

NY5

Central Avenue and State Street Land Use & Transportation Study



71.8 K
parking
30.0 K
parking
0 sq.ft.

Executive Summary

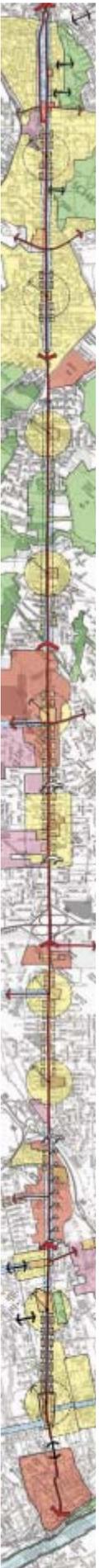
Prepared for

Capital District Transportation Committee

Prepared by

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with
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May 2002



**ADOPTED RESOLUTION 01-04
REGARDING THE NYS LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION CONCEPTS
PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) is the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for transportation planning and programming in the metropolitan area of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties; and

WHEREAS, CDTC has administered an extensive land use, economic and transportation study of the NYS corridor between downtown Albany and downtown Schenectady to serve as a prototype for land use and transportation concepts for similar corridors throughout the region; and,

WHEREAS, the five municipalities located along the corridor have been represented on the Study Advisory Committee guiding the study and the CDTC Planning Committee and CDTC Policy Board have been kept apprised of study developments; and,

WHEREAS, the study has employed multiple methods to seek the perspective of residents, businesses and property owners along the corridor; and,

WHEREAS, the study has identified an achievable "vision" that includes economic revitalization, transit system improvement, bicycle and pedestrian travel accommodations, travel safety enhancement, access management, streetscape and landscaping amenities and technology-based traffic flow management for the corridor; and,

WHEREAS, the CDTC Planning Committee recommended adoption at its October 3, 2001 meeting.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Capital District Transportation Committee adopts the NYS land use and transportation vision articulated by the CDTC study as a refinement to the New Visions 2021 Plan for the corridor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CDTC will pursue with its municipal, transportation agency and business and residential neighborhood partners implementation of "Bus Rapid Transit" and improved streetscaping and site design in the corridor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CDTC will work with its partners in investigating planning, zoning and other mechanisms available to local municipalities to help implement the vision.


Linda M. Gusance
Mayor of Rensselaer
Acting Chairperson, Capital District
Transportation Committee
November 7, 2001
Date

CDTC Policy Board Members *(As of March, 2002)*

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Authority

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Transportation

Michael Rose, New York State Thruway Authority

Non-Voting Members

Thomas C. Werner, NYSDOT Reg. 1

Letitia Thompson, FTA

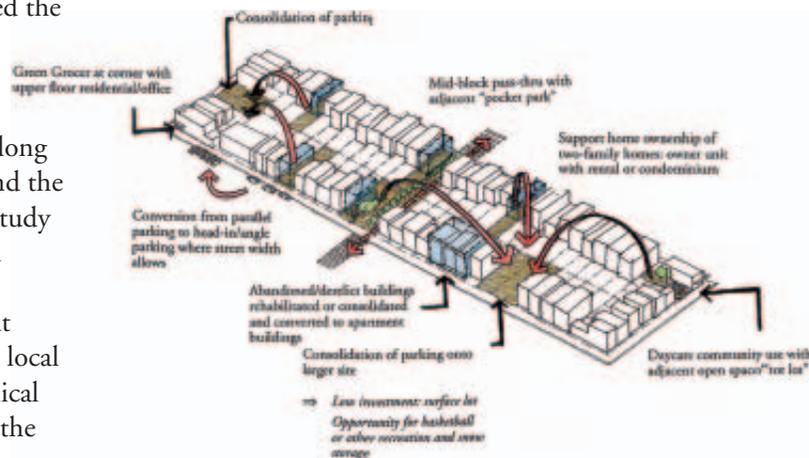
Robert E. Arnold, FHWA

What is the CDTC?

The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties. Every metropolitan area in the United States with a population of more than 50,000 must have a designated MPO in order to qualify for any Federal transportation funding. The function of the MPO is to provide a forum for state and local officials to discuss transportation issues and develop an overall transportation plan for the region.

The NY 5 Study and The Preferred Future Summary and Highlights

The Capital District Transportation Committee initiated the *NY 5 Land Use & Transportation Concepts Study* in 1998 in collaboration with the NYSDOT, CDTA, and the five Corridor communities. The purpose of this study is to evaluate land use and transportation issues along Central Avenue and State Street in Albany, the Town and the Village of Colonie, Niskayuna, and Schenectady. The Study identified three “Alternative Future Scenarios” based on approaches to land use and transportation policies and investments. The alternatives were developed with input from Corridor residents, business and property owners, local decision-makers, and public agency staff. Further technical evaluation and public input led to the identification of the Preferred Future.



Infill and reuse strategies can help to revitalize NY 5 communities and to promote pedestrian- and transit-oriented development.

What is the Preferred Future?

The “Preferred Future” is a shared vision for the future of land use and transportation along the NY 5 Corridor. The vision seeks to revitalize the quality of life for these constituents by revitalizing communities and enhancing transportation opportunities along the Corridor. The Preferred Future also aims to balance these improvements with the vitality of the greater Capital District region.

The Preferred Future provides Corridor users with more choice in transportation (transit, walking, and bicycling, as well as driving), and more choice in places to live, work, and shop. Redevelopment at key points along the Corridor works together with roadway improvements to increase economic activity while *improving local and regional access* and minimizing future congestion. A sophisticated *Bus Rapid Transit* (BRT) system will bring high-quality transit service to the Corridor communities and underutilized parcels located around transit stations can be the focus of

new neighborhood, village, and *town centers* that provide a link between the street and Corridor neighborhoods.

In the Preferred Future continued *downtown revitalization* in Albany and Schenectady along with adjacent Corridor improvements ensures that they lend stability to the region and Corridor. Key sites in Colonie and Niskayuna provide opportunities for *Regional Mixed-Use Districts* with regional retail and services, offices and other businesses, and residential neighborhoods.

Over time, more *buildings will front directly onto the street* which will be improved with better sidewalks, street trees, and other amenities that make it *safer and more comfortable for pedestrians*. Pedestrian improvements support increased foot traffic in retail areas, make the neighborhoods more livable, support transit ridership, and make community centers more accessible.



Next Steps

Achieving the Preferred Future will require unprecedented cooperation among the jurisdictions, businesses, associations, developers and agencies that are the Corridor’s caretakers. Some steps may be implemented immediately while others may require “phasing-in” through regulatory changes and infrastructure improvements over time.

The immediate and next five years' agenda is fully funded through actions by CDTC, CDTA and local governments—no new revenue sources are required. A more rapid implementation schedule for the remaining (20-year) agenda would be possible through concerted local effort. A source of funds above and beyond those counted on in the schedule to the right could permit implementation of most elements within as few as seven to ten years. The possibility of this shorter schedule is heavily dependent upon strong public support in each community and supportive private investment to pursue the Preferred Future.

Immediate: (\$12 M)	Corridor-Wide Signal Coordination (\$5 M) Bus Hardware for Priority Treatment (\$4 M) State Street: Fehr Ave. to Furman St. (\$3 M)
Next 5 Years: (\$32 M)	New “BRT” stations (\$2 M) New BRT buses (\$6 M) New shuttle buses (up to \$2M) Central Ave.: Everett to Albany city line (\$12 M) Downtown State Street Redesign (\$10 M) Revise Zoning, Site Design Standards
Over 20 Years: (\$120+ M)	Reconstruct many of the remaining sections Boulevard treatment in limited locations Remaining bus lanes & bypasses where needed More stations, buses, greater bus frequency Remaining utility relocation/undergrounding Further local efforts for economic revitalization

BRT Features

- Electronic rider information system with “real time” bus time information at stations and through touch-tone phones, the web, and wireless handheld devices
- Pre-pay tickets for faster boarding
- Comfortable, low-floor buses
- Safe and attractive shelters
- Global Positioning System technology and advanced signal coordination to keep buses on time
- Dedicated lanes and “queue jumper” lanes to shorten trip times



Improving circulation between the Corridor and its neighborhoods will be critical to the success of the Preferred Future.



BRT simulation at Nott Terrace (inset: existing condition)



BRT simulation at Quail Street in Albany (inset: existing condition)

Background

Albany, the Village of Colonie, the Town of Colonie, Niskayuna, Schenectady, and the Counties of Albany and Schenectady are connected by New York State Route 5 which consists of Central Avenue and State Street. Route 5 runs northwest from downtown Albany to downtown Schenectady passing through an historic cross section of urban forms in the United States—from 19th Century central city, to the street car suburbs of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to the early auto-suburbs of the 1940s and 50s, to the varied suburban strip of today.

Once the Capital District’s “main street,” the Route 5 Corridor’s vitality has been eroded over the last 50 years due to a combination of land use, transportation, social and market shifts in the Capital Region. The Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC); the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA); the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT); and the five jurisdictions mentioned above, which depend on the Corridor, have undertaken the NY 5 Corridor Land Use & Transportation Study to examine the future of land use and transportation along this 16.5 mile roadway. The Study builds from earlier efforts undertaken in the region in developing New Visions, the regional long-range transportation plan.

The NY 5 Corridor between Albany and Schenectady continues to be a significant component of the Capital District’s transportation and land use system. With the region’s two largest urban centers at the ends of the Corridor and the region’s largest suburban complex in the middle, the Corridor is witness to both the highest arterial traffic volumes and the greatest number of transit riders in the region. The study area includes Route 5 from Lark Street in Albany to Nott Terrace in Schenectady. These endpoints were selected due to the fact that land use development and design options from Lark Street east to the Hudson River in Albany and in the downtown Schenectady section (Nott Terrace west to the Mohawk

River) have been considered in other recent efforts and studies (i.e. Capitalize Albany and the recent Downtown Schenectady Master Plan).

