

# HOOSICK STREET PHASE II CORRIDOR PLAN

## CITY OF TROY, NEW YORK



*Final Draft – December 2004*

*PREPARED BY*

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*AND*

**TROY ARCHITECTURAL PROGRAM (TAP)**

**Table of Contents**

**I. Introduction Page 2**

Background and Purpose .....4  
A History of Hoosick Street.....6  
Project Approach .....8

**II. Existing Conditions Page 9**

Land Use, Zoning, and the Environmental Setting .....9  
Transportation .....11

**III. Market Study Page 13**

**IV. Hoosick Street Corridor Plan Page 37**

Overall Corridor Concept .....37  
The Hoosick Parkway .....38  
Sub-area Recommendations:  
Hudson River to 10th Street  
Land Use and Urban Design .....39  
Transportation .....41  
10th Street to Burdett Avenue  
Land Use and Urban Design .....44  
Transportation .....49  
Burdett Avenue to Woodrow Court  
Land Use and Urban Design .....51  
Transportation .....53  
Sycaway Neighborhood  
Land Use and Urban Design .....54  
Transportation .....55

**V. Implementation Page 56**

Short-term Actions: Initiate within first two years .....58  
Medium-term Actions: two to five years .....66  
Long-term Actions: five to ten years .....67

## Introduction

Hoosick Street (NYS Route 7) is a major roadway that traverses the City of Troy in an east to west orientation. It is part of the city's traditional grid of streets, but it also serves as part of the Capital District's regional highway network. Alternate Route 7, which links the Adirondack Northway (I-87) with Interstate 787 on the west side of the Hudson River, continues across the river on the Collar City Bridge. The bridge rides over Hoosick Street for several blocks across the narrow strip of lowlands along the river at the western edge of the City. As the City's topography rises up from the valley bottom the bridge ends abruptly at 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Here the Interstate Highway System dumps onto Hoosick Street - 43,000 vehicles per day (AADT) travel past this intersection. Hoosick Street, now a multi-lane urban arterial, continues up the hill intersecting city streets at regular block intervals.



Hoosick Street should be understood in both its local and regional contexts. Locally, Hoosick Street functions as an urban street, a primary route from the Hudson River east to the City of Troy's boundary with the Town of Brunswick. It is one of the main corridors up the hill from the river valley bottom to neighborhoods on the hillside overlooking downtown Troy and communities to the west. The road provides access to businesses, homes, and institutions along its edge, and to neighborhoods to its north and south.

Hoosick Street also serves as a critical transportation route at the regional level. It provides access from the Interstate Highway System to the City of Troy and to points east via the Collar City Bridge. Commuters from the Town of Brunswick and other parts of eastern Rensselaer County use this route to travel to and from the heart of the Capital District. It also serves as the primary transportation corridor to southern Vermont for those traveling from the Capital District or points south and west of Albany.

As a result of the local and regional demands placed on this corridor, Hoosick Street is among the busiest sections of road in the Capital District. Traffic volumes on Hoosick Street are comparable to those on Wolf Road in the Town of Colonie. However a primary difference between these four-lane arterials is that Hoosick Street cuts through a city, and through neighborhoods that predate its expanded role as a regional transportation corridor. Wolf Road traverses land that was only developed in the last forty years. Development occurred on the open land along Wolf Road in response to the construction of the Adirondack Northway (I-87). Generally speaking, Wolf Road's function is to provide vehicular access for the commercial land that adjoins it. Regional transportation is served instead by the Northway.



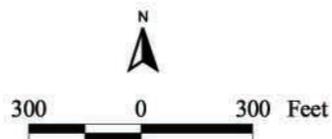
## Aerial Perspective

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March 2003

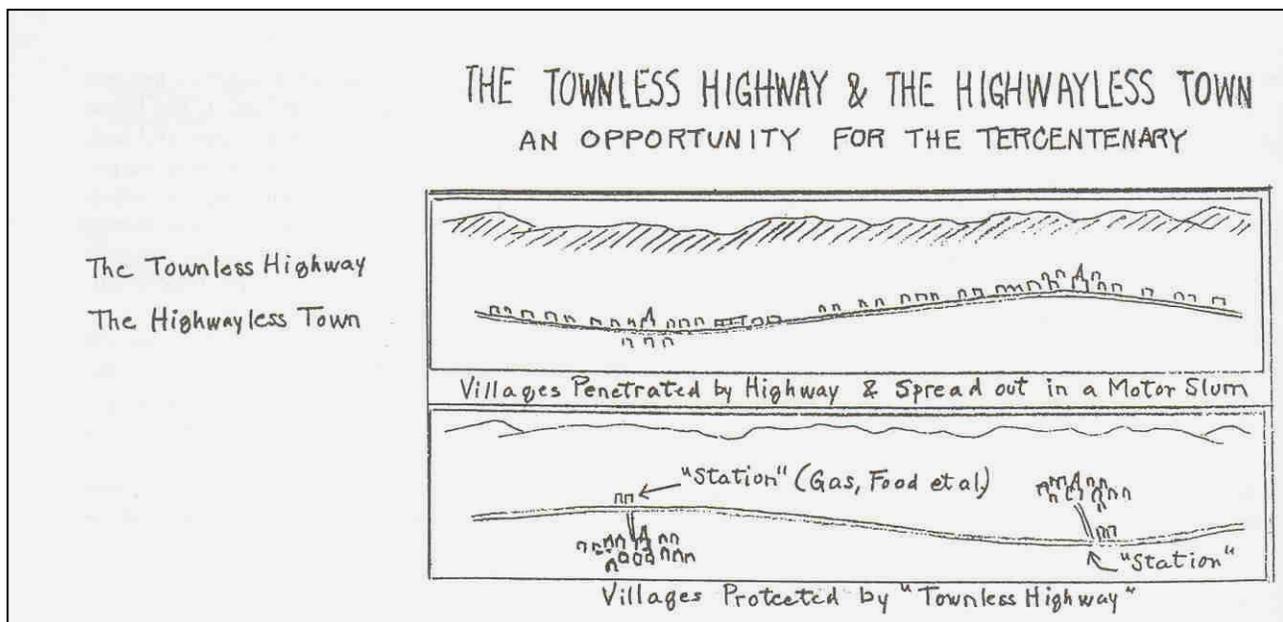


- Parcel Boundaries
- Building Footprints

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**HOOSICK STREET PHASE II**  
**CORRIDOR PLAN**

Hoosick Street must provide access to the parcels of land that adjoin it, and it must serve regional transportation needs. There is a tension between these functions that has remained unresolved for Hoosick Street. As a result, Hoosick Street and the land and neighborhoods that surround it have struggled. It does not perform well in any context, and as a result it is viewed as a problem on many levels. It is a transportation problem due to periodic congestion and vehicular and pedestrian safety issues. It is a city and neighborhood problem because attempts to improve its transportation function have made the street less hospitable to the people who live nearby. And it is a city economic development problem because it under-performs in terms of business activity and property values, and creates a bad image for the City of Troy.

These problems should not be a surprise. In the 1920's, just as the nation's early highway system was becoming a greater concern to the growing number of motorists, there were some who recognized both the opportunity and the danger in the future patterns of growth that might emerge in conjunction with an expanded highway system. Benton MacKaye's illustration promoting the ideal of "The Townless Highway and the Highwayless Town" is an example of this perceptive thinking. In MacKaye's view, both the community and the highway would be better served if they remained apart. Unfortunately, this simple principle was repeatedly violated as highway construction in America boomed during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Hoosick Street, like thousands of other roads across the country, was improved as a highway arterial even as it traversed directly through city blocks. The resulting "motor slum" (MacKaye's words) is a nuisance for the motorist and the resident alike.



Sketch by Benton MacKaye (1929). Published in Randall Arendt's Rural By Design: Maintaining Small Town Character (1994), American Planning Association.

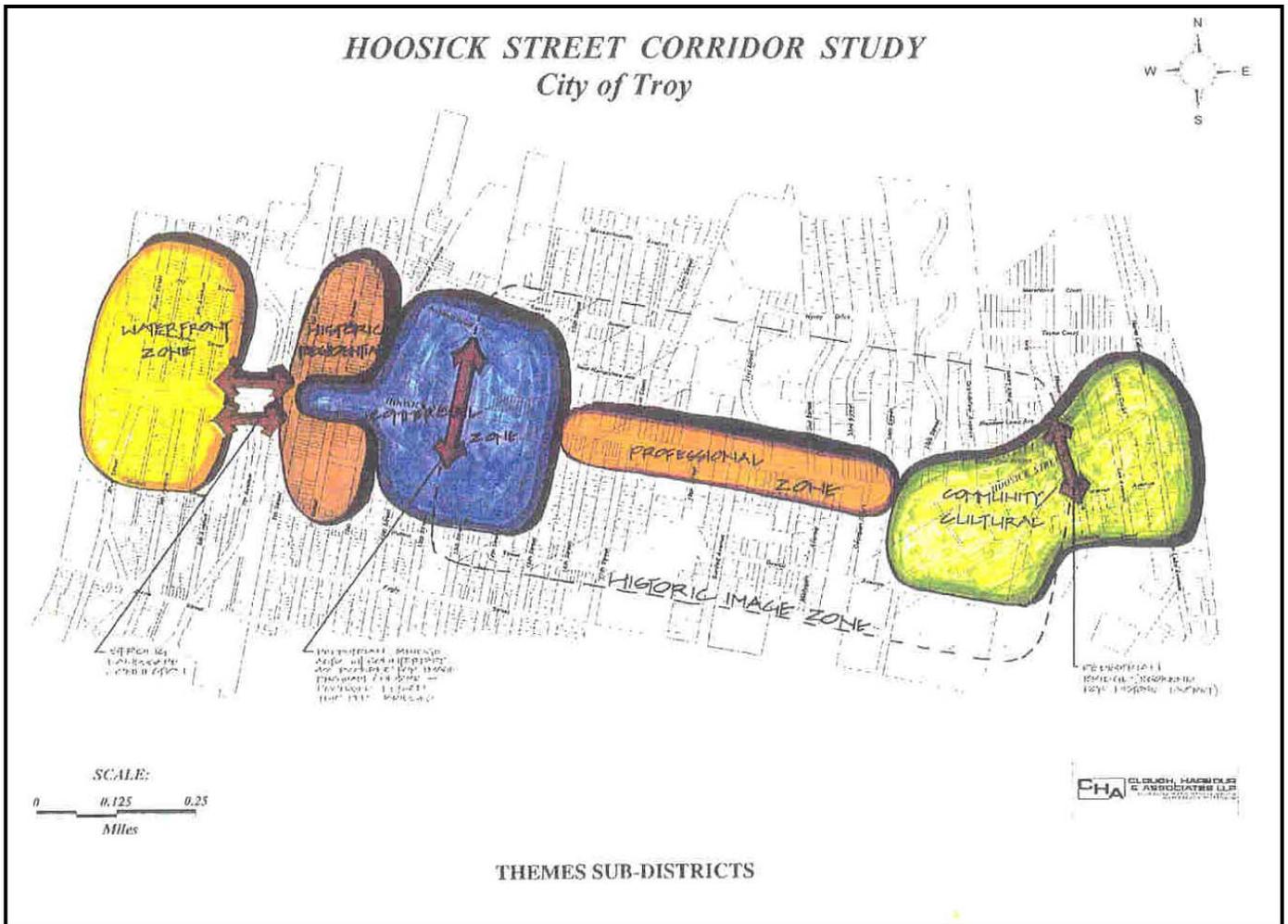
Of course, it is not likely that we can now separate Hoosick Street's local and regional functions. For example, construction of a bypass highway to southern Vermont is not a realistic option today even if it were desirable. Hoosick Street itself could be turned over more completely to one or the other of its functions. We could, for example, suggest that the highway be further "improved" for regional vehicular travel. Additional lanes could be

added to the road and access could be limited in an effort to move cars more quickly through the corridor. This option would probably not be popular with local residents, business owners, and city leaders. It would also be self-defeating in the long-run because the increased capacity on Hoosick Street would likely lead to additional development east of the city, the additional development would result in more vehicular trips, and ultimately the road would become congested again. Alternately, Hoosick Street could be narrowed significantly, adding time to regional trips or forcing some of them to find different routes. Although neighborhood quality of life would be greatly improved, it would be difficult to convince county, regional, and state officials that this option was acceptable. But what should the role of Hoosick Street be? The challenge of this study is to define a vision for the future of this corridor that balances these multiple demands and provides detailed solutions to the associated problems that have emerged for the city and the region.

### *Background and Purpose*

The City of Troy initiated Phase II of the Hoosick Street Corridor Study in the summer of 2002. It was funded through a grant from the Capital District Transportation Committee's (CDTC) Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program. An Advisory Committee comprised of community representatives was established by the City and convened for the first time in March 2003. The Advisory Committee, City staff, and a consulting team led by The Saratoga Associates and including Greenman-Pedersen, Inc., and the Troy Architectural Program, worked together on this project. One of the City of Troy's primary desired outcomes from this study is the rebuilding of Hoosick Street within the next five to ten years. This plan provides the detailed vision required to move forward with engineering and ultimately construction; and to that end, the City of Troy is also hoping to secure funding through the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for this project. In addition to this large highway project, the plan provides recommendations for numerous other actions that the City of Troy and its partners in the community and the region can initiate to improve the Hoosick Street Corridor.

Thankfully, this is not the first study to address the role of Hoosick Street. The Hoosick Street Corridor Study (Phase I) was completed in February 2000. That initial study organized a significant public involvement and information program in order to develop an understanding of the magnitude and scope of concerns in the corridor area. Through this process, the Phase I study concluded that, "Physically enhancing the existing Corridor to promote pedestrian safety, improve local traffic access and circulation, minimize impacts of arterial traffic, preserve the character of residential neighborhoods and mitigate land use conflicts" should be the preferred alternative. The study contained a series of broad recommendations for land use management, physical enhancement, and redevelopment in the corridor. The ideas generated in that initial study of the corridor served as a starting point for discussion in the current Phase II Study.

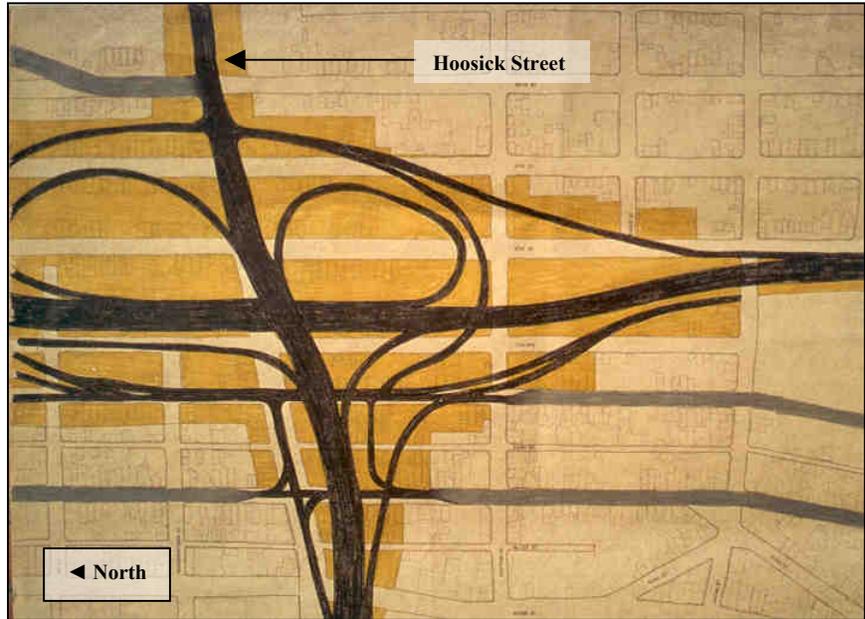


Later in the year, Troy’s Citywide Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan (November 2000) was completed. This report discussed the role of Hoosick Street in terms of increasing the retail sales capture rate, and it recommended zoning and incentives to encourage the conversion of all of Hoosick Street’s frontage to commercial and retail uses (encouraging redevelopment rather than residential conversions).

Currently the City of Troy is developing a citywide comprehensive plan. At the same time it is preparing a major rewrite of its zoning code in order to help implement the comprehensive plan. The Hoosick Street Phase II Corridor Plan is intended to complement these efforts. However, given the current level of development interest in certain areas of the Hoosick Street corridor, it might be even be reasonable to expedite the process of approving this plan and implementing suggested zoning changes prior to completing the citywide effort.

*A History of Hoosick Street* [by the Troy Architectural Program (TAP)]

The neighborhoods north and south of lower Hoosick Street have housed Troy’s low income and working class populations since well before Urban Renewal of the 1960’s and one of its implements of change, the National Highway and Defense Act of 1954. The area’s evolution, from 19<sup>th</sup> century enclave of the wealthy to communities of the disenfranchised, while never officially acknowledged, was the widely held belief behind the location of the Hoosick Street Bridge and the ill-fated North/South Arterial (see Proposed Plan, 1968).



**Proposed Plan (1968). East is at the top. Yellow area indicates buildings to be demolished.**

Public outcry followed the New York State Department Of Transportation

(NYSDOT) announcement that a bridge and an arterial connecting the highway systems on the Albany side of the Hudson River to Vermont, was to be built along the Maplewood/Hoosick Street transportation corridor planned some 20 years earlier. The years of disinvestment in the properties within the corridor prior to the announcement, however, had sealed the fate of Hoosick Street. Hoosick Street, the once unifying, commercial spine of neighborhoods to the immediate north and south and in the distant past, the trolley route to the suburban expansion to the north and east of downtown, was to be given over completely to the automobile.

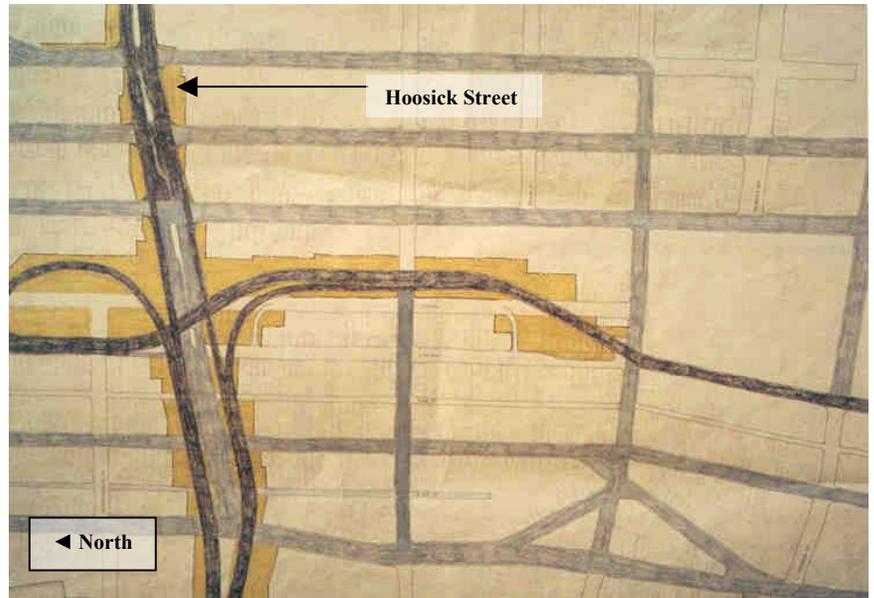
State and local government further diluted the response of the disenfranchised residents by pitting the local issue of livable neighborhoods against the promise of jobs and economic development of the greater community. The last vestige of civil protest, a lawsuit alleging the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was inadequate by limiting the impact study to the area between the Hudson River and 10<sup>th</sup> Street, was beaten back in court in 1972. NYSDOT made concessions on the bridge and roadway construction only in direct response to the construction budget (see As-Built Plan, 1977), with the promise that any adverse impacts would be addressed later.

The bridge opened in the late 1970’s. Some 25 years later, ‘adverse impacts’, many of which were forecast by bridge ‘opponents’, are the bridge’s legacy for the immediate neighbors and, often, for the motorists for whom the arterial was originally built. Congestion, pollution, noise, safety issues and divided communities have resulted in unacceptable living conditions, declining property values and a negative perception of Troy by those passing through while promoting sprawl in the once-rural, outlying areas.

Remaining residents have labored to convince public officials of the adverse conditions imposed by the bridge, all the while, continuing to suffer from insensitive planning decisions. A sprawling bus garage, acres of off-street parking, a ‘bypass’ along 8<sup>th</sup> Street and commercial development geared more to the motorist than to neighboring taxpayers are additional insults to the community building process.

This Phase II Corridor Plan represents the first major opportunity for responsible change along Hoosick Street in the last forty-five years.....

- A perspective by TAP, Inc.



**As-Built Plan (1977). East is at the top. Yellow area indicates buildings to be demolished.**

*Project Approach*

**Market – Land Use and Design – Transportation**

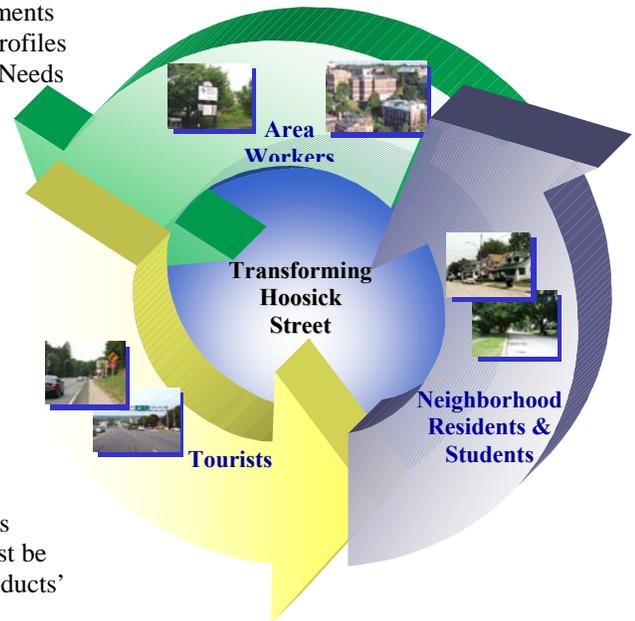
Development of the plan began with an analysis of existing conditions in the corridor. This included land use, zoning, environmental features, traffic and transportation, etc. Community perceptions of the corridor were identified through a complete review of the Phase I Corridor Study, and were confirmed and expanded through meetings with stakeholders and a public workshop held in May 2003.

The plan includes a market analysis and survey to determine the wants and needs of the primary market segments in the corridor – neighborhood residents and students, area workers, and tourists. Understanding the study area’s market potential is important to developing realistic ideas about future development / redevelopment opportunities along the Hoosick Street corridor. In addition to informing decisions about land use and physical development in the plan, the market analysis can also serve as a guide for business retention, expansion, and recruitment efforts once the plan is adopted.

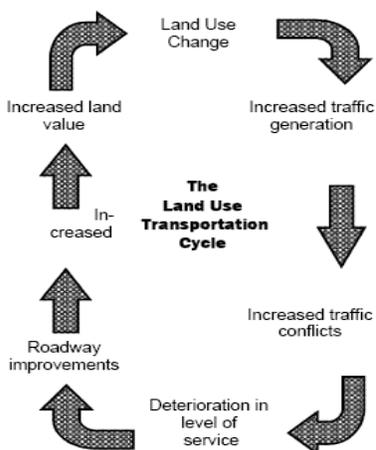
The land use and physical development plan is coordinated with recommendations for transportation improvements to enhance rather than further degrade the corridor. As the illustration below demonstrates, land use and transportation are closely linked. By addressing these issues together, the City of Troy and the region can ensure that investments of time, energy, and resources work toward complimentary ends. The approach advocated in this plan attempts to create a symbiotic relationship between the proposed land use changes and the proposed transportation system improvements.

**Market Analysis**

- Identify Market Segments
- Develop Customer Profiles
- Determine Wants & Needs



Built environment is important *but* it must be combined with 'products'



**The Land Use – Transportation Cycle**

How we use our land (i.e., for agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial development) impacts our transportation facilities, modes of travel (i.e., cars, buses, bicycles or walking), services and vice versa. This land use-transportation relationship or cycle is illustrated by describing what commonly occurs when a road is built or improved. Land along the road becomes more accessible. This increased accessibility makes the land more valuable and attractive to developers. As land along the road is developed, traffic volumes and the number of driveways increase. This results in more congestion and a deterioration of the road’s capacity to efficiently move people and goods. The reduced efficiency of the road eventually necessitates roadway capacity improvements that may encourage additional development and the start of a new cycle.

From: “How to...Link Land Use and Transportation Planning” (2003) Stafford Regional Planning Commission, Dover, New Hampshire

## Existing Conditions

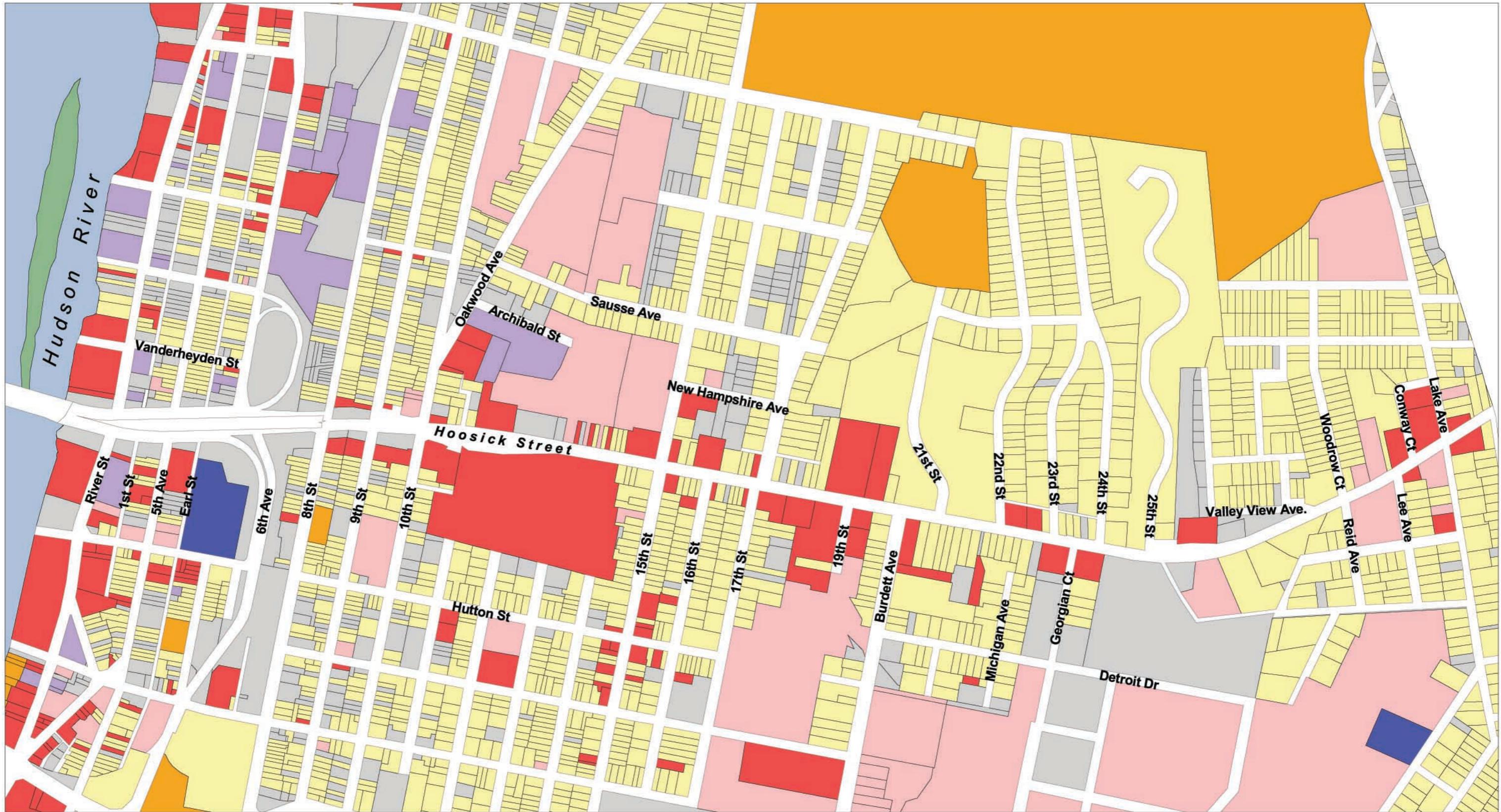
### *Land Use, Zoning, and the Environmental Setting*

Land use based on tax parcel data, zoning, and environmental features are illustrated on a series of maps that follow this page. These maps were generated from existing data provided by the City of Troy and from other public agencies.

