

Detailed Recommendations



DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon completion of the goals, objectives, and recommended actions, specific actions in particular were expanded upon and explored in more detail. Smaller work sessions were organized to engage in the process of formulation of more fully developed proposals to serve as the first recommendations for implementation.

Site Plan Review

Site Plan Review is an integral step in the planning process for any city. At its most basic level, site plan review allows for the examination of proposed projects to guarantee they are consistent with overall community policies and ordinances. Further, this review process can result in properties representative of high quality planning. Most importantly, however, site plan review ensures that a project fits within the physical and social character of its surrounding context. This review process not only addresses basic aesthetic qualities, but also environmental factors. Incorporating environmental standards, such as those included in the NYS State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), into the process can minimize negative impacts on the local natural environment.

Without a strong site plan review process in place, projects can be built that sharply contrast with the immediate neighborhood and do not accurately reflect the image of the entire city. When site plans are reviewed and found consistent with their surroundings, the overall perception of a city can be enhanced, which in turn creates a high quality of life and ultimately improves community pride.

Currently, the City of Syracuse addresses this issue through Project Site Review, a process included in the *Zoning Rules and Regulations*. The process was primarily established in response to the public's negative reaction to a project built in conformance with the adopted zoning regulations, but without any consideration given to its surrounding area. This gap in previous review regulations was addressed in part by Project Site Review; however, it is fairly underdeveloped as it fails to consider existing city character in a consistent manner.

Revisions to both the process and content of the existing Project Site Review will result in a new, comprehensive Site Plan Review mechanism that will be a more effective means for evaluating proposed projects. Administrators and applicants alike will benefit from general text reorganization, consistent use of terminology and more detailed information.

To maximize the benefits of Site Plan Review, the structure and staff of the Syracuse City Planning Commission must be modified. The City Planning Commission, expanded to include seven members, will have a majority with professional credentials applicable to the review process; specifically one licensed architect, one licensed landscape architect, one licensed civil engineer, one individual with an educational background in urban planning, and one real estate sales or development professional. The remaining two members will be appointed at-large. The text provided below for Site Plan Review will be included in overall



revisions to the *Zoning Rules and Regulations*.

Proposed Revisions:

PART C, SECTION I GENERAL REGULATIONS

ARTICLE 10 of the Syracuse Zoning Rules & Regulations: Site Plan Review

I. Purpose:

The Comprehensive Site Plan Review was established to maintain Syracuse's unique character while ensuring compatibility of new developments and additions to existing development. Site Plan Review is intended to:

- A. Ensure pedestrian oriented streetscapes where appropriate, and protect specific neighborhood adopted plans and regulations.
- B. Reduce the negative visual impacts of development by:
 - 1. Keeping mechanical structures and other utility features out of main view as much as possible;
 - 2. Reducing unnecessary signage;
 - 3. Minimizing curb cuts;
 - 4. Improving the space for pedestrians;
- C. Enhance parking area appearances through adherence to the parking guidelines
- D. Preserve historic and architecturally significant features.

II. Affected Projects (commercial

buildings only, does not include one- to four family dwellings):

- A. All new construction.
- B. All additions to existing buildings that exceed 25% of the total square feet of the footprint of the building or greater than 1,000 square feet.
- C. All exterior renovations and/or reorientation of existing buildings.
- D. All off and on premise signage.
- E. Demolition of buildings and proposed new use of properties.

F. Projects (other than demolitions) on properties:

- 1. Identified by the City as Architecturally Significant, or
- 2. Identified by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) as:
 - a. Located in a National Register of Historic Places (National Register) District,
 - b. Individually listed in the National Register, or
 - c. Eligible for inclusion in the National Register.

G. Super Projects: These are large scale projects that consist of thirty (30) contiguous acres, or are larger than three (3) city blocks, or are worth over ten million dollars (\$10,000,000); projects requiring government funding or economic incentives; and street abandonment or dedication, land subdivision, re-subdivision, use of public land, or exercise of eminent domain. All modifications to super projects also require site plan review.

III. Exempt Projects Covered by Other Provisions:

- A. Preservation Board cases pursuant to Part C, section VII, articles 1-9 of the City of Syracuse Zoning Rules and Regulations (Certificates of Appropriateness and demolitions on historically significant properties).



Site Plan Review



Case Study One



Family Dollar Store, South Salina Street



Burt Street Elevation



Family Dollar Parking Lot and Adjacent Commercial Structures



South Salina Street Facade and Adjacent Commercial Properties

Case Study One



Eckerd Drug Store, Valley Drive and West Seneca Turnpike



Adjacent Commercial Property, West Seneca Turnpike



View of Adjacent Property, Vermon House



Adjacent Commercial and Residential Properties, Valley Drive

Purpose

An integral step in the planning process for any city is Site Plan Review. At its most basic level, it allows for the examination of proposed projects to guarantee they are consistent with overall community policies and ordinances. Site plan review ensures that a project fits within the physical and social character of its surrounding context, therefore increasing quality of life and ultimately improving community pride. The Site Plan Review process addresses: environmental impact; context of the vicinity; proximity and orientation to the street; lot coverage; site features.



Primary Elevation

Absent a comprehensive Site Plan Review process a property can be developed with no relationship to the overall organization of the neighborhood, architectural design or individual buildings, or quality of the public right of way.

- Orientation of a building main entrance on a site elevation and away from the street fail to recognize the importance of pedestrian traffic on city streets.
- Principal facades without windows and little or no architectural detail abutting the sidewalk are imposing and uninviting.
- Building alignment inconsistent with street alignment makes for awkward relationships and unusable spaces.
- Parking, although more appropriate at the side or back of the property, nevertheless distracts from the quality of the street if design standards are not in place.
- Lot coverage less than that of neighboring properties diminishes overall neighborhood density.
- Building mass and shape inconsistent with adjacent preferred building types weakens neighborhood character.



Primary Elevation

In some cases, properties developed without the benefit of Site Plan Review eliminate the possibility of recapturing preferred community character.

- Excessive setbacks along street frontages eliminate the sense of enclosure naturally found along city streets.
- Standardized facades ignore unique community characteristics that could influence building design and instead evoke placelessness.
- Parking lots containing more than the required number of spaces go beyond meeting likely demand while discouraging pedestrian demand.
- Limited lot coverage exacerbates the vast openness created by deep setbacks and surface parking.
- Building mass and architectural detail that lack local references erode community identity.

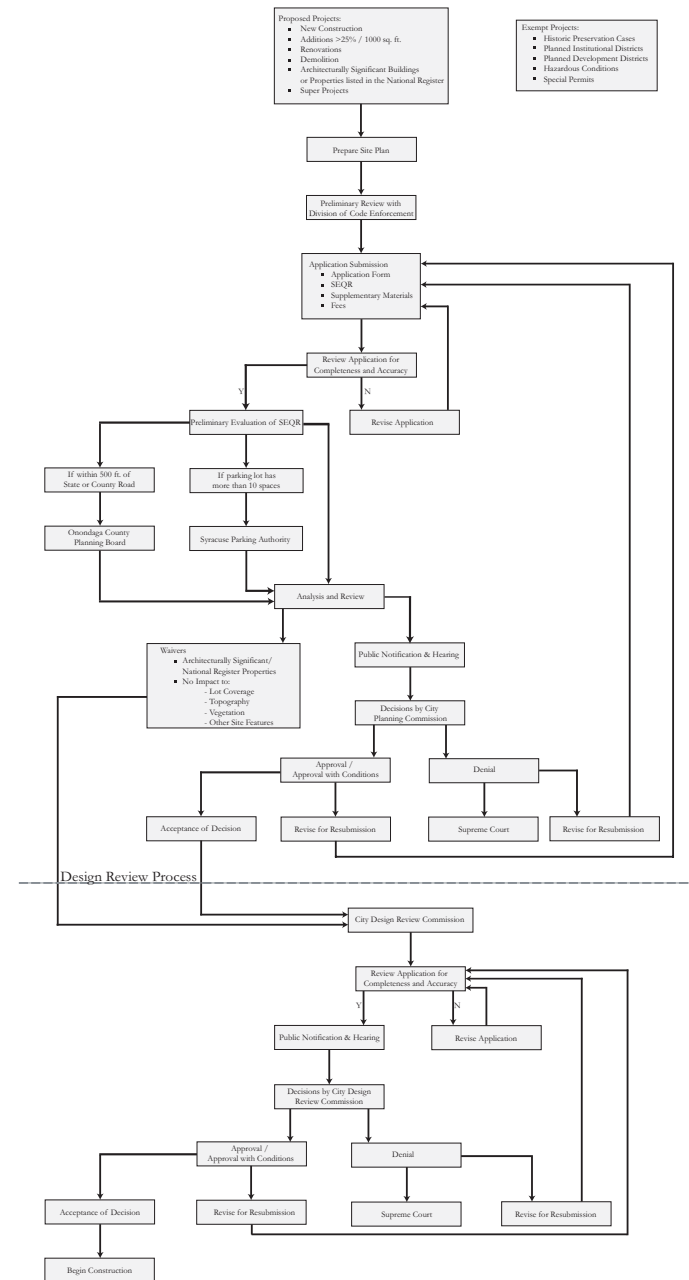
Current Process

Currently, the City of Syracuse addresses Site Plan Review through Project Site Review, a process included in the Zoning Rules and Regulations. The current process was in response to the community's negative reaction to a project built in conformance with the existing zoning regulations, but without any consideration given to its neighborhood context. Revisions to both the process for and content of the existing Project Site Review will result in a new, comprehensive Site Plan Review mechanism that will be a more effective means for evaluating proposed projects.

Administration

To maximize the benefits of Site Plan Review, the structure of and staff to the Syracuse City Planning Commission must be modified, including an expansion and restructuring of the Commission to include more members, with many having credentials applicable to the review process.

Site Plan Review Process



- B. Planned Institutional District projects.
- C. Planned Development District projects.
- D. Hazardous Conditions: Any building(s) or structure(s), which have been determined by the Director of the Division of Code Enforcement and/or Chief of Fire to constitute an immediate danger or hazard to public health, safety, or welfare.
- E. Special Permit cases.

IV. Procedure for Site Plan Review:

- A. Preparation of the project plan, including consultation with appropriate city staff for applicable requirements.
- B. Preliminary review of project plan by the Division of Code Enforcement to identify any major building code inconsistencies and any drainage or other construction issues.
- C. Submission of application to the Zoning Office.
- D. Review of application for completeness and, if not done earlier, identification of other approvals that may be required. Verification of information provided in application through on-site visit by duly designated staff.
- E. Preliminary evaluation of SEQR.
- F. Referral of application to other bodies as required. Responses from other bodies are required within 30 days:
 - 1. Onondaga County Planning Board for projects within 500 feet of a State or County road.
 - 2. Syracuse Parking Authority for projects with ten or more parking spaces.

G. Analysis and evaluation by Zoning Staff of application with findings report given to the applicant within 10 business days after receipt of responses from referring bodies.

H. Public Hearing and Notification to adjacent property owners within 1,500 feet of property's edge. Notification must occur within 55 days following the determination that all submission requirements have been met. The City Planning Commission shall then hold a public hearing on the proposed site plan before taking any further action. Notice of the hearing must contain information as to the time and place with a brief description of the proposed site plan. Such notice shall be given to the applicant and the adjacent property owners not less than 14 days before the hearing date. In addition, notice of the public hearing containing the same information shall be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation in the City of Syracuse, with publication not less than 14 days before the hearing date. The cost of all notices, including postage and publication expense, shall be paid by the applicant at the time of the application.

I. Decisions in one of the following manners:

- 1. Approval of application as submitted
- 2. Approval with Conditions
- 3. Denial

A majority plus one vote shall be required to override recommendation of Onondaga



County Planning Board or
Syracuse Parking Authority.

Decisions shall be made in
resolution form. Original
resolution shall stay in the
office file, a copy shall be filed
with the City Clerk, and a copy
shall be provided to the
applicant.

J. Response by the applicant to
the City Planning Commission
decision:

1. Acceptance of or consent to
the decision as submitted
to the Zoning
Administrator for the
record.
2. Revision of the application
for re-submission at a later
date.
3. Appeals from
determinations of the City
Planning Commission
shall be made to the
Supreme Court pursuant
to Article 78 of the
NYCCR.

V. Application Requirements:

- A. Completed application form.
- B. SEQR form. (Short Form
unless otherwise recommended)
- C. Supplemental material.
 1. For new construction,
additions, renovations and
super projects:
 - a. Statement of history of
project and reason for
site selection.
 - b. Five sets of the site plan
(see VI. below for
details).
 - c. Stamped survey.
 - d. Five copies of architectural
drawings to scale, depicting
floor plans, section views,
exterior elevations,

architectural design of
building including proposed
and existing materials,
textures and colors.

- e. Photographs, 35 mm or
digital, of all existing
buildings, structures and
project site.
 - f. Photographs of existing
streetscape, including
photographs of each
adjacent property and
properties directly across the
street.
 - g. Key map for photos or
other illustration of building
locations drawn to scale.
 - h. Other information or details
as may be reasonably
required.
 - i. Five copies of vicinity map
of 1,500 feet from property
line or a one-block radius.
 - j. Impact report for
surrounding area (1,500 ft or
1 block radius) for traffic
volumes.
 - k. Impact report for
surrounding area (1,500 ft or
1 block radius) on public
services.
2. For demolitions: Post
demolition plans must be
submitted pursuant to SEQR
(617.3g)
- a. Statements of justification
for demolition.
 - b. Stamped survey.
 - c. Site plan of existing
structures.
 - d. Five copies of vicinity map
of 1,500 feet from property
line or a one-block radius.
 - e. Photographs, 35 mm or
digital, of all existing
buildings, structures and
project site.



- f. Photographs of existing streetscape, including photographs of each adjacent property and properties directly across the street.
 - g. Key map for photos or other illustration of building locations drawn to scale.
 - h. Five copies post demolition reclamation plans.
3. For re-orientations of existing buildings.
- a. Statement of justification for reorientation.
 - b. Five copies of site plan.
 - c. Five sets of architectural drawings to scale, depicting floor plans, section views, exterior elevations, architectural design of building including proposed and existing materials, textures and colors.
 - d. Photographs, 35 mm or digital, of existing building and areas of reorientation.
 - e. Photographs of existing streetscape, including photographs of each adjacent property and properties directly across the street.
 - f. Key map for photos or other illustration of building locations drawn to scale.
 - g. Five copies of vicinity map of 1,500 feet from property line or a one-block radius, including all buildings, structures, land uses, street, driveways, sidewalks, parking areas, etc.
 - h. Impact report on changes in circulation both pedestrian and vehicular for surrounding area (1,500 feet or 1 block radius).
- D. Fees (pursuant to fee schedules adopted by the Common Council).
- VI. Site Plan Components (as prepared and stamped by a New York State licensed architect, landscape architect, or civil engineer):
- A. Title block, including name of property owner(s) and contact information, name of individual who prepared plan and contact information, address of site, date prepared, revisions box, scale (1:20 – recommended, 1:50 – minimum), and north arrow.
 - B. Proposed land use.
 - C. An estimated timetable for construction and completion of buildings, parking facilities and landscaping.
 - D. The zoning designation and dimensional requirements applicable to the site under the Syracuse Zoning Ordinance.
 - E. Site plan which will include the following:
 - 1. Tax map
 - 2. Lot number
 - 3. Area of lot
 - 4. Location of gross area of existing buildings
 - 5. Off-street parking spaces
 - 6. Handicap/accessible spaces
 - 7. Loading spaces
 - 8. Height and number of stories of existing and proposed buildings
 - 9. Proposed use
 - 10. Front, side, and rear setbacks
 - 11. All existing and proposed buildings or structures



- including shape, size, height, location, and typical elevations
- 12. Proposed streets, driveways, parking spaces, driving lanes, curbing and sidewalks with indication of direction of travel and the inside radii of all curves, including; width of all streets, driveways and sidewalks, and the total number of parking spaces, a circulation plan of the interior of all parking areas showing provisions for both auto and pedestrian circulation, and loading spaces and facilities used in connection with any structures on the site
- 13. Plans for snow removal and storage
- 14. Proposed and existing screens, fences, and walls
- 15. All proposed exterior signage and lighting
- F. Planting plan to include the following:
 - 1. All existing plantings and proposed plantings to be installed
 - 2. Natural cover to be retained
 - 3. Specifications of all sizes and types of shrubs, plants, and caliber of trees for both existing and proposed
 - 4. Natural cover of the perimeter of the site including all types of trees, and natural cover to be retained
- G. Grading Plan to include the following:
 - 1. Existing Contours at 1-foot or 2-foot intervals
 - 2. Contours of adjacent properties for no less than 50 feet outside property line
 - 3. Proposed Contours at 1-foot or 2-foot intervals
 - 4. Spot elevations for areas less than 2% slope
 - 5. The perimeter boundaries of the lot or lots of the proposed site, including compass bearings, distances and lot areas
 - 6. Detailed drainage plans showing on-site storage, floodways and proposed easements, including siltation and erosion controls plans
 - 7. All surface and subsurface storm drainage facilities, including city storm drainage facilities located immediately adjacent to the site
 - 8. All watercourses, marshes, rock outcroppings, wooded areas, designated wetlands (NYSDEC or Army Corps of Engineers), floodplains, (based on USFEMA maps) and other significant natural or human-made features
 - 9. All existing and proposed utilities both public and/or private
 - 10. All existing easements and/or restrictions of record, including rights-of-way, fully dimensioned
 - 11. Existing and proposed fire hydrants and fire suppression connections

VII. Waivers:

Site Plan Review can be waived for projects involving existing buildings when the proposal does not involve changes to lot coverage, topography, vegetation and/other site features. In such cases the project shall be forwarded to the City Design Review Commission.

All Waiver requests shall be subject to duly noticed public hearings.