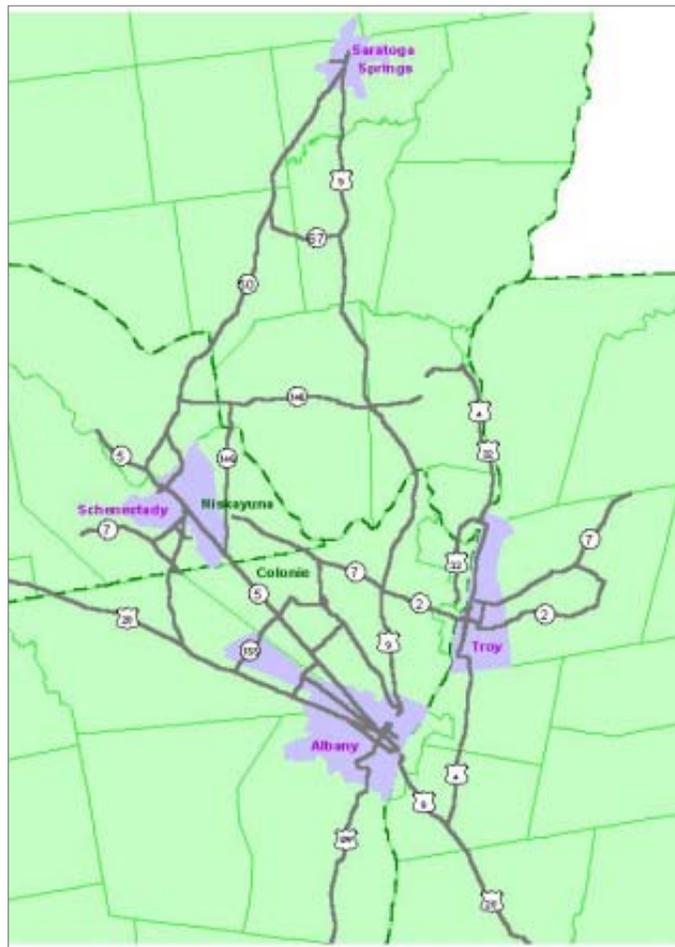
Examination of land use and transportation concepts in the Route 5 Corridor considered the following questions:

1. What do the communities along the Corridor wish to achieve in the Corridor?
2. How do these desires compare with the current situation and market-based forecasts for the various segments of the Corridor?
3. How can the communities both provide for an appropriate regional role for the Corridor, and at the same time, recognize and preserve the character of existing residential neighborhoods?
4. How can the communities help to successfully implement CDTC’s New Visions recommendations, which emphasize revitalization and creation of mixed-use, walkable communities?
5. Does the desired future scenario support further investigation of major transit investment (particularly if a fixed guideway such as Light Rail Transit were to be part of that scenario) in the Corridor, such that CDTC should pursue a Major Investment Study (MIS) in the Corridor?
6. What are the necessary steps toward achieving the desired scenario?

The importance of this study relates both to the critical role the Corridor plays in the region and to the value of using the Corridor as a prototype for similar work in other Corridors. Site design, the need for appropriate infill development, arterial access management for all modes, and transit service issues facing NY 5 are also present or are emerging in many other arterial Corridors in the region.

The NY 5 Study is unique in that it looks to land use, economic, and social solutions, to address the region's transportation issues, as well as to more typical transportation system improvements and policies. In this way, it seeks to improve the quality of life in the Corridor and thereby in the entire region. The goal of this study is to make recommendations which:

- maximize the effectiveness of public investment in the transportation system;
- seek to stabilize and invigorate the economy of the five Corridor Communities;
- are pedestrian and transit-friendly;
- satisfy the needs of the real estate market, automobile and service access; and,
- provide a benefit to adjacent mixed-use and residential neighborhoods, as well as mixed-use and employment districts.



The NY 5 Corridor and similar corridors throughout the Capital District

The Corridor in The Context of the Region

The Capital District of New York generally boasts a high quality of life in the communities which make up the region. The strength of the region is based on its stability as a center of state government, a center of higher education, its well-educated workforce, its well-defined urban and suburban areas, easy access to surrounding rural areas and natural amenities, and its tradition of transportation leadership. The NY 5 Corridor, from its beginning as an Iroquois trail, has been critical to the development of the region as a life-giving artery providing jobs, neighborhoods, resources, and connectivity to the region.

The construction of the New York State Thruway and other limited access highways, and the concurrent post-war housing boom changed the Corridor from a major regional transportation link to one of the first American suburban auto “strips.” The shopping centers, office and industrial parks, and recreational areas constructed in this era were all designed to incorporate convenience to the auto-user. Today, this development pattern remains evident by reflecting the desire for easy auto access, and separation of differing land uses, and low initial development costs. At the same time, these economic and social forces led to expansion of the region as a whole. First housing developments, then retail, and increasingly, jobs have been moving out from the traditional regional urban cores of Albany, Schenectady, and Troy to auto-oriented suburban areas such as the Towns of Colonie and Niskayuna and to areas in surrounding counties.

Yet, the Corridor is centrally located in the Capital District and has excellent access to the state and regional circulation system. While outlying suburban areas have experienced increasing growth, a significant concentration of jobs and homes are present in the Corridor. Approximately 15% of the Capital District's households and 30% of the jobs are within 1/2 mile of Route 5 within the Corridor. This is a significant concentration of jobs and housing within a region that is perceived by many to be characterized by low-density suburban and rural development. As a result, through the implementation of public policy and public investment, the Corridor has the potential to attract some key portions of development activity in the Capital District.

Finding Alternatives for the Future of NY 5

Issues and Opportunities throughout the Corridor

As a first step, the NY 5 Study team conducted a thorough analysis of land use, transportation and market conditions along the Corridor. The following are key issues and opportunities affecting the potential for land use, economic, and transportation investment along Central Avenue and State Street:

Issues

- Reduced economic strength has been experienced along the Corridor due to suburban expansion and competition from regional retail and entertainment centers and lack of reinvestment. Small parcel size and long term ownership patterns have contributed to existing reinvestment rates in the Corridor.
- Auto-oriented development and roadway design are “unfriendly” to pedestrians and bicyclists along portions of the Corridor. The existence of wide and frequent driveways deteriorates the pedestrian environment, which in turn can impact transit use.
- Traffic congestion and crash rates along some portions of the Corridor are relatively high due to Route 5’s relationship to other regional highways, major retail and activity centers, as well as the number of existing

curb cuts. This situation occurs in part due to the dual role of the Corridor in carrying both “through” trips and local trips and is made worse by the fact that there are few secondary streets and little connectivity between the commercial area and surrounding residences and community facilities.

- Constrained right-of-way width limits application of traditional improvement options for transportation system improvement.
- There is a lack of urban design or architectural standards currently in place to improve the quality of the built environment.

Opportunities

- The traditional character of the downtowns and some Corridor neighborhoods that include traditional urban forms and building types, some historic districts and buildings, and other cultural amenities, have the potential to support vibrant, walkable and affordable urban neighborhoods.
- The central location of the Corridor within the Capital District supports jobs and retailing.
- The existing bus transit service along the Corridor sustains the highest ridership levels in the region and is comprised of frequent and reliable service.



A welcoming pedestrian environment



An uninviting pedestrian environment

Urban Typologies

Four patterns of development have been identified in the Corridor, each reflecting distinct characteristics of residential and commercial land development, as well as the general roadway. These existing patterns, or “typologies” are described briefly below.



Urban Core - Townsend Park, Albany



Urban Strip - Central State St., Schenectady



Suburban Strip - Village of Colonie



Mixed-Use District - Colonie Center, Colonie

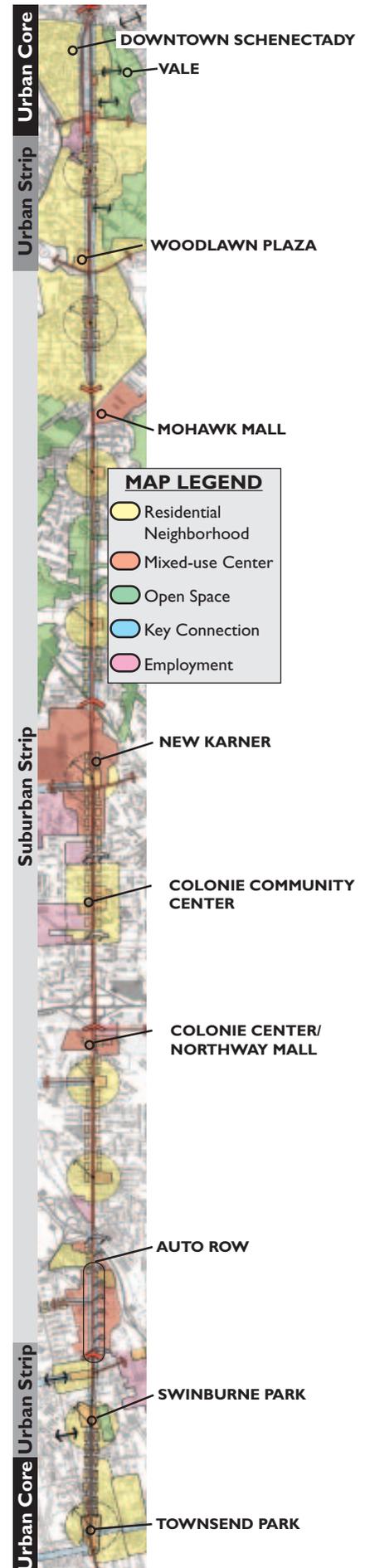
Above: The Urban Typologies

The *Urban Core* typology includes the areas built at higher densities extending out from the downtowns of Albany and Schenectady. The majority of development in these areas is on smaller parcels with buildings fronting directly onto the street with little or no setback.

The *Urban Strip* typology describes the first “streetcar suburbs” or older urban neighborhoods with medium density development. Many buildings still front directly onto the street. Parcel size is more varied than in the Urban Core areas with some medium and larger parcels.

The *Suburban Strip* typology represents the largest portion of the Corridor. Parcel size varies, but the pattern is typified by buildings set back from the street with parking in front. There is wide variation in intensity of use, ranging from semi-rural in areas between New Karner Road and Niskayuna to more intensive uses between New Karner Road and Wolf Road.

The *Regional Mixed-Use District* is represented by the Auto Row area in Albany, the Colonie Center/Northway Mall cluster, the cluster around New Karner Road with the Village Square Shopping Center, Builders Square, K-Mart, and Colonie Plaza, and the Mohawk Mall. These Regional Retail Clusters are the largest parcels in the Corridor, many are underutilized, and several are being revitalized.



Alternative Futures

Following a review of the Issues Assessment work, the consultants prepared a set of documents to illustrate the potential for reuse within the Corridor. These included a set of three Preliminary Alternative Futures illustrating transportation and land use variations that are the cross-section of a set of transportation systems and policies, and a set of land use policies and growth scenarios. In early February 1999, a five day design and policy charette was held in the CDTC offices with the SAC and other Corridor Stakeholders. The Alternative Futures Charette culminated in an open house at the Town of Colonie Community Center on Central Avenue. The Charette provided the opportunity to review the Issues Assessment documents and the Preliminary Alternatives, which presented initial land use and transportation concepts for the segments along the Corridor, and discuss concepts for encouraging urban revitalization and infill/reuse along the entire Corridor. Following the Charette, the Alternatives were refined into the following Alternative Future Scenarios:

The *Base Alternative* represents existing land use and transportation policies and the future growth that is projected by the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) (0.5 percent per annum in employment and 0.45 percent per annum in households). This alternative would result from the implementation of current land use and transportation policies and programs and the level of regional growth projected by the CDRPC.