Land Use - As would be expected for a corridor that has undergone such transition, Hoosick Street contains virtually every major category of land use. There are numerous vacant parcels under the Collar City Bridge that are generally used as parking for the Hedley Park Place and Flanagan Square buildings on River Street. A large parcel on the southwest corner of Hoosick Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue contains the Capital District Transportation Authority's (CDTA) bus facility, and is categorized as a public service use. Heading east from 8<sup>th</sup> Street for several blocks, parcels fronting on Hoosick Street are mostly used for commercial purposes. The largest of these is the site of Troy Plaza, an under-performing strip shopping center on the south side of Hoosick Street with its entrance at 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Opposite the entrance to the Troy Plaza is an entrance to the Seton Health System's Massry Center, categorized as a community service land use. East of the Troy Plaza to Burdett Street, a mixture of commercial and residential land uses exists on both sides of Hoosick Street. Starting at Burdett Avenue, the land use character of Hoosick Street changes. There are a few scattered commercial parcels between Burdett Avenue and the Sycaway neighborhood at the top of the hill, but this area is primarily residential. Beginning at 25<sup>th</sup> Street there are large vacant parcels on both sides of Hoosick Street where the topography is steepest. Finally at the top of the hill is the Sycaway neighborhood. Starting at Woodrow Court and Reid Avenue, community service (school, church, temple) and commercial land uses dominate the Hoosick Street frontage to the City boundary with the Town of Brunswick.

To the north and south of Hoosick Street, land use is mostly residential. However, there are some noteworthy exceptions. North of the Massry Center at 13<sup>th</sup> Street, the Seton Health System's St. Mary's Hospital and associated facilities are located between Oakwood Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street. South of Hoosick Street on 15<sup>th</sup> Street, a mixed use, residential and neighborhood commercial area leads to the 260-acre campus of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI). Also south of Hoosick Street along Burdett Avenue is the Northeast Health System's Samaritan Hospital and associated facilities.

Zoning - Zoning along Hoosick Street falls into several categories. Most of the land from the Hudson River east to almost Burdett Avenue falls into the B5 - Highway Commercial District. Exceptions include the Industrial Zoning District that extends south from Hoosick Street along River Street; the B-3 Shopping Center Commercial District that includes land on the south side of Hoosick Street from 10<sup>th</sup> Street to (and including) the Troy Plaza; the R-3 Multiple Family Residential, Medium Density District which runs along the south side of Hoosick Street from the Troy Plaza to 16<sup>th</sup> Street; and four parcels that are in the R-1 Single Family Residential, Detached District on the north side of Hoosick Street just west of Lavin Court. East of Burdett Avenue, there are areas zoned R-1 Single Family Residential, Detached and R-3 Multiple Family Residential, Medium Density. The Institutional Zoning District (part of the RPI campus) extends to the south side of Hoosick Street across from 25<sup>th</sup> Street. At the top of the hill, just west of Valley View Avenue, there are a few blocks of R-2 Two Family

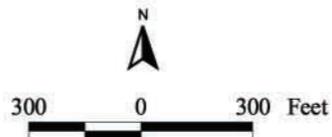


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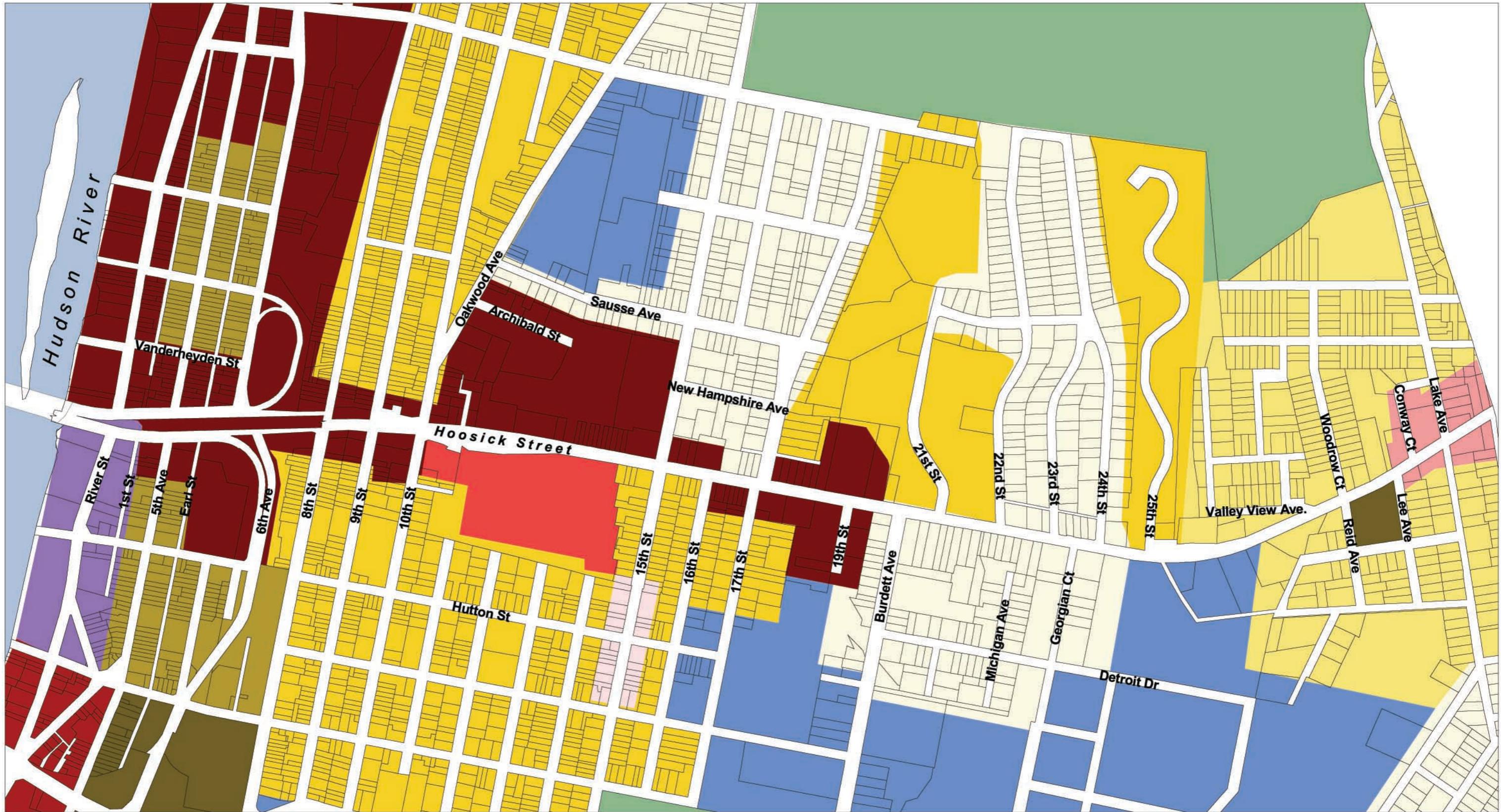
**Land Use**

**Land Use Classification**

- Commercial
- Community Services
- Forested
- Industrial
- Public Services
- Recreation & Entertainment
- Residential
- Vacant

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CORRIDOR PLAN**

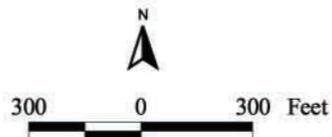


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**Zoning**

Zoning

- R1 - Single Family Residential, Detached
- R2 - Two Family Residential
- R3 - Multiple Family Residential, Medium Density
- R4 - Urban Neighborhood Res., Medium to High Density
- R5 - High Rise Res., High Density

- Parcel Boundaries
- Hudson River

- B1 - Neighborhood Commercial
- B2 - Community Commercial
- B3 - Shopping Center Commercial
- B4 - Central Commercial
- B5 - Highway Commercial
- Conservation
- Industrial
- Institutional

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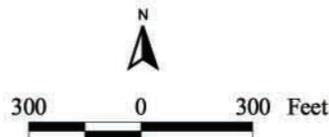
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**Environmental Features & Development Opportunities**



- Parcel Boundaries
- Vacant Property
- Property and/or Building Available for Sale, Rent, or Lease
- Vacant NYSDOT-owned Parcels Located Partially w/in Road Right-of-Way

- FEMA Floodplain**
- 100 year
- 500 year
- Steep Slopes**
- 16% - 25% (Steep)
- Over 25% (Very Steep)

Digital Elevation Model (Elevation in Meters)

	0 - 36.633
	36.633 - 73.267
	73.267 - 109.9
	109.9 - 146.533
	146.533 - 183.167
	183.167 - 219.8
	219.8 - 256.433
	256.433 - 293.067
	293.067 - 329.7

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**CORRIDOR PLAN**

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Residential on both sides of Hoosick Street. Finally, starting at Lee Avenue, a B-2 Community Commercial District extends along both sides of Hoosick Street to the City Line.

When reviewing District Regulations in the City of Troy Zoning Code, it is important to look not only at the allowed and specially permitted uses for each district, but also to consider the three dimensional impact of the area and bulk standards that apply. For example, in the B-3 Shopping Center Commercial District, there are a wide range of commercial uses that are allowed as-of-right or by special use permit. Whether the list of uses is really inclusive of all the uses that might be appropriate in this area is an open question. What is equally interesting, but more difficult to comprehend, is the effect of the dimensional requirements outlined in the subsection called “lot characteristics.” The requirements for the B-3 District are as follows:

- (1) Minimum lot area: 25,000 square feet.
- (2) Minimum lot width along property line and at front building line: 150 feet.
- (3) Minimum setbacks:
  - a. Front: 100 feet
  - b. Rear: 50 feet
  - c. Side: 50 feet each side.
- (4) Maximum lot coverage: 35%.

It is important to realize that these standards require development in the B-3 Zoning District to be built in the form of a large, suburban-style, strip shopping center. The large *minimum* lot area and *minimum* lot width requirements create building lots that are much larger and wider than typical city lots. The large *minimum* front setback forces the building far from the street and sidewalk and virtually ensures that all parking will be placed in front of the building. This has a devastating impact on the pedestrian environment. And finally, the *maximum* lot coverage creates much empty space between buildings, again negatively impacting the urban landscape.

The zoning district boundaries, the permitted and specially permitted uses, and the area and bulk standards for each district will need to be amended following completion of this plan. Generally speaking, modern codes place less emphasis on use and much more emphasis on design than did the earlier generation of zoning codes. Zoning recommendations throughout this plan will reflect that trend.

Environmental Setting – The Hoosick Street area has been urbanized for several generations and, therefore, remnants of its natural (pre-development) characteristics are no longer evident. For example, there are no hydrologic features (streams, wetlands, ponds, etc.) in the corridor. The only floodplains in the corridor are those between the Hudson River and River Street. The most evident environmental characteristic is the hillside on which the corridor is built. Steep slopes exist in several areas and are the primary constraint to development. The main topographic lines run parallel to the Hudson River, with steepest grade changes between 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street, and 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Valley View Avenue. The geology of the corridor was not examined as part of this study, but rock outcroppings along the roadway, especially on the north side of Hoosick Street between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street indicate that bedrock could be a constraint to development in areas.

*Transportation*

Hoosick Street performs two functions in the City of Troy: it is both a major city street and an interstate connector between I-787 and the State of Vermont. Hoosick Street is a state arterial – Route 7, and was widened by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) in 1964. That improvement provided four lanes on an undivided 44-foot curb-to-curb roadway. In 1980, I-787 was built north from Albany, with a connection eastward crossing the Hudson River at Hoosick Street on the Collar City Bridge. Later a new Route 7 was built connecting the Collar City Bridge westward to I-87 in Latham. In 2001, new traffic-actuated and coordinated signals were installed on Hoosick Street by NYSDOT.

By the late 1990’s daily volume on Hoosick Street was 43,000 vehicles per day immediately east of the bridge; east of 10th Street where NY Route 40 joins Hoosick Street volume was 30,000 vehicles per day; and between 15th Street and the east City line volume was 25,000 vehicles per day. Traffic volume is increasing less than 1% annually at the bridge, but nearly 2% approaching the growing suburbs in Brunswick, east of the City line. At this time congestion is not a widespread problem. Other than at the bridge terminus at 8th Street and at 10th Street, where there is a heavy left turn onto Route 40 north, intersections on Hoosick Street operate fairly well (Level-of-Service A and B). With traffic volumes increasing, however, additional intersections can be expected to exhibit congestion in the peak hours in the future: e.g. 15th Street and Lake Avenue.

There is a conflict, however, between through traffic and service to adjacent property and neighborhoods. Heavy through traffic on an undivided commercial and residential street presents a difficult situation to drivers. Opposing traffic streams are divided by only a centerline. At intersections left turning traffic waiting for a break in opposing traffic or for a left turn signal causes all following traffic to stop. This invites rear end collisions with following traffic as well as collisions with opposing traffic. Left turns into driveways are even more dangerous

because traffic often stops unexpectedly in the through lanes between intersections. Left turns out of driveways require drivers to wait for a gap in traffic in both directions; a poor estimate can result in a collision. Conditions are stressful at best.

Accident data for Hoosick Street reflects this situation. Accident records for Hoosick Street between January 1994 and August 2001 in NYSDOT’s Safety Information Management System files were reviewed. Between 8<sup>th</sup> Street



Transportation

**Current Conditions:**

**Traffic Volumes**

- East of Bridge – 43,000
- East of Route 40 – 30,000
- East of 15<sup>th</sup> Street – 25,000

Intersection at 8<sup>th</sup> and East bound left turns at 10<sup>th</sup> are problems.

Otherwise levels of service are good for other intersections.

**Accident Data (1994 – 2001)**

- Between 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> - 3x statewide average for undivided urban highways
- Between 15<sup>th</sup> and Burdett – 2x statewide average
- 1366 Total – 644 “non-reported” (below \$1000 damage)
- 722 “reported” – mostly “rear end”



Urban Arterial or Interstate Connector?

TSA  
Team

25

and 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Hoosick Street had over 15 accidents per million vehicle miles, three times the statewide average for undivided urban highways; between 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Burdett Avenue the rate was almost twice the statewide average. A total of 1366 accidents were recorded, including 644 in a “non-reported” category, (where damage is below the \$1000 threshold for reporting). Of 722 reported accidents, most – 392, were classified as “rear end” or “other” (detailed descriptions show that most of those in the “other” category were similar to rear end collisions). Left turns and right angle accidents accounted for 135 accidents. Pedestrians and bicycles were involved in 33 accidents. No fatalities were recorded.

The neighborhoods along and adjacent to Hoosick Street have been adversely affected by the volume of through traffic. There are no on-street parking spaces on Hoosick Street and limited amounts of off-street parking. Turns into and out of parking lots and driveways are difficult. Sidewalks were reduced for increased roadway lanes and are not of adequate width in the commercial area. Pedestrians must cross four lanes of traffic even where pedestrian signals have been provided. The Transportation/Circulation map on the following page shows the location of signalized crosswalks along Hoosick Street.

The Transportation/Circulation map also shows the location of Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) bus routes and bus stops in the Hoosick Street corridor. Two routes, Routes 84 and 87, run the length of the corridor. Route 84 also covers areas to the north of Hoosick Street by looping up Oakwood Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street. Route 80 intersects with Hoosick Street at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Route 85 intersects with Hoosick Street at River Street. Finally, Route 86 comes to within one block south of Hoosick Street when it runs between Burdett Avenue and Georgian Court on Detroit Drive.



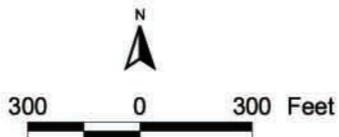
**THE SARATOGA ASSOCIATES**

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, AND PLANNERS, P.C.  
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This map is computer generated using data acquired by The Saratoga Associates from various sources and is intended only for reference, conceptual planning and presentation purposes. This map is not intended for and should not be used to establish boundaries, property lines, location of objects or to provide any other information typically needed for construction or any other purpose when engineered plans or land surveys are required.

March 2003

**Transportation / Circulation**



- Signalized Crosswalks
- CDTA Bus Routes / Stops
- Route 80
- Route 84
- Route 85
- Route 86
- Route 87
- Parcel Boundaries

**CITY OF TROY, NEW YORK**  
**HOOSICK STREET PHASE II**  
**CORRIDOR PLAN**

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## **Market Study**

A large residential, worker, and student population surrounds Hoosick Street, a heavily traveled road that carries both local and long-distance traffic. While the Hoosick Street corridor is both highly visible and conveniently located to serve a large and diverse customer base, it has suffered from the loss of the Price Chopper and Ames, and its existing commercial development is overshadowed by vacancies and a substandard physical appearance. Clearly, the built environment needs to be addressed, so the City undertook a physical plan, known as the Hoosick Street Corridor Study, to improve the physical environment for both local users and the passers-by. However, equally important is the “product.” In order to attract users, Hoosick Street must offer the product or products most desired by the various market segments. With the right retail combination in place, along with an attractive environment, Hoosick Street can become not only an attractive thoroughfare and gateway to Troy, but also an economic force, keeping residential spending in the community and attracting others (including passers-by and workers) to purchase in the City.

This Market Analysis outlines consumer preferences and attitudes in the context of the multi-faceted user population of Hoosick Street in order to identify emerging markets and latent demand and to help shape future infill development.

### ***Positioning Hoosick Street in the Commercial Landscape***

Where does Hoosick Street fit into the regional retail landscape? The answer to this question will help to position the district to meet the latent demand for retail product and environment. To respond to this question, the following section examines the retail landscape of the region around Hoosick Street.

Retailing in the region is plentiful, and ranges from traditional downtown shopping to big box retailers and malls throughout the Capital District. The closest competitive retail districts include downtown Troy, which offers a variety of retail and dining options in a traditional downtown setting, and, further down Hoosick Street in the Town of Brunswick, the Price Chopper/Wal-Mart Plaza. Unfortunately, the loss of Ames and Price Chopper in the Troy Plaza coincided with the development of the Wal-Mart and Price Chopper further east on Hoosick Street. These competing businesses make redevelopment of the Troy Plaza with similar “big box” retail outlets challenging at best. From the perspective of the regional retail environment, it is clear that a new direction needs to be developed. The opportunity for success on Hoosick Street is to leverage its assets, which include high visibility and central location, to attract potential users to spend more time on the street. Furthermore, development of Hoosick Street should create a welcoming retail environment that complements, rather than duplicates, downtown Troy in environment and retail mix.

### ***Developing the Vision***

A *market positioning statement*, based on an understanding of the primary markets and trade areas of a retail district, can be an effective tool in commercial district revitalization. Such a statement, which should summarize the desired image of the district and its primary customers, can create a “brand” that informs future development and investment in the district. It can be used to identify realistic opportunities for the district’s business

investment, retail and business recruitment, and as a promotional tool for the retail district to assist in establishing a desired business mix that provides a competitive edge in the marketplace.

The first step to developing a market positioning statement for Troy’s Hoosick Street corridor is to examine the opportunities and challenges facing the corridor today. With over 30,000 trips per day, Hoosick Street is the most heavily traveled street in the city. In fact, with traffic counts that approach those of Wolf Road, Hoosick Street has the visibility major retailers look for when searching for new locations. However, the street could be much more than a thoroughfare or a typical highway commercial district. The proximity of several major employers, residential neighborhoods and a major educational institution (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), creates a diverse user group for the corridor. This mix of prospective users offers the potential to create a mixed-use focal point for the City that connects the neighborhoods to the north and south, welcomes visitors to the City, and encourages passers-by to stop in Troy, thus enriching the retail economy. The following market vision was developed through analysis of the potential of the corridor in light of the market analysis, community desires as reflected in the survey, and realistic expectations in light of the current retail market.

**Hoosick Street Corridor Market Vision:**

The Hoosick Street Corridor should be a gateway to Troy that welcomes visitors and passers-by and a focal point that provides the amenities and services to bring together the residents and employees in neighborhoods to the north and south.

***Strategy 1***

To serve the daily needs of the surrounding residents, employees and students for convenient goods, services and dining options.

***Strategy 2***

To serve as a welcoming gateway to the City of Troy, offering amenities, retail and services geared toward the passerby.

***The Trade Area: Who Are the Customers?***

Hoosick Street relies on several market sectors. Residents, students, local employees, and pass-through traffic all use Hoosick Street in some way or another, and all are potential customer groups for businesses in the corridor. The key to the future economic success of Hoosick Street as a commercial corridor lies in encouraging and directing commercial growth in order to cater to the shared demands of the various customer groups.

Each market sector brings with it its own set of requirements, preferences, and spending patterns. Each sector also presents Hoosick Street with a challenge to meet its needs, as well as an opportunity to benefit from its spending potential.

This section examines the existing market segments and delves into the implications for potential development on Hoosick Street. This information will help guide efforts to strengthen and stabilize Hoosick Street and secure its position within the fabric of the City and the region.

***Trade Area Delineation***

In any market analysis, it is important to define the trade area, which is the geographic area from which the majority of retail and service businesses’ existing and potential customers come.

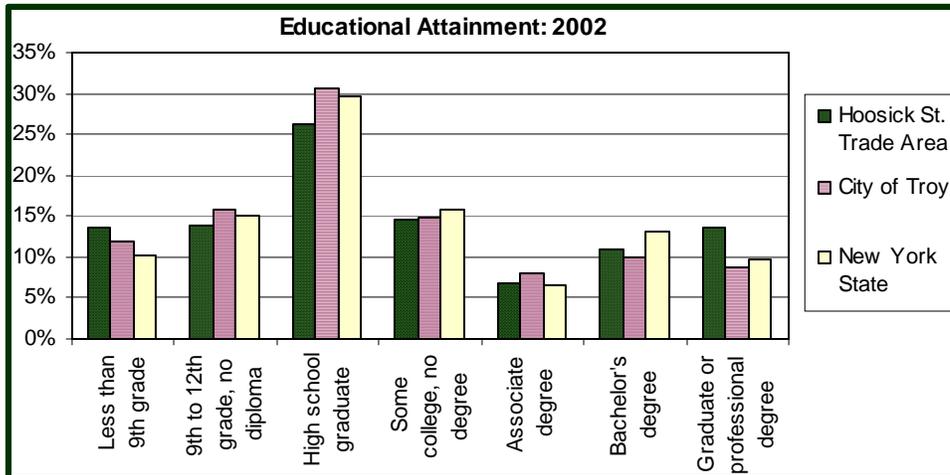
The primary trade area for Hoosick Street was defined as the area within three quarters of a mile of the intersection of Hoosick Street and 15<sup>th</sup> Street. The trade area is relatively small in size, but the urban density means that the population is sizable. Most people who are likely to spend money on Hoosick Street regularly live, work, or go to school within this area.



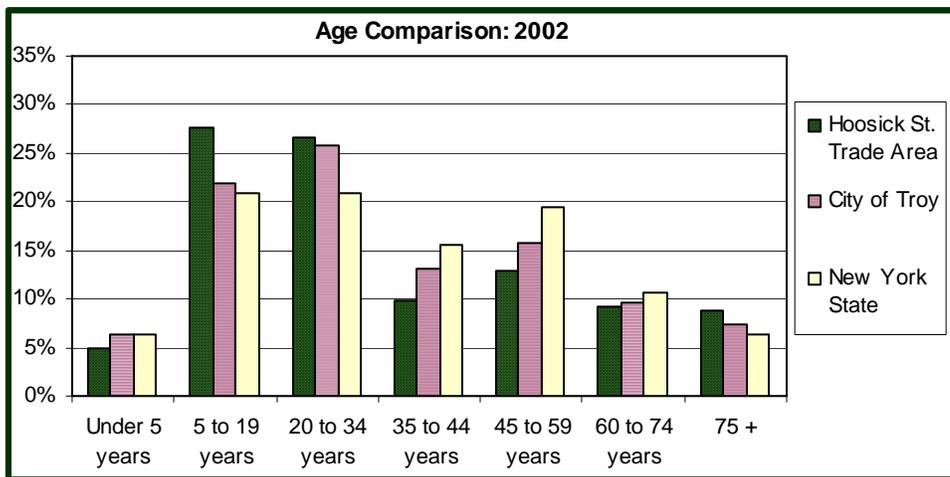
For comparison, the entire City of Troy was selected as a secondary trade area. People who live or work in the secondary trade area are less likely to shop in the trade area regularly, but may visit for special events or specialty shopping.

