



Transportation

Strategies

for Quality Communities



Moving Forward:

The Ulster County Transportation Plan



Prepared for
The Ulster County Planning Board
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Consultant

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Ulster County

Transportation Strategies for Quality Communities

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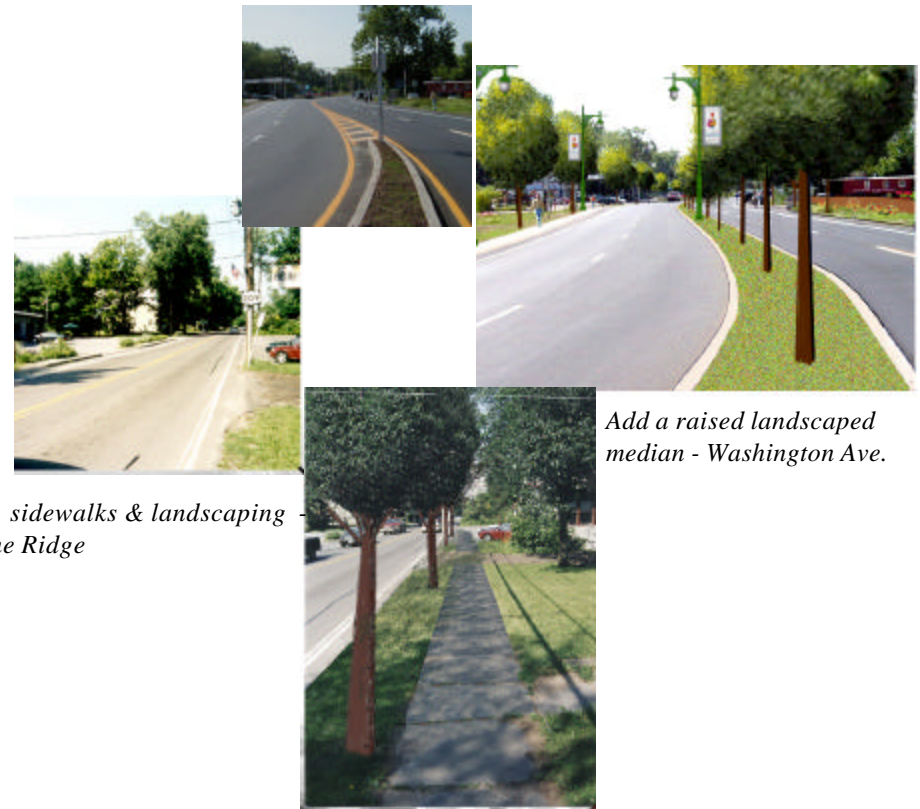
Ulster County Transportation Strategies for Quality Communities

1.0 Creating a Vision for Quality Growth

Introduction

Across the country, Americans are talking about the quality of growth in their communities and the challenges associated with it. *Transportation Strategies for Quality Communities (Strategies)* is designed to assist citizens, civic leaders and elected officials to incorporate into the transportation related decision processes effective, practical solutions for quality growth that will work in their individual communities.

Quality growth principles provide a balanced, sensible approach that gives growth back its good name. *Strategies* focus is on the fundamental link between land use and transportation. It illustrates tools to establish multi-modal transportation choices, ease traffic congestion, and accommodate residential and commercial growth in balance with the environment while contributing to a community's quality of life. *Strategies* recognize the need for a holistic approach using all the tools associated with quality growth.



Add sidewalks & landscaping - Stone Ridge

Add a raised landscaped median - Washington Ave.

1.1 The Elements of a Quality Community

According to the *New York State Quality Communities Interagency Task Force*, a quality community is a "place we want to call home." The Task Force found that when communities were asked to define their vision for the future, the same words and phrases were heard over and over: safe family environment; economic vitality; community pride and involvement; environmental integrity and protection of community character. At the National level, the *US Congress's Livable Communities Task Force* has developed policies that help make families healthy, safe and more economically secure such as:

- Provide local communities with the tools to solve their own local problems.
- Promote cheaper, more environmentally friendly solutions to infrastructure problems.
- Encourage multi-objective management choices that have multiple beneficial results.
- Prepare communities to function in a global environment.
- Focus on a wide range of partnerships for funding solutions.