VIII. Economic Hardship:

The City Planning Commission can consider hardship during its



deliberations if practical difficulties would occur if the proposal were modified to meet applicable sections of the *Zoning Rules and Regulations*. Practical difficulties affecting the property must be documented by a licensed design professional. Claims that conformance to adopted rules and regulations will cause a hardship must be supported by:

- A. conclusive documentation that the proposed project is more cost effective to construct/install and has a demonstrated life span greater than work that meets applicable guidelines;
- B. and the proposed project will result in maintenance and/or operating costs substantially less than a conforming design;
- C. and that the property cannot earn a reasonable [not optimum] rate of return if modified to meet applicable guidelines.

IX. Coordination with Other Boards and Procedures:

- A. Special Permit Uses:
 - 1. Site Plan Review not necessary.
 - 2. The required Special Permit reviews will include all of the same materials that would accompany Site Plan Review applications and approximate the same point by point analysis as involved with the project plans.
- B. Board of Zoning Appeals:
 - 1. Where Site Plan Reviews are involved the Board of Zoning Appeals shall consider only use variances.
 - 2. Where Site Plan Reviews are involved the Syracuse Planning Commission shall consider as

waivers those requests that would otherwise be considered as variances of residential density requirements or required amounts of parking.

- 3. Subject to findings under State Law, the Board of Zoning Appeals may grant requested use variances, to be preliminary to required review of the site plan by the Syracuse City Planning Commission.
- 4. The Board of Zoning Appeals shall have no authority to waive the requirements for Site Plan Review, nor shall it grant waivers as reserved for review by the Syracuse City Planning Commission.
- 5. The Board of Zoning Appeals shall have no authority to review appeals of the Syracuse City Planning Commission with respect to Site Plan Review.

Design Guidelines

The physical character of commercial areas reflects a city's economic health and impacts the potential for continued investment. Municipal guidance, therefore, is essential to maintaining a cohesive, attractive physical aesthetic. Design standards provide the overarching framework for guiding development within a city, memorializing basic philosophy for enhancing the community's existing physical character through repair, rehabilitation and new construction. Design guidelines provide more detailed advice, and often are specific to particular geographic areas or types of properties. Used in concert with traditional Site Plan Review, design standards and guidelines can help ensure that business and commercial



development within Syracuse compliments those community places, properties and features that generally are viewed as positive components of the city's urban fabric.

Statement of Purpose

Design guidelines for commercial areas, in conjunction with other zoning ordinance revisions, will provide an effective vehicle for evaluating the impact of proposed projects on physical character of the city. They correspond to specific aesthetic and functional goals for the community's business typologies, and are integrated into the regulatory mechanism addressing planning and development within the city. The advice offered will give direction to developers, property owners, and project design consultants, as well as the City Planning Commission and its staff. The Design Guidelines will apply to new construction and rehabilitation of existing properties.

Administration

As recommended in other components of the *Comprehensive Plan*, revisions to the Zoning Rules and Regulations will incorporate new provisions to establish conservation districts, and charge the Landmark Preservation Board with design review of these areas along with designated local landmarks and preservation districts. In addition this board will be responsible for Design Review. To better reflect these new broader responsibilities, its name will be changed to the City Design Review Commission.

Organization and Composition

The Design Guidelines for commercial areas will be developed based on the 5 broad business typologies found within Syracuse: pedestrian-oriented, automobile-oriented, former industrial, business clusters and suburban office. Each set of

guidelines will be organized around 15 characteristics or attributes of the physical environment:

Building Height, Width and Depth:

Providing guidance regarding the proportions of buildings in relation to their context is important because compatibility of scale and mass can maintain traditional density and support efficiency, which are desirable characteristics within a city.

Setbacks: A generally consistent frontage along the street is important to the urban experience and pedestrian environment, as well as to overall organizational patterns within the city fabric.

Fenestration: The exterior architectural detail of a single building can impact the larger context by its physical proximity and visual character. The arrangement of solids to voids on building walls, the degree to which there are projections or recesses, and the incorporation of detail or ornamentation must be carefully considered. Equally important are the treatments along the first or ground floor, as physical and visual connections between the public realm and building interior are integral to safe, comfortable city streets.

Roofs & Parapets: The forms and materials used for building roofs can be significant components of a district's composite character, and in some cases the city skyline, and therefore must be carefully designed with respect to the larger context.

Materials and Details: Buildings that compliment rather than sharply contrast with one another result in a cohesive, although not uniform, image and therefore can enhance rather than detract from the urban experience. Texture, color



and architectural features can be used to strengthen overall aesthetic quality while still allowing for distinctive individual properties.

Franchise Architecture: The sense of place generated by preferred districts is important to both the identity of that area and the overall image of the city. Standard corporate designs, which intentionally have no stylistic relationship to any locality, generally lack pedestrian orientation and therefore discourage walkability, must be sufficiently adapted to respect the character of such areas.

Parking: Parking, a highly valued cultural commodity, should be plentiful enough in any commercial district to support business, but must not detract from an area's aesthetic quality. Careful planning and design can ensure that gaps in the streetscape from surface lots can be avoided or screened to preserve the preferred urban character of commercial areas.

Streetscape and Landscape: The quality of the streetscape impacts not only the municipal right-of-way, but also the abutting private properties; therefore streetscape elements throughout specific commercial areas must be uniform or complimentary in character to promote an identifiable sense of place. Private landscapes are viewed as part of the larger public realm and thus must be designed to screen or enhance views as necessary.

Universal accessibility: A community that ensures universal access to and in both public and private properties is one committed to all members of the community. Policies supporting such access as well as mandatory codes for handicapped accessibility can be enforced while still allowing for design creativity and visual continuity in the environment.

Lighting: Illumination can be an effective means for drawing attention to window displays, signs, store information and architectural details, as well as creating a sense of safety and an inviting environment for customers—all generally preferred conditions in commercial areas. Careful selection of light fixtures and illumination levels can contribute to rather than detract from an area's physical character and social ambiance.

Signage: Signs, considered essential to business success, can be some of the most dominant features in commercial areas, and consequently can have an impact far beyond the limits of a single property. Sensible yet creative use of materials, coloration and graphic design can dramatically improve the visual appearance of a business, lend character to the larger area or district, and create an inviting environment for customers.

Awnings: Awnings are an effective means for improving energy efficiency in buildings and providing sun protection and shelter for pedestrians. Their location at doors, windows and storefronts make them highly noticeable components of the environment. Through careful design, awnings can also effectively advertise businesses, unify a streetscape, and accent a building's architecture, thereby enhancing the character of both a building and its district.

Screening: Because they typically lack visual appeal, mechanical equipment, trash receptacles and snow storage areas diminish the visual quality of individual properties as well as their surroundings. Screening devices that compliment preferred architectural and/or landscape character not only will effectively eliminate such features from view, but



also can add interest and detail to overall area character.

Security Grills: Building security is an important concern in many commercial areas, but contemporary exterior security devices can conflict with the traditional open character of storefronts by imposing large, sometimes opaque, metallic features on the facade. These characteristics, sometimes coupled with deferred maintenance, impart an image of insecurity far in excess of the actual problem and project a negative image for the entire area. Thoughtful design of such elements can avoid this effect, and rather result in a more pleasing character.

Access: Access to and circulation within individual properties, as well as entrances to buildings, are critical to how commercial properties and their surroundings function; they also impact how properties are perceived in terms of safety. Designs that promote attractive and identifiable access for both pedestrians and vehicular traffic will be positive additions to any commercial area.

Design Guidelines

Design advice will be presented in a hierarchical manner under three sections for each of the 15 characteristics: *Objective*, *Standards* and *Guidelines*. The *Objective* describes the rationale for providing municipal oversight of each characteristic. *Standards* dictate the mandatory design criteria that must be met and *Guidelines* are additional design measures that are recommended rather than required. The *Design Guidelines for the Pedestrian-Oriented Business Typologies* included in the Appendices of this document, can be used as model for the remaining typologies. In combination, all five sets of Design Guidelines will provide the City of Syracuse with an effective tool for

obtaining high quality commercial development.

Syracuse Gateway System

The approach to and entry into a city or its commercial districts should and can be a memorable experience. For long time residents and daily users, the routes taken and portals used to pass into a particular sector become routine and familiar. While they might lack outstanding features, these physical links and entry points take on great meaning—signaling arrival at home, work or play. Basic amenities, such as informational signage, lighting and regular maintenance, are sufficient to insure local citizens are afforded safe and pleasurable movement throughout a city.

For the uninitiated or infrequent visitor, however, the quality of experience in traveling to and ultimately reaching a particular city location is much more significant. These individuals are looking for both overt and subtle clues to guide them to an intended destination.

Powerfully articulated primary corridors linking a city to its larger context, and districts within a city to one another, contribute to successful way-finding and a positive first impression of a community. Equally impressive entrances to a city and its commercial corridors enhance that initial image.

Purpose

The proposed Gateway System is intended to emphasize principal entrances and approach routes to the City of Syracuse and its commercial areas. A collection of coordinated physical elements will ensure that the visual character of designated entry points and corridors is appreciably enhanced. These features will establish a sense of



Design Guideline Document

Introduction

The physical character of commercial areas reflects a city's economic health and impacts the potential for continued investment. Municipal guidance, therefore, is essential to maintaining a cohesive, attractive physical aesthetic. Design standards provide the overarching framework for guiding development within a city, memorializing basic philosophy for enhancing the community's existing physical character through repair, rehabilitation and new construction. Design guidelines provide more detailed advice, and often are specific to particular geographic areas or types of properties. Used in concert with traditional Site Plan Review, design standards and guidelines can help ensure that business and commercial development within Syracuse complements those community places, properties and features that generally are viewed as positive components of the city's urban fabric.

Purpose

Design guidelines for commercial areas, in conjunction with other zoning ordinance revisions, will provide an effective vehicle for evaluating the impact of proposed projects on physical character of the city. They correspond to specific aesthetic and functional goals for the community's business typologies, and are integrated into the regulatory mechanism addressing planning and development within the city. The advice offered will give direction to developers, property owners, and project design consultants, as well as the City Planning Commission and its staff. The Design Guidelines will apply to new construction and rehabilitation of existing properties.

Administration

As recommended in other components of the Comprehensive Plan, revisions to the Zoning Rules and Regulations will incorporate new provisions to establish conservation districts, and charge the Landmark Preservation Board with design review of these areas along with designated local landmarks and preservation districts. In addition this board will be responsible for Design Review. To better reflect these new broader responsibilities, its name will be changed to the City Design Review Commission.

Organization and Composition

The Design Guidelines for commercial areas will be developed based on the five broad business typologies found within Syracuse: pedestrian-oriented, automobile-oriented, former industrial, business clusters and suburban office. Each set of guidelines will be organized around fifteen characteristics or attributes of the physical environment:

Building Height, Width, and Depth: Providing guidance regarding the proportions of buildings in relation to their context is important because compatibility of scale and mass can maintain traditional density and support efficiency, which are desirable characteristics within a city.

Setbacks: A generally consistent frontage along the street is important to the urban experience and pedestrian environment, as well as to overall organizational patterns within the city fabric.

Fenestration: The exterior architectural detail of a single building can impact the larger context by its physical proximity and visual character. The arrangement of solids to voids on building walls, the degree to which there are projections or recesses, and the incorporation of detail or ornamentations must be carefully considered. Equally important are the treatments along the first or ground floor, as physical and visual connections between the public realm and building interior are integral to safe, comfortable city streets.

Roofs & Parapets: The forms and materials used for building roofs components of a district's composite character, and in some cases the city skyline, and therefore must be carefully designed with respect to the larger context.

Materials and Details: Buildings that compliment rather than sharply contrast with one another result in a cohesive, although not uniform, image and therefore can enhance rather than detract from the urban experience. Texture, color, and architectural features can be used to strengthen overall aesthetic quality while still allowing for distinctive individual properties.



The Design Guidelines illustrate the desired design elements for commercial properties of the "Pedestrian Oriented" typology.

Design Guidelines Document

Signage

Signs are one of the most visually dominant features in commercial areas, being an important element in the design of a building's exterior. Signs, in addition to their functional purpose, also contribute to the visual character of a building and its surroundings. Signs should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.

Objectives:

- Signs should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.
- Signs should be designed to be functional and to provide information to the public.
- Signs should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
- Signs should be designed to be safe and to not obstruct the view of the street.

Standards:

- Signs should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.
- Signs should be designed to be functional and to provide information to the public.
- Signs should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
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Guidelines:

- Signs should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.
- Signs should be designed to be functional and to provide information to the public.
- Signs should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
- Signs should be designed to be safe and to not obstruct the view of the street.

Recommended

Fenestration

The placement and composition of doors and windows has a tremendous impact not only on the physical appearance of a building, but also on its functionality. Effective fenestration design is important to improving the physical and visual connection between the building interior and public realm to address a building's overall design and style.

Objectives:

- Fenestration should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.
- Fenestration should be designed to be functional and to provide information to the public.
- Fenestration should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
- Fenestration should be designed to be safe and to not obstruct the view of the street.

Standards:

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Recommended

Materials and Detailing

Through the appropriate use of materials and architectural detailing, a building can be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance. Materials and detailing should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.

Objectives:

- Materials and detailing should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.
- Materials and detailing should be designed to be functional and to provide information to the public.
- Materials and detailing should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
- Materials and detailing should be designed to be safe and to not obstruct the view of the street.

Standards:

- Materials and detailing should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.
- Materials and detailing should be designed to be functional and to provide information to the public.
- Materials and detailing should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
- Materials and detailing should be designed to be safe and to not obstruct the view of the street.

Guidelines:

- Materials and detailing should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.
- Materials and detailing should be designed to be functional and to provide information to the public.
- Materials and detailing should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
- Materials and detailing should be designed to be safe and to not obstruct the view of the street.

Recommended

Building Height, Width, and Mass

Designing buildings to have an appropriate scale and mass is an important element in the design of a building's exterior. Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.

Objectives:

- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.
- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be functional and to provide information to the public.
- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be safe and to not obstruct the view of the street.

Standards:

- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to enhance the building's overall appearance.
- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be functional and to provide information to the public.
- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be safe and to not obstruct the view of the street.

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- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be consistent with the building's overall design and style.
- Building height, width, and mass should be designed to be safe and to not obstruct the view of the street.

Recommended

Design advice will be presented in a hierarchical manner under three sections for each of the fifteen characteristics: Objectives, Standards, and Guidelines. The Objective describes the rationale for providing municipal oversight of each characteristic. Standards dictate the mandatory design criteria that must be met and guidelines are additional design measures that are recommended rather than required. The Design Guidelines for the Pedestrian-Oriented Business Typology (included as appendix of this document, can be used as a model for the remaining typologies). In combination, all five sets of design guidelines will provide the City of Syracuse with an effective tool for obtaining high quality commercial development.

Organization and Composition Cont.

Franchise Architecture: The sense of place generated by preferred districts is important to both the identity of that area and the overall image of the city. Standard corporate designs, which intentionally have no stylistic relationship to any locality, generally lack pedestrian orientation and therefore discourage walkability, must be sufficiently adapted to respect the character of such areas.

Parking: Parking is a necessary part of a functioning city, but all too often the creation and maintenance of parking facilities occurs unchecked due to a lack of sound design guidelines. The result is an uncoordinated and auto-dominated landscape, which unfortunately detracts greatly from the urban fabric and character.

Streetscape and Landscape: The quality of the streetscape impacts not only the municipal right-of-way, but also the abutting private properties; therefore streetscape elements throughout specific commercial areas must be uniform or complimentary in character to promote an identifiable sense of place. Private landscapes are viewed as part of the larger public realm and thus must be designed to screen or enhance views as necessary.

Universal Accessibility: A community that ensures universal access to and in both public and private properties is one committed to all members of the community. Policies supporting such access as well as mandatory codes for handicapped accessibility can be enforced while still allowing for design creativity and visual continuity in the environment.

Lighting: Illumination can be an effective means for drawing attention to window displays, signs, store information, and architectural details, as well as creating a sense of safety and an inviting environment for customers all generally preferred conditions in commercial areas. Careful selection of light fixtures and illumination levels can contribute to rather than detract from an area's physical character and social ambience.

Signage: Signs, considered essential to business success, can be some of the most dominant features in commercial areas, and consequently can have an impact far beyond the limits of a single property. Sensible yet creative use of materials, coloration and graphic design can dramatically improve the visual appearance of a business and lend character to the larger area, district and create an inviting environment for customers.

Awnings: Awnings are an effective means for improving energy efficiency in buildings and providing sun protection and shelter for pedestrians. Their location at doors, windows and storefronts make them highly noticeable components of the environment. Through careful design, awnings can also effectively advertise businesses, unify a streetscape, and accent a building's architecture, thereby enhancing the character of both a building and its district.

Screening: Because they typically lack visual appeal, mechanical equipment, trash receptacles, and snow storage areas diminish the visual quality of individual properties as well as their surroundings. Screening devices that complement preferred architectural and/or landscape character not only will effectively eliminate such features from view, but also can add interest and detail to overall area character.

Security Grills: Building security is an important concern in many commercial areas, but contemporary exterior security devices can conflict with the traditional open character design of storefronts by imposing large, sometimes opaque, metallic features on the façade. These characteristics, sometimes coupled with deferred maintenance impart an image of insecurity far in excess of the actual problem and project a negative image for the entire area. Thoughtful design of such elements can avoid this effect, and rather result in a more pleasing character.

Access: Access to and circulation within individual properties, as well as entrances to buildings, are critical to how commercial properties and their surroundings function; they also impact how properties are perceived in terms of safety. Designs that promote attractive and identifiable access for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic will be positive additions to any commercial area.



