, Bear Street facing the mall parking lot is designated as a B street, fronted with parking garages, and not strictly coded. As a result, the waterfront and the central avenue, with its square, can provide a continuously walkable environment. If the mall expansion, as recommended, lines the northern side of Bear Street with high-quality building fronts rather than parking, this plan would respond in kind with an A-street northern edge.

A site has been reserved on the waterfront for a the proposed aquarium, which is currently expected to be located in the expanded mall. Placing the aquarium in the mall, cut off from the streets of the city, will indeed benefit the mall, but will not benefit the city. If the city has any say in the matter, it should insist that the aquarium be located not within the private precinct of the mall, but within the public realm of this new neighborhood -- and on the water, where an aquarium belongs. The mall does not need the aquarium, as it is already well-supplied with destination retail. But it would be a great boost to the rehabilitation of Harbor West.

The next series of drawings help to explain the plan and also to control its implementation. The first shows how the area is organized into neighborhoods, each based upon the radius of a five-minute walk from edge to center. The Franklin Square neighborhood to the southeast is abutted by the Inner Harbor district to the west. The neighborhood structure is further explained in the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Guideline*s provided as a part of the Settlement Plan.
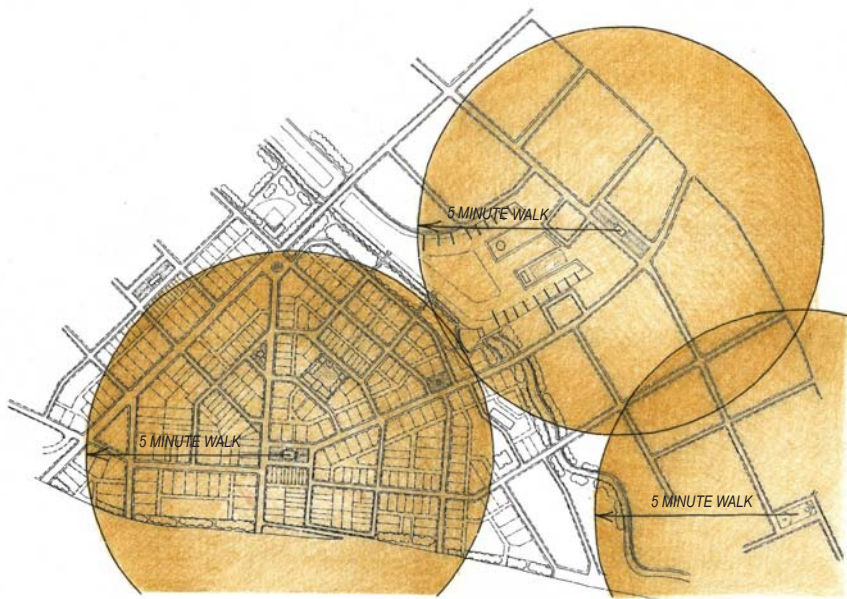

THE QUARTER- MILE RADIUS "PEDESTRIAN SHED" DIAGRAM

The next diagram indicates the streets which must be added to the existing system to turn it into a true street network. As in any traditional city, small blocks and a variety of paths between destinations result in an environment that works well for pedestrians. Notice the streets that have been added to the north, which grant automotive access to the waterfront. The proper size of blocks and the placement of streets along waterfronts are also discussed in the *TND Guidelines*.
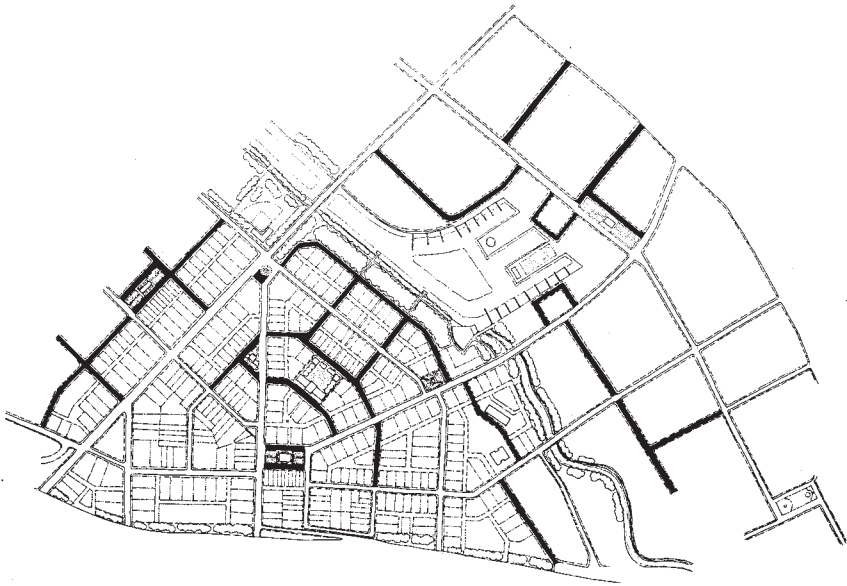

PROPOSED NEW THOROUGHFARES

Next is the Regulating Plan for the area which, like the plan for Butternut, ties into the *TND Code* and the different categories of the Transect. A similar Regulating Plan for a greenfield project can be found in the Appendix of the *TND Code*, showing how the different Transect zones -- from Urban Core to Sub-Urban work their way outwards from the neighborhood center. Each Transect zone refers to a column of the *TND Code*, such that buildings in the neighborhood center behave in a more urban way, while buildings at the neighborhood edge behave in a more sub-urban way. Thus, this Regulating Plan, in conjunction with the *TND Code*, controls the physical form of the neighborhood.


■	URBAN CORE
■	URBAN CENTER
■	GENERAL URBAN
■	SUB-URBAN
■	CIVIC BUILDINGS
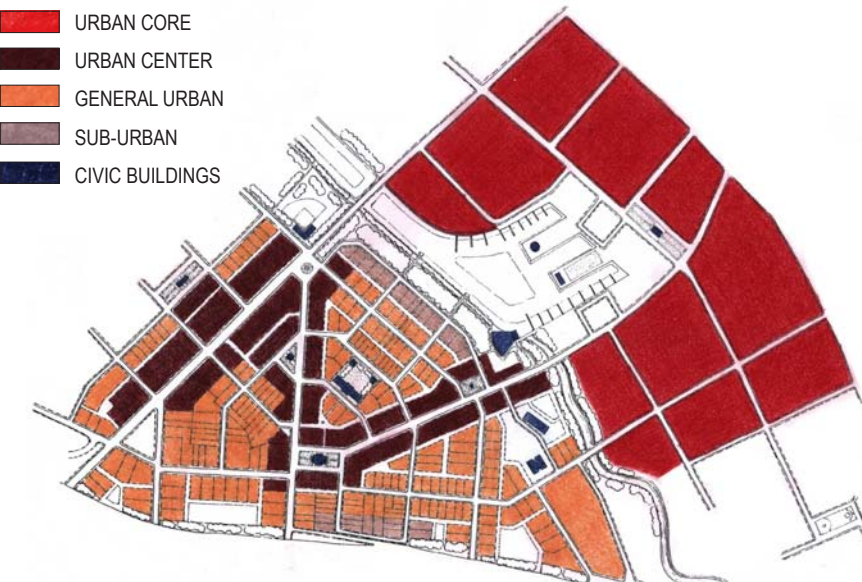
REGULATING PLAN: URBAN CENTER, GENERAL, AND SUB-URBAN AREAS

Also mapped here are the neighborhood's open spaces: plazas, parks, greens, and corridors. These are carefully located so that every household is within a two-minute walk of public recreational space. In this way, each residential unit does not need to have its own yard, and children have independent access to neighborhood parks.
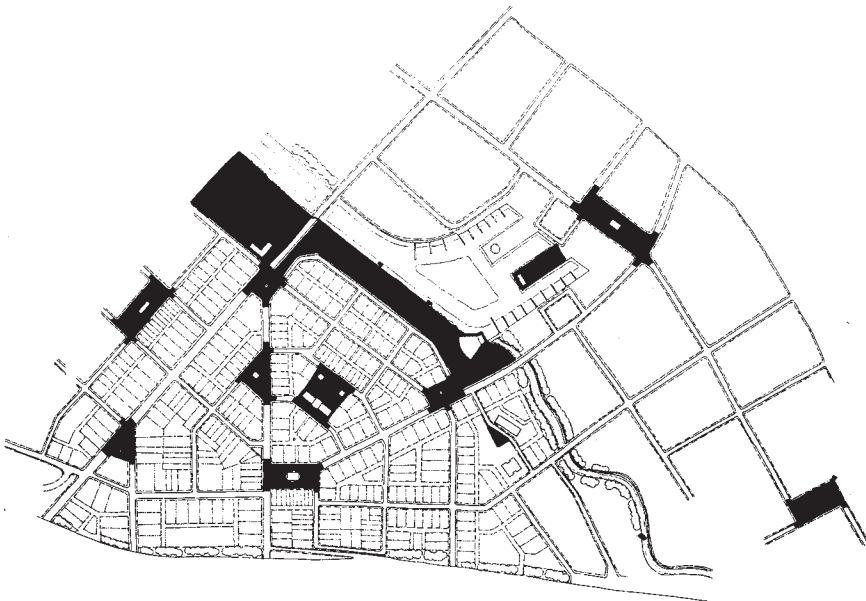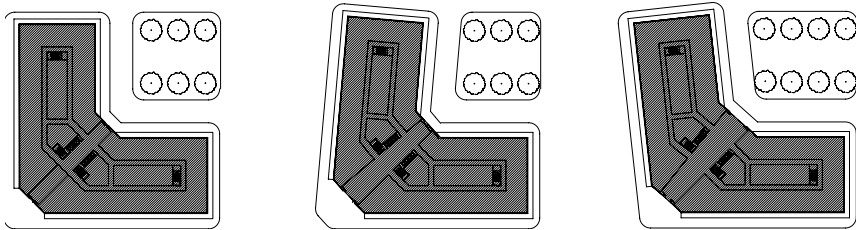

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND SPACES

A final drawing shows what are called Build-To Lines; these control where buildings must place their fronts in order to give spatial definition to the streets and squares. Build-To Lines are conceptually distinct from setback lines, which keep buildings away from public spaces and allow them to pull back even further behind parking lots. In contrast, Build-To Lines require the building to place its front in a specific position such that it forms a wall to the street, which shapes the public space and forces the parking lot behind the building, out of sight. As shown, frontage lines are not consistent, but are manipulated in order to shape the civic streetscape in desired ways. For example, the buildings along Bear Street briefly pull very close to the street at both ends -- to define a linear square and slow traffic -- and then open up in the middle to allow buildings to separate themselves from the street.
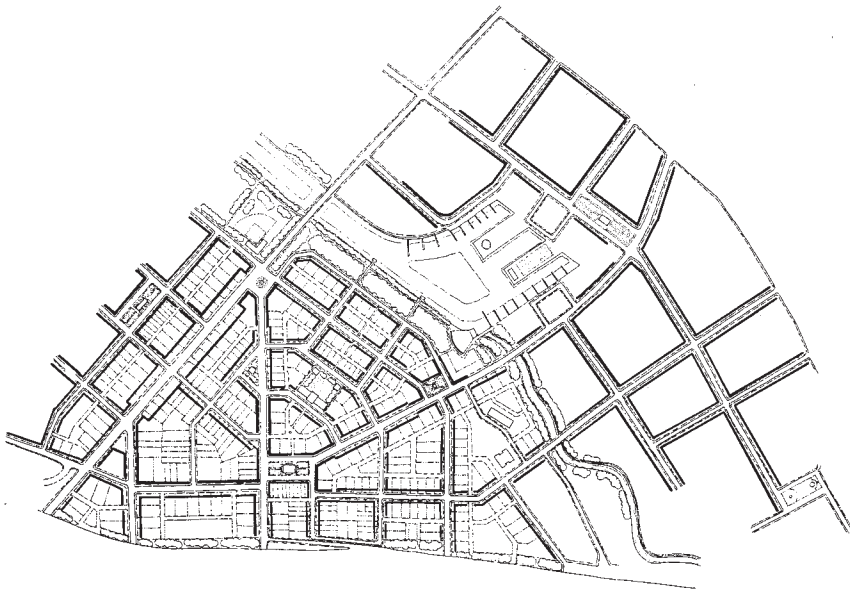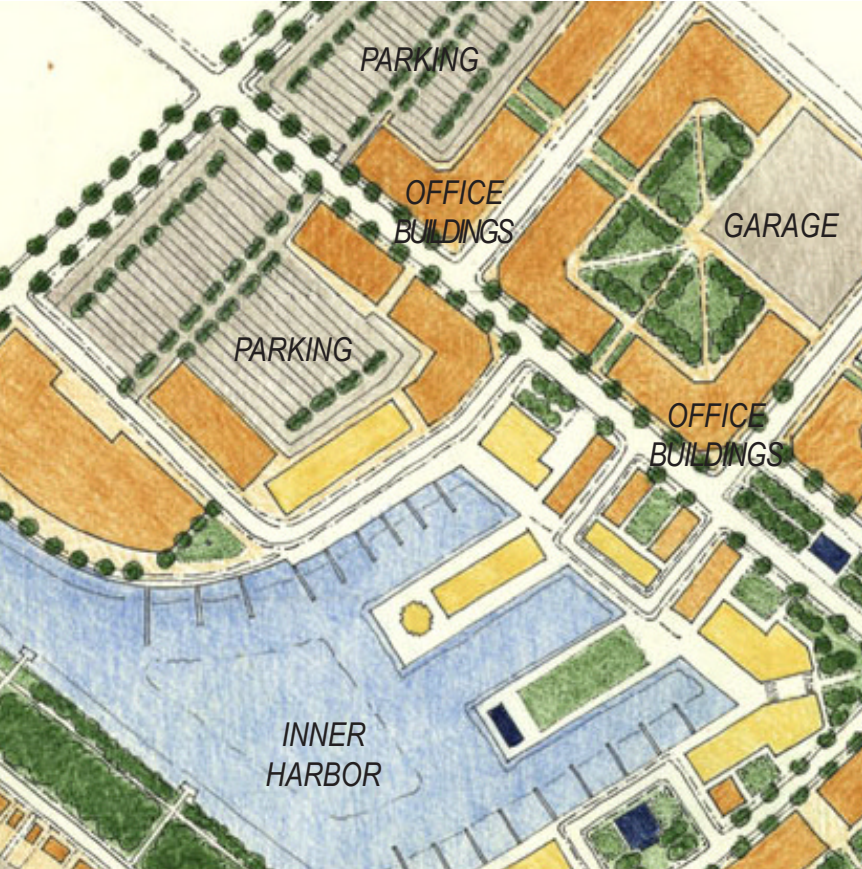

