



RAILROAD AVENUE AREA TRANSPORTATION AND REVITALIZATION PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

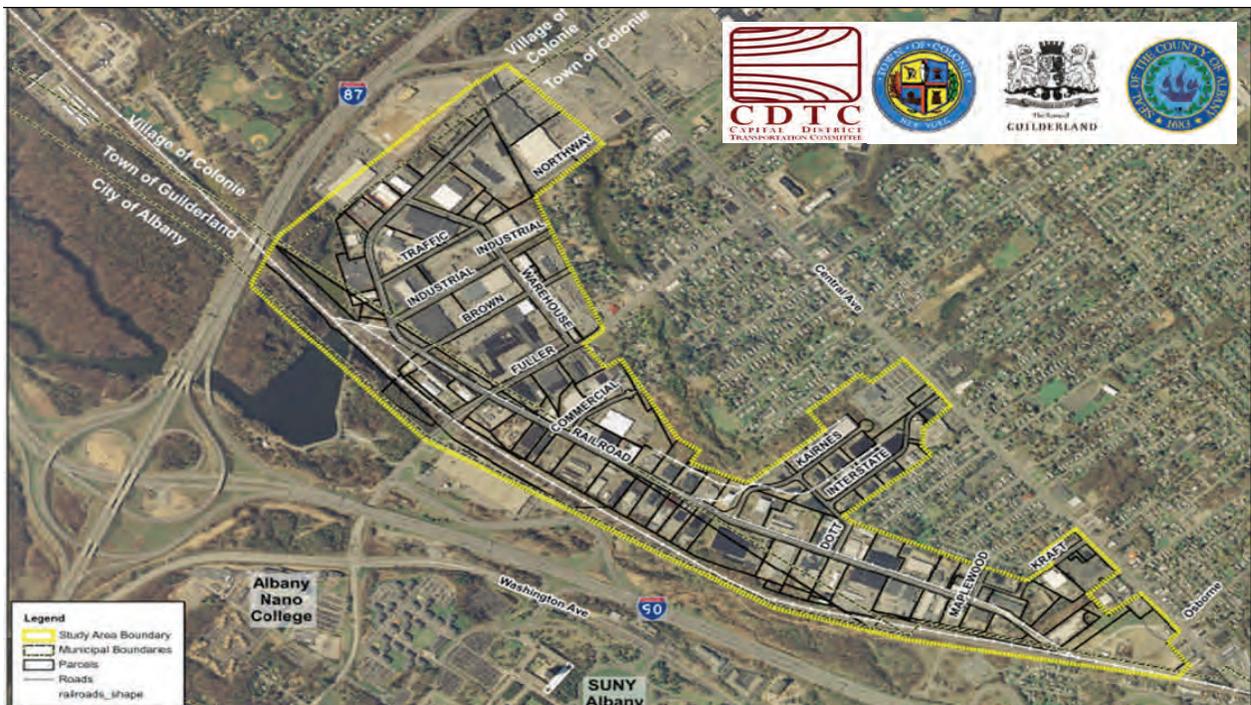
Town of Colonie, Town of Guilderland, & Albany County, NY

The Railroad Avenue Area in the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland in Albany County, New York is uniquely positioned for revitalization due to its close proximity to the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, the University at Albany, and Harriman Campus, key redevelopment opportunities and easy access to area Interstate Highways and transit. Its industrial zoning, distinctive mix of manufacturing, distributors and wholesale uses, proximity to major retail, as well as access to rail sidings present rare opportunities for an array of industries, incubators, and entrepreneurial start-ups and spinoff companies.

The Towns of Colonie and Guilderland in partnership with Albany County and the Capital District Transportation Committee undertook a study to develop a plan for this important area to help spur revitalization, identify needed transportation access and connectivity improvements to dovetail with recently completed major roadway improvements in the area, and identify actions aimed at improving the image, aesthetics, and redevelopment potential of the Railroad Avenue Area.

See

<http://railroadavestudy.wordpress.com/> for the full study existing conditions and revitalization strategies reports, as well as results of the business owner survey and presentations from two public meetings held at Harbrook Fine Windows and Doors.



The Railroad Avenue Area Revitalization Plan lays out a long-range vision for what the Railroad Avenue Area could become over the next 10 to 20 years and includes recommendations such as:

Public Outreach Business Survey & Two Public meetings	
64 Online Survey Responses (51% response rate)	
<i>Top Reasons for Locating in the Area</i>	
Proximity to Highways	(73.1 %)
Available Truck Access	(57.7%)
Cost-effective Space	(57.7%)
Available Parking	(36.5%)

- **Revitalize the area through ongoing inter-municipal cooperation and coordination** including development of partnerships with state and regional stakeholders such as SUNY College of Nanoscale Science & Engineering. *Recommended strategies include completing detailed analysis to support marketing efforts and help bring sites to a level of shovel-ready approval. A joint grant application to the [Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program](#), and the [Shared Municipal Services Program](#) is suggested.*

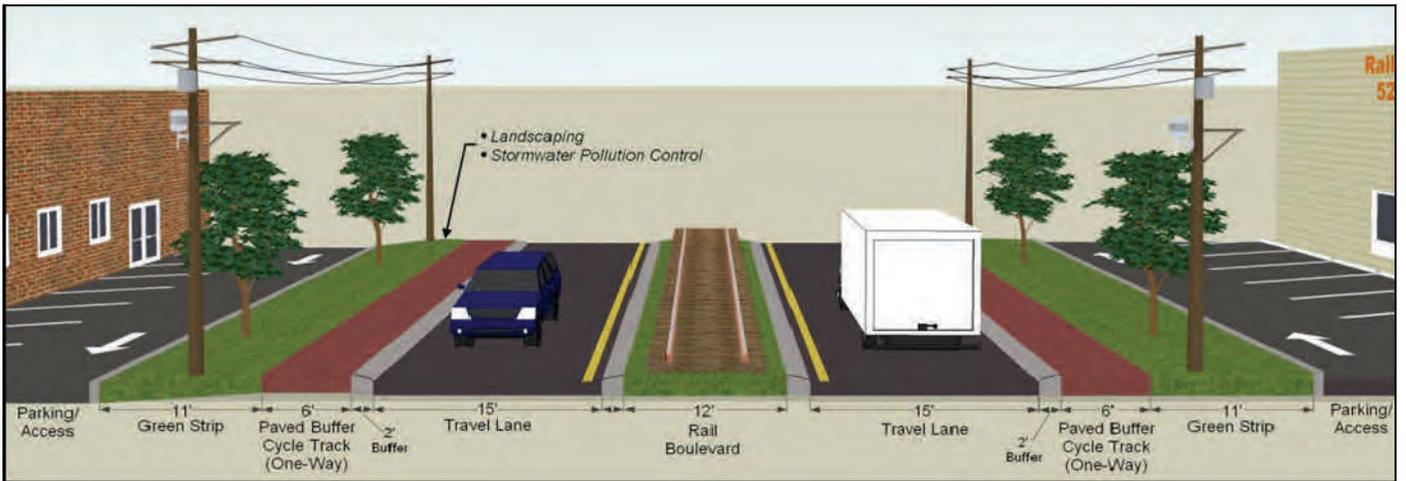
- **Preserve existing industrial zoning/maintain industrial uses as the predominant land use.** Establishment of a more defined industrial zone or an industrial preservation overlay district could foster flexibility and preserve/enhance the industrial base. Development of industrial site design standards to preserve such uses, while improving area aesthetics and integrating sustainable site development practices could increase area attractiveness especially for high tech uses.
- **Preserve and enhance the multi-modal transportation infrastructure and make appropriate multi-modal connections to the regional transportation system.**

Railroad Avenue West of Fuller Road and Warehouse Row: In this area characterized by retail and wholesale retail businesses, the center median railroad tracks may not be required any longer, permitting reuse of the median as a landscape element or for stormwater management.



Suggested Street Cross-Section with railroad tracks removed

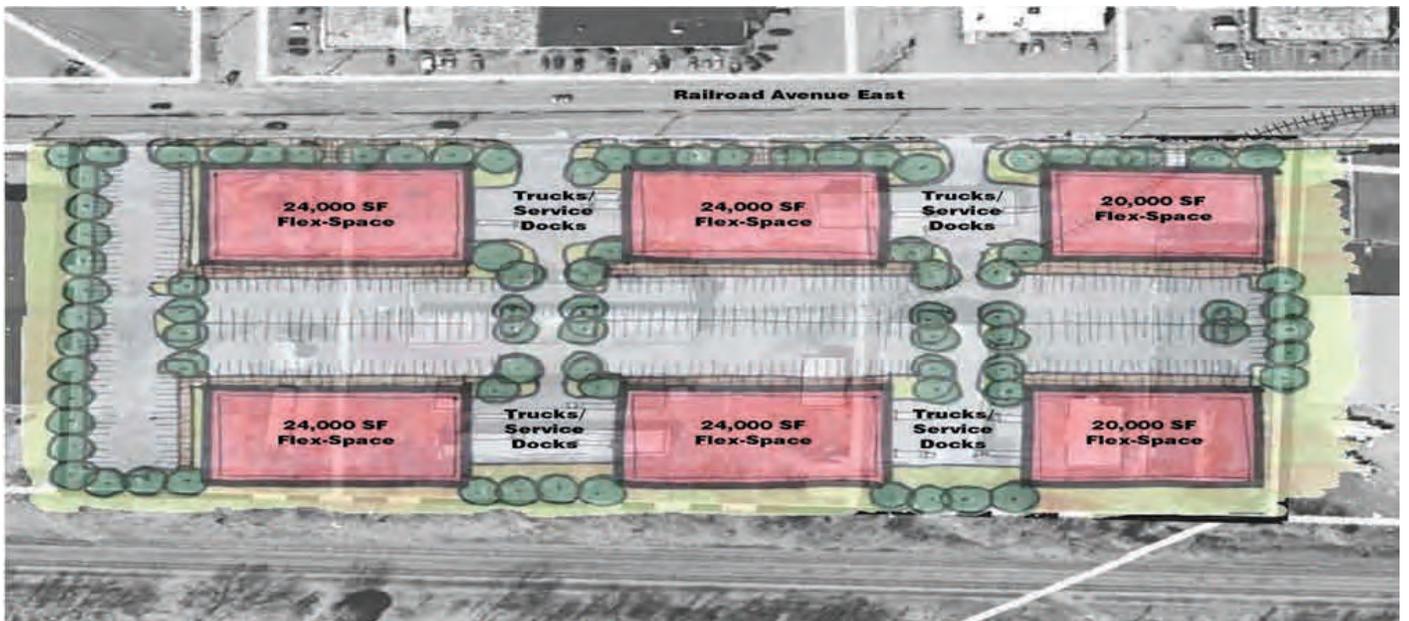
Railroad Avenue East of Fuller Road: Based on the business owner survey, comments received at public meetings and Study Advisory Committee guidance, removal of the tracks down the center of Railroad Avenue is strongly desired. If that changes in the future based on a recommended Railroad Infrastructure Inventory, communications with CSX and a commitment to rehabilitate the tracks and the road crossings to improve and maintain good roadway conditions along Railroad Avenue, the street could look as shown on the next page:



Suggested Street Cross-section with railroad tracks remaining

Railroad Avenue East Extension to Central Avenue and Osborne Road: Recommended in the [NY Route 5 \(Central Avenue\) Access Management Plan](#), this extension would provide alternative access to Central Avenue and would enhance redevelopment opportunities on the National Lead site, while potentially further reducing traffic on Maplewood and Kraft Avenues. A traffic impact analysis would be needed to ensure that the location and design of this connection would not adversely impact the intersection function and surrounding neighborhoods. New York State Department of Transportation approval would be required for a new connection onto NY Route 5.

- Shovel-Ready Site Development Plans:** Several large vacant/underutilized sites could provide major redevelopment sites. Two large sites Miron and National Lead present opportunities as each is relatively undeveloped, large and located in key industrial redevelopment areas. Shovel-ready site design and approval processes could be funded utilizing NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas Nomination or Implementation funding along with matching local funds.



Redevelopment Concept illustrating 136,000 SF of 'Flex-Space' in 6 Multi-tenant Buildings for small industrial/research start-up facilities (350 parking spaces).

- **Provide wayfinding and aesthetic improvements:** Establishing an identity, communicating a sense of arrival and providing clear directional signage are among key elements in a successful business park road network. These principles should be applied to the Railroad Avenue Area.



Wayfinding signage system example. (CSUS Wayfinding Signage System by Transform)

- **Strategic Partnership Development:** Partnerships on several levels will help ensure the success of revitalization efforts in the Railroad Avenue Corridor study area.

Major new anchor projects will require major investments, and the most logical investors are the nearby University at Albany and the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering. As developable space adjacent to the campus dwindles, available vacant sites in the study area would be logical sites for related new facilities.



Railroad Avenue Area Gateway: Albany County’s Fuller Road Reconstruction Project is now complete and included a new signal at Railroad Avenue and Fuller Road, new pavement, curbs, sidewalks, drainage and wider shoulders to help accommodate bicyclists.

Contact Information **Colonie:** Planning & Economic Development Department, www.colonie.org/PEDD, (518)783-2741
Guilderland: www.townofguilderland.org **Albany County:** www.albanycounty.org **CDTC:** www.cdtcmpo.org/linkage/reports/colonie.htm



RAILROAD AVENUE AREA TRANSPORTATION AND REVITALIZATION PLAN



TECHNICAL MEMO 1— EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT



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1.0 Introduction

The Railroad Avenue Area Revitalization Plan lays out a long-range vision for what the Railroad Avenue Area could become over the next 10 to 20 years. It gives guidance to planners, developers, institutions and public sector agencies and businesses as they make decisions about the physical development of the area and undertake activities to support and enhance this industrial/commercial area within the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland within Albany County.

1.1

The Purpose of this Report is:

- Establish a vision with the program goals and objectives, formalized through an analysis of a survey of stakeholders, review of input from the study advisory committee, and public information meetings
 - Provide a general project area overview, description and existing condition assessment for the study area;
 - Summarize the relationship of ongoing local and regional planning efforts affecting the study area;
 - Summarize the federal and state brownfield redevelopment programs and how they might be beneficial in revitalization efforts;
 - Provide a preliminary assessment of opportunities and constraints;
- A vision statement and outline of recommended implementation measures and suggest programs for funding them is presented in a separate technical document.

1.2 Background and Study Objectives

The purpose of this study is to develop a Railroad Avenue Area Revitalization Plan that will include recommended strategies for revitalization, transportation access and connectivity improvements along with actions to improve the image, aesthetics, and redevelopment potential of the Railroad Avenue Corridor and the surrounding area. The study is a

joint effort by Albany County, the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland and the Capital District Transportation Committee. The proposed project relates directly to the *New Visions*¹ general principle of supporting urban revitalization and redevelopment of existing commercial/residential areas, encouraging a greater mix and intensity of land uses, and developing pedestrian-friendly design standards. The project includes all or part of the following streets in the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland: Fuller Road, Railroad Avenue, Warehouse Row, Kraft Avenue, the commercial portion of Maplewood Avenue, Greenhouse Road, Interstate Avenue, Kairnes Street, Commercial Avenue, Brown Road, Central Avenue, Industrial Road, and Traffic Road. The exact project limits are shown in Figure 1 on page 6.



Railroad Avenue, west of Fuller Road

The Railroad Avenue area has a long history of industry within the community. Named for the spurs of rail that paralleled and crisscross

¹. CDTC's Regional Transportation Plan is now called 'New Visions'. It is a comprehensive long-range (20-30 year) plan for the transportation system of the metropolitan area, updated at least every four years by CDTC. The current plan [New Visions 2035](#) includes goals, objectives and policies which emphasize land use and multi-modal planning, urban reinvestment, smart growth and quality of life.

Railroad Avenue and the Fuller Road intersection, the Railroad Avenue Area is poised for redevelopment as a new center for business that has less emphasis on the rail system and more on vehicular traffic due to its proximity to the New York State Thruway Exit 24 interchange and the southern terminus of the Adirondack Northway.

In 2003, in conjunction with planners from the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland, the County of Albany identified the Railroad Avenue Area as a new focus area for its expanded Empire Zone program. The Empire Zone designation brought with it an increased interest in the area and new developments as well. Under the program, 10 businesses have been certified and have made more than \$8 million in capital investments.

The study area surrounding the Railroad Avenue corridor is also uniquely positioned for revitalization due to opportunities presented both from a geographic and zoning standpoint:

- The study area is located in proximity to the University at Albany and its College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering facility opening up possibilities for high-tech supportive land uses;
- Important regional transportation facilities including I-90, I-87, NYS Route 5/Central Avenue, Fuller Road and Washington Avenue are present within and immediately adjacent to the study area providing a high level of both vehicular and alternative mode access making it an attractive location;
 - Albany County's Fuller Road reconstruction project, tentatively slated to be completed by 2013, will result in enhanced multimodal access for the study area;
 - The County has also planned Patroon Creek Trail, a bicycle and walking trail that will run adjacent to the study area's southern boundary;
 - Public transit access to the area via Central Avenue has recently been further enhanced as the region's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service called *BusPlus* began in April 2011;

- The majority of land in the study area is zoned for industrial\commercial type uses and represents the remaining limited amounts of industrial lands within both Towns; and
- Recreational opportunities are nearby at the 6 Mile Waterworks/Rensselaer Lake and the Albany Pine Bush Preserve.

A primary objective of this study is to identify promising redevelopment strategies and other actions for this older industrial area that would encourage supporting industries servicing the region's emerging technology sector and other appropriate land uses. The Towns of Colonie and Guilderland in partnership with Albany County seek sustainable reuse and redevelopment of the Railroad Avenue Area to fulfill their commitment to provide for balanced tax bases, diversified employment, and economic growth opportunities for their communities and the broader region.



Photos illustrating varying corridor conditions and uses: previous Miron Lumber Site, Ryan's Produce, Canada Dry Bottling, Colonial Plumbing, Old Brick Furniture

The purpose of this study is to develop a plan to revitalize this area and to identify an implementation strategy that will be centered on a cooperative and coordinated ongoing inter-municipal effort.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- Provide recommendations to improve the image and aesthetics of Railroad Avenue including, but not limited to, development of a gateway concept; that establishes this area as an attractive location for new and growing businesses in the study area
- Create recommendations for the re-use, including adaptive re-use, and redevelopment of parcels within the study area;
- Identify the status and usage of the existing railroad track network within the study area;
- Create an identity for the corridor that emphasizes its proximity to the Harriman State Office Campus, The University at Albany, and the University at Albany's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE);
- Improve bike and pedestrian connections and access management;
- Identify new/improved transportation connections to Central Avenue and Fuller Road and other key points/destinations. Examples of important destinations include the University at Albany, College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, Harriman State Office Campus and Rensselaer Lake Park.
- Identify a meaningful framework for use by the county and towns to identify/categorize potential environmental/brownfield issues related to study area properties including an identification of the process needed to make properties desirable for remediation, if necessary, and redevelopment. This framework should specifically identify and reference current brownfields regulations and programs available through various federal and state agencies including the USEPA, NYSDEC and NYSDOS among others.
- Coordinate all recommendations with the County's Fuller Road/Washington Avenue Intersection Project and Fuller Road Reconstruction plan, the completed Harriman Campus Linkage Study and the Patroon Creek Trail Linkage Study.

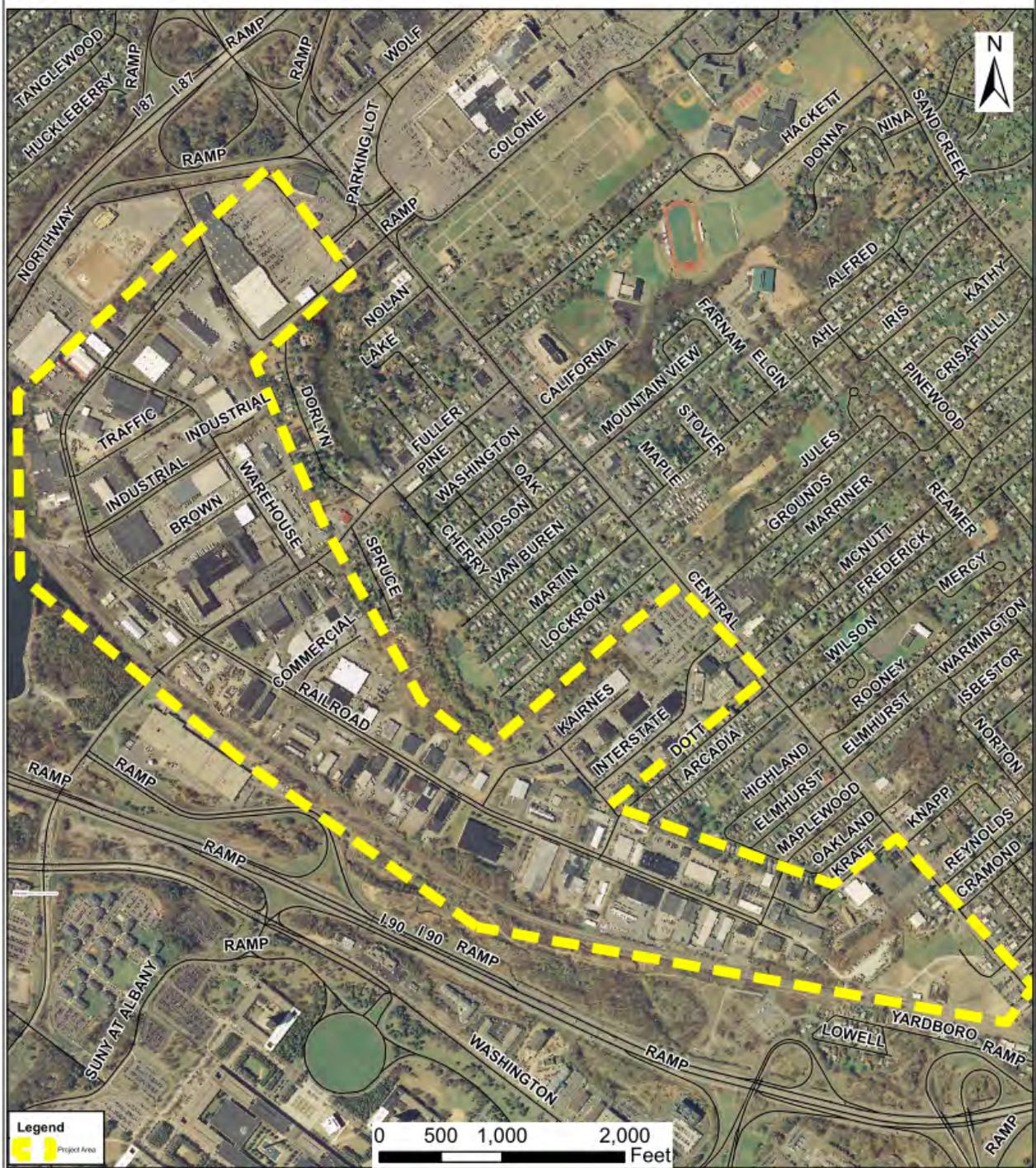


Figure 1: Railroad Avenue Transportation and Revitalization Project Area Study Boundaries

2 Existing Conditions and Needs

2.1 Study Area Description and Context

The study area encompasses the entirety of the Railroad Avenue corridor and its immediate surroundings as outlined on the map in Figure 1 on the previous page. The southern boundary of the study area is bounded by the CSX railroad ROW, in the Town of Guilderland. The northern boundary follows the boundary between the commercial and industrial zones and the residentially zoned lands accessed from Central Avenue. The study area encompasses approximately 406 acres.