Design Guidelines



Design Guidelines: Pedestrian-Oriented Businesses

Syracuse was organized around neighborhoods, which traditionally have been the basic building blocks of its physical structure and therefore important components to the city's cultural make-up and economic health. Its neighborhood environments have evolved over generations with a particular focus on pedestrians, especially in eras before widespread use of private automobiles. Inherent in this pedestrian orientation was the efficient use of space due to the high density of development. Commercial destinations traditionally were located throughout this dense urban fabric, resulting in convenience to goods and services and streetscapes that had the vitality and safety generated by the critical mass of people using common areas. Retail businesses were located in close proximity to their residential customer base, making every neighborhood "walkable."

Design guidelines for these pedestrian-oriented business typologies must emphasize the physical characteristics that make such areas so unique. Of particular concern are property components that have direct contact with the public sidewalk and therefore have the greatest impact on the pedestrian experience; that is setback, fenestration, materials and details, streetscape and landscape, and access. How and where buildings are placed on the site will create a sense of comfort and safety, and thereby enhance social interaction. Design of building fenestration, materials and details—particularly at the first floor—must provide visual interest and strengthen overall district character at street level. Similarly, advice regarding the remaining components, such as lighting, signage and awnings, will lead to property features that offer ephemeral, but still durable and attractive additions to the pedestrian environment.

The East Genesee Street neighborhood commercial district, which already has a strong sense of identity, will be further enhanced as such design guidelines are consistently applied over time. Large vacant parcels, such as current surface parking lots, can accommodate new construction designed to bring back strong streetscape definition and provide a more traditional sense of enclosure along an important long-established city street. Careful treatment of existing buildings can reverse previously inappropriate modifications and return many properties to a more inviting appearance. Using the design guidelines, still other buildings initially constructed outside of any identifiable architectural style can be significantly modified to make them more inviting at street level.



700-1000 block of East Genesee Street



Conceptual Illustration of Design Guidelines



Proposed East Genesee Street looking West



Proposed East Genesee Street and Irving Avenue looking North



Proposed East Genesee Street looking South-east toward Crouse Avenue



Existing conditions



Existing conditions



Existing conditions

Faculty of Landscape Architecture

State University of New York

College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Design Guidelines

City of Syracuse Commercial Areas Plan

Urban Design Studio 2006



commonality among the various locations while still allowing room for characteristics that distinguish the more unique gateways. Attention to both the motorist and pedestrian is addressed in the various entry features that can be used.

Administration

The city administration can implement the System incrementally, gradually improving the sense of arrival at specific locations and along particular corridors. The city Department of Public Works will be the principal agency responsible for administering the System, although Business Improvement Districts should be an important partner in addressing both short- and long-term matters. In instances where private entities seek permission to modify the public right-of-way along designated gateway corridors or at gateway entries, the Department will review all requests for conformance to the adopted System features, and proposals that are inconsistent will not be approved. The Department can work with the City Research Bureau to obtain funds for design, installation and maintenance. A primary source of assistance to pursue is the Transportation Enhancements Program which is a federal reimbursement program under the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)*, administered by the New York State Department of Transportation. This program provides funding for transportation projects of cultural, aesthetic, historic and environmental significance. In addition, the New York Main Street Program, Brownfields Grant Program and Community Development Block Grant funds might be available for design and installation.

Gateway Corridors and Entries

Every street that crosses the city boundary provides a connection between Syracuse and its surrounding context, and affords the traveler a sense of entry somewhere along its route. Some streets support substantial regional vehicular traffic but others carry far more modest volumes; and while some corridors include points that provide discernible entry and exit experiences, many do not.

It is the most highly traveled routes, and those that are central to the city's commercial areas, that have the potential to be enhanced as economic generators and can be considered *Gateway Corridors*; they include:

- Salina Street
- Butternut Street
- James Street
- Grant Boulevard
- Burnet Avenue
- Erie Boulevard
- East and West Genesee Street
- West Seneca Turnpike
- West Onondaga Street
- Geddes Street
- Hiawatha Boulevard
- East Brighton Avenue
- South Avenue

These corridors announce and celebrate entry to Syracuse, and in particular its economic opportunities. Many exhibit tangible evidence of the city's natural and historic character while others are distinguished predominantly by the volume of traffic they carry. Thereby collectively these corridors offer a variety of experiences to local citizens and visitors alike.

Along these and other corridors the sense of arrival often is triggered by a combination of physical features and visual character at a particular point. These *Gateway Entries* can be strongly



defined by existing city fabric, such as topography, views and vistas, organization and size of streets and blocks, proximity of buildings to the street and sidewalk edge, or presence of elevated crossings for highways or railroads. In some cases, entries might be less articulated due to the presence of surface parking or vacant lots, but can be altered in varying degrees to achieve a more positive feeling. Using existing conditions in combination with general locations, gateway entries can be divided into four classes: city, interstate, downtown and commercial areas.

City entries are those points where any corridor crosses the municipal boundary; for example:

- East Genesee Street in the vicinity of Dewitt Road
- Erie Boulevard East in the vicinity of Smith Street
- James Street in the vicinity of Milford Drive
- South Avenue in the vicinity of Mitchell Avenue
- West Seneca Turnpike in the vicinity of Barnes Avenue

Interstate entries are those points where interstate exit ramps connect with city streets and include the following exits:

- Interstate 81 North—Rt. 298/Court Street, Rt. 370/Hiawatha Boulevard
- Interstate 81 South—North Salina Street/North Clinton Street, North Franklin Street/West Street, Catawba Street/Spencer Street
- Interstate 81 North & South—South Salina Street/Brighton Avenue, Adams Street/Harrison Street
- Interstate 690 East—Hiawatha Boulevard, Bear Street/Rt. 298, West Genesee Street

- Interstate 690 West—North Geddes Street, Townsend Street
- Interstate 690 East & West—West Street, Teall Avenue, Midler Avenue,
- Interstate 481 North & South—Brighton Avenue

Downtown gateway entries are those points where direct access is provided into the city center, and as defined in the *Downtown Master Plan Component of the Syracuse Comprehensive Plan*; for example:

- East Genesee Street at Interstate 81 overpass
- North Salina Street at Interstate 690 overpass
- South Salina Street at Railroad Bridge
- West Genesee Street at West Street overpass

Commercial gateway entries are those points on a gateway corridor and within a commercial area; for example:

- James Street at Grant Boulevard
- North Salina Street at Catawba Street
- South Salina Street at Seneca Turnpike
- West Genesee Street at Erie Boulevard West
- South Avenue at Valley Drive

By implementing a comprehensive plan for the design and maintenance of gateway corridors and entries, the City can create a more attractive image for key commercial areas, which subsequently will generate greater interest and investment by both property and business owners.

Gateway System Features

The Syracuse Gateway System will consist of both common and special elements. The common features will be used along gateway corridors and at entries throughout the city, lending a unified



aesthetic to the city as a whole, and will include signage, vegetation, lighting, utilities, banners, street furnishings and paving. Special features will illustrate and reflect the unique character of particular commercial areas and will include water features, public art and unique paving.

Common Features

Signage

A hierarchal signage system that provides direction, general information and interpretive materials will greatly enhance arrival to the city and its major commercial areas. Most importantly these signs will facilitate easy way-finding throughout the city, while directing visitors and residents to businesses and other commercial establishments. Beginning at the city boundary and interstate entry points and continuing along the gateway corridors and at other entries, the signs will lead travelers to key city locations, such as neighborhood commercial districts and regional commercial corridors. They also will incorporate varying degrees of detail about a wide range of topics, including news and events. The interpretive component of the System will provide educational materials such as historical facts or cultural details.

There will be two subsets of the signage system, those for pedestrians and those for motorists, and they will be compatible in overall composition. Characteristics include:

- Material: Metal signboards with reflective text, mounted on rectilinear metal poles 3 inches in thickness
- Graphic symbols: Contemporary city logo
- Color: White text on various solid color backgrounds

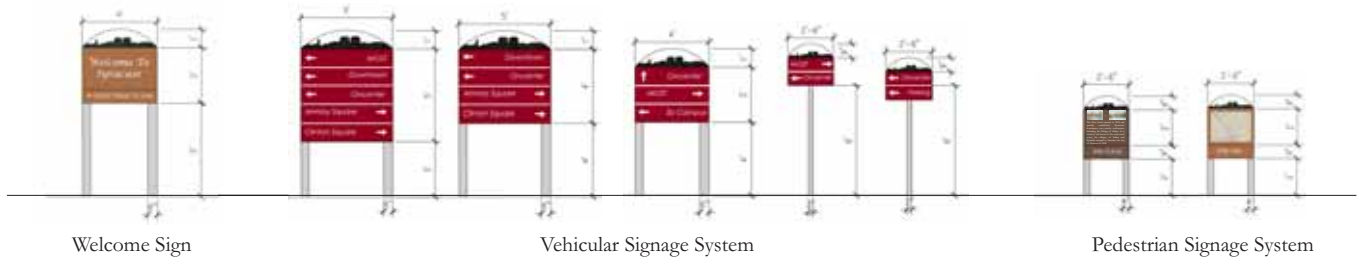
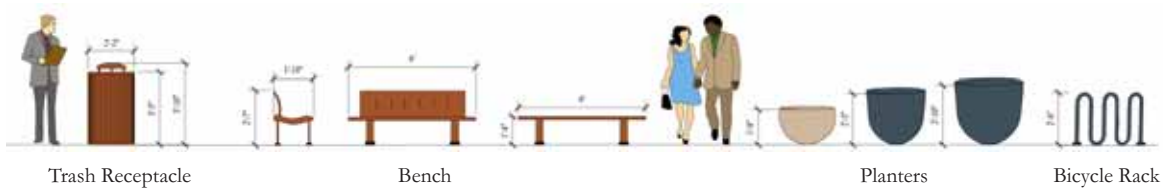
- Text format and font: Horizontal alignment, consistent in Century Gothic font
- Installation: Freestanding on metal poles with footings

Design standards will be developed for all tiers of the system. The sign types, associated with entries and the way-finding experience to the city and commercial areas, will include:

- Freestanding Vehicular Entry Sign
 - Height, overall – 9’
 - Height, mounting – 5’ above grade on double metal poles
 - Signboard – 4’ x 3’
 - Text size – 5” or higher
- Freestanding Vehicular Directional Sign (5 destinations)
 - Height, overall – 9’
 - Height, mounting – 3’ above grade on double metal poles
 - Signboard – 5’ x 5’
 - Text boxes – maximum 5, each 1’ high
 - Text – destination name, directional arrow, font 5” high
- Freestanding Vehicular Directional Sign (4 destinations)
 - Height, overall – 9’
 - Height, mounting – 4’ above grade on double metal poles
 - Signboard – 5’ x 4’
 - Text boxes – maximum 4, each 1’ high
 - Text – destination name, directional arrow, font 5” high
- Freestanding Vehicular Directional Sign (3 destinations)
 - Height, overall – 8’
 - Height, mounting – 4’ above grade on double metal poles



Gateway Elements



Purpose

The proposed Gateway System is intended to emphasize principal entrances and approach routes to the City of Syracuse and its commercial areas. A collection of coordinated physical elements will ensure that the visual character of designated entry points and corridors is appreciably enhanced. These features will establish a sense of commonality among the various locations while still allowing room for characteristics that distinguish the more unique gateways. Attention to both the motorist and pedestrian is addressed in the various entry features that can be used.

Administration

The city administration can implement the System incrementally, gradually improving the sense of arrival at specific locations and along particular corridors. The city Department of Public Works will be the principal agency responsible for administering the System.

Gateway System Features

The Syracuse Gateway System will consist of both common and special elements. The common features will be used along gateway corridors and at entries throughout the city, lending a unified aesthetic to the city as a whole, and will include signage, vegetation, lighting, utilities, banners, street furnishings and paving. Special features will illustrate and reflect the unique character of particular commercial areas and will include water features, public art and unique paving.

Street furnishings

Providing amenities for pedestrians along gateway corridors is critical to the viability of many commercial areas in the city. As residents and visitors make the transition from motorists to walkers they must have access to those elements that will support and encourage their use of these corridors.

Benches and trash receptacles will be available in crimson, dark copper and brown, one color per location. Planters will be available in these colors plus sand and charcoal and may differ from the other furnishings.

Lighting

By modifying the level and quality of light, as well as style of the lighting fixtures, more prominent entry points in the nighttime landscape will be created, and, in some cases, will be more noticeable during the day-time hours. In addition, a consistent and comprehensive treatment of lighting along gateway corridors will enhance overall city image. Banners can be used to signal entry into the city or a specific commercial area, and to complement the unique character of the different gateway corridors. Banners are incorporated with the lights to further enrich the streetscape. The Gateway System calls for both improved streetscape lighting and up-lighting. Decorative streetscape lighting will be installed along gateway corridors and up-lighting will be installed to highlight all city welcome signs.

Signage

A hierarchical signage system that provides direction, general information and interpretive materials will greatly enhance arrival to the city and its major commercial areas. Most importantly these signs will facilitate easy way-finding throughout the city, while directing visitors and residents to businesses and other commercial establishments. Beginning at the city boundary and interstate entry points and continuing along the gateway corridors and at other entries, the signs will lead travelers to key city locations, such as neighborhood commercial districts and regional commercial corridors. They also will incorporate varying degrees of detail about a wide range of topics, including news and events. The interpretive component of the System will provide educational materials such as historical facts or cultural details.

There will be two subsets of the signage system, those for pedestrians and those for motorists, and they will be compatible in overall composition. The informational signs are dark copper in color, the directional signs are crimson, and the interpretive signs are brown.



Gateway Design



Gateway Corridors

Gateway corridors announce and celebrate entry to Syracuse, and in particular its economic opportunities. Many exhibit tangible evidence of the city's natural and historic character while others are distinguished predominantly by the volume of traffic they carry, thereby collectively offer a variety of experiences to local citizens and visitors alike.

Along the corridors the sense of arrival often is triggered by a combination of physical features and visual character at a particular point. These Gateway Entries can be strongly defined by existing city fabric, such as topography, views and vistas, organization and size of streets and blocks, proximity of buildings to the street and sidewalk edge, or presence of elevated crossings for highways or railroads. In some cases, entries might be less articulated due to the presence of surface parking or vacant lots, but can be altered in varying degrees to achieve a more positive feeling.

Every street that crosses the city boundary provides a connection between Syracuse and its surrounding context, and affords the traveler a sense of entry somewhere along its route. Some streets support substantial regional vehicular traffic but others carry far more modest volumes; and while some corridors include points that provide discernible entry and exit experiences, many do not.

It is the most highly traveled routes, and those that are central to the city's commercial areas, that have the potential to be enhanced as economic generators and can be considered Gateway Corridors. South Avenue between Valley Drive and Elmhurst Drive is one of them. This section of South Avenue is located at the south west edge of the city and is a highly traveled route. There are many opportunities to enhance this gateway corridor through the use of street furnishings and a new signage system. Street lighting and trees will also add to the improvement of the commercial corridor.



Welcome Sign at city entry



Existing South Avenue and Elmhurst Drive intersection



Proposed South Avenue and Elmhurst Drive Intersection



Existing South Avenue and Brighton Avenue intersection



Proposed South Avenue and Brighton Avenue intersection



Existing South Avenue and Valley Drive intersection



Proposed South Avenue and Valley Drive intersection



- Signboard – 4 x 3'
- Text boxes – maximum 3, each 1' high
- Text – destination name, directional arrow, font 5" high
- Freestanding Vehicular Directional Sign (2 destinations)
 - Height, overall – 8'
 - Height, mounting – 6' above grade on single metal pole
 - Signboard – 2'-6" x 1'-6"
 - Text boxes – maximum 2, each 9" high
 - Text – destination name, directional arrow, font 4" high
- Freestanding Vehicular Directional Sign (1 destination)
 - Height, overall – 8'
 - Height, mounting – 6' above grade on single metal pole
 - Signboard – 2'-6" x 1'-6"
 - Text boxes – maximum 1 at 9" high
 - Text – destination name, directional arrow, font 4" high
- Freestanding Pedestrian Sign (Informational and Interpretive)
 - Height, overall, – 5'-6"
 - Height, mounting – 2' above grade on double metal poles
 - Signboard – 2'-6" x 2'
 - Text size – 3"

Color is the distinguishing element, with directional signs crimson, informational signs dark copper, and interpretive signs medium warm brown.

Vegetation

There are a limited number of species that can withstand existing environmental conditions along the

gateway corridors and at the entries due to climatic factors of Syracuse. The strategic introduction and maintenance of appropriate vegetation will provide seasonal interest at these key points. Appropriate urban soils and provisions for routine maintenance will be incorporated. All selected species will be tolerant of urban conditions of the city, including high amounts of road salt, carbon monoxide and suspended particulates. Examples of tolerant species include:

- Street Trees (Height up to 25', plant in beds of 5' width with planting size of 2.5 cal.)
 - *Syringa reticulata*—Japanese tree lilac
 - *Crataegus viridis*—winter king hawthorn
 - *Acer campestre*—hedge maple
- Street Trees (Height over 25', plant in beds of 8'-12' width with planting size of 3.5 cal.)
 - *Amelanchier canadensis*—serviceberry
 - *Pyrus calleryana*—Callery pear
 - *Tilia cordata*—little leaf linden
 - *Platanus x acerifolia*—London planetree
 - *Gleditsia triacanthos*—honey locust
- Planting Beds
 - At base of welcome signs
 - Naturally mulched bed of diameter between 5' and 8'
 - Plants will be maintained at 5' in height
 - Bed compositions: [A]—*Cornus alba* 'Elegantissima'—variegated red twig dogwood, *Hydrangea*



- *macrophylla* – endless summer hydrangea, *Juniperus horizontalis* – creeping juniper, along with assorted annuals. [B]—*Ilex glabra*- inkberry holly, *Weigela florida* – wine and roses, *Cotoneaster horizontalis* – rockspray cotoneaster, along with assorted annuals.