In practice, whether they are called "Quality" or "Livable," these communities typically share similar physical traits. They are "walkable," accommodating pedestrians, encouraging non-motorized mobility and promoting human interaction through the interconnection of neighborhoods, community facilities, and public spaces. They provide residents with opportunities to live or easily commute between their home, job and other activities. Most importantly, they balance a multitude of issues related to economic development, environment, agriculture, and open space by encouraging compact, mixed-use development patterns, in and around existing centers or at identified priority growth areas, linked to more cost-efficient infrastructure and public services.

The application of quality communities concepts is critical to municipalities in Ulster County as accelerating suburbanization, and subsequent changes in traffic levels and patterns affects our quality of life, sense of place and economy. In response, many communities in the County are now examining ways to retain those traits that make them a place people want to call home. The following vision statement incorporates the Quality Community concept into transportation decision-making.

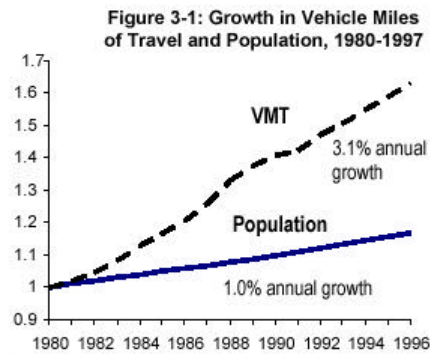
Vision Statement for Quality Communities

The Ulster County multi-modal transportation system will seek to provide equitably funded, safe, efficient, and cost-effective, mobility and accessibility to all county residents, travelers, businesses, and emergency services within and across county boundaries.

Ulster County and its communities will seek to utilize decisions and investments that effect transportation infrastructure to develop a multi-modal transportation system, encourage compact, mixed-use development patterns, in and around existing centers or at identified priority growth areas, and provide community enhancements as part of these investments. These decisions and investments will balance transportation needs with preserving and enhancing community character, quality of life,

2.0 The Transportation Land Use Connection

The connection between transportation and land use is fundamental. Nationally, vehicle travel has increased substantially in recent decades. Between 1980 and 1997, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the United States increased 63 percent, representing a growth rate almost three times that of population during the same period.

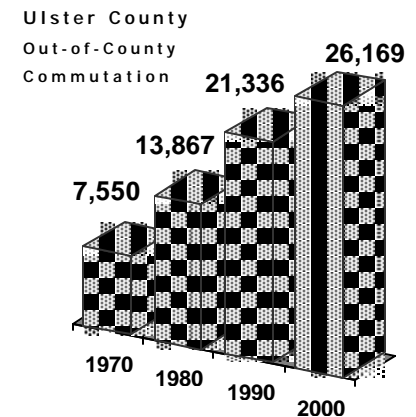


Scale: 1980 value = 1.0
Sources: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. *Highway Statistics (Summary to 1995, and annual editions, 1996 and 1997)*. Washington, DC.

In Ulster, VMT is expected to increase 17.8 percent between 1996 and 2007 (EPA). Population growth estimate for this time period is less than 10 percent. Development patterns have contributed to this increased vehicle use. The current pattern of development is neither village nor rural. Growth has primarily occurred with significant distances between housing, jobs, schools, and shopping.

Most County residents now require the use of an automobile for nearly all trips. Commuting patterns over the last three decades continue to show longer distances and an increasing number of residents commuting out of county to work. From 1970 to 2000 the resident work force employed out of county grew from 16.7 percent to 32.5 percent. Over 26,000 residents now commute out of county to work with a majority of these commutes being suburb to suburb. Many factors are responsible for this pattern including the failure to match work force and housing needs both in terms of demand and affordability.

Existing zoning statutes and site design are in part responsible, encouraging automobile use even for short trips. Existing statutes we have resulted in a lack of mixed-use developments, large surface parking lots, wide streets, and cul-de-sac subdivisions without sidewalks. In this environment, vehicle use becomes a necessity and is more comfortable and safer than walking or bicycling. Effective transit service is difficult and costly to operate.