BUILD-TO LINES DESIGNATE THE BUILDING EDGES THAT DEFINE THE PUBLIC REALM
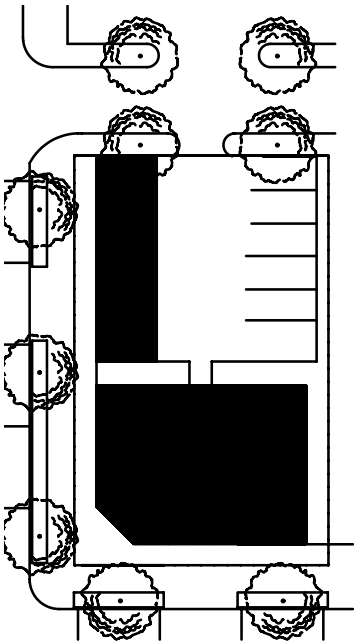
Some Proposed Buildings

The next group of illustrations address the typical office building type planned for the Inner Harbor District. It is three stories tall and 90' deep, providing about 25,000 square feet of interior space, the commercial standard. It is designed to function equally well on 90-degree corners, acute corners, and obtuse corners, which is what one finds in the street network of this area. As shown in the master plan, three of these L-shaped buildings can be combined on a single block with a parking structure, with mid-block gardens in between. This is actually an urban type developed by hometown son Mark Falcone, now a Denver developer. It is a popular configuration because the offices receive good views in all directions, since there is a garden between them and the parking structure.

*STANDARD L-SHAPED OFFICE BUILDINGS THAT HANDLE A VARIETY OF CORNER CONDITIONS*

A smaller type of mixed-use building, also recommended for this part of the plan, is pictured in the final three images. These buildings have a more domestic scale, and contain apartments above shops. They are similar in scale to the six-plex apartments discussed earlier, with which they are actually interchangeable. For that reason, they could also be used in the Urban Center category of the neighborhood as well. Like the six-plex apartments, they handle their parking requirements on surface parking lots to the rear. At corners, the parking is hidden from the street behind thin "liner" buildings. In the first example, the liner building actually contains a full row of parking below an office or apartments upstairs.

L-SHAPED BUILDINGS COMBINE WITH PARKING STRUCTURES AND GARDENS TO FORM BLOCKS

MIXED-USE BUILDING

Building Area:	2,596 sf
Apartments:	4 Units
Shops:	2 Units
Parking :	15 places/ story
Stories:	Three
Lot :	72x 110 ft
Front Setback :	6 ft.
Side Setback :	6 ft.
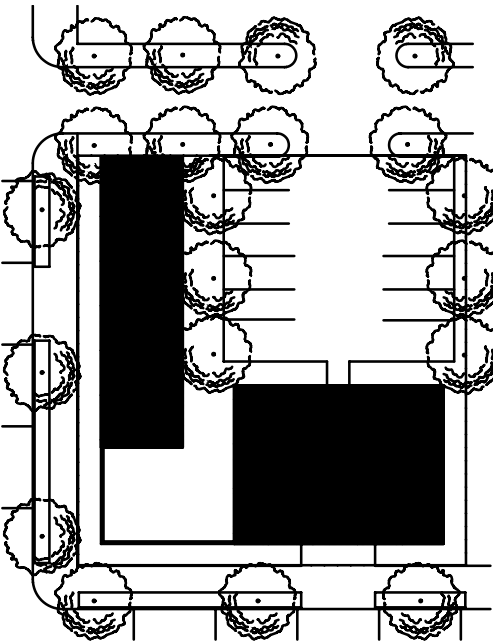
MIXED-USE BUILDING

Building Area:	2,596 sf
Apartments:	6 Units
Live/Work:	2 Units
Parking :	15 places/ story
Stories:	Three
Lot :	72x 110 ft
Front Setback :	6 ft.
Side Setback :	6 ft.
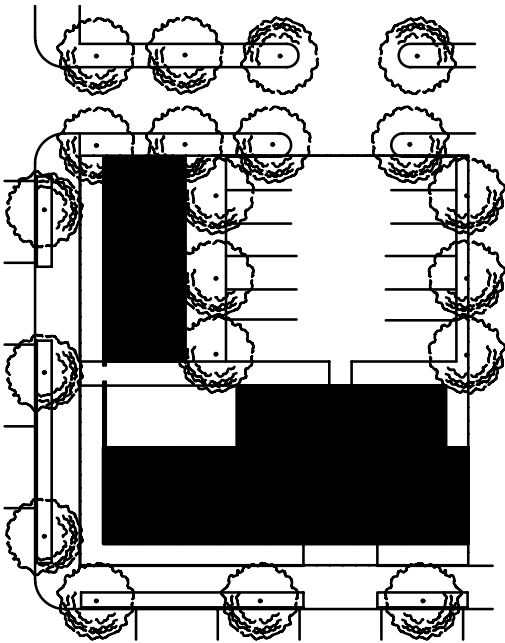
MIXED-USE BUILDING

Building Area:	2,596 SF/FL
Apartments:	4 Units
Live/Work:	2 Units
Shops:	3 Units
Parking :	15 places/ story
Stories:	Three
Lot :	72x 110 ft
Front Setback :	6 ft.
Side Setback :	6 ft.

SMALLER OFFICE BUILDINGS THAT HIDE PARKING LOTS BEHIND THEM

IMPLEMENTATION

All brownfield redevelopment opportunities within the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County should be considered in light of this *Pilot Project*. Municipalities that wish to encourage such redevelopments will initiate planning and rezoning efforts ahead of the private sector, to pre-permit healthy growth. Whether the design effort is led by a municipal department, a private developer, or a public/private partnership, the plan should be completed in a public, participatory planning process in order to produce a consensus outcome. Such designs should be completed by professional planners conversant in the techniques of traditional neighborhood development.

The process of creating such a plan is not particularly difficult if the designers thoroughly review the documents provided here. In addition to this *Pilot Project*, the necessary tools are the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Guidelines* and the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*. The *Guidelines* provide instruction on design technique, while the *Code*, if followed, regulates a satisfactory outcome. In addition, the *Regional Plan's* Transportation Policies provide justification for many of the decisions implicit in the plan.

ONONDAGA COUNTY
SETTLEMENT PLAN

PILOT PROJECT 4: LIVERPOOL
VILLAGE RETROFIT

SUMMARY

Liverpool currently suffers from a fate shared by other County villages: previously a pleasant, walkable community, it is sundered by the speed and volume of the state-highway traffic that passes through it. The through-commuting needs of residents beyond Liverpool have been given unfair priority over the local community needs of Liverpool residents. The result is a main street that is barely crossable and a population that is afraid to walk. The solution is a site-specific application of a generic technique: the reconfiguration of the highway into a traditional, pedestrian-friendly street design. In addition, some suggestions are made about taking advantage of certain opportunities unique to the current situation.

AERIAL VIEW OF THE VILLAGE OF LIVERPOOL

DISCUSSION

Overview

Liverpool was chosen as a *Pilot Project* because it suffers from a condition that is shared by many of the County's other towns, villages, and hamlets: it has a wonderfully-organized traditional downtown that has been split in two and sundered by high-speed automotive traffic. In this case, two state highways -- County Route 57 and NY Route 370 (Oswego Street and Second Street) -- have been allowed over time to gradually straighten and widen, such that the downtown of Liverpool is no longer an environment that supports pedestrian life. That is not to say that there are no pedestrians -- a few valiant individuals still try to walk and bicycle there -- but this unpleasant and dangerous activity becomes more unlikely with each passing day.

In studying Liverpool, the planning team was able to draw some larger lessons that apply to the County's main streets, its thoroughfares in general, and to its park system. As many problems as Liverpool has, it is also remarkable how many solutions appeared very quickly from its analysis. The effort was assisted in this regard by the many Liverpool residents who participated in the planning workshops. Not only did these residents have many excellent ideas, but they also demonstrated the enthusiasm and determination to make these ideas happen. More than some of the other *Pilot Projects*, one can have some confidence that this particular exercise may bear fruit quickly.

Traffic Concerns

This first photograph sums up the main problem facing downtown Liverpool. Several features are particularly telling: the blur of the fast-moving vehicle,

ENDANGERED SPECIES: LIVERPOOL PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS

the body language of the young bicyclist, the highway-sized signage, and the sheer expanse of pavement between one side of the street and the other. These circumstances are the outcome of a highway design policy that has prioritized the free flow of traffic at the direct expense of the Village's quality of life. As often happens throughout the state and the country, the state Department of Transportation, heeding to the demands of suburban commuters, has been allowed to ream out the center of a previously viable village with high-speed roadway geometrics, so that those who live beyond can drive to and from the city as quickly as possible. This attitude was summed up by a refreshingly honest politician who visited the design workshop. "Liverpool," he said, " is *in the way*."

The aerial photograph on the prior page clearly shows the existing street pattern of Liverpool, which is a very well organized traditional street network. It has some 1950s and 1960s sprawl at its edges, but even that is correctly tied into the existing block system. The widened thoroughfares of N.Y. 57 and the Onondaga Lake Parkway are plainly visible, as are the two triangular greens at the village center: one has already been landscaped as a proper village green, while the other has yet to be completed, not surprising given the limited pedestrian activity. Along the surrounding streets there is a scattered collection of spotty retail, most of which is experiencing some distress. In fact, few stores look like they will be able to last there very long, with the exception of Heid's, which is such a neighborhood institution that it has actually been coded as a Civic Building in the master plan ahead. The proposals that follow are an implementation of the Transportation Policies included in the *Regional Plan*, specifically the concepts of the *Highwayless Town* and the *Townless Highway*, and *Regional Facilities vs. Local Needs*.

Recovering the Parkway

This image indicates the current road network more clearly. To the right, in green, is one of the better portions of the Onondaga Lake Park, which has unfortunately been given away as a corridor for the Onondaga Parkway (NY Route 370). But there are several lucky circumstances, one of which is the railroad bridge to the southeast, above Onondaga Lake Parkway, that is known for taking the tops off of trucks. The D.O.T. wants to give the Parkway back to the County if it is willing to take it back. However, the County should not do so under current circumstances, due to the associated liability. Instead, the County and the State should build a bypass further to the east, as illustrated, in order to take the principal connection to the Onondaga Lake Park out at least a mile from the village. Rerouting the traffic in this way would allow the "Parkway" to once again to become a true *parkway*: a quiet two-lane thoroughfare with slow-moving traffic and places to park to gain access to the lakefront. This redesign evokes one of the fundamental rules of town planning, which is never to place a highway against a waterfront, as it eliminates the possibility of access to the water. Many cites have broken this rule -- Manhattan, for example-- usually following the same history, in which a pleasant waterfront parkway was widened repeatedly in a vain attempt to accommodate traffic. That is what happened in Liverpool, and this proposal attempts to return a portion of the parkway to something resembling its original condition. This transformation regains a large area of the waterfront park for the area's residents and visitors.

The second image shows the Parkway in its recovered condition. Since it will be carrying less through traffic and more pleasure traffic, only two lanes are necessary rather than four. Half of the asphalt has been sawed away to reduce the road width, but it has been left its full width in certain areas to provide periodic head-in parking along the parkway for visitors. The meandering bicycle path parallels the waterfront, and visitors can park along the water's edge to sit and eat lunch -- as some do now -- or to pull out their picnics and play equipment. This configuration is ideal for a waterfront park, as opposed to the typical condition in which one huge remote parking lot is provided, requiring visitors to lug their picnics a great distance.

Incentivizing the Thruway

The other lucky circumstance in Liverpool is the presence of the N.Y. State Thruway (I-90) directly to the north of the Village, parallel to the Parkway, providing a potentially superior means of access to downtown for those motorists who find Liverpool to be "in the way." The first question the planners asked was why more people going to Syracuse do not use the Thruway instead of the Onondaga Parkway. It was noted that an experiment was conducted several years ago for six months, in which the Thruway toll was eliminated and still few motorists chose to take it. People continued driving through the center of Liverpool on Route 57. This outcome was interpreted as suggesting that further attempts to incentivize Thruway use would be in vain.