- Seasonal plantings in containers

Lighting

By modifying the level and quality of light, as well as style of the lighting fixtures, more prominent entry points in the nighttime landscape will be created, and, in some cases, will be more noticeable during the day-time hours. In addition, a consistent and comprehensive treatment of lighting along gateway corridors will enhance overall city image. Banners are incorporated with the lights to further enrich the streetscape. The Gateway System calls for both improved streetscape lighting and up-lighting. Decorative streetscape lighting will be installed along gateway corridors and up-lighting will be installed to highlight all city welcome signs.

- Decorative streetlights
 - Cast metal pole with acorn globe
 - Black pole and base
 - Height includes a 14'-6" pole with single globe and a 20' pole with double globes
 - Installed along street edge in the public right-of-way 2' from the curb.
- Up-Lights

- Small-scale, non-decorative units
- Dark colored housing
- Installed flush with grade in planting bed

Banners

In addition to signage, banners can be used to signal entry into the city or a specific commercial area, and to compliment the unique character of the different gateway corridors. Whether temporary or permanent elements, banners will have the following characteristics:

- Material—silk-screened Sunbrella, or equivalent
- Mounting—with horizontal bar attached to streetlights 10' above grade
- Size—2' x 4'-6"

Street furnishings

Providing amenities for pedestrians along gateway corridors is critical to the viability of many commercial areas in the city. As residents and visitors make the transition, whether they are motorists or walkers, they must have access to those elements that will support and encourage their use of these corridors.

- Benches—6' long steel units with and without backs
- Trash Receptacles—41" height x 26" diameter steel units with lids
- Planters—two shapes and three different sizes, Bowl—20" height; U-shaped—29" and 34"
- Bike racks—2'-6" height x 4'-2" width

Benches and trash receptacles will be available in crimson, dark copper and brown, one color per location.

Planters will be available in these colors plus sand and charcoal, and



although one color will be used per location it need not be the same as the other furnishings.

Crosswalks

The articulation of pedestrian crosswalks within gateway corridors will add to general circulation safety and also improve the physical character of the route. Distinctive treatment of these areas can be a valuable traffic-calming device and aid in safe pedestrian movement. It also is an effective means for making the roadway more visually attractive.

Utilities

Overhead utility lines and their support poles contribute to the chaotic appearance of many gateway corridors, as well as physically impact both pedestrian and vehicular circulation. Removing these elements from the streetscape and installing them underground will significantly improve the appearance and function of these important routes.

Special Features

Public Art

Using public art to mark and identify entries throughout the city will bring added distinction and meaning to those places already recognized as access points. Incorporating public art into the entry experience directly corresponds to recommendations made in *The Preservation Component of the City of Syracuse Comprehensive Plan* and the *Downtown Master Plan*, which are compliments to this *Commercial Areas Plan*. Public art can be used to represent certain historic qualities and aspects of the city, or it can be themed after contemporary trends and movements. Both of these additions to the existing urban fabric, particularly at the identified entries,

will add a new layer of cultural meaning to the city landscape. The combination of both permanent and temporary pieces will provide the opportunity to showcase a wide range of creative artistic expression, and indirectly reflect both the enduring and ephemeral nature of history as well as contemporary culture.

Public art will vary for each designated gateway entry, but can incorporate either or both temporary or permanent pieces:

- Temporary Art:
 - Relate to seasonal or cyclical events, programs or exhibits
 - Include banners, temporary 2- and 3-dimensional pieces, and/or installation art
 - Highlight local artists
- Permanent Art:
 - Incorporate historical and/or cultural references
 - Incorporate water features
 - Include 2- and 3-dimensional pieces
 - Highlight local, regional and/or national artists

Water Features

The sense of arrival at specific gateway entries can be enhanced by the incorporation of water features. The sound and light associated with both still and moving water will create a more memorable experience for city visitors.

Unique Paving

Through the use of different types of paving materials and patterns the special identity of a commercial corridor can be enhanced, and



pedestrian and vehicular spaces can be differentiated.

Comprehensive Parking Strategy

The development, maintenance and administration of parking must be made as efficient and consistent as possible for any city to successfully address this fundamental component of society, and more specifically this critical factor in economic development. In addition, serious consideration must be given to eliminating the detrimental physical impacts of ill-conceived, ill-maintained and poorly operated parking facilities. By instituting a comprehensive approach, municipalities can better match supply with demand, including accommodating both residential and commercial expansion, as well as adopt standards that will ensure safe, functional and aesthetically appropriate parking options.

In order to holistically and effectively address parking in Syracuse, the City must institute changes to existing policies and programs, as well as create new mechanisms based on national models that include:

- One agency with sole responsibility for the oversight of all parking within the city.
- A central database.
- A policy that supports multi-modal transportation.

Parking Authority

Municipal oversight of all parking within a community allows city government not only to acquire, hold and run public facilities, but also to manage overall parking supply, ensure efficient operation, promote adequate maintenance, and

contribute to high quality physical development. A parking authority, an independent agency or organization, is the principal vehicle for carrying out these tasks. It can be established in concert with significant reform of existing zoning regulations, which are tied directly to local government policies and planning priorities.

The responsibilities of a progressive parking authority for Syracuse will be most effective if incorporated into the existing authority established in 2003. This entity already possesses the ability to administer at least two parking garages within Downtown and therefore can be readily modified to assume expanded responsibilities and powers.

▪ Responsibilities & Authority

The Syracuse Parking Authority (SPA) will be responsible for all off-street public parking facilities and all on-street parking, and it will have the authority to administer rules and regulations pertaining to all private parking facilities within the city limits.

A parking facility is defined as any built structure or improved lot, public or privately owned, that holds, houses or stores motor vehicles for a short or long period of time, with the exception of impound lots, heated storage facilities, residential driveways, and street parking on public roadways.

▪ Public facilities

The SPA will operate and/or manage, either with its own forces or through contractual agreement with a private entity, all publicly owned parking garages and lots; establish consistent rates based on market demand; and maintain consistent operating hours



and signage for this network. It also will ensure that all public garages and lots meet established design guidelines, and will assume responsibility for inspections and code enforcement for such facilities.

Enforcement of all on-street parking regulations will be transferred to the SPA from the Syracuse Police Traffic Division, and will include rules related to metered and un-metered spaces, designated accessible spaces, and loading and delivery zones. Additionally, it will have the power to designate residential parking permit zones, and subsequently issue permits for and enforce the regulations for such areas.

- Private facilities

The SPA will have the authority to issue parking facility licenses for all private garages and all private lots that equal a capacity of 10 parking spaces or more. Licensure will be required for lots of 9 parking spaces or less which are contiguous to at least another parking lot of equal or greater size. Based on revisions to the Syracuse Zoning Rules and Regulations, all private parking facilities (except as noted above) will require review and approval by the SPA. Successful applicants will receive a parking facility license, which will allow the property to be used for parking purposes. The SPA will conduct inspections on a cyclical basis to enforce all applicable rules. Facilities that are found to be in violation will be put on notice and/or issued a fine (depending on the severity of the violation); failure to correct all inadequacies will result in the SPA license being revoked and use of the property for parking prohibited.

Data Base

The SPA will establish an effective inventory system for tracking all on- and off-street parking, employing a more comprehensive application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software than currently used by most city agencies. Once a baseline is created, the SPA will update the data no less than every 2 years to ensure accuracy and maximize planning.

Policies

The SPA will establish policies and develop an overall plan for parking within Syracuse, addressing general supply and demand, on-street parking, off-street facilities, design guidelines, special programs, multi-modal transportation options, and marketing.

- Supply & Demand

Given societal changes initiated in the post-World War II years, the number and use of private cars in the United States increased steadily, some might argue exponentially, throughout the 20th century. Syracuse like most mid-size American cities saw a move away from pedestrian activity and public transportation, and with that a shift in the local economy from the city to the surrounding suburbs.

Various city administrations, local organizations, and property and business owners undertook often desperate measures in attempt to retain residents, employees, customers and clients. Their actions were responsible for, or tacitly supported, largely unchecked development of parking facilities—primarily surface lots—throughout



Parking Program



Syracuse Parking Authority:

The Syracuse Parking Authority (SPA) will be responsible for all off-street public parking facilities and all on-street parking, and will have the authority to administer rules and regulations pertaining to all private parking facilities within the city limits.

The SPA will operate and/or manage, either with its own forces or through contractual agreement with a private entity. All publicly owned parking garages and lots and will establish consistent rates based on demand and market for parking. Along with consistent operating hours and signage for this network. It will also ensure that all public garages and lots meet established design guidelines, and will assume responsibility for inspections and code enforcement for such facilities.

Enforcement of all on-street parking regulations will be transferred to the SPA from the Syracuse Police Traffic Division, and will include rules related to metered and un-metered spaces, designated accessible spaces, loading and delivery zones. Additionally, it will have the power to designate residential parking permit zones, and subsequently issue permits for and enforce the regulations for such areas.

The SPA will have the authority to issue parking facility licenses for all private garages and all private lots that equal a capacity of 10 parking spaces or more. Licensure will be required for lots of 10 parking spaces or less which are contiguous to at least another parking lot of equal or greater size. Successful applicants will receive a parking facility licensure, which will allow the property to be used for parking purposes.



Context Map

Surface Parking:

Parking is a highly valued commodity and should be plentiful enough in any district to support residents and businesses alike. To that end, SPA primary policies include: illuminating ratios that result in over-sized, under-utilized lots; incorporating sufficient flexibility to allow less than required minimum numbers when public transportation or mixed-use properties allow for shared parking; requiring all parking facilities are licensed by the SPA; limiting new stand-alone facilities inconsistent with the comprehensive parking strategy; requiring all major institutions provide a parking plan; redefining "temporary parking lots;" and establishing parking fees and fines that aid in meeting capital, operating, maintenance and enforcement costs.



Lot at North State and Division Streets



Surface Parking Allowable by Implementing the Existing Zoning Regulations



Redevelopment: One Property with Internal Block Parking, Secondary Street Access



Redevelopment: One Property with Internal Block Parking, Primary Street Access



Redevelopment: Two Properties Each with Parking, Secondary Street Access



Redevelopment: One Property, All Parking



Redevelopment: One Property with Internal Block Parking, Secondary Street Access



Redevelopment: One Property with Internal Block Parking, Primary Street Access



Redevelopment: Two Properties Each with Parking, Secondary Street Access



Redevelopment: One Property, All Parking

Faculty of Landscape Architecture

State University of New York

College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Parking Program

City of Syracuse Commercial Areas Plan

Urban Design Studio 2006



Parking Program



Shared Parking Program:
The Syracuse Parking Authority (SPA) will administer a shared parking program. The combination of more flexible zoning regulations and incentives can be used to develop shared parking facilities in key commercial areas. Owners of strategically located properties can develop parking facilities able to meet not only their own needs but those of near-by properties and businesses, entering into binding agreements that establish responsibilities, authority, financial obligations, fee structure, and hours of operation. The participants can receive waivers from required parking provisions as long as the agreement is in effect and the facility meet SPA license requirements.



Context Map



Shared Parking Garage



Shared Parking Garage



Single Large Shared Lot



Two Adjacent Independent Shared Lots

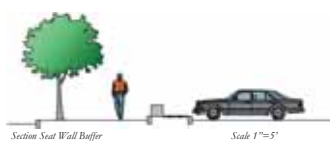
Design Guidelines: Screening of Off-Street Surface Parking

The Syracuse Parking Authority also will enforce a set of design guidelines for all parking facilities, with the primary goal to ensure the development of safe, efficient facilities that complement rather than detract from community character and, in particular, the pedestrian environment. These guidelines will address location, size, configuration, features, and screening. Components of screening include vegetation, walls and fences; sizes, types and installation methods.



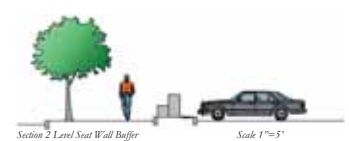
Section Tree Buffer

Scale 1"=5'



Section Street Wall Buffer

Scale 1"=5'



Section 2 Level Street Wall Buffer

Scale 1"=5'



Section Shrub Buffer

Scale 1"=5'



Section Shrub and Fence Buffer

Scale 1"=5'



Section Tree and Fence Buffer

Scale 1"=5'



the community. Today the success of such an approach is questionable in light of the relatively large parking supply actually available yet popular perception that parking generally is inadequate in almost every area of Syracuse.

Clearly, parking is a highly valued cultural commodity and it should be plentiful enough in any district to support residents and businesses alike; but where and how parking is provided must be carefully considered. To that end, SPA primary policies include:

- Eliminating land use/parking ratios in the Zoning Rules & Regulations that result in over-sized, under-utilized lots and/or are based on single-season/single-use peak events.
- Incorporating sufficient flexibility in the Zoning Rules & Regulations to allow construction of less than required minimum numbers when a use is adequately served by public transportation and/or mixed-use properties allow for shared parking, with “in-lieu-of-parking” fees as an incentive for this type of development.
- Requiring all parking facilities are licensed by the SPA.
- Limiting the number of new stand-alone parking facilities inconsistent with the comprehensive parking strategy.
- Requiring all major institutions provide a parking plan as part of any proposed development.

- Redefining “temporary parking lots” to ensure a truly temporary condition.
- Establishing parking fees and fines at levels that significantly aid in meeting capital, operating, maintenance and enforcement costs.
- Establishing a *Parking Enterprise Fund* that combines revenue from all city-owned parking facilities and parking enforcement into a single fund to support all city parking programs and leads to financially self-sufficiency.

▪ On-street parking

The supply and management of on-street parking varies throughout Syracuse, but generally is perceived by most users as the parking option that should be most readily available to the public. In commercial areas, on-street parking is used primarily by customers and clients, although business owners and employees also place demand on available spaces. In addition, dedication of curbside locations for loading and deliveries eliminates some street area for parking.

To maximize on-street parking, and thereby in part reduce pressure to create new off-street parking facilities, SPA policies include:

- Implementing the use of angle parking on streets where traffic volumes and conditions will not be impeded.
- Striping on-street spaces in un-metered locations to improve parking efficiency and numbers.



- Re-evaluating loading and delivery zones in high trafficked commercial areas, and assigning under-utilized or ineffective zones to general purpose parking.
 - Adjusting time limits and meter rates to maximize short-term rather than long-term use of on-street spaces.
 - Installing new meters and/or pay stations, incorporating multiple payment options including coins, bills, pre-paid cards and credit/debit cards.
 - Eliminating accessibility barriers for on-street parking.
- Off-street facilities

Parking garages and surface lots comprise the vast majority of parking facilities within Syracuse. Garages are located primarily within or near Downtown and major institutions, and commonly serve multiple properties as well as the general public. They vary in fee structure and hours of operation, and many include reserved spaces for particular customers. While different in architectural and structural design, parking garages typically are substantial in size, with some occupying an entire city block. Unlike parking lots, garages contribute to the sense of density so critical to an urban environment, although many detract from the public streetscape and pedestrian experience.

Parking lots are found throughout the city, with the greatest concentration in commercial areas rather than residential neighborhoods. These facilities differ widely in size,

configuration, fee structure, and hours of operation; some are restricted to specific users, while others are open to the general public; and virtually all of them sufficiently decrease density to evoke an image of abandonment and disinvestment. Included in this category are “temporary” parking lots, properties intended to accommodate parking only for a limited time; in reality many of these lots have been in existence for decades.

To improve off-street parking options, and concurrently enhance city character, SPA policies include:

- Establishing optimum ratios for short- and long-term parking in public facilities based on identified user base.
- Instituting coordinated fee structures, hours of operation, maintenance standards and advertising for all public facilities.
- Ensuring parking lot occupancy rates are no greater than 85% to accommodate higher turnover.
- Adopting criteria and processes for licensing all parking facilities, including criteria for inspections, enforcement and license renewal.
- Adopting criteria for the design and operation of all parking facilities, with particular attention to the relationship between the facility and abutting public sidewalks.
- Re-defining “temporary” parking lots to have a maximum 3-year life, with alternative but still effective design and operation



requirements, and the option to become permanent lots under established license criteria and procedures.

- Developing incentives to encourage shared parking facilities in areas of high demand.

- **Parking Facility Design Guidelines**

The SPA will enforce a set of design guidelines for all parking facilities, with the primary goal to ensure the development of safe, efficient facilities that complement rather than detract from community character and, in particular, the pedestrian environment. They are based on the following definitions:

- **Parking Facility:** Any built structure or improved lot, public or privately owned, that holds, houses or stores motor vehicles for a short or long period of time, with the exception of impound lots, heated storage facilities, automobile dealerships, residential driveways, and street parking on public roadways.
- **Permanent Surface Parking Lot:** Any ground level lot intended as parking use for more than 3 years and which meets the prescribed design guidelines and operational requirements established by the SPA, and therefore is a licensed SPA facility.
- **Temporary Surface Parking Lot:** Any ground level lot intended as parking use for less than 3 years and which

meets the prescribed design guidelines and operational requirements established by the SPA for such limited use.

- **Parking Garage:** A parking facility housed in a built structure, which is at least two stories high.

Parking facility guidelines will be incorporated into the revised Zoning Rules and Regulations as part of the Design Guidelines developed for the five business typologies identified within Syracuse: pedestrian-oriented, automobile-oriented, business cluster, former industrial, and suburban office complex. Each set of parking facility guidelines will present advice for permanent lots, temporary lots and garages. Location, size, screening, configuration and features will be addressed for both types of lots. The guidelines for garages will deal principally with location, as these features are addressed as “new construction” under the broader Design Guidelines. The parking facility guidelines for the Pedestrian-Oriented Development typology, presented here, can serve as a model for all other sets.

Pedestrian Oriented Development Parking Design Guidelines

A. Permanent Surface Parking Lots

I. Location

1. Lots will be located within maximum footage of the primary property they serve, and within the same zoning district as this primary property.



2. Lots will not be located along the street front, except when size and/or configuration of the property prevents placing the lot at the side or rear. In such cases only one side can be contiguous to a street, and this side will contain the entrance/exit.
3. In no case will a lot abut the street front for an entire city block or occupy a corner property.