Alternative Futures Open House, February 1999 in the Village of Colonie

Regional Growth and Capture Rates 2000-2015

Area	CDRPC (Base Year)		Base Alternative		Preferred Future			
	2000 HH	2000 Emp	2000- 2015 HH	2000- 2015 Emp	Intermediate Alternative		Stimulated Alternative	
					2000- 2015 HH	2000- 2015 Emp	2000- 2015 HH	2000- 2015 Emp
Regional Growth	--	--	22,285	33,950	22,580	33,950	72,200	109,350
Share of Region	Exist'g Distribution		Distribution of Future Growth Increment					
Albany Core	2.1%	14.6%	0.7%	2.7%	1.8%	9.7%	1.4%	6.0%
Corridor	11.8%	13.0%	1.7%	2.7%	8.8%	14.0%	8.6%	14.2%
Schenectady Core	2.4%	2.5%	2.0%	1.0%	3.0%	3.3%	3.0%	2.1%
TOTAL	16.3%	30.0%	2.6%	5.5%	10.8%	27.0%	10.3%	22.3%

(1) Employment under the Base Alternative assumed to be the same as under the Intermediate Alternative which is based on historical employment growth

The *Intermediate Alternative* represents the same growth projections as the Base, but with a portion of regional growth shifted to the Corridor reflecting the adoption of new land use policies and other public policies to encourage investment and development in the Corridor. This alternative would see an increase in vitality throughout the Corridor, reflecting new land use policies and programs within the Corridor communities to direct an additional portion of future development to the Corridor. This increased vitality would in turn support further investment in the Corridor's transportation system resulting in more complete implementation of the "Best Bus" system.

The *Stimulated Alternative* represents the potential future if the regional growth rates are tripled; 1.5 percent per annum for employment and 1.35 percent per annum in households. It also represents additional land use policies to encourage more intensive development in portions of the Corridor. These land use and economic improvements would in turn support, and be supported by, increased investment in the Corridor's transportation system. These improvements would most likely include a bus system with dedicated lanes in feasible locations or light rail service.

How Was the Preferred Future Identified?

In April of 2000 an *Alternatives Evaluation Working Paper* was produced that included an assessment of the three future scenarios described in the *Alternatives Futures Working Paper* (March, 2000). The three future alternatives were based varying degrees of growth and distribution patterns in the Corridor described for each in the preceding section: Base, Intermediate and Stimulated alternatives.

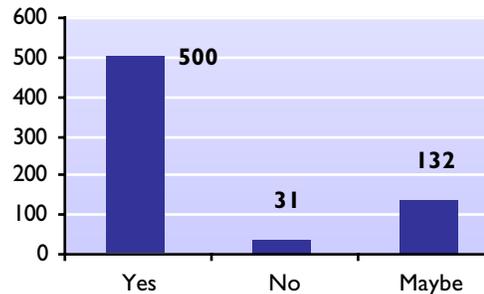
These alternatives were evaluated in three broad categories: Land Use/Urban Design/Environmental, Transportation, and, Quality of Life/Socio-Economic. Each category had a list of sub-criteria that included a definition, methodology, and findings.

Concurrently, a newsletter and more detailed web site were published along with a short survey querying residents, business owners, employees, and land owners for their reactions to the improvements developed under the

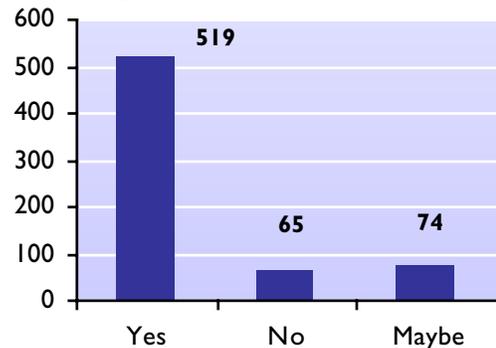


The NY 5 newsletters were distributed to over 14,000 of the Corridor's residents and property owners

"The newsletter presents one vision of how Route 5 could look and develop. Is this a vision that you think the communities along the Route 5 Corridor should work to achieve?"

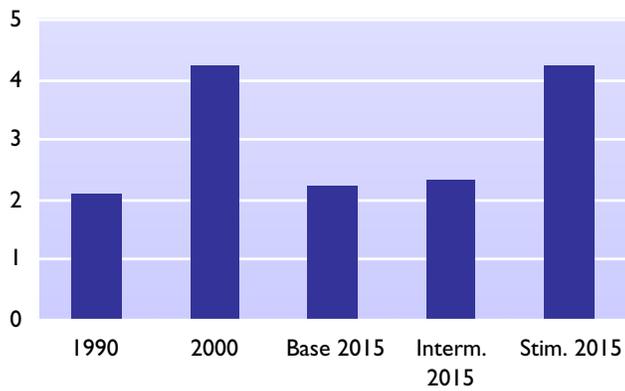


"Would you be willing to accept traffic levels and congestion roughly as they are on Route 5 now if we could improve transit, walking, biking, landscaping, attractiveness and safety?"



The results of the survey exhibited overwhelming support for the proposed land use and transportation improvements, which would become the basis for the Preferred Future.

Vehicle Hours of Delay

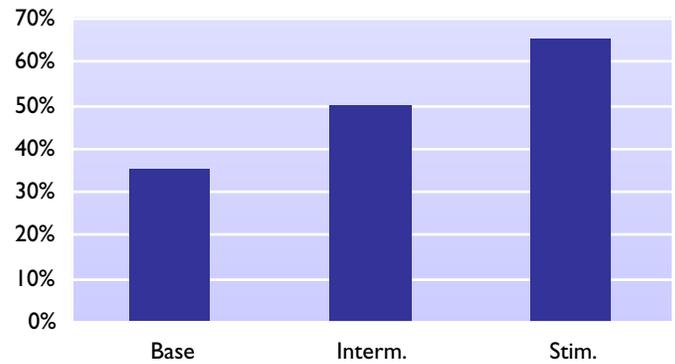


Land use and transportation improvements under the Stimulated Alternative would show slightly reduced or similar vehicle hours of delay into the future and would also improve transit access, the pedestrian environment, bicycle safety, and economic vitality.

Stimulated Alternative. The survey returned 677 responses indicating an overwhelmingly positive response to the detail study photosimulations and example improvements.

After completing the evaluation process, examining the regional economy, land use patterns and policies, and reviewing the response from the surveys, it was determined that regardless of regional growth, the planning and design strategies illustrated in the Stimulated Alternative are critical (and desirable) to achieving a land use pattern which is conducive to multi-modal accessibility within the Corridor communities. Additionally, these changes result in desired improvements in the quality of life in the

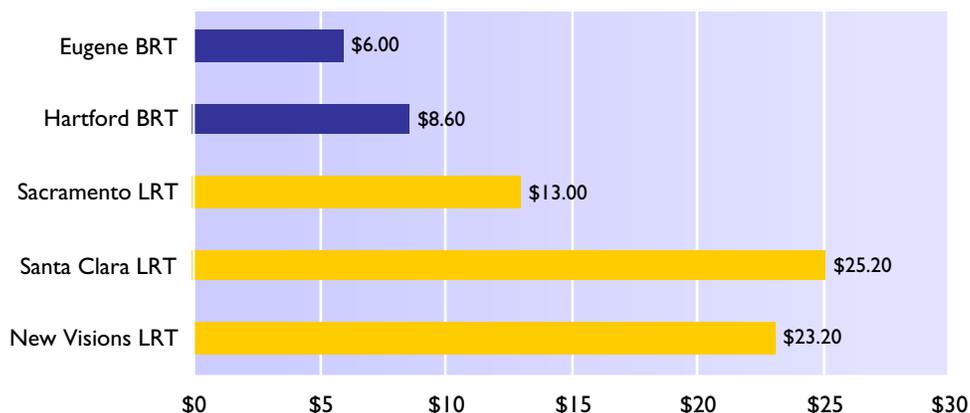
Services within Walking Distance (1/4 mile) of Home



Intensifying land uses around transit stations will improve “quality of life” by increasing access to local services, enhancing neighborhood identity, and decreasing the cost of transportation for residents and employees.

Corridor. In particular, strategies emphasizing intensive mixed-use development are best suited for a “high end” transit system such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Finally, the land use designs proposed in the Stimulated Alternative were more likely to yield real progress toward rejoining and revitalizing the Corridor communities. Such development patterns coupled with urban design recommendations can create a safe, attractive environment for all modes of transport and achieve the goals established for the Study. Hence, the land use strategies of the Stimulated Alternative have been combined with the high-quality, cost-effective service of Bus Rapid Transit to form the Preferred Future Alternative.

Major Transit System Capital Costs (in millions of year 2000 \$ per mile)



Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is more cost-effective than comparable light-rail systems (LRT) and fits within the physical constraints of the Corridor.

What is the Preferred Future?

The Preferred Future is a vision for land use and transportation along the NY 5 Corridor into the 21st century. The vision aims to incrementally revitalize Corridor communities and to support continued investment in the Corridor's transportation system through reorganization of land use at key points along the Corridor. The land use and transportation improvements are designed to mutually support one another, strengthening the overall vitality of the Corridor and in turn, contributing to quality of life in the Capital District region.