**Residential Demographics**

The demographics of the primary trade area suggest a diverse population. The area contains both a higher proportion of people with less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education and people with a graduate degree or better than New

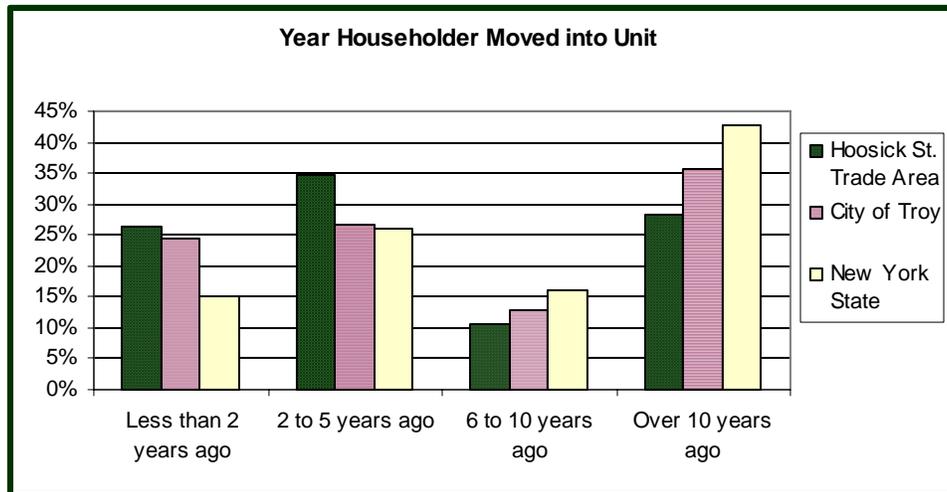


York State as a whole. Age is also somewhat polarized—the trade area and the city as a whole have a larger percentage of young people (under 19) than the state, but also a larger percentage of elderly persons over the age of 75. These variations are indicative of a diverse population, and can be explained by the mix of poor residential neighborhoods characterized by both very young families and older residents aging in place, with a large student



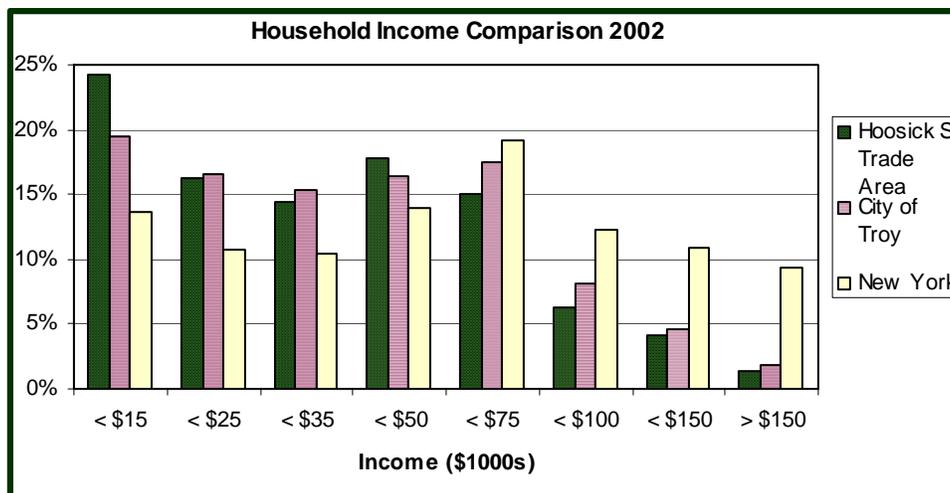
population. This mixed population **suggests demands for affordable everyday items and services for both the poorer residential population and the students, for inexpensive eateries for students as well as residents, and convenient medical and related services for the elderly population.** Medical services are also appropriate for the corridor because of the proximity to major medical centers. In addition, the unusually high education attainment of a portion of the population suggests **a market for computer and software stores, bookstores, and the like.**

Both the primary trade area and the city share a tendency towards high mobility, as indicated by the large proportion of the populations that have moved within the last five years. This suggests a **lower than usual demand for major household goods, but possibly a higher demand for inexpensive furnishings.**



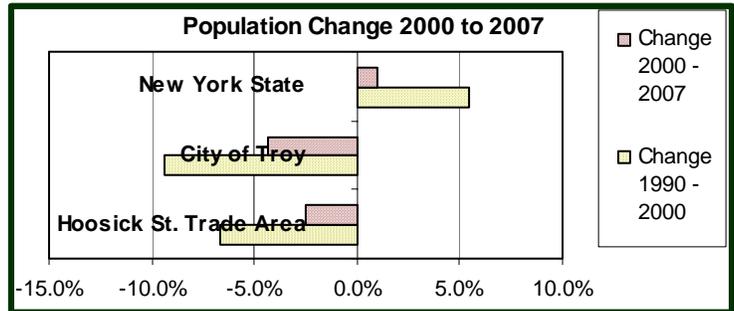
Another characteristic shared by the two populations is a relatively low access to cars. According to the 2000 US Census, over one quarter of the households in the trade area did not have access to a single car, and less than 40 percent have two or more cars. **This indicates that the populations are more reliant than usual on local stores and services that can be accessed on foot or by public transportation, and emphasizes the demand for everyday goods and services within easy access of neighborhoods.** In addition, the lower car ownership rate indicates a need to balance pedestrian and automobile use of the street.

Income levels, not surprisingly, are low. The income levels in the Hoosick Street trade area are significantly lower than in New York State and somewhat lower than in the City as a whole. In fact, the largest income cohort in the trade area has a household income of under \$15,000 a year. The low household incomes suggest that residents create a **limited demand for high-end products, but rather a need for affordable options in both retail and services.**



Currently, the population is declining, suggesting that there is a real need to address the problems in the area in order to stem this population loss. **Improvements to the area, including new housing options and more inviting commercial districts, could make the difference between a net loss and gain of local population.**

Population 1990 to 2007						
Market Area	1990 Population	2000 Population	Change 1990 - 2000	2002 Estimated	2007 Projected	Change 2000 - 2007
Hoosick St. Trade Area	13,302	12,414	-6.7%	12,249	11,943	-2.5%
City of Troy	54,269	49,170	-9.4%	48,218	46,127	-4.3%
New York State	17,990,406	18,976,458	5.5%	19,021,134	19,208,844	1.0%



**Other Customer Groups**

Hoosick Street does not rely on residents and students alone. There are several major employers, including Seton Health, Northeast Health and RPI, which bring about 5,000 employees to the vicinity—more than one-third the total residential population of the trade area. In addition, there are nearly 30,000 vehicular trips on Hoosick Street a day. **Encouraging these drivers to stop on Hoosick Street for their retail and service needs, including fuel, snacks, meals, newspapers, and the like, could significantly increase the aggregate spending in the corridor.**

**Spending Power Analyses**

Retail demand drives retail success; that is, the number and type of stores a trade area can support are directly related to the level of demand for specific product types in that trade area. This section analyzes the demand for consumer goods by store type in order to determine where there may be significant leakage of retail dollars outside the trade area.

**Leakage Analysis**

The methodology used in the leakage analysis is as follows:

- Retail sales data for different businesses in the trade area were sourced from Claritas, Inc.
- Actual retail sales per household in different categories were calculated by dividing retail sales by total number of households.
- Typical expenditure per household in the Northeast was sourced from the Consumer Expenditure Survey, Bureau of Labor statistics, and adjusted to reflect the average household income in the trade area.

- Actual sales were compared to expected spending to determine surplus or leakage. A surplus occurs when the actual sales per household exceeds that to be expected from the typical expenditure per household in the Northeast. A leakage occurs when the reverse holds true.
- The figures for surplus and leakage per household were multiplied by the total number of households to obtain total surplus and leakage in the trade area.

It is important to note that the potential expenditure figures take into account *only residential spending* and *only for residents in the described trade area*. Neither employee nor pass-through spending is included in this analysis since there is no reliable information available that would allow us to break down worker or tourism expenditures into specific store types.

Categories that reveal a surplus (i.e., sales exceed typical spending) can be considered destination categories since it is obvious that those businesses are attracting spending from outside the trade area. However, since people rarely spend all their money near their homes, regardless of how appealing the downtown may be, retail categories that function as destinations within the trade area may still show a leakage, albeit smaller than the leakage of another category. Thus, a relatively small leakage rate, especially within the secondary trade area, also suggests that customers other than trade area residents are patronizing that store category.

The leakage analysis for relevant retail categories is presented in the following table. As illustrated in the table, nearly every category shows a leakage of expendable dollars out of the area. This can be attributed to the lack of stores and services along Hoosick Street within the study area. Although grocery stores are an exception, the sales data used for this analysis predates the closing of the Price Chopper at the Troy Plaza. Most of the grocery spending has likely moved to the new Price Chopper further east on Hoosick Street. The leakages across the board suggest that there is a latent demand for a variety of businesses in the Hoosick Street trade area.

The leakage analysis demonstrates much room for growth on the Hoosick Street corridor in a number of categories. Sales in the “grocery and other food at home” category were reported to be quite high—much higher than can be attributed to residents of the trade area alone. But the sales figures were generated before the closing of the Price Chopper, and would likely be much lower today. Aside from groceries, “eating out places” is one other category that shows a surplus; more money is spent in the trade area in that category than can be attributed to the residents alone. This suggests that Hoosick Street is a destination for “food away from home”. Since restaurants tend to do well when clustered together, the significant spending on “food away from home” suggests that **additional restaurants and take-outs may be appropriate additions to the corridor.**

Potential expenditures in every other category are leaking out of the district (i.e., being spent elsewhere). Although there is good reason for significant leakage in some categories, such as the overwhelming competition from big boxes and malls, the right store mix could bring more retail expenditures to the District in other categories. The components of a desirable store mix for Hoosick Street are identified throughout this analysis, and summarized in the section entitled “Implementing the Vision: Economic Themes.”

Retail Leakage Analysis, Selected Categories Hoosick Street Trade Area				
Business	Sales per Household in Trade Area	Typical expenditure/ Household	Surplus (Leakage)/ Household	Total Surplus (Leakage)
Grocery & other food at home	\$22,434	\$2,573	\$19,861	\$6,026,212
Eating out places	\$3,188	\$1,740	\$1,448	\$6,222,132
Alcoholic beverages	\$233	\$292	(\$59)	(\$255,527)
Clothing and accessories	\$98	\$2,584	(\$2,491)	(\$10,704,585)
Appliances	\$23	\$113	(\$90)	(\$384,647)
Books	\$70	\$128	(\$58)	(\$249,700)
Electronics and music	\$140	\$515	(\$376)	(\$1,615,062)
Drug stores	\$303	\$369	(\$67)	(\$287,299)
Gasoline	\$0	\$822	(\$822)	(\$3,532,390)

Overall Capture Rate Hoosick Street Trade Area	
<b>Spending Power</b> (\$millions)	
Residents*	\$183.5
Workers**	\$12.9
RPI students and faculty***	\$37
Pass-through traffic****	\$93.4
<i>Total</i>	\$326.8
<b>Actual Sales</b> (\$millions)	
<i>Total</i>	\$96.4
<b>Capture Rate</b>	
Actual Sales/Spending Power	29%

\* Residential spending power calculated to be 33.5%, of the aggregate income of all residents, based on the most recent Consumer Expenditure Survey.  
 \*\* Average annual expenditure of \$2720.28 per worker. Source: International Council of Shopping Centers  
 \*\*\* Average annual student and faculty expenditure of \$5,171. Source: Emory University  
 \*\*\*\* Typical expenditure per car trip \$8.53. Source: University of Wisconsin

*Capture Rate Analysis*

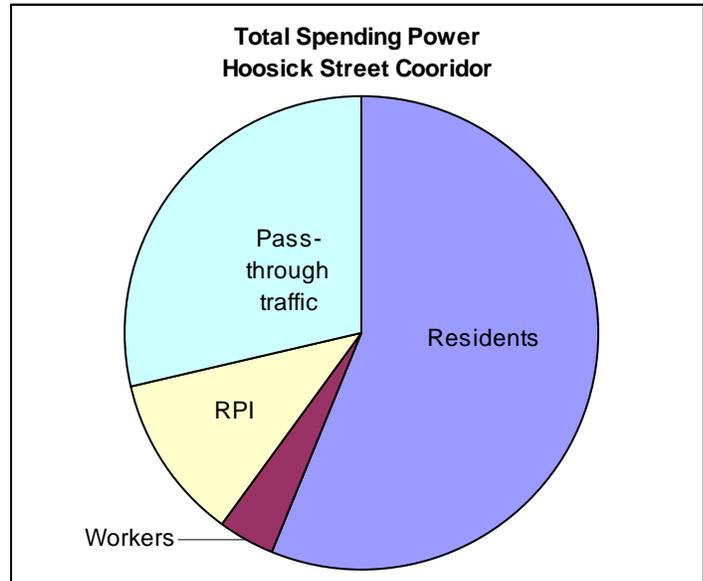
While spending for the whole customer base (including residents of trade areas, students, workers, and pass-through traffic) cannot be broken down by specific store category as was done in the leakage analysis above, the overall capture rate of spending power can be estimated using available data.

For this analysis, we estimate the total spending power of each of the four major customer groups and compare the total spending power to the actual retail sales in the trade area to obtain the capture rate. A capture rate of 100 percent is unrealistic, but a healthy commercial district may capture as much as 75 to 80 percent of the spending power in its primary trade area. As is evidenced in the table at right, Hoosick Street has a capture rate of only 29 percent. **This emphasizes the conclusion that there is room for additional retail development in the Hoosick Street corridor.**

The spending power of the various customer groups also provides an idea of each group’s relative impact on the overall spending in the corridor. **Residents make up the largest segment, thus suggesting that the retail and service needs of this group should be the most prominent when developing a retail strategy for the corridor.** The second largest segment is the pass-through traffic. While there is no data as to the exact breakdown of the pass-through traffic, the road is known as the most direct route from points south to skiing destinations in Vermont, suggesting that the pass-through traffic includes a large number of long-distance travelers from New Jersey and the New York City metropolitan area. These travelers, who are likely to have relatively high incomes,

may be three or four hours into their trip by the time they get the Hoosick Street, at which time they will likely be ready to stop for gasoline, restrooms, and possibly a meal. **Thus, this customer group could also factor prominently in planning for retail and service development in the corridor.**

**While local workers and RPI students and faculty represent a smaller portion of the spending power than the other groups, their needs and interests should not be dismissed as these groups diversify the customer base and offer an additional source of income for retail and service providers.**



**Survey Results**

The analyses above demonstrate what the market *can bear*. In order to develop an idea of what the market *wants* on Hoosick Street, three survey forms were prepared and distributed. One was mailed to a random sample of 1200+ residents selected from registered voters in the surrounding voting districts, one was distributed to students at the Student Center at RPI, and one was distributed to employees of the major employers in the area through their personnel offices. The survey was designed to gain insight into the way that the various market groups are currently using the Hoosick Street corridor, and what type of commercial and residential development might be appropriate.

**Methodology**

In total, 1,086 surveys were returned, including 347 resident surveys (a return rate of close to 30 percent), 575 worker surveys (a return rate of approximately 35 percent), and 164 RPI student surveys. Overall, the survey can be considered a reliable snapshot of the opinions of members of potential user groups that are the most interested in the future of Hoosick Street and thus are the most likely regular patrons of businesses on Hoosick Street. The distribution methods were as follows:

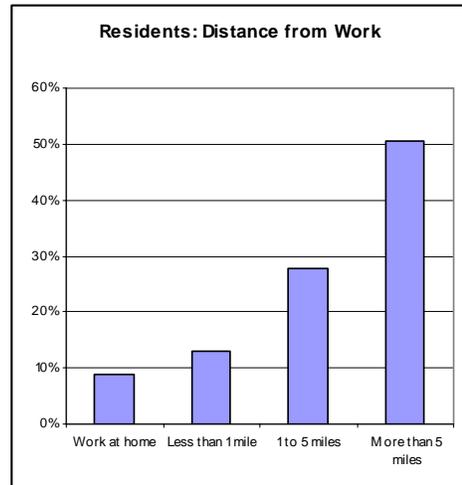
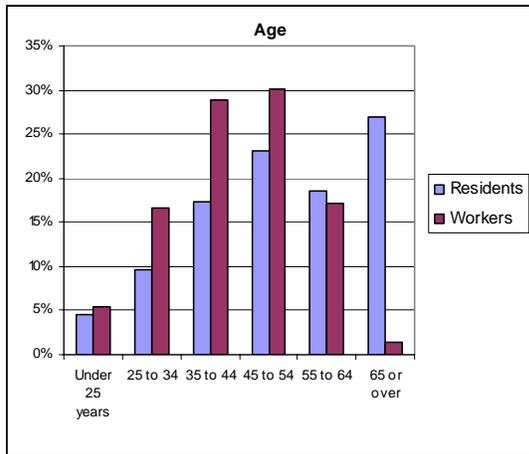
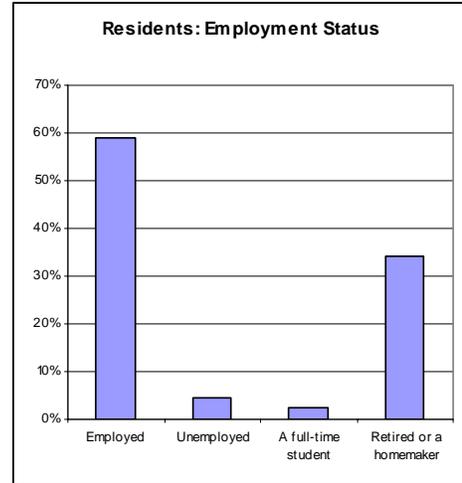
- **The resident survey** was mailed to a randomly selected list of registered voters from the voting districts nearest the Hoosick Street corridor.
- **The student survey** was distributed in the Student Union building during finals week. This is a popular spot for studying, and therefore a healthy cross-section of students had the opportunity to fill out the survey. While the self-selected group that took and returned the survey cannot be taken as a representative sample of all RPI students, they do represent students who are interested in development on Hoosick Street and possibly are those students most likely to utilize the street and surrounding commercial/residential development.

- **The worker survey** was given to the personnel offices of nine local employers. Each personnel office chose how to distribute the forms to its employees. Most included the surveys with paychecks, but one or two sent the form via email.

*Demographics of Respondents*

Residents

There are some inherent biases to any survey, and these should be kept in mind when reviewing the results. As is typical with mail-back surveys, the population that returned this survey was skewed towards the older age cohorts, and was disproportionately female as compared to the overall population. The residents who returned this survey were also wealthier than the population of the trade area, another bias that is typical of this type of survey. Of the people who responded to the survey, nearly 60 percent are employed, and a third are either retired or are homemakers. Only three percent are full-time students.

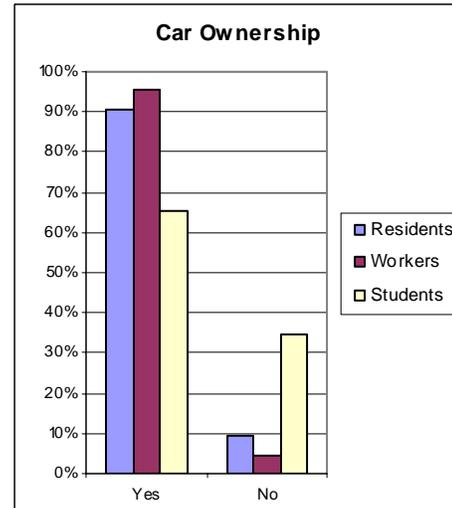
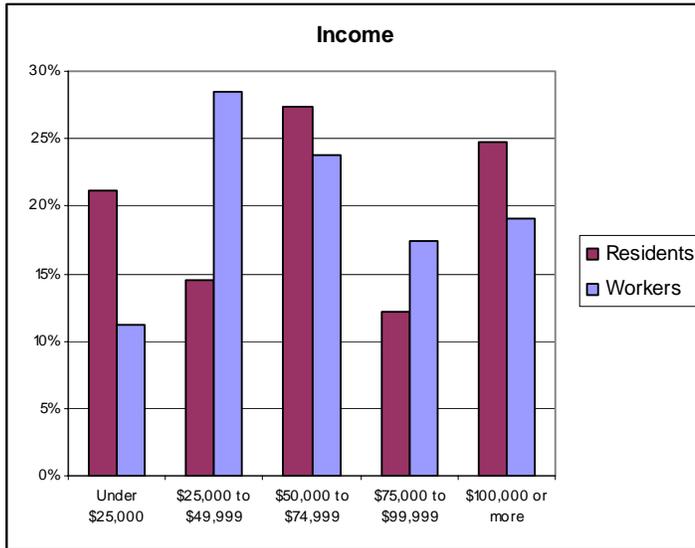


Car ownership is high among survey respondents—90 percent own cars, as opposed to less than 75 percent of all the households within the trade area.

About 20 percent of the residents that participated in the survey work either at home or less than one mile from home. These respondents are a particularly important customer group as they are close to the Hoosick Street corridor both during the day and on evenings and weekends.

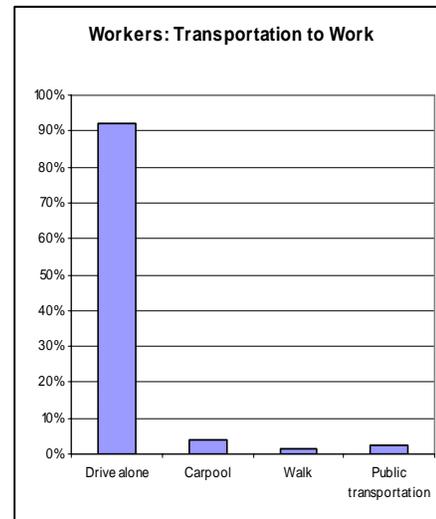
Employees

The preponderance of workers who participated in the survey are between the ages of 35 and 54 – the prime earning years. Employees in this age range tend to be more settled in their jobs than their younger counterparts. Workers’ incomes run across the spectrum, but the majority of workers tend to fall in the range of \$25,000 to \$75,000 a year, which indicates a solid working- to middle-class population.



Eighty percent of the workers surveyed were women. Although women are generally more likely than men to participate in surveys, in this instance the preponderance of women likely does reflect the overall employee population in the area since several of the major employers are health care organizations with a large nursing staff. **This suggests that businesses geared towards women may be profitable in the Hoosick Street corridor.**

Most employees have cars, suggesting that they have the ability to leave the area during the workday if they choose. Furthermore, the vast majority drive their own cars to work. Thus, **businesses such as restaurants and take-out establishments that would like to capture the lunchtime market must work to keep these employees from getting in their cars and driving elsewhere during their lunch breaks.**



Students

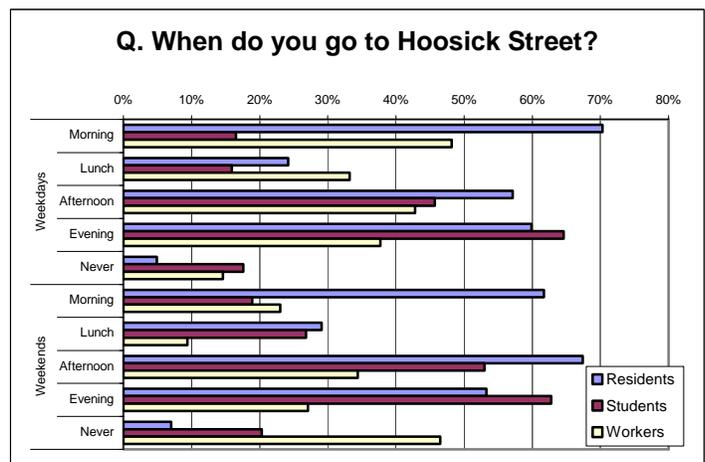
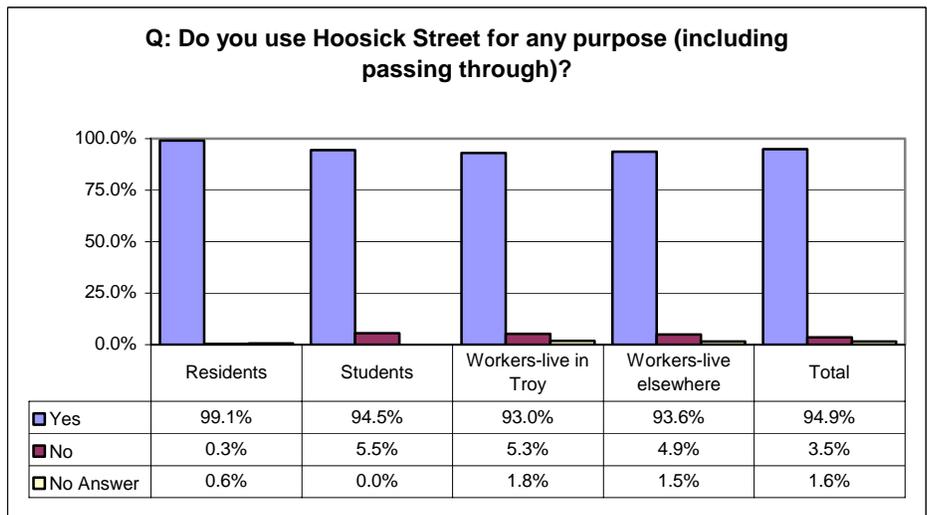
Twenty-seven percent of the students that participated in the survey are graduate students, roughly the same proportion as the actual student population at RPI, where 25 percent of the students on the Troy campus are graduate students.

Of the students surveyed, 60 percent live off-campus, indicating a stronger demand for convenience items and fast food than would be expected in a college town with more on-campus students. This is further reinforced by the fact that far fewer students than any other population have cars and thus students are perhaps the most “captive” of the three customer groups—they are the most likely to seek out all of their retail and service needs in the immediate area. Thus, this is a market that the Hoosick Street merchants should target and recruitment efforts should consider.

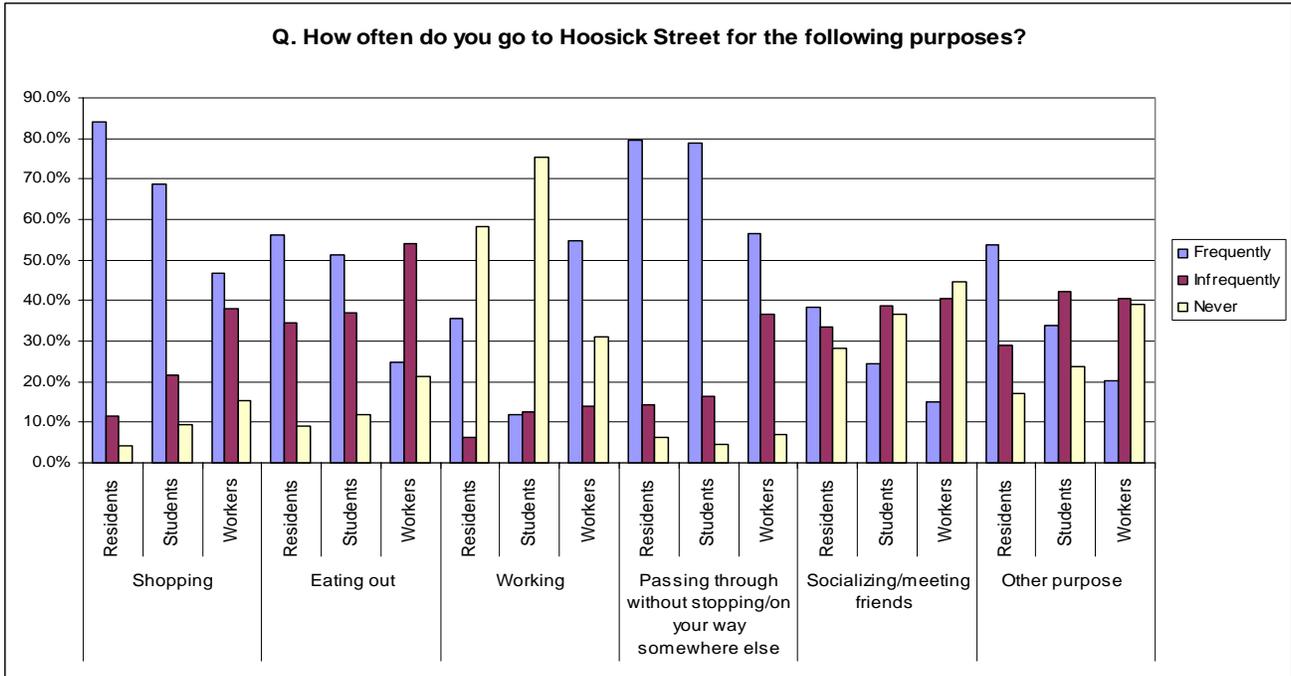
*Visitation and Visibility*

**Nearly all of the people surveyed do use Hoosick Street.** Residents have the highest rate of usage—over 99 percent indicated that they use Hoosick Street for some reason, whereas between 5 and 6 percent of students and workers never visit Hoosick Street at all. Residents also visit Hoosick Street with greater frequency than the other two groups—half shop on Hoosick Street every day and nearly 60 percent pass through every day. Residents eat out on Hoosick Street fairly frequently as well, with over 55 percent indicating that they do so at least several times a month. While the other two groups are not as likely to take part in any of the activities asked about every day, shopping, passing through, and eating out were the most popular activities for these groups as well. The least frequently undertaken activity for all three groups is socializing, which is not surprising given the appearance of the corridor and the lack of gathering places.