2.2 Current Planning Initiatives

a. [County Route 156 Fuller Road Reconstruction Project](#), On-going

This Albany County project will reconstruct 1.7 miles of Fuller Road in the Towns of Guilderland and Colonie and the City of Albany between State Route 5 (Central Avenue) and U.S. 20 (Western Avenue). The project includes reconstructing the pavement, installing new curbing and sidewalks, and improving drainage, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. At the Fuller Road/Railroad Avenue intersection, the project will add left-turn lanes and increase the corner radius for turning trucks. Portions of the Town of Guilderland water line will also be replaced along Fuller Road as part of the project.

The Fuller Road Reconstruction project will be completed in two phases. Construction began in April 2010 on the southern section, between Western Avenue and Tricentennial Drive, and will be completed in early 2011. Construction has begun approaching Railroad Avenue and more extensive work began in April 2011. Fuller Road work is scheduled to be completed in 2013.

b. [County Route 156 Fuller Road/Washington Avenue Intersection Reconstruction Project](#), On-going

This Albany County project will realign and reconstruct the intersection of Fuller Road and Washington Avenue in the City of Albany. The project objectives are to decrease traffic congestion at the existing signalized intersection, to improve both pedestrian and bicycle access through the intersection, and to address the deteriorating pavement condition. This project is separate from, but is being coordinated with, Albany County's *Fuller Road Reconstruction Project*.

The project is currently being designed. Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2011 and be completed by the end of 2013.

c. **City of Albany Bicycle Master Plan, December 2009**

This plan established 20 year development goals for the implementation of a citywide bikeway network in the City of Albany. The plan established a hierarchy of bikeway connections and recommended designating Central Avenue (NY Route 5), Washington Avenue and Fuller Road (Albany County Route 156) as Major Bikeways. Major Bikeways are described as ‘...busy roads where it is important to find ‘space’...’ for bicyclists. Portions of Washington Avenue in the City have already been reconfigured to include bike lanes with ‘sharrows’ as recommended in the plan. The plan recommended Central Avenue be treated to create shared use lanes marked with lane markings and signage.

The plan also incorporated most of the recommendations of the Patroon Greenway Project discussed below. Of particular importance is the reiteration of two recommended cross connections made in the Patroon Greenway Plan between the Patroon Greenway and Washington Avenue. The Bicycle Master Plan recommends creation of a multi-use trail alongside Fuller Road between Washington Avenue and Rensselaer Lake Park in addition to designating Fuller Road as a Major Bikeway. The second cross connection is accomplished with a multiuse path located in the shoulder of the southbound ramp from I-90 to Washington Avenue.

d. **Capital Corridor Transportation Management Association Feasibility Study, August 2009**

This CDTA study evaluated the feasibility of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) to address transportation needs in the Washington Avenue corridor. The study area was bounded by I-90 to north, Western Avenue to the south, Route 85 to the east, and Columbia Circle to the west. The study area is south of the Railroad Avenue project area.

TMA’s are public-private partnership organizations established to design and implement transportation management strategies to address traffic congestion, mobility, and air quality problems in specific geographic areas. TMA’s have a greater chance of addressing difficult transportation challenges than any one government agency, employer, developer, or resident could accomplish alone and typically include employee-oriented Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs such as car/van pools, transit planning and other commuter services. The study concluded that a TMA for the Washington Avenue corridor is not likely to be feasible today but could be an appropriate and important strategy in the future.

e. **NY Route 5 Access Management Plan, June 2009**

This plan was jointly sponsored by CDTA and CDTC as part of the broader NY 5 BRT Roadway Component Study that included transit signal priority, queue jump lane design and access management. The plan is a reference

tool for access management decisions in the NY Route 5 corridor and throughout the five municipalities located along the corridor. The study area is a 16.5 –mile stretch of Route 5 from Washington Avenue in Schenectady to Broadway in Albany and includes the Towns of Niskayuna and Colonie and the Village of Colonie.

The Osborne Road Area is adjacent to the Railroad Avenue study area and it is recommended to improve access management by extending Railroad Avenue east through vacant land to form a 4th-leg to the signalized intersection of Route 5 with Osborne Road. This has the opportunity to reduce commercial traffic through adjacent residential streets.

The Railroad Avenue extension to Central Avenue at Osborne Road will be included in this study.

- f. **Washington/Western BRT Conceptual Design Study, On-going**
This CDTA study will determine the feasibility of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the Washington Avenue and Western Avenue corridor as well as to identify opportunities to improve and modernize development along the corridor in concert with BRT. This corridor is the Capital District's second most heavily traveled transit corridor and a logical next step for BRT. Preliminary alternatives are in development. This study may be relevant to the project because the BRT may generate additional pedestrians bound for the Railroad Avenue study area via Fuller Road.
- g. **New York State Senate High Speed Rail Task Force Action Program, January 2006/High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Project, On-going**
This study for the New York State Senate produced a program with the purpose to develop an adequate high speed rail system that can effectively move people and products between cities in New York State and the nation's economic centers in order to grow businesses and create jobs and opportunities. As it relates to the Railroad Avenue corridor, the Action Program included an item to explore the desirability and feasibility of locating a new rail station in the vicinity of the State Campus on the west side of Albany. The item description continues that the station location should be sited to provide convenient access at what is clearly a major origin/destination in the metropolitan area, and that the station should be accomplished in parallel with installation of the Rensselaer-Schenectady double-track improvement. In addition, New York State received \$151 million in High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) grants for the Empire Corridor; funds will be used for a variety of projects that will reduce travel times while increasing average speeds and reliability of Amtrak service. One of these projects includes the Albany-Schenectady Double Track Project. Also, the NYS Department of Transportation is currently conducting a High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Project strategic plan and environmental study; see <https://www.nysdot.gov/empire-corridor> for up to date information. According

to the project webpage, the “strategic plan will help spark statewide economic development by combining our strong freight system with a competitive passenger system that delivers fast, efficient, environmentally friendly and reliable service. New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the **Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)** will examine and evaluate potential improvements and projects to intercity passenger rail service within the corridor, which proceeds north from New York through Albany, turns west to Schenectady, passes through Utica, Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo, then terminates at Niagara Falls, a distance of 463 miles. During the two-year project there will be many opportunities for corridor residents, transit users, businesses, taxpayers and other partners to [learn about high speed rail](#), and identify local needs and concerns regarding the potential expansion of high speed rail”.

h. NY Route 5 BRT Roadway Components Study, Implementation Stages

The NY Route 5 corridor transit improvements have been progressed through a series of cooperative projects between the CDTC, CDTA, NYSDOT, the Cities of Albany and Schenectady, the Towns of Colonie and Niskayuna, and the Village of Colonie. This study was initiated as the first of several steps towards the implementation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the NY Route 5 Corridor between Albany and Schenectady. BRT was determined to be well suited for the corridor because it can bring rail-like service serving destinations along the corridor at a much lower cost, with much less disruption, in less time than light rail transit. This study included elements of BRT such as queue jump lanes and transit signal priority, now currently under design and construction, and access management (see e. above).

i. Harriman Campus – University at Albany Transportation Linkage Study, 2007<http://www.cdtcmmpo.org/linkage/harriman/report.htm>

This CDTC study was initiated to develop a vision for an integrated, multimodal transportation system over a 10-year period and to identify strategies and projects that would help facilitate connections and linkages between the sites in the study area. The study area included the Harriman Research and Technology Park, the University at Albany, the Patroon Creek Corporate Park, and the adjacent neighborhoods. The results of this study included various short and long term strategies to accomplish the project objectives. The key strategy identified was the creation of a multi-modal transportation spine to link the campuses, now being examined as a potential BRT route as part of the previously mentioned Washington/Western BRT Study. The transportation spine would intersect with Fuller Road, which would provide the multi-modal link to the Railroad Avenue study area.

j. Patroon Greenway Project: Tasks 3 and 4, Refinement of Cost Estimates and Funding Opportunities, October 2004

This report analyzed the feasibility of creating a multi-use trail that would connect the Corning Preserve through the city to the Pine Bush Preserve via

the Patroon Creek. The plan laid out a conceptual route for the trail in the open space formed along Patroon Creek between the CSX right-of-way and the I-90 corridor.

[The report](#) included several recommendations relevant to the Railroad Avenue Area Revitalization Project including the creation of a multi-use path along Fuller Road that would connect the Patroon Greenway to the University at Albany via Fuller Road and Washington Avenue.

A connection between the Harriman State Office Campus and the Patroon Greenway was recommended utilizing the shoulder of the southbound ramp to Washington Avenue from Interstate 90.



k. [Pinebush Transportation Study Update, September 2004](#)

This study was initiated by the Albany County DPW and CDTTC to update the 1985 Pinebush Area Transportation Study to address all of the changes to the area that have occurred between 1985 and 2004. The geographic limits of the Pinebush study area were roughly bounded by Fuller Road to the east, the City of Albany jurisdictional line to the west, Central Avenue to the north, and Western Avenue to the south. The recommendations of this study do not have direct effect on the Railroad Avenue corridor, although the transportation system improvements recommended in the report would have an overall positive effect on the area as a whole. The study does recommend that further studies be completed to address the impacts of possible developments on Fuller Road between Washington Avenue Extension and Western Avenue, although this area is currently being constructed as part of the Fuller Road reconstruction project.

l. [Town of Colonie Comprehensive Plan, August 2005](#)

The Town's Comprehensive Plan looked at issues related to its continued growth and development and focused on ensuring the community remains a desirable place to live, work, and visit, attracting new industry and employment opportunities, and conserving the area's natural resources and remaining open spaces.

Goals of this plan include encouraging the reuse or redevelopment of existing sites and buildings, promoting commercial and industrial growth and, providing a business-friendly environment that is supportive of local businesses. Relevant recommendations are to establish traffic calming measures and encourage the use of mass transit, address brownfield issues,

provide adequate buffers between industrial sites and adjoining residential neighborhoods, and improve transportation access and infrastructure as necessary.

Specific recommendations for Railroad Avenue are to enhance the appearance and image of the area, as it serves as a gateway of the Town, and to protect the residential neighborhood to the north toward Central Avenue. The Plan recognized the need for “clarity about the type of industries that should be targeted for this (Railroad Avenue) area”, recommended incentive zoning to encourage redevelopment and suggested “creative financing to spur investment such as incentive financing.”

m. 2010 Albany Pine Bush Management Plan

The Rensselaer Lake Preserve and Park (also called Six Mile Waterworks), located off of Fuller Road and partially within the Railroad Avenue Area study area, is a 5 acre recreational area featuring picnicking facilities, playground equipment, restrooms, and a concessionaire. Managed by the City of Albany Water Department, Rensselaer Lake Park also includes a short hard surface bike trail and trail connections to the larger Albany Pine Bush Preserve and is also the only significant area available in the Pine Bush Preserve for fishing and boating.

2.3 Existing Land Use and Zoning

a. Land Use

The Railroad Avenue study area is defined by a wide variety of land uses all within a relatively small, defined area in southwest Colonie/northeast Guilderland. Unique to the corridor is that fact that three separate municipalities (Town of Guilderland, Town of Colonie, and Village of Colonie) all converge within or immediately adjacent to the study area. Regionally, the study area is situated immediately to the south of a very concentrated commercial area of Colonie near the Central Avenue and Wolf Road intersections.

As shown in Figure 2 below, a wide array and complexion of land uses occur across the study area. The mix of commercial and industrial uses includes sales and service uses, with a strong presence of retail and wholesale home improvement products, manufacturing, storage/warehousing, and businesses supporting the construction industry. Several vacant and underutilized parcels dot the study area. Of note is the fact that the majority of current land uses do not require rail access, although several businesses rely on it.

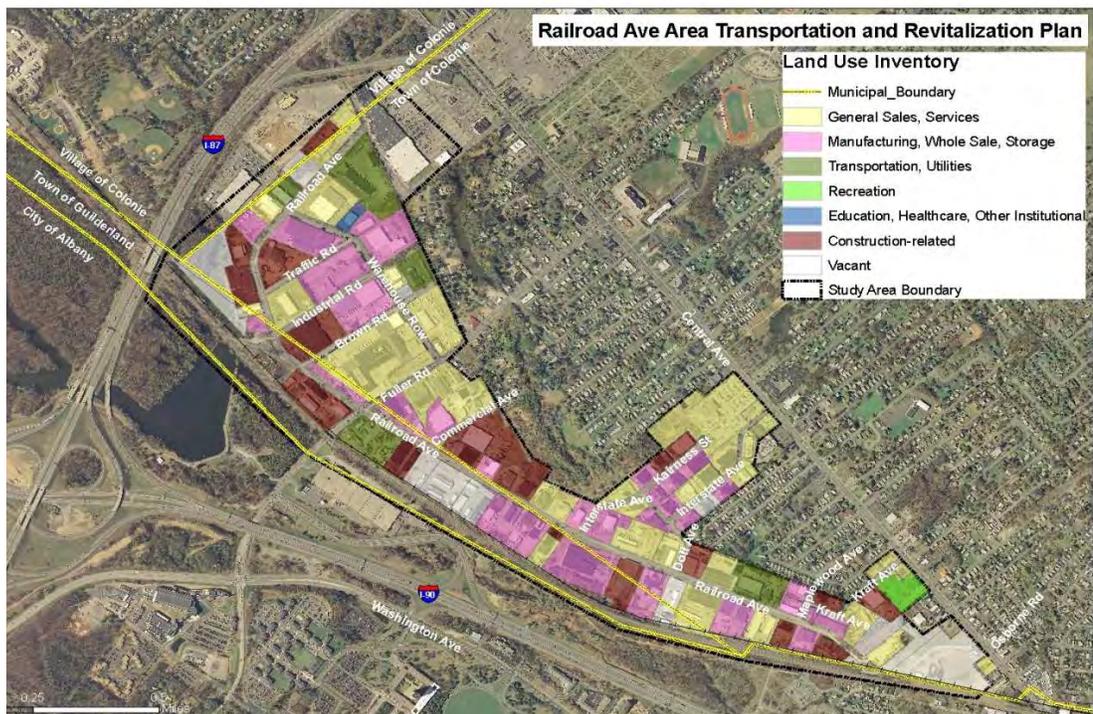


Figure 2: Existing Land Use Inventory Map (CDTC) (See Also 11x17 Size Map - Appendix C)

There are several truck terminals in the study area including the former Sysco facility located at the corner of Railroad and Fuller (71 Fuller). Typical

commercial uses found along the length of Fuller Road are offices, several restaurants, specialty retail shops, and wholesalers.

Many businesses in the study area, including warehousing facilities, several distribution facilities, as well as some light manufacturing and fabricating businesses, require frequent heavy tractor-trailer access. In addition, there are several clusters of home improvement retail and wholesale businesses, as well as those supporting commercial construction. Miscellaneous uses include environmental services labs, health services, printing/publishing and truck/auto services. To the northwest of the study area there are single-family residential neighborhoods.

The following list is a sample illustration of some of the diverse types of business found in this part of the study area:

- Coca Cola Distribution Warehouse 38 Warehouse Row
- Suburban Propane 76 Railroad Avenue
- Peterbilt Heavy Truck Sales & Repair 65 Railroad Avenue
- Green Depot 86C Railroad Avenue
- Marjam Supply 86 Railroad Avenue
- Capital Staple Distribution Facility 63 Railroad Avenue
- Harbrook Lumber & Materials Warehouse 47 Railroad Avenue
- Northstar Express Freight Facility 44 Railroad Avenue
- Kamco Supply Warehouse 36 Railroad Avenue
- Titan Roofing Contractors 32 Railroad Avenue
- Best Pallet and Crate Manufacturing 22 Railroad Avenue
- Schaap Moving Systems, Inc. 6 Brown Road
- JC Smith Sales & Rental 12 Railroad Avenue
- Arcon Construction Corporation 8 Railroad Avenue
- Interstate Battery Distribution Warehouse 2 Interstate Avenue
- Frozen Ropes Climbing Center 3 Interstate Avenue
- Old Brick Furniture Showroom/warehouse 33 Warehouse Row
- Albany Medical Center Material Support Facility 14 Commercial Avenue
- Budget Car & Truck Rental 1252 Central Avenue
- Cocca's Appliances 158 Railroad Avenue
- Lumber Liquidators 158 Railroad Avenue

Other commercial uses include WF Ryan's Produce and Farmer's Market at 114 Railroad Avenue, the Metal Supermarket at 88 Railroad Avenue, Harbrook Fine Windows and Doors at 47 Railroad Avenue, and Marcello Stoneworks at 6 Interstate Ave. All of these commercial uses attract numerous local and regional customers to the area, which in turn helps support other local businesses that benefit from the increased traffic into and out of the study area.

b. Zoning

As can be seen on the next page in Figure 3 (Zoning Map), there are five zoning districts within the study area boundary. These districts include Commercial Office Residential (COR); Highway Commercial Office Residential (HCOR); Industrial (IND); Neighborhood Commercial Office Residential (NCOR) and Single-Family Residential (SFR). All of the study area lands in the Town of Guilderland are zoned Industrial. Almost 90% of the existing project area is zoned industrial, which includes most of the vacant lands available for redevelopment.

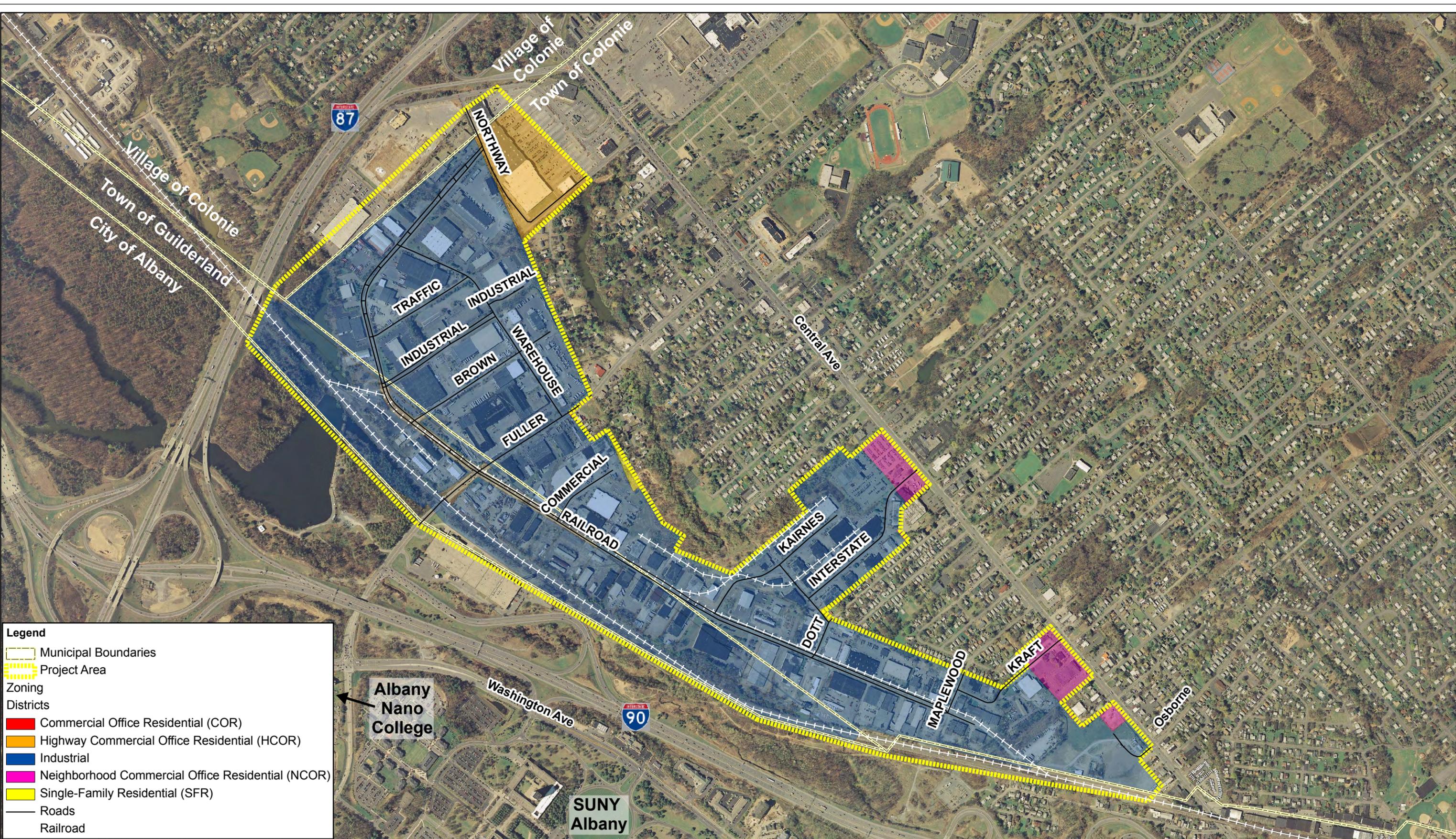
The current IND Zoning District in the Town of Colonie allows a wide range of retail, commercial, institutional, office, and warehouse uses in addition to nearly all industrial uses. Single family residences are permitted only in SFR zones and by special use permit (SUP) in the NCOR district. COR, NCOR and HCOR permit townhouse dwelling. COR and HCOR permit multifamily dwellings and in HCOR multifamily dwelling is by SUP. The IND district permits only multifamily dwellings.