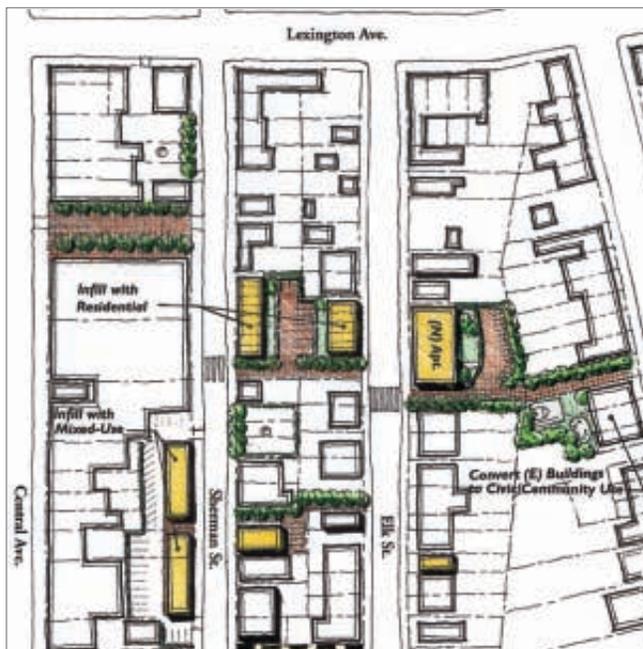
Improved access for pedestrians, transit, automobiles and bicycles and reuse and infill strategies for land use are at the heart of the Preferred Future vision. A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system will bring high-quality rail-like service to the Corridor presenting opportunities to redevelop vacant and underutilized parcels around transit stations. Station areas will be aggressively reconfigured to optimize development potential. Improved site design will be integrated into street improvements to create stronger pedestrian connections and ultimately improve local access for automobiles. Improving local access will in turn facilitate the movement

Land Use Concept

- Incrementally reconfigure land use along the Corridor to enhance quality of life & economic vitality
- Do not rely on increased regional growth to achieve the Future Vision
- Encourage mixed-use & pedestrian-friendly infill and reuse
- Encourage a mix of local & regional serving commercial uses
- Encourage a range of housing types and levels of affordability
- Encourage creation of new jobs
- Scale new development to be compatible with its surroundings

of regional traffic through the Corridor. Revitalization efforts in the downtown cores will ensure that Albany and Schenectady continue to lend stability to the region and the Corridor. Reuse and infill in the urban strip will make these places viable locations for local businesses, community centers and new mixed-use developments while re-connecting them with Corridor neighborhoods. Key sites in Colonie and Niskayuna are opportunities for creating Regional Mixed-Use Districts with regional retail and opportunities for employment uses and residential neighborhoods. Central Avenue and State Street neighborhoods in all Corridor Communities will offer safe, high-quality housing.

The following pages outline the transportation improvements which are a part of this vision and then present how the transportation and land use improvements could come together at five locations along the Corridor. These locations have been selected to model the variety of approaches which could be applied to the different urban typologies in the Corridor.



Opportunity areas, identified as part of the Study, will serve as catalysts for revitalization of the Corridor.

Transportation Network

Transportation improvements in the Preferred Future will balance all modes of transportation through the Corridor, which includes Central Avenue and State Street as well as the neighborhood and regional street networks to which Route 5 is connected. These improvements will also work with the potential land use improvements described in the Preferred Future to better balance regional and local traffic.

Five street design “treatments” have been developed for the various segments of the Corridor. These treatments are defined further in Appendix E, *Draft NY 5 Street Design Manual*, of the Final Report and will be further refined as a key follow up task to this study.

The following sections summarize the key improvements which would create a more balanced transportation system in the Corridor.

Pedestrians

Traffic calming techniques will be applied to the streets which connect the Corridor with adjacent neighborhoods. Pedestrian amenities such as street trees, benches, waste receptacles, special paving, and bollards will improve the pedestrian environment to encourage walking as a legitimate mode of transportation. Pedestrian-friendly infrastructure will also serve to catalyze redevelopment in key areas which in turn will provide a mix of land uses supportive of walking. The pedestrian environment will also be improved in suburban portions of the Corridor by bringing buildings and shop windows up to the sidewalk. In the more urban portions of the Corridor, redevelop-

Transportation Concept

- Provide for all modes of transportation
- Implement Bus Rapid Transit with feeder and regional bus connections
- Provide pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods and safe crossings of Route 5
- Improve safety by consolidating curb-cuts and implementing other design solutions
- Provide bicycle access along and parallel to Route 5



A simulated view of a mid-block crossing in future downtown Albany



Simulation of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station adjacent to a new civic green at the Colonie Community Center

ment will create a more “fine-grained” pedestrian network with accessways between uses and between Central Avenue/ State Street and the adjacent neighborhoods. These accessways will be complemented by mid-block crossings to better connect the “sides” of the Corridor.

Bicycles

Bicycling is an important, but often ignored, transportation option for many in the Capital Region. In the urban portions of the Corridor, dedicated bicycle lanes are provided for cyclists. In the suburban portions of the Corridor a combination of bicycle lanes, separated bicycle paths, or slower and safer parallel local access lanes provide for bicycle access. Where this is not possible, parallel routes will be created for cyclists to safely travel through the Corridor, such as Clinton Avenue in Albany or Albany Street in Schenectady. Bicycle racks will be provided at key locations in the Corridor, such as transit stops, village and neighborhood retail, schools, and retail centers.

Transit

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) was selected over light rail for its inherent flexibility and more easily justified cost. Bus Rapid Transit uses increased investment in technology, equipment, stations, operations and marketing to rival the quality of service of higher investment light rail

systems while remaining more flexible and less costly than rail systems. Bus Rapid Transit is particularly well-suited for the Corridor because of its ability to maneuver through a constrained right of way. The Corridor's BRT system would include the following key features:



A working demonstration of bus time integration with wireless handheld devices for Metro in Seattle, Washington

Electronic rider information system uses Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to provide passengers with “real time” bus arrival information at stations and through other tools such as touch-tone phones, the web, and wireless handheld devices.

Bus signal preference and preemption. Preferential treatment of buses at intersections can involve the extension of green time or actuation of the green light at signalized intersections upon detection

of an approaching bus. This system can be combined with the GPS used for the rider information system to give buses more or less priority depending on their closeness to being on schedule. A portion of these improvements are currently being made in the Corridor.

Dedicated-lanes in certain segments of the Corridor will reduce automobile and bus traffic conflicts allowing buses to keep on schedule during peak traffic hours.

“Queue-jumper” lanes. A “bus only” lane at boarding platforms on the near-side of signalized intersections allows buses, upon completion of boarding, to receive a transit-only green light in advance of the automobile signal. This allows buses to keep on schedule at congested intersections.



Bus manufacturers such as Irisbus (Renault/Iveco) are releasing new models specifically designed for BRT systems.

Fast-boarding. Conventional on-board collection of fares slows the boarding process. Prepaid “smart cards” providing for automated fare collection or a self-service “proof-of-payment” system would speed fare transactions and potentially allow for faster boarding through multiple doors of the BRT vehicle.

Easier Boarding. Low-floor buses possibly combined with slightly higher curbs could provide for level boarding, making boarding both faster and easier for all passengers.

“High-end” buses would be clean, quiet, comfortable and air-conditioned. BRT buses will feature many of the amenities found on light rail vehicles, such as wider aisles, larger windows, well-lit interiors, and security features.

Several bus manufacturers are now producing models designed for BRT applications.



This ticket vending machine would be appropriately scaled for the BRT stations

Timed connections would be provided to shuttle service serving popular destinations such as Union College, SUNY-Albany and the airport at comfortable transfer facilities. The BRT will also be able to connect to potential commuter rail stations in Albany and Schenectady.

Improved Shelters would provide larger enclosed heated spaces, with 360-degree visibility for safety. Bicycle racks or lockers would be provided at some stations, and bicycle racks would be available on all BRT buses. A built-in security and customer service phone would connect customers directly with CDTA. Rider information kiosks will provide “real-time” bus information and announcements. In some locations, shelters will also include automated vending as well as kiosks for micro-format retail such as sales of newspapers, coffee, flowers, etc.

In addition to the BRT improvements Transit Demand Management programs will continue to be pursued to boost ridership and express bus service serving the downtowns would continue to operate.

Automobiles

The automobile will continue to be the dominant mode of transportation in the Corridor. Other transportation system enhancements discussed above should mitigate the effects of intensified land use along the Corridor on traffic accessibility and mobility. Reduced curb-cuts and improved off-street connections between uses and parking lots will improve traffic safety and decrease the amount of local traffic that uses the arterial street.

Creating a multi-way boulevard in some sections of the Corridor will separate through traffic from local traffic. Also, traffic calming along streets parallel to Central Avenue and State Street will encourage use for local traffic and discourage through traffic.



An electronic rider information board in Germany



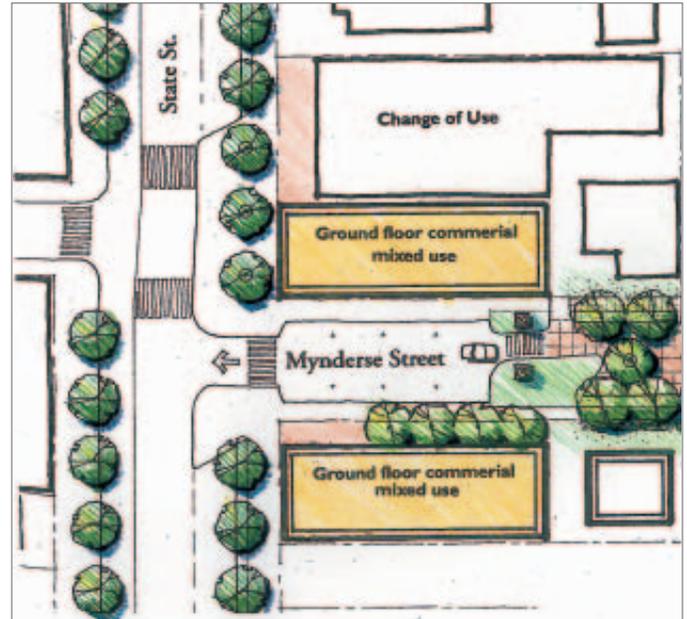
Simulation of a rider information kiosk at Nott Terrace that combines both printed and electronic information

Street Design Concepts

Concerns were raised from the beginning of the Study in regard to the limited right-of-way width and the extent of curb cuts and intersections along the Corridor. Reuse and infill development along the Corridor could facilitate the reduction of curb cuts benefiting both traffic and transit flow, improving bicycle safety, and helping to create a better pedestrian environment.

Traffic Calming

Motor vehicle traffic in much of the Corridor is un-pedestrian in velocity and scale. Traffic calming measures help to replace auto-dominance with pedestrian-equivalence by making streets, which are necessarily shared by pedestrians, bicycles and motor vehicles, safer and less intimidating for pedestrians. Along Central Avenue and State Street, traffic in the urban portions of the Corridor can be “calmed” by utilizing narrower lanes, providing on-street parking, and installing appropriate pedestrian signalization. In the more suburban parts of the Corridor, through traffic can be separated from local traffic by creating a “multi-way” boulevard.