**While Hoosick Street has high visibility, it is not being used to the extent that it could be.** For example, less than half of the workers surveyed shop frequently on Hoosick Street and only about half of any of the groups eat out regularly. *Given the high visibility of the street, these numbers could be much higher with a more attractive surrounding and business mix that better responds to the desires of the potential users.*

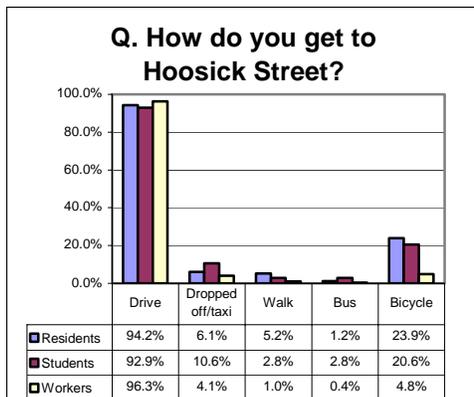


**Use of Hoosick Street varies widely by user group.** Workers are most likely to go to Hoosick Street weekday mornings and afternoons; students frequent Hoosick Street in the evenings; and residents use the street throughout the day on weekdays and weekends. The net result is that **Hoosick Street businesses can take advantage of a robust customer base that populates the street morning through evening every day of the week.** This fact could play an important part in a retail recruitment campaign for the corridor.



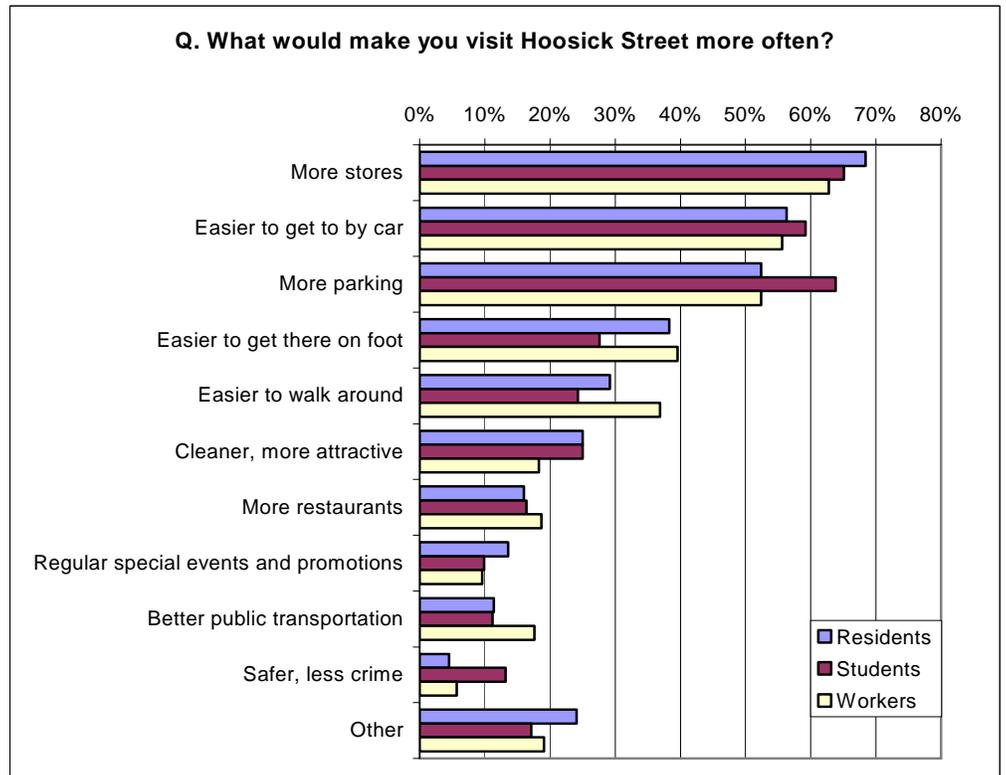
**Access**

**Pedestrian and bicycle access are important.** Although the most popular mode of transportation to and from Hoosick Street is the automobile, a significant percentage of survey respondents indicated that they use other modes of transportation to get to Hoosick Street. For example, over 5 percent of residents surveyed walk to the corridor. This, combined with the high proportion of households without cars, the relatively large senior population, and the student presence, indicates a need to focus on pedestrian, bicycle, and bus access to the corridor, as well as on amenities for non-drivers within the corridor.



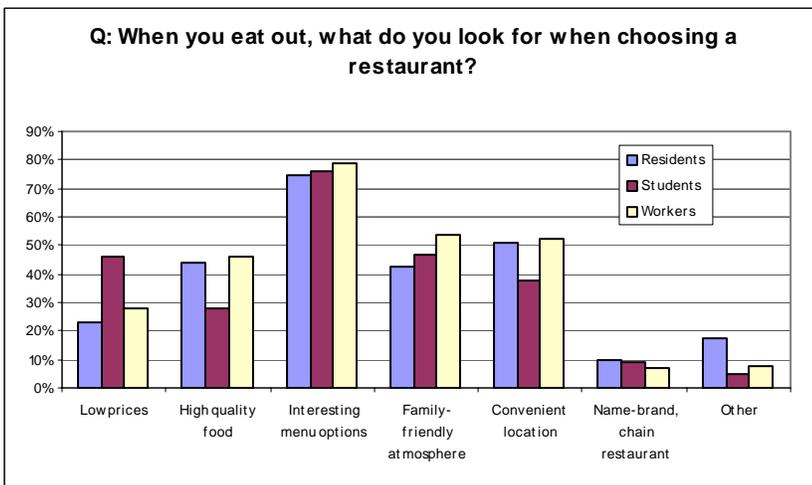
Further evidence of the need for improved pedestrian accessibility can be found further down in the survey. When survey respondents were asked what would make them visit Hoosick Street more often, nearly 40 percent of residents and workers selected better pedestrian access, and a significant proportion (just under 30 percent of residents and over 35 percent of workers) said that they would like to see Hoosick Street easier to walk around.

While parking appears to be somewhat of an issue, it was only the third-highest ranked quality for two of the three groups when asked what would make them visit more frequently. Parking is nearly always ranked highly as a problem in downtown areas, but other improvements which make the area more appealing often overcome complaints about parking since people are willing to walk a little further from their cars to their destinations in a pleasant environment. Therefore, while parking is always an issue, it should not be emphasized to the detriment of other amenities.



*Retail Demands*

Of all the qualities listed, survey participants indicated that the thing most lacking—the thing that would make them most likely to visit Hoosick Street more frequently—is **more stores**. For all three groups, “more stores” was *the* most popular response when asked what would make them visit Hoosick Street more often. Furthermore, less than 20 percent of any of the groups surveyed agreed that there are enough stores or restaurants on Hoosick Street today.



Interestingly, although “more restaurants” was not singled out as a quality that would encourage people to visit Hoosick Street more often, when asked what they would like to see added to the corridor, **the most popular response was restaurants**. Restaurants tend to do well when clustered, so consideration should be given to adding additional restaurants in developing the Hoosick Street corridor. When asked what they look for in a restaurant, about three-quarters of all

survey participants responded “interesting menu options,” suggesting that a variety of restaurants could thrive in the district. About half the respondents overall said that they look for conveniently located restaurants, suggesting that Hoosick Street’s central location is a strong factor in favor of locating restaurants on the corridor. Other responses to the question asking what qualities people look for in restaurants can be used as a marketing tool to attract appropriate restaurants to the corridor. For example, students prefer low prices while workers and residents prefer high quality. **This suggests that a mix of restaurants could thrive on Hoosick Street, with some establishments geared towards the student population and the lower-income residential population focusing on price, while others might offer more expensive dining options for workers and residents with a focus on high quality.**

According to the survey, there is a strong desire for a grocery store and department stores, suggesting that **there is a need for additional stores that offer basic merchandise.** In addressing the demand for basic merchandise, the following should be kept in mind:

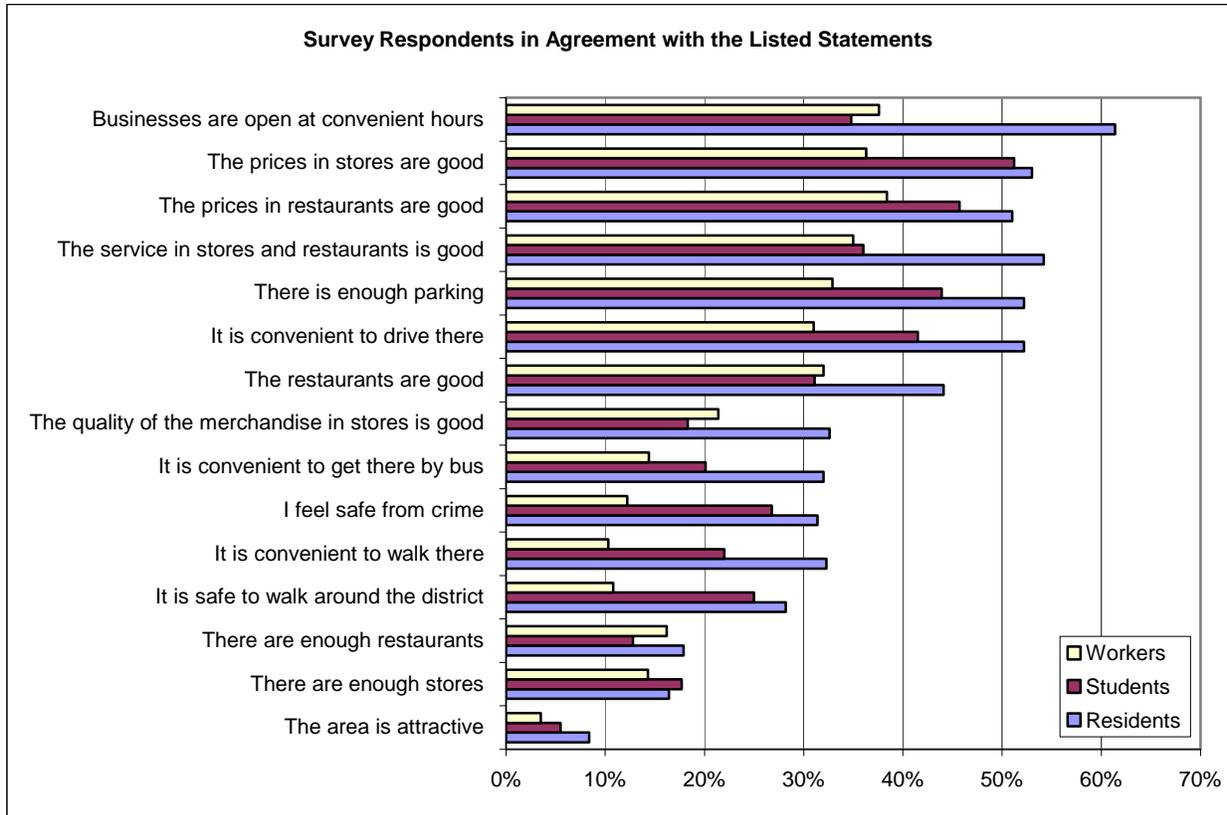
- The demand for quality and convenience in grocery shopping
- The demand for convenience in shopping for other everyday needs.

**Survey results show that Hoosick Street is considered convenient, which, coupled with the fact that it is heavily traveled, positions the corridor well to address the need for convenient shopping opportunities for all customer groups.**

The Troy Plaza may be able to attract another full-service grocery store to replace the Price Chopper, but other ways to meet the demand for food and other everyday shopping needs should also be considered, especially since the overall market vision calls for an alternative to the typical highway strip development pattern.

<b>Q. What do you look for when shopping for the following?</b>						
	Name brand	Quality	Price	Service in store	Convenience	Other
Groceries	6%	31%	36%	4%	21%	2%
Other everyday needs	5%	16%	39%	4%	34%	2%
Clothing	7%	47%	30%	4%	6%	6%
Furniture/appliances	7%	53%	27%	4%	3%	6%
Gifts	4%	46%	26%	4%	11%	10%

Smaller specialty food stores such as a bagel store, bakery or health food store, along with stores offering other everyday items, such as a drug store, dollar store, and the like, could address the desire for convenience shopping as well or better than one or two large stores. **In fact, small, specialty food stores may be a better choice for Hoosick Street than a large grocery store as survey respondents indicated that they tend to look for convenience and quality in addition to price when shopping for groceries.** The existing Midland Farms meets the demand for groceries at low prices, but smaller stores such bakeries and delis can bring a larger selection of items needed most often closer to home, while at the same time offering better quality than one might find in a large supermarket.



*Environment and Safety*

Other than more businesses, **it is clear that there is a desire for physical improvements on the corridor.** The lowest rated quality across all the groups surveyed was appearance—less than 10 percent of any of the groups agreed with the statement that Hoosick Street is attractive. Physical improvements, ranging from attractive landscaping, to better maintenance of streets and sidewalks, to benches and other amenities have the potential to not only improve the appearance of the corridor, but also to address the personal safety concerns since a well-maintained, attractive environment feels safer than one that seems neglected. Furthermore, physical enhancements that calm traffic will make it safer for pedestrians to walk around the street and visit the services and businesses that are there now or that will locate there as the street is improved.

*Housing*

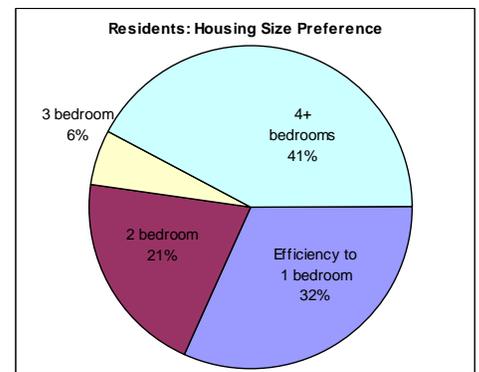
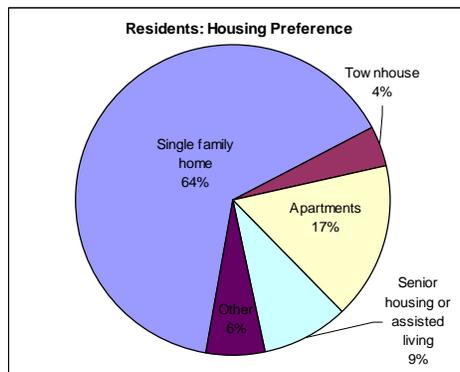
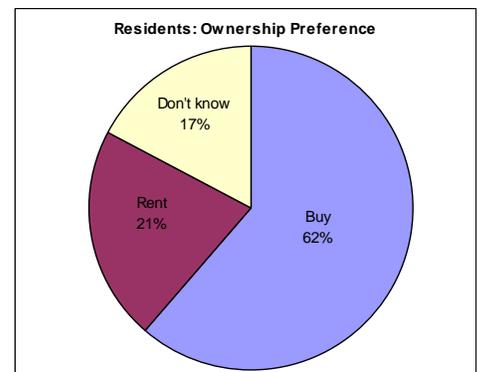
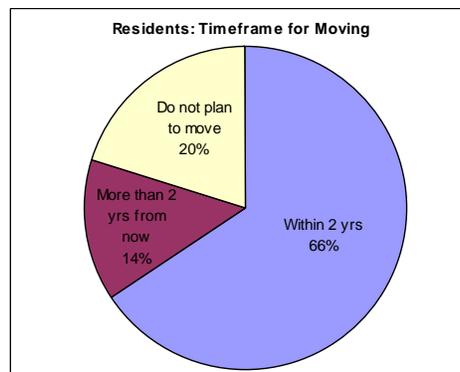
The possibility of housing on and around the Hoosick Street corridor is one that was contemplated by the design team, based on the premise that as the corridor improves and offers more appealing amenities; demand may increase for convenient, centrally-located residential development. Conversely, additional high-quality residential development within walking distance of the corridor has the potential to create a stronger, more loyal customer base and thus generate more market demand for commercial development.

In order to determine whether there may be a demand for housing at this location, and if so, what type, the surveys included questions on this topic. The intent was to determine whether or not there is an interest in housing in the Hoosick Street corridor, and what size and style of housing would be most appropriate. The current housing market supply and demand in the region is beyond the scope of this study, but the proceeding analysis provides a general idea of the level of interest in various housing types by each market sector so that the physical plan for Hoosick Street and its surrounds as well as the relevant land use regulations can allow for these housing types. The market will determine when and if this housing is actually developed.

Residents

*Housing demand*

The residents surveyed are quite mobile; while three-quarters own their own homes, 65 percent plan on moving within two years and an additional 14 percent plan on moving sometime in the future. Only 20 percent indicated that they do not plan on moving in the foreseeable future. While this may be due, to some extent, to the large student population in the area, only 2.5 percent of the residential surveys returned were filled in by full-time students. A high mobility rate is not generally desirable as it leads to a lack of a sense of community. Creating a more appealing and attractive environment that offers the



amenities desired by the community may help to lower the rate of mobility, as residents will be more satisfied with their surroundings. The current level of dissatisfaction, both in the community and in the housing, is revealed in the responses to a query about how the residents feel about their home in the Hoosick Street area. Thirty-three percent of residents indicated that they would like to move out of Troy, and an additional 9 percent would like to move to a different house within the City. In comparison, a 2002 survey of Capital District residents reported that only 10 percent of residents are dissatisfied with their community (Center For Social and Demographic Analysis, 11<sup>th</sup> Annual CSDA Capital District Survey-2002). In addition to improving the appearance and amenities in the area, however, providing housing that would entice residents to stay in the area would encourage them to put down roots and enhance the sense of community in the Hoosick Street area.

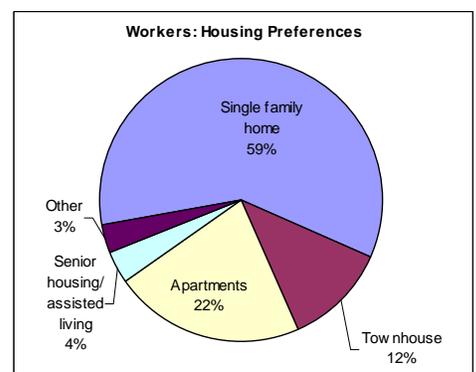
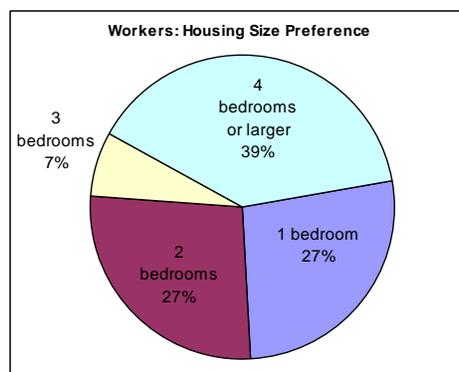
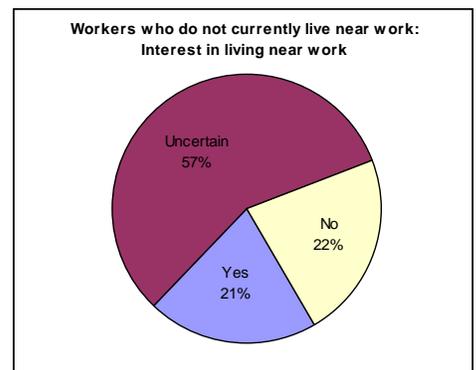
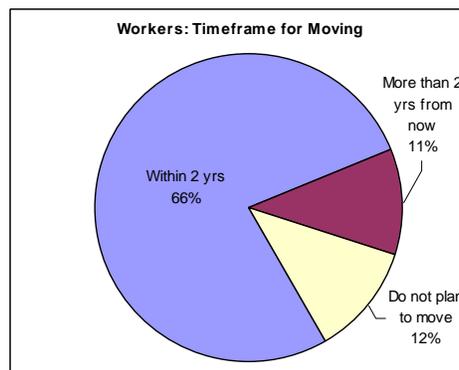
*Housing preferences*

Current residents are interested in a variety of housing types. Residents primarily desire single-family homes, but a good proportion indicated an interest in apartments and housing for seniors. As far as size goes, there is demand for housing of all sizes. The largest proportion of respondents (41 percent) wants four bedrooms or more, but significant numbers want other sizes as well: 21 percent would look for two bedrooms and 32 percent would like an efficiency or one bedroom unit. While the area around Hoosick Street cannot meet all of these needs, **the housing types that are appropriate for an urban setting, such as apartments and senior citizen housing, should be considered as the Hoosick Street district is developed. Furthermore, providing these types of housing sooner rather than later would be beneficial, since it could capture some of the people who plan to move in the near future.**

Workers

*Housing demand*

Only 21 percent of workers live in Troy, and of those, 40 percent would like to move out of the City. Clearly, there is work to be done in order to make Troy more appealing for local workers. As with residents, providing housing that meets the needs of workers would be beneficial since a large proportion of surveyed workers indicated that they plan on moving in the near future. In fact, two-thirds have plans to move within two years, and only 12 percent are not planning to move at all. Furthermore, there is a distinct possibility that a significant proportion of workers would consider housing near their offices



if suitable housing were available. While only about one-fifth of the workers surveyed who do not live near their places of work said they definitely would be interested in living near work, only about one-fifth said they definitely would not be interested in living near work. The remainder are uncertain, and some of those could probably be attracted to live in the Hoosick Street area if they could find the right housing at the right price.

*Housing preferences*

Like the residents, workers prefer single-family homes, although a significant proportion indicated an interest in more urban-scale dwellings. Over 20 percent of this group expressed interest in apartments and another 10 percent indicated a preference for townhouses. Overall, this reinforces the above conclusion that **there is a market for housing of a style that could be incorporated into the urban fabric of the Hoosick Street district.**

In terms of housing size, the local employees surveyed were divided in the number of bedrooms they need, again reinforcing the conclusions drawn in the previous section that **there is a demand for various sized units in the area.**

Students

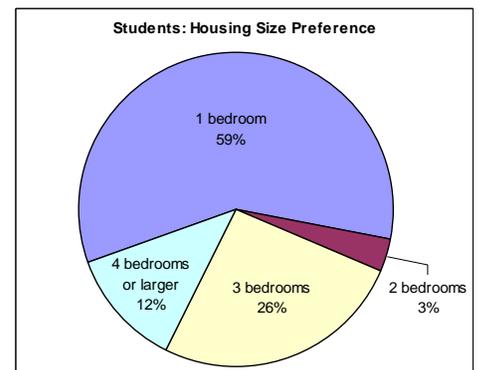
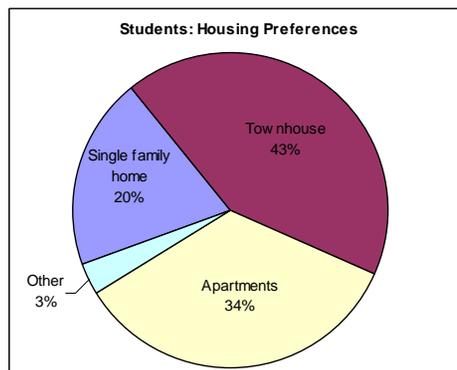
*Housing Demand*

Of the students surveyed, 56 percent said that they are planning to leave the Capital District after graduation. Of the remainder, about one-third definitely plans to stay in the area, and the other two-thirds are undecided. The relatively small number of students who plan to stay in the area suggests that there is no need to focus specifically on providing housing for recent graduates. However, the attitude of current students towards living in the City of Troy after graduation does reflect an overall negative perception of the residential possibilities within the City. Of the students who said that they either are planning on staying in the area after graduation or are uncertain about their plans, only 15 percent indicated that they would consider living in the City of Troy after graduation, 32 percent were uncertain, and the remaining 53 percent would not consider living in Troy. **Clearly, most of the students surveyed do not consider Troy a desirable place to live, thus emphasizing the need to address the overall image of the place.**

While it may not be a priority to provide housing for recent graduates in the area, there is a demand for student housing since many students live off-campus while they are in school. Of the students surveyed, only 40 percent currently live on-campus. The remaining 60 percent live off-campus, suggesting **a strong demand for local housing among students, and suggesting another potential market for apartments and other rental housing.**

*Housing Preferences*

The students surveyed who would at least consider staying in the Capital District after graduation prefer a markedly different housing mix than either residents or workers. The majority would like to live in a townhouse after graduation, and about one-third would choose an



apartment. Furthermore, only 7 percent definitely plan on purchasing a dwelling after graduation. While, as mentioned above, the number of students who may stay in the area is not remarkably large, the preferences of this group do indicate additional demand for the type of housing that would be appropriate for infill development around the Hoosick Street area.

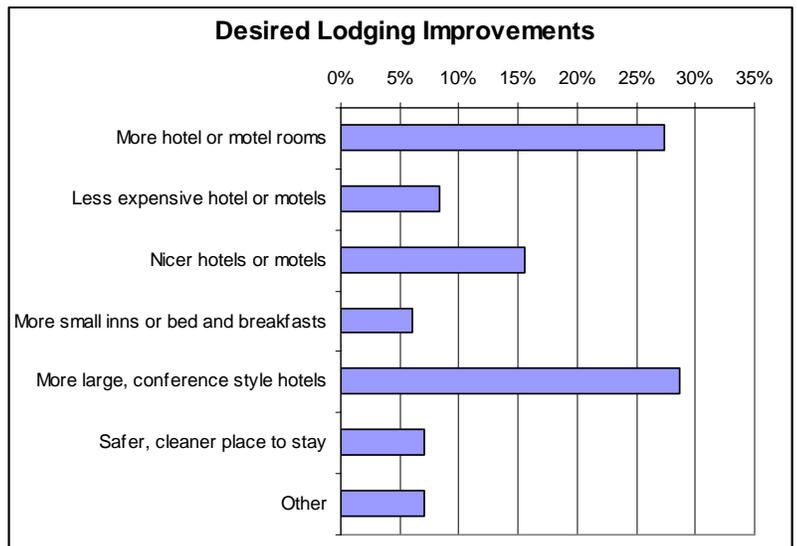
The students indicated a stronger demand for smaller units than did the other groups, evidently due to their stage of life—single with no children. Whereas the largest proportion of each of the other groups would choose a housing unit with four or more bedrooms, students overwhelmingly prefer a one-bedroom unit.

*Hotel/Motel Demand*

In order to gauge the demand for lodging in the Hoosick Street area, students were asked about their families and friends. Students surveyed reported that their friends and family visit an average of 2.7 times a year. If this bears out across the campus, RPI students’ visitors could account for over 23,000 visits to the Troy area every year. This translates to significant demand for hotel and motel rooms, if the visitors stay in local lodging. However, the survey results indicate that currently, less than 10 percent of students reported that their visitors stay in hotels or motels in Troy. While 38 percent indicated that their visitors stay with them, the remainder indicated that their friends and family stay in lodging outside of the City. **This suggests a potential market for more convenient lodging options, which could possibly be located in the Hoosick Street corridor.**



When asked what would make their friends and family more likely to stay in the City of Troy when visiting, the two most popular responses among students were “More large, conference style hotels” and “More hotel or motel rooms.” **If space could be found for a nicer conference hotel, it could potentially serve students’ visitors as well as long-distance travelers passing through on the way to and from Vermont and other vacation destinations. In addition, a conference hotel in the vicinity could be an asset to local businesses and RPI as it would allow them to sponsor conferences in a convenient location.**



## *Implementing the Vision*

### *Economic Themes*

The framework for success in the Hoosick Street corridor will be laid with the implementation of the physical plan as described in the Hoosick Street Corridor Concept Plan. This framework will allow the city to bring in the appropriate uses for the corridor as outlined in this market vision. Based on the market analysis herein, there are opportunities to expand and promote the following economic themes in the Hoosick Street Corridor:

1. Convenience shopping and services, offering merchandise in a range of price points to address the various needs of the multi-faceted customer groups as well as important services such as banks.
2. Convenient stores, restaurants and services geared towards the long-distance travelers passing through on the way to and from Vermont.
3. Restaurants, offering family dining and quick meals, both eat in and take out, to appeal to pass-by traffic and local workers (care should be taken not to compete with downtown Troy – that is, not to look for fine dining and entertainment to locate on Hoosick Street)
4. Medical offices and related services, catering to the senior population in the area and building on the presence of the major medical institutions.
5. Residential development, around and possibly even on Hoosick Street (above storefronts), which could provide convenient housing options for older residents as well as local employees.
6. Lodging, which, like housing, could be located around or on Hoosick Street, to encourage students' families and friends to stay close by, to offer overnight accommodations for long-distance travelers (such as people heading to Vermont), and to allow local businesses to hold conferences in the area.