The Town of Colonie has had zoning regulations in place for many years, and has updated those regulations several times, most recently in 2007, culminating in a zoning code that more closely follows the Town Comprehensive Plan. Similarly, the Town of Guilderland has had formal zoning regulation in place and updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2006 and is currently in the process of revising its zoning regulations to be in conformance with the new Plan.

c. Economic Development Programs

The NYS Empire Zone (EZ) sunset passed on June 1, 2010. Existing EZ's will continue however there will be no new applications. Albany County's Empire Zones (EZ) currently encompass roughly 1280 acres and are spread out across the County and various municipalities including one such EZ along Railroad Avenue in the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland.

New York State created the Empire Zone (EZ) Program in 1986 to stimulate economic growth in its distressed areas by providing significant tax incentives to attract and retain local and regional businesses. The program was designed to both help existing businesses expand and attract new businesses from outside the state. A new program, The [Excelsior Jobs Program](#) administered by the Empire State Development Corporation, offers tax credits for job creation, investment, and research and development in specific industries such as biotechnology, pharmaceutical, high-tech, clean-



Legend

- Municipal Boundaries
- Project Area
- Zoning Districts**
- Commercial Office Residential (COR)
- Highway Commercial Office Residential (HCOR)
- Industrial
- Neighborhood Commercial Office Residential (NCOR)
- Single-Family Residential (SFR)
- Roads
- Railroad

**Railroad Avenue Corridor
Zoning**

Albany County 4/29/11 New York

Figure
3
Project No.
1315.001

technology, green technology, financial services, agriculture and manufacturing.

AI Tech Trust Fund

In 1976 the U.S. Department of Commerce provided funding to AI Tech Specialty Steel in Pennsylvania. The funding was provided to enable AI Tech Specialty Steel to purchase the assets of Allegheny Ludlum Industries, Inc. on Spring Street in Colonie.

Pursuant to the agreement of this financial relationship, the money provided was then repaid into a trust fund, and the AI Tech Trust Fund was created. One of the conditions that the Federal Government required was that the funds generated from the repayment must be used to create and retain jobs in Albany County. The Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce is the agent for the Albany County Business Development Corporation which administers the **AI Tech Trust Fund**.

The resulting impact to the local business community since the inception of the fund has been outstanding. Since 1994 alone, the fund has helped create more than 1,235 jobs and retained more than 1,927 jobs. In that same time period, the AI Tech Trust Fund has funded 123 loans for more than \$23 million and has been a part of more than \$85 million in economic growth projects in Albany County.

Some of the specifications and requirements of the AI Tech Loan Fund are:

- The current amount available for request is \$50,000 - \$500,000.
- There is a \$350 non-refundable application fee, which is due upon submission of the loan application
- Commercial Mortgages funded by the AI Tech Fund are mortgage tax exempt
- The current rate is prime minus 4% with a floor of 4%.
- Term requirements are five to 15 years, depending on the use of the proceeds.
- The borrower must be located in Albany County for the term of the loan.
- Proceeds from the loan can be used for:>> Working capital
>> Purchase of fixed assets and equipment
>> Acquisition and renovation of commercial real estate.
- Proceeds from the loan **cannot** be used for:
>> Refinancing existing debt
>> Payment of delinquent taxes

As mentioned above, **The Excelsior Jobs Program** will provide job creation and investment incentives to firms in such targeted industries as

biotechnology, pharmaceutical, high-tech, clean-technology, green technology, financial services, agriculture and manufacturing. Firms in these strategic industries that create and maintain new jobs or make significant financial investment will be eligible to apply for up to four new tax credits. The Program will encourage businesses to expand in and relocate to New York while maintaining strict accountability standards to guarantee that businesses deliver on job and investment commitments. Program costs are capped at \$250 million annually to maintain fiscal affordability and ensure that New Yorkers realize a positive return on their investment.

The **Small Business Revolving Loan Fund (SBRLF)** is a \$50 million fund designed to create economic activity by providing greater access to capital for main street everyday small businesses. The program is targeted to small businesses that have had difficulty accessing regular credit markets. The 2010-11 State budget provided \$25 million in state funds and will leverage at least \$25 million in private matching funds.

Program funds used to finance an applicant loan will not be more than 50% of the principal amount and no greater than \$125,000. There will be two categories of loans:

- Micro-Loans - principal amount less than or equal to \$25,000
- Regular Loans - principal amount greater than \$25,000

The **Community Loan Fund of the Capital Region** is a participating lender in the new program. The Community Loan Fund of the Capital Region is a non-profit community development financial institution serving the Capital Region of New York State -- Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren & Washington Counties.

Incorporated in 1985, their mission is to promote sustainable community development efforts for economically underserved people and communities. They provide access to capital by pooling investments and donations from socially concerned individuals and organizations, and re-lending it to non-profit organizations for housing and community improvement and to micro enterprises for business development.

2.4 Environmentally Impaired and Vacant Buildings

Several sites within the study area have been the subject of brownfield cleanups over the past several years with work either completed or in process. The NYSDEC remediation database lists four State Superfund Sites in the study area including National Lead (NL) Industries at 1130 Central Avenue (also a Federal Superfund Site), Mercury Refining at 26 Railroad Avenue, the Owasco River Railway, and the former Paulsen-Holbrook (Miron Lumber) at 54 Railroad Avenue. The Mercury Refining facility and the Owasco River Railway are being

cleaned up as one site. Information summarizing data from the NYSDEC Environmental Site Remediation Database Search records can be found in Appendix A.

Both the Miron Lumber site and the Mercury Refining/Owasco Railway site, have had assessments completed and clean up plans approved by the US EPA/NYSDEC in 2010, with the expectation that these sites will be cleaned over the next few years. For the most up to date information on site clean up go to <http://www.dec.ny.gov/cfm/external/derexternal/index.cfm?pageid=3> and type in Site Code: 401046 for the Miron Lumber (Paulsen-Holbrook) site and Site Code: 401025 for the Mercury Refining/Owasco River Railway site, then click on the Email Us button at the bottom of the page to request any available updates.

The NL Industries site (Site Code: 401006) has been cleaned up and for the time being contains a small pump and treat system to deal with some volatile organic compound contamination in the groundwater. The site has been cleared for reuse.

The 8.8 acre Miron Lumber site has been a lumber yard since the 1950's and includes several vacant buildings from the former lumber yard complex. Rail sidings serve some of the former warehouse buildings and over 600 feet of frontage along Railroad Avenue make the site extremely desirable for redevelopment once remedial actions are taken.

The Mercury Refining/Owasco Railway and NL Industries sites together create a large redevelopment site with access to Railroad Avenue and frontage on NYS Route 5 (Central Avenue). During cleanup projects a rail siding was utilized to remove excavated materials by rail. This siding still exists and is occasionally used by other nearby industries. This site would also be extremely desirable for redevelopment including mixed-use.

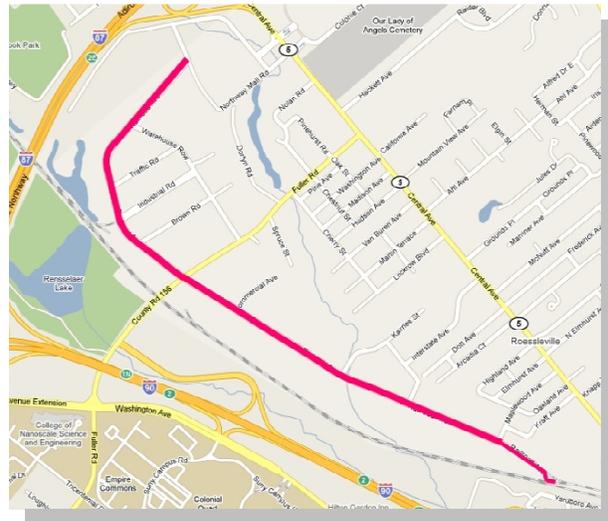
Additional detailed information on these sites is presented in Appendix A.

2.5 Existing Roadway Conditions

Road conditions vary in the study area and are generally poorer where track crossings exist and where level of use is high. Many of the crossings have been repaired privately to prevent damage to local company vehicles. Conditions for each road are discussed in detail below and information about each road and intersection is presented in Tables 1 and 2 presented in Section 2.10.

Railroad Avenue

Railroad Avenue is categorized as a local road and is approximately 2 miles long which generally follows an east/west route with termini at the existing CSX railroad to the east (dead end) and an intersection with the Northway Mall Road to the west (dead end with access to private lands). The existing roadway width is approximately 60-feet including four 10-foot travel lanes (two eastbound and two westbound) and a 20-foot median. The median is defined by abandoned rails, overgrown weeds and grass, and occasional crossing points.



The posted speed limit on Railroad Avenue is 30 MPH. There are several stop sign controlled intersections with local roads which serve the adjacent neighborhoods and other industrial/commercial parcels. There is one signalized intersection with Fuller Road (CR 156).



Railroad Avenue, west of Maplewood Ave.

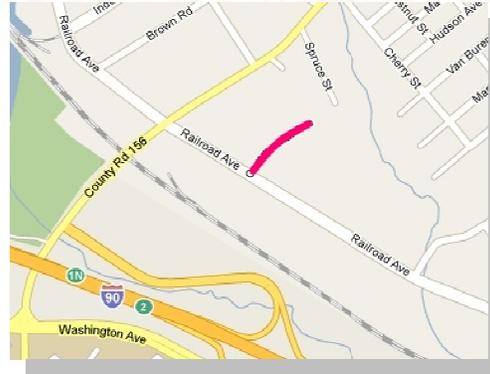


Railroad Avenue, west of Fuller Road

Parking along Railroad Avenue is not restricted or posted. There are several access management issues along the corridor including undefined property access points, loading docks accessed directly from the roadway, unrestricted parking along the various property frontages, and informal median crossings.

Commercial Avenue

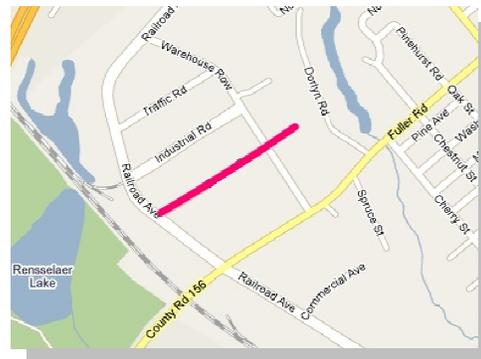
Commercial Avenue is a local commercial /industrial dead end road intersecting with Railroad Avenue to the south and is approximately 800 feet in length.



Commercial Avenue, north of Railroad

Brown Road

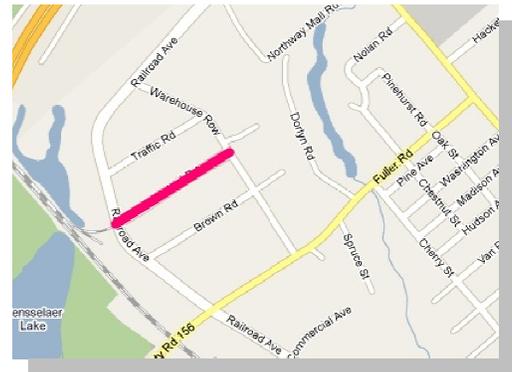
Brown Road is approximately a ¼ mile long local road intersecting Railroad Avenue to the south and Warehouse Row to the north. Brown Road dead-ends approximately 400 feet to the north of its intersection with Warehouse Row.



Brown Road, north of Railroad Avenue

Industrial Road

Industrial Road is approximately a ¼ mile long local road intersecting Railroad Avenue to the south and Warehouse Row to the north. Industrial Road consists of one northbound and one southbound travel lane separated by a median. The median is mostly overgrown with weeds and contains an abandoned railroad track. Industrial Road also contains access management issues with wide open parcels and street side loading docks, as shown in the picture below.



Industrial Road , north of Railroad Avenue

Traffic Road

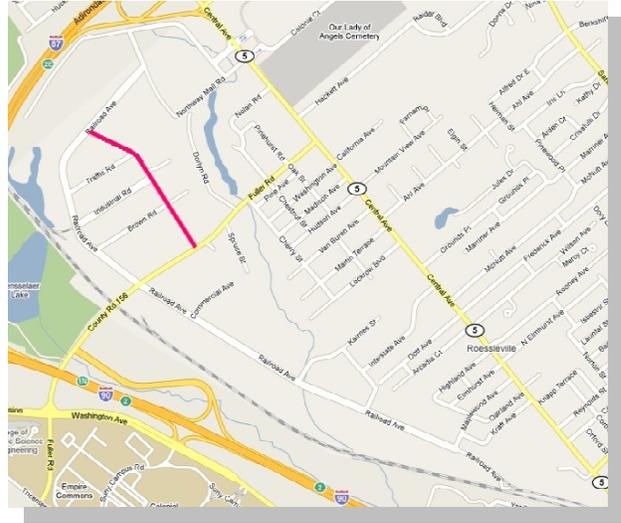
Traffic Road is another local connector road between Railroad Avenue and Warehouse Row. Traffic Road is approximately a ¼ mile in length and has fairly well defined access points.



Traffic Road, north of Railroad Avenue

Warehouse Row

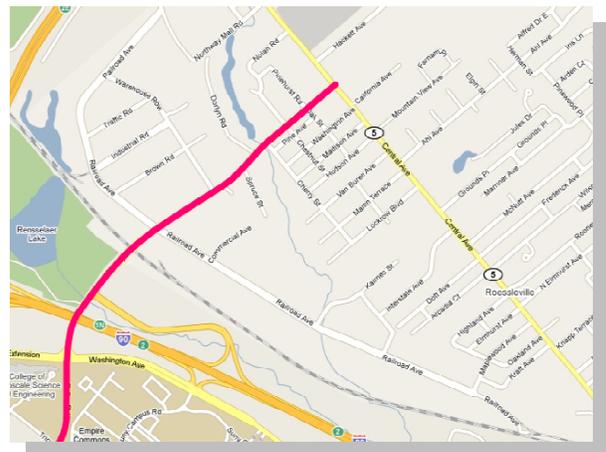
Warehouse Row is a local commercial/industrial road approximately a ½ mile in length, intersecting Railroad Avenue to the west and Fuller Road to the east. The Railroad Avenue intersection is controlled by a stop sign on Warehouse Row and the Fuller Road intersection is under signalized control. This signal is slated for removal as part of the Albany County's Fuller Road reconstruction project. Warehouse Row intersects with Traffic Road, Industrial Road, and Brown Road, offering users of these roads an alternate approach to Fuller Road or the west end of Railroad Avenue.



Warehouse Row, looking east

Fuller Road

Fuller Road, Albany County Route 156, is generally a north/south route connecting Western Avenue (US 20) with Central Avenue and providing access to I-90. Albany County is currently reconstructing Fuller Road, upon completion Fuller Road will include one southbound travel lane, two northbound travel lanes, a two-way left turn lane, shoulders, and sidewalks. A replacement traffic signal has been installed at its intersection with Railroad Avenue and includes turning lanes on Railroad Avenue.



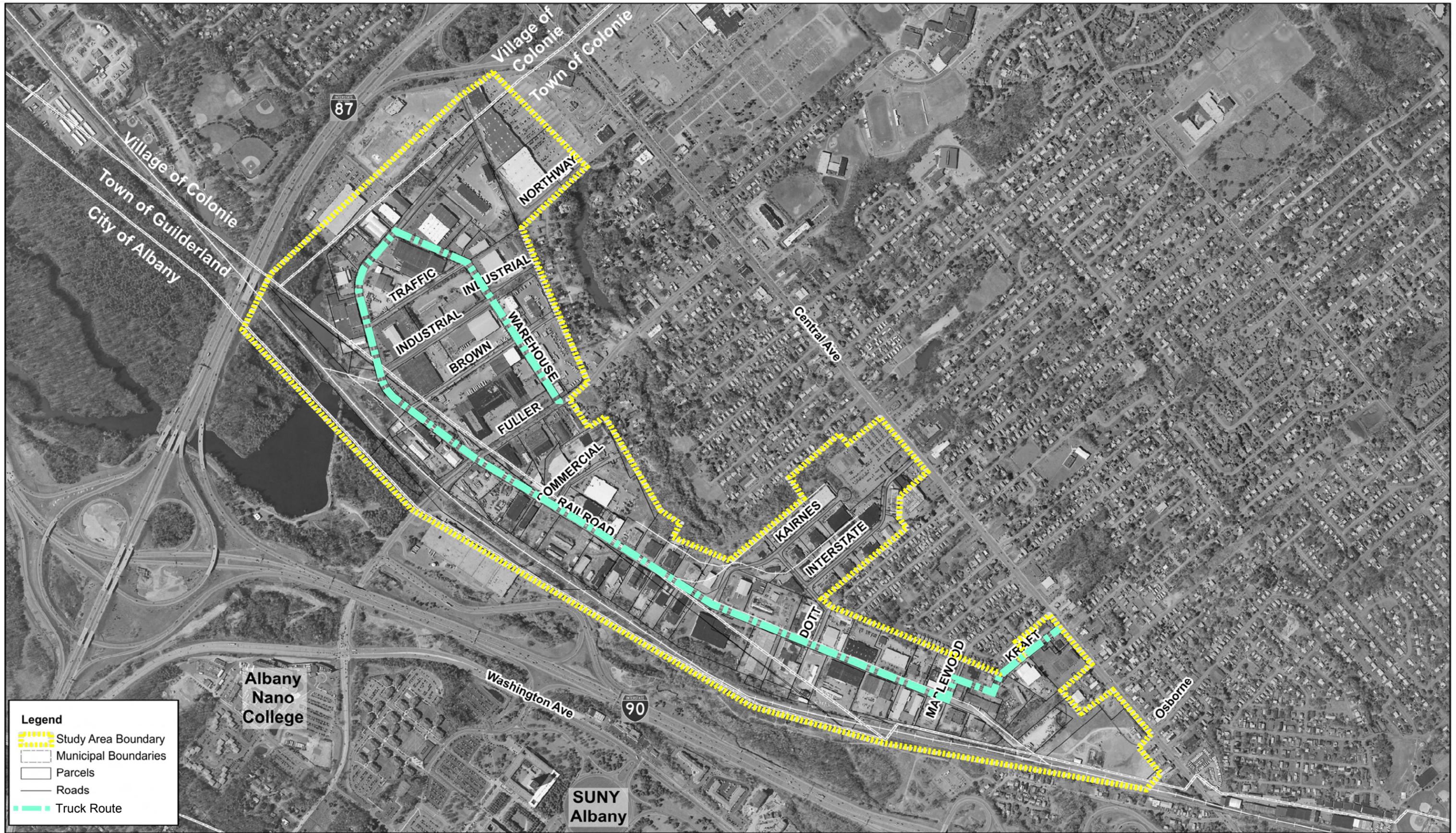


Fuller Road, north of Railroad Avenue

Maplewood Avenue, Kraft Avenue and Greenhouse Road are additional local roads within the study area. Maplewood Avenue is a residential street that provides a connecting route to Central Avenue (NY Route 5) from Railroad Avenue, although this is a weight restricted road between its intersection with Kraft Avenue and Central Avenue. Kraft Avenue provides a connection between Maplewood Avenue and Central Avenue and is a signed truck route due to the weight restrictions of Maplewood Avenue (See Figure 4 showing the signed truck route). Dott Avenue intersects Railroad Avenue then curves to the west and becomes Greenhouse Road which then turns into Interstate Avenue. The residential portion of Dott Avenue is outside the study area where it deadends on its southern end; the northern end of Dott Avenue intersects with Central Avenue.



Maplewood Avenue, looking south to Railroad Avenue



Legend

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundaries
- Parcels
- Roads
- Truck Route



1 inch = 850 feet

**Railroad Avenue Corridor
Truck Routes**

Albany County 4/29/11 New York

Figure
4
Project No.
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2.6 Existing Traffic Characteristics

Traffic count information from the Fuller Road reconstruction project was provided for this study. A review of the 2010 projected volumes determined that there are 625 eastbound and 600 westbound vehicles in the weekday PM peak hour on Railroad Avenue at its intersection with Fuller Road. Heavy vehicle usage was calculated at 4% during the PM peak hour.

Also provided for use with this study was the January 13, 2006 Traffic Impact Study for the Lowe's Home Improvement Store development in the Village of Colonie. The project site is located adjacent to Railroad Avenue, just south of the Northway Mall. The study area for this project included the intersection of Railroad Avenue with the Northway Mall Perimeter Access Road. A review of the 2007 projected volumes determined that there are 324 eastbound and 361 westbound vehicles in the weekday PM peak hour, upon build-out of the development, on Railroad Avenue at its intersection with the Northway Mall Perimeter Access Driveway (Private).

Designated truck routes exist in the study area and are illustrated in Figure 4 on the next page.

2.7 Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations

Currently there are no dedicated facilities for pedestrians or bicyclists within the project limits. Throughout the project corridor, pedestrians and bicyclists must utilize the roadway, shoulders, or area adjacent to the roadway.