3.0 The Quality Community Response

Another important factor contributing to "sprawl development" is the "American Dream" - the desire for large lots in low-density, single-family neighborhoods. People are willing to pay higher costs for the daily commute in order to afford a larger house in the suburbs. It is reasonable to say that while transportation alone does not cause sprawl, it definitely enables it. Thus, dealing with transportation issues alone will not create a quality community or contain sprawl. However, sound land use and transportation planning, coupled with the other quality community policies, are effective. In short, the best strategy is a package approach tailored to each community's need.

Roads, airports, bus stations, bike paths, railways, train stations and other transportation components comprise a significant portion of Ulster County's public space and investment. As such, these spaces reflect the values of the community. Decisions on how they are designed, utilized, and how land use relates to them should articulate those values and consider the multi-use of this space.

Interconnections, access management, traffic calming, aesthetic controls and multi-use corridors are all means to maximize use of these spaces for the benefit of the community.

In Ulster County, most municipalities have exercised land use controls through zoning and subdivision regulations since the early 1970's and all have them today. The structure of these statutes and approvals under them are site specific. Little consideration is given as to how the interactions of individual land use decisions affect the transportation network and community development pattern over time. This need to address a regional framework, a growing awareness in the weaknesses associated with the statutes themselves, as well as increased development pressure have led many communities to re-examine their vision for the next 20 years. Some are concluding that their current comprehensive plans and regulatory framework are not up to the challenges.

As a result, there has been a resurgence of discussion on the use of alternative, some would say classical, planning techniques that seek to create compact communities of choice, balancing the many competing factors involved in land use decisions.

We also live in an age of broad public concern for the physical environment. Yet we are preoccupied at the periphery of what is essential about town-making. On the one hand, planners seem mired in the bureaucratic realm of policy formulation and resource management— important, certainly, though not often enough seen as related to the spatial dimension of communities. On the other hand, architects (and for that matter citizens who make up planning and design review boards) are consumed with detail and image: esthetic guidelines, for example, or worse, motifs for simulating various architectural periods. Consequently, we continue to build — and live in — vast tracts of undifferentiated development that form neither neighborhoods, towns or cities.”

Towns and Town-Making Principles,
Duany and Plater-Zyberk
(1991) p.9

3.1 Quality Community - Land Use Controls

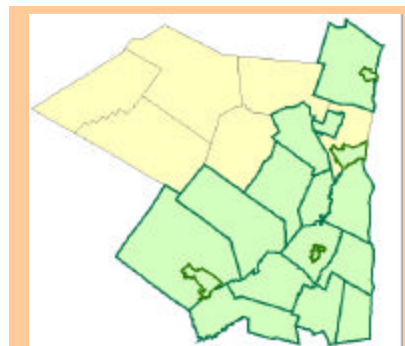
In January 2000, New York State initiated the Quality Community Interagency Task Force to undertake a multifaceted and interdisciplinary study of issues which influence the creation of community visions. Their report has a wide-ranging series of recommendations lending direction for community planning and future funding. These recommendations include the opportunity of local municipalities to use various planning techniques and exert their extensive land use control powers in a careful thoughtful way to address transportation issues.

Another prominent program on the state level is the Hudson River Valley Greenway. The Greenway has two excellent models illustrating an integrated package of quality community building initiatives- Westchester County's *Historic River Towns of Westchester*, and Dutchess County's *Greenway Connections*. Nationally other models are available where successful quality growth policies have been enacted.

Update the Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan can define the relationship between land use and transportation. There are many techniques available to balance the development goals of a community that reduce traffic congestion and incorporate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists while preserving and establishing neighborhoods. Achieving this balance is critical for the City of Kingston, as well as the towns, villages, and hamlets of Ulster County. Overall the plan should foster the creation of compact mixed-use communities with vibrant centers and main streets that are aesthetically pleasing and have multi-modal transportation choices available.