In effect, the implementation of these various pieces will create a brand for Hoosick Street – a distinctive role and identity within the larger region that will attract people to the Corridor and create an excitement and energy to surround it.

### *Redevelopment Strategy*

As new businesses are identified as desirable additions to the Hoosick Street corridor, locations for these businesses must be identified as well. With the exception of the Troy Plaza, the corridor is currently characterized by relatively small lots in disparate ownership. The Troy Plaza itself has significant vacant space, but it does not offer either the visual or the physical connection with the rest of the corridor that would create a strong, cohesive identity and synergy for the corridor. As the redevelopment of the corridor moves forward, the following guidelines will help to create commercial space with the characteristics needed to attract desirable retail tenants:

1. **The redevelopment of the Troy Plaza should be a priority.** The Troy Plaza was an important retail destination before it lost its two major tenants – Price Chopper and Ames – and it could be a destination again. Reintroducing strong retail tenants into the Troy Plaza is of utmost importance since the Plaza offers the only real opportunity to bring large-scale retail capable of drawing people to the corridor. However, the current design of the Plaza cuts it off from the rest of the street. Therefore,

- redeveloping the Troy Plaza to create a stronger physical and visual link to the rest of the corridor is vital if it is to have a positive impact on commercial development elsewhere on the corridor.
2. **Encourage the creation of larger properties than currently exist along the corridor** in order to provide opportunities for larger stores and restaurants to locate on Hoosick Street. This can be accomplished using the following techniques:
    - a. As buildings and lots become available along Hoosick Street, encourage consolidation of properties to create larger lots for redevelopment.
    - b. Where possible, combine parcels facing Hoosick Street with the parcels immediately behind to create lots with more depth and thus more ability to provide off-street parking, rear access, and larger retail footprints.
  3. **Protect adjoining residential neighborhoods from the impact of the increase in commercial development** that should be anticipated on Hoosick Street as a result of the redevelopment and improvement of the corridor by encouraging or requiring wide planted buffers between the commercial ground-floor uses facing Hoosick Street and the adjoining residential neighborhoods.
  4. **Consider zoning changes to limit ground floor uses to non-residential uses** in order to maximize the commercial space available and to move towards an unfragmented commercial street. Studies have shown that 30 feet or more of vacant storefronts or other non-retail uses tend to make the pedestrian turn back.
  5. **Consider providing technical or financial assistance to property owners and developers to assist in the renovation of existing buildings or development of new buildings** that will best meet the needs of potential commercial tenants as well as enhance the appearance and function of the corridor.
  6. **Maintain an attractive street** – In the short-term, simply clean the street and adjoining properties, encourage property owners to maintain or upgrade properties, and use code enforcement powers. In the long-term, consider establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) or other form of special assessment district to provide and maintain amenities.

### *Business Recruitment*

Bringing the retail vision to fruition requires a well-conceived and implemented business recruitment strategy to re-tenant vacancies and bring in new businesses for infill locations. Such a strategy is vital to ensure that the desired retail mix is attained.

An effective recruitment strategy includes the following elements:

1. **Develop a location strategy.** Obviously, businesses need to locate in a structure that will enable the business owner to realize success. Square footage, access from the street, utilities, rent, and window displays all contribute to success factors. The location decision also, where possible, relates to the cluster retail strategy established for the district. The goal is to locate businesses with similar customers near each other. This strategy, known as clustering, can dramatically increase sales.

2. **Develop a prospect list of potential businesses.** This list should include both independent businesses and national chains. Independent businesses located in nearby areas are ideal candidates for expansion. They are currently in business, know their clientele and customer base, and are succeeding.
3. **Assemble a recruitment package.** Information about the Hoosick Street Corridor, including the market data contained herein, a list of vacancies, and other relevant information should be assembled into a cohesive, attractive marketing package, which should be kept up to date and should be able to be customized to the needs of the target business.
4. **Assemble a business recruitment team.** Team members should include people whom business owners will perceive as peers, such as current business owners; people who can provide expert information, like Chamber of Commerce representatives, city planners, bankers and real estate representatives; and other stakeholders, such as representatives from RPI, Seton Health, local neighborhood groups, and the like.
5. **Create and maintain a tracking system of business prospects.** The needs of a business prospect, either independent or national, that does not express immediate interest in locating on Hoosick Street could change at any time. Therefore, keeping track of businesses that would be desirable additions to the Hoosick Street corridor and contacting them periodically to see if their needs have changed can be a productive endeavor.

When developing a detailed business recruitment strategy, keep in mind that successful commercial districts are not exclusively retail. In fact, commercial districts often thrive when populated with a diversity of functions—professional offices, banks, services, entertainment, other commercial uses, civic destinations, etc. A business recruitment strategy for the Hoosick Street Corridor should include a variety of non-retail businesses, especially lodging and medical offices, which will add to the diverse appeal of the district and to its ability to serve a multitude of purposes.

#### *Business Assistance*

Recruiting new businesses to the Hoosick Street corridor is only half the battle. Once businesses are located in the corridor, providing these businesses with the support that they need to become and remain successful will help these businesses thrive in the long-term. An ongoing business retention and assistant program should be designed to help merchants and service providers on Hoosick Street better understand and meet the demands of the customers in the trade area and support and provide technical assistance to businesses that want to improve or expand within the corridor. A successful business assistance program will serve the dual purpose of creating and maintaining a stable and successful retail and service community, and also providing developers, investors and merchants considering developing or locating on Hoosick Street the confidence to move forward with their plans on the corridor. Such a program can be administered through the Chamber of Commerce, the City of Troy, or some other office created specifically for this purpose. It would make sense to administer both the business assistance and business recruitment programs out of the same office.

The key elements of a successful **business retention and expansion program** include the following services:

1. **Provide current market information**, including local, regional and national trends, customer profiles, and trade area definitions.
2. **Offer loans or grants for business improvement purposes**, including inventory diversification and expansion, marketing, building and façade improvements, etc.
3. **Maintain a current list of available property for rent or sale** and help business owners locate new property within the corridor when they are ready to expand.
4. **Assist new and expanding business owners in preparing business plans and financial feasibility plans.**
5. **Create a clearinghouse to provide information on the various state, federal and private business-assistance** programs that may be of interest to businesses in the corridor.

### *Conclusion*

The Hoosick Street corridor has much potential – from its high visibility to its proximity to a diverse customer base. However, it has yet to live up to its potential. A successful market vision will create a distinctive brand for the district – making it a place that potential customers and visitors as well as local residents, workers and others, can easily identify and will think to travel to for shopping and other needs.

Implementing this vision will require the coordinated efforts of the City, the local business and institutional interests, the real estate development community, and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The efforts, which should include business recruitment, the redevelopment of the Troy Plaza, and the continuous upgrading of the physical place, will result in a successful business district and gateway to the City of Troy that will bring pride of place as well as economic benefit to the Hoosick Street corridor, the surrounding communities, and even to the entire city.

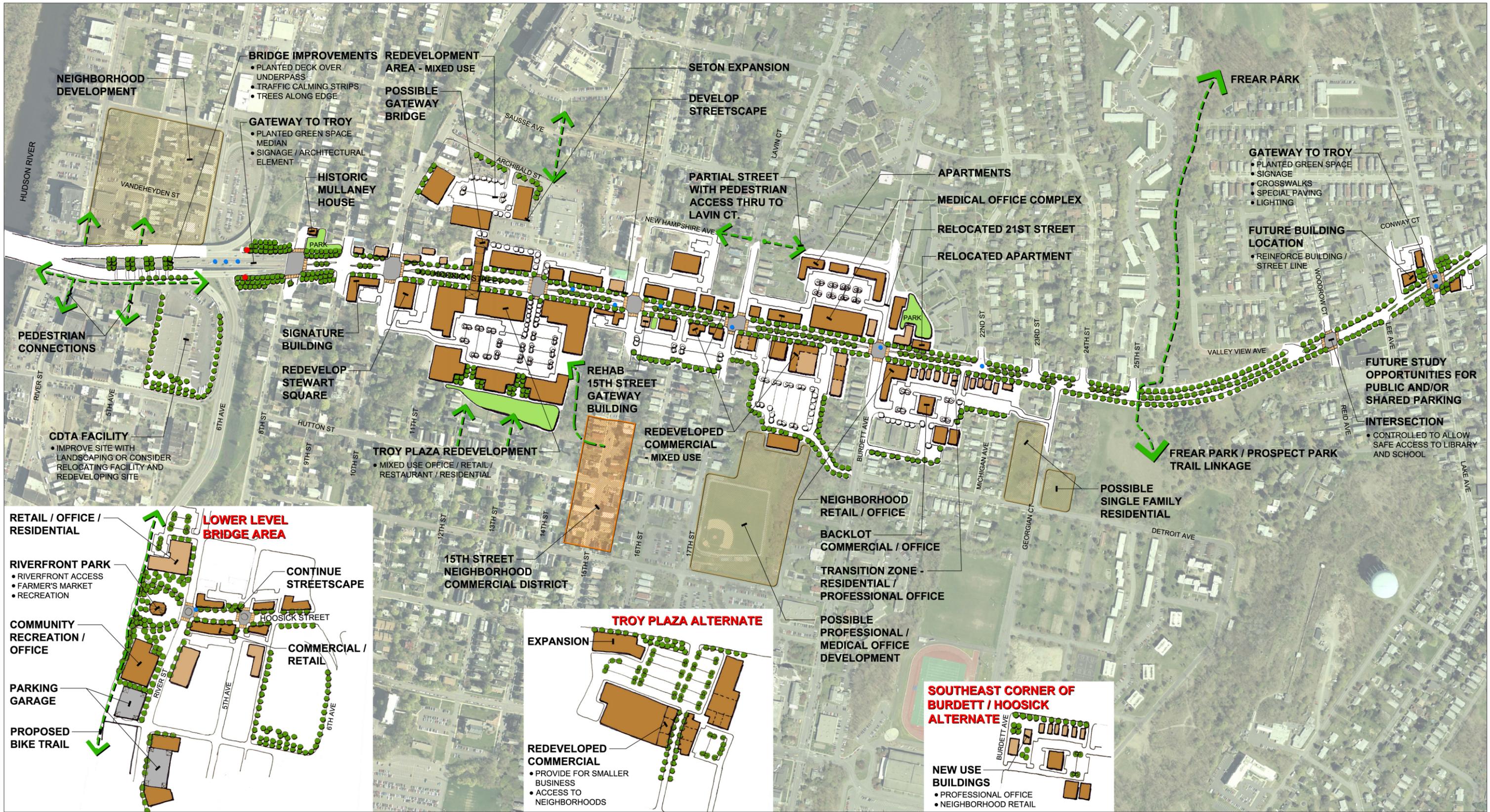
### Hoosick Street Corridor Plan

#### Overall Corridor Concept

This plan seeks to strike a balance between Hoosick Street’s roles as a city street and as a regional highway. The vision for Hoosick Street described within creates considerable opportunity for the development and redevelopment of land along Hoosick Street while improving its transportation function for vehicles and pedestrians. Rather than dividing neighborhoods to the north and south as it has for decades, Hoosick Street will once again unite these neighborhoods, becoming a place for social interaction and commerce. Hoosick Street will be an attractive front door to the City of Troy, creating a positive impression of the City and encouraging passers-by to stop and enjoy what it offers.

The Corridor Concept Plan follows this page. Sub-areas are described in more detail later.





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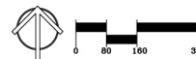


Troy Architecture Program, Inc. (TAP)

# Corridor Concept Plan

**LEGEND**

● CDTA BUS STOPS



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**CITY OF TROY, NEW YORK**  
**HOOSICK STREET PHASE II**  
**CORRIDOR PLAN**

*The Hoosick Parkway*

When the City of Troy completed its *Phase I Hoosick Street Corridor Study* in 2000, one of the concepts examined was a Hoosick Street “Parkway Option” with a raised median between opposing traffic streams. A raised median would provide a key component of a redevelopment initiative, with attractive plantings, enhanced lighting and the informative signs.

This Phase II Study has reinforced and developed this concept in further detail. The parkway concept recommended here retains four through lanes on Hoosick Street, as at present. Additional through lanes were deemed incompatible with the redevelopment goals for the corridor and unnecessary to accommodate traffic. The raised median narrows at intersections to provide left turn lanes, but still offers pedestrian crossing refuges outside the traffic stream. Driveways on Hoosick Street are consolidated and eliminated to better manage access, improving safety and capacity. The parkway concept is not primarily intended to improve capacity on Hoosick Street, but careful analysis demonstrates that it will not negatively impact capacity. The parkway concept is primarily an area revitalization and safety measure.

A raised median barrier eliminates many of traffic conflict points and potential accident situations. Left turn lanes provide safe waiting areas for left turning vehicles out of through traffic stream. This decreases driver frustration and delay, and increases safety. Based on prior NYSDOT safety projects, adding a flush median with left turn lanes yields reductions of 40% for rear end accidents, 77% for left turn accidents, 52% for head-on and sideswipe accidents; for raised medians, the improvement is probably greater. The median, even where it is reduced for left turn lanes, will provide a refuge for pedestrians crossing the street. Pedestrians can cross each direction separately, without waiting for a longer two-way gap in traffic. This is particularly important for the handicapped and the increasing number of elderly in the community.

The recommended raised median will preclude left turns between intersections from and to driveways on Hoosick Street, reducing thereby a number of dangerous conflict points. The median does affect access to adjacent property; vehicles may have to go around the block in certain situations to enter or leave a driveway with a right turn. The plan provides for access to the rear of many Hoosick Street parcels from shared driveways and rear parking lots. Data show that right turn accidents increase with raised medians, possibly because left turns converted into right turns, but these are relatively fewer in number. Turning traffic is handled more efficiently and safely at intersections.

*Sub-area Recommendations:*

Hudson River to 10<sup>th</sup> Street

Land Use and Urban Design

This sub-area actually consists of two distinct circumstances: the western gateway to Hoosick Street from the Collar City Bridge, and the area under the bridge from River Street to 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The western gateway begins on the Collar City Bridge itself. In order to send a signal to motorists that they are leaving the Interstate Highway System and arriving on a city street, it is recommended that the character of the roadway begin to change starting several hundred feet west of 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Working with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), visual cues could be introduced on the bridge structure including street trees in planters along the shoulder and in decks that span the gap between the two bridge sections over Hoosick Street, narrowed travel lanes, traffic calming strips in the roadway, special pavement textures or colors, and speed limit signs.

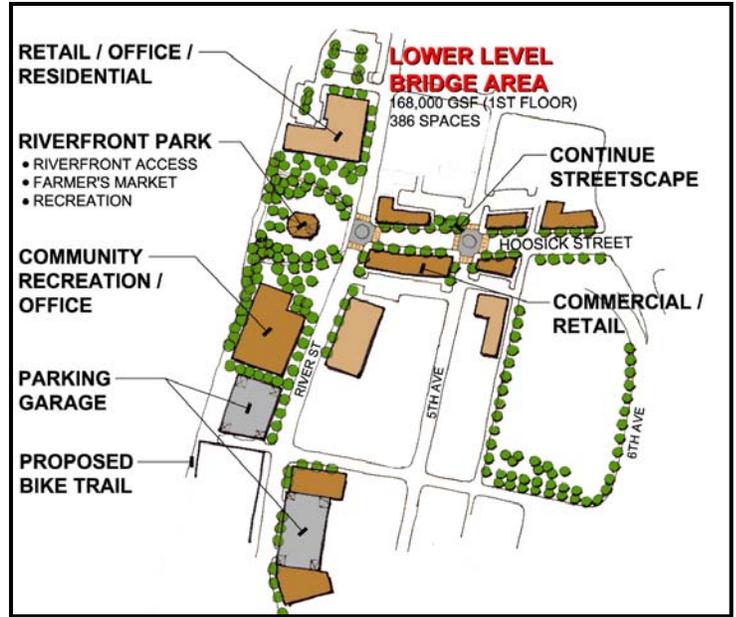
Alongside the bridge on the hillside between 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street, additional large trees could be planted to green-up and soften the view from the bridge.

Once the Collar City Bridge reaches 8<sup>th</sup> Street, the Hoosick Parkway would begin. The planted median between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets would be an appropriate location for a sign welcoming travelers to the City of Troy. Additional gateway features that could be incorporated into this area include generous plantings along both sides of Hoosick Street between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Street, and perhaps an architectural feature (statue or other form of public art) that is duplicated on both the north and south side of the road. Plans for the historic Mullaney House on the north side of Hoosick Street, and the small park proposed for land between the building and Hoosick Street are consistent with this vision of the western gateway. Finally, the parcel of land on the southeast corner of Hoosick Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street is identified as the potential location for a “signature building.” This simply means that the corner is the first development site at this end of Hoosick Street, and because of its high visibility it deserves a building with outstanding architectural design. The building should be located close to the sidewalk edge with parking at the rear, and its front door should be oriented to the corner.



The section of Hoosick Street under the Collar City Bridge presents a different set of challenges. Here, the road itself is not a tremendous barrier. However because the land under the bridge is vacant, there is a swath of undeveloped hardscape that creates a substantial divide between neighborhoods to the north and south. There are a number of ways that this area could be improved.

All of the parcels under the bridge are publicly owned. They are currently used to help supply parking for the Hedley Park Place and Flanagan Square buildings. While the surface parking areas have helped make the adaptive reuse of these two former industrial buildings possible, a longer term parking solution would focus on the creation of one or more parking structures in this area. Parcels of land located under the bridge could then be used for development purposes. One idea would be to turn these state owned parcels over to an economic development entity that could develop low rent incubator office and retail space for start-up businesses. While a location under the bridge may seem undesirable, numerous examples exist from other cities of well-designed and successful developments of this kind.



Café Guastavino - Under the 59<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, NYC

With or without this development, the streetscape along Hoosick Street should be enhanced consistent with improvements up the hill, but without the provision of a planted median. Street trees, pedestrian-scaled lighting, sidewalks and curbs, and crosswalks should all be added or improved as necessary.

Additional suggestions for this area include the creation of a Riverfront Park at the end of Hoosick Street. Currently used for parking, this parcel along the river could become a nice gathering place for area workers and residents alike. Because the bridge covers it, the park could be a foul weather space for the farmer’s market. It could also become a stop along the proposed riverside bicycle trail.

A final recommendation for this area of Hoosick Street involves the CDTA bus facility on the southwest corner of Hoosick Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. A dialogue should be initiated about the future of this facility. If the facility remains at this location, CDTA should be encouraged to substantially improve the landscaping at the facility’s perimeter. Alternatively, CDTA might want to relocate the bus facility to lower value real estate elsewhere in Troy or the region. If that is the case, the City should work with the CDTA to master plan the site and solicit suitable redevelopment proposals. Because of its direct access to the regional highway system, this location may

be appropriate and desirable for a needed commercial use (such as a supermarket). Because of its proximity to downtown and to many neighborhoods in the City, the site may also be suitable for some type of community center or organization. No matter what the use, care must be taken to design the facility in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Specifically, the building or buildings developed on this site should be urban in character and orientation.

### Transportation

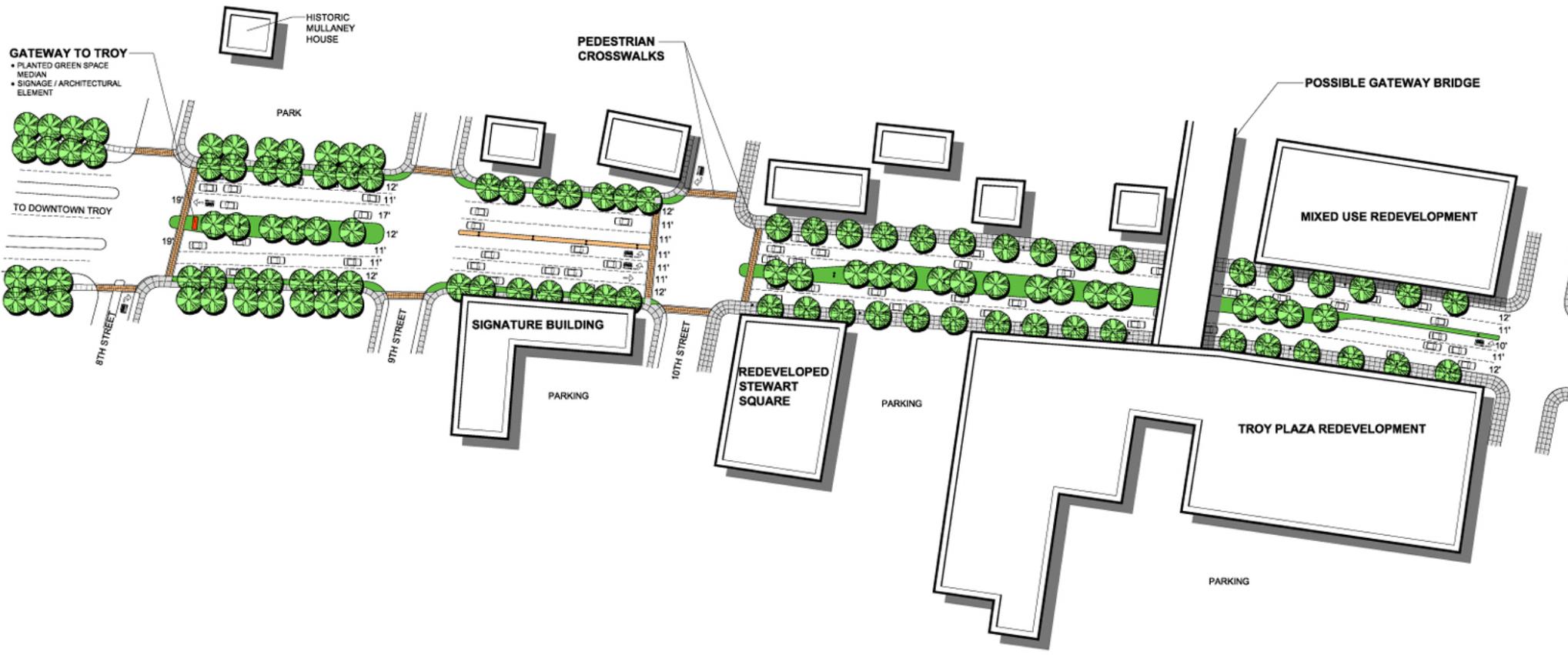
The Collar City Bridge is the western gateway to Hoosick Street and, for many people, to the City of Troy. The overwhelming impression is that of traffic and pavement. At 8<sup>th</sup> Street, the traffic volume on Hoosick Street is very heavy: 43,000 vehicles per day. A significant amount turns to and from Route 40 at 10<sup>th</sup> Street, but 30,000 vehicles per day still remains east of 10<sup>th</sup> Street. To accommodate this heavy volume and significant



weaving maneuvers (left turning traffic from the bridge must cross eastbound traffic from downtown) Hoosick Street between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Street is seven lanes wide with a pavement width of 90 to 100 feet. This wide expanse of pavement does not present an attractive entry into Troy, and it forms a formidable obstacle to pedestrians crossing Hoosick Street. There is no pedestrian signal and crossing between 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue making Hoosick Street a barrier between Troy neighborhoods.

There is inadequate storage space for eastbound traffic turning left at 10th Street and traffic often backs up past 9th Street, 8th Street and onto the bridge. Another concern involves 8th Street south of Hoosick Street. This street carries a significant volume of traffic to and from the bridge as well as to and from Hoosick Street east of the bridge. The City and local community are looking to divert through traffic on 8th Street and reinforce it as a residential street rather than a traffic artery.

Hoosick Street does not operate well east of 10th Street because the rightmost of the three eastbound lanes becomes a right turn-only lane at 13th Street. While some traffic moves left to the through lanes relatively quickly, the leftward merge of other through traffic in right lane near 13th is a confusing and awkward maneuver.



**GATEWAY TO TROY**  
 • PLANTED GREEN SPACE  
 • MEDIAN  
 • SIGNAGE / ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENT

HISTORIC MULLANEY HOUSE

PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALKS

POSSIBLE GATEWAY BRIDGE

TO DOWNTOWN TROY

PARK

SIGNATURE BUILDING

REDEVELOPED STEWART SQUARE

MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT

TROY PLAZA REDEVELOPMENT

PARKING

PARKING

PARKING

8TH STREET

8TH STREET

10TH STREET

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## Corridor Detail Plan

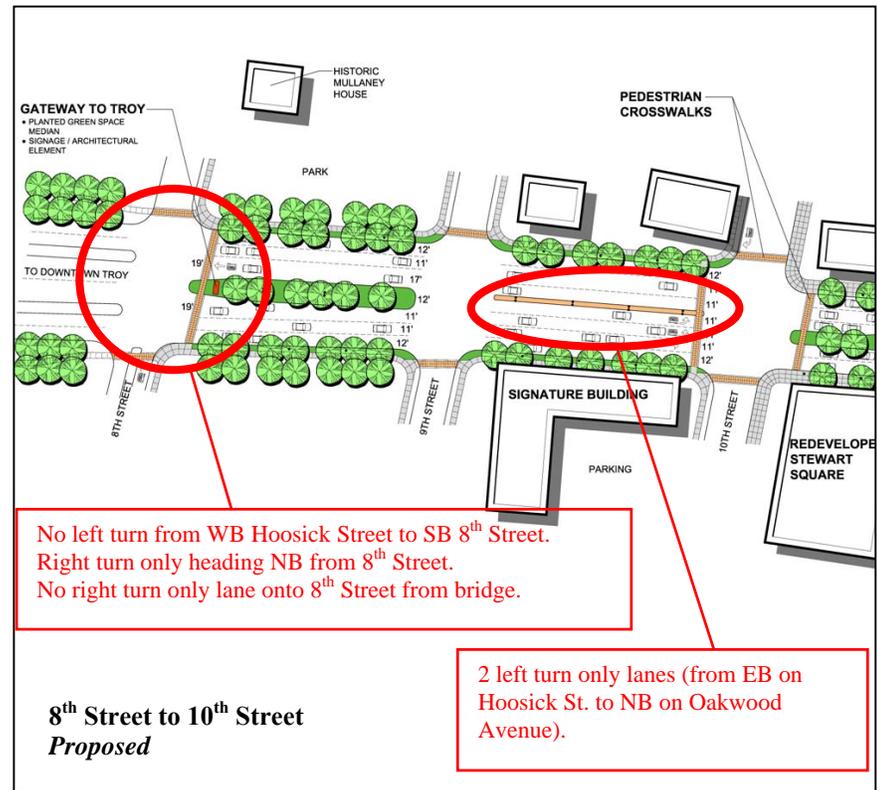
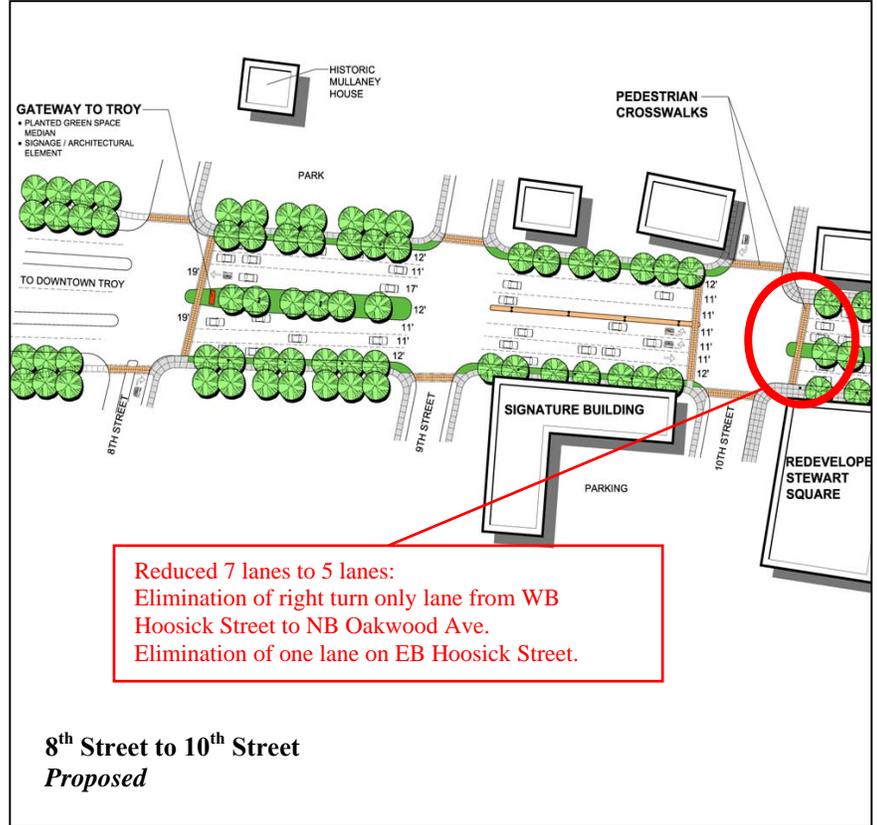
8th to 10th Street - Gateway to Troy



**CITY OF TROY, NEW YORK**  
**HOOSICK STREET PHASE II**  
**CORRIDOR PLAN**

The plan proposes a number of regulatory and roadway changes to alleviate the problems at the western gateway and provide for a more attractive entry to the City. They should all be possible within the current right-of-way, making these improvements feasible in the short-term with changes to signal timing and pavement markings. In the long term, curbs can be relocated and raised islands can be provided.