The Fuller Road traffic counts also collected pedestrian data at the intersection of Railroad Avenue with Fuller Road. The results show very little pedestrian use of Railroad Avenue. Fuller Road pedestrian usage was higher, and can be assumed to increase upon the completion of the Albany County Fuller Road reconstruction project, which will construct sidewalks along both sides of Fuller Road in 2011.

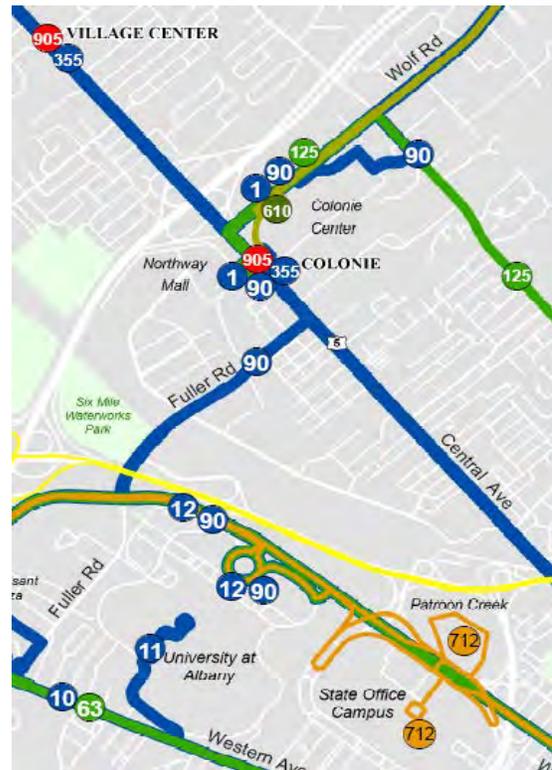
2.7 Existing Transit

CDTA recently [restructured routes within Albany County](#) to better reflect current travel needs. The following [CDTA Routes](#) provide service in and around the project area:

Route 1 – Central Avenue: downtown Albany to Northway Mall and Colonie Center with occasional stops at the Albany Airport.

Route 90 – Troy/Latham/Crossgates Mall: UAlbany, Crossgates Mall, Latham Farms, and downtown Troy. Stops at Colonie Center (Wolf Road) and along Fuller Road, and transfer points at Colonie Center and the Northway Mall.

BusPlus Route 905 – Albany/Schenectady via Route 5: limited stop service between downtown Albany and downtown Schenectady along Central Avenue. This route has stops at the new BusPlus stations on Central Avenue at Northway Mall (eastbound) and Colonie Center (westbound).

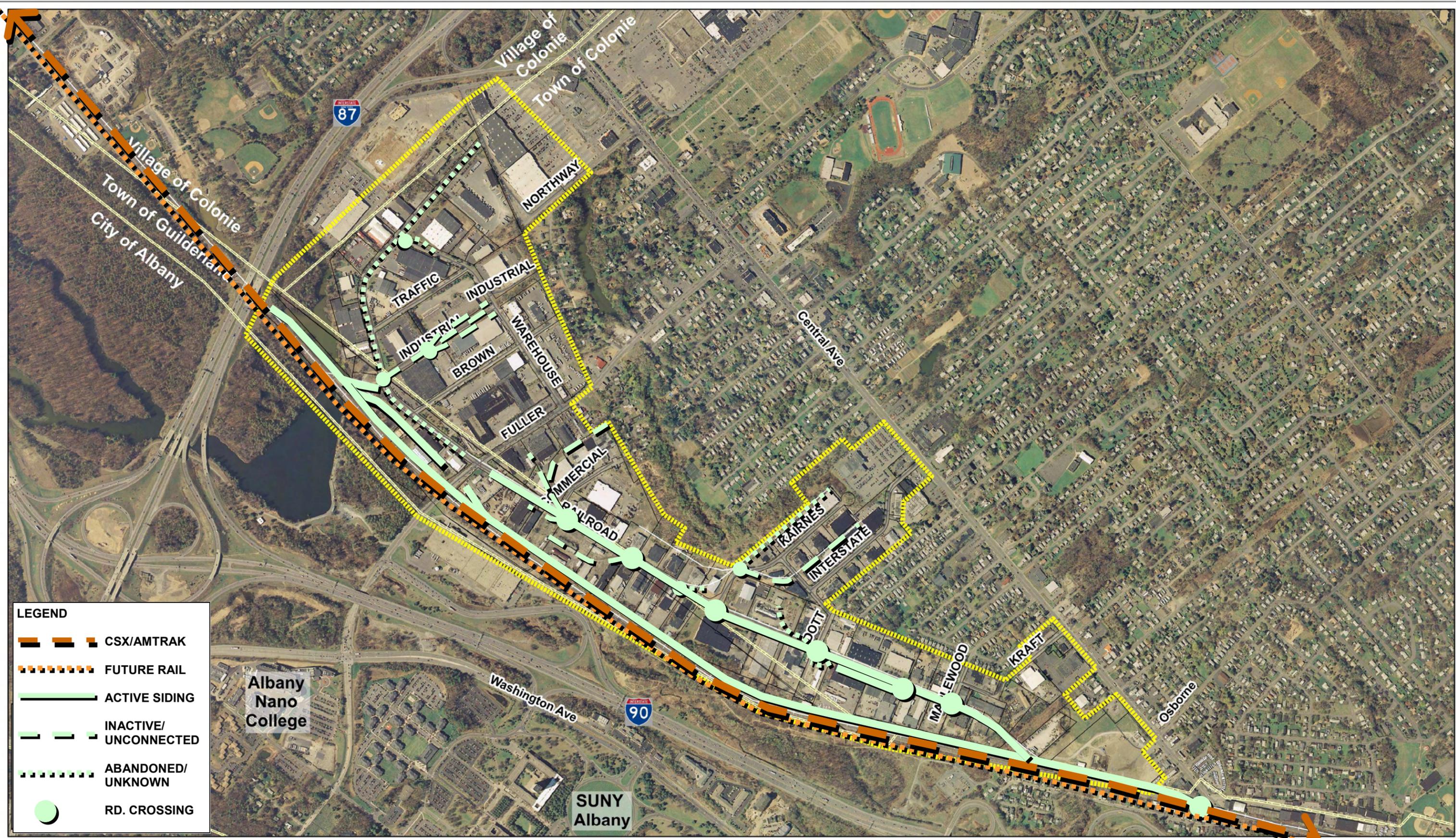


2.8 Existing Rail Facilities and Use

CSX Transportation owns the railroad right-of-way that parallels the Railroad Avenue corridor and this portion of the track is leased to and maintained by Amtrak. The line is part of the CSX Albany Division, Hudson Subdivision and is used primarily for passenger rail; however freight traffic is common, partly due to the proximity to the West Albany Yard in the City of Albany. East of that yard the Amtrak line crosses the Livingston Avenue Bridge and then on to the Rensselaer Station and



Railroad siding crossing Railroad Avenue



LEGEND

-  CSX/AMTRAK
-  FUTURE RAIL
-  ACTIVE SIDING
-  INACTIVE/ UNCONNECTED
-  ABANDONED/ UNKNOWN
-  RD. CROSSING



1 inch = 850 feet

**Railroad Avenue Corridor
Existing Railroad Sidings and Spurs**

Albany County 4/29/11 New York

passenger points south and east. Further west near Amsterdam, this line joins one of the main upstate freight rail lines (Selkirk Subdivision). As discussed in Section 2.2, funding is in place to construct a high-speed rail line in this right-of-way, a project that has been in the planning stages for several years.

Several sidings off of the main line exist in the project area; however use of these sidings does not appear to be active. A siding that appears to link up to the West Albany Yard parallels on the north side of the Amtrak operated rail splits near the eastern terminus of Railroad Avenue with one siding continuing in the CSX right-of-way and a second siding that enters the project area. This second freight siding appears to be the main rail line that once existed down the center of Railroad Avenue and probably formed a contiguous siding as it once crossed Fuller Road and connected to the siding to the west of the project area. The siding to west appears to include a spur that continued east paralleling Railroad Avenue and a second spur that appears to run down the center of Industrial Drive.

Portions of the main track in the center of Railroad Avenue have been removed, notably at Fuller Road and further west. Rail sidings still connect to the track in the center of Railroad Avenue in the eastern portion of the study area. Active rail sidings serve the Green Depot on western end of Railroad Avenue; spurs at Suburban Propane near Fuller Road and at Miron Lumber appear to usable; and spurs in the far eastern end of Railroad Avenue appear to be actively in use. While many of the sidings south of Railroad Avenue are or could be used in the future, the rail siding that runs down the center of the avenue are no longer continuous through west of Fuller Road. Sidings and minor spurs observed on aerial photography and in the field are illustrated on the Existing Rail Facilities Map Figure 5 on the previous page.

Road and other pavements around railroad sidings are in a more advanced state of deterioration than surrounding pavements. In some areas, pavements have been placed to cover the existing sidings. Rails may have been removed in other areas to eliminate the need for additional road maintenance.

2.10 General Project Area Transportation System Conditions

In general, the transportation systems in the study area function well. Sufficient capacity exists for current land uses and future build out. Existing traffic controls work well and when the proposed Fuller Road improvements project is completed, will function more efficiently. The project area is well served by existing and proposed public transit systems.

Negative factors are the road conditions especially where pavement conditions have been deteriorating along rail crossings. Other negative factors include poor access management throughout as delineation between travel lanes and parking areas and truck access are not well defined. Finally, there is a lack of adequate

directional and informational signage which makes it difficult to locate businesses. Detailed functional and condition analysis for roads and intersections in the study area is contained in the tables below.

Table 1: Railroad Avenue Study Area Roadway Network: Existing Conditions

	<i>Functional Class</i>	<i>Geometry</i>	<i>Site Access</i>	<i>On-Street Parking</i>	<i>Ped/Bike Facilities</i>	<i>Bus Service</i>	<i>Traffic Volume</i>	<i>Rail</i>	<i>Crossings</i>	<i>Sidings?</i>
Brown Road	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, 30-34' pvmt., 50' ROW	Uncontrolled	Tractor trailers park on shoulder, both sides	None	N		None	None	N/A
Commercial Avenue	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, 50' ROW	Uncontrolled	Not Restricted or Posted	None	N	730	Crossing	Southern Terminus, at Railroad Avenue	0
Greenhouse Road / Dott Avenue	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, 30'-50' ROW	Uncontrolled	Not Restricted or Posted	None	N		Crossing where Dott begins	Dott / Railroad intersection	0
Industrial Road	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, Divided, 60' pvmt., 80' ROW	Uncontrolled	Not Restricted or Posted	None	N		Center Median	None	2
Interstate Avenue	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, 22'-24' pvmt., 50' ROW	Uncontrolled	Not Restricted or Posted	None	Y		None	None	N/A
Kairnes Street	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, 50' ROW	Uncontrolled	Not Restricted or Posted	None	N		None	None	N/A
Kraft Avenue	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, 60' ROW	Uncontrolled	Not Restricted or Posted	None	N		None	None	N/A
Maplewood Avenue	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, 28' pvmt., 50' ROW	Uncontrolled	Restricted or Posted	None	N		None	None	N/A
Railroad Avenue	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, Divided, 80' ROW	Uncontrolled	Not Restricted or Posted	None	N	7,100 (W of Fuller) / 2,250 (E of Fuller)	Center Median	Crosses from Industrial Road	1
Traffic Road	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, 28' pvmt., 50'-60' ROW	Uncontrolled	Not Restricted or Posted	None	N		None	None	N/A
Warehouse Row	Urban Local	2-way, 2 lanes, 80' ROW	Uncontrolled	Not Restricted or Posted	None	N		Crossing	Crosses from Industrial Road	0
Fuller Road (Co. Route 156)	Principle Arterial	2-way, 4 lanes, 70'-80' ROW	Curb Cut	None	Sidewalks, both sides	Y	24,100 (Wash to RR) / 16,700 (RR to Cent)	Crossing?	At Railroad Avenue	0

	<i>Geometry</i>	<i>Ped/Bike Facilities</i>	Traffic Control
Railroad / Fuller	4 legs w/ turn lanes	None	Traffic Signal
Railroad / Brown	3 legs	None	Stop Sign (Brown)
Railroad / Dott	3 legs	None	
Railroad / Industrial	3 legs	None	Stop Sign (Industrial)
Railroad / Traffic	3 legs	None	Stop Sign (Traffic)
Railroad / Warehouse	3 legs	None	Stop Sign (Warehouse)
Railroad / Commercial	3 legs	None	Stop Sign (Commercial)
Railroad / Interstate	3 legs	None	Yield Sign (Interstate)
Railroad / Maplewood	3 legs	None	Stop Sign (Maplewood)
Warehouse / Fuller	3 legs w/ turn lanes	None	Traffic Signal - To Be Removed

3 Stakeholder Input, Survey, and Analysis

3.1 Study Advisory Committee

During the project's startup phase, a Study Advisory Committee (SAC) was established which included representatives from the CDTC, Albany County, the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland and local business owners. The SAC allows for a two-way information exchange, advising and informing the community about the project, while guiding the efforts of the consultant team. The committee can also help maximize the amount of volunteerism available from stakeholders in the study area and assists in the preparations for the public information meetings.

3.2 Public/Stakeholder Participation Approach

In recognition of the nature of this study with its focus on a commercial/industrial area and the need to engage with study area business owners and managers, a targeted approach for public/stakeholder participation was developed. This approach was designed to ensure that project information could be easily and conveniently shared and that opportunities for the public and study area business owners to provide input on that information would also be conveniently accessible.

Accordingly, the SAC laid out the following approach, some of which has been initiated or completed, with some items remaining such as a second public information meeting to present and discuss the draft revitalization plan:

- Project webpage - <http://railroadavestudy.wordpress.com/> was created and contains background information about the plan development process, [Information from 9/29/10 Public Meeting](#), [Business Survey Results](#), a link to NYSDEC's Site Information on current brownfield site remediation status/plans, and [Contact Information](#). Comments can also be easily submitted for posting. Since the project webpage was established it has received over 2,100 "hits".

- [Online survey](#) – this survey (using surveymonkey) was targeted to study area business owners/managers and was completed by fifty-seven (57) businesses prior to and within a few weeks of the first public meeting. The online survey was designed so that it could be completed in about 10 minutes and included questions on issues, concerns and ideas for improvement from study area business owners. (See Section 3.3 below for analysis of the results).

- Postcards – to inform businesses of the online survey, project webpage and first public meeting, were hand delivered to over one hundred twenty five (125)

business people and then mailed via US Postal Service to businesses in the study area.

- First of two public meetings – with business owners and workers in mind, the SAC scheduled the first public meeting at the start of the business day and held

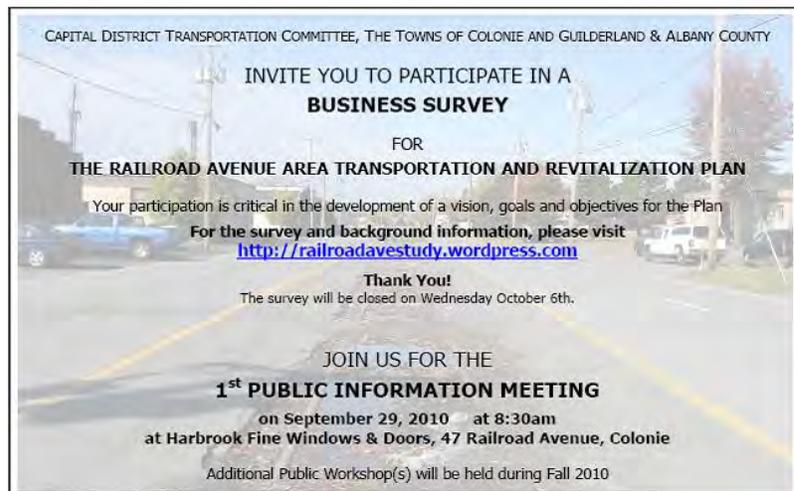
it at a study area business, Harbrook Fine Windows and Doors. on September 29, 2010. Business owners, local officials and members of the Study Advisory Committee attended this meeting and viewed a [presentation](#) on the study, after which questions and comments were discussed. Comments were primarily made online.

- The second public meeting, planned for early 2012, will be held at the end of the business day with the agenda focusing on review and discussion of the draft revitalization plan. The meeting will be advertised and email notices sent to the over 100 businesses for which email addresses were obtained as part of the post card hand delivery contacts that were made.

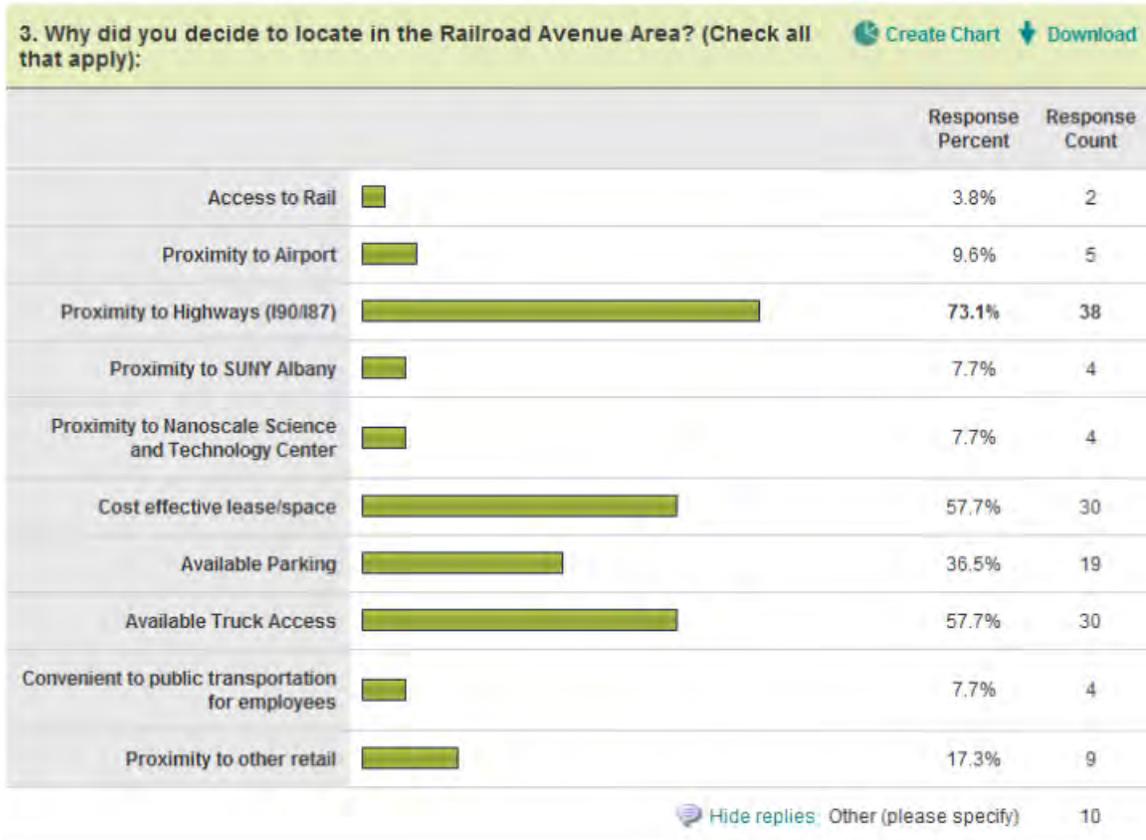
3.3 Survey Results Analysis

As mentioned above a public survey was produced with an online survey generator service. The survey was developed for commercial/business stakeholders and targeted tenants as well as property owners. Post cards with the survey's website link were hand-delivered and a project stakeholder contact list was compiled from information received. The survey served as a precursor to the first public meeting and gave a basis for issues to be discussed. With approximately 125 postcards hand delivered and 64 survey responses, the response rate was approximately fifty one percent (51%), with fully completed surveys totaling 57 or 46%.

The first question was intended to establish how many responses were from business owners versus those employed in the study area. The survey found 45% of the respondents were employed in the project area; 38% owned a business and property in the project area; and 17% owned a business and leased space in the project area.



Question 3 asked the respondents to indicate the main reason for locating their business in the project area. Proximity to highway systems, cost of leasable space, available truck access and available parking were the most common responses as summarized in the table below.



Question 5 was intended to learn about stakeholders perceptions of the Railroad Avenue area. In this portion of the survey, respondents were given five levels from strongly agree to strongly disagree in answer to 17 questions. A high percentage of survey respondents strongly agreed with the following statements in the survey:

- ▶ This is a mainly industrial area (60%)
- ▶ There are many vacant or abandoned sites (33%)
- ▶ The area is unattractive with unmaintained buildings and lots (40%)
- ▶ The roads are in bad condition (63%)
- ▶ There is no place to walk or bike safely (61%)

- ▶ Customers/people making deliveries comment they cannot easily find their way around (32%)

The last response asked what 'different' types of businesses would enhance the area. Responses included:

- ▶ Restaurants
- ▶ Coffeehouse/breakfast/lunch eatery
- ▶ Retail
- ▶ Professional Offices

Question 6 asked respondents to make the same value assessment of potential future improvements to the project area. There was overall strong agreement with most of the questions posed including:

- ▶ Once contamination problems are addressed the area will be more attractive and desirable to new and growing businesses (44%)
- ▶ An identity that will link Railroad Avenue area revitalization to high technology, nanoscale science, research and the alternative energy industry would be mutually beneficial for study area existing businesses and growing businesses (46%)
- ▶ Gateways at key entrances to the area would enhance the appearance (40%)
- ▶ New signage would make it easier to navigate and find businesses (61%)
- ▶ Aesthetic improvements (greenspace/landscaping) along the roads would make the area more desirable for consumers and new and growing businesses (53%)
- ▶ A new road connection extending Railroad Avenue to Central Avenue at Osborne Road would be desirable (43%)
- ▶ A new cross connection between Railroad Avenue and BJ's/Lowes sites would be desirable (43%)
- ▶ I would be willing to make minor site, signage or façade improvements to my business to improve the area (43%)

Survey respondents did not overwhelmingly strongly agree or disagree, meaning responses were more evenly spread from "strongly agree to strongly disagree", with these three statements:

- ▶ Re-establishing use of the railroad facilities in the area would make the area more attractive and desirable to new and growing business (23% strongly agreed, 25% were neutral and 18% strongly disagreed)
- ▶ A new roadway cross section for Railroad Avenue to better serve the commercial uses (maybe reduce current 4 lanes to 2 wide lanes) should

be considered (25% strongly agreed, 25% were neutral and 16% strongly disagreed)

- ▶ Pedestrian and bicycle facilities to link to the Fuller Road and Central Avenue corridors are needed (32% strongly agreed, 19% were neutral and 11% strongly disagreed)

Question 7 asked respondents to make the same value assessment of the impact of potential future improvements on their businesses. There was strong agreement with only one of the questions posed:

- ▶ Having a sidewalk and green strip along the front of my business or residence will have a positive impact so long as I still have adequate parking, loading and access (28%)

Respondents strongly disagreed with three statements:

- ▶ Formalized connections for pedestrians and bicyclists to local parks would benefit my business (33%)
- ▶ Retaining the existing railroad infrastructure is important to maintaining the unique identity of the Railroad Avenue Study area (38%)
- ▶ Availability of a rail siding is critical for me to maintain and expand my business (54%)

Question 8 asked whether respondents believed clean-up of environmental contamination in the project area would positively impact their businesses. 72% responded yes.