The following recommendations offer guidance on important objectives and goals to include in a quality community plan:



*Ulster County
Greenway Municipalities*

Incorporate New York State Quality Task Force Recommendations

The New York State Quality Community Interagency Task Force recommended actions for quality communities are:

- Revitalize and concentrate new mixed use developments in cities and centers
- Promote agriculture and farmland protection
- Conserve open space and other critical environmental areas
- Enhance multi-modal transportation choices and construct more livable neighborhoods
- Adopt sustainable development policies and regulations
- Strengthen intergovernmental partnerships
- Help create, implement and sustain the vision of a quality community

Incorporate Greenway Principles

Greenway principles relating to transportation include controlling commercial strip development, minimizing traffic congestion, parking lot design and access, and streetscape design. Principles relating to land use include preventing strip subdivisions, identifying priority growth areas, and creating more pedestrian-friendly areas. Traffic congestion mitigation measures include limiting access along major roads, dispersing vehicles on interconnected secondary street systems, and creating a mix of land uses closer together to encourage alternatives to the automobile.



Source: Dutchess County Greenway Connections

Define Priority Growth Areas

Development should be focused in community-identified growth areas, both infill redevelopment sites and land in and immediately around existing or proposed centers. Incentives for new construction on critical open space or active farmland should be removed. Municipal infrastructure in growth areas should be provided and extension of municipal services avoided where not so identified. In combination with this, appropriate scale densities to support the development of neighborhoods and support services should be set.

Priority Growth Areas

- High priority growth areas should include vacant or underutilized land within walking distance of activity centers or logically extend compact neighborhood patterns.
- Consider shifting development opportunities from outlying rural farm and scenic areas using a well-coordinated process of incentives such as purchase or transfer of development rights and regulatory changes.
- Transform existing single use neighborhoods with good access and services to more mixed-use areas
- Target key properties to seed neighborhood revitalization or establish a new activity node by preparation of concept plans

Amend Zoning and Subdivision Statutes to Implement the Comprehensive Plan

Zoning Statutes

Out of date zoning and subdivision statutes often hinder a community from achieving its vision for the future. Therefore, these should be reviewed in coordination with changes to the comprehensive plan. These statutes are the regulatory tools that put into practice the vision set forth in the comprehensive plan and care should be taken to ensure that they are adequate to do so.

Zoning regulations in many Ulster County towns often fail to address the principals associated with quality communities. However, with conscientious work zoning can be modified to address quality community principals. Areas likely in need of overhaul include density, mixed uses, site design, setbacks, clusters, etc. Other regulatory alternatives and hybrids that can be modified to fit individual community needs include:

Incentive Zoning: can be used to promote a particular kind of development or more importantly, in this instance a preferred development pattern. Incentives can include increased density, fee waivers, pre-approved site development concepts, etc

Overlay Zoning: accompanies traditional zoning placing specialized zones over existing zoning in areas where the community has specific concerns. A number of overlay zones have been implemented in Ulster County including:

Town of Marbletown - design guidelines are incorporated into its zoning statute for the Stone Ridge area of the Rt. 209 corridor. There are specific design objectives including a requirement that existing building styles in the corridor be incorporated into the design of new structures, location of parking facilities and landscaping.

Town of Woodstock - an overlay zone above 1,200 ft in elevation requires a special permit for siting of all structures. Review includes the location and design of structures, access roads and electric service to insure that road and visibility and erosion is minimized. Lighting, roofing and siding materials are also reviewed.

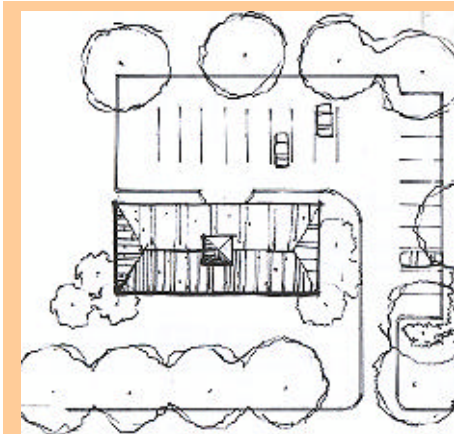
Town of Esopus has a design overlay district for its Rt. 9W corridor. This district contains special landscaping and design requirements as well as limiting uses in various segments of the corridor beyond the underlying zoning.

Performance Zoning: uses performance standards to regulate development. Performance standards are zoning controls that regulate the effects or impacts of a proposed development or activity on the community, instead of separating uses into various zones. By itself or coupled with a traditional statute a performance standards could address traffic generation, pedestrian interconnections, etc.