That interpretation was made in ignorance of a fundamental property of traffic behavior, that traffic will take the path of least resistance. As long as the path through the center of Liverpool remains smooth and clear -- something that the D.O.T. has guaranteed with its high-speed geometrics --

THE VILLAGE AND ITS CURRENT ROAD NETWORK.
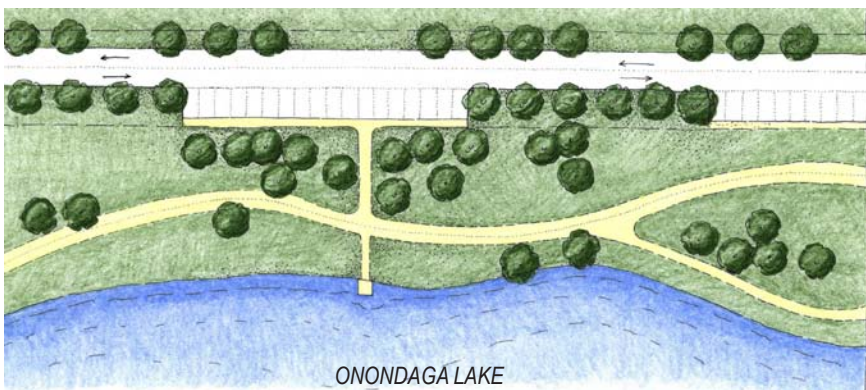
THE RECOVERING OF THE ONONDAGA LAKE PARKWAY AS A TRUE PARKWAY.

drivers will have no incentive to use a bypass route. It is patently wrong to assert that the bypass is not viable; shutting down Oswego Street to cars would quickly demonstrate how viable the bypass is. As long as the bypass is available as an alternative, the question is not whether Oswego Street is necessary for through traffic, but simply how much traffic downtown Liverpool wants. Shutting it down entirely would be worse for businesses than doing nothing, because retail needs cars. But retail needs *cars moving slowly on pedestrian-friendly boulevards*, and therefore Liverpool would benefit most from a reconfiguration of its downtown that provides that outcome. To the degree that such a redesign causes traffic to back up, people will then use the bypass. No traffic studies are necessary to confirm the obvious, that the system will be completely self-regulating.

Indeed, this would have been demonstrated if the earlier study of the bypass had been done properly, with traffic cones used to calm traffic on Oswego Street. With no reason to consider taking the bypass route, it is no surprise that few drivers used it. In other locations, where no viable bypass is available, the intentional reduction of volume along a neighborhood's main street would perhaps have to be weighed against driver inconvenience. In this case, however, with the Thruway so close at hand, no such second-guessing is justified.

However, it must be mentioned that the Thruway could perhaps benefit from improvements. There is some question as to the effectiveness of the design of its entrance and exit ramps at Liverpool. The State is considering ways to address possible driver impediments, particularly at the eastern end of the Thruway bypass. Investments in this sort of highway infrastructure -- encouraging commuters to skirt over-trafficked downtowns -- represent responsible roadway investment, in contrast to the money that was spent widening the streets of Liverpool.
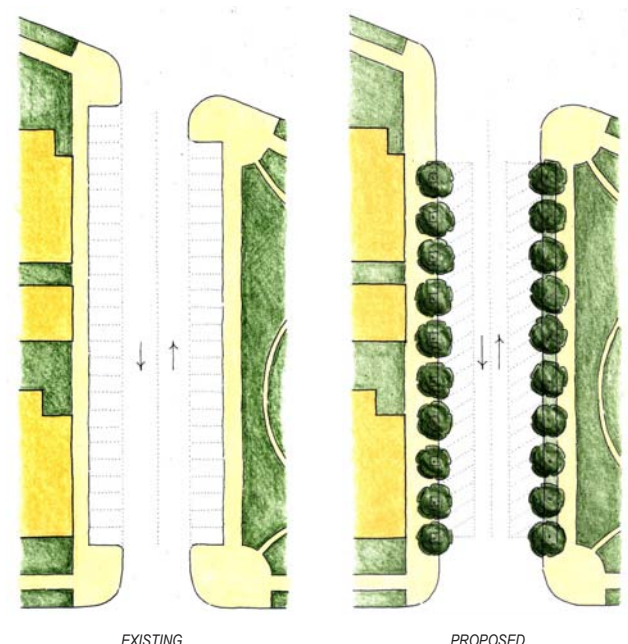
Street Reconfigurations

Central to the reconfiguration of downtown Liverpool are the two street designs pictured here. The first is Oswego Street, still kept fairly wide, but narrowed from four lanes plus parallel parking to three lanes plus parallel parking. The bulb-outs, or "elephant ears" have been eliminated, as they are not necessary; traditional towns don't have them, they are expensive to build and maintain, and they tend not to drain properly. Trees have been planted at a regular interval to define the street space.

The second is Tulip Street, which has received trees and a wider sidewalk, narrowing the roadway. To accomplish this, head-in parking has been replaced with diagonal parking, which is a very useful tool, as the angle is adjustable. If cars are traveling too quickly, the angle can be raised closer to 90 degrees; if drivers feel that space is too tight, the angle can be reduced, all for the price of paint alone.

A key factor in reconfiguring these streets -- and any others in downtown situations -- is lane width, discussed in detail in the *Regional Plan's* Transportation Policies. While engineering manuals may suggest otherwise, the observation of successful older neighborhoods teaches a simple lesson: driving lanes in neighborhoods should never be more than 10' wide, and parking lanes never more than 7' wide. Most cars are less than 6' wide, and the excess lane width only causes speeding. While 11' and 12' lanes may be appropriate for interstate highways, they do not belong in environments in which people are expected to walk. Traffic engineers are often skeptical of this proposal, which they might accept if they would only visit some of the older cities where the 10' standard is in place. Local engineers are encouraged to pay less attention to their manuals and more attention to healthy cities. And if they do not, citizens should take it upon themselves to study their own streets, measure the ones that are effective in slowing down traffic, and make them the standard. Appropriate templates for the creation of neighborhood streets are provided in the Thoroughfare Standards within the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*.
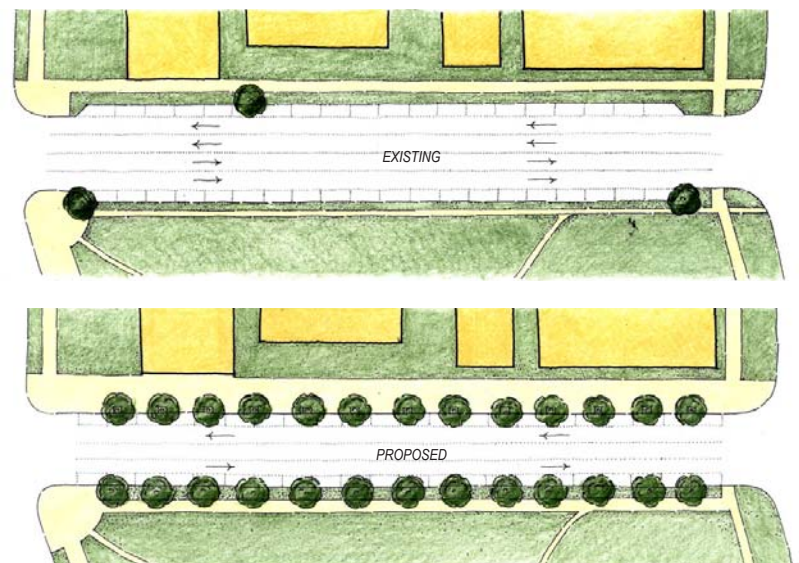
PROPOSED RECONFIGURATION OF OSWEGO ROAD

PROPOSED RECONFIGURATION OF TULIP STREET

THE PLAN OF LIVERPOOL, HEALED

The Plan

The recommended overall plan for Liverpool, not so different from the current plan of Liverpool, recovers the neighborhood's traditional street pattern, which is as good as in any village in Europe. The primary change is the removal of the high-speed traffic pattern and the logical resolution of the roadway network. The high-speed geometrics created by the highway engineers have been reshaped, and a plaza announces the entrance into town. The existing triangular green is kept, and the second is completed with equal quality. As shown in the next two images, very few changes are necessary to complete the thoroughfare network. Primarily, blocks have been completed so that the road network regains complete connectivity.

The plan also proposes one major land swap, in an attempt to keep the Post Office, which is looking for a larger site and may have to leave town. The Post Office is currently located to the north, with a large parking lot, away from Oswego Street where it could be providing activity and energy. Due to the reconfiguration of the highways, there is now a site available for their building directly to the south of Oswego Street. The old site could be turned into an even larger parking lot, which would serve the Post Office overflow as well as shoppers in general. It would also provide more parking for the parks department, so that the two parking lots within the park area could be converted to recreational use.

This proposal may seem a bit radical, but it is based on successful downtowns all over the world. As discussed in the plan for Butternut, large parking lots should not be directly adjacent to their destinations, or else no-one will walk and shop on the main street. The twin anchors of the parking and the destination should be separated, with shopping streets in between. This is a fundamental rule of healthy city-making. Placing the recreational parking across Oswego Street will enormously enliven the restaurants and shops of downtown Liverpool. Of course, this proposal is only fair -- and will only work -- if the pedestrian experience from parking to destination is of the highest urban quality, a delight to walk. Simply separating the anchors is no use without a walkable environment in between. Therefore, this land swap is only suggested if the high-speed roadways are reconfigured as previously described.

THE PROPOSED LIVERPOOL STREET NETWORK

CHANGES RESULTING IN THE PROPOSED NETWORK
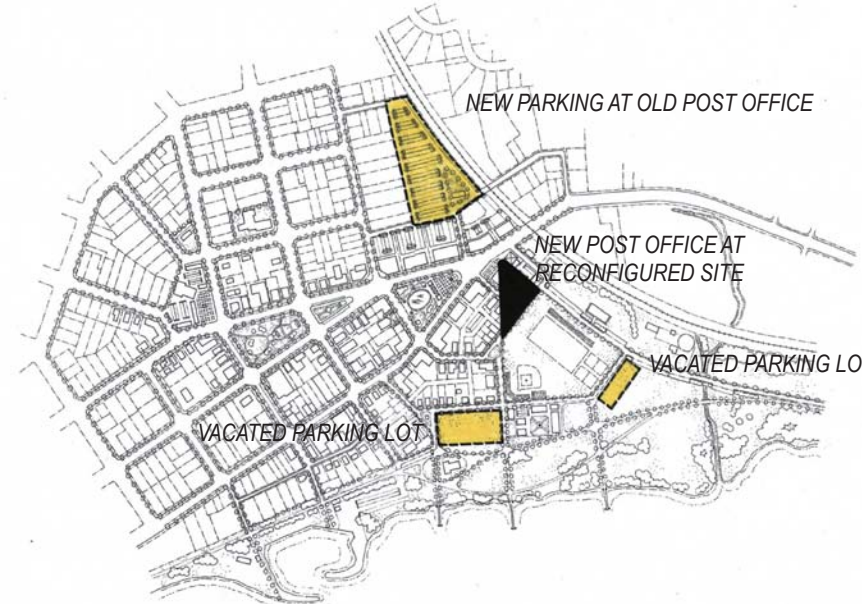
THE PROPOSED POST OFFICE LAND SWAP

The large plan also shows, in orange, all of the new buildings that are possible if the roadways are reconfigured so that they can flourish. The next diagram, in black and white, shows Liverpool's open space system, which could be both well-shaped and continuous, the two main goals of open-space planning. The squares and greens are shaped as a series of outdoor living rooms, appropriately located near to civic buildings, such as the plaza in front of the church that provides a place to collect after services. The parkways runs continuously along the southern edge of the village.

The most remarkable aspect of the Liverpool Pilot Project is how small an intervention is needed to reintroduce an ideal neighborhood structure into what is currently a blighted automotive environment. Indeed, less investment is required to repair the Village than was spent to damage it. Similar interventions are possible wherever the demands of the automobile have been allowed to overrun the desires of local residents.

IMPLEMENTATION

All municipalities within the County should investigate whether they contain downtown areas that have been blighted by the introduction of high-speed geometries into what was formerly a pedestrian-friendly environment. These areas should be approached with a conviction that the rights of local pedestrians are no less significant than the rights of through-commuters. Small interventions can be introduced by a municipality's Public Works department, but any larger plans for change should be completed in a public, participatory planning process in order to produce a consensus outcome. While plans such as these are typically prepared by professional planning consultants, it is imaginable that they could be completed by professional staff or citizen volunteers as well, advised by County Planning staff.

THE PROPOSED LIVERPOOL OPEN SPACE NETWORK

The process of creating such a plan is similar to the techniques that have been demonstrated here. Because traffic will automatically take the path of least resistance, municipalities can redirect traffic to streets *between* neighborhoods simply by introducing to neighborhood centers the types of traffic-calming interventions proposed above. Additional bypass routes should be considered in order to create special corridors like the proposed Onondaga Lake Parkway. Interrupted street networks should be reconnected, and the strategic location of anchors and parking should be considered as a way to reinvigorate the area. In addition to this *Pilot Project*, helpful tools include the *Regional Plan's* Transportation Policies, the Thoroughfare Standards within the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*, and the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Guidelines*.

ONONDAGA COUNTY SETTLEMENT PLAN

PILOT PROJECT 5: FAYETTEVILLE
MALL RETROFIT

SUMMARY

One of many "dead" malls in the County, Fayetteville is fairly representative of the group: bankrupted by a later generation of retail, a visual blight to its neighbors, but well located at a major intersection. This "100-percent corner" location means that the site would work well as a future town center, and that is what is proposed here. As could be attempted on any similar site, the mall's buildings are gradually replaced and integrated into a street network that requires minimal reconfiguring of infrastructure. The result is a self-sufficient urban neighborhood that can also serve as a resource to its surrounding suburban population.

DISCUSSION

Overview

Fayetteville Mall presents the problem of the dead shopping mall. This is a very serious issue in Onondaga County, which has at least four malls which are dead or dying. Like the others, Fayetteville could be described as a retail development that has had its comeuppance. When it opened, it came to life by putting a number of main street shops and department stores out of business. Now, one retail generation later, a newer mall has put it out of business. In retail as in life, one reaps what one sows.