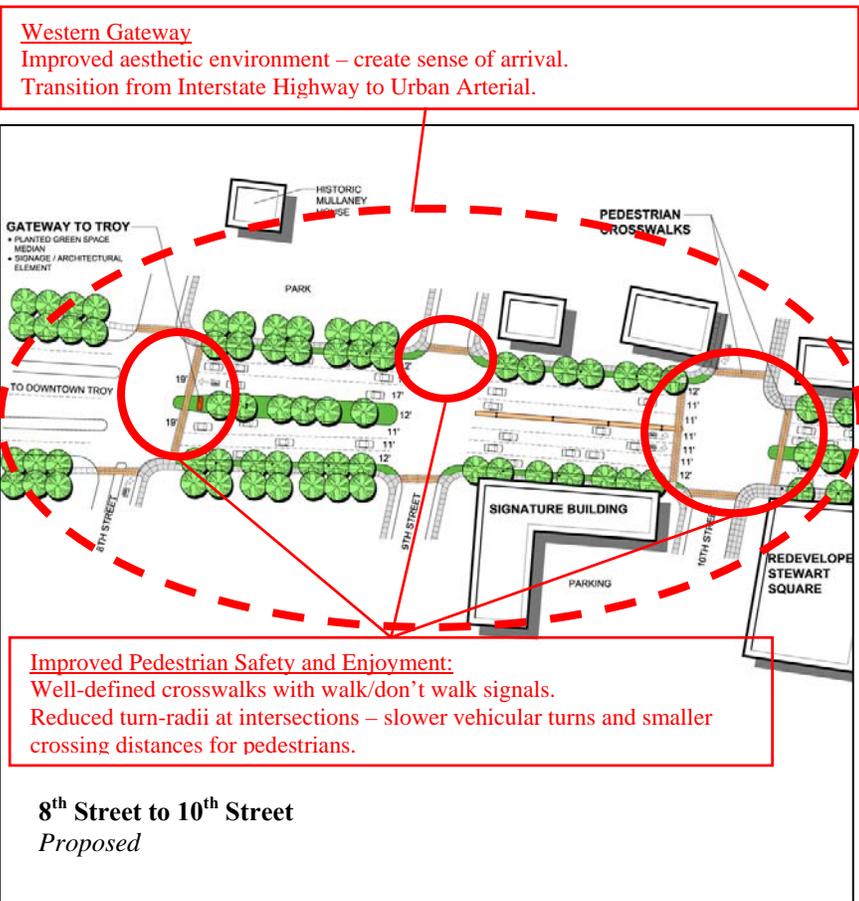
The plan proposes to eliminate the left turn from 8th Street to the bridge. The existing improved 6th Street approach is the preferable route for bridge traffic from the south. Signs would divert bridge traffic coming north on 8th Street to go left on Jacob Street, then right on 6th Street, and right on Jay to the bridge. The proposed plan also eliminates the left turn from westbound Hoosick Street to 8th Street south; it diverts this traffic to 6th Street for access to downtown, rather than 8th Street. The City will need to study and confirm that the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue / Hoosick Street intersection is able to handle increased traffic destined downtown resulting from this change. The elimination of the left turn from westbound Hoosick Street to 8th Street permits a simplification of the traffic signal cycle, which will allow a pedestrian signal and crossing at 8th Street. It also provides space for an island and pedestrian refuge. The pedestrian crossing and island should help unite neighborhoods north and south of Hoosick Street. The new island also provides location for a “western gateway” to Hoosick Street, where an appropriate sign or "welcoming" feature can be placed to greet incoming traffic. To discourage traffic on 8th Street the right turn only lane from the bridge should be eliminated. Revisions to



the signal timing should provide sufficient capacity for eastbound traffic from the bridge without this lane.

The left turn lane from eastbound Hoosick Street to northbound 10th Street would be extended back to 9th Street by eliminating the less frequently used westbound left turn lane on Hoosick Street at 9th Street. This increases the storage capacity for eastbound left turning vehicles at 10th Street and should reduce somewhat the back-ups at 8th Street and onto the bridge. The extraordinary volume of traffic between 9th and 10th Street makes seven lanes necessary, and will leave room for only a small painted median on this block.

The plan calls for reducing the crossing on the east side of 10th Street from seven to five lanes. Two eastbound lanes from the west side of the 10th Street intersection proceed directly into two eastbound through lanes on east side of the intersection. The center eastbound lane is eliminated and replaced with a landscaped island, providing a pedestrian refuge and another opportunity for signing. The two eastbound lanes then move gradually to the left to become the two through lanes. This modification eliminates the difficult merge near 13th Street. If traffic generated by a redeveloped Troy Plaza warrants, a short right turn lane could be added in the future closer to 13th Street. The volume turning right at 10th Street from Hoosick Street westbound is relatively small; the plan proposes to eliminate the right turn only lane and, thereby, shorten the pedestrian crossing.



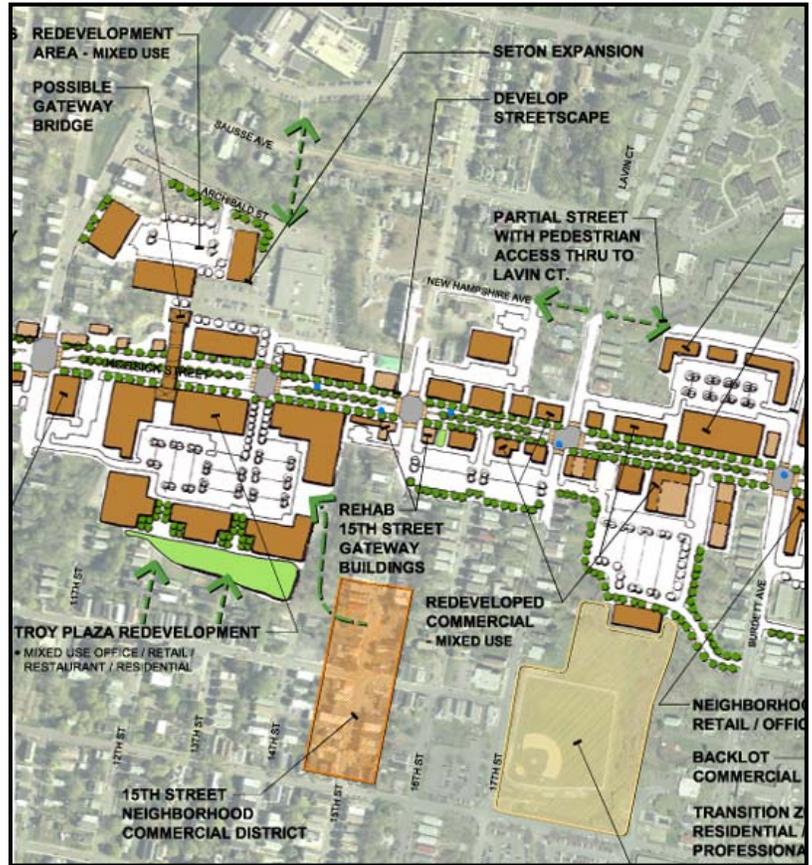
10th Street to Burdett Avenue

Land Use and Urban Design

This subsection is the commercial core of Hoosick Street. These ten blocks are designated for fairly intensive mixed-use development, most of which will involve redevelopment of sites that are now occupied by lower value uses. Many of the existing buildings are remnants of the residential past of this section of Hoosick Street.

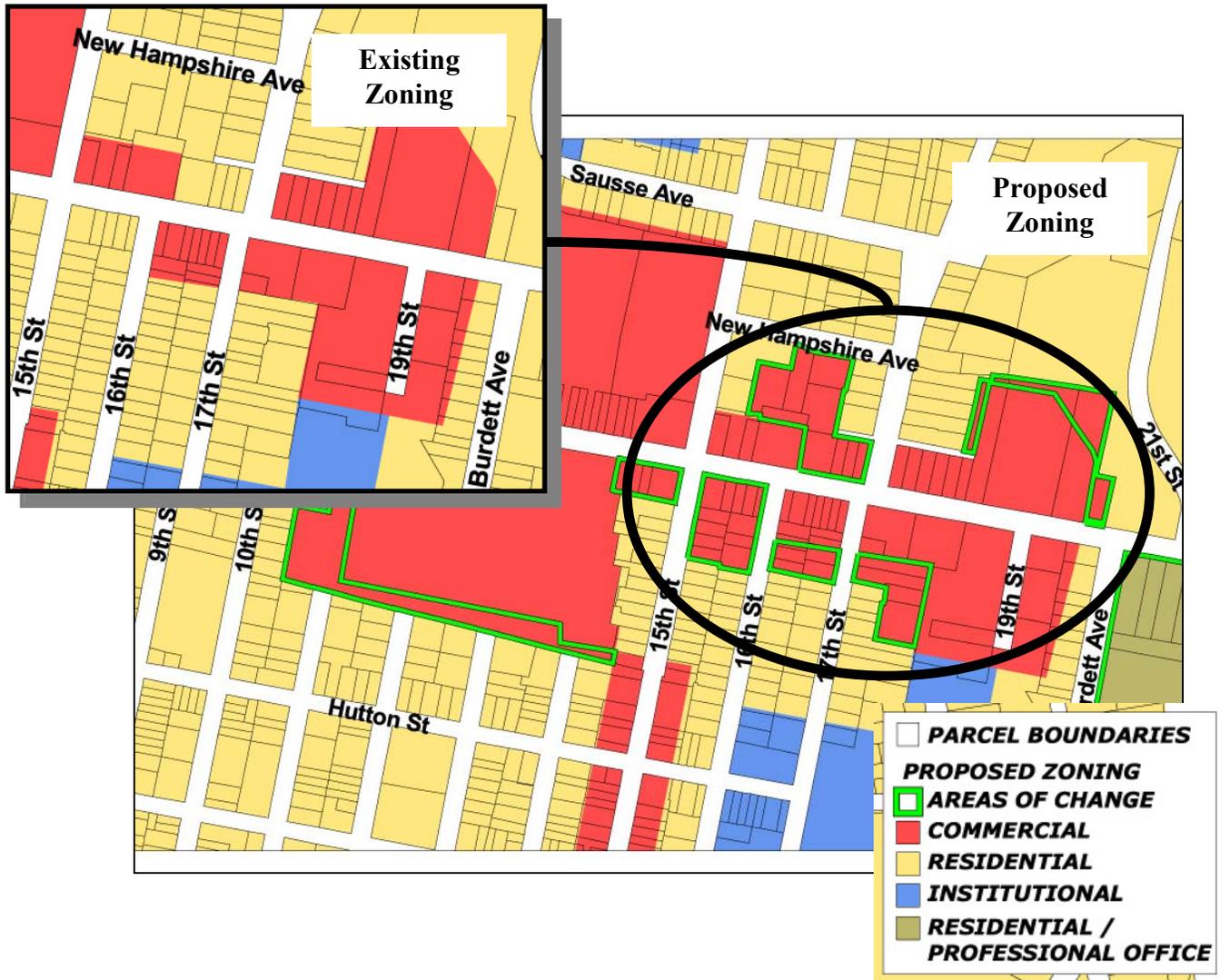
Development of this mixed-use commercial district should be based on the following principles:

- The district should allow a wide range of commercial uses - retail, service, office, entertainment (including restaurants, cafes, and taverns) – plus other compatible uses such as high density residential and civic uses. Uses should be mixed horizontally across the district, and vertically within buildings.
- To the degree possible, active uses (retail, service, and entertainment) should be located on the ground floors of all buildings fronting on Hoosick Street. Active uses on the ground floor promote sidewalk life and enhance the vitality of the street. These uses may also extend onto upper floors, or upper floors may be occupied with other uses such as office and residential.
- Multiple story buildings are strongly encouraged. Buildings of two to three stories will help create the feeling of an “outdoor room” in the public space (street and sidewalk) between the facades of buildings located on either side of Hoosick Street.
- All buildings in the district should be constructed to a uniform “build-to line” established for each side of Hoosick Street (could also be a minimum/maximum setback range). The build-to line would be set so that buildings are built to the sidewalk edge. However, because a few feet of right-of-way must be added to the corridor to fit the parkway program in this subsection of Hoosick Street (see transportation recommendations below), the line will actually be a few feet from the current sidewalk edge in the short-term. In the long-term, these buildings will be located at the sidewalk edge in order to create the sense of enclosure necessary for a comfortable pedestrian realm.
- Parking will be located behind buildings fronting in Hoosick Street. The parking areas of adjoining parcels will be interconnected in order to complete rear access ways between blocks. Cross-easements or other appropriate mechanisms should be used to ensure the future right of access across multiple parcels. Shared parking arrangements should be encouraged to the degree possible in order to minimize the amount of



parking necessary, and in some instances the City or another appropriate entity (parking authority, business improvement district, etc.) could consider acquiring these parking areas in order to make them public.

- Some of the parcels fronting on Hoosick Street are too shallow to be viable for commercial use. Specifically, the parcels on the south side of Hoosick Street between 15<sup>th</sup> Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Street must be assembled with other parcels to the rear in order to provide adequate space for buildings and rear parking. This will necessitate the conversion of several parcels from residential to commercial.



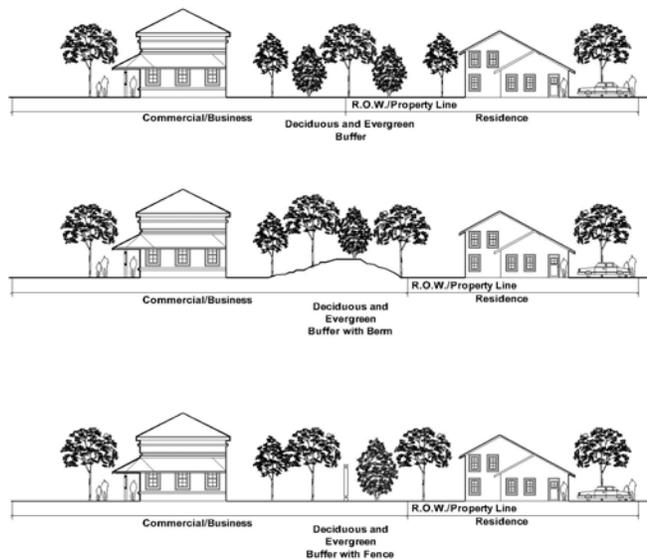
The map above shows the parcels that should be changed from residential to commercial. It should be noted that the integrity of the residential neighborhoods to the north and south of Hoosick Street remains important to the City, and these proposed district boundaries were drawn with great care. The number of parcels added to the commercial district are all that are required to fit the scale of building and associated parking desired for the parcels fronting on Hoosick Street. These boundaries should not be extended further into the residential neighborhood to accommodate a larger commercial building if one is proposed. Being this clear and precise about the boundary should allow residential property owners immediately south of the proposed

boundary to feel a sense of security and permanence about the future of this neighborhood, and prevent the sort of property disinvestment or neglect that can result from uncertainty about the future.

In addition to the clear definition of boundaries, it is recommended that the City establish design guidelines describing appropriate methods for buffering these residences from the parking areas behind buildings on Hoosick Street, and for ensuring that the streetscape along these streets (15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup>) is carefully designed to provide safe and attractive connections from the neighborhood to Hoosick Street.



Sample design guidelines illustrating alternatives for buffering residential properties from adjacent commercial properties



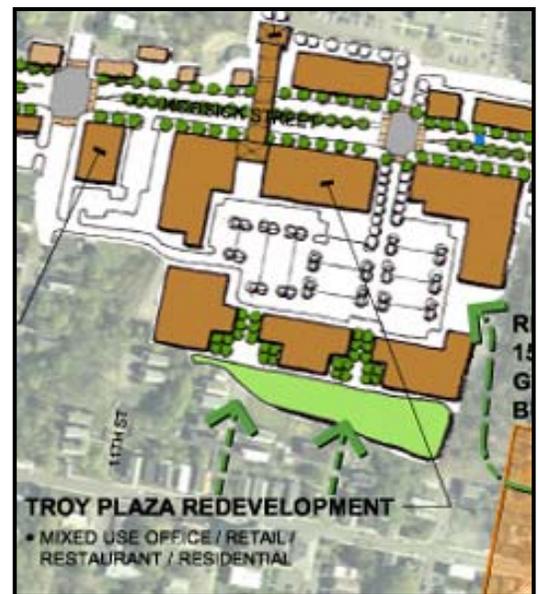
- The Hoosick Parkway concept will carry through this area as illustrated in the cross-section on the following page. Important features shown in the cross-section include wide (12') sidewalks suitable for a commercial district, well-defined crosswalks (with pedestrian signals) at intersections, street trees, pedestrian scaled lighting, and attractive street furniture.
- Interconnected streets and sidewalks are strongly encouraged throughout this subarea. But where vehicular connections are not possible, or where they are controversial (for example, New Hampshire Avenue), pedestrian connections should be established as a minimum requirement. Several such connections are shown on the concept plan.

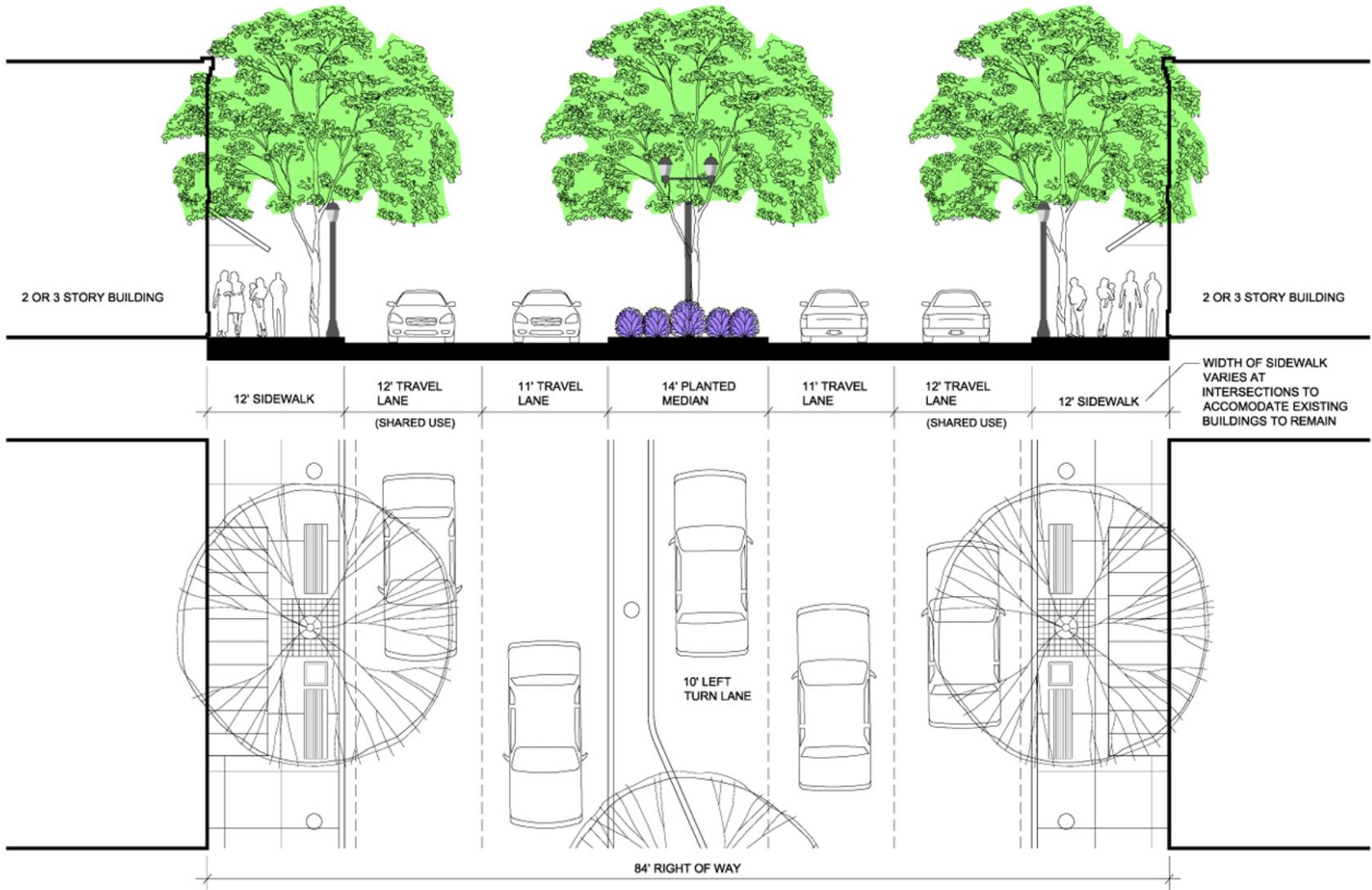
In addition to these overall principles, there are several specific development recommendations illustrated on the plan for this area. These include:

- Troy Plaza Redevelopment – Based on the market analysis, there is strong evidence that Hoosick Street captures only a small share of the available retail dollars from its potential customer groups. There is significant room for retail development in the Hoosick Street corridor, and the Troy Plaza site is perhaps the most important site for taking advantage of that potential in the near term. With the loss of Price Chopper and Ames in the last few years, the plaza remains only partially occupied. Owned by a company from outside the region, the plaza does not appear to be receiving much attention, and its strip mall design is looking worn out. Redevelopment of the plaza is a high priority for this plan.

Two conceptual redevelopment scenarios were considered for the plaza. The first, illustrated in the top drawing, is an improved and slightly expanded version of the existing plaza.

The more compelling vision, however, is illustrated in the bottom drawing. This would be a much more intensive redevelopment of the site. Buildings fronting on Hoosick Street would replace the existing retaining wall. These buildings would have their ground floor space oriented to the sidewalk on Hoosick Street. As described above, these ground floor spaces should be reserved for active uses. The second and third stories could also achieve direct access from the internal parking area. Because of the change in elevation on the site, the second story may actually be at the same grade as the parking area. This would make it possible to surround the internal parking area with additional retail uses, similar in layout to the Stuyvesant Plaza in the Town of Guilderland. Upper floor space that is not used for retail could be used for office or residential purposes instead. The upper floors of the buildings at the southern edge of the site, because of their distance from Hoosick Street and their proximity to residential neighborhoods, might be particularly suitable for high





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**TROY**

Troy Architecture Program, Inc. (TAP)

## Corridor Cross Section

10th Street to Burdett Avenue  
 84' Right of Way

**CITY OF TROY, NEW YORK**  
**HOOSICK STREET PHASE II**  
**CORRIDOR PLAN**



density residential development. Perhaps these units would serve RPI's residential needs, or they might cater to specific households such as seniors or local workers.

Depending on the intensity of redevelopment, surface parking on the interior of the site may or may not be adequate. If it is not, structured parking may still make intense use of this site possible. Again the topography could be an advantage in developing multi-level parking with access to a lower level from 10<sup>th</sup> Street.

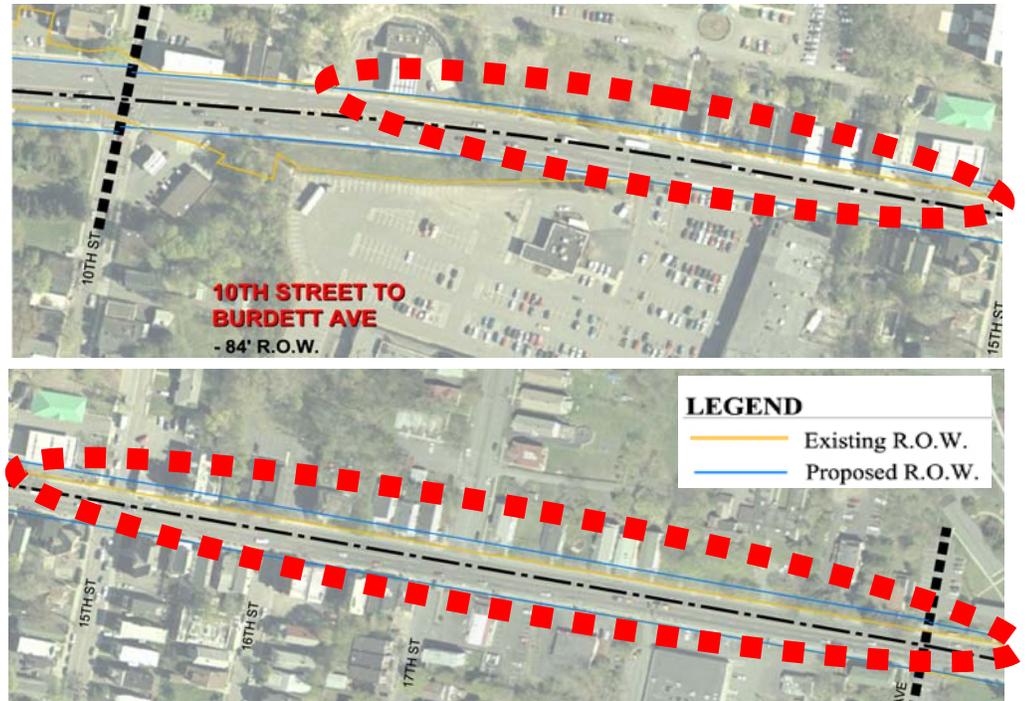
In order to encourage the redevelopment of Troy Plaza, the City should take an active role in explaining to the development community its vision for this site. Most developers will probably not expect that the City is eager for, and willing to approve (if designed correctly) the level of development described for this site. That information combined with the findings of the market analysis should get their attention. Even if the current owners of the plaza are not interested, there are developers in the region that could become interested enough to pursue acquisition of the site from the current owners. In the meantime, the City should also make certain that the zoning for this site is amended to allow for the type of development described in this plan. Developers value predictability in the development review process. The City can have high standards for development, but it should strive to streamline the development approval process for applicants that are willing to meet those standards.