Planned Unit Development (PUD): can provide greater use and design flexibility. Deviations allowing mixed use and higher densities may be permitted in response to meeting community defined objectives. These can be better design, affordable housing, or trip reduction. The Town of Shawangunk has a Mixed Use Development Zone that is very much like a PUD.

Special Permit &

These review processes give municipalities an opportunity to address potential transportation concerns prior to approval. When couple with design guidelines they provide a flexible blueprint to guide the development process in addressing fundamental land-use issues identified by the community. Transit, pedestrian, and bike facility requirements as well as parking, access requirements, spacing, and alignment can be set. Perhaps the largest failure of these reviews seen in practice is one of neglecting to consider adjacencies and the neighborhood or corridor as a whole during the approval process. These reviews are a municipality's final chance to address concerns before they "are set in stone."



Subdivision Statutes

Subdivision statutes play a key role in a quality community. These regulate the division of land and ultimately the placement of structures, the ability to interconnect neighborhoods and their relationship to each other. Critical items that are addressed include road width and grade, driveway, spacing, road frontage, sidewalks, street trees, and the like to help create a neighborhood. Flexibility is also available using cluster and conservation or average density provisions within the laws.

Conservation or Open Space Subdivision: utilizes a creative design process that identifies and protects natural areas. Reduced and variable lot sizes and flexible road standards allow development to take place on the preferred portions of the project site.

Design Guideline - Parking

Establish parking on the side or rear of a facility.

Parking provided to the side and rear of buildings benefits the transportation system and community aesthetics. This configuration separates pedestrian and vehicular activity. It also reduces the potential impact on the adjacent roadway by providing adequate circulation and storage. Buildings to be located close to the street edge provide an historic village or hamlet pattern and a visual buffer between the lot and the street.

The technique works well for subdivisions that are only individual lots or those that encompass an entire site. Although not in itself a solution to sprawl, it can help to preserve working farms and important open space. Clearly it is a significant improvement on the typical rural subdivision design.

Cluster Subdivision: A cluster development subdivision generally sites houses on smaller parcels of land, while the additional land that would have been allocated to individual lots is converted to common shared open space. Usually associated with development of an entire site, the Cluster Subdivision can offer distinctive advantages to both the community and the developer in reducing infrastructure costs while contributing to important open or working landscapes that when connected together form larger regional and inter-municipal open space systems. Typically, road frontage, lot size, setbacks, and other traditional subdivision regulations are redefined to permit the developer to preserve ecologically sensitive areas, historic sites, or other unique characteristics of the land being subdivided. The cluster advantages from a transportation viewpoint are less road frontage, reduced installation and maintenance costs, easier transit access, and potential for amenities such as sidewalks, street trees, etc.

3.2 Quality Community - Land Use Techniques

Reclaim Existing and Avoid Traditional Commercial Strips

Stop the spread of strip commercial zones and begin to reclaim existing strips into more contained sub-centers.

- Limit length to walkable distances - approximately one-half mile, and
- add depth,
- Encourage mixed uses including residential, build out to the street, and allow infill.
- Create physical connections with sidewalks, frontage roads, and shared driveways and parking.
- Create visual connections with landscaping, street trees, planted medians, and architectural details.



Source: Dutchess County Greenway Connections

Avoid Strip Subdivisions

New housing in the countryside should be accessed from side roads or shared driveways, as well as screened from public view. These designs, in addition to eliminating multiple curb cuts, provide easier school and transit service points, preserve viewsheds, and connect habitats.