But the Fayetteville mall and the others like it present an additional, greater problem. When one builds as quickly and cheaply as these buildings were constructed, there is very little that is physically worth saving. Still, economy dictates reuse wherever possible, and this plan, similar to successful mall retrofits elsewhere, proposes saving a portion of the mall temporarily, as part of a multiple-step reconstruction process.

The natural evolution of a dead mall, given its inevitable location at a major crossroads with excellent regional access, is as a town center. Based on their original marketing plans, these malls are all extremely well located and well served by infrastructure. In addition, they are already zoned for intensive commercial use, and their neighbors have already been ill-treated by the existing mall's traffic, so there are few political barriers to redevelopment. The only significant impediment is that many of these malls, Fayetteville included, are burdened by a heavy debt load, which has to be somehow written down. Accomplishing that feat is best left in the hands of the dealmakers, but the mall's surrounding municipalities can play a role in making the mall's creditors aware that they will most likely never be made whole. Once this is understood and accepted, these sites would then perhaps become acquirable at a reasonable cost. This plan is completed in optimistic anticipation of such an eventuality.

The exterior and interior views make it clear how quickly these buildings can fall out of date. When a building is designed according to the latest fashion, as this mall was, it is very easy to fall out of fashion. When a building is designed in a more timeless way, it may be less exciting the day it opens, but it does not look dated ten years later. This is a lesson that is also being learned by property owners in the split-level ranch subdivisions of the sixties, many of which are losing value only because they are no longer "in fashion".

The Plan

The aerial view shows how the mall is composed, like many malls of its generation, with four large anchor stores separated by a collection of smaller in-line stores. The anchors are located in taller, stronger buildings with wider structural spans, and are thus more easily adaptable to other use. In the Eastgate Mall retrofit in Chatanooga, the anchors have been successfully converted into Class-C office space for international telemarketing companies. The in-line stores are small, inflexible, less sturdy, and therefore easy to remove.

THE FAYETTEVILLE MALL


PARKING LOT VIEW

INTERIOR VIEW

AERIAL VIEW OF THE MALL

Once the in-line stores are demolished, it is possible to build a main street that can be made available for other uses, such as convenience retail and small apartment buildings for retired people who want to be able to walk to their daily needs. This main street benefits from a physical amenity, which is the retrieval of the stream that currently runs under the property. This stream was piped up and covered over for the construction of the parking lot, an unecological gesture that has resulted in recent flooding. The natural solution is to recover that stream, connect it into the stream system to the east, and turn it into an amenity like the riverwalk at San Antonio, which is not very wide yet a huge success. The stream can be dammed, if necessary for retention, but the dam could be opened for floods. In the winter, the water could be turned into a linear skating pond. This is one of may civic amenities that were suggested by local residents. Of course, the main amenity of the plan are the street spaces themselves, so the concept is equally valid with or without the water feature.

In this plan, the mall is not yet a true town center, but it is a complete main street. Surface parking lots are still located at the edges, but once people enter the main street they experience a continuous pedestrian-friendly environment.

In the final plan, below, the anchor stores have been removed and replaced by a collection of mixed-use buildings. The success of the first phase has increased the value of the land to a point where it is economically viable to build structured parking garages, which free the remaining site area for the insertion of a complete street network. The key to attaining this end is the mix of uses, as parking structures are difficult to afford with only daytime or nighttime traffic. If they are sitting unused overnight, for example, that is a waste of resources. The solution is to build parking structures that are used around the clock: shopping during the day, restaurants in the evening, apartments at night. In this way, a fully mixed-use plan makes parking structures possible.

In this plan, offices and shops are combined with the full range of housing -- including single-family lots near the existing subdivision -- to create a fully self-sufficient mixed-use neighborhood. Two civic amenities requested by citizens, a library and a YMCA, are provided near the center.
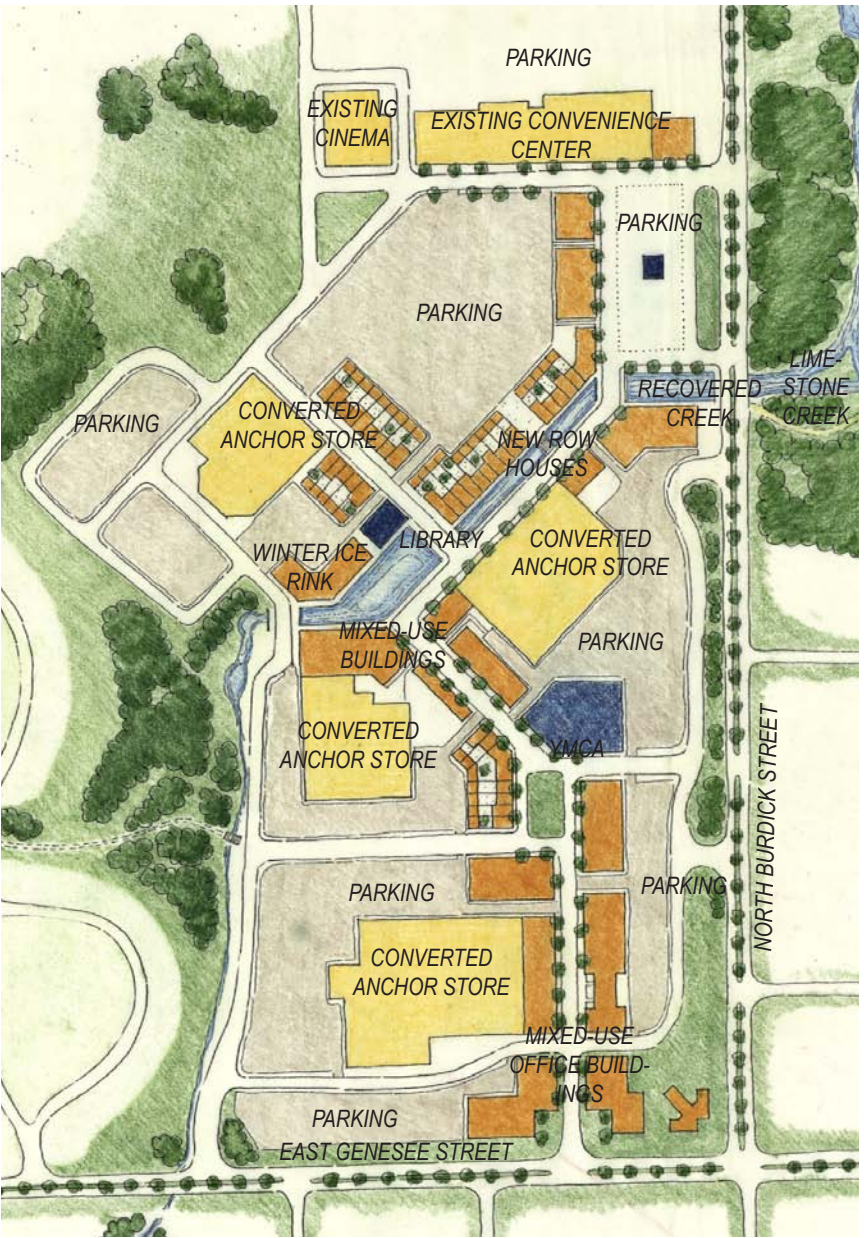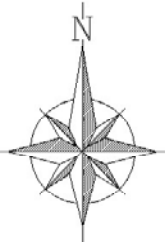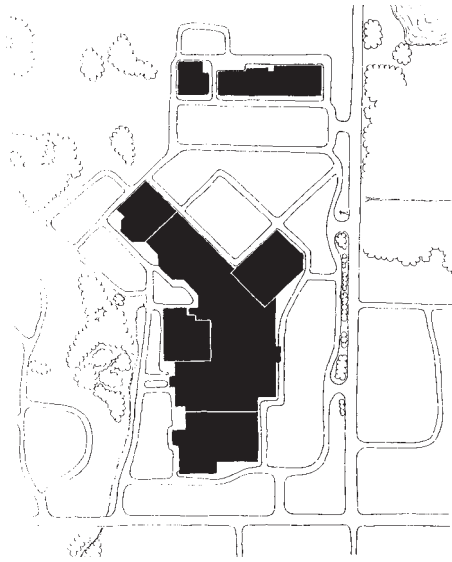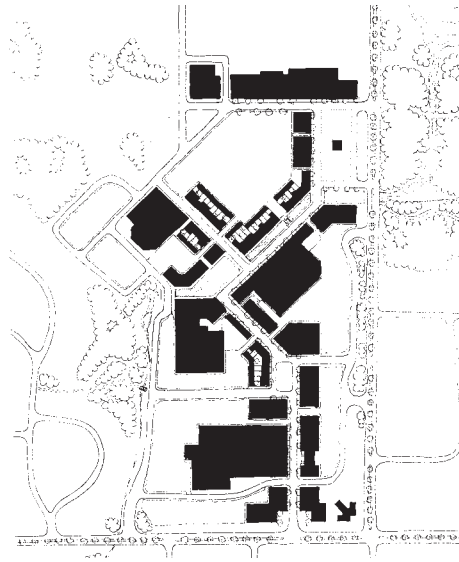

STEP 1: THE INTERMEDIATE PLAN
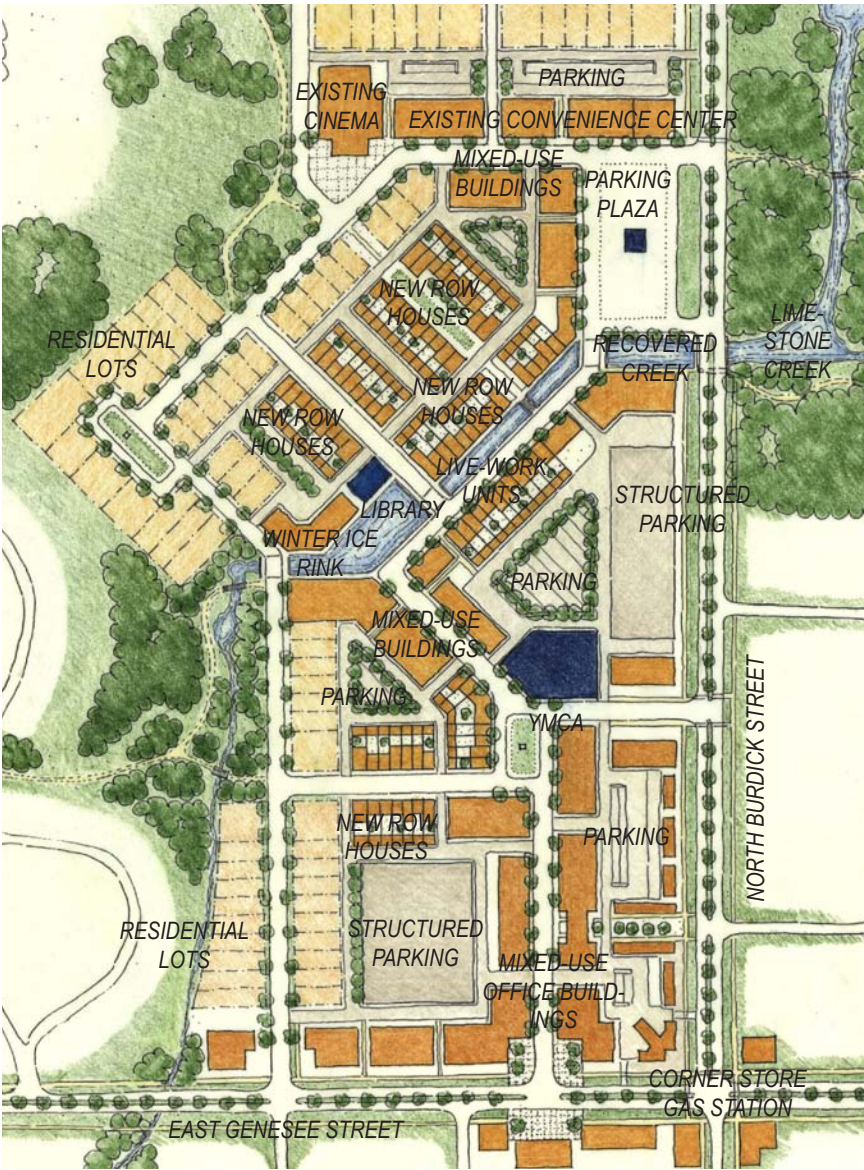
STEP 2: THE FINAL PLAN
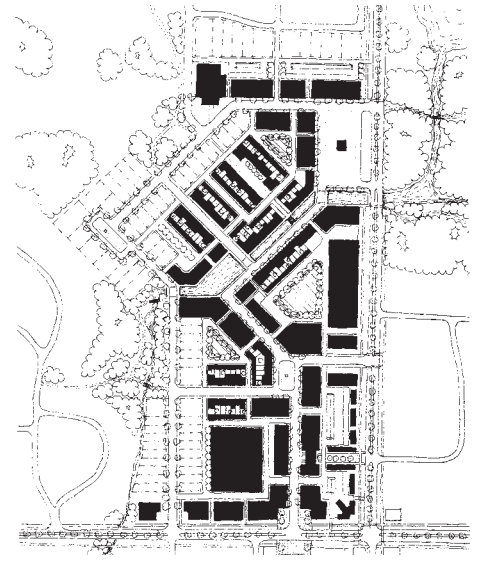
EXISTING
PROPOSED
CIVIC

*EXISTING FIGURE-GROUND*

PHASE 1 FIGURE GROUND

PHASE 2 FIGURE GROUND

The three black-and-white diagrams illustrate the transformation of the mall into a small urban neighborhood. Initially, the mall sits alone in its parking lot, an object floating in space. Visitors park their cars and trek across acres of asphalt to enter the hermetically sealed shopping environment. That unpleasant walk from car to shopping is one of the reason why malls are so quick to fall to competitive pressures. Also visible in the drawing is the small convenience center and cinema to the north. In the first phase retrofit, it is maintained intact; the second phase imagines keeping the cinema while transforming the convenience center into a more dense (multiple story) and appropriately urban building fabric.