- Pedestrian Bridge – Because of the topography in the area just east of 10<sup>th</sup> Street, there is a unique opportunity to create a pedestrian bridge over Hoosick Street. The bridge could span across Hoosick Street from the Seton Health Systems site on the north to the Troy Plaza site on the south. Although not strictly needed for pedestrians to cross Hoosick Street safely and comfortably once the Hoosick Parkway concept is implemented, the pedestrian bridge could be such an interesting architectural feature that enhances the gateway to Troy. Development of the pedestrian bridge could be accomplished through a partnership between public and private entities. For example, developers on either side of Hoosick Street might be interested in the bridge as a means of attracting attention to their projects, and the City could pursue grants from sources such as the TEA3 federal transportation bill now under consideration in Congress.
  
- Intersection of 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Hoosick Street - The sidewalk width could be narrowed at the intersection of 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Hoosick Street in order limit the amount of additional right-of-way needed at this location. This area has been singled out so that an existing building on the southeast corner of the intersection could be preserved. The architectural character of this building creates an important gateway to the neighborhood commercial district on 15<sup>th</sup> Street between Hoosick Street and the RPI campus. It is one of the few buildings along this section of Hoosick Street that might be worth keeping.

Transportation

The parkway concept is a long-term recommendation consistent with the long-term redevelopment proposals of the study. As described above, these call for a commercial core between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Burdett Avenue. Offices and business would serve both the local area and through travelers in a pedestrian-friendly environment. Two through lanes each way (12 foot curb, 11 foot center), a 14 foot median, and 12 foot sidewalks will require a right-of-way of 84 feet, (except at 15<sup>th</sup> Street where the sidewalk could be narrowed to preserve an architecturally significant building on the southeast corner).

The current right-of-way on Hoosick Street between 13th Street and Burdett Avenue is about 66 feet, requiring approximately 18 feet of additional right-of-way for the through lanes, median and sidewalks. If the City were to enact a setback or “build-to” line for new buildings, the required area could gradually become unencumbered as parcels adjacent to the right-of-way redevelop in the future. Determining precisely where the "build-to" line should be located is difficult to do at this time given the lack of survey information for



Right-of-way acquisition necessary on north side of Hoosick Street (building redevelopment)

Hoosick Street and the absence of engineering level design for the conceptual Hoosick Street improvements suggested in this plan. If possible, the City should commission a survey to determine the exact location and dimensions of the existing right-of-way. It would also be useful to locate the desired 84 foot right-of-way in terms of the transportation engineering requirements for this roadway.

In the absence of this data, a build-to line should be established that is somewhat conservative. The plan shows the approximate locations where land will be required on the north side or the south side of Hoosick Street. Most of the necessary right-of-way expansion between 13th Street and Burdett Street appears to be located on the north side of Hoosick Street. As a result, the build-to line could be established at 20 feet on the north side of Hoosick Street, and perhaps 12 or 15 feet on the south side of Hoosick Street. If this distance later proves to be somewhat greater than needed, additional sidewalk width between the building and the street could be provided when the road is rebuilt. Very wide sidewalks are not inappropriate for this type of commercial corridor. In fact, wider

sidewalks allow for a greater range of sidewalk activity (such as sidewalk cafes or sidewalk retail), and tend to make such commercial districts more lively and, therefore, more successful.

When all or most right-of-way is unencumbered, acquisition, widening and installation of the median would occur. The pace of redevelopment is difficult to predict, and the parkway option may be five to ten or more years in the future. However, with this plan in mind, and City regulations to implement it, it can ultimately be fulfilled without widespread disruption and at reasonable cost.

Left turn lanes would allow the 13<sup>th</sup> Street (the entrance to Seton Health and Troy Plaza), 15<sup>th</sup> Street, and Burdett Avenue intersections to retain reasonable performance into the future. There is the potential for spot improvements at these key intersections in advance of the parkway, if the opportunity and funding are available. A relocation of the eastbound through lanes between 10th and 13th Streets will ameliorate a difficult merge in this area.

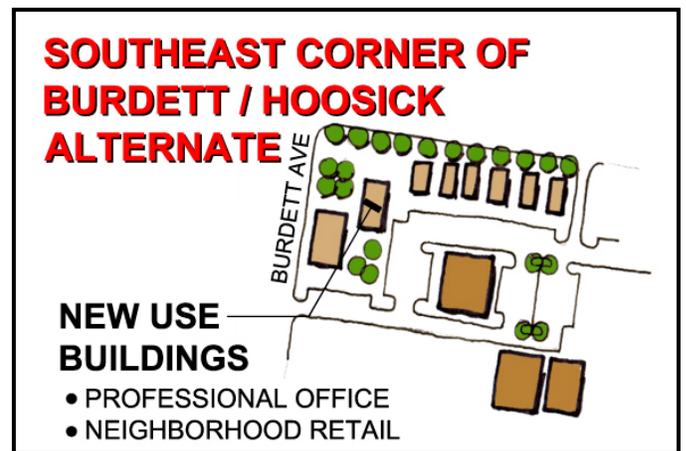
*Burdett Avenue to Woodrow Court*

Land Use and Urban Design

The intersection of Burdett Avenue and Hoosick Street marks the eastern end of the commercial core. There are several important opportunities that have been identified in the vicinity of this intersection.

One of these opportunities involves land on the north side of Hoosick Street, across from 19<sup>th</sup> Street. A regional developer has expressed interest in building a medical office building at this location. A conceptual design for this development was developed as part of this plan and is shown at right. The conceptual design places the medical office building close to Hoosick Street with a main entrance oriented to the sidewalk, and another entrance oriented to the rear parking area. To access the site, 21<sup>st</sup> Street would be reconstructed so that it aligns directly with Burdett Avenue. This alignment would create a regular block pattern on the north side of Hoosick Street allowing for more efficient access for the proposed medical office building. The realignment of 21<sup>st</sup> Street would necessitate the removal of one apartment building in the adjoining apartment complex, however a new apartment building could be constructed where 21<sup>st</sup> Street once intersected with Hoosick Street. Due to the block street pattern established by the new alignment of 21<sup>st</sup> Street, it might also be possible to build two or three additional apartment buildings north of the new medical office building’s parking area. These apartment buildings could share parking with the medical offices because the peak parking demand for these uses occurs at different times of the day.

A second opportunity involves the southeast corner of Burdett Avenue’s intersection with Hoosick Street, and land to the east of this intersection. Again development interest in the property on this corner provides an opportunity to establish a new development pattern. As traffic on Hoosick Street has increased in recent years, the neighborhood on the south side of Hoosick Street

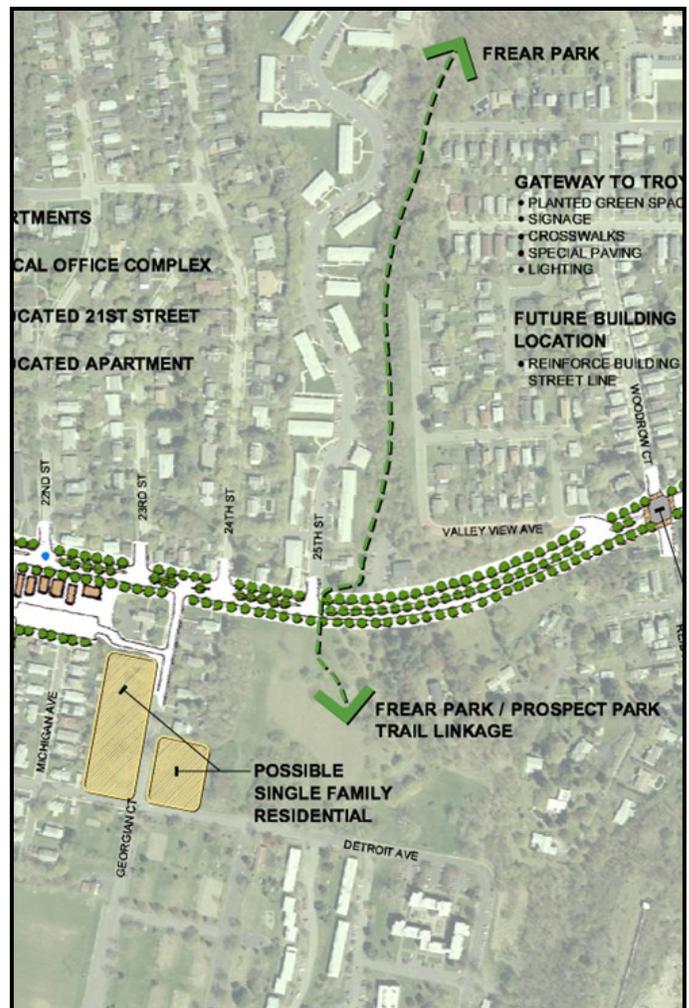


between Burdett Avenue and Georgian Court has become undesirable for residential purposes. Several residents from these homes have expressed their displeasure with the impacts of noise and pollution and have made it clear that they no longer wish to live there. Currently zoned for single family residential, these homeowners are unable to sell their properties due to these conditions. However, developers have expressed interest in purchasing some of these homes for redevelopment. Responding to these concerns, the plan calls for the creation of a residential and professional office zone in this area. The zone would allow for the continued residential use of these properties, but it would also allow these buildings to be used as office space for lawyers, doctors, accountants, real estate brokers, and other professionals. In some cases, existing buildings may not be suitable for these purposes, so the zoning should allow for replacement of these buildings as long as the scale and character of new buildings is consistent with the residential buildings in this area. As these conversions take place, curb cuts from Hoosick Street will be eliminated when possible in favor of access from the rear of these parcels. The depth of these parcels, and the consolidation of these with adjacent parcels to the south, will make rear access and parking possible over time.

The possible development project on the southeast corner of Burdett Avenue and Hoosick Street, therefore, can initiate this transition. If the existing buildings on the corner are to be demolished to make way for the project, the City should insist that the new building anchor the corner. The new building should have two functional stories and be built to the sidewalk edge. As in the commercial district to the west, an active use (retail, service, entertainment) should be strongly encouraged for the ground floor, but the second floor could contain offices or residential units. Parking for the new building would be located in the rear, with access from Burdett Avenue only. The City should also be certain to obtain a cross-easement for the parking area so that when parcels to the east transition away from residential use, a pattern of rear access and parking can be created all the way across to Georgian Court.

Moving east up the hill toward Woodrow Court, the remainder of this sub-area should remain largely unchanged. The residential parcels on the north side of Hoosick Street will benefit from the improved appearance and safety of the road under the Hoosick Parkway concept. The undeveloped green areas will remain undeveloped.

One feature illustrated on the concept plan is a possible trail linking Frear Park to the RPI campus and ultimately to Prospect Park. This north-south trail would follow the undeveloped strip of land below Valley View Avenue and perhaps cross Hoosick Street at grade in the vicinity of 25<sup>th</sup> Street, or via a second pedestrian bridge above

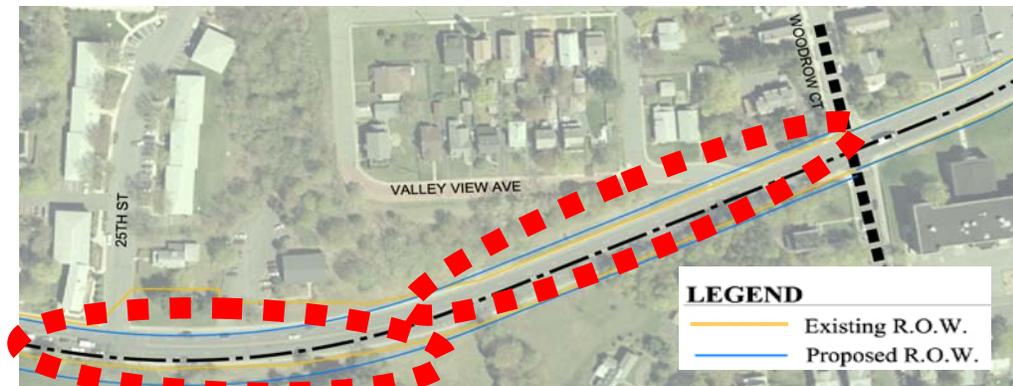
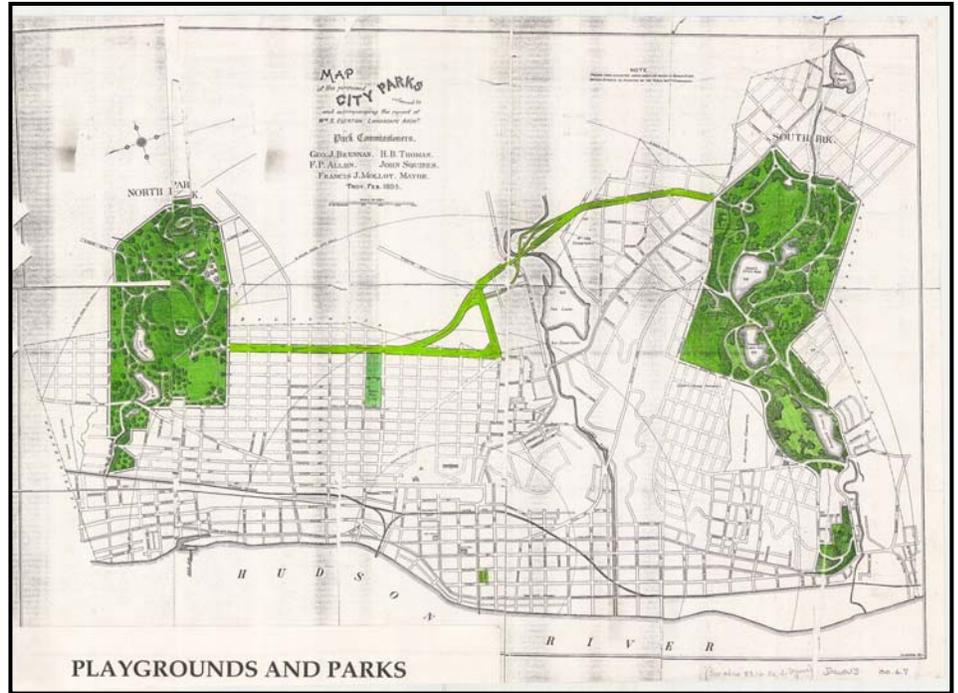


Hoosick Street. The idea of creating a greenway system in the City of Troy is not a new one. The map at right is from 1895. It depicts a system of city parks linked by greenways. Over 100 years later this remains a worthy but elusive goal.

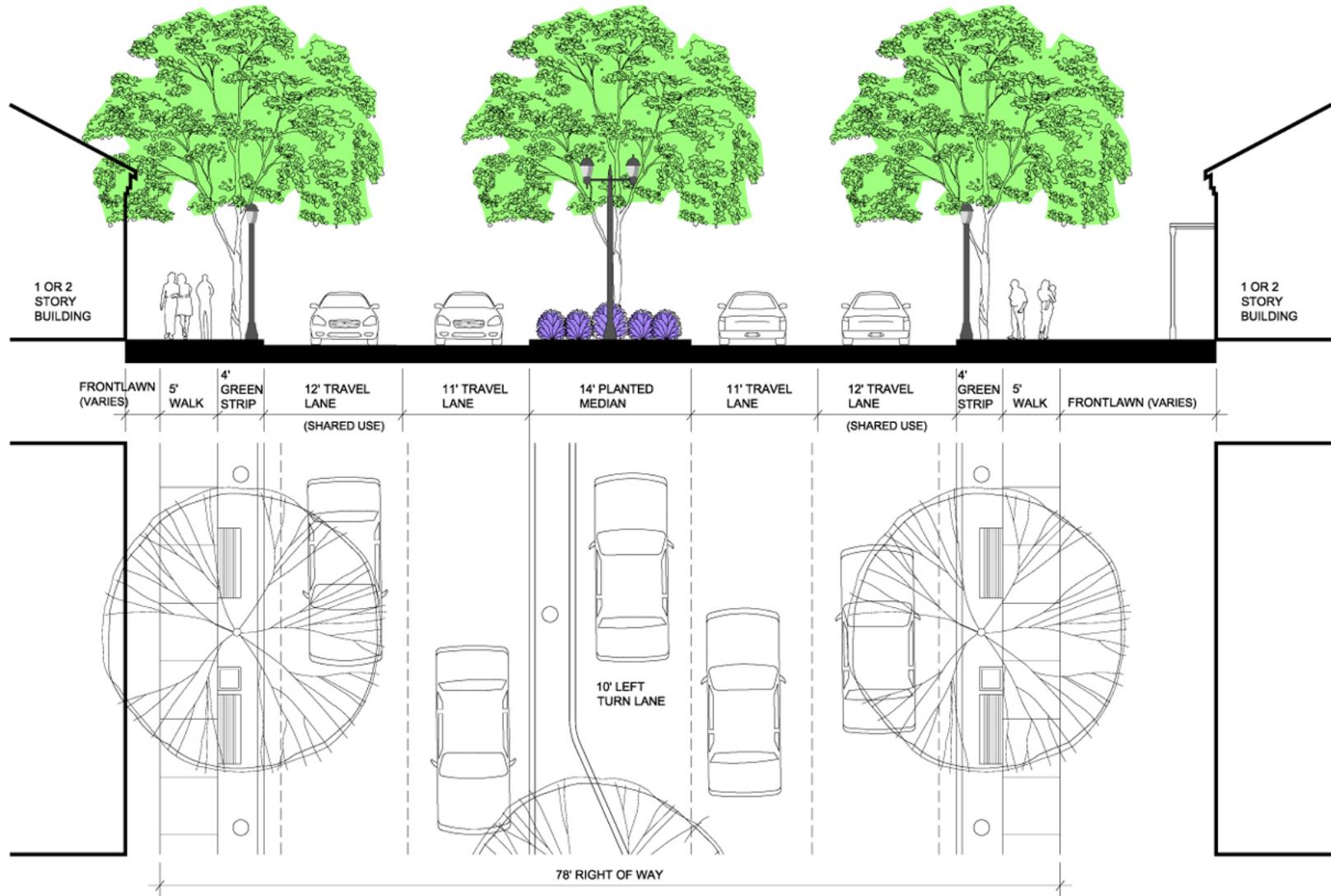
Transportation

Two through lanes each way (12 foot curb, 11 foot center), a 14 foot median are proposed between Burdett Avenue and Woodrow Court. These dimensions are illustrated in the cross-section on the following page. Between Burdett Avenue and Woodrow Court, the right-of-way would be widened from its existing width - about 66 feet, to 78 feet. Existing building setbacks would allow for a five-foot sidewalk and a four-foot planting strip near the curb without taking existing buildings. On the south side between Burdett Avenue and Georgian Court, a shared driveway with rear parking is expected to aid in the transition from residential use to professional offices.

It is also proposed to realign 21<sup>st</sup> Street with Burdett Avenue if, as the area redevelops, existing buildings are replaced. The frequent westbound backup on Hoosick Street at Burdett Avenue impedes eastbound traffic making a left turn into 21<sup>st</sup> Street. The westbound backup also blocks



Right-of-way acquisition necessary on north and south sides of Hoosick Street (does not impact existing buildings)



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Troy Architecture Program, Inc. (TAP)

## Corridor Cross Section

Burdett Avenue to Woodrow Court  
 78' Right of Way



**CITY OF TROY, NEW YORK**  
**HOOSICK STREET PHASE II**  
**CORRIDOR PLAN**

traffic exiting 21<sup>st</sup> Street. These problems would be alleviated by the addition of a westbound left turn lane on Hoosick Street. Pending the redevelopment and realignment, NYSDOT should consider adding a traffic signal at 21<sup>st</sup> Street coordinated with the nearby Burdett Avenue signal.

### *Sycaway Neighborhood*

#### Land Use and Urban Design

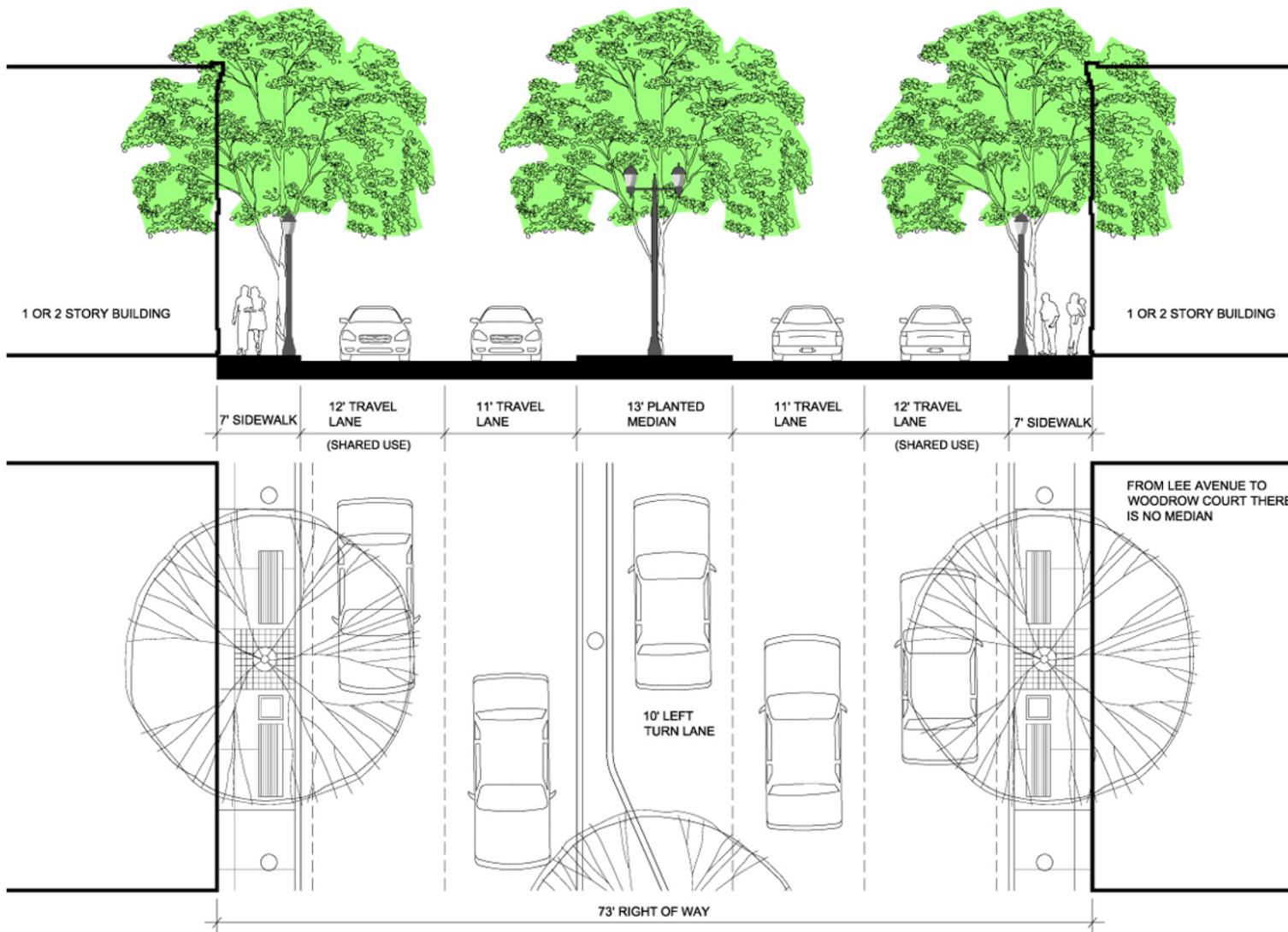
The Sycaway neighborhood is the eastern gateway to Hoosick Street and the City of Troy. As such, one of the primary goals for this sub-area is to create a sense of arrival to the City. Additional goals for this area are to reduce the impact of Hoosick Street's traffic and to protect the character of the neighborhood.

In accordance with the Hoosick Parkway concept described throughout this plan, the entrance to Troy will be marked by a planted median that starts at the City line. The median would be an appropriate location for a sign welcoming travelers to the City of Troy. The median, pedestrian scaled lighting, sidewalks, and well-defined crosswalks would continue along Hoosick Street, and generous landscaping at the corner of Lake Avenue and Hoosick Street would complete the visual improvements to this important gateway. These features are illustrated in the cross-section on the following page.



The character of Sycaway's small commercial area could be improved by ensuring that future development or redevelopment in the area follows the same urban design principles outlined for other portions of the corridor. However, the scale of development in Sycaway should remain small, with buildings of one or two stories. Buildings should be located along the sidewalk with parking in the rear. Where existing buildings have parking to their side, low walls or decorative fences running along and parallel to the sidewalk can greatly improve the pedestrian environment.

The addition of a median and improved crosswalks should make the pedestrian experience safer and more enjoyable. The ability to cross Hoosick Street will improve neighborhood cohesiveness. It might also allow for a patron of one of the small businesses in Sycaway to patronize some of the other businesses without returning to his/her car. The ability to walk safely, therefore, could reduce the demand for parking in Sycaway. The City and local business should work together to identify opportunities to formalize shared parking arrangements so that limited space for off-street parking in the neighborhood is used efficiently.



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Troy Architecture Program, Inc. (TAP)

## Corridor Cross Section

Sycaway Neighborhood - Woodrow Court to City Line  
 73' Right of Way

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## Transportation

The NYSDOT recently completed reconstructing Route 7 in Brunswick. The west end of the project extended into the City of Troy as far west as Woodrow Court. Route 7 now has one lane in each direction; a center two-way left turn lane (left turn only at intersections); bicycle lanes; and shoulders as far west as Lake Avenue. Two eastbound lanes extend a considerable distance east of Lake Avenue to facilitate the merge from two eastbound lanes west of Lake Avenue that previously caused back-ups through the intersection. Additional land was acquired at Lake Avenue by NYSDOT to provide the right-of-way for these improvements.

An opportunity exists to modify NYSDOT's recent work to accommodate both short and long-term improvements within the new right-of-way. The illustration on the following page demonstrates how this could be accomplished. The proposed long-term plan continues the parkway median and left turn lanes to Lake Avenue. Left turn lanes are provided at Woodrow Avenue / Reid Avenue. A small amount the lawn at School 18 would be needed near Lee Avenue.

A number of improvements can be made at Lake Avenue in the short term. The short-term plan increases the area to the left of the eastbound and westbound left turn lanes on Hoosick Street to 8 feet. This would provide small islands east and west of Lake Avenue that will facilitate safe pedestrian crossing. There appears to be sufficient room within the new NYSDOT right-of-way to accommodate a northward shift in the westbound lanes and sidewalk that the islands will require. The island east of Lake Avenue can widen east of the left turn lane, taking more of the center 2-way left turn lane, to provide space for a western gateway welcoming feature.