II. Size

1. In no case will a lot occupy an entire city block.
2. Parking space allocation will follow the zoning code requirement, but in no case will lot size exceed the maximum percentage outlined in the code.
3. Corner properties that require off-street parking will develop no more than the allowed percentage of the lot, as prescribed in the zoning code, for surface parking.

III. Screening

1. All boundaries of a parking lot will be screened with landscaping (trees, hedges, walls, or fences, or a combination of these elements). 100% of every side will be screened, with the exception of vehicular and pedestrian entrance/exit. Only one of these screening elements is required however.
2. Trees will be installed at 4.5" dbh and at least 14-16' high. Trees will be spaced based on the natural habit of the species

selected, but generally at 35-40' intervals. When placed along a street frontage, they will alternate in their spacing with existing city street trees so as to maximize screening. Trees will be installed in a minimum 5' wide bed.

3. Shrubs used in hedges or mass plantings will be installed in beds no less than 5 ft. wide, and will be spaced based on the natural habit of the species selected but generally no more than spacing of 30 in. on center. Shrub plantings will be maintained at minimum of 48 in. in height, or a minimum of 24 in. when in conjunction with a wall or fence.
4. Walls will be 48 in. tall. If a wall segment exceeds 50' in length, wall breaks will be incorporated that will be 36-48" wide. If a seat wall is used, seating should be a minimum of 18" from the ground. Walls will be structurally sound, and designed and comprised of materials to compliment the surrounding context. If walls are used, a 5' minimum bed will be maintained.
5. Fences will be 48 in. tall. Fencing may not be plastic, chain linked, or topped with barbed wire, and will possess a certain amount of transparency.
6. The following tree and hedge species may not be used for any landscaping: Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), American Sweet Gum (fruit producing varieties only, *Liquidambar styraciflua*), Gingko (female tree only, *Ginkgo*



biloba), Burning Bush (*Euonymus alata*), Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Hawthorn (thorn varieties only, *Crataegus spp.*).

7. The following tree species are recommended for use:
Eastern hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), Serviceberry (*Amelanchier spp.*), Flowering crabapple (*Malus spp.*), American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), Honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*).

IV. Configuration & Features

1. Parking stalls will be no less than 9' x 18' and no greater than 10' x 20' in size.
2. Drive lanes will be no less than 10' in width.
3. Entry and exit width will be no less than 10' each.
4. When a minimum square footage of 30% of vehicular pavement area is of permeable paving, the landscaped island requirement shall be reduced by 25%.
5. A minimum of 30% of the parking lot will be paved with a material that is not asphalt or concrete. This part of the parking lot will be closest to the street. This percentage may or may not be the same amount of permeable paving called for in number 4.
6. Lot striping will demarcate stalls, drive lanes, and stopping stripes at exits.
7. Granite barrier curbing will be provided for all parking lot landscaping, as well as the 5' planting bed fronting the street.

8. Lots must have one landscaped island and one shade tree per certain amount of parking spaces (as per zoning code), or at least one interior side landscaped according to the screening guidelines provided in the previous section. This landscaped side must be different than the one contiguous to the street. If there is an adjoining parking lot, the side contiguous to the neighboring parking lot will be the landscaped side so as to provide screening between lots.
9. The size of an interior landscaped island should adhere to minimum footage in zoning code.
10. The following tree and hedge species may not be used for any landscaping: Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), American Sweet Gum (fruit producing varieties only, *Liquidambar styraciflua*), Ginkgo (female tree only, *Ginkgo biloba*), Burning Bush (*Euonymus alata*), Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Hawthorn (thorn varieties only, *Crataegus spp.*).
11. Dumpsters will be located at least 30' from the sidewalk. Dumpsters will be screened with fencing or vegetation that is higher than the dumpster itself.
12. An interior percentage of lot space should be provided for winter snow storage. This space will not be factored into the parking lot size maximum. Alternately, a certain amount



of parking spaces may be relegated for snow storage.

13. Lighting will follow current zoning code for required candle power, and will be implemented so that light is directed and reflected away from adjacent properties and public ways.

B. Temporary Parking Lots

I. Location

1. Lots will be located within maximum footage of the primary property they serve, and within the same zoning district as this primary property.
2. Lots will not be located along the street front, except when size and/or configuration of the property prevents placing the lot at the side or rear. In such cases only one side can be contiguous to a street, and this side will contain the entrance/exit.
3. In no case will a lot abut the street front for an entire city block or occupy a corner property.

II. Size

1. In no case will a lot occupy an entire city block.
2. Parking space allocation will follow the zoning code requirement, but in no case will lot size exceed the maximum percentage outlined in the code.

III. Screening

1. All boundaries of a parking lot will be screened with

landscaping (trees, hedges, walls, or fences, or a combination of these elements). 100% of every side will be screened, with the exception of vehicular and pedestrian entrance/exit. Only one of these screening elements is required however.

2. Trees will be installed at 4.5" dbh and at least 14-16' high. Trees will be spaced based on the natural habit of the species selected, but generally at 35-40' intervals. When placed along a street frontage, they will alternate in their spacing with existing city street trees so as to maximize screening. Trees will be installed in a minimum 5' wide bed.
3. Shrubs used in hedges or mass plantings will be installed in beds no less than 5 ft. wide, and will be spaced based on the natural habit of the species selected but generally no more than spacing of 30 in. on center. Shrub plantings will be maintained at minimum of 48 in. in height, or a minimum of 24 in. when in conjunction with a wall or fence.
4. Fences will be 48 in. tall. Fencing may not be plastic, chain linked, or topped with barbed wire, and will possess a certain amount of transparency.
5. The following tree and hedge species may not be used for any landscaping: Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), American Sweet Gum (fruit producing varieties only, *Liquidambar styraciflua*), Ginkgo (female tree only, *Ginkgo biloba*), Burning Bush



- (*Euonymus alata*), Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Hawthorn (thorn varieties only, *Crataegus spp.*).
6. The following tree species are recommended for use:
 Eastern hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), Serviceberry (*Amelanchier spp.*), Flowering crabapple (*Malus spp.*), American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), Honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*).

IV. Configuration & Features

1. Parking stalls will be no less than 9' x 18' and no greater than 10' x 20' in size.
2. Drive lanes will be no less than 10' in width.
3. Entry and exit width will be no less than 10' each.
4. Parking lot will be paved.
5. Lot striping will demarcate stalls, drive lanes, and stopping stripes at exits.
6. The size of an interior landscaped island should adhere to minimum footage in zoning code.
7. The following tree and hedge species may not be used for any landscaping: Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), American Sweet Gum (fruit producing varieties only, *Liquidambar styraciflua*), Ginkgo (female tree only, *Ginkgo biloba*), Burning Bush (*Euonymus alata*), Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Hawthorn (thorn varieties only, *Crataegus spp.*).
8. Dumpsters will be located at least 30' from the sidewalk. Dumpsters will be screened

with fencing or vegetation that is higher than the dumpster itself.

9. An interior percentage of lot space should be provided for winter snow storage. This space will not be factored into the parking lot size maximum. Alternately, a certain amount of parking spaces may be relegated for snow storage.
10. Lighting will follow current zoning code for required candle power, and will be implemented so that light is directed and reflected away from adjacent properties and public ways.

C. Parking Garages

Garages will be located to avoid or limit building elevations that abut street frontage, with priority given to areas behind existing buildings and, in the case of new construction, below street level.

Garages that will abut street frontage will meet the following requirements:

1. Setback a distant equal or comparable to adjacent buildings.
2. Contain commercial space on the street level.
3. Compliment the character of adjacent buildings.
4. Appropriate landscaping will be present at the street level as per surface parking screening guidelines (except if retail is incorporated).
5. Incorporate ramping within the structure, rather than as a visible component of the building exterior. Structure ramping should occur within



the interior where it is out of sight.

- Special Programs

Parking in Syracuse has been addressed through a combination of planned and happen-stance activities, which has led to marginal physical and economic results. The ever-increasing demand for more parking—and that which is more convenient and more inexpensive—will place continued burden on community character and financial viability unless more creative measures are incorporated into a holistic handling of the issue. Among the strategies to be considered by the SPA are:

- Shared Parking Program: The combination of more flexible zoning regulations and incentives can be used to develop shared parking facilities in key commercial areas. Owners of strategically located properties can develop parking facilities able to meet not only their own needs but those of near-by properties and businesses, entering into binding agreements that establish responsibilities, authority, financial obligations, fee structure, and hours of operation. The participants can receive waivers from required parking provisions as long as the agreement is in effect and the facility meet SPA license requirements

- Residential Permit Parking Program: Throughout the city there are commercial districts, particularly those based on evening and special events entertainment, that generate a parking demand great enough to negatively affect the on-street parking supply available to area residents. A Residential Parking Permit (RPP) program can help moderate these impacts, by prioritizing on-street spaces by location and pool of users.

Through the issuance of permits in designated RPP areas, residents can be allotted the majority of spaces on streets that have no businesses, and a pro-rata number of spaces on streets that have a mix of both residential and commercial properties. Remaining spaces can be managed through meters or pay stations, favoring short-term customer parking over long-term users.

For streets having a surplus of on-street daytime parking spaces consideration could be given to time-sensitive permits for area businesses, that is permits that expire at times more favorable to residents. Similarly, residents could be allowed to use their permits in SPA licensed parking facilities within the designated RPP area during those hours when area businesses have a lower parking demand.

- Valet Parking: Used in conjunction with the Shared



Parking Program or independently, valet parking can provide businesses with greater flexibility in meeting customer and client parking needs. The SPA will issue valet permits to businesses demonstrating a need for the service and providing a plan identifying the involved properties and parking facilities. In addition, the SPA will designate an on-street drop-off area at or near participating businesses, which may include day and/or time use restrictions.

- Validation Program: The SPA will be responsible for overseeing the coordination of a program for educating business owners on the benefits of a validation program and how it would benefit shoppers and retailers alike. A validation program would provide discounted or free parking for those who are directly purchasing goods or utilizing certain businesses in an area.

- Multi-modal Transportation

While the City must remain dedicated to ensuring high quality parking options are available to the public, time must also be dedicated to exploring alternative transportation methods. Options such as shuttle services can be used to link available parking facilities with popular trip destinations and decrease parking demand on a seasonal, cyclical or events basis. Regional ride-sharing programs can help reduce

day-time demand and traffic volumes in areas over-saturated by employee parkers. Similarly, commuting by bike can reduce intra-city community between many neighborhoods and both Downtown and University Hill institutions.

Regular assessment and evaluation of the Centro system, its routes, stops and rider amenities, will ensure maximum effectiveness of public transit in the city. Used in combination with SPA special programs and other transportation alternatives, Centro can continue to offer viable options to private car use and the need for high numbers of parking.

Through the SPA, the City can provide incentives to businesses and commercial enterprises that institute employee transportation support programs that prioritize alternatives to private car use. For example, minimum parking requirements for a business might be reduced on a pro-rata basis for the percentage of employees that use alternative transportation options. Exploration and implementation of these and other options can be supported through the *Parking Enterprise Fund*.

- Marketing

The SPA will develop and manage a comprehensive marketing campaign for the city-wide parking system. Information will be distributed on the local, regional and national level in the form of a web site, television and radio



advertising, printed brochures, flyers and posters, and in special cases direct mail. Information will include an Online Parking Locator, to find the closest parking facility to specific destinations, printable maps, and instructions on how to use parking meters and pay stations or make secure on-line payment of parking violations. Lastly, the SPA will be responsible for the design and use of a coordinated signage system to be used on all SPA licensed facilities.

Business and Commercial Typologies

The key to strengthening Syracuse's economic base and its place within the Central New York regional economy lies in diversification, with particular attention paid to the businesses, industries and institutions unique to urban centers and this city in particular. The first step is to provide policies, programs and funding that support those entities already located in the city and contributing positively to the economy, physical character and social constructs of the community. The next and more challenging task is to aggressively seek out preferred businesses and industries and to offer them attractive and creative incentives to relocate to or expand in Syracuse.

Several strategies are recommended for pro-active, targeted economic development that capitalizes on urban conditions and markets. Through these combined efforts, the city can realize substantial economic growth.

Targeting Business Typologies

A *typology* is a classification based on types or categories. It allows the construction of a grouping system based on common characteristics or specified attributes that are mutually exclusive. Five broad typologies can be used as an organizational grouping system for the wide variety of existing businesses and commercial ventures within Syracuse. They define the relationships between specific business types and aid in determining which types should be promoted.

- Pedestrian-Oriented
 - Live/Work
 - Established neighborhood corner store
 - Established neighborhood commercial property/district
 - Main Street corridor
- Auto-Oriented
 - Suburban neighborhood commercial property
 - Small community shopping center
 - Big Box property
 - Established community commercial corridor
 - Regional commercial corridor
 - Highway commercial corridor
- Clusters
 - Auto sales property or corridor
 - New industry clusters
- Former Industrial
- Suburban Office Complex
 - Property or Corridor

Certain typologies are recommended because they are “preferable.” Although preference is subjective, in this case the



preferred business types are based on economic, social and physical factors that support the philosophy of regional smart growth and economic and environmental sustainability; in addition “preference” takes into account both historic preservation and advancing technologies. Recommendations are made with the intention of promoting an entire preferred typology or a single specific type within larger typology.

Pedestrian-Oriented Typologies

The term “traditional” refers to an inherited, practiced or customary pattern of thought, action or behavior; or cultural continuity in social attitudes, customs or institutions. Syracuse was organized around neighborhoods, which traditionally have been the basic building blocks of its physical structure and therefore important components to the city’s cultural make-up and economic health. Its neighborhood environments have evolved over generations with a particular focus on pedestrians, especially in eras before widespread use of private automobiles. Inherent in this pedestrian orientation was the efficient use of space due to the high density of development. Commercial destinations traditionally were located throughout this dense urban fabric, resulting in convenience to goods and services and streetscapes that had the vitality and safety generated by the critical mass of people using common areas. Retail businesses were located in close proximity to their residential customer base, making every neighborhood “walkable.”

After decades of decreasing, the city population recently has stabilized and its many strong neighborhoods are a testament to the re-emerging popularity of urban living. Their physical, social and economic structure is unique to the region, and sets Syracuse apart from

outlying communities when considering certain economic opportunities. Targeting select development ventures around thriving Syracuse pedestrian-oriented business typologies—such as neighborhood commercial properties and districts and Main Street corridors—will re-invigorate the economic base, make use of existing infrastructure, re-establish traditional density through new development, and strengthen community identity.

Successful versions of these types can be used as demonstration models. The Westcott Street neighborhood commercial district is one such example. Stimulated in large part by a strong though transitory college-age residential base with expendable income, it offers a number of coffee shops, vintage fashion stores, restaurants and bars, and a movie theater. This combination of businesses caters primarily to the market demand of residents in close proximity, but also attracts customers from the larger community. While trial and error and traditional preferences might have been used by individual entrepreneurs to determine which business could be supported by the surrounding neighborhood and therefore survive in this district, formal market studies of other neighborhoods throughout the city would assist in identifying the potential business ventures that would realize economic success in similar pedestrian-oriented typologies—before the investment risk is assumed by individual businesspeople.

Such studies help identify unique market demands as well as evaluate the needs and preferences of the immediate residential, and therefore customer, base. The city administration can play an important role in this effort by providing both technical assistance and modest financial support



for such studies. Subsequently, the city can aid individual projects with existing tax incentives and loan programs, particularly to alleviate risk for start-up businesses. In addition, the City can advocate for the creation of new or the involvement of existing not-for-profit organizations to identify and pursue common goals among the businesses located in neighborhood commercial and Main Street districts. To that end, Business Improvement Districts must be considered the primary vehicle for this purpose.

Business Improvement Districts

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a non-profit management association acting to support commercial activity within a designated district's core. It provides a means to finance improvements to promote or in many cases restore business activity. BIDs provide the opportunity for businesses to pool resources for common purposes or interests, often as to supplement services available through the municipal government. They serve to identify retail gaps and recruit new merchants to occupy vacant storefronts, making use of incentive programs and coordinating parking facilities. They increase activity in the district by coordinating advertising and special events. BIDs have the ability to bring about change, a power that often lies in the private sector particularly if there is a lack of confidence in the effectiveness of local government to so. BIDs have met with success in many large US cities, such as New York, Philadelphia and Los Angeles; and as of 1999 there were over 400 BIDs throughout the country.

Creation of a BID is dependent on a binding agreement among property owners within a delimited area to pay a specified fee based on their real property

tax assessment. The local governing body collects the funds for the BID District Management Association.

DMA members include businesses, non-for-profit organizations, and any institutions that potentially benefit from services provided by the BID. The board of directors must have a minimum of 7 members including three incorporators, one appointed by the chief executive officer of the municipality, one by the chief financial officer of the municipality, and on a municipal legislative representative. The other members must include representative owners and tenants within the district. All members of the BID vote on pending issues, with the total number of votes for any one member or group under common ownership not to exceed 33 1/3% of the total number of votes.

A district plan establishes a course of action for the BID, by outlining the boundaries of the District, its services and improvements, budget and method of assessment, as well as management policies and mechanisms. The plan may be prepared by the municipal legislative body, by municipal officers or employees designated by the body, or by independent professional consultants. A municipality can adopt a resolution authorizing the preparation of a district plan for a BID in three ways:

- Motion by the local legislative body;
- Upon request of the chief executive officer of the municipality, individual or agency designated by such officer; or
- By written petition of at least 51% of the owners in the proposed district.

The requirements for a district plan are located in Section 980-a of Article 19-a



within NYS General Municipal Law entitled “Business Improvement Districts.” The City of Syracuse already has adopted local law, Article 2B of the General City Law, which allows for application of the enabling legislation at the local level, and therefore the establishment of new BIDs can occur with some ease. It should be noted, however, that if 49% or more of the effected property owners, by headcount or valuation of represented property, voice opposition to a proposed BID, or the district plan is not approved by the New York State Comptroller, the BID will not be approved. Amendments such as alteration of the physical boundary must meet with the same standards of approval.