The Phase 1 figure-ground shows the spatial definition that is provided by the traditional main street organization. In response to the presence of the old anchors, it follows a rather cranky picturesque path, which is effective in providing multiple corners and terminated vistas for more effective retail. The Phase 2 drawing shows how the single main street has grown into a full network of streets, and the anchors have been replaced by smaller buildings.

That street network is shown in black in the diagram at the right, which demonstrates its continuity. The scale of the drawing is somewhat deceiving. It is only the size of a mall parking lot, but there are entire European cities that are no larger than a mall parking lot. In fact, the amount of buildings here -- more than six full blocks -- is perhaps twice the amount of urbanism that one finds in Syracuse's entire Armory district. For that reason, one would not expect this transformation to happen very fast; it may require a full ten or twenty years, and involve many different small developers. However, in a more positive economic scenario, this is the sort of development that a single investor can accomplish in two years. What is most important is to have the plan in place -- the town of Manlius could pre-permit it -- before some inferior form of development occurs. The same holds true for the County's other dead malls. If a developer purchasing the property inherits a plan that is already approved, the development of the parcel according to that plan is much more likely.
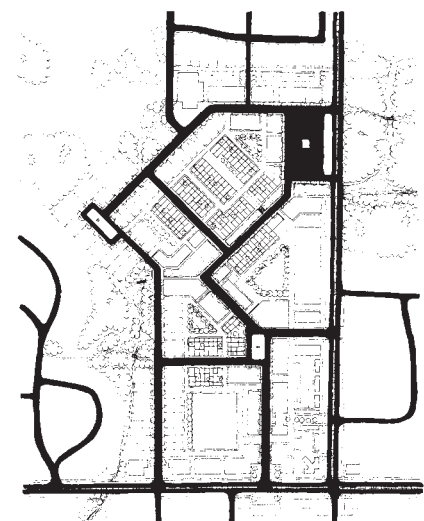
STREET NETWORK

IMPLEMENTATION

All dead or dying malls in Onondaga County should be considered in light of this *Pilot Project*. Municipalities that wish to encourage such redevelopments will initiate planning and rezoning efforts ahead of the private sector, to pre-permit healthy growth. Whether the design effort is led by a municipal department, a private developer, or a public/private partnership, the plan should be completed in a public, participatory planning process in order to produce a consensus outcome. Such designs should be completed by professional planners conversant in the techniques of traditional neighborhood development.

The process of creating such a plan is not particularly difficult if the designers thoroughly review the documents provided here. In addition to this *Pilot Project*, the necessary tools are the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Guidelines* and the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*. The *Guidelines* provide instruction on design technique, while the *Code*, if followed, regulates a satisfactory outcome. In addition, the *Regional Plan's* Transportation Policies provide justification for many of the decisions implicit in the plan.

ONONDAGA COUNTY
SETTLEMENT PLAN

PILOT PROJECT 6: BAYBERRY PLAZA
SHOPPING CENTER RETROFIT

SUMMARY

The Bayberry Plaza represents the first generation of suburban shopping centers, the strip mall, in which the stores face a sidewalk set back behind a deep parking lot. The grocery store and fast food franchises across the street are sited in the same manner, resulting in a "main street" which is too wide and ill-defined to serve as a comfortable pedestrian environment. As a result, the otherwise pleasant suburban development of Bayberry is split down its middle. The proposed solution is unique, but teaches lessons that could be used elsewhere, and in fact have been used successfully in previous similar rehabilitations.

DISCUSSION

Overview

Like Liverpool, Bayberry is an example of a very pleasant place that has seen its center deeply undermined by the demands of the automobile, such that rather than being a natural gathering place for its surrounding neighborhoods, it instead separates those on one side from those on the other. It is a center that has become instead a double-edge, and it is unworthy of its surroundings, which include some healthy Radburn-era suburbs. Bayberry's main problem is that it was built in an era that had many excellent ideas for improving residential subdivisions -- limiting through traffic, emphasizing pedestrian activity, introducing natural greenways, etc. -- but only one idea for shopping, and a bad one: the strip center. In order to improve motorist convenience, the main street of stores was set back several hundred feet from the road, behind a vast parking lot. This dramatic move made two other developments inevitable: first, the street became a landscape of garish signs, necessary to advertise the now distant shops; and second, lacking meaningful pedestrian addresses and the spatial definition of buildings against it, the street lost its walkability and was thus given over entirely to the automobile. As traffic increased, there was no pressure against widening the road, since it was already written off by pedestrians. The outcome is a street so wide and devoid of buildings, trees, or people, that it is even unpleasant to drive on.

Oswego Road (County Route 57) is also unpleasant because of the urban qualities of the buildings which surround it. What is visible in the first photograph is an apparently random collection of completely uncoordinated commercial construction. The entrances are uncoordinated, as are the parking lots, the setbacks and the signage. It is hard to imagine that any zoning code was in place at all when this was built; if this current configuration is in fact the outcome of a code's enforcement, then it is difficult to determine what the code is requiring or why it is even worth administering.

As unpleasant as the drive is, and as unappealing as Bayberry Plaza may be, it would be wrong to condemn it entirely. Behind its gigantic parking lot, Bayberry Plaza does exactly what it should: every store in the complex provides useful goods and services for the surrounding residents. In redesigning this Plaza, one would not want to lose a single one of these "mom-and-pop" shops. Rather, the goal would be to reorganize these shops into a physical model that supports pedestrian life and relates to the planning traditions of Onondaga County.

The same is true of Wegmans, which residents seem to really love -- at least, they love what's inside. The essential intellectual maneuver is not to dislike Wegmans, but to learn to separate its very good beef from its very bad parking lot. This lot not only blights Oswego Road, but effectively separates Wegmans from everything else, which prevents it from serving as an anchor that shares some of its shoppers and energy with smaller stores nearby.

A final factor that undermines the quality of Bayberry is the intersection of Oswego Road and Blackberry Road, a crossroads that not only carries a fair amount of through traffic but, due to the clipped street network, also must handle much of the area's local traffic as well. Due to the hierarchical *dendritic* road system of sprawl, which limits local intersections in a vain (and dangerous) attempt to increase vehicular speeds, it is difficult to travel within Bayberrry without repeatedly using this same intersection. As a result, it is severely overtaxed. The proposed plan for Bayberry attempts, in sum, to relieve this intersection, to turn Oswego Road into more of a connection and less of a seam, to turn the strip center back into a main street, and to create a situation in which the wide variety of retail establishments can be mutually supportive. The plan's primary technique for doing so is to introduce the interconnected traditional street network that the area now lacks.
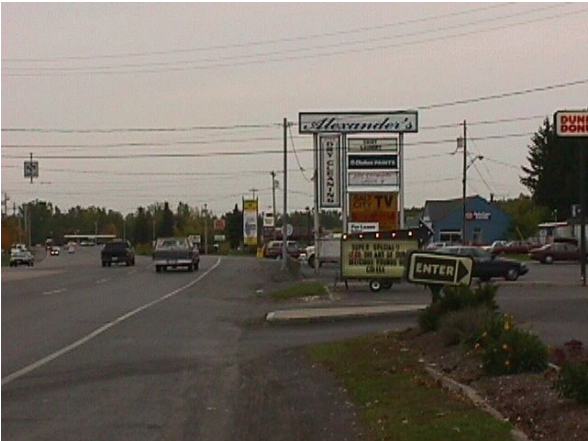
OSWEGO ROAD: MAIN STREET, BAYBERRY

THE BAYBERRY PLAZA: POORLY PLANNED, BUT EXTREMELY USEFUL

WEGMANS: GOOD BEEF, BAD PARKING LOT

OSWEGO ROAD AND BLACKBERRY ROAD: AN INTERSECTION FORCED TO CARRY MORE THAN ITS SHARE OF LOCAL TRAFFIC
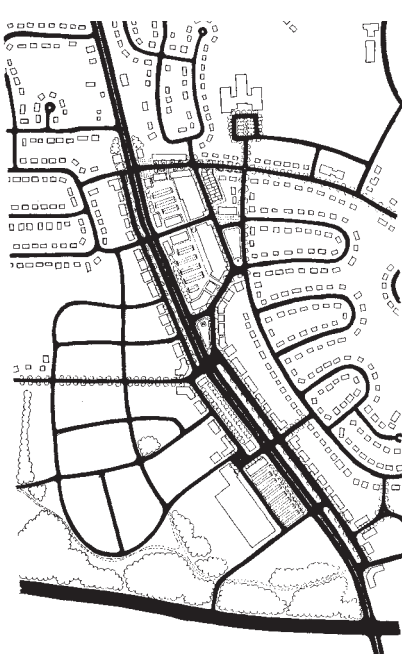
The Plan

The plan of existing conditions summarizes the current situation well. The pleasant 1950's suburbs, with their green fingers, exist to the east and west, connected only by the intersection of Oswego Road and Blackberry Road. Their school is visible to the north. Bayberry Plaza sits behind its parking lot, and Wegmans, to the south, floats in isolation. The first lesson of the master plan, shown next, is to connect wherever possible along the length of Oswego Road. It is likely that some traffic engineers will fight these connections, saying that they will slow down traffic. Indeed, they will slow down traffic slightly, but they will ultimately improve the through-flow by taking pressure off of the Blackberry Road intersection.
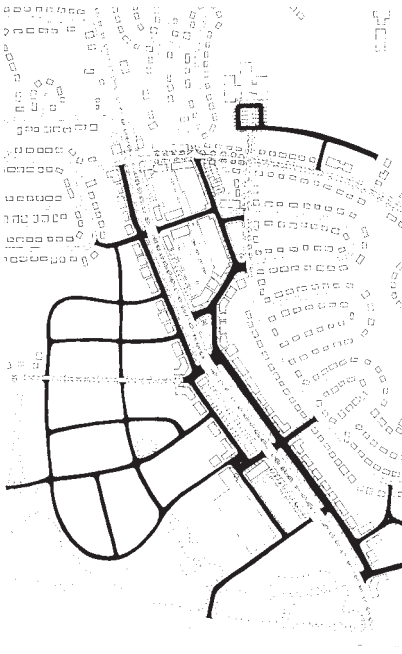
The second lesson is to recognize that Oswego Road, lacking spatial definition, will perhaps never be a successful pedestrian corridor. It can, however, become an attractive vehicular corridor, through the introduction of a boulevard street section, with trees aligned for its entire length. This configuration provides the additional benefit of limiting access onto the center (through) lanes of Oswego Road, which is an outcome favored by traffic engineers. All of the parking lots along the edges are allowed to coalesce in a coherent way in the form of the boulevard's side (parking) lanes. The setbacks are approximately the same, and the signage is controlled. The result is a place that looks better as it grows, as opposed to the current chaotic condition, in which each new store makes the street look worse. Also visible in the plan is a collection of new building sites lining the boulevard, with proposed buildings shown in orange. These buildings would pull up to a sidewalk along the boulevard, with additional parking located behind, out of view.

Within this framework is Wegmans, which maintains its large parking lot, but attempts to contribute to the surrounding urbanism in a more positive way. Wegmans has plans to rebuild, and has expressed a desire to include a cafe/restaurant that provides a more urban indoor/outdoor sidewalk dining experience. Rather than simply placing that experience against a vast parking lot, it is located at a cross-street intersection, and begins a row of connected shops that use Wegmans as an anchor. In this way, Wegmans attaches itself to the neighborhood at large.

The first black-and-white diagram shows how the road system has been reconnected into a true network, with its varied boulevard section along Oswego Road. The second drawing shows the new streets that achieve this goal. Also visible in these drawings, and in the previous master plan, is a new residential neighborhood located in the largely unused land next to the Wegmans. It is a hopeful assumption that, given the good quality of the surrounding suburbs, more people would want to live in this area once it was reconfigured in a more appealing way. Here is another example where a municipality could make the first planning move ahead of the developers: complete the land plan, plat the lots, pass the *TND Code*, and open the new neighborhood up to developers as an area that has been pre-permitted for homebuilding as-of-right.
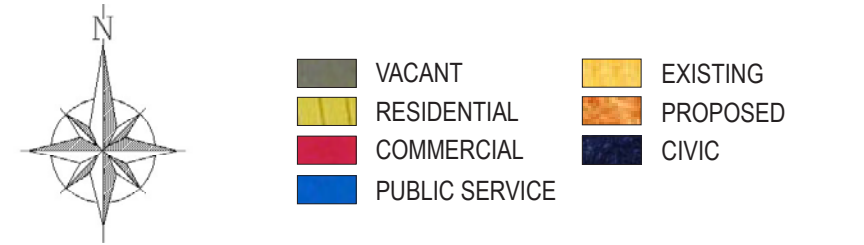

THE EXISTING PLAN OF THE BAYBERRY AREA

N

■ VACANT		■ EXISTING	
■ RESIDENTIAL		■ PROPOSED	
■ COMMERCIAL		■ CIVIC	
■ PUBLIC SERVICE			

THE MASTER PLAN FOR THE BAYBERRY AREA.