Drawing of possible streetscape and land use reconfiguration in Schenectady's Vale neighborhood

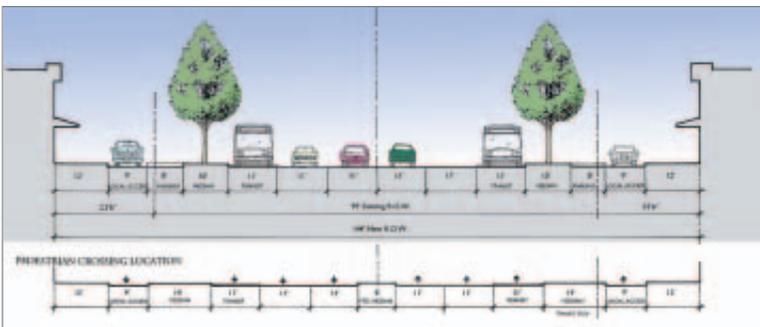


Simulation of streetscape improvements for Vale area



Transitways

Dedicated transit lanes in the most congested parts of the Corridor will improve the flow of both transit and general traffic by restricting conflicts between the two. Improved flow means more dependable and efficient transit service that attracts increased ridership.

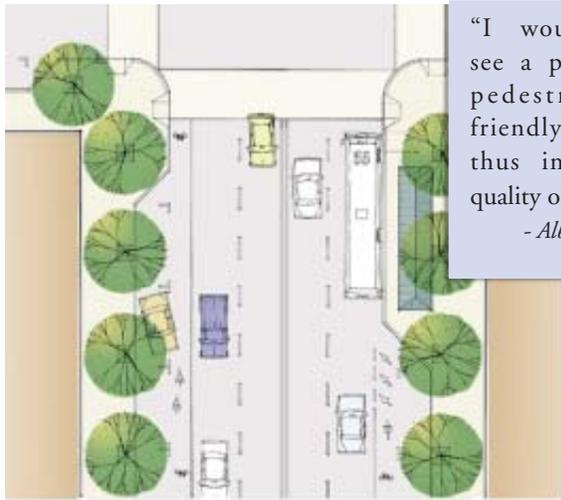


Multi-way Boulevards

Conflicts occur between local and through-traffic, impeding both mobility and accessibility to properties along the Corridor and its side streets. One method for reducing these potential conflicts is to reduce the number of curb cuts and provide connections between parking lots so that some local traffic does not need to use Central Avenue or State Street. Another method to improve the flow of traffic in this section is to reconfigure the roadway into a multi-way boulevard which physically separates local and through-traffic. Such a treatment may be utilized in Suburban Albany and Colonie. The figures on this page illustrate such a boulevard street configuration that could be developed on Central Avenue. Boulevards allow local traffic and bicycles to utilize a local accessway, in this case on-street parking is also provided on the accessway. Through traffic would utilize the four lanes in the middle of the roadway and would be separated by landscaped medians from the accessways as in the figure to the right. Bus Rapid Transit would travel in the through lane adjacent to the median. With additional widening of the right-of-way, transit stops may be located on the median.

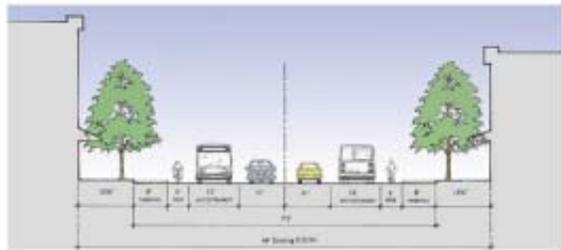


Urban Strip Model Improvements: Swinburne Park



“I would love to see a prettier, more pedestrian/bicycle friendly community, thus improving my quality of life.”

- Albany Resident and Property Owner



Redesigned Central Avenue in the Urban Core and Urban Strip, Albany



Initial Improvements



Final Improvements



Existing condition with surface parking lot

“Economic redevelopment which is consistent with the historic nature of Albany is vital to the area.”

- Albany Resident



Above and Left: Future condition with mixed-use building and transit plaza

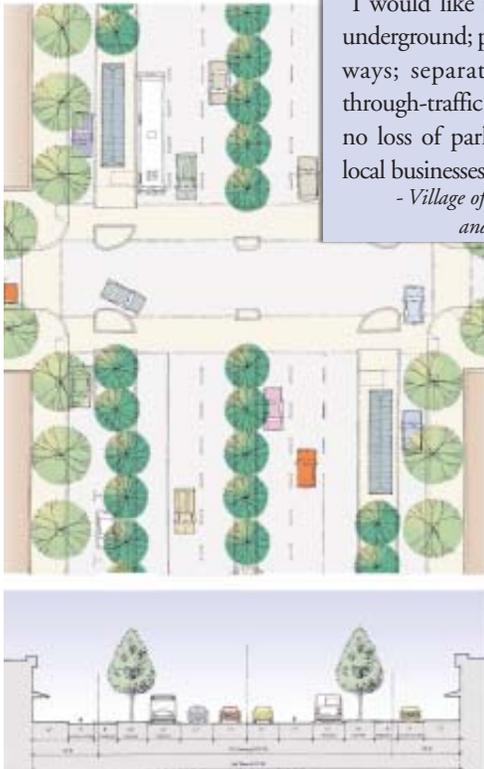


Potential Improvements:

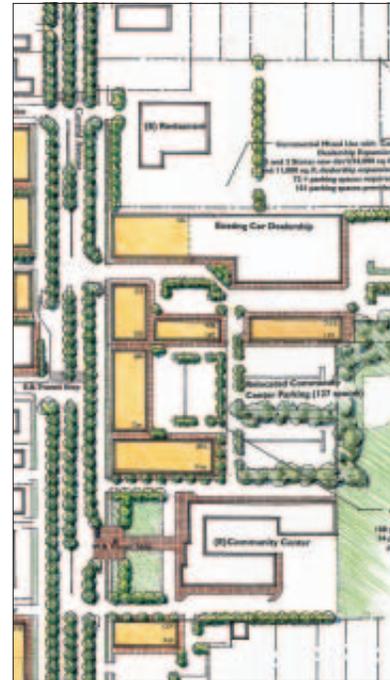
- Reorganize parcels into shared surface parking lots with pedestrian paths connecting into surrounding neighborhoods
- Reconfigure roadway to incorporate transit and safe pedestrian crossings
- Infill parcels with mixed-use buildings
- New plaza connecting Swinburne Park and Central Avenue

Suburban Strip Model Improvements: Colonie Village

“I would like to see: Utilities underground; pedestrian cross-ways; separating local and through-traffic where feasible; no loss of parking spaces for local businesses.”
- Village of Colonie Resident and Property Owner



Initial Improvements



Final Improvements

Redesigned Central Avenue from Fuller Road to Lincoln



Existing Conditions

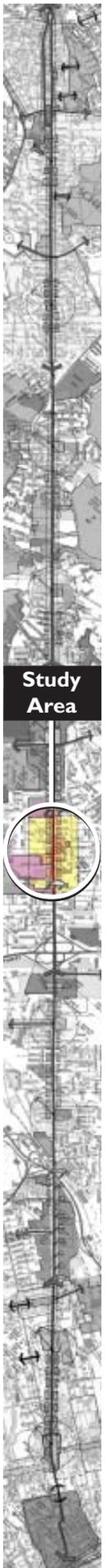
“So long as auto/trucks are used, traffic will remain heavy in the corridor. Anything to enhance the aesthetics of the area and improve pedestrian safety would be a major improvement.”
- Village of Colonie Resident and Property Owner



Infill of parking lot with mixed-use buildings, village green, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) transfer station



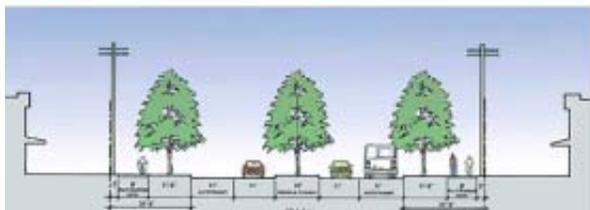
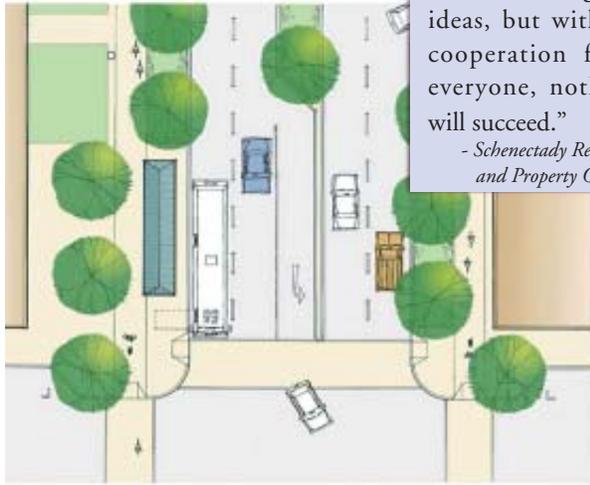
- Potential Improvements:**
- Implement improvements such as separating local and through traffic, or providing dedicated transit lanes
 - Redevelop some of the mall sites as a mixed-use district
 - Add a new building to the west of the site, with retail on the ground floor and a cafe fronting onto the village green
 - Establish new pedestrian connectors between retail and adjacent neighborhoods



Study Area

Regional Mixed Use District Model Improvements: New Karner Mixed-Use District

“These are good ideas, but without cooperation from everyone, nothing will succeed.”
- Schenectady Resident and Property Owner



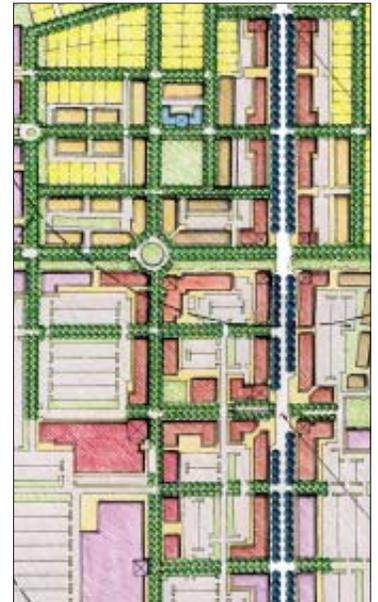
Redesigned Central Avenue and State Street in the more rural areas of the corridor



Future pedestrian-oriented employment center



New residential neighborhood



Build-out concept for Mixed-use Center to the west of New Karner Road

Study Area



Existing Conditions

“I would love to be less dependent on my car... I fully support any move in this direction.”
- Albany Resident and Property Owner