10' LEFT TURN LANES

CURBED MEDIAN

MAINTAIN PROPOSED CENTERLINE FROM NYSDOT PLAN

12'  
11'  
11'  
12'

**Short Term Enhancements -**  
Maintain proposed NYSDOT R.O.W.  
Curbed median from Lee Avenue to Lake Avenue and Lake Avenue to City Line

10' LEFT TURN LANES

13' PLANTED MEDIAN

MAINTAIN PROPOSED CENTERLINE FROM NYSDOT PLAN

7'  
12'  
11'  
11'  
13'  
12'  
7'

**Long Term Enhancements -**  
Maintain northern proposed NYSDOT R.O.W.  
Acquire Minimal additional property along southern road side.  
Create turning lane and planted median from Woodrow Court to Lee Avenue.  
Convert curbed median to planted median from Lee Avenue to Lake Avenue and from Lake Avenue to City Line.

MAINTAIN PROPOSED SOUTHERN RIGHT OF WAY FROM LEE AVENUE TO LAKE AVENUE

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## Proposed Right of Way

Sycaway Neighborhood - Woodrow Court to City Line

### LEGEND

- Proposed DOT R.O.W.
- Alternate R.O.W.
- Maintain Proposed Centerline
- Planted Median
- Curbed Median
- Proposed Roadway



**CITY OF TROY, NEW YORK**  
**HOOSICK STREET PHASE II**  
**CORRIDOR PLAN**

## Implementation

The City Engineering and Planning Departments will oversee implementation of the Hoosick Street Phase II Corridor Plan. The specific actions that will implement this plan are described and prioritized below. In each case responsibilities are assigned, guidance is provided for organizing the action, and potential sources of funding or technical assistance are identified (where applicable).

The City's role in implementing the plan can be categorized into four general functions. They are:

1. *Creating and managing the regulatory framework in which private sector development of the corridor takes place* – It must be remembered that most of the land side improvements (as distinct from highway corridor improvements) illustrated in the plan will actually be completed by the private sector. The City's role consists primarily of the zoning, subdivision, and other land use and environmental regulations, and the project review processes that control development throughout the city generally, and along Hoosick Street specifically. The City can also utilize its code enforcement powers to improve the safety and appearance of buildings and properties. Strong code enforcement is also a disincentive to landowners who are not interested in maintaining or improving their properties, and could encourage them to sell for redevelopment. Finally, the City can implement some of the access management recommendations in this plan by controlling curb-cuts (driveway permits) during the development approval process.

In the near term, amending the City's zoning regulations to be consistent with the plan vision should be a high priority for the City. The City's standards for development along Hoosick Street, as expressed in the regulations, should be high. The urban design and architectural qualities, parking location, and access management concepts described in this plan should be applied consistently to all development and redevelopment in the corridor. However, to maintain these high standards without discouraging investment, the City must be extremely clear about its expectations for development along Hoosick Street. The regulations should be as descriptive as possible about the type and form of development expected, and the review process should be understandable and transparent. Experience from across New York State and the nation suggests that, generally, good developers are willing to accommodate high standards if those standards and the associated review processes are predictable. This is a fair tradeoff. As an overriding principle, the City's regulations and review processes should be designed to allow good projects (those that adhere to the well-defined standards) to move forward to approval as quickly as possible, and to prevent bad projects (those that ignore the well-defined standards) from moving forward at all.

2. *Securing funding and advancing the transportation and related infrastructure investments for the Hoosick Parkway improvements* – One of the City of Troy's primary desired outcomes from this study is the rebuilding of Hoosick Street within the next five to ten years. This plan provides the detailed vision for the corridor necessary to move forward with requests for funding from regional, state, and federal offices and transportation agencies. The plan describes short-term, relatively inexpensive transportation projects that can be accomplished quickly in order to create momentum and excitement about the future of Hoosick Street. The short-term projects are consistent with the long-term vision so that investments in

these early efforts will contribute toward the larger, long-term project. It will take several years to move the longer-term reconstruction project through the appropriate funding channels, so efforts to do so must also begin immediately.

A related role for the City as the transportation improvements are moved forward through detailed design and construction will be to remain vigilant about the roadway design characteristics described in the plan. Because this study did not involve actual survey measurements, dimensions shown on the various graphics and discussed in the text are subject to change when more detailed information about the roadway is developed. However, the City should be careful that engineering decisions for future improvements along Hoosick Street do not compromise the urban design and the pedestrian safety and comfort features of the plan in favor of the automobile. This tendency continues to exist in most major roadway projects in New York State despite the NYS DOT's increased emphasis on "context sensitive design." The suggestions for travel lane and turning lane widths, median widths, sidewalk widths, lane adjustments, reduced turn-radii, and related features described in the plan were developed with the assistance of professional transportation engineers. They were suggested specifically to balance the needs of the various users of this road, and not always to the maximum advantage of vehicles driving through the corridor. At all times acceptable highway standards were attained, but they were not optimized for through travel. These decisions were deliberate and their intention should be preserved as the actual road improvements move forward.

3. *Pro-actively encouraging the development and redevelopment of land along Hoosick Street* – Armed with the plan, and the market study contained within, another role for the City should be to reach out to the regional development community. The results of the market study indicate significant potential for business expansion along Hoosick Street. The plan describes substantial development and redevelopment of the area between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Burdett Avenue in particular. Although some area developers may not be familiar with the urban design characteristics desired for Hoosick Street (especially those whose work has been primarily in suburban communities), they should be impressed with the intensity of development envisioned. The plan strongly encourages dense, mixed-use development in the "commercial core", and therefore larger and potentially more lucrative projects than many developers might expect to be allowed and encouraged here. There are several developers in the region that do have experience with these types of projects. Specific sites such as the Troy Plaza offer tremendous opportunity, and the City should make sure that there is awareness about these opportunities among the development community. It might be appropriate to convene a meeting, or a series of meetings with regional developers to introduce them to the community's vision for Hoosick Street and to stimulate their interest in becoming part of the future of this corridor.
4. *Facilitating continued dialogue and cooperation between landowners, institutions, advocacy groups, residents, and all other stakeholders in the Hoosick Street Corridor* – City government cannot be expected to accomplish Hoosick Street's transformation by itself. Fortunately there are numerous individuals, business owners, institutions, and organizations that are interested in the future of the City of Troy generally, and Hoosick Street specifically. The City can continue to work with these individuals and groups to promote the corridor improvements. It might even be appropriate to organize regular public

meetings (quarterly, semi-annually, or annually) to discuss progress and to strategize solutions to problems that emerge along the way. The Chamber of Commerce's Hoosick Parkway Steering Committee could be a partner with the City in this effort.

A related facilitation role for the City will be to work with landowners to encourage cooperation on simple but effective solutions such as shared parking. This will probably occur most frequently in reaction to development proposals, but that does not have to be the case. There may be opportunities that can be initiated in the absence of a development project. For example, as the streetscape improvements in the plan (median, sidewalk furniture, landscaping, lighting, etc.) are designed and constructed as part of the roadway project, the question of long-term maintenance of these amenities may arise. The City might not desire to adopt these responsibilities directly, but it could facilitate the establishment of a special assessment district or business improvement district that would fund and administer such maintenance.

Overall responsibility for implementation of the Hoosick Street Corridor Plan rests with the City of Troy. The four broad categories of action described above outline the City's roles in this regard. Detailed implementation projects and programs are described below.

***Short-term Actions (initiate within the first two years)***

- **Revise Zoning Regulations for the Corridor** - As indicated in the plan, there are several areas of the corridor where zoning revisions will be necessary to allow and encourage the desired type, form, and intensity of development. Map revisions will be necessary for certain zoning district boundaries, and text amendments will be necessary for the substantive requirements in certain districts. In addition, design guidelines should be developed for the corridor.
  - **Map Revisions** – The existing commercial districts from 8<sup>th</sup> Street to Burdett Avenue (on both sides of Hoosick Street) – the B5 Highway Commercial and B3 Shopping Center Commercial districts - should be consolidated into one mixed-use district. Areas along this section of Hoosick Street that are currently zoned residential (between Troy Plaza and 16<sup>th</sup> Street in the south, 15<sup>th</sup> Street and almost 21<sup>st</sup> Street on the north) should also be included in the new mixed-use district. The map on page 43 indicates precisely to what depth into these residential districts the new mixed-use district should extend. This depth has been carefully set for reasons explained fully on page 43.

An additional map amendment should be implemented for the residential transition area on the south side of Hoosick Street. This area would include parcels fronting on Hoosick Street that are currently zoned R1 Single Family Residential, Detached from just west of Burdett Avenue to one parcel east of Georgian Court. It would also include approximately four parcels immediately south of the parcels fronting Hoosick Street from Burdett Avenue to almost Michigan Avenue.

The area under the Collar City Bridge, from 8<sup>th</sup> Street west to the Hudson River, should be reviewed as well. Most of this area is currently part of the B5 Highway Commercial District.

The B5 district extends northward along the east side of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and along both sides of River Street. It is unclear at this time if that zoning designation will remain following completion of the citywide comprehensive plan. If the B5 designation does remain, the City should determine whether the requirements of this zoning district would allow the type of development described for this area of Hoosick Street on page 38. If it does not, it may be necessary to separate this area – both sides of Hoosick Street under the bridge – and create another mixed-use district specific to the area.

The last potential map amendment involves the current B2 Community Commercial District in Sycaway. The boundaries of this district should be reviewed for consistency with existing land uses in the area. Any changes here should not extend the commercial zone north or south into the residentially zoned areas.

- Text amendments – A section of text for the new mixed-use district between 8th Street and Burdett will need to be established. The district regulations should place less emphasis on use and more on form than is typical of traditional zoning regulations. A wide range of mixed-uses should be permitted in the district, including: retail, office, service, entertainment (restaurants, cafes, pubs, etc.), institutional, high density residential, and civic uses. Active uses (retail, service, and entertainment) should be strongly encouraged for the ground floors of buildings. All new development or redevelopment should be required to conform to design guidelines for the district. “Substantial alterations” to existing buildings (thresholds to be determined) should also be required to conform to the design guidelines to the maximum extent practicable. Alterations to existing buildings that are below the “substantial alterations” threshold, and changes in use, should simply be required to move toward compliance with the design guidelines as appropriate under the circumstances. The design guidelines themselves should be generously illustrated and prescribe traditional urban design principles. For example, buildings should be multiple stories (perhaps a 3 story, 45 foot maximum height), should be built to the sidewalk, should occupy all or most of their lot frontage, and have multiple stories. Parking, when provided for individual buildings, should be located behind the buildings on the interior of lots. Additional issues, such as general architectural elements, well-designed lighting, and signage could also be addressed through the guidelines. Given the location of this district along a heavily traveled regional highway corridor, the guidelines should also limit the mass of individual buildings to a certain amount of gross square feet and a certain building footprint (perhaps 10,000 square foot building footprint).

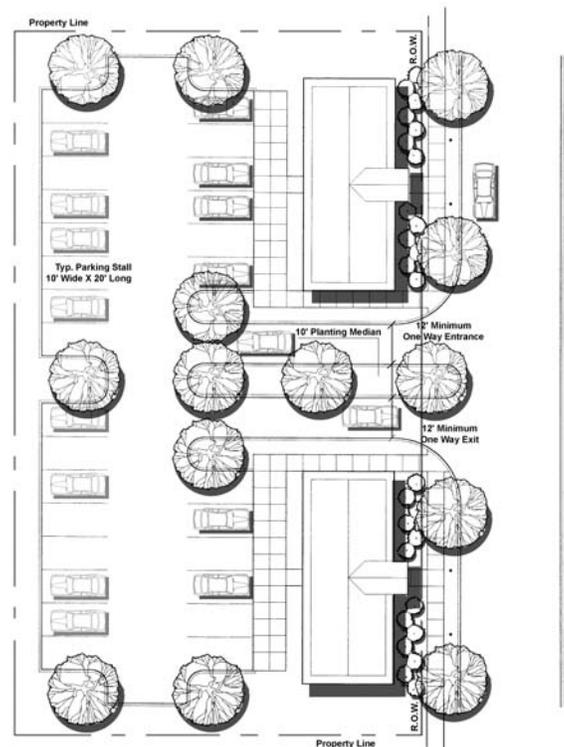
A new section of text will also be necessary for the residential transition area generally east of Burdett Avenue. This district should allow existing single-family uses to continue, but should also allow a wider variety of mixed-uses than is currently allowed in the zone. Design guidelines would ensure that the residential character of these areas is preserved, and performance standards would protect existing residential properties from any negative impacts of non-residential neighbors. It is expected that professional offices (medical, legal, real estate) would be a good fit for this new zone. The design guidelines for this district would prescribe different urban design

characteristics than the mixed-use district to the west. Here the buildings should sit back from the sidewalk with small front and side yards. Building massing and general architectural features should be consistent with residential buildings. For example, architectural features such as pitched roofs and front porches (transitional spaces between the public and private realms) would be encouraged.

Additional text amendments will be necessary for the area under the Collar City Bridge (depending on the outcome of the review described under map amendments), and for the B2 Community Commercial District in Sycaway. Whether a new mixed-use commercial district is established under the Collar City Bridge or the current B5 Highway Commercial District remains, design guidelines should be established for this area. The scale of construction (building height and size) permitted for this area should be smaller than what is encouraged in the mixed-use district to the east, however, the same basic urban design principles should apply. The same is true for the Community Commercial District in Sycaway. Design guidelines for this commercial district should be established. Here too, the scale of construction (building height and size) permitted for this area should be smaller than what is encouraged in the mixed-use district between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Burdett Avenue, however, the same basic urban design principles should apply. At a minimum, text amendments will be necessary in both of these areas in order to tie the design guidelines to the review process for proposed development, redevelopment, substantial alteration, etc. in these districts.

- o Design Guidelines - Design guidelines provide the basis to developers when preparing their development plans and applications, and subsequently, to the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals with plan review and approval. Design guidelines provide design and development principles that help both the local community and developers: the community benefits from a consistent, coherent and functional commercial or mixed-use district; the developer benefits from a predictable and standard approval process.

These development guidelines provide basic information, but do not attempt to address all the design issues relevant to proposed development. The guidelines do, however, provide a statement of principle or intent for site organization, layout, site design and architectural design. Each of these categories is described below. The interpretation of the design guidelines should remain the



responsibility of a designated review board.

*Site Organization* - site organization addresses issues relating to both building and parking location. Others issues addressed in this process include vehicle access (curb cuts) and pedestrian circulation to and from the proposed building.

*Site Design* - site design addresses issues generally relating to the aesthetics of the site and proposed development impacts on nearby properties, such as the impacts of commercial development abutting residential parcels. Generally, landscaping principles define this review process, but building signage is also addressed here.



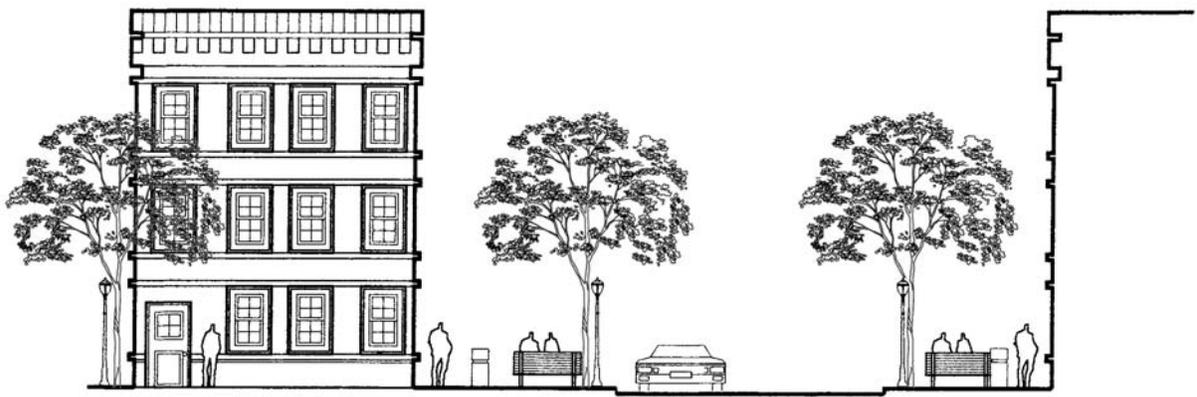
Appropriate landscaping plays an important role in the visual character of site development. For example, parking lots can be a visual blight if not appropriately shielded. However, landscaping with trees and shrubbery can help to reduce the visual impacts as buffers as well as enhance vehicle and pedestrian circulation.

*Public Places* - The streetscape includes that area that is publicly owned but has a direct relation to the building. For instance, public sidewalks can be used for the display of retail goods as a ...



shoppers into the store, or a restaurant may provide sidewalk-dining opportunities. Both of these circumstances require special considerations for safe and efficient pedestrian circulation.

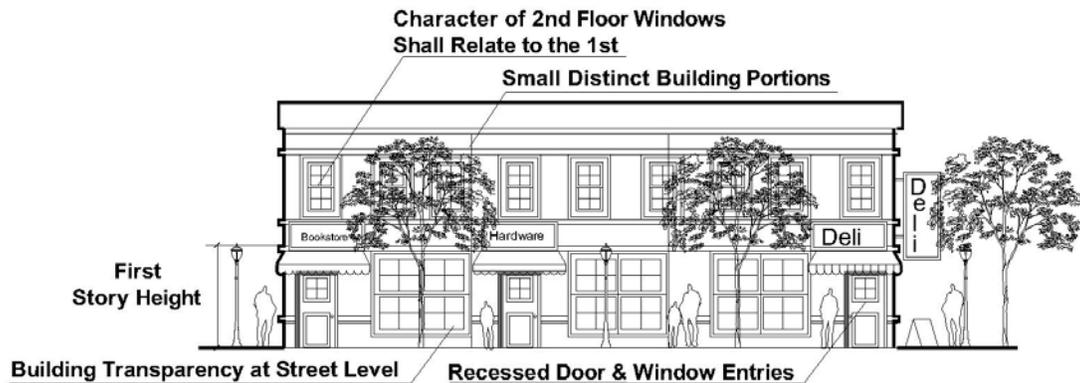
*Architectural Design* - As gas stations, supermarkets, and fast food franchises have become a part of our lives, we manage to ignore their aesthetic liabilities. Architectural design review ensures that new building construction or modifications are compatible with the surrounding buildings or traditional patterns, styles, and textures. Architectural guidelines typically address general building features such as: proportion (mass and height), roof styles, fenestration (windows and doors), awnings and canopies, specialty equipment, materials, and sometimes, broad categories of color. It is important that the guidelines do not stifle architectural creativity, however they should provide general parameters in which to create.



Flat Roof with Parapet



Pitched Roof



- Transportation Projects – there are several transportation initiatives that can be implemented in the short-term for Hoosick Street. The two most prominent of these are the “bookends” – the eastern and western gateway improvements. Because of existing circumstances, it is possible to begin work at both ends of the corridor prior to the larger, regional-scale reconstruction of Hoosick Street that is several years away.
  - Construct Eastern Gateway (\$20,000) - Modify to provide better pedestrian crossings at Lake Avenue; and an Eastern Gateway welcoming feature at Mount Pleasant Avenue (City of Troy).
    - Expand islands to the left of left turn lanes by five feet for a wider pedestrian refuge outside of through traffic; shift westbound through lanes and sidewalk north to accommodate wider islands (NYSDOT)
    - Shorten westbound left turn lane at Lake Avenue to provide new island near Mount Pleasant Street for Eastern Gateway welcoming feature. (NYSDOT)
    - Provide a new Eastern Gateway welcoming feature (City of Troy)
  - Design and Construct Western Gateway (\$ 40,000) - Modify existing pavement markings and lane lines, signals, signs and regulations between 8th Street and 13th Street to enhance pedestrian safety and convenience, improve traffic operations and provide two locations for a Western Gateway welcoming feature.
    - Study the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue / Hoosick Street intersection to determine its ability to handle increased traffic destined downtown resulting from the elimination of left turns from westbound Hoosick Street to 8th Street.
    - Promulgate new regulations prohibiting left turns from westbound Hoosick Street to 8th Street, and from northbound 8th Street to westbound Route 7 and Hoosick Street; modify signs to display new regulations. (NYSDOT)

- 
- Revise signal timing to reflect new traffic movements at Hoosick Street and 8th Street; eliminate right turn lane from Collar City Bridge to 8th Street; provide a pedestrian signal and crossing of Hoosick Street (NYSDOT)
  - Layout a center island on Hoosick Street between 8th and 9th Streets to provide a pedestrian refuge and the location for a Western Gateway welcoming feature (NYSDOT)
  - Eliminate the westbound left turn lane on Hoosick Street at 9th Street and extend the leftmost eastbound left turn lane at 10th Street back to 9th Street (NYSDOT)
  - Layout a new center island on the east side of 10th Street (another potential site for the welcoming feature) by eliminating the leftmost eastbound lane; eliminate the right turn lane and redirect the two rightmost eastbound lanes to become the through lanes at 13th Street (Seton Health/Troy Plaza) (NYSDOT)
  - Provide a new Western Gateway welcoming feature (City of Troy)
- Hoosick Street Parkway - Future Right-of-Way Protection (\$ 0 ) - Enact a "build-to" or setback regulation to define the Hoosick Street Parkway boundaries and preclude new development and redevelopment within the future right-of-way (City of Troy). If possible, this dimension should be based on an accurate survey of Hoosick Street and preliminary design for the corridor, which contemplates an expansion of the right-of-way to 84 feet.
  - Provide an Access Management Plan for Hoosick Street (\$10,000) - Develop guidelines, regulations and plans to improve Hoosick Street safety and access by consolidating, eliminating and regulating driveways
    - Review state and local standards for driveway, spacing, location and operation (see Appendix); develop and enact new regulations for Hoosick Street and other city arterials (City of Troy)
    - Initiate a program to provide easier and safer access by consolidating, sharing and regulating driveways onto Hoosick Street property (NYSDOT, City of Troy)
    - Identify rear areas and parcels with potential for rear parking and access; locate shared driveway access points (City of Troy)
  - Hoosick Street Parkway Design- Programming (\$ 0 ) - Seek funding for the design of the long-term Hoosick Street Parkway project through the Capital District Transportation Committee's 5-year Transportation Improvement Program, making it eligible for federal funding (CDTC, City of Troy). Also consider other possible sources of funding such as state legislative or congressional appropriations.
  - Spot Improvements - Solicit Funding (\$ 0 ) - Solicit special item state and federal funding for safety and capacity improvements in advance of the Parkway project at 8th Street, 10th Street, 15th Street, Burdett Avenue and/or other problem locations on Hoosick Street (City of Troy)

- Bus System Improvements (\$ 30,000 ) - Review current routes and services to better serve Hoosick Street corridor. Provide bus shelters at 15th Street, Troy Plaza and Burdett Avenue. (CDTA)
- Bicycle Routes - Planning (\$ 20,000 ) - Conduct studies to identify bicycle routes and trail opportunities in the corridor
  - Conduct study for the location and character of an east-west route alternative to Hoosick Street. (City of Troy)
  - Conduct study for location of pedestrian / bicycle trail connecting Frear Park and the RPI campus, crossing Hoosick Street at 25th Street (RPI, City of Troy)
- Additional Studies Related to the Western Gateway (\$ 20,000) - Conduct additional studies near the Western Gateway of areas that will be affected by the short-term improvements
  - Review and modify, as necessary, lane markings and signalization at 6th Avenue and Hoosick Street (NYSDOT)
  - Review and modify as necessary, street and lane configuration on NYS Route 40 - Oakwood Avenue north of Route 7 (NYSDOT)

***Medium-Term Actions (initiate within two to five years)***

- Transportation Projects
  - Hoosick Street Parkway - Design (\$ 800,000 ) - Design new parkway, including landscaping and enhancements
    - Layout new through lanes, raised medians, left turn lanes, pedestrian crosswalks, signals, signs (NYSDOT)
    - Design transportation enhancements: sidewalks, lighting, median plantings, and other features (NYSDOT)
    - Design new wayfinding system of signs to direct drivers to Hoosick Street corridor destinations and to rear access and parking lots (NYSDOT)
  - Access Management - Design (\$ 0 )
    - In conjunction with redevelopment, layout rear parking and access (City of Troy, Private Developers)
    - Identify property required for buffering parking lots from adjacent residential areas (City of Troy)
  - Hoosick Street Parkway Construction - Programming (\$ 0 ) – Seek funding for the construction of the long-term Hoosick Street Parkway project through the Capital District Transportation Committee's 3 or 5 year Transportation Improvement Program, making it eligible for federal funding (CDTC, City of Troy). Also consider other possible sources of funding such as state legislative or congressional appropriations.
  - Bicycle Route Implementation (\$ 200,000) - Layout, construct and sign new bicycle routes and trails (City of Troy)
  - Burdett Avenue / 21st Street Realignment (\$ 50,000 - \$80,000) - Address Burdett Avenue / 21st Street misalignment problem
    - Incorporate realigned 21st Street - Burdett Avenue intersection into redevelopment plans at intersection - \$50,000 (Note: depending on redevelopment timing, this may be deferred to next period) (City of Troy, Private Developers, NYSDOT)
    - Review traffic volumes and operations at 21st Street for possible new signal, coordinated with existing signal at Burdett Avenue and implement, if warranted - \$80,000 (NYSDOT)

***Long-Term Actions (initiate within five to ten years)***

- Transportation Projects
  - Hoosick Street Parkway - Acquire Right-of-Way (\$ 2 million) - When redevelopment has cleared all or a substantial portion of the existing buildings in the area to be acquired for widened Hoosick Street acquire needed right-of-way. (NYSDOT)
  - Hoosick Street Parkway - Construction (\$ 6 million) - Construct Hoosick Street Parkway, including raised median, left turn lanes, pedestrian crosswalks and signals, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting and signs. (NYSDOT)
  - Hoosick Street Parkway - Rear Access Improvements (\$ 0 ) - Acquire land as required to provide shared rear access and parking to serve existing and new Hoosick Street development (Private Developers, City of Troy, NYSDOT)

**Transportation**

<b>Summary of Implementation Actions</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>\$ 000</b>
<b>Short-Term: Initiate within first two years</b>		<b>140</b>
A. <u>Construct Eastern Gateway</u>	NYSDOT, Troy	20
B. <u>Design and Construct Western Gateway</u>	NYSDOT, Troy	40
C. <u>Provide an Access Management Plan for Hoosick Street</u>	Troy	10
D. <u>Hoosick Street Parkway Design- Programming</u>	CDTC, Troy	na
E. <u>Spot Improvements - Solicit Funding</u>	Troy	na
F. <u>Bus System Improvements</u>	CDTA	30
G. <u>Bicycle Routes - Planning</u>	Troy, RPI	20
H. <u>Additional Studies Related to the Western Gateway</u>	NYSDOT	20
<b>Medium-Term: two to five years</b>		<b>1,080</b>
A. <u>Hoosick Street Parkway - Design</u>	NYSDOT	800
B. <u>Hoosick Street Parkway - Future ROW Protection</u>	Troy	na
C. <u>Access Management - Design</u>	Troy	na
D. <u>Hoosick Street Parkway Construction - Programming</u>	CDTC, Troy	na
E. <u>Bicycle Route Implementation</u>	Troy	200
F. <u>Burdett Avenue / 21st Street Realignment</u>	Troy, NYSDOT, Developers	80
<b>Long-Term: five to ten years</b>		<b>8,000</b>
A. <u>Hoosick Street Parkway - Acquire Right-of-Way</u>	NYSDOT	2,000
B. <u>Hoosick Street Parkway - Construction</u>	NYSDOT	6,000
C. <u>Hoosick Street Parkway - Rear Access Improvements</u>	Troy, NYSDOT, Developers	na