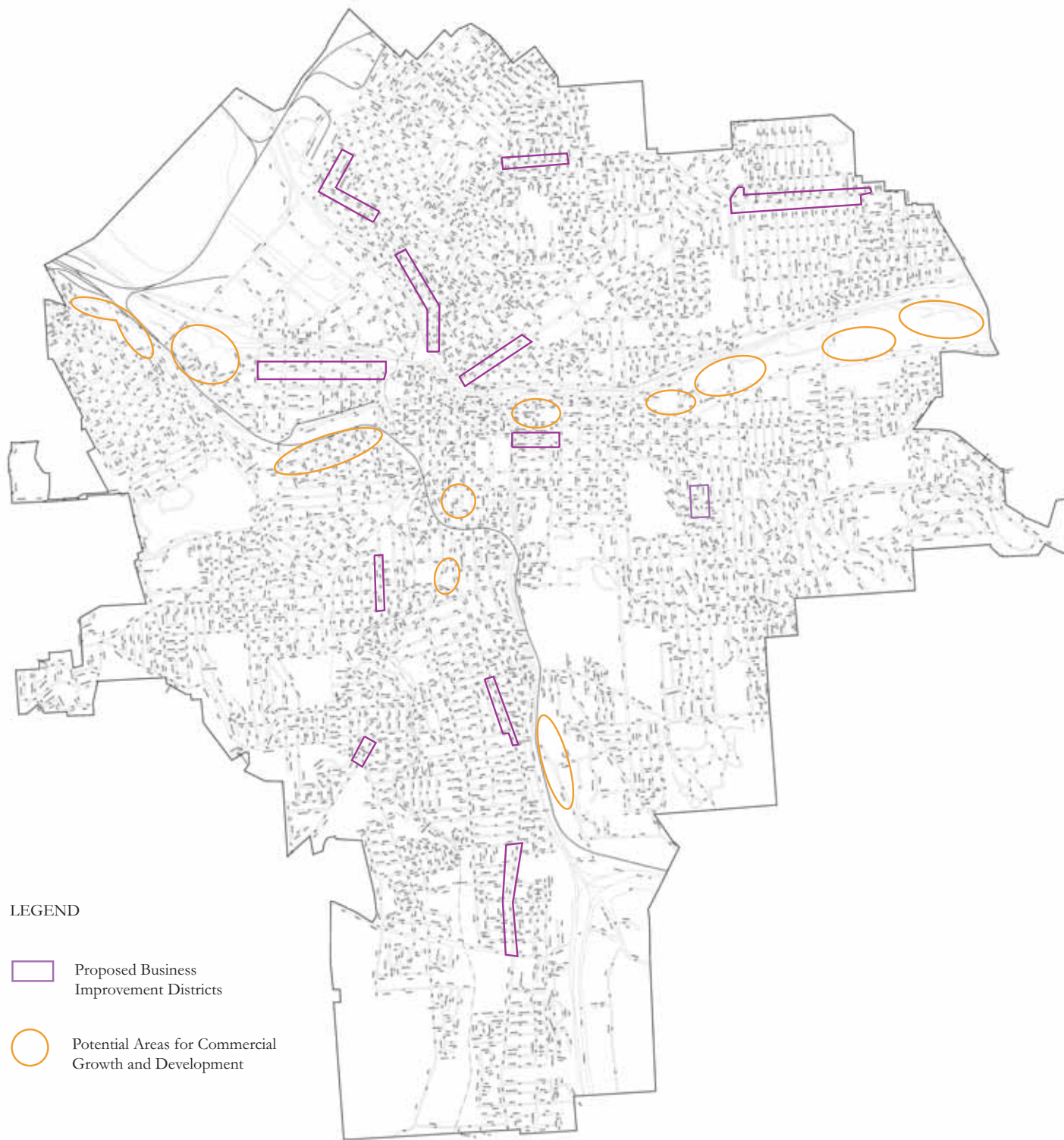
Two BIDs already exist in Syracuse, Downtown and the Crouse-Marshall Street District. The former, first organized as a Special Assessment District in 1975, is commonly known as the Downtown Committee, Inc. and currently employs administrative, program and support staff to carry out a range of activities within the designated BID boundaries. The latter, organized by the University Hill Corporation and business owners on South Crouse Avenue and Marshall Street with the assistance of Syracuse University, was established in 2002. This BID has a budget for maintenance personnel, administration, marketing, security and equipment. Both of these BIDs can point to significant success in meeting their respective goals, but it is the Crouse-Marshall BID, which is a neighborhood commercial district, that can serve as a positive example of how other pedestrian-oriented business types can benefit from forming their own BID. Of particular note are its first initiatives, which focus on improving the quality of the public streetscape—including placing utility lines underground, installing decorative

streetlights, adding distinctive paving materials, and reconfiguring existing parking.



While other neighborhood commercial and Main Street districts might not be supported by existing business associations to initiate formation of a BID, Syracuse boasts a high number and great variety of NFPs that can act as such facilitators. For example, NEHDA could be instrumental in bringing business and property owners together in the North Salina Street Little Italy corridor to consider the formation of a BID. Similarly, they might assist a similar group along lower James Street for the same purpose. In other areas, the city TNT program might be the most viable mechanism for organizing business people and property owners interested in having a more direct impact on the quality of pedestrian-oriented business areas. All of these locations within Syracuse can adopt BID plans that will attract people to special commercial opportunities and social events traditionally associated with pedestrian-oriented commerce.

Market studies can be a primary tool for aiding such efforts. With preference and priority given to the local residential population rather than attracting people from outside city neighborhoods, these studies can help ensure business success due to the proximity of a convenient, stable and interested market. Local entrepreneurs often rely on instinct about market direction, and successfully invest in “home-grown” retail, including shops and restaurants, to serve the resident market. But developments in transportation and communication technologies have allowed economic ventures to be successful on a much broader scale, such as national or multinational corporations, which in turn can run counter to the economic structure





LEGEND

-  Proposed Business Improvement Districts
-  Potential Areas for Commercial Growth and Development

0.25 0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles
Map Source: Syracuse-Oswego County Planning Agency (2/99)



Faculty of Landscape Architecture

State University of New York
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Strategic Development

City of Syracuse Commercial Areas Plan

Urban Design Studio 2006



of pedestrian-oriented businesses. Carefully crafted BID market studies, however, can help achieve a good balance of and healthy competition between large and small business within a designated district. They also can aid in identifying businesses that contribute to and respect unique neighborhood identity and, on a slightly larger scale, Main Streets that appeal to a city-wide user base while remaining pedestrian-oriented, which means providing places to park while still ensuring district walkability.

Additionally an individual BID or a consortium of several BIDs in the city can establish an information warehouse containing data on demographics, business tenant mixes, existing commercial activity, and market forces, as well as standards for economic evaluations for existing and proposed business.

BIDs also can benefit from financial assistance programs such as the NYS Main Street Program, which is administered by the Division of Housing and Community Renewal and is intended to “strengthen the economic vitality of the State’s traditionally-designed central business districts.” The Syracuse Downtown BID received \$25,000 in 2002 from the program for revitalizing the Downtown cultural district; and in 2005 NEHDA was granted \$200,000 for building improvements in the North Salina Street Little Italy area, a strong candidate for BID status.

Cooperation is the key to successful implementation of any Main Street Program. In the Downtown Cultural District, a working group involving the Downtown Committee, FOCUS, and the city and country administrations has organized a design competition related to downtown signage. In Little Italy,

NEHDA administering Main Street funds for façade and streetscape improvements, requiring the combined efforts of NEHDA, business people, property owners, and city agencies.

Automobile-Oriented Typologies

With the advent of the automobile and continually increased private car use, commercial development in Syracuse for the better part of the 20th century was automobile-oriented, which was in stark contrast to the both the physical and economic character of its pedestrian-oriented businesses. The construction of highways as well as intra- and inter-urban arterials drew traffic away from Downtown and neighborhood corridors. Business of all types relocated along these new high volume often high-speed roads, following their employees, customers and clients in order to remain financially solvent, and as they moved out Downtown and neighborhood districts suffered.

The traditional Downtown businesses were began to be replaced by freestanding shopping centers, located at or beyond the city boundary and near but not within new suburban residential areas. Developed on large and spacious lots, often former farmland, the structures were set far back from the road with parking prominently in front, offering convenience to the driving rather than walking public and dramatically shifting the cultural focus from people to cars. Within a few decades “formula businesses” joined shopping centers in drawing more people and dollars from Syracuse’s traditional business areas.

These national chain businesses and their local franchises adopted standardized services, architecture and other features, making each example virtually identical to its counterpart in other communities, and



are known as Big Box or Formula Businesses for their physical appearance. Because these businesses were quick and efficient to build, had stable markets and could afford to offer the lowest prices and the broadest selections, the outlying municipalities encouraged this kind of development, sometimes by offering subsidies to national chains in the interest of stimulating the suburban economy. During the same period, commercial offices also found suburban locations increasingly more attractive than city sites due to their proximity to employees and clients and ability to accommodate large quantities of “free” parking.

Seeking to combat what appeared to be an ever-steady out-migration of businesses, Syracuse like other urban communities eventually began to seek ways of attracting these auto-oriented businesses into the city. Giving little thought to the walkability and density that distinguished its neighborhoods from the suburbs, nor the long-term economic costs associated with this kind of development, the city saw the slow erosion of its urban character and community identity with little certainty of realizing maximum economic revival through such auto-oriented development. Today Syracusans can point to several areas, such as the Highway Commercial Corridor found along Erie Boulevard East, that fall within the automobile-oriented business typology. These places clearly serve the community in terms of convenience and habit, but arguably do not contribute substantially enough to the local economy or positively impact the image of the city.

Other automobile-oriented business, such as individual suburban neighborhood commercial properties and isolated big box properties, provide needed goods and services. Unfortunately they also typically do not contribute to walkable

communities because of their standardized designs; but because they are built independently of other businesses could be made more compatible with their surroundings through well-developed and consistently applied design guidelines.

A number of studies evaluate the sales gains and jobs created by big box development in comparison to the costs generated. These studies consider the loss of existing businesses as well as demands on city infrastructure and services, such as road maintenance, police and fire, and find the costs often outweigh the benefits.

In Brarnstable, Massachusetts the economic costs of such commercial development had a significant impact on the city budget:

- Big Box Businesses have a net deficit of \$468 per 1,000 sq. ft.
- Shopping Centers have a net deficit of \$314 per 1,000 sq. ft.
- Fast Food Restaurants have a net deficit of \$5,168 per 1,000 sq. ft.
- Specialty Retail Stores have a net gain of \$326 per 1,000 sq. ft.

A study conducted in California considered the impact of national chain development on a State expenses and found of the \$86 million to provide workers with healthcare and other services each year, an average of \$2,100 is provided per Wal-Mart employee.

An Andersonville, Illinois study compared the local economic impacts of chain stores with locally operated businesses and found the latter generated 70% more local economic impact per sq. ft. than the chain stores. For every \$100 spent at locally owned businesses, \$68 is invested in the local economy, while only \$43 for every \$100 spent at a chain store is invested



locally. A similar study in mid-coast Maine found correlating data, and that the primary areas of investment by locally owned businesses were “wages and benefits paid to local employees; goods and services purchased from other local businesses; profits that accrued to local owners; and taxes paid to local and state government,” while most of the national retail investment is through wages.

These figures are consistent with a number of other studies in communities across the country, each showing an economic cost associated with large-scale auto-oriented development that exceeds the local investment generated by them. In Syracuse, therefore, this kind of development should not be aggressively pursued over more financially lucrative and physically more compatible business options.

Of all the automobile-oriented business types the Community Commercial Corridor and Regional Commercial Corridor can be the most important to the Syracuse economy and city image. These corridors have the potential to house businesses that support a substantial number of jobs, add considerably to the tax base, and generate spin-off dollars in the form of support businesses and services. They also are routes that carry substantial amounts of traffic and therefore contribute significantly to the physical and visual character of the community. Assisting businesses already located in these areas to remain and expand, and attracting preferred commercial entities to move to these corridors, must be a priority for the City. In addition, national chain stores and businesses do offer some benefits through their stable markets, low prices, broad selections, and acquired popular recognition by a large customer base through the use of media and branding.

The city therefore can consider attracting these businesses to strategic locations along community or regional commercial corridors.

These corridors can have a more positive effect on community economic dynamics if the City of Syracuse follows a strategy based on economic and community impact review; site location, assembly and preparation; incentive-investment agreements; and design controls.

Economic and Community Impact Review

The City can require a comprehensive economic and community impact review before approving any new suburban-scale, auto-oriented retail construction. Such a review will be required when the proposed development exceeds 50,000 square feet or that will generate more than 500 vehicle trips per day. In receive approval the proposed project must meet criteria outlined in the revised *Zoning Rules and Regulations* and other applicable ordinances. Criteria will include impact on the immediate commercial corridor, employment (jobs gained versus jobs lost), wages, tax revenue, roads and other public services, historic resources, air and water pollution, and traffic. The City also will require an economic and tax (property and sales) impact studies be conducted by independent consultants chosen by the City and paid for by a fee assessed on the developer. Following a public hearing to obtain comment from the community, the City Planning Commission will determines if the project's overall costs outweigh the benefits, and if so deny permits to proceed.

Site location, assembly and preparation

Given the vast amount of vacant land and number of vacant buildings in Syracuse, there is a great opportunity to assemble



Strategic Site Development



A Plan For Big Box Business

Seeking to combat the out-migration of businesses, Syracuse like other urban communities has sought ways of attracting auto-oriented businesses into the city. Today Syracusans can point to several areas, such as the Highway Commercial Corridor along Erie Boulevard East, that are examples of the automobile-oriented business typology.

These places clearly serve the community in terms of convenience and habit, but arguably do not substantially contribute to the local economy or positively impact the image of the city. They do not contribute to walkable communities because of their standardized designs; but could be made more compatible with their surroundings through well-developed and consistently applied design guidelines.

Nevertheless, national chain stores and businesses do offer some benefits through their stable markets, low prices, broad selections, and acquired popular recognition by a large customer base through the use of media and branding. The city therefore can consider attracting these businesses to strategic locations along community or regional commercial corridors.

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Existing Site Property Boundaries



Conceptual Site Plan

Economic Impact

A number of studies evaluate the sales gains and jobs created by big box development in comparison to the costs generated. These studies consider the loss of existing businesses, and demands on city infrastructure and services, such as road maintenance, police, and fire, and show an economic cost associated with large-scale auto-oriented development that exceeds the local investment generated by them.

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An Andersonville, Illinois a comparison of the amount of local economic investment by chain stores with locally operated businesses:

- For every \$100 spent at locally owned businesses, \$68 is invested locally, through wages and benefits paid to local employees; goods and services purchased from other local businesses; profits that accrued to local owners; and taxes paid to local and state government
- For every \$100 spent at a chain store, \$43 is invested in the local economy, primarily through wages

In Syracuse, therefore, this kind of development should not be aggressively pursued over more financially lucrative and physically more compatible business options.

Site Location, Assembly And Preparation

There is an opportunity for the City to assemble vacant and tax delinquent parcels large enough to attract preferred auto-oriented development, and to create parcels in locations considered most appropriate for these types of uses. Through the actions of a local landbanking authority, the City can effectively reduce property acquisition and site preparation costs for larger commercial projects that conform to city policies and goals.



Existing Sears Store at Mid-Block



Existing Sears Store



Existing Sears Store and Adjacent Lot

Site Location, Assembly And Preparation

To best utilize landbanking the City must:

- Identify businesses appropriate for and beneficial to city economic dynamics.
- Identify preferred locations for such development
- Assemble high-priority development sites
- Market availability of high-priority sites through requests-for-proposals

Incentive-investment Agreements

Auto-oriented businesses, particularly national chains and corporate franchises, provide limited direct economic benefit to the community. The City can be more judicious with its tax incentives by linking them directly to required community investment, such as:

- Funds for training local residents
- Physical improvements in near-by traditional business properties
- Support local schools through scholarship monies
- Funds for public infrastructure to improve and maintain sidewalks and public parks
- Support local businesses and services where possible

Design Controls

The revision to the Zoning Rules and Regulations will include processes for more comprehensive review of development proposals throughout the city. As part of the necessary modifications, provisions for capping all large scale building construction for retail purposes, and/or those associated with national chains and formula businesses, must be included. In addition, design guidelines specific to auto-oriented commercial development will provide advice to both project sponsors and city staff; these guidelines will seek to minimize the proliferation of corporate trademarks and logos, standardized design, and excessive parking particularly along community and regional commercial corridors.



Proposed Adaptive Reuse and New Construction



Proposed Adaptive Reuse and New Construction



Proposed Infill Character



parcels large enough to attract preferred suburban-style, auto-oriented development. Because many of these properties also are tax delinquent, the City has the opportunity to create parcels in locations considered most appropriate for these types of uses. Through the actions of a local landbanking authority, as recommended in the *Housing Component* of the Comprehensive Plan, the City can effectively reduce property acquisition and site preparation costs for larger commercial projects that conform to city policies and goals.

To best utilize landbanking for these purposes, the City must:

- Identify businesses appropriate for and beneficial to city economic dynamics.
- Identify preferred locations for such development
- Assemble high-priority development sites
- Market availability of high-priority sites through requests-for-proposals

Incentive-Investment Agreements

Current incentive packages for auto-oriented business types most often include a variety of tax breaks, including Payment-In lieu- of-Tax (PILOT) agreements for property tax relief. Because these businesses, particularly those associated with national chains and corporate franchises, provide limited direct economic benefit to the community, the City can be more judicious with its incentives by linking them directly to required community investment by the involved businesses.