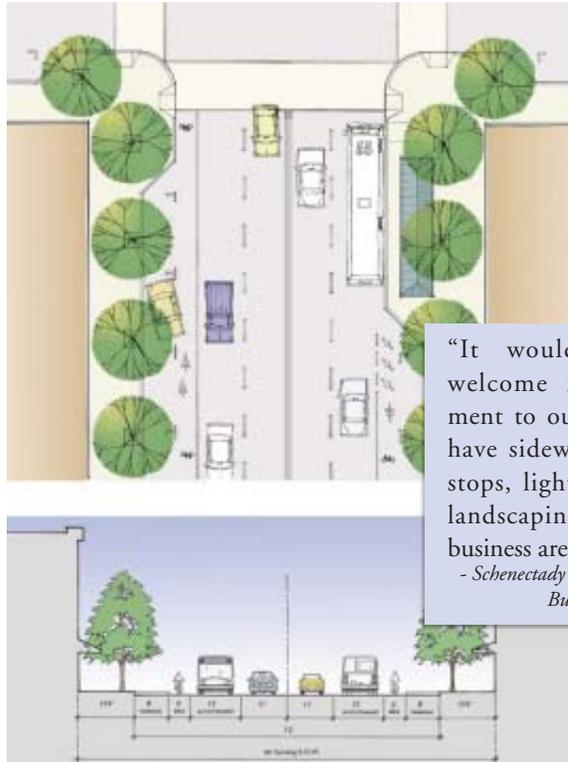


Above and left: After mixed-use infill development

Potential Improvements:

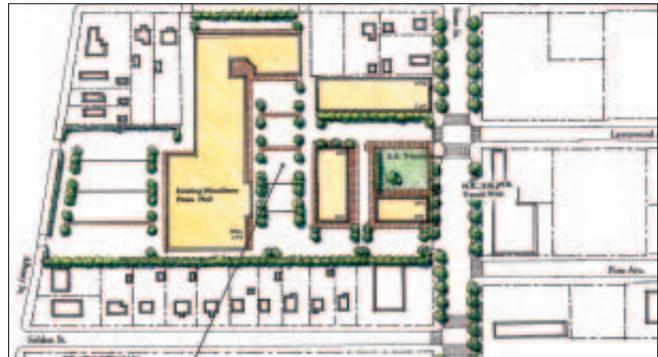
- Create a “main street” off of Central Avenue connecting shopping, transit, housing and employment
- Infill existing parking lots with new streets and mixed-use buildings
- Reuse large stores for offices
- Reconfigure Central Avenue to incorporate transit, bike paths and safe pedestrian crossings

Urban Strip Model Improvements: Woodlawn Plaza

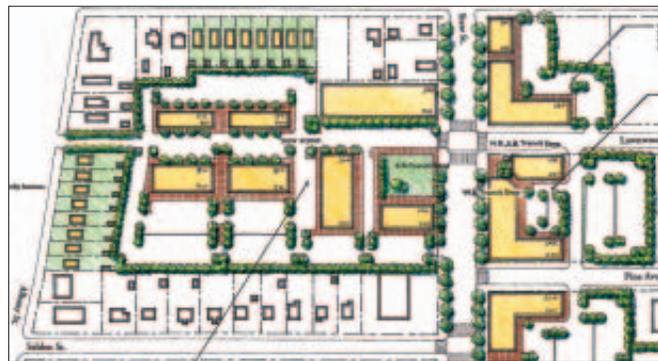


“It would be a welcome improvement to our area to have sidewalks, bus stops, lighting, and landscaping in new business areas.”
- Schenectady Resident and Business Owner

Example street plan and section of street improvements along this portion of State Street



Initial Improvements



Final Improvements



“There is currently a lot of vacant commercial land use in the Woodlawn area. Any improvements would be refreshing.”
- Schenectady Resident and Property Owner

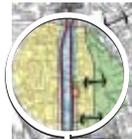
Above and right: Infill of parking lot with mixed-use buildings, village green, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) transfer station



Potential Improvements:

- Integrate a new Bus Rapid Transit station to provide better transit along State Street and transfer access to other regional centers
- Redevelop the Woodlawn Plaza shopping area into a lively mixed-use center with new commercial use and a village green
- Reconnect with the surrounding neighborhood using active streets
- Re-establish the neighborhood fabric with new homes

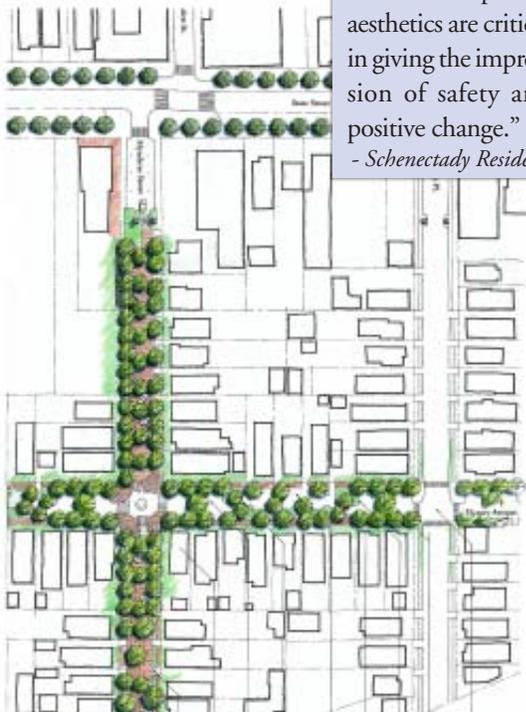




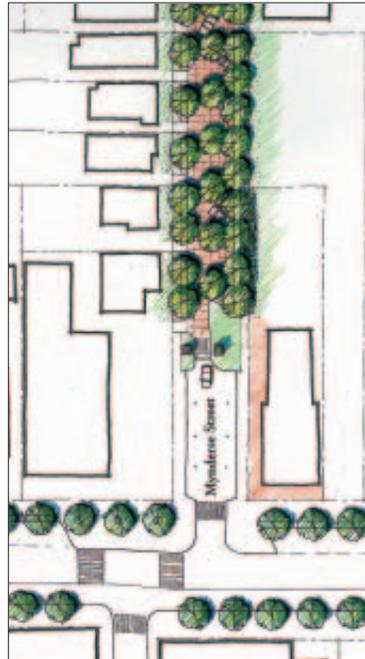
Urban Core Model Improvements: Vale Neighborhood

Study Area

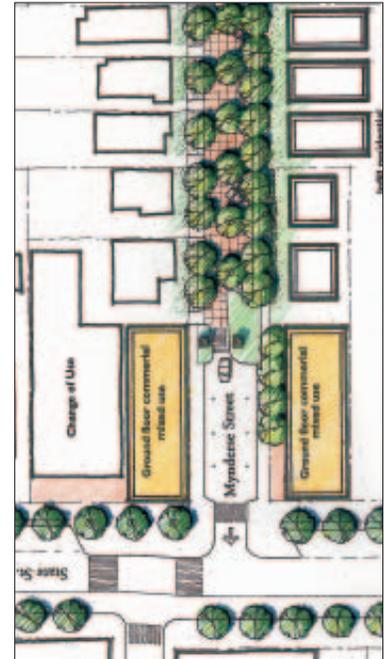
“I believe improved aesthetics are critical in giving the impression of safety and positive change.”
- Schenectady Resident



Examples of traffic calming on Mynderse Street and Victory Avenue



Initial Improvements



Final Improvements



Existing condition

“This plan would make working/owning a business in the Vale neighborhood much more ideal. It has great potential for improvements in that area.”
- Schenectady Resident



After installation of street improvements



After mixed-use infill development

Potential Improvements:

- Introduce street improvements to spur private investment in the area
- Use traffic calming techniques and redevelopment of key sites to dissuade criminal activity
- Develop community services, new residences, and a variety of commercial uses on some existing surface parking lots

Achieving the Preferred Future

The future of the Route 5 Corridor holds much promise. To achieve the Preferred Future, the Corridor Communities will have to face and overcome many challenges. This study has successfully concluded a planning process that has established an initial vision for the future of the Corridor. This vision—the Preferred Future—is only a starting point. It is now incumbent upon the variety of Corridor Stakeholders from NYSDOT to the residents of the Vale Neighborhood in Schenectady to implement the Preferred Future using the Action Plan in the Final Report and to treat this plan as a “living document”, refining it and amending it as future needs dictate.

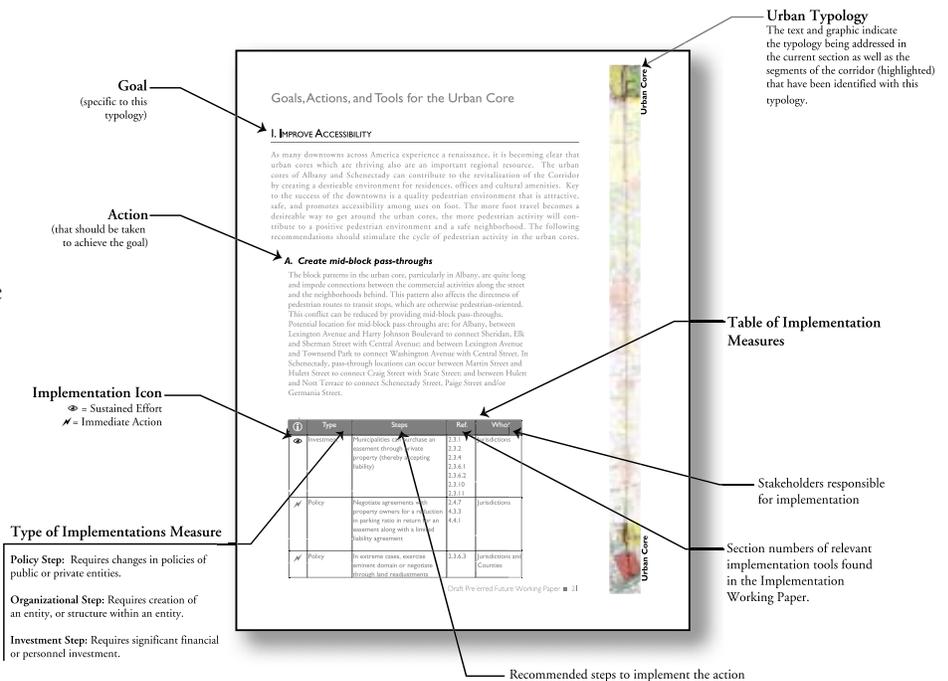
A fact to celebrate is that each of the five Corridor municipalities, along with the Metroplex authority, have adopted a resolution officially endorsing the land use and transportation vision articulated through this study. These resolutions also made explicit the intent of each community to work with CDTC, CDTA, NYSDOT and each other to investigate the planning, zoning and other mechanisms needed to bring the vision to reality and to participate in follow up tasks.