THE REVISED BAYBERRY ROAD NETWORK

NEW STREETS

The images at right show three choices for the design of the boulevard section, all of which structure parking for the adjacent retail in a coherent way. In the first case, the secondary roadways to the side have parallel parking on both sides; in the second, there is a single row of head-in parking on one side. Both options provide approximately the same amount of parking. A third option, requiring a slightly wider right-of-way, provides twice as much parking. Due to the multiple roadway, cars pulling in and out of parking spaces would not affect the through traffic in the center lanes. As a whole, this configuration is not a wonderful pedestrian experience; but it is a viable pedestrian experience, and an excellent driving experience.
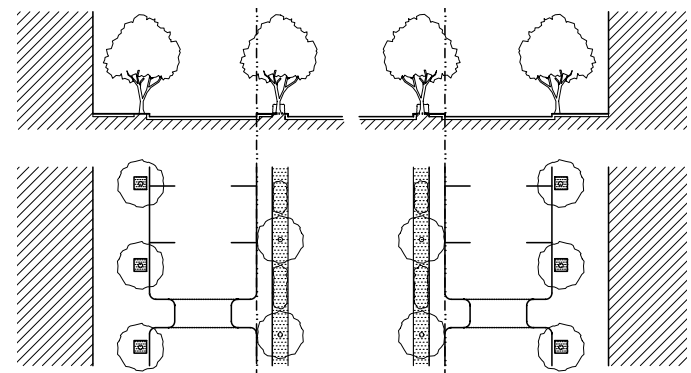
Reversing the Bayberry Plaza

The final strategy, and the boldest move in the plan, sounds truly radical, but it has been done before with success in a project in Cape Cod called Mashpee Commons. In that project, an ugly 1960's shopping center facing a parking lot was simply turned around to create a traditional main street at the back, and then expanded. The back became the front, and the parking remained where it was. Now it is a much larger shopping center, much more successful, and serves as a center to its surrounding community. The same solution is proposed for the Bayberry Plaza. Interestingly, it seems an even more natural solution for this location than it did in Mashpee, for a number of reasons.

First, this project is not isolated in a parking lot like Mashpee was, but abuts on one side the eastern residential neighborhood, with a thin triangle of pavement in between. This seam is just large enough to hold a main street and a small green, perfectly sized for a neighborhood center. This street could easily be accessed from Blackberry Road to the north or from Oswego Road to the south, by means of second triangle that diverts northbound traffic to the east. In this way, the new plan of Bayberry would center upon a series of two triangular greens, as already seen in the traditional plan of Liverpool. The parking lots would still be signed and accessible from the boulevard, but those in search of a more civilized shopping experience, or simply on their way home, could approach the stores from the new main street and town green.

Second, unlike Mashpee, only the slightest amount of surgery is required for the stores to reorient themselves. In this case, only the last few feet at the rear of the store need to be closed down temporarily while the new eastern facade is completed.   Then, for a week before opening day, they can shut down entirely and complete their interiors, which may not be as big a job as one would suspect. The new rules of retail say that the cash register should be as deep in the store as possible -- that is the configuration in many Gaps and Banana Republics -- so in some cases the register may even be able to stay where it is.

Once the new street network has been completed and the stores reoriented, the remaining design exercise addresses completing the edges of the blocks to create a well-defined pedestrian realm. The new buildings shown in orange hold the edge of the sidewalk and hide the parking lots from pedestrians on main street. They can include office buildings, townhouses for young families, and apartments for the elderly, as well as additional stores. Conventional suburban retailers who desire the boulevard exposure can locate toward the outside edges of the parking lot, where they can place their drive-throughs. The existing buildings are shown in yellow, and recommended new civic structures are shown in purple, at the town green. These sites should be reserved for future public buildings like libraries and houses of worship, which can share the large parking lots with the Bayberry plaza retailers.

In this way, the void at the heart of Bayberry could be transformed into a true town center. Obviously, this project is a site-specific solution that takes advantage of many fortuitous circumstances unique to its location. But the techniques provided here should be considered by other suburban shopping strips with similar problems.

THE NEW BOULEVARD SECTION WITH PARALLEL PARKING
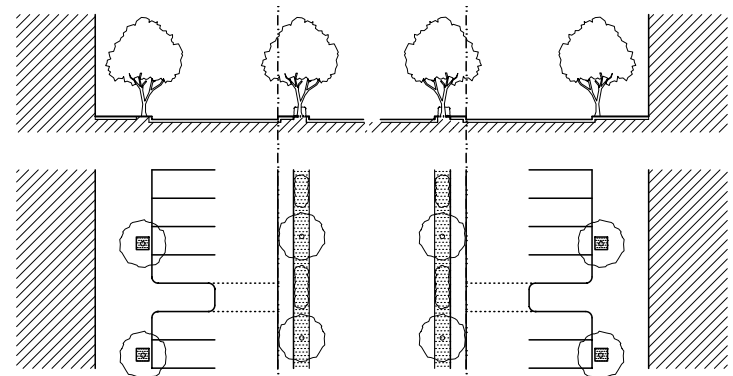
THE NEW BOULEVARD SECTION WITH SINGLE HEAD-IN PARKING
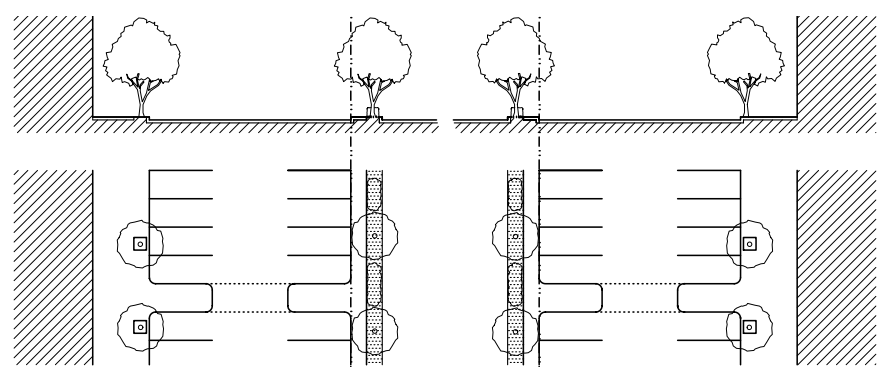
THE NEW BOULEVARD SECTION WITH DOUBLE HEAD-IN PARKING

THE PROPOSED PLAN FOR BAYBERRY PLAZA REVERSES THE SHOPPING CENTER TO FACE A NEW MAIN

IMPLEMENTATION

All strip shopping centers within the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County should be considered in light of this *Pilot Project*. Municipalities that wish to encourage such redevelopments will initiate planning and rezoning efforts ahead of the private sector, to pre-permit healthy growth. Whether the design effort is led by a municipal department, a private developer, or a public/private partnership, the plan should be completed in a public, participatory planning process in order to produce a consensus outcome. Such designs should be completed by professional planners working with traffic engineers conversant in the techniques of traditional neighborhood development.

The process of creating such a plan is not particularly difficult if the designers thoroughly review the documents provided here. The basic steps, as described above, include the reconnecting of side streets to create a true network and the introduction of a boulevard street section. The reversal of the shopping center is a more particular condition that may not occur elsewhere, but the first two steps are still relevant without it. In addition to this Pilot Project, the necessary tools are the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Guidelines* and the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*. The *Guidelines* provide instruction on design technique, while the *Code*, if followed, regulates a satisfactory outcome. In addition, the *Regional Plan's* Transportation Policies provide justification for many of the decisions implicit in the plan.

ONONDAGA COUNTY SETTLEMENT PLAN

PILOT PROJECT 7: BALDWINSVILLE
VILLAGE EXTENSION

SUMMARY

Baldwinsville is one of many villages in the County that are slowly accumulating a detritus of sprawling pods at their periphery. This exercise demonstrates how such a community should instead grow according to the increment of the mixed-use neighborhood, in a form that emulates the urban pattern of the core village while supporting the affordable provision of transit. The plan is the result of applying the *TND Code* to open farmland. Ideally, this is the sort of plan that a municipality would complete in anticipation of private development, to be permitted as-of-right.

DISCUSSION

Overview

Baldwinsville is a truly special place, the sort of traditional village that offers its residents a character and quality of life that are simply not available in suburbia. It has a full collection of classic American residential streets boasting continuous, mature tree cover. Some of these streets, towards the downtown, are more urban in character, while others, like the one pictured at right, are more rural, without curbs and gutters. Baldwinsville also has simple, dignified civic buildings such as the old schoolhouse, simple yet elegant buildings constructed at a time of relative poverty yet built to last, of the best scale and proportions. Schools like these are capable of being loved, unlike most public buildings constructed today, which cost more but satisfy less.

Baldwinsville also hosts its quota of suburban subdivisions, which do not begin to offer the sort of pedestrian experience and public realm of the older village neighborhoods. Paradoxically, these cost more to build than old Baldwinsville, due to their full curbs and wider streets. These suburban streets, identical to newer streets laid throughout the County -- and the country -- represent a standard imported from California that bears no relationship to the northeastern rural tradition. They cover more land, take longer to plow, cost more to build, and cause drivers to speed. Part of this plan -- in the *TND Code* -- is a new series of Thoroughfare Standards that go back to the County's origins, to the reasonably sized streets and roads of its towns, villages, and hamlets. The current wide standard will remain available for new suburban-style subdivisions, but those wishing to build traditional neighborhoods will now be able to furnish them with traditional streets.

Also in Baldwinsville is the retirement community pictured below, which raises an important point. Few would argue that these buildings are not pleasant and do not provide an attractive place to live. But they are part of a system that is simply not viable as a way to grow old self-sufficiently. As long as the resident can drive, the system continues to function. However, once the driving skill is lost -- and this happens well before the walking ability is lost -- the senior citizen becomes isolated in an environment without sidewalks and without access to any daily needs. He or she becomes subject to the whims of a charitable relative, or perhaps of a van service that picks seniors up once a week to go to the mall. This is not a good way to grow old, and represents one of the most serious failures of modern suburbia.

So, the primary question addressed in this study was, precisely, how Baldwinsville should grow -- if it is to grow -- so that its new neighborhoods can provide a quality of life commensurate to that of its old neighborhoods; and generally, how greenfield development should take place anywhere in the County. Baldwinsville was selected for two main reasons. First, it contains at its edge a large greenfield area that is under consideration for development, and indeed is beginning to be developed. And second, its older sections provide an exemplary model of neighborhood growth, a model that new growth can and should emulate.

ONE OF MANY EMINENTLY WALKABLE RESIDENTIAL STREETS IN BALDWINSVILLE

THE OLD SCHOOLHOUSE

STANDARD SUBURBIA IN BALDWINSVILLE

A RETIREMENT COMMUNITY THAT ISOLATES THE NON-DRIVING ELDERLY

THE MASTER PLAN FOR THE EXTENSION OF BALDWINSVILLE.

EXISTING
PROPOSED
CIVIC

The Plan

The first thing to notice about the proposed plan is how it connects seamlessly into the existing Baldwinsville street network, to the north. If the drawing were not colored, it would be difficult to determine where the old ended and the new began. Not only do the roads connect, but the new roads are laid in essentially the same pattern of mostly rectilinear blocks, most of which are oriented north-south. The new plan does not introduce the foreign vocabularies of the cul-de-sac and the curlicue, common to most new subdivisions.

There are also connections between each of the individual properties within the study area. As often must happen, this plan was laid across multiple individual land ownerships, which were not ignored but were not allowed to disrupt the continuity of the street network. If property lines were superimposed on the plan, it would quickly become visible how they have been used as places to locate streets and backyard divisions, such that the plan could be developed one property at a time yet still function effectively. This is how American towns used to grow, such that individual ownerships eventually disappeared. In the current haphazard development system, these ownerships are allowed to trump all other factors. The municipal planning departments, either nonexistent or strictly reactive in their approach, do not even insist on a street network that connects internally from subdivision to subdivision. The result is a small number of collector roads that are quickly overwhelmed by traffic. Instead, it is the Village's responsibility to insist, before the fact, that development result in a true

network. The easiest way to accomplish this goal is for each municipality to project its own expansion, just as typically occurs in Europe. Baldwinsville should create its own plan, as has been done here, and pre-permit it for as-of-right development. Any developer who is willing to follow this plan and the *TND Code* should be allowed to start building tomorrow rather than being subjected to the standard delays of the permitting process.

Worth noticing next is how the plan is not just a uniform street grid, but a collection of individual neighborhoods, each with a green civic space at its center. These centers are connected by avenues that emphasize the structure of the plan and naturally direct traffic from center to center. One of the neighborhoods, to the southeast, is actually more like a village of its own, since it is surrounded by greenways. These greenways represent the existing natural corridors that run through the site, which are not currently protected from development. If this site were developed according to current practices, one of two outcomes would probably occur. These corridors would either be ignored and paved over like the creek under the Fayetteville Mall or, more likely, they would become a part of some new resident's backyard, privatized and hidden from view. This plan, like most neighborhoods developed before 1950, recognizes that the best property values result not from privatizing views, but from publicizing them, by fronting them with neighborhood streets. In this way, everyone in the community is able to enjoy the natural amenity, and the whole neighborhood becomes more valuable.

The following diagrams help to further explain the proposed design, which is of course one of many ways in which the Baldwinsville expansion could be planned according to traditional neighborhood design principles. The first diagram shows the four individual neighborhoods superimposed with five-minute-walk circles, or *pedestrian sheds*. Notice how the northern neighborhoods actually incorporate pieces of the existing street network, seamlessly adopting Baldwinsville into the pedestrian pattern. As the circles indicate, almost every property within the plan exists within a five minute walk of a neighborhood center, which is the ideal location for a transit stop This organization is what is necessary if transit service is to be economically viable to these new neighborhoods, because it encourages residents to walk to transit. People who get into their cars tend to keep driving, so the park-and-ride concept is rarely successful; rather, riders must access transit as pedestrians. In addition, the avenues connecting the neighborhood centers naturally form a rational transit loop. Each neighborhood center should also contain a minimum of a small convenience store, so that people can walk to shopping, especially people too young or old to drive.