The amount and/or term of incentives can be determined based on the developer's agreement to provide specific incentives to the community; for example:

- Funds for training local residents
- Physical improvements in near-by traditional business properties
- Support local schools through scholarship monies
- Funds for public infrastructure to improve and maintain sidewalks and public parks
- Support local businesses and services where possible

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Business Cluster Typologies

Clusters are groups of private companies, government agencies, institutions and not-for-profit organizations with similar mutual goals that collaborate to grow their businesses in a faster manner, with better quality, and through innovation. This cooperative association assists in addressing practical issues like physical infrastructure, employee training and procurement of goods and services, and is recognized as one of the most prudent and strategic options for successfully



INDUSTRY CLUSTER



In order for Syracuse to become a regional center for "new industry," the city must be proactive in pursuing these businesses and developing incentives specific to them. The principal recommendation is for City to establish a New Industries Development unit.

Within the existing Office of Economic Development, the City can create a staff dedicated solely to fostering new industry development in Syracuse. Drawing on both current staff people and new hires, the city administration can concentrate its efforts on identifying those new industries most compatible with community resources. In particular, such staff can identify the most appropriate locations for such development and then generate plans to guide the evolution of these places into multi-layered new industry clusters.

The Office of New Industries Development will Aggressively Market Programs and Incentives Programs and Incentives Examples such as:

- Empire State Venture Group Inc. (ESVG)
- New York State Science (Gen*NY*sis Program)
- Small Business Environmental Ombudsman (SBE) Program
- Small Business Technology Investment Fund (SBTIF)
- Manufacturing Extension Program (MEP) & Industrial Effectiveness Grants (IEG)
- Green Building Tax Credit (GBTC)
- Investment Tax Credit (ITC)
- Research and Development Tax Credit

The city's greatest opportunity for economic gain in cluster development relates to "new industry" clusters including green technology, biomedical technology, nanotechnology, and hi-tech companies. New York State has taken the lead to promote and encourage this sort of development by offering a number of incentives that support these business types and, more importantly, clusters of these businesses.

An inaugural venture for the New Industries staff will maximize the impacts of the Syracuse Center of Excellence for Environmental and Energy Systems. The area immediately contiguous to the Center site is ideal as a business cluster related to advancing technologies for the environmental sciences and related disciplines. Its close proximity to Syracuse University and the SUNY-College of Environmental Science & Forestry, and its short distance from the community's principal hospitals, it that much more appealing for this purpose.

The surrounding blocks, comprised of a number of vacant and/or underutilized properties, can be assembled into parcels of various sizes, which in turn will accommodate a wide range of businesses and research facilities. New construction can and should occur incrementally to ensure optimum functional associations and overall physical development. An emphasis on "green design," high quality public open spaces, and efficient shared parking facilities will make such a cluster an excellent model for similar development elsewhere in the city.



Land Conclusion for Hi-tech Campus

LEGEND

- * Key land for Hi-tech Campus
- Existing parking areas
- Property to be assembled by the city
- Existing buildings to be maintained

North Scale: 1" = 200'



Site of the Center of Excellence

Business Clusters

Site Characteristics

- Lot size varies, but generally larger
- 50-75% lot coverage
- Pedestrian oriented
- Common parking
- Parking configurations vary

Use Characteristics

- Hi-tech, bio-medical, nano-technology
- Laboratories and research facilities

Building Characteristics

- 2-8 storeys buildings
- Pedestrian oriented buildings
- Incorporate 'Green' design

Locational Characteristics

- Location Varies
- Generally distinguishable from surrounding environment



Conceptual Master Plan

North Scale: 1" = 125'

LEGEND

- New Buildings
- Open Space, Pedestrian
- Proposed Parking
- Existing Buildings
- Center of Excellence Site



Proposed Center of Excellence



negotiating today's increasingly competitive market place. Working together for mutual growth helps individual but related businesses and organizations overcome scale and capability limitations inherent in operating a single enterprise, and facilitates new ideas and ways of functioning.

Municipalities can benefit from such business clusters. Employment growth and job retention, increased investment, and enhanced domestic and export performance are positive economic spin-offs for a community from this collaborative approach. Many business clusters deal with exciting technology and in turn attract a bright, creative and highly educated class of people—and intellectual capital—to a community. Clusters also tend to support high paying jobs, giving a city such as Syracuse a competitive advantage in retaining young college graduates as residents and building a self-sustaining environment with strong economic activity. Syracuse can realize these benefits by planning for and facilitating establishment of clusters for specific business types, and by offering involved enterprises both financial and technical support. A large range of public incentives will encourage business formation and start-up, operational sustainability and strategic expansion.

One such cluster already exists in the city, that for automotive businesses. The best developed of this type is located along the West Genesee Street corridor and is known as Automobile Row. The result largely of market forces, this cluster attracts customers on a regional level and concentrates automotive sales and repair in a single area. However, in order to maximize the economic benefits of this cluster the city must implement policies and programs that guide its physical expansion without negatively affecting the

adjacent residential neighborhoods. Designating a specific district boundary will add to the city's sustainability and aesthetics, prevent the sprawl of dealerships and unsightly automotive shops, while allowing for increased local competition.

The city's greatest opportunity for economic gain in cluster development relates to "new industry" clusters including green technology, biomedical technology, nanotechnology, and hi-tech companies. New York State has taken the lead to promote and encourage this sort of development by offering a number of incentives that support these business types and, more importantly, clusters of these businesses. Facilities across the State, many in Syracuse, are home to top international medical and technology researchers. With the State's visionary strategy for leveraging both public and private sector funds, the stage has been set for future growth in "new industry" clusters.

New York State has committed to and realized considerable biomedical industry growth and committed to expand businesses and create new high technology and biotechnology opportunities. New York State's high technology sector is distinguished by mixed industry-academia partnerships, access to venture capital, a highly educated work force, and training resources that nurture and develop industry leaders. It ranks second in the nation in nanotechnology research and fourth in overall development of nanotechnology. New York is continually gaining more high-tech companies and venture capital dollars to support them.

In order for Syracuse to become a regional center for "new industry," the city must be proactive in pursuing these



businesses and developing incentives specific to them. The principal recommendation is for City to establish a New Industries Development unit.

Office of New Industries Development

Within the existing Department of Economic Development, the City can create a staff dedicated solely to fostering new industry development in Syracuse. Drawing on both current staff people and new hires, the city administration can concentrate its efforts on identifying those new industries most compatible with community resources. In particular, such staff can identify the most appropriate locations for such development and then generate plans to guide the evolution of these places into multi-layered new industry clusters.

Once preferred new industries and suitable sites for them are identified, staff can develop a marketing plan promoting such development in the community. The central feature of such a program will be available economic incentives; including:

- New York State Financial Incentives—The State offers a range of incentives regarding commercial site location, new facility construction, existing facility expansion or modernizing existing operations for manufacturers, service providers, warehouse and distributors, and research and development companies. Financial assistance for acquisition of land and buildings, machinery and equipment, construction or renovation of buildings, construction or improvement of infrastructure, employee training, expanding your company's export opportunities, and productivity enhancement is available as direct
- loans and/or grants, interest rate subsidies by a grant or linked deposit with the lending institution to help reduce the cost of borrowing from private financial institutions, loans and grants for working capital assistance in specialized situations, and infrastructure assistance in the form of a loan and grant combination for a portion of the cost of the infrastructure project.
- Center for Economic Growth (CEG)—The CEG develops and promotes efforts to attract high-tech talent and companies and to provide innovative services to bolster local businesses. Financial support can come from the NYS Office of Science, Technology and Academic Research (NYSTAR), National Institute of Standards Technology (NIST), Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP); the latter assists local manufacturing and technology companies with generating new sales, creating stronger operational infrastructure and overcoming barriers to growth.
- Empire State Venture Group, Inc. (ESVG)—The ESGV, and the affiliated Upstate Venture Association of New York, seeks emerging technology-related companies based in New York. The organization focuses on advocacy, education and events.
- New York State Science (Gen*NY*sis Program)—The Gen*NY*sis program focuses on all stages of life sciences research and development process, from research to final product. It



- encourages collaboration between public and private research institutions with emerging as well as established companies.
- Small Business Environmental Ombudsman (SBEO) program—The SBEO program provides a wide range of compliance assistance services including regulatory assistance to determine which permits or registrations a business may need and when to obtain them; and can refer companies to an extensive network of small business assistance programs that provide technical services at the local, state and federal levels.
 - “The Smart Start Venture Forum”—The Smart Start Venture Forum helps forge connections between burgeoning high tech companies and investors from throughout New York State and the Northeast, from New England to Virginia. To date, 20 of 55 presenters have received funding through their participation in the event.
 - Environmental Services Unit (ESU)—The ESU offers financial assistance for research, development and demonstration projects that lead to measurable pollution prevention and economic development outcomes. Research, Development and Demonstration (RD&D) contracts are limited to and not-for-profit organizations and small and medium-sized New York State businesses that earn less than \$10 million in gross annual sales, for projects in which a New York State firm demonstrates a commitment and ability to directly implement the project results.
 - Small Business Technology Investment Fund (SBTIF)—The SBTIF provides start-up funds for high-tech companies to promote job creation and economic growth. The Fund makes early stage equity investments in companies that have developed innovative technology products or services and that display significant competitive advantage. It also offers technical and managerial services. The Fund has invested in software, biotechnology, electronics, telecommunications, optics and materials science, concentrating its efforts in many areas of the State.
 - Manufacturing Extension Program (MEP) & Industrial Effectiveness Grants (IEG)—The MEP provides assistance in identifying, developing and implementing improved management and production processes, expanding market share and promoting job growth to small and medium companies or groups. It is run through Technology Development Organizations (TDOs), which are field forces of engineers that assist individual businesses and groups of firms. IEGs are awarded to companies have demonstrated need, willingness to share costs and contribute resources, involvement of employees, and commitment to self-improvement.
 - Build Now-NY Program—Build Now-NY, a competitive grant program that helps local community job growth, has distributed just over \$4 million to



- help local communities pay for professional services related to engineering studies, environmental assessments, and legal support.
- **Green Building Tax Credit (GBTC)**—Businesses that meet certain building and environmental standards receive a tax credit based on a compliance with energy efficiency (building and equipment), commissioning, construction materials, water conservation, refrigerants and certain standards and management plans.
 - **Investment Tax Credit (ITC)**—Business that create new jobs and make new investments in production, property and equipment qualify for tax credits of up to 10% of their eligible investment. New businesses may elect to receive a refund of certain credits, and all unused credits can be carried forward for 15 years.
 - **Research and Development Tax Credit**—Businesses that investment in research and development facilities can become eligible for a 9% corporate tax credit. Additional credits are available to encourage the creation and expansion of emerging technology businesses, including a three-year job creation credit of \$1,000 per employee and a capital credit for investments in emerging technologies.
 - **Sales Tax Exemptions**—Business purchases of production machinery and equipment, research and development property, and fuels/utilities used in manufacturing and R&D can receive exemptions from New York State.
 - **Real Property Tax Abatement**—Businesses can apply for a 10 year property tax abatement to offset increased assessments due to improvements to business and commercial property, which encourages development, expansion and improvement of such property.
 - **Economic Development Zone/Empire Zone Tax Credits**—The State has designated 72 zones, including one in Syracuse, which offer a host of benefits including discounts on electricity, enhanced tax credits for investment and job creation, and additional sales and property tax exemptions.
 - **Brownfield Cleanup Program**—Business can obtain tax credits for the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites, with credits enhanced in designated Environmental Zones (En-Zones) which are limited to those census tracts with a poverty rate of at least 20% according to the 2000 Census, and an unemployment rate of at least 125% the New York State average, or a poverty rate of at least double the rate for the county in which the tract is located.
 - **City-wide Commitment to Visionary and Regional Economic Development**—This program assists local manufacturing and technology companies in generating new sales, creating stronger operational infrastructure



and overcoming barriers to growth. It can help market data pertinent to new industries, such as the high number of universities, colleges and hospitals in the city.

- **Energy Savings**—The State and the electric and gas utilities offer a variety of energy cost saving programs that help businesses reduce costs, preserve and create jobs, and boost economic growth.
- **Power for Jobs programs**—The provides 450 megawatts of low cost electricity to businesses that remain and expand in the State; and since 1997 has helped to create and retain over 300,000 jobs at over 450 businesses. After a company fulfills its requirements it receives energy cost savings that range from 10 to 25% depending on usage and local utility delivery charges.

NYSERDA—The State offers technical services and capital financing to help businesses identify and implement cost-effective, energy-efficient measures including engineering feasibility studies, technical training on energy efficient technologies, and engineering support for the energy-related technical assistance. Capital financing programs also are available to industrial, commercial, not-for-profit and private institutions.

The city New Industries staff can highlight its successes through award programs, which lend the municipality credibility within the field of emerging technology. In return such recognition will help attract additional new businesses

and create more economic opportunities. Programs such as the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation - Environmental Excellence Awards can recognize city as an environmental and conservation leader working to solve environmental challenges by using innovative and environmentally sustainable practices or creative partnerships.

An inaugural venture for the New Industries staff will maximize the impacts of the Syracuse Center of Excellence for Environmental and Energy Systems. Even before construction has begun, this proposed project has generated substantial interest from research facilities and for-profit businesses, making the area immediately contiguous to the Center ideal as a business cluster related to advancing technologies for the environmental sciences and related disciplines.

Its close proximity to Syracuse University and the SUNY-College of Environmental Science & Forestry makes the area that much more appealing for this purpose. Similarly, its short distance from the community's principal hospitals also will make appealing to human health related enterprises related to the cluster's other new industries.

The blocks surrounding the Center are comprised of a number of vacant and/or underutilized properties, including Kennedy Square. The vast majority of these properties can be assembled into parcels of various sizes, which in turn will accommodate a wide range of businesses and research facilities. New construction can and should occur incrementally to ensure optimum functional associations and overall physical development. Even in its initial stages of development, the new industry cluster can be used by the



New Industries staff as a model for other business cluster in Syracuse.

City-wide Programs

In addition to the primary recommendation to target preferred business typologies, the City of Syracuse must continue to provide a wide variety of programs and incentives, both existing and recommended, to stimulate business investment. New development mechanisms need not be specific to any particular typology, but rather can be made available across the city; two such programs include a business revitalization foundation and commercial rent regulation.

Business Revitalization Foundation

A business revitalization foundation is a mechanism that assists developers through gap financing incentives for the renovation of older commercial structures. These foundations are created through a large initial investment and then sustained by interest earned on the principal. Although municipal governments initiate these foundations, they are run as not-for-profit organizations independent of the city, allowing them to localize efforts and have a greater positive impact without being bound by political implications. Business revitalization foundations have been successful in a number of US cities, such as Madison, Wisconsin and with its Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation and Syracuse with its Syracuse Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO).

Much like SEDCO, a new business revitalization foundation for Syracuse can be initiated by the City of Syracuse and committed to stimulating façade and streetscape improvements, undertaking planning, and obtaining consulting services. But unlike SEDCO, however, the new not-for-profit organization can

have far more independence from any sitting city administration. Nevertheless, the City must be instrumental in generating start-up capital for the foundation, with a target minimum of \$10 million. Funds held in an interest bearing account can be distributed by the foundation board of directors, which is responsible for establishing policies and programs to meet defined goals.

Rent Regulation

Currently rent regulations are intended primarily to protect residential tenants in privately-owned buildings from illegal rent increases but at the same time allow owners to maintain their buildings and realize a reasonable profit. These controls, governed by several State laws and administered by local municipalities, can be used as models for commercial rent control and be a catalyst for business investment in both revitalized and neglected areas of the city. Such a program will target rents carried by business owners, with the goal of maintaining low cost and stable rents particularly for start-up and low margin businesses. Much like with residential rent control, these businesses will be protected from extreme rent increases or eviction in commercial areas that ultimately experience rapid and positive economic change.

Rent regulations will be administered jointly by the City through the Office of Zoning Administration and Division of Code Enforcement. Participating properties will receive a specific zoning overlay classification designating them as a rent regulated. This designation will ensure that rental fees for business tenants are either at a fixed rate or based on a set percentage of business-generated revenues. Rent increases only can occur if there are increased costs to maintain the building.



Conclusion



CONCLUSION

Noted author and urban theorist, Jane Jacobs, defined a city as “a settlement that consistently generates its economic growth from its own local economy,” and a stagnant city as “a settlement that formerly grew as a city, but has stopped doing so”

In her seminal book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jacobs wrote that:

...big cities are natural generators of diversity and prolific incubators of new enterprises and ideas of all kinds. Moreover, big cities are the natural economic homes of immense numbers and ranges of small enterprises....

Characteristically, the larger a city, the greater the variety of its [businesses], and also the greater both the number and the proportion of its small [businesses]. The reasons for this are that big enterprises have greater self-sufficiency than small ones, are able to maintain within themselves most of the skills and equipment they need...and can sell to a broad market which they can seek out wherever it may be.... [F]or small [businesses, it] is reversed. Typically they must draw on many and varied supplies and skills outside themselves, they must serve a narrow market at the point where a market exists, and they must be sensitive to quick changes in the market. Without cities, they would simply not exist. Dependent on a huge diversity of other city enterprises, they can add further to that diversity. This last is an important point to remember....

Smallness and diversity, to be sure, are not synonyms. The diversity of city enterprises includes all degrees of size, but great variety does mean a high proportion of small elements. A lively city scene is lively largely by virtue of its enormous collection of small [businesses]....

Nor is the diversity that is important for city districts by any means confined to profit-making enterprises and to retail commerce [but][c]ommercial diversity is, in itself, immensely important for cities, socially as well as economically.... But more than this, wherever we find a city district with an exuberant variety and plenty in its commerce, we are apt to find that it contains a good many other kinds of diversity as well...”