Question 9 asked for final thoughts on how survey participants viewed the potential future condition of the study area. Comments were consistent with the responses to statements in earlier questions. Support was expressed for improving the appearance and enhancements to wayfinding. There were several comments expressing concern that the project area remain industrial and that improvements to road cross sections not inhibit the current needs of existing commercial, warehouse and industrial uses. Widespread support was expressed for extending Railroad Avenue east to Central Avenue. Storm drainage problems were identified as a major issue that should be addressed in the future.

Many commented that the railroad tracks down the center of Railroad Avenue should be removed, especially where they are no longer needed. Others commented that some of the existing sidings were needed for existing or future use in support of their businesses.

The survey results appear to have provided relevant and comprehensive public input that can form the basis for a draft Vision Statement for the project.

The full results of the survey are in Appendix B.

3.4 Preliminary Assessment of Issues and Opportunities

This preliminary assessment of issues and opportunities is a synthesis of observations, public comments and suggestions by the Study Advisory Committee. The Preliminary Assessment Map Figure 6, illustrates the initial analysis of the Railroad Avenue Study Area and illustrates the locations of the issues and opportunities discussed below.

Study Area Strengths

- Existing Transportation Network - The existing internal transportation system is organized in an grid-pattern allowing for intuitive navigation. The road network is generally designed for heavy truck transportation including designation of Railroad Avenue, Warehouse Row, a short segment of Maplewood Avenue between Railroad Avenue and Kraft Avenue, and Kraft Avenue. Traffic controls appear to function well, and these controls will be further enhanced by the current Fuller Road reconstruction project. Traffic studies have concluded that there is sufficient capacity in the existing road network for future build out. The project area is on major bus routes including the new Route 5 Bus Rapid Transit line.
- Access to Rail Sidings – Currently, several large redevelopment sites including the Miron site and the NL site have direct access to active sidings or rail sidings that could easily be upgraded to active. This would also provide for desirable industrial redevelopment lending the project area a significant advantage in attracting emerging industries. Desirable industries such as the renewable energy industry and other commercial development are likely to require intermodal transfer to rail capabilities.
- Unique Mix of Wholesale Uses and Proximity to Major Retail – The Railroad Avenue Study Area contains a unique concentrated mix of manufacturing and distributors/wholesalers, which generally caters to the needs of contractors; however, many have showrooms open to the public, not found elsewhere in the region. In addition, the project site is near major retail centers offering a chance to provide alternative ‘warehouse’ retail and transportation support.
- Perception of Environmental Constraints – Public perception of environmental constraints can be positive factor creating a basis for participation in publicly funded programs for the preparation of

redevelopment strategies and shovel-ready preparedness. This is especially important as large open tracts of land are in the process of mitigation and will soon be ready for redevelopment.

- Location and Marketability – The project area is ideally situated near the Albany International Airport, and has easy access to key Interstate Highways (I90 and I87). Close proximity to the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, The University at Albany, and the proposed Harriman Campus developments would make the site an ideal location for feeder industries, incubatory industries and entrepreneurial start-up/spin-off companies from those institutions.

Study Area Weaknesses

- Aesthetics and Overall Appearance – There is an overall lack of definition of vehicular, parking, access, pedestrian and landscape space throughout the study area. Wayfinding is difficult as a cohesive system of signage that might provide guidance does not currently exist. Gateways into the project area are currently non-existent. While some pedestrian amenities will be implemented as part of the Fuller Road Reconstruction project, none exist elsewhere in the study area.
- Existing Transportation Connectivity - Direct connections to key areas outside the project area are currently lacking including between Railroad Avenue and the BJ's/Lowes complex in the Village of Colonie, and between the western terminus of Railroad Avenue and Central Avenue. Opportunities for direct connections to connect to Washington Avenue in addition to Fuller Road are severely limited by the CSX Rail Corridor and the Interstate 90 Corridor. Pedestrian connectivity to the Six Mile Waterworks Park and future Patroon Creek Greenway Trail are similarly limited to Fuller Road.
- Railroad and Road Crossings – Pavement deterioration is a constant and recurring problem where rails cross paved roads. Significant potholes and emergency repairs further complicate the problem.
- Stigma of Contamination – While much of the contamination that existed in the project area has been mitigated, there is still a perception of an environmentally constrained area.

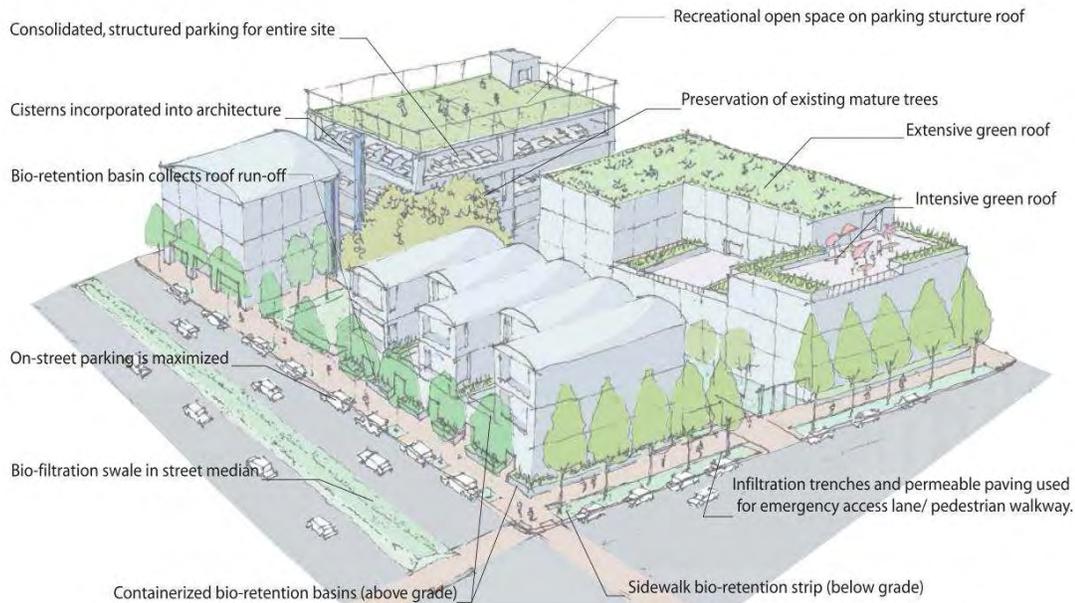
Study Area Opportunities

- Industrial Redevelopment - The project area contains three potential sites for large industrial redevelopment projects with access to rail sidings (Miron, National Lead, and Conway). These sites would be highly marketable to a wide range of industrial or warehouse redevelopment projects by offering a capable existing road network, convenient connections to highways and most importantly, access to rail.

- Road and Connectivity Improvements - Few major improvements in roads are needed, however, an approach to develop a long term solution to address pavement deterioration problems at rail crossings of roadways would eliminate the only major negative impact rails have in the project area. The extension of Railroad Avenue east to Central Avenue at Osborne Road would create a new gateway into the project area, add a new truck route connection and strengthen the case to designate Railroad Avenue as an Urban Collector.
- Branding, Gateways, Signage and Aesthetic Improvements – Creation of gateways at major entrances to the project areas would provide a significant first impression. In addition, a uniform program of wayfinding signage that would include directions, mapping, business directories, and addresses could be implemented with graphic reinforcement of a project area 'brand'. Finally, the implementation of improved delineation of parking, access, and pedestrian space would improve the overall aesthetic appearance.
- Grey-to-Green Redevelopment – Implementation of sustainable design practices in redevelopment projects could aid in the overall change in the perception of the project area. Use of 'complete streets', sustainable stormwater, and sustainable sites practices would be incorporated into 'shovel ready' redevelopment strategies.



An example of two types of wayfinding signage that communicates an industrial-based brand.



Example of sustainable design practices that could be part of future 'Grey to Green' redevelopment projects.

Study Area Threats

- **Loss of Rail Sidings** - A network of rail sidings with the flexibility and overall comprehensive access available in the project area is rare. Currently, the abandonment, lack of use and loss of connection threatens to eliminate rail sidings that may be beneficial towards long-term redevelopment in the project area.
- **Retail Conversion** - The transition from industrial and warehouse land uses to retail has been taking place west of Fuller Road. Should this transition completely engulf the study area, some valuable industrial development land in the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland will be lost.
- **Lack of Stewardship** - The project area is located in two towns and has a wide ranging representation of interests. The lack of a project area-based stewarding organization could hamper efforts to gain area-wide support and consensus towards making comprehensive improvements.



RAILROAD AVENUE AREA TRANSPORTATION AND REVITALIZATION PLAN

Towns of Colonie and Guilderland, Albany County NY

FINAL REPORT

DECEMBER 2012

TECHNICAL MEMO 2— RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES



The Railroad Avenue Area Revitalization Plan lays out a long-range vision for what the Railroad Avenue Area could become over the next 10 to 20 years. It gives guidance to planners, developers, institutions and public sector agencies and businesses as they make decisions about the physical development of the area and undertake activities to support and enhance this industrial/commercial area within the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland within Albany County.

This report was prepared in cooperation with Albany County, the Town of Colonie, the Town of Guilderland, the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA), and the Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC). This report was funded in part through grant[s] from the Federal Highway Administration and the United States Department of Transportation. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of these governmental agencies.

This project was made possible with the participation from a Study Advisory Committee which guided staff and consultant efforts.

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4.0 Study Area Revitalization Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives

4.1 Vision Statement

A proposed Vision Statement for the revitalization of the Railroad Avenue Study Area (RASA) was developed based on the input received during public meetings on September 29, 2010 and June 13, 2012, the responses to an online survey and discussions with the Study Advisory Committee. This vision statement is intended to convey the goals and objectives towards revitalization of the Railroad Avenue Study Area:

The Railroad Avenue area will become a more intensely thriving commercial/industrial-centered area due in part to its convenient location and good connections to the surrounding transportation system. Roads will be well maintained roads and ample commercial rail connections will be upgraded to support the mix of businesses located here. Railroad tracks that are longer needed, will be removed, and those remaining will be upgraded to serve new rail dependent industry and to create maintenance free road crossings. Carefully planned redevelopment will occur that preserves the underlying industrial infrastructure while promoting growth in technology uses. Strategic partnerships between the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland; Albany County; the local business owners; and state and federal agencies will play a key role in bringing solid new employers to the project area. The project area will go from brown to green as the stigma of an environmentally constrained area is replaced by high tech, sustainable industrial development linked to growth at the SUNY Albany Campus, Harriman Office Campus and College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering. A branding and marketing campaign will be developed that reaches out to the targeted commercial and industrial sectors and advertises shovel-ready approvals for site development, giving the Railroad Avenue area a distinct advantage in attracting solid desirable companies. Existing business owners will proudly show their clients the revitalized Railroad Avenue area, while prospective companies will be impressed with the quality of life upgrades including streetscape improvements, attractive gateways, wayfinding signage and sustainably developed sites. Bicycles, joggers and pedestrians will be seen throughout the corridor as the local workforce will recognize these are great ways to reach public transit, park facilities at Five Mile Waterworks and shopping near Central Avenue.

4.2 Revitalization Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives for attaining this Vision are:

- ▶ Revitalize the area through ongoing inter-municipal cooperation and coordination including development of partnerships with state and regional stakeholders, such as SUNY College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering.
- ▶ Preserve the existing industrial zoning and maintain industrial uses as the predominant land use.
- ▶ Explore potential growth incentive programs to form a catalyst for redevelopment.
- ▶ Preserve and enhance the multi-modal transportation infrastructure within the study area and make appropriate multi-modal connections to the regional transportation system.
- ▶ Develop an inventory of study area rail infrastructure and use this information in communications with CSX to implement a plan to remove unused track in the median of Railroad Avenue to improve roadway conditions and to preserve those tracks and sidings serving current and potential future needs to enhance the attractiveness of the study area as a thriving twenty-first century industrial/commercial area.
- ▶ Improve access and circulation within the project area.
- ▶ Provide pedestrian oriented enhancements and transit accommodations where appropriate to enhance multi-modal access within and to/from destinations in the study area.
- ▶ Provide wayfinding and aesthetic improvements.
- ▶ Increase utilization of available programs for economic development, business expansion and job creation in the project area.
- ▶ Foster cooperation among local businesses and among public sector partners.
- ▶ Develop a strong branding and marketing strategy to effectively reach out to prospective developers.
- ▶ Implement sustainable design practices in redevelopment projects.
- ▶ Address any remaining adverse environmental issues and carefully plan for redevelopment concepts for large vacant sites.

5.0 Revitalization Strategies

The strategies discussed in this section are recommended next steps toward revitalization of the study area. Some of these strategies involve undertaking more detailed analysis that will support marketing efforts and help bring sites to a level of shovel-ready approval. There are advantages in submittal of joint grant applications under two [NYS Department of State programs](#) which can fund many of the detailed analyses and shovel ready approval recommendations: the [Brownfield Opportunity Areas program](#), under which a Nomination (second level) application could be made, and the [Shared Municipal Services program](#). Discussions below outline each recommendation in detail and Section 6 provides a list of appropriate funding programs for each recommended strategy including the NYSDOS programs mentioned above.

5.1 Future Area-Wide Land Use and Zoning Modifications

Land use codes in effect in both Guilderland and Colonie have been updated in recent years. While these codes serve the greater community extremely well, there is some potential that other types of development could supplant the desired industrial development in the study area. Some minor amendments would reinforce study area redevelopment goals.

a. Existing Industrial Zoning: The existing Town of Colonie and Town of Guilderland Codes allow a range of uses for the development and redevelopment of parcels in their Industrial Zoning districts. Establishment of a more defined industrial zone or an industrial preservation overlay district could foster flexibility in terms of the types of high tech/light industrial uses that could be attracted to redeveloped sites and preserve and enhance the industrial land use base currently located in the study area. It may also be desirable to develop industrial site design standards that would preserve the industrial uses, while improving the overall aesthetics of the area and integrating of sustainable site development elements, potentially increasing the attractiveness of this area for high tech/light industrial uses. These standards would expand on the buffer requirements to include recommended landscaping where industrial development is adjacent to residential zones. These standards could be tied to a redevelopment incentive that encourages and supports the redevelopment, rehabilitation and revitalization of currently developed properties that are redeveloped to industrial, light industrial and high-tech type uses.

b. Fuller Road Corridor: The Fuller Road corridor is the ideal study area location for more retail/commercial and industrial development. Fuller Road is significant as it includes two of the most important gateways into the project area over a very short distance. The retail and commercial development pattern that exists along Fuller Road should be preserved and enhanced because these uses place a greater emphasis on maintaining curb appeal to attract customers. The existing zoning provides some flexibility, however, similar design standards used for the COR districts would ensure that the design of future development meets these objectives and incorporates pedestrian facilities.

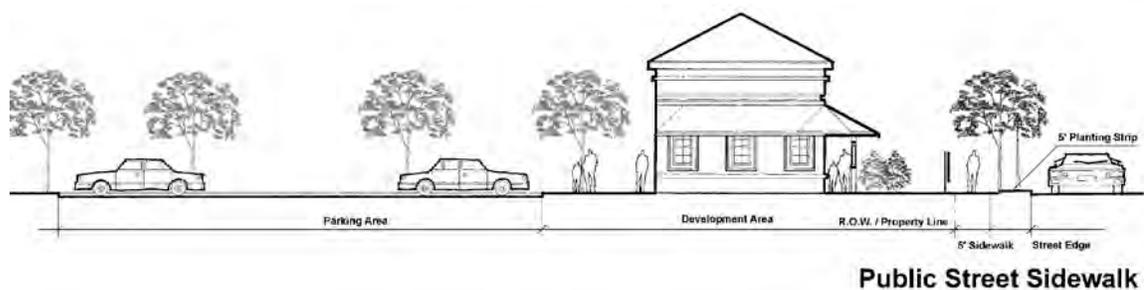


Figure 1: Illustration from Town of Colonie Design Standards for COR district.

c. Railroad Avenue East Extension to Central Avenue and Osborne Road: The extension of Railroad Avenue east to Central Avenue would create a site for a significantly sized development at an important Colonie and Albany gateway. The industrial zoning district extends to Central Avenue, and while zoning changes would not be needed for new development to occur here, establishment of industrial site design guidelines or standards would foster development of a development project that could enhance this area as a 'gateway'.

Recommended Land Use and Zoning Strategies

- Industrial Preservation Overlay District/Design Guidelines/Standards which would prohibit certain allowable uses including residential and big-box retail and prohibit permanent conversion of existing industrial /warehouse uses to retail/commercial use.
- Fuller Road Commercial/Retail Overlay District intended to retain the industrial uses but to also incorporate some design standards similar to those used for the COR district.

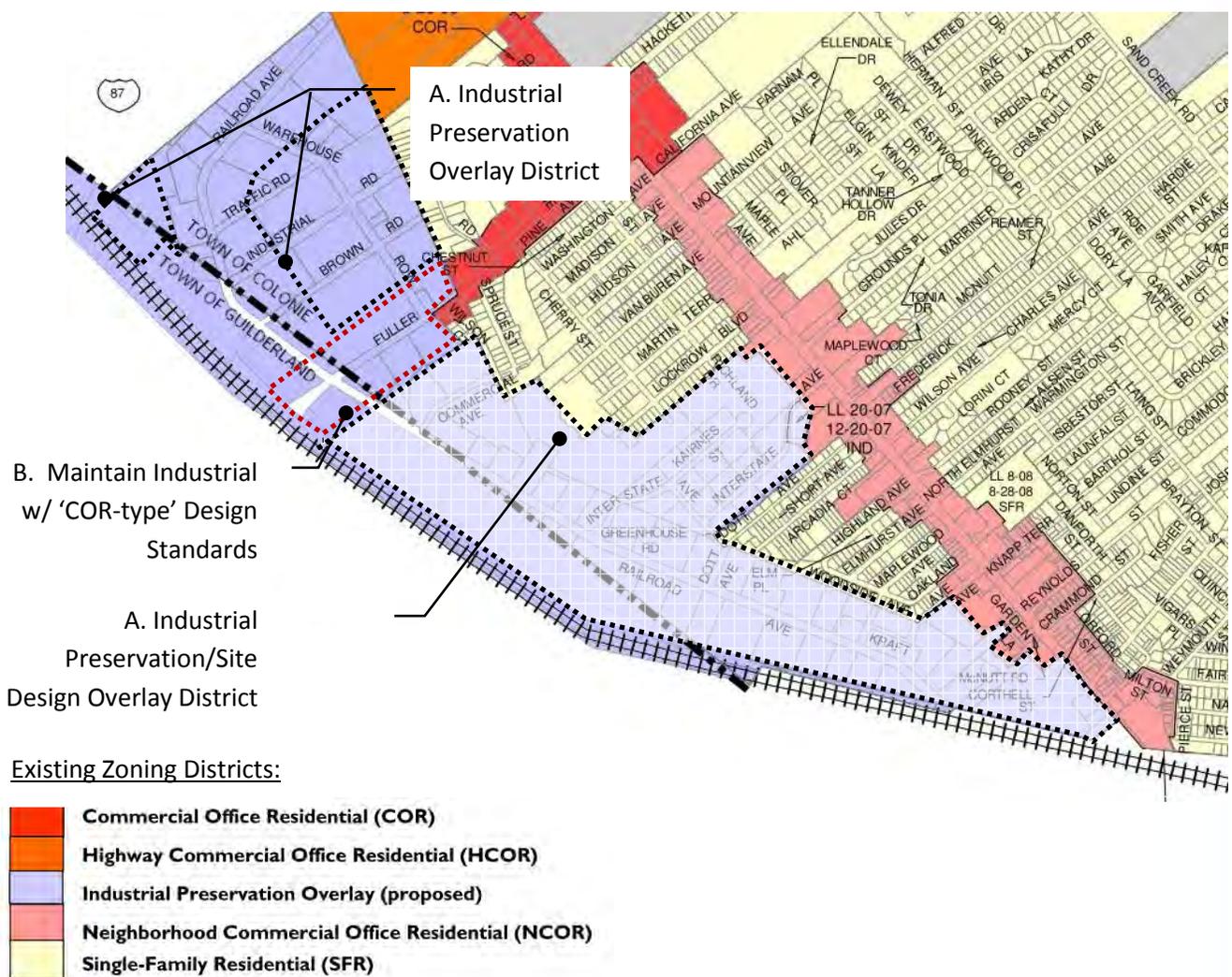


Figure 2: Suggested Zoning District Adjustments

5.2 Environmentally Impaired Sites

Many of the required follow up studies recommended in the sections that follow could be funded under the [Brownfield Opportunities \(BOA\) Program](#) administered by the NYSDOS. Participation in the NYS Department of State BOA program would provide funding for follow-up analyses. The program is organized in three phases, Pre-Nomination (Phase 1) which involves the gathering of basic information, Nomination (Phase 2) which includes more detailed study, and Implementation (Phase 3) which generally funds studies, environmental assessments, preparation of EIS and other plans that will result in shovel-ready redevelopment sites. One purpose of this study is that it may be used as a Pre-Nomination (Phase 1) to a subsequent BOA application.