THE QUARTER-MILE RADIUS "PEDESTRIAN SHED" DIAGRAM.

The second diagram shows the logic and the continuity of the planned open space. Whenever possible, open space should be connected into continuous corridors, to satisfy the needs of animals. To satisfy the needs of people, open space should be designed more in terms of quality than quantity. The miles of buffers and berms to be found in modern suburbia are of little use to anyone, because they do not correspond to the open space types that people are familiar with or comfortable in. In traditional neighborhoods -- new and old -- open space takes the form of plazas, squares, greens, tot-lots parks, and other well-known types that people know how to use. Each of these is designed according to specific criteria. For example, what makes a square? It is the size of a small city block. It is surrounded by public streets lined by buildings with entries and windows, for maximum activity and visual supervision. It has trees at its edge to define the space and to provide shade on hot days, and it is sunny and open at its center for cooler days. It has paved areas for strolling and grassy areas for sports. If any of these elements were missing, then this open space should not be called a square. When open space is provided with this degree of rigor, a little of it can go a long way.
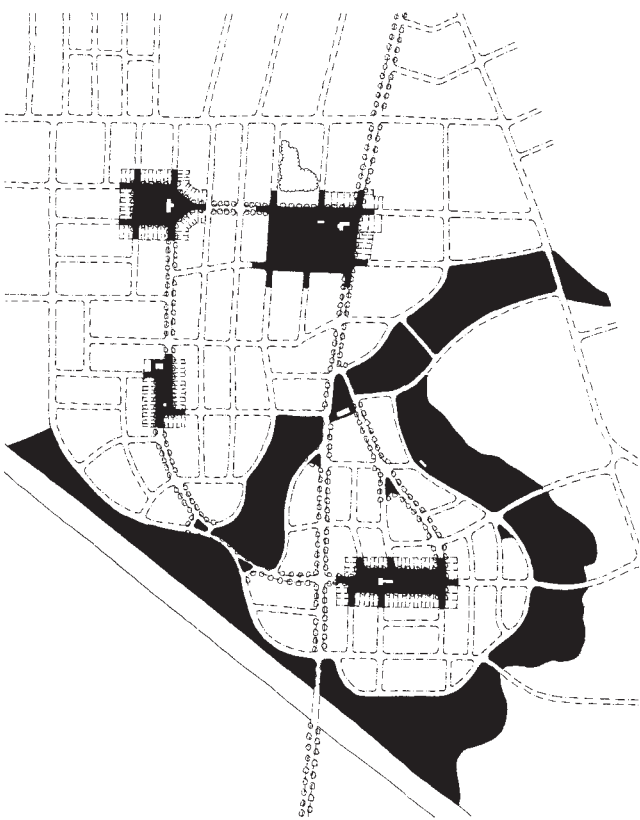

THE OPEN SPACE DIAGRAM: NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS AND NATURAL CORRIDORS.

The color image shows the proposed zoning of the Baldwinsville expansion. The three zoning categories of Urban Center in red, General Urban in orange, and Sub-urban in lavender tie into the three main categories of the *TND Code*. As discussed, each category provides different specifications regarding street types, lot sizes, setbacks, landscaping, and the other factors that determine how rural or how urban a place feels. When applied to this plan, the *TND Code* would result in a series of neighborhoods of authentic variety, each with a fairly urban center and a fairly rural edge. People of different needs and tastes can choose which environment they wish to live in, but they can all share the same neighborhood and thus get to know each other. This is the opposite of what happens in today's new suburbs, where every segment of society -- older, younger, richer, poorer -- tends to be separated from every other.
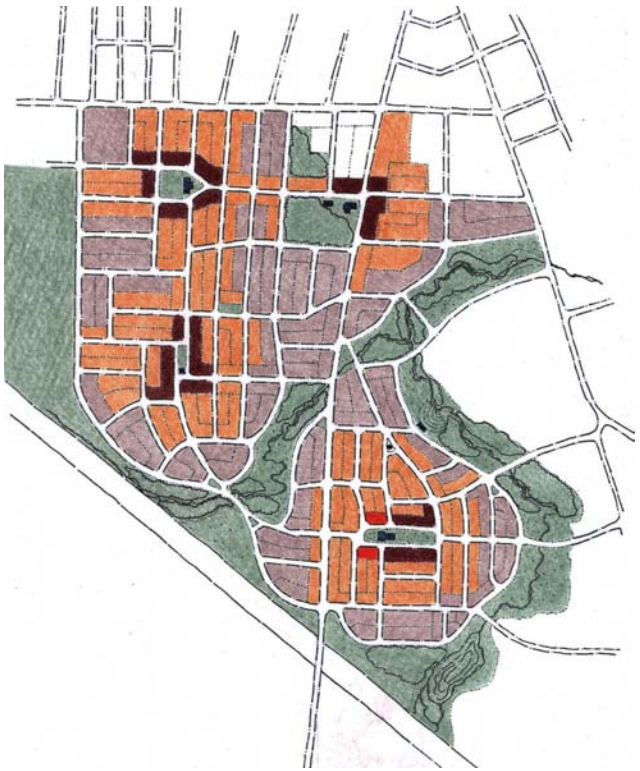
THE TND ZONING DIAGRAM: NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER, GENERAL, AND EDGE.

- URBAN CORE
- URBAN CENTER
- GENERAL URBAN
- SUB-URBAN
- CIVIC BUILDINGS
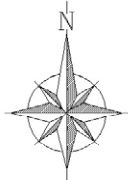
The map to the right shows the land use that is allowed under zoning currently in place on the site. In comparison to the previous plan, this is both disappointing and worrisome. We should ignore for a moment the street network underneath, as the distribution of colors is itself significant. In contrast to the delicacy of the previous diagram, this drawing shows what a crude instrument modern zoning is. The colors are not distributed according to any logic of neighborhood structure, but in a pattern that makes the formation of mixed-use neighborhoods impossible. Developers currently operating within this framework have little choice but to provide suburban sprawl.

And indeed, it is suburban sprawl that the street pattern underneath shows. This same drawing also includes a combination of three things: existing roads and development already on the site, projects that have been proposed, and an educated guess as to how these developments will grow over time along the patterns they have already established. As can be seen, nothing connects easily to anything else, the natural corridors are privatized and violated, and there is no neighborhood structure whatsoever. Less significant, but still important, is the fact that this pattern has nothing to do with the historic patterns of Baldwinsville or Onondaga County. The codes and practices currently in place, taken from elsewhere, are turning the County into a place that could be anywhere. This should not be allowed to happen, and while one may never be able to make it illegal, one can at least make the traditional patterns legal again.

The final two images show just the street networks of the two alternative patterns. The sprawl diagram shows how the only connective roads are the large ones, where children are not safe walking or biking. While it may be very safe for a child to live on a cul-de-sac, it is not safe to *leave* the cul-de-sac, which is why children in the new suburbs are so dependent on their parents for transportation. A study comparing ten-year-olds in suburban California and small-town Vermont found that the Vermont children had three times the mobility -- independent access to desired destinations -- while the Orange County children watched four times as much television.
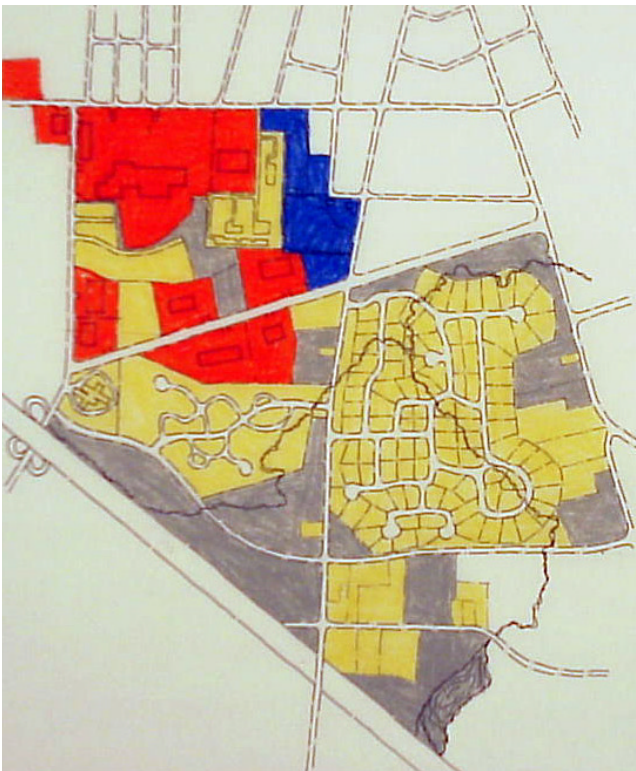
The neighborhood network street pattern shows how, when there are multiple paths from every destination to every other, no single street has to carry very much traffic. As a result, every street can be quite narrow, and they are all safe for walking and bicycling children. In Kentlands, a new Maryland town of approximately this size, designed according to the *TND Code*, parents tell how their children have independent access to the entire area. The soccer moms have been liberated and the children are being taught self-sufficiency, due to the porous network of narrow streets.

It is the choice of the County's individual municipalities which of these two futures they wish to provide their children. If they do nothing, they can have some confidence that the outcome will be sprawl. If they plan and pre-permit an expansion such as the one described here, they can expect a happier outcome.

IMPLEMENTATION

All towns and villages within Onondaga County should consider their expansion in light of this *Pilot Project*. Municipalities that wish to avoid accumulating additional sprawl will initiate planning and rezoning efforts ahead of the private sector, to pre-permit healthy growth. Whether the design effort is led by a municipal department, a private developer, or a public/private partnership, the plan should be completed in a public, participatory planning process in order to produce a consensus outcome. Such designs should be completed by professional planners conversant in the techniques of traditional neighborhood development.

The process of creating such a plan is not particularly difficult if the designers thoroughly review the documents provided here. In addition to this *Pilot Project*, the necessary tools are the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Guidelines* and the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*. The *Guidelines* provide instruction on design technique, while the *Code*, if followed, regulates a satisfactory outcome. In addition, the *Regional Plan's* Transportation Policies provide justification for many of the decisions implicit in the plan.

■ VACANT
■ RESIDENTIAL
■ COMMERCIAL
■ PUBLIC SERVICE

ZONING CURRENTLY IN PLACE
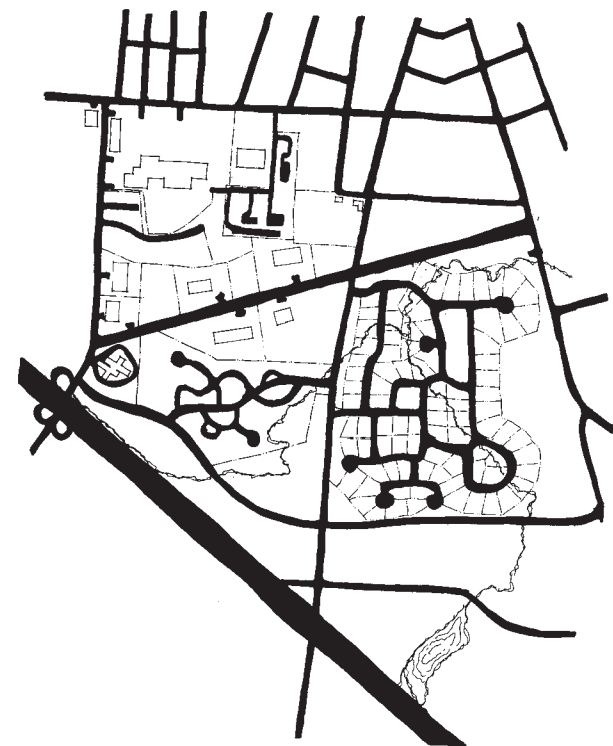
STREET NETWORK DIAGRAM: SPRAWL ALTERNATIVE

STREET NETWORK DIAGRAM: NEIGHBORHOOD ALTERNATIVE

ONONDAGA COUNTY SETTLEMENT PLAN

PILOT PROJECT 8: JAMESVILLE
HAMLET EXTENSION

SUMMARY

Typically, the County's hamlets grow through the slow accumulation of individual isolated housing pods, which place additional demands on existing roads without providing alternative paths for circulation. The proposed extension of Jamesville knits together previous growth and provides a framework for future development in an integrated road network, which also improves pedestrian access throughout the area. Again, this is the type of plan that could be prepared by the municipality in advance of growth, according to principles that are equally valid elsewhere.

DISCUSSION

Overview

As already discussed, all of the *Pilot Projects* are model plans, intended to convey principles and techniques that can be used in any number of similar locations. Whether or not they are completely applicable to the specific site under consideration is less important. It is hoped that most of the suggestions made are physically and politically feasible, but this plan does not assert that this is necessarily so. That said, to the degree that the residents, property owners, and other shareholders in each pilot area would like to achieve the outcomes suggested here, they are encouraged to implement the plans as quickly as possible.

As the Baldwinsville Pilot Project envisioned the large-scale expansion of a Village, the Jamesville Pilot Project envisions the small-scale expansion of a hamlet. *In both cases, the plan does not intend to imply that such expansion is a preferable alternative to the status quo. Rather, it acknowledges that with economic growth will come physical growth, and that without a template in place, this growth will inevitably take the form of suburban sprawl.* The plan provides a template that will allow such growth to occur in a way that turns Jamesville from a hamlet into a village, instead of turning it into a hamlet surrounded and burdened by single-use pods.