New Visions, the Capital District’s regional transportation plan, calls for a regional development plan which builds on the interconnection between quality of life and economic growth, seeing the two as complements rather than contradictions. The plan makes it clear that balanced growth cannot be achieved without regional cooperation. To

this end, this study acknowledges the role of the region’s Corridors as a focus for high-quality development and transportation that link the region’s communities together. The essence of the NY 5 Study recommendations echoes the need for cooperation across city, county, and property lines in order to enhance the greater quality of life along the Corridor. The NY 5 Study process and hopefully its results will serve as a model for the other Corridors in the region as well as for regional cooperation in general.

How to Use this Study

The results of this Study should be used by Corridor Stakeholders as an initial vision for the future and a guide for achieving this future. The Study can also be used as an educational tool. The complexities of the Preferred Alternative and the implementation recommendations require that a consensus be maintained. Without broad support the implementation of the Preferred Future will be all the more difficult.



Because of the important role of cooperation in implementing the Preferred Future, the Action Plan has been written to provide all potential users – developers, city planners, elected officials, property owners, employers, residents, and more – with an easy way to understand and access the tools which will be required to move the vision forward.

The Preferred Future Action Plan, included in the Final Report, is the “guidebook” for implementing the Preferred Future. Cooperation is at the heart of the Action Plan. It is designed to be equally meaningful to all stakeholders, orienting users with steps which must be taken within their domain to accomplish and participate in the Preferred Future. The Action Plan integrates the actions of all stakeholders into the broader goals of the Preferred Future. Stakeholders will have to be creative, open-minded, and ready to think regionally and act locally. Above all this document challenges stakeholders to operate “outside of the box” of their everyday interests.

The Final Report should also be used as a “living document.” The Preferred Future will be refined throughout the

implementation process as policies, programs, and designs discussed here are carried forward into reality. Refinements will occur at a broad level with the implementation of the BRT system, and with revisions to communities’ comprehensive plans, as well as at the detailed level with the design and construction of streetscape improvements and new development on private properties.

The Corridor communities will need to refer to the document periodically to see that the individual actions that are occurring are in fact moving the Corridor towards the Preferred Future.

A summary of the goals and actions which appear in the Action Plan appears below.

Recommended Action Plan

1. Encourage Economic Growth

- Maintain and enhance existing public & private investment and development;
- Encourage growth of the Capital District region;
- Coordinate public & private economic development; and,
- Create neighborhood & district revitalization plans.

2. Facilitate Redevelopment

- Update community plans;
- Provide strategic business planning assistance;
- Reform zoning & building codes to support reuse and mixed-use development;
- Provide loans & grants for business & residential revitalization; and,
- Support public or private assembly of underutilized properties on Central Avenue & State Street.

3. Require Quality, Coordinated, & Pedestrian-friendly Development And Revitalization

- Prepare model land use standards & design guidelines;
- Create station area plans;
- Establish incentives for good land uses & design;
- Mitigation & other fee reductions;
- Loans & grants for facade, signage, & code compliance improvements; and,
- Loans & grants for mixed-use projects.

4. Create A Multi-modal Transportation System: For Pedestrians, Transit, Autos, Bicycles, & Service Traffic

- Establish NY 5 Capital Improvements Program;
- Finalize street section designs & begin incremental construction;
- Finalize BRT system design & begin incremental implementation;
- Create “shared” parking standards & parking districts; and,
- Build transit stations using joint-development & other creative mechanisms.

Capital Budget

Attaining the Preferred Future will require steady and constructive investment by both private and public sectors. Substantial funds will be required from both sectors to achieve the goals of the Capitalize Albany initiative in downtown Albany and the City of Schenectady's downtown master plan. (The full buildout of the Western Gateway Intermodal Center, including the private office building, is estimated to cost \$30 M alone, for example.) Regular and recurring redevelopment of existing commercial sites over the coming years will total hundreds of millions of dollars of capital investment prior to full implementation of the Corridor plan.

From this perspective, the requirements for auto, pedestrian and transit infrastructure appear large, but within reason. There is a significant opportunity to implement aspects of the Preferred Future in conjunction with routine highway rehabilitation, making the incremental cost of the Corridor plan more manageable. Further, the Preferred Future's commitment to Bus Rapid Transit makes implementation of a "high-end" transit system feasible immediately, with complete implementation occurring over time depending upon available funding.

The total capital cost of the highway and transit system recommendations of the Preferred Future for the Corridor is slightly in excess of \$200 M. This can be divided roughly as shown in the table below.

Alternative Paths to Implementation

The public and private stakeholders with direct influence on the future of the NY 5 Corridor have expressed interest in and support for the Preferred Future. The implementation actions (what needs to happen) and implementation mechanisms (how it can be accomplished) have been outlined in the Final Report and several follow up and ongoing tasks included in the Plan are getting underway, including establishment of a BRT/Street Design Engineering Committee, creation of a Route 5 Coalition stakeholders group, and a zoning revision analysis. Implementation of the Preferred Future is off to a great start, but questions remain around the level of long-term commitment to implementation. How serious about implementation are the elected and appointed officials in the communities along the Corridor? What priority does the NY 5 Corridor have within the regional transportation plan? What priority does BRT have among CDTA's various responsibilities and constraints? How likely is it that property owners see the benefit of a collaborative Corridor redevelopment program? Will regional efforts provide sufficient growth to support revitalization of the Corridor?

The answer to these and similar questions will dictate the appropriate strategy and timetable for implementation of the Preferred Future. Initial answers to these questions are reflected in the fact that the five corridor municipalities, along with CDTC's Planning and Policy Committees and the Metroplex Authority officially adopted resolutions stating their endorsement of this study's recommendations and pledge to work together toward achievement of the Preferred Future.

Components of Capital Budget

Component	Full Cost	Current TIP
Hwy Rehab and Enhancement	\$104 M	\$ 25 M
Bus Rapid Transit	\$ 25 M	\$12 M
Boulevard	\$ 25 M	\$0 M
Utilities	\$ 33 M	\$ 0 M
Signals, other	\$20 M	\$ 4 M
TOTAL	\$ 207 M	\$ 41 M

Note: "Current TIP" reflects 1999-2001 committed funds and 2001-2006 Implementation Paths and Milestones.

Possible Path 1: Nominal Support Path

Elected and appointed officials perceive modest interest in the Preferred Future from the broad community, largely insufficient to support the difficult work of regulatory changes, Corridor promotion or property assembly. Minor pieces of the preferred land use future are obtained through irregular efforts negotiating with developers to obtain modest alterations to development proposals. Transportation system features are enhanced in the Corridor as funds permit, in conjunction with projects initiated for infrastructure rehab or traffic safety purposes. A first generation of signal upgrades and modest implementation of bus transit improvements is put in place quickly, but support from communities is insufficient to sustain the effort.

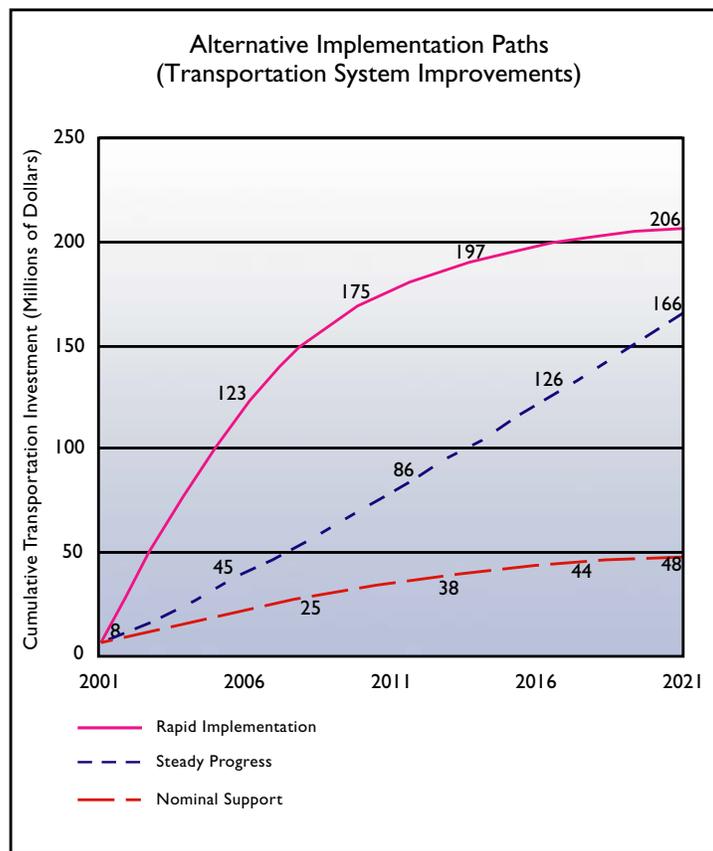
Economic development agencies and private property owners respond primarily to near-term market forces and national trends in development styles with minimal interaction with specific Corridor goals or plans. Failure to witness steady progress diminishes the value and credibility of the Corridor Plan and aspirations for continuous transit and streetscape improvements diminish over time. Only disconnected portions of the preferred transportation future are in place after twenty years and most opportunities to achieve key land use components are missed because of limited policy commitment and implementation difficulty.

Accompanying regional economic "temperature": cool to warm. Corridor economic temperature: cool -- and cooling further.

Possible Path 2: Steady Progress Path

Elected and appointed officials perceive strong support from the broad community for the Preferred Future. Transportation agencies and other parties commit to implementation of the Preferred Future and treat the Corridor as an important part of regional priorities. Economic development agencies recognize Corridor goals and plans and adjust actions to fit. Private property owners engage effectively with each other and with governmental officials and agencies to leverage public infrastructure investment to encourage private redevelopment investment. Municipalities explore and steadily adopt regulatory modifications to encourage private investment of a type that moves the Corridor toward the Preferred Future.