Among the many redevelopment opportunities are three significant sites with existing environmental concerns. These areas are in various stages of brownfield mitigation and will provide significant sites for new developments. Detailed information about each site is included in Technical Memo #1 - Appendix A, a synopsis of the related opportunities for these sites is below.

a. National Lead Site: Environmental cleanup is reported to be complete however, the site is still being monitored and tested. The site is close to the Mercury Refining site which is currently undergoing cleanup and has some vacant structures but still operates a recycling business on the site. The National Lead site has existing rail access and forms the southern boundary of a highly visible gateway on Central Avenue near the Colonie/Albany border. Consistent with the existing land uses on Route 5, there is the potential for a greater mix of commercial and retail uses on Central Avenue and along the recommended extension of Railroad Avenue to Central Avenue opposite Osborne Road. The remaining portions of the site would be more appropriately developed as high-tech and light industrial to take advantage of rail access and transition to existing industrial uses on east Railroad Avenue.

b. Miron Lumber Site: According to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's [Record of Decision](#) for this site, mitigation is ongoing including on-site soil stabilization to the water table and ground water treatment. Some contamination from heavy metals will remain in the soils under the approved mitigation plan and re-use will be restricted to commercial or industrial development. Some of the existing buildings will be demolished during the

mitigation work, however larger structures outside the 'hot zone' will be retained. The site is ideally situated for a large industrial redevelopment with access to rail sidings to the south and frontage on Railroad Avenue to the north. Most of the remaining buildings are 'lean-to' warehouses and could be demolished providing for flexibility in the redevelopment plans. The two year clean-up would allow an appropriate time-frame for pre-planning as part of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement and marketing to create a highly desirable 'shovel ready' redevelopment site that would establish the future course of (re)development in the study area.

c. Participation in the NYS Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program (BOA): The revitalization strategy outlined in this draft plan could form the basis of a BOA Nomination (Phase 2) grant application, facilitating participation in the BOA program. The BOA program is focused on redevelopment of areas impaired due to the existence of brownfields. The Nomination Phase would provide funding for strategic planning of the Railroad Avenue Project Area Revitalization strategies while this study would fulfill the basic requirements of the pre-requisite Phase 1 Pre-Nomination Study. The Implementation Phase of the BOA program could also be accessed to provide additional funding for shovel readiness including preparation of Environmental Impact Statements, Marketing Strategies and Local Code Revisions.

Recommended Strategy

- Prepare and Submit a NYSDOS BOA Nomination Study to include:
 - Refined Visioning and Comprehensive Revitalization Plan
 - Drafting of Zoning Modifications
 - Shovel Ready Site Design and Approvals
 - Assessment of Rail Sidings including Ownership, Condition, Continuity, Removal Requirements and Coordination with CSX
 - Rail Infrastructure Needs/Demands Study
 - Draft Site Planning, Wayfinding, and Signage Standards
 - Detail Transportation-Related Analyses
 - Economic Impact and Market Analysis
 - Partnership Development
 - Development of Marketing and Branding Strategies

5.3 Study Area Redevelopment Opportunities

This study lays out a preliminary revitalization strategy, framework and concepts focused on the study area's current assets and potential for future redevelopment. Redevelopment projects should be based upon the advantage offered by the study area's enhanced access to the regional transportation system, proximity to growing economic sectors (i.e. Nanotech, etc), centralized location, and strong and diverse existing businesses. Investment should be sought that is not only filling empty space but is truly beneficial and compatible with the greater economic goals of the area. The trend towards more retail and distribution uses has filled several large vacant buildings, these uses can continue to be accommodated in the study area, but should be balanced in the future with high tech industrial and manufacturing that could create a greater number of employment opportunities over the same square footage. While some preliminary concepts are presented below, further detailed site analysis and design will be needed to make the larger development and redevelopment opportunity sites within the study area more attractive to potential investors. Next steps should include:

a. Comprehensive Project Area Redevelopment Master Plan: An overall redevelopment strategy to serve as a guide for the future redevelopment of the project area should be developed. Potential funding for this effort could be obtained through the NYS Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area program as described in more detail below and should be done in coordination with Albany County's economic development planning staff, and subsequently incorporated into the relevant local plans.

b. Shovel-Ready Site Development Plans: Several significant large vacant and underutilized sites exist and these sites could provide major redevelopment sites as illustrated in figure below. Some potential redevelopment concepts are presented in section c. below. Shovel ready development planning involving a local IDA as the sponsor and engaging the host community would have a greater likelihood of producing a compatible redevelopment plan that meets local goals such as maintaining the Capital District's 'Green Tech' leadership status. In addition, the process would eliminate major unknowns including SEQR compliance and agency approvals as potential stumbling blocks for a potential investor. Two large sites Miron and National Lead would provide excellent opportunities as they are all relatively undeveloped, large and located in key

industrial redevelopment areas. The shovel-ready site design and approvals process for these sites could be funded utilizing NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas Nomination or Implementation funding along with matching local funds. Sites 1 and 2 below would provide each sponsoring municipality with a shovel-ready project, future years could focus on obtaining shovel ready status for other sites shown in the figure below.

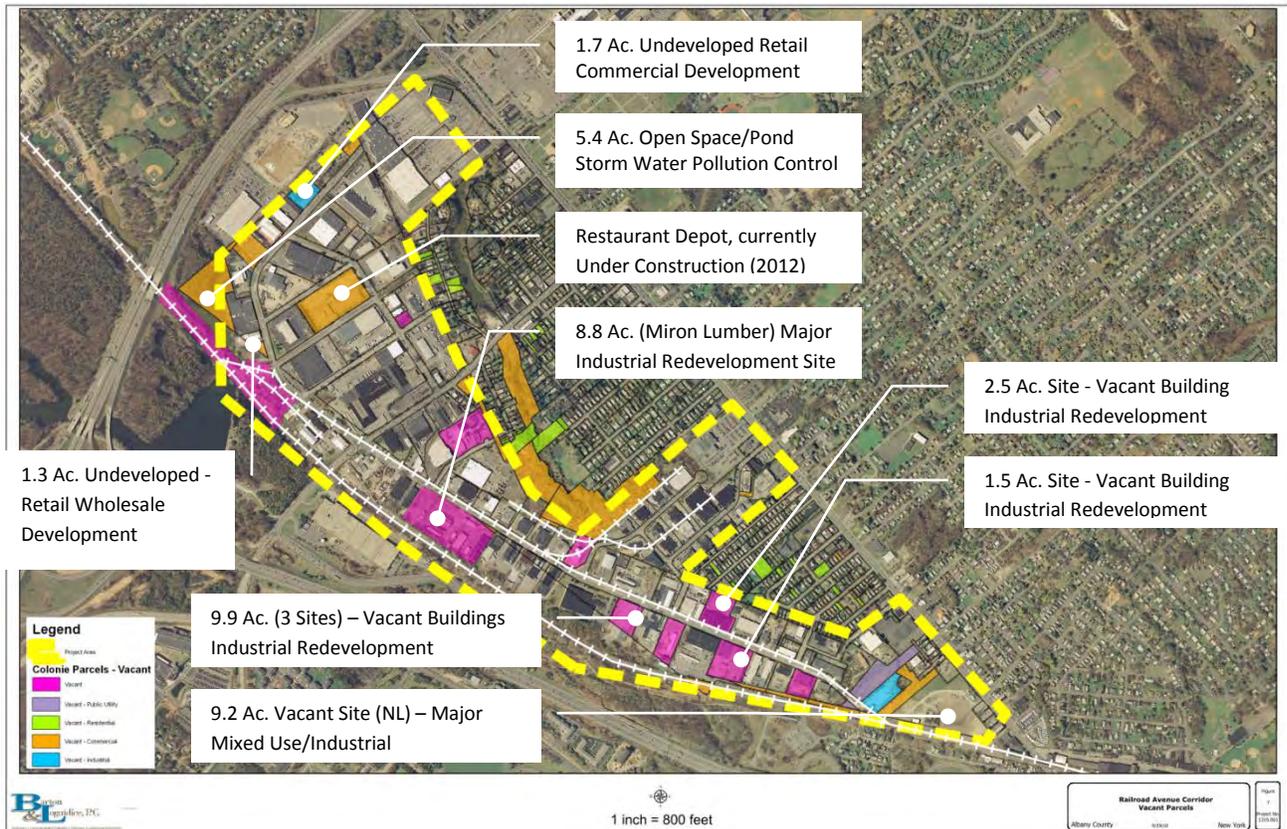


Figure 3: Key Vacant/Underdeveloped Parcels and Potential Redevelopment Strategies

c. Key Redevelopment Site Concepts

The graphics presented below are meant to provide examples of potential redevelopment concepts. These conceptual designs could be applicable to other sites within the study area where buildings and sites are vacant or underutilized.

1. Miron Lumber Site: 54-62 Railroad Avenue, Guilderland. The site has 900' of frontage on Railroad Avenue, access to rail via a siding adjacent to the main CSX/Amtrak line and via a siding on Railroad Avenue. The Railroad Avenue siding would require rehabilitation and would limit the development of the site, however it provide a 'site only' siding. Several existing buildings still exist in various conditions that could be evaluated for adaptive re-use. The site is large enough to create an interior public street and thus be subdivided. Redevelopment land use opportunities include:

Large Single Industrial 'Green Tech' (CNSE Spin-Off)



Figure 4: Redevelopment Concept for the Miron Lumber Site, Illustrating an Industrial Rail-Dependent Single User with 132,000 GSF and parking for 300 Cars.

Alternative Energy Industrial (Rail-Dependent)
Large Single Warehouse, Intermodal, Trucking Terminal (Rail-Enhanced)
Wholesale Distribution or Wholesale Retail

Adaptive Re-Use for Small Green Tech Industrial
Flex -Space Start-up Technology Campus (Incubators)

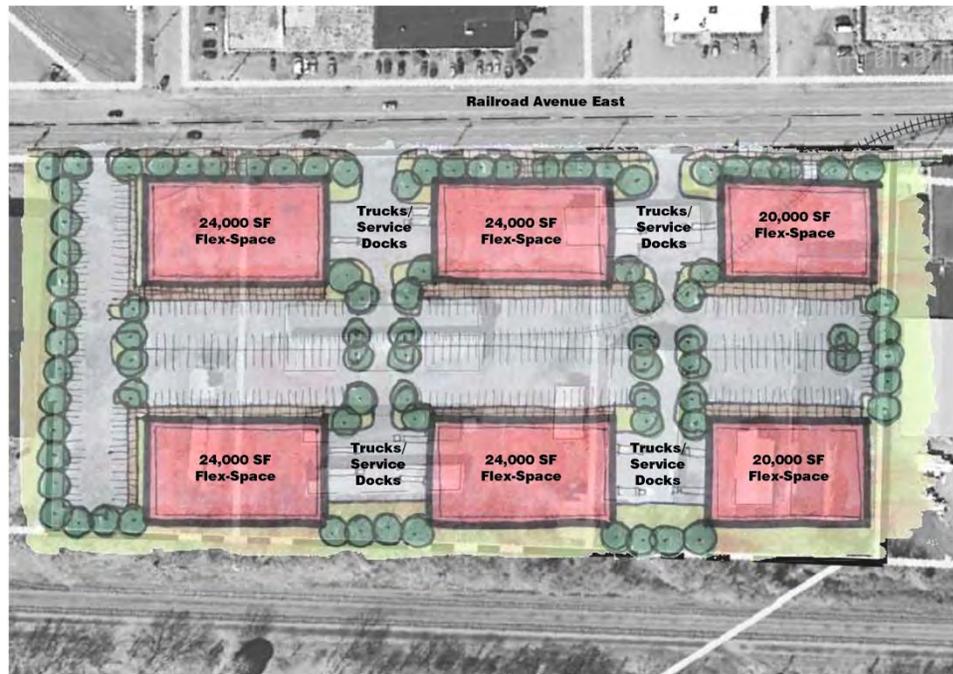


Figure 5: Redevelopment Concept illustrating 136,000 SF of 'Flex-Space' in 6 Multi-tenant Buildings for small industrial/research start-up facilities (350 parking spaces).

2. National Lead, et al.: Central Avenue, Colonie. This site has a large contiguous development area including significant frontage along Central Avenue. The extension of Railroad Avenue as a public road, or as a private road, through the site to Central Avenue at Osborne would bisect the site while creating additional significant frontage for development. The site could be developed with a mix of uses transitioning from commercial and retail adjacent Central Avenue to industrial and high-tech approaching the existing Railroad Avenue terminus. The site would also offer access to active rail sidings and would have nearly direct access to the West Albany Rail Yard. Finally, the site could be developed to create an enhanced gateway into the Town of Colonie. Redevelopment land use opportunities include:

Large Single Industrial and Office 'Green Tech' Development
Warehouse, Intermodal, Trucking Terminals
Flex -Space Start-up Technology Campus (Incubators)
Wholesale Distribution or Wholesale Retail

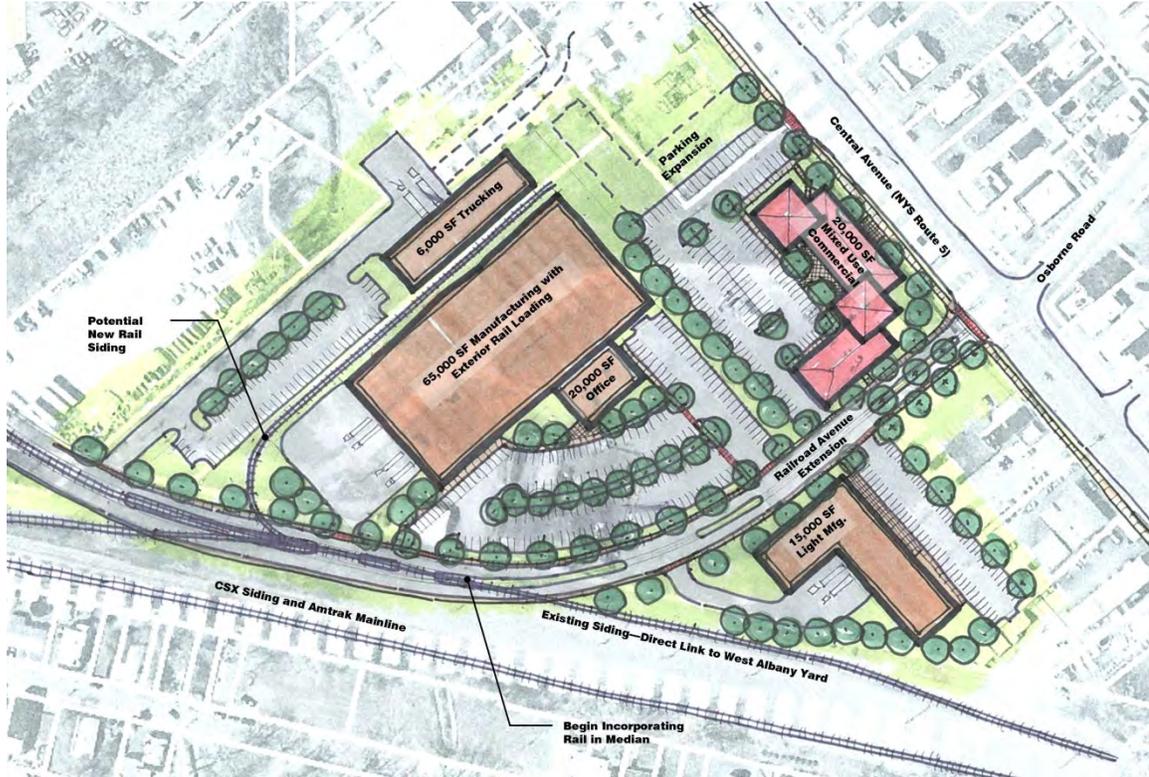


Figure 6: Redevelopment Concept illustrating Four Separate Developments. The Town Gateway concept is reinforced by a Multi-Use Commercial Building. A transition to Industrial and High-Tech is made along Railroad Avenue Extension where the rail siding is incorporated into the road median.

3. Other Sites: Several other sites exist and could potentially be redeveloped as small scale incubators or green technology start-up facilities. Redevelopment land use opportunities for other vacant sites include:

- Single Industrial 'Green Tech' Development
- Single Small Warehouse, Intermodal, Trucking Terminal
- Flex -Space Start-up Technology Campus (Incubators)
- Wholesale Distribution or Wholesale Retail

Recommended Redevelopment Plan Strategies

- Seek funding for Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan and pilot Shovel Ready Projects at the Miron and National Lead sites from NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunities Areas grant funds

- Prepare a Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan to include refinements of concepts, extensive public outreach, fiscal impacts and marketing strategy development.
- Obtain Shovel-Ready Approvals for Redevelopment Sites in a Phased approach based on Priorities of Miron and NL sites and others identified in the Comprehensive Railroad Avenue Study Area Redevelopment Plan

5.4 Transportation Interconnectivity and System Improvements

The study area is generally well connected with convenient connections between the study area road network and the surrounding road systems with the exception of a circuitous connection to the BJ's/Lowes plaza behind Northway Mall, and the dead end of the eastern terminus of Railroad Avenue. Pavement and roadway conditions along Railroad Avenue itself and other study area roadways need to be improved to remove or improve rail crossings; better define parking, pedestrian and access; and to improve and update storm drainage systems. Below are suggested implementation measures to make improvements in support of revitalization efforts and redevelopment projects.

a. Railroad Track Rehabilitation and Removals:

A comprehensive evaluation of the existing rail sidings throughout the study area is needed. This evaluation should include, determining ownership (CSX v. Local Municipalities), field verification of system continuity,

assessment of requirements for abandonment/removal, and determination of the final disposition of removed tracks in

coordination with CSX. A key aspect of this action will be establishing ongoing communications with CSX. Track removals should also be evaluated based on market forces and the related potential to serve future rail transportation of goods. A rehabilitation effort focused on track that is not recommended for



Figure 7: Tracks crossing pavement at long angles result in excessive pavement damage without crossing treatments designed for heavy truck loading.

removal should be undertaken based on crossing treatments commonly used for heavy truck traffic. At present, a total of eight potential crossing rehabilitations would be needed. The most logical track abandonment would be the discontinuous track that exists down the center of Railroad Avenue.



Figure 8: Example of a long term rehabilitation of rail crossings.



Figure 9: A portion of the existing railroad facilities map. Dots indicated existing crossing repair points.

b. Eastern Extension of Railroad Avenue to Central Avenue and Osborne Road: This connection, illustrated in the figure below, is recommended in the [NY Route 5 \(Central Avenue\) Access Management Plan](#) from 2009 (see pages 22 and 23 of that report for more details) and would provide an alternative access point to the Northway and Thruway other than Fuller Road. Completion of this connection would advance the goal of designating Railroad Avenue as a 'Collector' street. In addition, the new connector would enhance redevelopment opportunities on the National Lead site, be coordinated with a potential Harriman Campus Connector, further reduce traffic on Maplewood and Kraft Avenues, and help form a new gateway to the Railroad Avenue Corridor. A traffic impact analysis would be needed to ensure that the location and design of this connection would not adversely impact the intersection function and the surrounding neighborhoods.

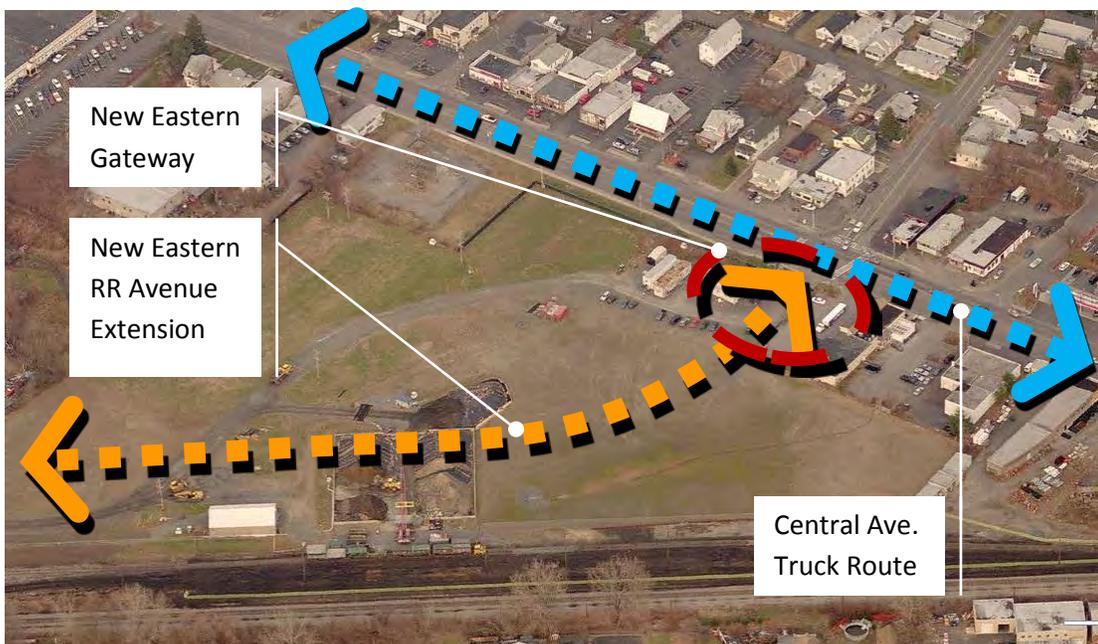


Figure 10: Dashed line illustrates the extension of Railroad Avenue to Central at Osborne

c. Office Campus Connector: The recent Patroon Greenway study suggested creating a pedestrian connection to the Harriman State Office utilizing the Exit 3 ramp to I-90 bridges (see Figure 13, next page). Taking that idea one step further to include a road connection to Central Avenue requiring a new bridge over the railroad corridor might influence the redevelopment of the Former

National Lead site and possibly the eastern Railroad Avenue project area. This connection would be cost prohibitive as it would cross both a major interstate and a major passenger rail route, however, a future bridge rehabilitation of the existing ramps and bridges could incorporate some of the needed pedestrian infrastructure to make trail connections to the future Patroon Greenway. The alternative concepts for this connector should be coordinating with the eastward extension of Railroad Avenue.