Located at a country crossroads, Jamesville is almost the image that one would expect to find in the dictionary next to the definition of *hamlet*, an intersection that has become the site of increased residential density and a small amount of mixed use. Its edges are extremely rural, and its center contains the sort of convenience retail that is truly useful to surrounding residents. Unfortunately, this hamlet has been degraded recently by inferior development, and could be damaged further by its ongoing roadway reconfiguration. The latter problem is a controversy that it would have been very easy to take on -- as was suggested in Liverpool -- but in this case the issues are particular to this one site, having to do with roadway elevation complications. Therefore, the highway was left out of this planning discussion, which instead focused on how the hamlet has begun to grow according to an inappropriate suburban sprawl model, and how growth could be redirected so that Jamesville could become a small village rather than a poorly-integrated collection of suburban pods.

Jamesville has what used to be a very nice center, a densification of development around an intersection, just like the *Regional Plan* recommends for the location of new hamlets throughout the County. It still has churches and urban buildings pulled directly up to their front property lines. Unfortunately, this center not so long ago was drastically eroded by the development of a suburban-style gas station, with its vast tarmac and top-heavy canopy. This canopy is located on a site of great visibility and significance, as it terminates the vista into Jamesville from the south. Interestingly, this canopy sits in front of a convenience store which has been detailed very carefully in emulation of the local historic railway station. This situation shows the relative importance of architecture and urbanism, and how people often erroneously believe that good architecture can overcome bad planning. Whatever the building looks like, it still sits behind a large gas station and its canopy, rendering the whole experience unpleasant to pedestrians. The first step is to place the building against the sidewalk with the pumps behind, and to address the architectural style later. There is nothing wrong with a gas-station convenience store, if it is organized correctly on its site.

RURAL HOUSES AT THE EDGE OF JAMESVILLE

THE JAMESVILLE INTERSECTION, WITH ITS CORNER ERODED BY THE GAS STATION

Jamesville actually has more shops than a typical hamlet, but these additional shops are also located behind the gas station, even further from the intersection. It is surprising that they survive in this location, where they do nothing to contribute to the spatial definition of the town center. There are also two attractive commercial buildings not far from the center, but these are flanked by four other buildings of extremely low quality. This situation raises another issue, which is the question of predictability. What motivates a company to purchase one of these attractive office buildings, when there is no guarantee that an extremely ugly building won't be built next door? That is why a master plan and a code such as the *TND* are necessary to ensure a modicum of investment security.

Jamesville has not seen much residential growth in the past thirty years, but most of it has occurred in two suburban cul-de-sacs that bear no relationship to the traditional urban patterns of the area. As additional farmers and other landowners decide to sell their property for single-family development, it would be useful to have a pre-permitted plan in place -- as has been recommended for Baldwinsville -- so that future growth is more compatible with the hamlet's and the County's historic growth.

SHOPS SET BACK BEHIND PARKING, IN THE STANDARD SUBURBAN FASHION

ATTRACTIVE OFFICE BUILDINGS ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR RURAL LOCATION

EXISTING
PROPOSED
CIVIC

THE MASTERPLAN FOR THE EXTENSION OF JAMESVILLE

The Plan

The master plan for Jamesville works towards two primary objectives: to reshape the center of the hamlet into a true civic space, one that attracts pedestrians rather than repelling them; and to rationalize the existing street system into a logical network that provides a variety of vehicular and pedestrian connections, taking some of the pressure off of the main intersection.

First, the plan shows how new buildings have been added at the intersection, to repair it. Some of these buildings reconnect the existing collection of shops back to the center, so that they are no longer sitting off by themselves, out of place. The buildings shown in purple are civic buildings, one of which is the existing church. The remaining sites should be reserved for civic use and offered at reasonable cost to other institutions that wish to be located at the hamlet center. The gas station has been reconfigured with the pumps behind, as already discussed.

Next, and more significantly, the plan has added a number of streets, bikeways, and pedestrian paths to reconnect the hamlet's disassociated parts back together. Some of these are partial roads to eliminate dead ends, while others are entirely new roads that open up additional sites for development. The commercial park, formerly an awkwardly-sited industrial storage building, has been reconfigured rationally and reconnected into the road network. The earlier subdivisions have been reintegrated with the neighborhood center, including a large subdivision to the north. The school

keeps its current building, but its field has been flipped to the other side, so that its dead-end road can continue through.

In discussions with residents, a strong desire was expressed for a new sports center, which was located at the north of the plan in the old quarry site. Like everything else, it has been attached back to the hamlet in several places, to reinforce the center. In this way and others, the sprawling and disconnected road system that had been slowly accumulating around the original intersection has been completed as a true network. As in the plan for Baldwinsville, such a porous network offers many different paths for both cars and pedestrians, resulting in a more socially connected and walkable community.

Residents on the cul-de-sacs will no doubt object to having their streets opened up to through traffic, no matter how slight. This is to be expected, since people will always consider their own street first and their larger neighborhood last. Again, the status of these plans as *Pilot Projects* means that they have been completed in a relative vacuum, without the democratic input of all the parties affected. This is a process that the individual municipalities must go through eventually if they wish to implement these plans or others like them. For the time being, the objective was to do the best plan, independent of potential political difficulties, in order to illustrate the purest principles and the best techniques, uncompromised by local impediments.
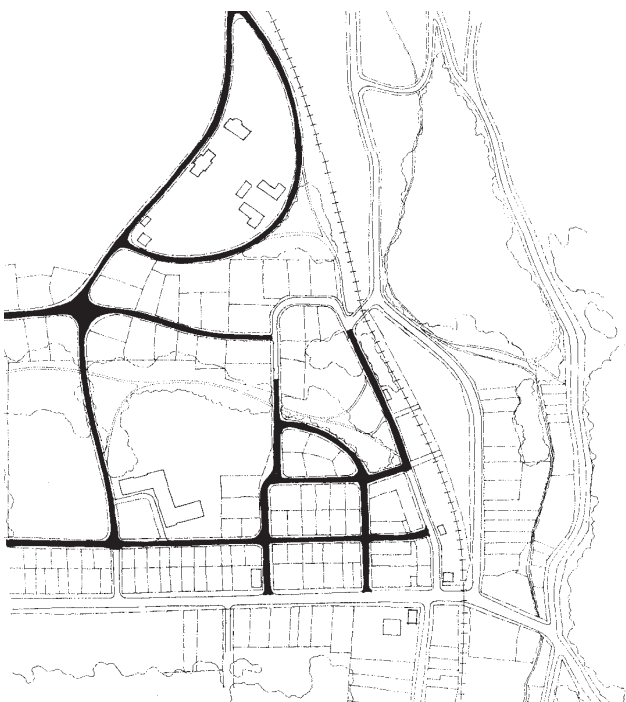
The following three drawings help to explain the plan. The street diagram shows the proposed roads, bikeways, and pedestrian paths that would give the hamlet the thoroughly connected network of a village. The civic buildings diagram indicates the existing and proposed school, church, and other public buildings that would reinforce the center of the hamlet, both spatially and socially. Finally, the zoning diagram indicates the different designations of the hamlet as it relates to the urban-to-rural Transect of the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*: Urban Center, General Urban, and Sub-urban. In gray is a fourth designation, the District, which applies to any area in which a single use predominates -- here, the sports facility.

Once again, it must be acknowledged that this plan, like many of the other Pilot Projects, requires both economic support and political approval that may not be immediately available. That circumstance is the outcome of this being a "twenty-year plan," twenty years being quite a long time, over which many things can happen. There is a joke that, in order to conceive of such things, one must imagine an awful lot of people in their coffins, because impediments are everywhere. In planning, this is what is called "vision." All humor aside, one should not underestimate the tremendous power of time in the life of a community. With a little time, great change can come, whether one wants it or not. The question is not whether change will come but when, and when it comes, whether or not it is a positive change. That is the reason to have a plan.

IMPLEMENTATION

All hamlets within Onondaga County should consider their expansion in light of this *Pilot Project*. Those that wish to avoid accumulating additional sprawl will initiate planning and rezoning efforts ahead of the private sector, to pre-permit healthy growth. Whether the design effort is led by a municipal department, a private developer, or a public/private partnership, the plan should be completed in a public, participatory planning process in order to produce a consensus outcome. Such designs should be completed by professional planners conversant in the techniques of traditional neighborhood development.
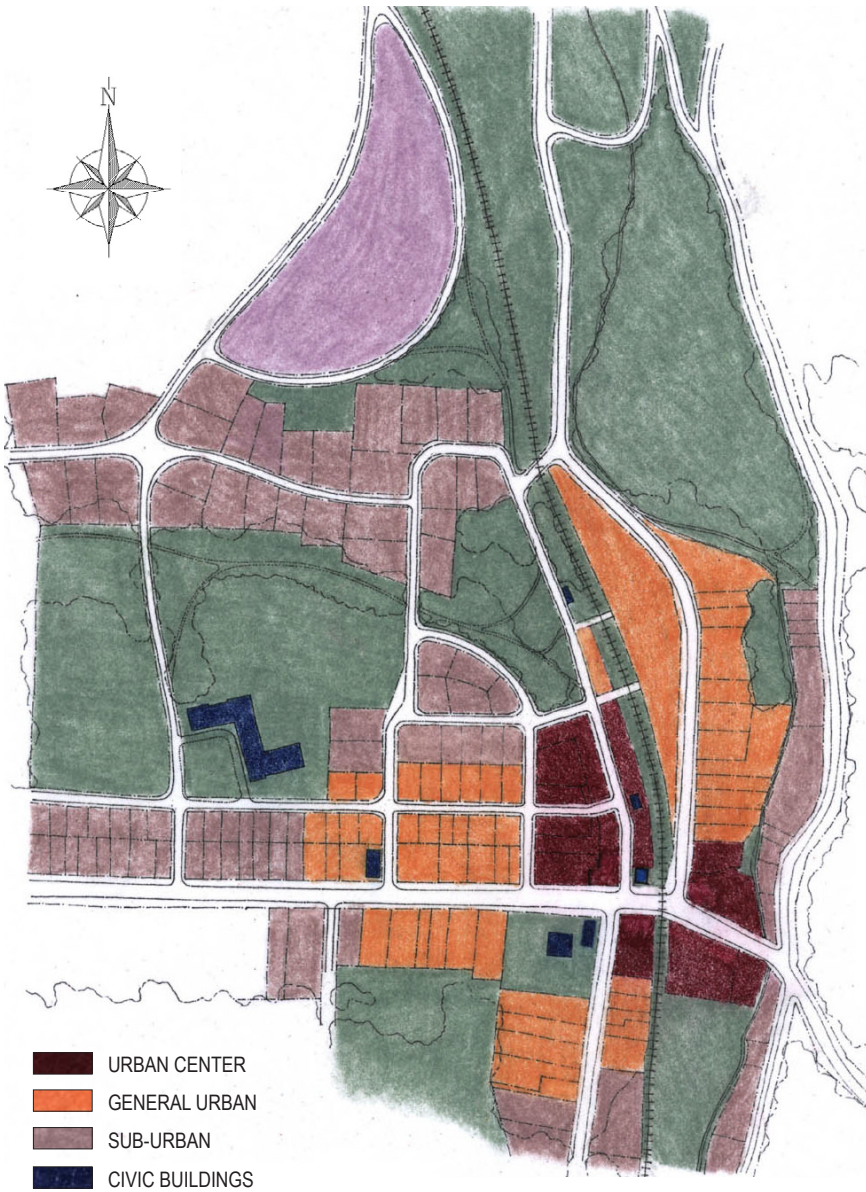
The process of creating such a plan is not particularly difficult if the designers thoroughly review the documents provided here. In addition to this *Pilot Project*, the necessary tools are the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Guidelines* and the *Traditional Neighborhood Development Code*. The *Guidelines* provide instruction on design technique, while the *Code*, if followed, regulates a satisfactory outcome. In addition, the *Regional Plan's* Transportation Policies provide justification for many of the decisions implicit in the plan.

THE STREET NETWORK DIAGRAM.
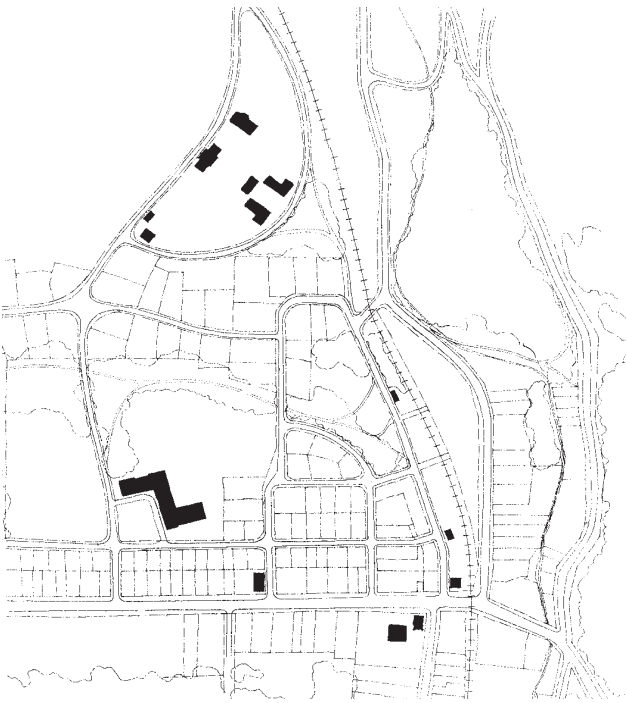
EXISTING AND PROPOSED CIVIC BUILDINGS

■	URBAN CENTER
■	GENERAL URBAN
■	SUB-URBAN
■	CIVIC BUILDINGS

THE TND ZONING DIAGRAM: NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER, GENERAL, AND EDGE.