Related downtown development in Schenectady and Albany steadily grows economic bases for the Corridor market. Neighborhood and business improvement districts modestly "spruce up" sections of the Corridor. Bus Rapid Transit deployment occurs incrementally with a first generation in the next five years leading to a greater deployment of features over ten or more years. Implementation of much, but not all, of the identified highway / streetscape system features is reached after twenty years based on the street design booklet which has been adopted by most jurisdictions. Significant land use change is evident after twenty years, but full implementation of the preferred land use future is prevented partly by modest levels of



It is critical for all stakeholders to recognize that the timetable for implementation will directly reflect community support and commitment to the Preferred Future.

regional economic growth and partly by the many long-lived redevelopment activities that occur before communities adopt new regulatory mechanisms. *Accompanying regional economic temperature: warm. Corridor economic temperature: warm.*

Possible Path 3: Accelerated Implementation Path

Elected and appointed officials perceive strong support for rapid implementation of the Preferred Future. Transportation agencies and other parties assign a high priority to the Corridor and assist local officials' efforts to articulate the need. Local officials and transportation agencies secure supplemental public funding from local, state and/or federal sources to permit implementation of Bus Rapid Transit and other transit, highway and streetscape improvements in a concentrated time period (ten years); changes in succeeding years require less funding. Municipalities explore and quickly adopt many recommended implementation mechanisms from the NY 5 Study to assist in property assemblage, site design and community layout. Private property owners engage effectively with each other on a Corridor level and with governmental officials and agencies to leverage public infrastructure investment to encourage private redevelopment investment. Regional economic marketing efforts and external events succeed in projecting a positive, attractive image to the nation and the world; sufficient economic growth provides for much redevelopment activity along the Corridor, largely achieving the land use future within ten or so years. *Accompanying regional economic temperature: hot. Corridor economic temperature: warm—and heating up.*

What Path Are We Beginning to Take?

Comparing the current situation to the characteristics of the three implementation paths provides substantial encouragement regarding implementation. Stakeholders today appear to be seeking the steady progress path with interest in exploring the rapid implementation path. However, continued progress on this path is not assured by current activities; continuing commitment and hard work will be required to sustain the steady improvements.

Rapid implementation will not occur without substantial effort that turns up the regional and Corridor economic and political “temperature” a notch from that evident today. Unless such effort is deemed feasible and appropriate, the more modest steady progress expectations and timetable should reflect the maximum reasonable expectations for the Corridor.

Relative to the projected capital budget for highway and transit improvements, the three paths differ significantly regarding the pace of investment. The chart on the previous page reflects the likely buildout of highway, transit and utility projects over the coming 20 years. As described above, the rapid implementation path achieves the majority of needed investment within ten years; in contrast the nominal support path reflects diminishing momentum and declining rates of investment after the initial wave of efforts. Funding shown in the 2001-06 TIP, if sustained, would be consistent with the steady progress implementation path.

Important Milestones Along the Way

The Action Plan (Chapter IV of the Final Report) describes the “what” and the “who” of the wide range of actions required to achieve the Preferred Future. The Implementation Mechanisms (Final Report Appendix A) provides a menu of the “how”. The pace of change, the ability to continuously refine the Action Plan, and momentum toward full implementation will be measured by the timeliness and effectiveness with which key milestones are reached.

The milestones listed below appear to be the most strategic, the most catalytic. Success in reaching each of these

milestones will breed further success; failure to reach success will diminish prospects for further success. There are a number of milestones which must be reached in the next few years (certainly within a five year period) in order to maintain momentum on the Steady Progress implementation path. Additional milestones must also be reached in short order (again, within five years) if the Rapid Implementation Path is to be attained. Failure to reach these elements over a lengthy period of time will increasingly push the Corridor toward the nominal support path of minimal levels of implementation.

Near-Term Milestones to Sustain Momentum on the Steady Progress Implementation Path

1. Local Community Buy-In
2. Official Endorsement of the Preferred Future and the Action Plan
3. Business Improvement District Success
4. Neighborhood Association Success
5. Downtown Investment
6. Initial ITS Success
7. Initial Transit Success
8. Initial Streetscape Success
9. Zoning and Regulatory Changes
10. Improved Prospects for the Regional Economy
11. Continued Transportation Funding to the Region
12. Continued State Programs Supporting Urban Revitalization

Additional Near-Term Milestones For the Rapid Implementation Path

1. Regional Community Buy-In
2. Development Community Buy-In
3. Corridor-level Identity and Coordinated Promotion
4. Supplemental Funding
5. External Events that Heat Up the Regional Economy
6. TDM and Parking Management Changes
7. Adoption of Property Assembly Tools
8. Pursuit of Boulevard and Transit Lane Elements

“What You Can Do To Support The Preferred Future”

Take advantage of neighborhood revitalization programs. Look for home renovation and home-ownership programs in your neighborhoods. Small business development programs may also be available throughout the Corridor as a catalyst for revitalizing the local economy. Small businesses can look forward to “thinking outside the box” and taking advantage of new policies such as local business development programs, outdoor café seating, and signage programs. Larger companies should look for opportunities in redevelopment, reuse or infill sites.

Advocate for pedestrian and street improvements. Let your jurisdiction know that you want these improvements. Initial designs for more pedestrian-friendly streets have been developed in the process of identifying the Preferred Future. In many cases these small but effective changes can be built into routine road and sidewalk maintenance as well as new construction. Implementing these changes on your street may be easier than you think.

Create a Framework for Corridor Cooperation. Cooperation among the five communities that share the Corridor is key to realizing the Preferred Future. Neighborhood and business associations are the building blocks of this cooperation. Communities can create Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) along their portion of the Corridor, and then work with each other to ensure that a unified vision for the Corridor is maintained.

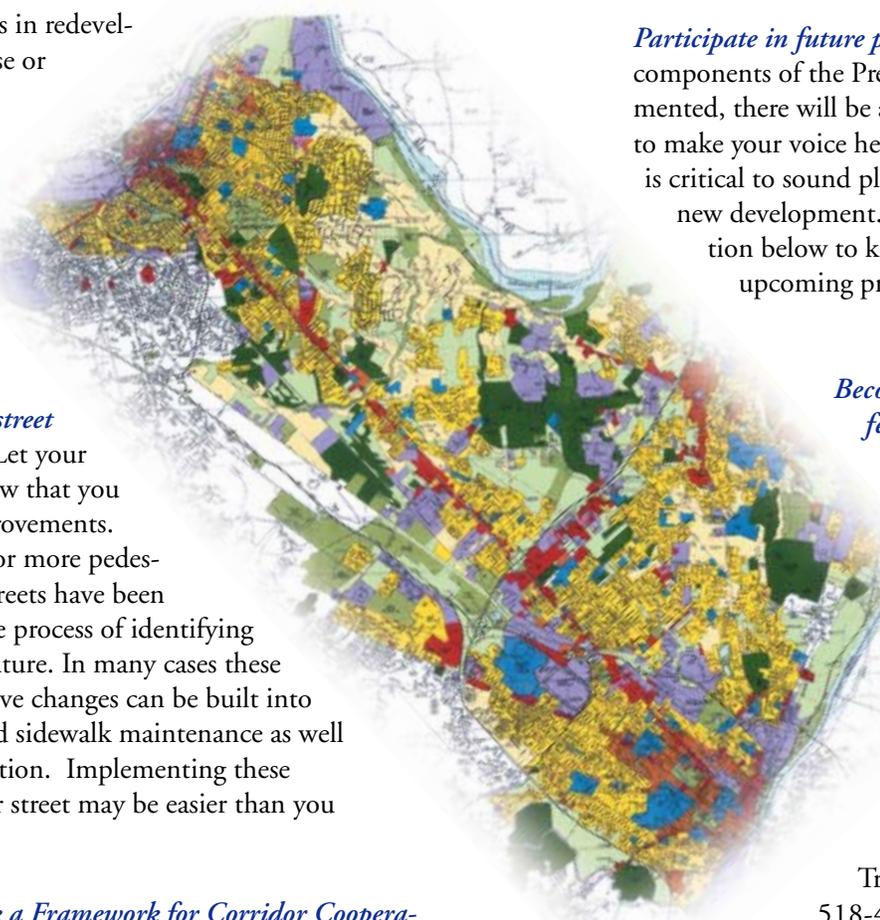
Support Transit and Transit-Oriented Development. The more people are willing to incorporate public transit into their daily routine, the more advanced Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) will become in the Corridor. Property owners and developers should coordinate with CDTA to integrate new and existing development with the BRT system. Neighborhood groups can also work with CDTA to ensure that transit is more accessible from your neighborhood.

Participate in future planning processes. As the components of the Preferred Future are implemented, there will be additional opportunities to make your voice heard. Public participation is critical to sound planning and execution of new development. Use the contact information below to keep informed about upcoming projects.

Become familiar with the Preferred Future Action Plan.

This document is the “guidebook” for the Preferred Future. The Action Plan and other sections of the Final Report, as well as additional detailed information and graphics, is available by visiting www.ny5.org or by contacting the Capital District Transportation Committee at 518-458-2161 (contact person: Anne Benware).

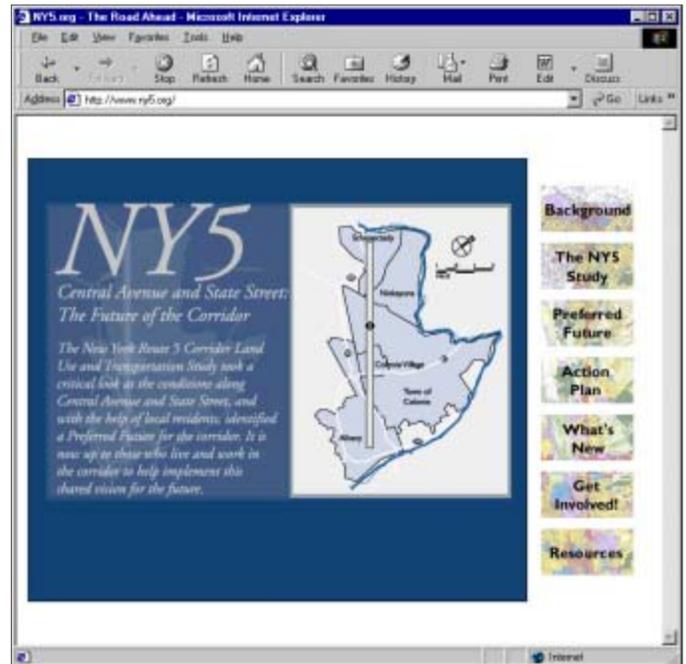
Encourage public policies which support compact, mixed-use development. Public support of mixed-use development can go a long way toward realizing this more efficient land use pattern. Most of the jurisdictions along the Corridor will soon need to create or update their comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances. Get involved in this process to ensure that these plans support compact, mixed-use development that balances local and regional uses.



Get Involved!

If you would like more information about this study or to learn how you can support the Preferred Future in your neighborhood, please contact

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5 Computer Drive West
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Comprehensive and up-to-date information on this Study and the Preferred Future may be accessed on-line at www.ny5.org

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