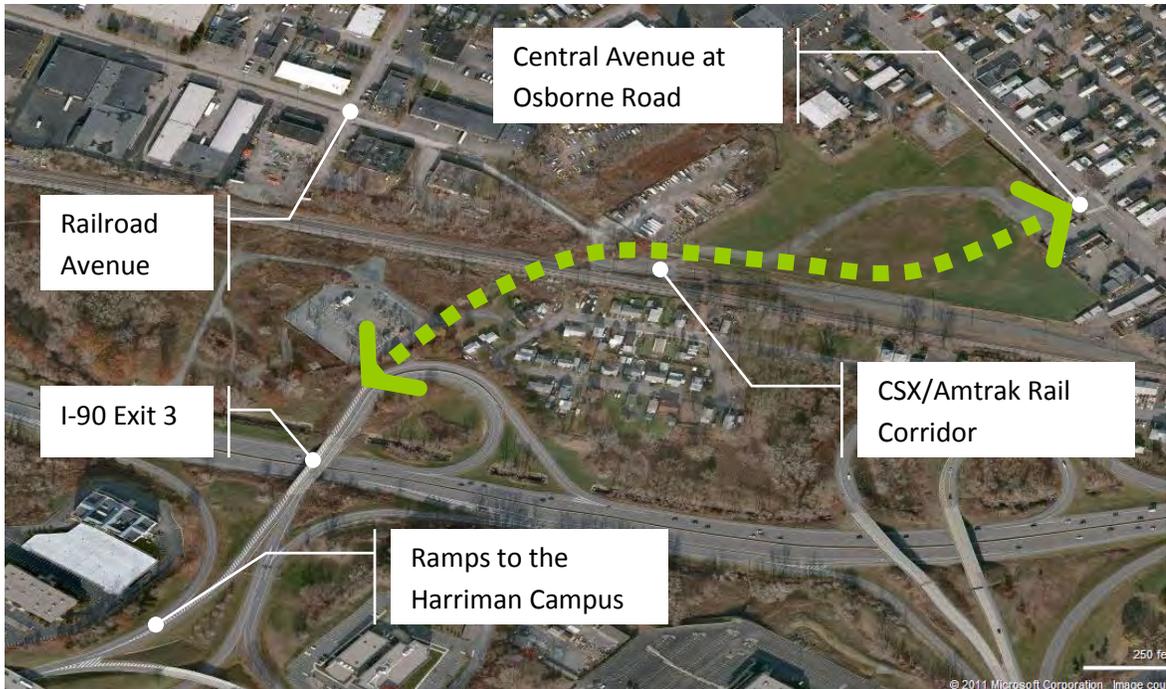


Figure11: Office Campus Connector to Central Avenue

d. Truck Routes: The impact of the extension of Railroad Avenue to Central Avenue at Osborne Road could require some changes to established truck routes. An analysis of the impact of these new connections on surrounding roads and highways should be undertaken. Once constructed, the eastern extension of Railroad Ave would still be the truck route to Osborne Road and would connect to the Central Avenue truck route but would **not** continue onto Osborne Road north.

e. Railroad Avenue Reclassification: The process to have Railroad Avenue reclassified as an 'Urban Collector' should be initiated as soon as possible. According to NYSDOT, "Functional classification is the process by which roads, streets, and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of

service they provide. Individual roads and streets do not serve travel independently but as part of a network of roads through which the traffic moves. Functional classification describes the importance of a particular road or network of roads to the overall system and, therefore, is critical in assigning priorities to projects and establishing the appropriate highway design standards to meet the needs of the traffic served. Functional classification is also used to determine which roads are eligible for project funding under the Federal Highway Administration's "Surface Transportation Program."

Recommended Transportation Improvement Strategies

- Study Area Transportation Circulation Study
 - Intersection analysis of the New Railroad Avenue Extension to Central Avenue at Osborne Road including impacts on Osborne Road and adjacent residential areas.
 - Evaluate the alternative to connect the Harriman Campus to Central Avenue Connector as a multi-modal crossing of I-90 and the CSX/Amtrak Rail Corridor.
 - Develop the justification for the Railroad Avenue Functional 'Reclassification'
- Rail Infrastructure Study
 - Evaluate Needs for Removal or Retention of Railroad Tracks with Redevelopment Strategies including the related economic and marketing benefits; permit requirements; abandonment requirements; and disposition of removed infrastructure.
 - Assessment of Rail Sidings including Ownership, Conditions, Continuity, Removal Requirements and Coordination with CSX
 - Reach out to CSX to determine ownership and identify issues related to improvements/targeted removal of rail infrastructure.
 - Evaluate crossing repair methods and develop a prioritized list of crossings to be rehabilitated.
- Implement Improvements
 - Obtain funding to complete needed improvements

5.5 Roadway and Site Treatments

Implementation of a Complete Streets approach is recommended to complement other revitalization strategies. New York State enacted Complete Streets legislation in 2011; the law took effect in February 2012 and requires all state, county, and local transportation agencies to consider complete streets design principles on all future projects which receive both federal and state funding. The law requires that the use of complete streets design features be considered during planning, design, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation of roadway projects receiving federal and state funding.

Complete streets design principles are roadway design features that include sidewalks, paved shoulders suitable for use by bicyclists, bicycle lanes, share the road signage, crosswalks, pedestrian control signalization, bus pull outs, curb cuts, raised crosswalks, ramps and traffic calming measures designed to allow pedestrian and motor traffic to easily coexist.

In addition to this pending legislation, there are several practical reasons for improving accommodations for all users, even in industrial areas. The National Complete Streets Coalition (NCSC) has assembled compelling data indicating the significant positive impact of transportation options has on employers. This lead, the NCSC to conclude that... *“Incomplete streets hinder economic growth and can result in lost business, lower productivity, and higher employee turnover...”*

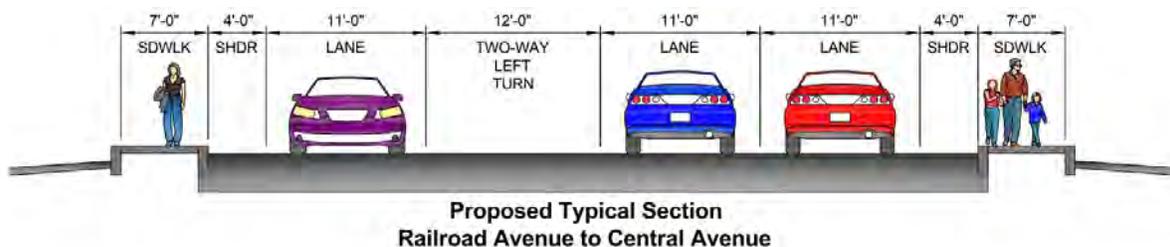


Figure 12: The Reconstructed Cross Section for Fuller Road (Greenman Pederson, Inc.) includes widened shoulders and upgraded sidewalks.

- a. **Complete Street Design:** The need to better define functional space along the study area road network was a common theme in the survey responses, notably, uncontrolled access along certain highly travelled streets primarily along Railroad Avenue and Warehouse Row. Clear delineation of public roadways, parking, access and truck access will reduce the number of conflict points and clarify where turning vehicles may be encountered. Innovative techniques can be used

to incorporate pedestrians and cyclists including ‘cycle track’, a separated bike lane located next to the roadway. The results will be an overall safety improvement for all road users; better traffic flow; more attractive sites and streetscapes; and an overall more friendly appearance for the study area. Street geometry should continue to be designed to comfortably accommodate large truck turning movements.

Railroad Avenue West of Fuller Road and Warehouse Row: The study area west of Fuller Road is characterized by retail and wholesale retail businesses. It is therefore unlikely to require the center median railroad tracks, permitting reuse of the median as a landscape element or for stormwater management (or both). This segment has somewhat better definition of space and has more street trees due to the retail curb appeal desired by businesses such as Old Brick. It will be especially important to include complete streets implementation for these two roads, as both interconnect with the upgraded pedestrian systems on Fuller Road. The suggested road section here would include elimination of one lane in each direction and narrowing the median to 8’, 15’ travel lanes, 6’ cycle-tracks, and a variable width landscaped buffer strip. As a result up to 13’ of new space is created in the road right-of-way, preferably landscaped, but available for use as access and parking where needed.

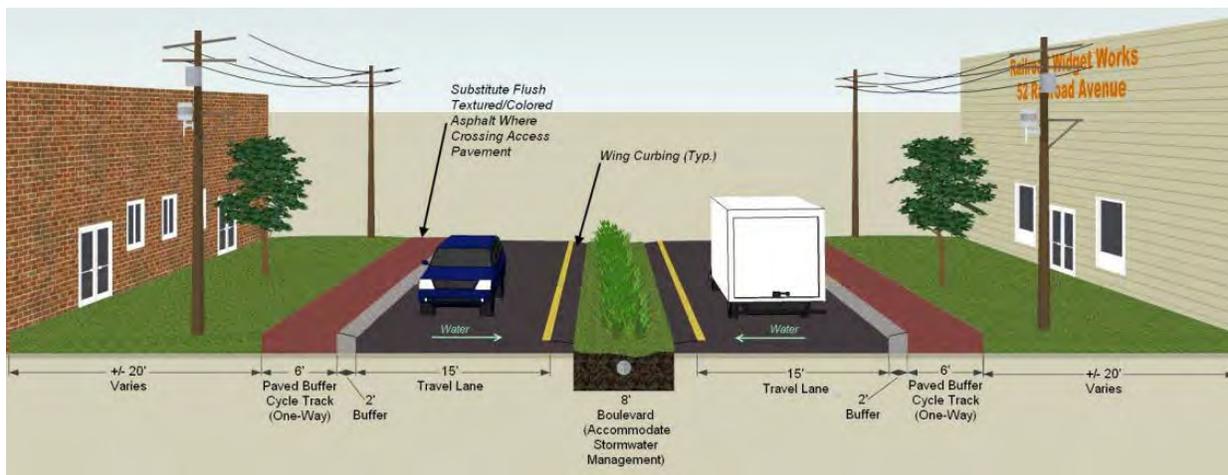


Figure 13: Suggested Street Cross-Section with railroad tracks removed

Railroad Avenue East of Fuller Road: East of Fuller Road, land uses are predominantly warehouse retail, warehouse trucking and industrial. Based on the business owner survey, comments received at the two public meetings and Study Advisory Committee guidance, removal of the tracks down the center of Railroad Avenue is strongly desired. If that changes in the future based on the Railroad Infrastructure Inventory, communications with CSX and a commitment to rehabilitate the tracks and the road crossings to improve and maintain good roadway conditions along Railroad Avenue, the street would look as shown in Figure 14. A less intensive complete street intervention is recommended including elimination of one lane in each direction, a 12' wide center rail median, 15' travel lanes, 6' cycle tracks, and where feasible a landscaped buffer strip. This will result in an additional 11' of space on both sides of the road frontage which would preferably be landscaped, but would also be available to meet parking, access and truck loading needs

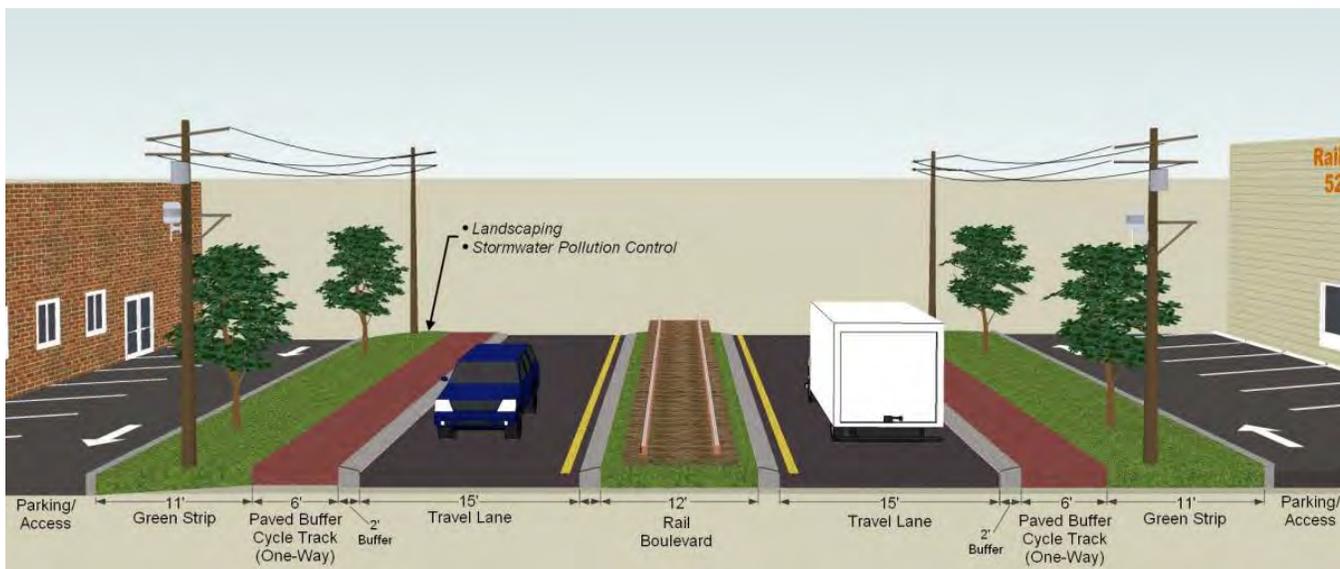


Figure 14: Suggested Street Cross-section with railroad tracks remaining



Figure 15: Illustration of the use of additional space created for front yard parking and access

Other Streets: As pedestrians and use of bicycles increases in the study area, other streets can be treated as warranted with on street markings such as sharrows, crosswalks to delineate pedestrian space and 'Share the Road' warning signs.

- b. Site Development Guidelines:** A set of uniform site development guidelines would assist local boards during site plan reviews in gaining a more consistent site designs and building placement for redevelopment projects. These guidelines could be developed to be applicable in designated overlay districts and would also include suggested parking, loading and access; landscaping, signage, storm water management, etc. intended to consolidate access points, better define pedestrian, parking and access pavements. The NY Route 5 Access Management Plan included a [‘Site Plan Review Checklist’](#) that can serve as a resource for plan reviews and development of guidelines.

Figure: Site design guideline for light industrial industrial development. Key site design features include: shared driveway, service area screening, reduced parking areas at frontage and minimum building setbacks.

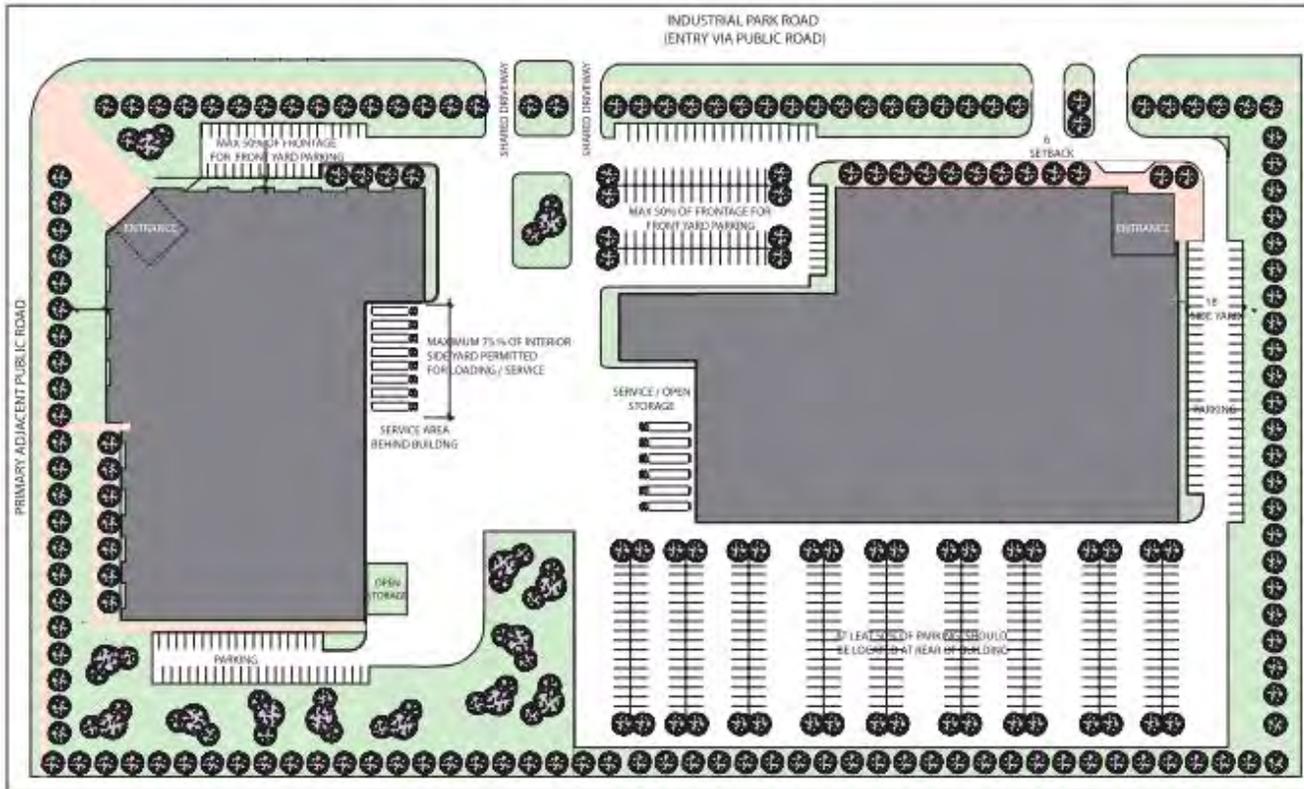


Figure 16: An example of site access and circulation site standards for a light industrial park. (Regional Municipality of Niagara Model Urban Design Guidelines)

Recommended Strategies

- Implement Complete Street Designs for Rehabilitation of Railroad Avenue, Kraft Avenue, Interstate Avenue and Warehouse Row (short term)
- Implement Complete Street Designs for future rehabilitation projects of minor streets (long term)
- Prepare Site Development Guidelines for the Project Area

5.6 Wayfinding and Aesthetic Treatments

Establishing an identity, communicating a sense of arrival and providing clear directional signage are among key elements in a successful business park road network. These principles should be applied to the study area as well. The measures discussed below will complement aesthetic improvements recommended elsewhere while providing unifying site amenities, architecture and signage.

a. Gateway Treatments: Improvements to the main entrances into the project area would help establish the identity of the corridor, provide an improved appearance and provide better information about project area businesses. Amenities and design features should be consistent with other signage improvements and landscaping to be implemented throughout the project area. Key gateway locations include Fuller Road at the CSX bridge, Fuller Road at Central Avenue, Railroad Avenue at the Northway Mall. New gateways include the crosslink to the BJ's/Lowes sites and the future extension of Railroad Avenue to Central Avenue at Osborne Road.

b. Signage Standardization: A consistent signage system should be implemented throughout the project area to provide better wayfinding including public transit stops including BRT service on Central Avenue. A hierarchy that will provide a familiar reference system of street addresses, consistent with other site amenities and gateway signage should be incorporated into a local signage standard.



Figure 17: An example of some of a complete system of wayfinding signage. (CSUS Wayfinding Signage System by Transform)

c. Façade Improvements: Many of the existing buildings are in good condition, however, in some instances, facades are in need of repair or updates. To assist local business owners, a façade improvement program should be initiated with grants and low interest loans providing an incentive through financial assistance. The program should include a set of architectural guidelines to preserve the existing ‘Palma Park’ architectural features on Interstate Avenue and to ensure overall compatibility.



Figure 18: An example of the unique brick patterns that appear throughout the original facades in the Railroad Avenue Area.

Recommended Strategies

- Develop Gateway Treatment Designs and Standards
- Develop Wayfinding and Signage Plan
- Develop Signage Standards/Guidelines
- Establish a Façade Improvement Program

5.7 Sustainable Design Practices Implementation

The revitalization of the study area would be enhanced by the implementation of sustainable design practices. These practices including ‘sustainable storm water’ and ‘low impact design’; should be a consideration in developing shovel ready redevelopment plans. Incentives for retrofit of existing sites could also be implemented with the help of grant funds. The following should be considered:

a. LEED Certification: Development of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified facilities would establish a local identity as promoting low impact design and sustainable practices. Implementing LEED site selection and sustainable design practices during redevelopment projects would establish the project area as innovative, sustainable and progressive consistent with the potential to attract emerging industries. LEED is general most applicable to building construction projects.

b. Green Streets Initiatives: Green Streets include the implementation of innovative storm water management and pollution prevention practices. These practices should be encouraged as part of road reconstruction projects.