In the past 20 years, many constituencies have worked to reestablish such a diverse economy for Syracuse, hoping to draw on its heritage as well as reach out to new markets. Although these efforts vary from independent ventures to cooperative undertakings, successes have been realized as Syracuse has been ranked:

- First in the northeast and 14 overall in the top 25 cities nationally for doing business in America [*Inc. Magazine*]
- Sixth in the top 100 American metropolitan areas to do business in [*Regional Financial Associates*]
- First in the top 15 of 124 metropolitan areas for increase median sale price of existing houses



- First in the top 10 cities nationally for Internet penetration [*Scarborough Research*]
- In the top 50 cities nationally for business expansion and relocation [*Expansion Management* magazine]

The commercial enterprises that contribute to these standings are many and varied. Some are individual businesses, often isolated from other commercial properties; others are integrated—financially and physically—within distinctive areas; and still others are along principal vehicular routes throughout the city.

It has been and continues to be a richly diverse economy that will enable Syracuse to realize a true financial resurgence. Companies with a long history in Syracuse, others that have relocated here, and those whose entrepreneurial vision has yet to take root, can and will find Syracuse an excellent place to do business. As Jacobs wrote, the city will be a lively place, and one that exhibits substantial diversity.

Adoption and implementation of the Commercial Areas Component of the Comprehensive Plan will call attention to this unique role the city plays in the regional economy.



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Appendix



APPENDIX A

APPLICATION FOR SITE PLAN REVIEW

Syracuse Zoning Administration

City Hall Commons * Room 211 * 201 E. Washington Street * Syracuse, NY 13202-1416 * 315-448-8640

For Office Use: Filing Date

Case Number

Please PRINT or TYPE Information

This APPLICATION is for:

☐ New Construction of (please describe building project and use) _____

☐ New Addition to (please describe existing and proposed building and use) _____

☐ Exterior Renovation of (please describe existing and proposed building and use) _____

☐ Demolition (please state reason for demolition and describe plan for reclamation) _____

SUBJECT PROPERTY ADDRESS(ES)

PROPERTY OWNER

Name: _____ Phone (__) _____ /e-mail _____

Address: _____ City/Town: _____

Zip Code: _____

REPRESENTATIVE /ADDITIONAL CONTACT: Attorney, Landscape Architect, Architect, Contractor, Other

Name: _____ Phone () _____

Address: _____ City/Town: _____

Zip Code: _____

CONTIGUOUS PROPERTY OWNERS

Property Address Owner's Name Owner's Mailing Address

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

PROPOSAL



Please attach a summary of the work scope outlining major elements of the project, reason for site selection, and estimated cost and time for completion.

MATERIALS NEEDED FROM APPLICANT

(Before an application can be considered complete, the following must be provided:)

- APPLICATION (completed and signed by property owner)
- PROPERTY SURVEY (Drawn to scale and stamped by a licensed surveyor)
- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING (drawn to scale):
 - SITE PLAN
 - PLANTING PLAN
 - GRADING PLAN
- ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS (Drawn to scale):
 - Floor plans
 - Exterior Elevations
 - Sections
 - Buildings Materials
 - Specifications
- PHOTOGRAPHS (COLOR 35mm or digital) of existing structure or project site
- PHOTOGRAPHS (COLOR 35mm or digital) of existing streetscape including properties adjacent to, and across the street from, project site.
- PHOTOGRAPHS keyed to MAP
- VICINITY MAP (showing context of site and its surrounding one block radius or a minimum of 1500 feet from perimeter of site).
- EXTERIOR SIGNAGE DRAWINGS (Showing proposed location and dimensions of **ALL** exterior signage)
- STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT form (short form unless otherwise specified, completed and signed)
- OTHER as applicable (For demolitions, post demolition plan is required; specifications may be required for certain projects)_____

SIGNATURE_____

Property Owner:_____Date:_____

*******(Staff Use Only)*******

REFERRAL NEEDED

- ☐ ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
- ☐ CITY DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
- ☐ SYRACUSE PARKING AUTHORITY



APPENDIX B

Design Guidelines

Building Height, Width and Mass

Providing guidance regarding the proportions of buildings in relation to their context is important because compatibility of scale and mass can maintain consistent density and support efficiency, which are desirable characteristics within a city.

Objective: Use scale, mass and rhythm of buildings to retain a strongly defined pedestrian streetscape.

Standards

Overall-

- Commercial building heights will be no more than two stories taller or one story shorter than adjacent buildings.
- First floor heights will match those of adjacent buildings, and generally be 13-15 feet with upper stories ranging from 12-14 feet.

Guidelines

New Construction-

- Upper story setbacks can be used as an effective means to accentuate building heights, reduce apparent building mass, and provide additional roof-top open space.
- Buildings should abut adjacent architecture to maintain enclosure and rhythm of the streetscape.

Not Recommended

- Single story commercial properties should not be used where context is predominantly multi-story.
- Buildings should not occupy less than the entire length of street frontage.

Setbacks

A generally consistent frontage along the street is important to the urban experience and pedestrian environment, as well as to overall organizational patterns within the city fabric.

Objective: Maintain setbacks that encourage social interaction and support commercial activity.

Standards

Overall-

- Setbacks will be consistent with those of contiguous properties, but in no case exceed 10% of distance from sidewalk to façade on neighboring properties.

Guidelines

New Construction-

- Where additional setback occurs, the building frontage established by neighboring buildings should be continued through the use of visual elements such as decorative fencing, planters, outdoor seating, etc.



Not Recommended

- Setbacks

Fenestration

The exterior architectural detail of a single building can impact the larger context by its physical proximity and visual character. The arrangement of solids to voids on building walls, the degree to which there are projections or recesses, and the incorporation of detail or ornamentations must be carefully considered. Equally important are the treatments along the first or ground floor, as physical and visual connections between the public realm and building interior are integral to safe, comfortable city streets.

Objective: Provide patterns and compositions that create attractive buildings and are positive additions to overall area character.

Standards

Overall-

- Facades will have a minimum of 65% transparency for retail purposes on the first floor of the front facade.
- A minimum of 50% transparency is required for other floors of the front facade.
- A minimum of 40% transparency is required for all other facades.
- Building widths will be partitioned into bay sections to continue rhythm of mixed-use commercial development.
- Walls with no fenestration or lacking architectural detail is not permitted.
- Projections, recesses, architectural details and other materials will be used to add visual interest.
- First floor fenestration will have strong visual connections through the use of large windows and doors.

Guidelines

New Construction-

- Door and window features should be compatible with those of surrounding buildings.
- Horizontal and vertical architectural features of adjacent buildings should be continued in façade when able.
- Original doors and windows in historic buildings including the opening size and shape as well as the units should be retained.
- False windows and doors should be used to provide interest and detail when operable doors and windows are not possible.
- A majority of first floor windows should be reserved for display of merchandise.

Rehabilitation-

- In-fill of existing windows and doors is not recommended and when used, fill should be recessed.
- Maintain original openings in existing buildings.

Not Recommended



- Existing openings should not be obscured with permanent or temporary elements such as advertisements, air conditioning units, etc.
- Tinted or highly reflective glass should not be used.

Roofs and Parapets

The construction of roofs and parapets should reflect consistency in form and material selection, while highlighting traditional design elements.

Objective: Create attractive rooflines that compliment neighboring buildings and create a cohesive commercial district.

Standards

Overall-

- Roof top service equipment will be set back from the building roof edge to prevent visibility from the street.

New Construction-

- Roof forms and slopes for new buildings will be consistent with those of adjacent properties.
- When visible from street, roof materials will be consistent with those of adjacent properties.

Rehabilitation-

- Addition of new roof top features, such as dormers or skylights, will not be visible from within the commercial area.
- Existing roof slopes will be retained.

Guidelines

Overall-

- Architectural detail, materials and finishes should be used to articulate parapets and roof edges.
- Alternative uses for roof tops such as patios and decks should be considered.

Not Recommended

- Distinctive roof features should not be eliminated through construction of additional floors on existing buildings.

Materials and Detailing

Buildings that compliment rather than sharply contrast with one another result in a cohesive, although not uniform, image and therefore can enhance rather than detract from the urban experience. Texture, color, and architectural features can be used to strengthen overall aesthetic quality while still allowing for distinctive individual properties.

Objective: Ensure high quality architectural character through the creative use of building materials and detailing.

Standards

Overall-



- Concrete masonry units are prohibited on any facade visible from the street.
- Painting previously unpainted masonry is prohibited.
- Aluminum, vinyl or fiberglass siding is prohibited on facades visible from streetfront.
- Using artificial materials to mimic traditional materials is prohibited.
- Color will be used to highlight architectural features and ornamentation, such as cornices, trim, windows, doors and storefronts.
- Materials will be consistent with adjacent architecture.

New Construction-

- The number and type of materials used for building elevations will correspond with those of neighboring buildings.
- Highly reflective materials, such as metal panels or opaque glass, will be used to accent features rather than as principal materials.

Rehabilitation-

- Materials and architectural features significant to the original building design will be retained, such as wood bulkheads in 19th century storefronts and aluminum decoration on 1930s buildings.
- Building rehabilitation will restore preferable architectural details such as cornices and masonry work.

Guidelines

Overall-

- Materials in traditional unit shapes and sizes should be given priority for new construction.
- Accent materials should be used to provide interest, primarily on the first floor and at building entries.
- Materials and colors should be used in patterns complimentary of overall composition.

Rehabilitation-

- High quality materials and distinguishing features, such as door and window trim or ornamentation, should remain visible on existing buildings.

Not Recommended

- Harsh or glaring colors, such as florescent hues should not be used.
- Excessively complex patterns of textures and color should not be used.

Franchise Design

The sense of place generated by preferred districts is important to both the identity of that area and the overall image of the city. Standard corporate designs that intentionally have no stylistic relationship to any locality generally lack pedestrian orientation and discourage walkability, and therefore must be sufficiently adapted to respect the character of such areas.

Objective: To ensure context-sensitive adaptations of franchise designs.

Standards



Overall-

- Site development will prioritize pedestrian circulation and orientation over car use.
- Building shape, scale and placement on the lot will be consistent with dominant patterns in commercial area.
- Corporate logos, colors or other characteristics will be limited to signage.
- Drive-thrus will be located in the rear and resulting vehicular circulation will be separate from pedestrian circulation.

Guidelines

Overall-

- Use of existing buildings adapted for franchises is encouraged.

Not Recommended

- Franchises should not use trademarked or generic building designs.
- Excessive signage should not be used.
- Multiple vehicular entries/exits to site should not exist.

Parking

Parking is a necessary part of a functioning city, but all too often the creation and maintenance of parking facilities occurs unchecked due to a lack of sound design guidelines. The result is an uncoordinated and auto-dominated landscape, which unfortunately detracts greatly from urban fabric and character.

Objective: Provide safe, attractive and convenient parking facilities.

Standard:

- All surface parking will meet standards dictated by the Parking Ordinance.
- Corner lots on intersections will not be developed as surface parking.
- Parking ratios will be defined by business typology.
- Five-foot buffers will be present between the lot and the street.

Guideline:

New Construction/Rehabilitation:

- Lot configuration should accommodate parking behind buildings, unless prohibited by property size and configuration.
- Lot paving should include materials other than asphalt and concrete.
- Parking garages should incorporate retail space at the street level.
- Parking garages should be constructed so as to complement the character of adjacent buildings.

Not Recommended:

- Parking lots should not be contiguous with the street.
- Parking lot sizes should not be based on maximum use.



Streetscape and Landscape

The quality of the streetscape impacts not only the municipal right-of-way, but also the abutting private properties; therefore streetscape elements throughout specific commercial areas must be uniform or complimentary in character to promote an identifiable sense of place. Private landscapes are viewed as part of the larger public realm and thus must be designed to screen or enhance views as necessary.

Objective: Provide an attractive, functional and safe pedestrian environment.

Standards

Overall-

- Ground floor commercial uses will have entries to the street.
- Primary building entries will be located on the main building façade fronting on the street.

Guidelines

Overall-

- Transitions between indoor and outdoor spaces, such as outdoor dining areas and merchandise displays, should be incorporated.
- Site furnishings, such as benches, trash receptacles, fencing, bike racks, lighting and trash enclosures, should compliment building design, materials and color.
- Landscape treatments should enhance pedestrian experience and not provide usual or physical barriers between a property and abutting sidewalks.
- Plant materials should be selected to achieve environmental sustainability as well as improve aesthetics.
- Walkways on private property should make use of paving materials other than concrete and should be complimentary of architecture.

Not Recommended

- Invasive plant materials should not be used.
- Raised or sunken plazas should not abut public sidewalks.

Accessibility

A community that ensures universal access to and within both public and private properties is one committed to all members of the community. Policies supporting such access can incorporate design creativity and also meet mandatory requirements.

Objective: Provide accessibility consistent with the character of the commercial area.

Standards

Overall-

- All accessibility requirements will be met.

Guidelines

Overall-

- Accessibility should be considered comprehensively for each property.
- Appropriate screening should be used to minimize visibility of accessibility features that are unavoidably incongruous with the surrounding context.



Not Recommended

- Accessibility provisions should not be separated from main entries.

Lighting

Illumination can be an effective means for drawing attention to window displays, signs, store information and architectural details, as well as creating a safe inviting environment for customers. Careful selection of light fixtures and illumination levels can contribute to rather than detract from an area's physical character and social ambiance.

Objective: Provide appealing nighttime character.

Standards

Overall-

- Lighting will not encroach on neighboring properties.
- Lighting will not be permanently affixed to or aimed at trees or other landscape elements.

Guidelines

Overall-

- Lighting should be used to create a sense of security for pedestrians.
- Illumination should be incorporated into sign design.

Not Recommended

- High-wattage flood lighting should not be used.

Signage

Signs, considered essential to business success, can be some of the most dominant features in commercial areas, and consequently can have an impact far beyond the limits of a single property. Sensible yet creative use of materials, coloration and graphic design can dramatically improve the visual appearance of a business and lend character to the larger area, district and create an inviting environment for customers.

Objective: Design signs to attract attention to commercial properties while complimenting building architecture and neighboring properties.

Standards

Overall-

- Signage will meet requirements dictated in the Signage Ordinance.
- Neon signs are permitted, but will not consume more than 1/3 of the glazed window surface.
- Permanently painted window signs will not consume more than 1/3 of the glazed window surface.
- Lettering styles will be simple and easy to read, consuming no more than 75% of the total sign area.
- Projecting signs will be no less than 10 feet from ground level.
- Signage will not obstruct façade design details.



Guidelines

Overall-

- Signs should be durable and easy to maintain.
- Signs should be constructed from natural materials such as metal or wood.
- A maximum of two lettering styles should be used.
- Signs should be constructed in a simple shape to convey their message clearly.
- All signs should align with neighboring commercial signage.
- Signs should be confined to one floor above street level.

Rehabilitation-

- “Ghost signs” should be preserved and rehabilitated.

Not Recommended

- Animated signage should not be used.
- Excessive signage should be avoided.
- Permanent paper signs should not be attached to display windows.

Awnings

Awnings are an effective means for improving energy efficiency in buildings and providing sun protection and shelter for pedestrians. Through careful design, awnings can also effectively advertise businesses, unify a streetscape, and accent a building’s architecture, thereby enhancing the character of both a building and its district.

Objective: Accent architecture and district character with form and color along first floors.

Standards

Overall-

- Awnings will not extend across multiple storefronts.
- Awnings will not be internally lit.

Guidelines

Overall-

- Awnings should extend far enough to provide shelter and shade to pedestrians.
- Size and scale should be appropriate to the size and proportions of the building.
- Awnings should have a shape and color that compliments the architecture.
- Awnings should be constructed of weather resistant material.

Not Recommended

- Awnings should not cover architectural details.

Access

An inviting entry is a necessary component to a successful commercial property. Proper design of vehicular access routes as well as pedestrian entrances increases the functionality of a property. A safe and inviting appearance contributes to new and continued commercial use.



Objective: Accommodate safe and efficient vehicular access while emphasizing the pedestrian environment.

Standard

Overall-

- Front doors will be primarily glass to provide views into the building.
- Primary entries will be located at grade and on the principally street-facing building façade.
- Long façades and large buildings will incorporate multiple entry points.
- Service entries will be concealed from the streetscape by screening.

Guidelines

Overall-

- Building entrances should be well marked and visually appealing.
- Rear entrances should be marked by signage and easily recognized.
- Doors should be compatible with architecture in shape, size and style.
- Entrances should provide protection from the elements through use of awnings, roof overhangs and arcades.

Not Recommended

- Residential style doors should not be used.
- Doors of reflective or opaque glass should not be used.
- Merchandise should not block doors.

Security Grilles

While building security is a primary concern for business owners, the use of contemporary exterior devices such as security grilles can detract from the overall character of a storefront. Thoughtful design of such elements can avoid this effect and result in a more inviting appearance.

Objective: Ensure the safety of businesses while maintaining visual contact with building interiors.

Standards

Overall-

- Security features will be concealed by awnings or signage, particularly during business hours.
- Only “open” security grilles are permitted.
- Solid or opaque features are not permitted.

Guidelines

Overall-

- Security design features should complement building architecture.
- Security grilles should have a well-maintained appearance.

Not Recommended

- Incorporation of razor wire or other similar elements is not appropriate.



Screening

Screening of visually unappealing elements such as HVAC units, trash receptacles, snow store areas and mechanical equipment can improve the visual appeal of individual businesses and districts without limiting functionality.

Objective: Improve aesthetic quality by proper screening.

Standards

Overall-

- Screening materials will be consistent in color and texture with building materials.
- Vegetation used for screening will be environmentally sustainable.
- Utility units will be consolidated within one area to limit the need for screening.

Guidelines

Overall-

- All utility areas should be screened from public view.
- Utilities should be installed underground for or within new construction.
- Audible impact of service areas should be mitigated through screening.

Not Recommended

- Outdoor storage areas should not be used.
- Non-native plants should not be used.
-