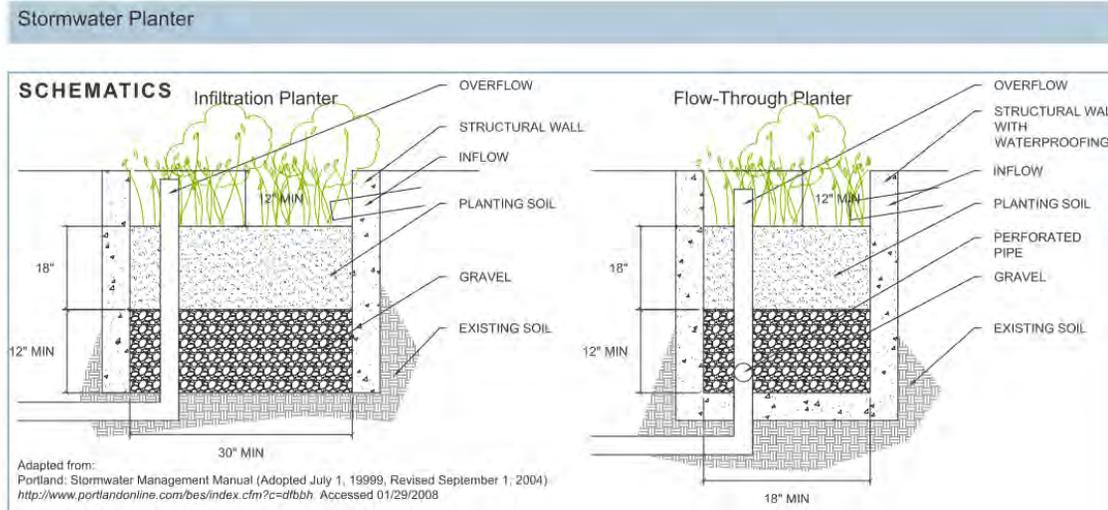


Figure 19: Storm Water Planters are an example of practices that could be easily accomplished in Railroad Avenue to help alleviate some of the current runoff problems.

c. Low Impact Site Design Practices: Low impact site development practices should be incorporated into site development standards for the project area. Practices related to storm water would be especially beneficial including rainwater harvesting and reuse for non-potable industrial use, irrigation, etc...

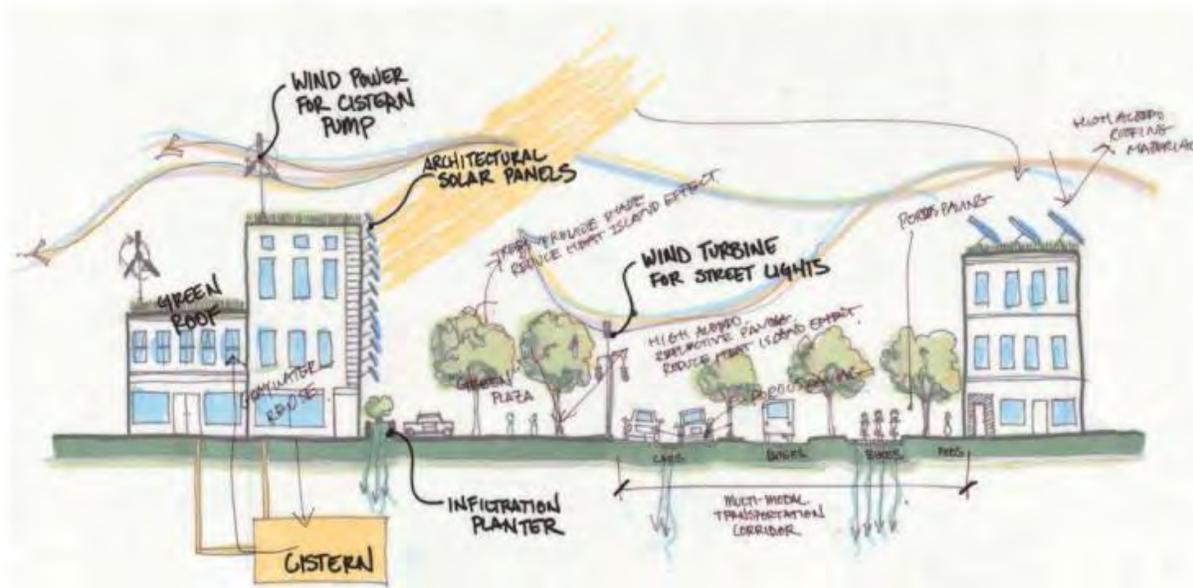


Figure 20: Sustainable Design Practices for Urban and Industrial Sites (American Society of Landscape Architects)

Recommended Sustainable Design Practice Implementation

- Encourage LEED Certification for Redevelopment Projects
- Incorporate Green Streets Practices in road reconstruction projects and Shovel-Ready Development Plans
- Incorporate Low Impact Design Practices into Site Development Guidelines
- Establish incentive programs for implementation of sustainable site practices on existing sites

5.8 Business Development Support Strategies

A recent Albany Times-Union news article began with “Rust Belt to Green Economy...” in a story that outlined the local success that have led to the Capital District’s ascension to the top in attracting industry focused on ‘Green Technology:’. This study area is poised to follow in this pattern and may be perfectly suited to fill niches for smaller start-ups where ‘in-place’ infrastructure is a requirement.

To better define the most beneficial redevelopment scenarios, some detailed analysis will still be needed including a market analysis and fiscal impact analysis. The development of approved shovel-ready site plans for major redevelopment projects will significantly improve the chances of attracting a desirable developer. Financial incentives will help to attract new development, coupled with updated outreach for existing programs, will encourage growth in new and existing study area businesses.

a. Financial Incentive Programs: The project area online survey results revealed a spike in the number of businesses established as a result of the establishment of an Empire Zone and related incentives. This serves to illustrate the importance of financial incentives in spurring redevelopment in the project area. The NYS Empire Zone (EZ) sunset passed on June 1, 2010. A new program, The [Excelsior Jobs Program](#) administered by the Empire State Development Corporation, offers tax credits for job creation, investment, and research and development in specific industries such as biotechnology, pharmaceutical, high-tech, clean-technology, green technology, financial services, agriculture and manufacturing.

AI Tech Trust Fund - As mentioned in Technical Memo #1, a portion of the AI Tech Trust Fund must be used to create and retain jobs in Albany County. The Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce is the agent for the Albany County Business Development Corporation which administers the AI Tech Trust Fund. The availability of this fund has had a significant positive impact and since 1994 alone the fund has helped create more than 1,235 jobs and retained more than 1,927 jobs. In that same time period, the AI Tech Trust Fund has funded 123 loans for more than \$23 million and has been a part of more than \$85 million in economic growth projects in Albany County. Some of the specifications and requirements of the AI Tech Loan Fund are:

- The current amount available for request is \$50,000 - \$500,000.
- There is a \$350 non-refundable application fee, which is due upon submission of the loan application.
- Commercial Mortgages funded by the AI Tech Fund are mortgage tax exempt.
- The current rate is prime minus 4% with a floor of 4%.
- Term requirements are five to 15 years, depending on the use of the proceeds.
- The borrower must be located in Albany County for the term of the loan.
- Proceeds from the loan can be used for:
 - Working capital
 - Purchase of fixed assets and equipment
 - Acquisition and renovation of commercial real estate.
- Proceeds from the loan **cannot** be used for:
 - Refinancing existing debt
 - Payment of delinquent taxes

The Excelsior Jobs Program will provide job creation and investment incentives to firms in such targeted industries as biotechnology, pharmaceutical, high-tech, clean-technology, green technology, financial services, agriculture and manufacturing. Firms in these strategic industries that create and maintain new jobs or make significant financial investment will be eligible to apply for up to four new tax credits. The Program will encourage businesses to expand in and relocate to New York while maintaining strict accountability standards to guarantee that businesses deliver on job and investment commitments. Program costs are capped at \$250 million annually to maintain fiscal affordability and ensure that New Yorkers realize a positive return on their investment.

The **Small Business Revolving Loan Fund (SBRLF)** is a \$50 million fund designed to create economic activity by providing greater access to capital for main street everyday small businesses. The program is targeted to small businesses that have had difficulty accessing regular credit markets. The 2010-11 State budget provided \$25 million in state funds and will leverage at least \$25 million in private matching funds. Program funds used to finance an applicant loan will not be more than 50% of the principal amount and no greater than \$125,000. There will be two categories of loans:

- Micro-Loans - principal amount less than or equal to \$25,000
- Regular Loans - principal amount greater than \$25,000

The **Community Loan Fund of the Capital Region** is a participating lender in the new program. The Community Loan Fund of the Capital Region is a non-profit community development financial institution serving the Capital Region of New York State -- Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren & Washington Counties.

Incorporated in 1985, their mission is to promote sustainable community development efforts for economically underserved people and communities. They provide access to capital by pooling investments and donations from socially concerned individuals and organizations, and re-lending it to non-profit organizations for housing and community improvement and to micro enterprises for business development.

Potential programs are listed in the Funding Implementation Matrix in Section 6 below.

b. Market Analysis Study: In order to focus efforts to attract business that will provide great local benefits, as well as to investigate the potential needs of the Green Technology sector that can be accommodated in the study area a focused market analysis should be prepared. Based on the survey distributed by the Albany County Chamber of Commerce, several emerging growth industries might be attracted to the Railroad Avenue project area. An economic development analysis should be prepared that will analyze the potential for attracting new industry to the project area. This study would review local, regional and national trends; research potential markets; and suggest growth industries to attract. The NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunities program provides grants for market analysis of study areas and could be a funding source for such a study here.

c. Regional Emerging Industry and Technology Links: The proximity of the project area to the University at Albany's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) could logically provide some opportunities for complementary development in the study area. Existing and future buildings could host small startup companies (incubator companies) related to research efforts. The availability of rail sidings at two key large redevelopment sites provides potential sites for emerging types of industry such as the alternative energy industry. Proximity to transportation systems and the rail sidings provides opportunities for trucking and warehouse industries and small intermodal transfer facilities for moving freight between rail and truck transportation. The feasibility of sites within the project area to house these

opportunities should be researched including interviews with CNSE leaders and coordination amongst the several local IDA's, chambers of commerce and business associations.

Recommended Strategies:

- Develop updated Outreach for Financial Incentive Programs
- Prepare a Market Study and Fiscal Impact Analysis to identify target industries and niches that can be filled in the study area.
- Establish links to Emerging Industry and Technology Industry at CNSE and Global Foundries

5.9 Strategic Partnership Development

Partnerships on several levels will help ensure the success of revitalization efforts in the Railroad Avenue Corridor study area. This project is the result of a partnership between the Towns of Colonie and Guilderland and Albany County. Local business owners joined to promote their common interests and provide input to the municipal partners would ensure the strength of existing enterprises. Major new anchor projects will require major investments, and the most logical investors are the nearby University at Albany and the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering. As developable space adjacent to the campus dwindles, available vacant sites in the study area would be logical sites for related new facilities.

a. Joint Municipal Services Group: The sponsoring municipalities should formalize their municipal partnerships to coordinate redevelopment efforts, jointly apply for grant funds and cooperatively administer programs.

b. Local Business Group: During public meetings, there was interest expressed by several local businesses to join forces in the area for promotion, development and mutual benefit. In addition, three municipal entities are currently involved in the project cooperatively creating opportunities for joint development, promotion and funding assistance.

c. Business Improvement District: A more formal mechanism for partnering would be the establishment of a Business Improvement District. The BID could assist with the coordination between businesses and the municipalities, assist with the maintenance of common areas, undertake streetscape improvements, provide marketing assistance and offer technical assistance for small scale expansion and development projects. The [Central Avenue Business Improvement District](#) located in Albany could provide additional information.

Recommended Strategies

- Establish MOU's for a Joint Municipal Services Group
- Establish a Local Business Steering Committee to Coordinate Efforts
- Explore the Establishment of a RR Ave BID

6.0 Funding Implementation Matrix

		New York State														
		NYS DEC Environmental Restoration Program	NYS DOS BCA Nomination Study	NYS DOS BCA Implementation Study	NYS DOS Local Government Efficiency Grants	NYS DOS Smart Growth	NYS DOT Industrial Access Program	NYS DOT Transportation Improvements Plan	NYS DOT CHIPS Aid for Local Streets	NYS DOT Transportation Enhancement Program	NYS OPRHP Parks Grants	NYS OPRHP Recreational Trails Act Program	NYS OCR Economic Development Program	NYS OCR Technical Assistance	NYS OCR Competitive Grants	NYS OCR NY Main Street Program
5.1	Future Area-Wide Land Use and Zoning															
	Existing Industrial Zoning			✓											✓	
	Fuller Road Corridor			✓											✓	
	Railroad Ave. East Ext. to Central Ave. & Osborne Rd.			✓											✓	
5.2	Environmentally Impaired Sites															
	National Lead Site	✓	✓	✓												
	Miron Lumber Site	✓	✓	✓												
	Participation in the NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas	✓	✓	✓												
5.3	Study Area Redevelopment Opportunities															
	Comprehensive Project Area Redevelopment Plan		✓			✓										
	Shovel Ready Site Development Plan			✓		✓							✓	✓		
	Redevelopment Site Concept Plans		✓			✓										
5.4	Linkage and Transportation Improvements															
	Eastern Extension of Railroad Ave to Central Ave & Osborne Rd		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓							
	Private Drive Cross-Links to BJ's/Lowes		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓							
	Office Campus Connector		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓							
	Truck Routes		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓							
	Railroad Avenue Reclassification		✓	✓			✓									
5.5	Roadway and Site Treatments															
	Access Management						✓	✓		✓						
	Site Development Guidelines		✓	✓		✓										
	Railroad Track Rehabilitation and Removals		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓							
	Transit & Pedestrian Accommodations						✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				
5.6	Wayfinding and Aesthetic Treatments															
	Gateway Treatments			✓		✓	✓			✓	✓					✓
	Signage Improvements			✓		✓	✓			✓						✓
	Façade Improvements			✓		✓	✓									✓
	Streetscape Improvements			✓		✓	✓			✓						✓
5.7	Sustainable Design Practice Implementation															
	LEED Certification		✓	✓												
	Green Streets Initiatives		✓	✓		✓										
	Low Impact Site Design Practices		✓	✓		✓										
5.8	Business Development Support Services															
	Financial Incentive Program												✓			✓
	Market Analysis Study		✓	✓		✓	✓						✓			✓
	Regional Emerging Industry and Technology Links					✓	✓						✓			
5.9	Partnership Development															
	Joint Municipal Services Group		✓	✓		✓							✓			
	Local Business Group															
	Business Improvement District															✓

		GRANT PROGRAMS											
		New York State								Federal			
		NYS EFC Green Innovation Grant Program	NYS EFC Small Business Environmental Assistant Program	NYS ESDC (Multiple) Business Loan Funds	NYS ESDC Environmental Investment Program	NYS ESDC Restore NY Communities Initiative	NYS ESDC Urban & Community Development Program	NYS ERDA Renewable Energy Manufacturing Incentive Program	NYS ERDA Existing Facilities Program (LEED)	NYS ERDA New Facilities Program (LEED)	NYS ERDA Green Jobs Program	US Commerce Dept. ARRA Grant Programs	US Commerce Dept. Economic Development Grant Programs
5.1	Future Area-Wide Land Use and Zoning												
	Existing Industrial Zoning												
	Fuller Road Corridor												
	Railroad Ave. East Ext. to Central Ave. & Osborne Rd.												
5.2	Environmentally Impaired Sites												
	National Lead Site									✓			
	Miron Lumber Site									✓			
	Participation in the NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas												
5.3	Study Area Redevelopment Opportunities												
	Comprehensive Project Area Redevelopment Plan												✓
	Shovel Ready Site Development Plan												✓
	Redevelopment Site Concept Plans												✓
5.4	Linkage and Transportation Improvements												
	Eastern Extension of Railroad Ave to Central Ave & Osborne Rd												✓
	Private Drive Cross-Links to BJ's/Lowes												✓
	Office Campus Connector												✓
	Truck Routes												✓
	Railroad Avenue Reclassification												✓
5.5	Roadway and Site Treatments												
	Access Management												✓
	Site Development Guidelines									✓			✓
	Railroad Track Rehabilitation and Removals												✓
	Transit & Pedestrian Accommodations												✓
5.6	Wayfinding and Aesthetic Treatments												
	Gateway Treatments												✓
	Signage Improvements												✓
	Façade Improvements												✓
	Streetscape Improvements												✓
5.7	Sustainable Design Practice Implementation												
	LEED Certification	✓						✓		✓	✓		✓
	Green Streets Initiatives	✓											✓
	Low Impact Site Design Practices	✓			✓					✓			✓
5.8	Business Development Support Services												
	Financial Incentive Program		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Market Analysis Study			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
	Regional Emerging Industry and Technology Links	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
5.9	Partnership Development												
	Joint Municipal Services Group		✓	✓									✓
	Local Business Group		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Business Improvement District		✓	✓		✓							✓

		Federal				Private & Corporate					
		US EPA Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Grants	US EPA Pollution Control Grants	US DOT Transportation Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act Program	US DOT Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing Program	National Grid Strategic Economic Development Outreach	National Grid Industrial Building Redevelopment	National Grid Shovelready Infrastructure	National Grid Brownfield Redevelopment	National Grid Main Street/Commercial District Revitalization	National Grid Urban Corridor Revitalization
5.1	Future Area-Wide Land Use and Zoning										
	Existing Industrial Zoning					✓					
	Fuller Road Corridor					✓					
	Railroad Ave. East Ext. to Central Ave. & Osborne Rd.					✓					
5.2	Environmentally Impaired Sites										
	National Lead Site	✓				✓	✓		✓		
	Miron Lumber Site	✓				✓	✓		✓		
	Participation in the NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas	✓							✓		
5.3	Study Area Redevelopment Opportunities										
	Comprehensive Project Area Redevelopment Plan										
	Shovel Ready Site Development Plan										
	Redevelopment Site Concept Plans										
5.4	Linkage and Transportation Improvements										
	Eastern Extension of Railroad Ave to Central Ave & Osborne Rd									✓	✓
	Private Drive Cross-Links to BJ's/Lowes									✓	✓
	Office Campus Connector									✓	✓
	Truck Routes										
	Railroad Avenue Reclassification									✓	✓
5.5	Roadway and Site Treatments										
	Access Management									✓	✓
	Site Development Guidelines					✓	✓			✓	✓
	Railroad Track Rehabilitation and Removals				✓						
	Transit & Pedestrian Accommodations									✓	✓
5.6	Wayfinding and Aesthetic Treatments										
	Gateway Treatments									✓	✓
	Signage Improvements									✓	✓
	Façade Improvements									✓	✓
	Streetscape Improvements									✓	✓
5.7	Sustainable Design Practice Implementation										
	LEED Certification		✓			✓					
	Green Streets Initiatives	✓	✓	✓							
	Low Impact Site Design Practices	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
5.8	Business Development Support Services										
	Financial Incentive Program		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Market Analysis Study		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Regional Emerging Industry and Technology Links			✓		✓				✓	✓
5.9	Partnership Development										
	Joint Municipal Services Group					✓				✓	✓
	Local Business Group					✓				✓	✓
	Business Improvement District					✓				✓	✓

	Private & Corp.		
	National Grid Renewable Energy and Economic Development	Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region	Golub Foundation
5.1 Future Area-Wide Land Use and Zoning Exiting Industrial Zoning Fuller Road Corridor Railroad Ave. East Ext. to Central Ave. & Osborne Rd.			
5.2 Environmentally Impaired Sites National Lead Site Miron Lumber Site Participation in the NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunity Areas			
5.3 Study Area Redevelopment Opportunities Comprehensive Project Area Redevelopment Plan Shovel Ready Site Development Plan Redevelopment Site Concept Plans			
5.4 Linkage and Transportation Improvements Eastern Extension of Railroad Ave to Central Ave & Osborne Rd Private Drive Cross-Links to BJ's/Lowes Office Campus Connector Truck Routes Railroad Avenue Reclassification			
5.5 Roadway and Site Treatments Access Management Site Development Guidelines Railroad Track Rehabilitation and Removals Transit & Pedestrian Accommodations			
5.6 Wayfinding and Aesthetic Treatments Gateway Treatments Signage Improvements Façade Improvements Streetscape Improvements		✓	✓
5.7 Sustainable Design Practice Implementation LEED Certification Green Streets Initiatives Low Impact Site Design Practices			
5.8 Business Development Support Services Financial Incentive Program Market Analysis Study Regional Emerging Industry and Technology Links		✓	✓
5.9 Partnership Development Joint Municipal Services Group Local Business Group Business Improvement District			

7.0 Disclosure Statements

This report was funded in part through grants from the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation. The views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The recommendations related to physical improvements set forth in this report are conceptual in nature and do not commit Albany County or the Towns of Colonie or Guilderland to funding any of the improvements. The concepts need to be investigated in more detail before any financial commitment can be made, including design work that still remains to be done before any of these projects can be constructed.

7.1 Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990:

Plans and programs developed by CDTC must comply with the accessibility standards in the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) of 1968, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Accordingly, sidewalks, like roadways, should be planned and designed to serve all users.

7.2 Environmental Justice

Increased attention has been given to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) related to its ability to balance overall mobility benefits of transportation projects against protecting quality of life of low-income and minority residents of a community. President Clinton issued Executive Order 12898 to bring attention to environmental and human health impacts of low-income and minority communities – referred to as environmental justice – when federal funding is involved. The goal of environmental justice review is to ensure that any adverse human health or environmental effects of a government action, such as federally-supported roadway or transit projects, does not disproportionately affect minority or low-income residents of a community or neighborhood. Environmental justice is a public policy objective that can help improve the quality of life for those whose interests have traditionally been overlooked.

The CDTC staff has completed a review of civil rights/environmental justice impacts of transportation actions proposed under this study. Based on a review of the latest socioeconomic data available, the CDTC staff has determined that there are a total of 0 TAZ's in the Railroad Avenue Transportation and Revitalization Plan Study Area that

are identified as Environmental Justice Target Population Areas. All of the transportation recommendations for the study would provide fair access and do not result in negative impacts to any minority or low-income residents. However, additional information gathered through the public review process could suggest a different outcome. In addition, examination of regional equity impacts would be necessary if any transportation action is considered for inclusion in CDTC's Transportation Improvement Program.

Equitable access to, consideration within, and effects of the design and implementation of federally assisted projects is also a key aspect of environmental justice. However, design and construction is the responsibility of implementing agencies in the region. For projects identified in this study, implementing agencies would either be Albany County, the Town of Colonie, the Town of Guilderland, or the Capital District Transportation Authority.

EJ Target Population Areas are defined as any TAZ with low income, minority, or Hispanic populations equal to or greater than the regional average. The regional averages are as follows:

Minority Population	11.2%
Hispanic Population	2.6%
Low Income Population	8.9%