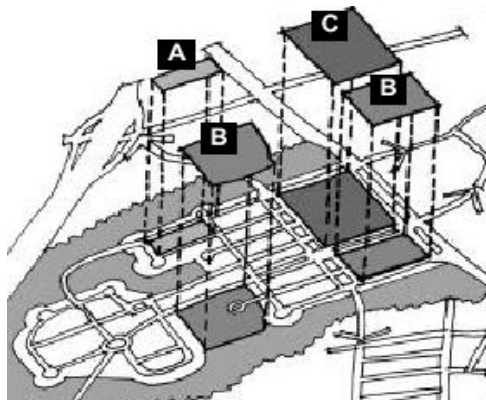


Avoid strip subdivisions - settle them into the countryside on shared access road(s)

Source: *Dutchess County Greenway Connections*

Embrace Neighborhood Design

Neighborhood Design plays a key role not only in transportation demand but also quality of life issues. Over and over again people express a great appreciation for vital community centers characterized by appropriate scaled settlement, narrow streets, public parks and mixed uses which allow residents to live within easy walking distance of shops, restaurants, commercial districts, employment centers and public transportation. This pattern in many instances runs counter to that established by applying existing zoning statutes. As a result many communities are rediscovering the planning and design practices responsible for creating the traditional



Neighborhood Design

- Has a variety of street sizes and public open spaces;
- Connects adjacent neighborhoods; and
- Integrates land uses

Key

- A. Residential blocks
- B. Community facilities and parks
- C. Community commercial or mixed-use

development patterns.

Become a Pedestrian Friendly Community

Pedestrians account for one out every four traffic fatalities in New York. Implementing pedestrian-friendly streets can reduce this figure. To encourage walking for short trips a continuous pedestrian network within about 2,000 feet (an easy 10-minute walk) should interconnect neighborhoods, businesses, and public facilities, especially school and parks. A work plan should involve the following:

- *Conduct a walking tour*
- *Photograph your streets*
- *Map important destinations - schools, parks, senior centers*
- *Map existing pedestrian system & proposed sidewalk extensions*
- *Prioritize projects working with local groups*
- *Adopt pedestrian zones and enforce them stripe new crosswalks*
- *include pedestrian amenities as part of site plan approvals*

Uptown Kingston



Sidewalk Guidelines

- ❑ 5 foot minimum width
- ❑ 8 to 15 feet in main street commercial areas
- ❑ At least 5 feet back from curb to separate walkers from traffic and road spray, allow room for street trees and snow storage,
- ❑ Meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements (ADA)
- ❑ Both sides along central circulation streets, in commercial districts, near schools, and in residential areas with more than 4 units per acre
- ❑ At least on one side in residential areas with 1 to 4 units per acre.
- ❑ Optional one side or wide shoulder in areas with less than 1 unit per acre.



Village of New Paltz

Become a Transit-Oriented Community

Transit-oriented development requires incorporating designs solutions in shopping plazas and community buildings that insure transit access can be accommodated through parking lots and, where possible, allow drop-off from the adjoining street. Sidewalk connections and building location adjacent to the street are also important, as are interconnections to adjoining developments. Communities can use their zoning power and site plan approval powers to insure these design issues are addressed. A transit checklist should be provided to developers. Parking requirements should reflect availability of transit services. In addition, developments should be expected to provide or allow bus shelters and information kiosks. System operators should provide bike racks that permit multi-modal transfers. Other critical considerations include parking facilities at transfer sites, higher densities and mixed uses where transit is available.



Transit -Oriented Policies

- Predesignate a future system of transit corridors.
- Modify policies to include transit as an element of land development
- Provide mixed land use including housing, office, retail, light industrial and recreational uses.
- Relate design to market.
- Provide variety within the district.
- Separate transit-oriented and auto-oriented land uses.
- Establish transit service zones along existing arterials.
- Explore public/private opportunities for transit stop joint development.
- Design for a phase implementation of transit corridors.
- Zoning should encourage transit-sensitive land use design through the designation of Transit Corridor Districts (TCDs) .
- Provide for transit-sensitive review of site plans and development proposals.
- Accommodate multiple developers and development patterns.
- Utilize appropriate land use adjacencies.
- Provide recreational opportunities and amenities.
- Relate the design and connections of adjacent developments
- Develop a program to encourage shared parking facilities.
- Minimize the distance between building entrances and transit stops; provide logical connections between buildings and transit.

Incorporate Context Sensitive Solutions into Transportation Projects

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) are being incorporated routinely in transportation improvements around the State. The Department of Transportation has embraced CSS as a means of designing transportation projects in harmony with the community. Project designs advanced under this philosophy involve the community in identifying the environmental, scenic, aesthetic, cultural, natural resources, community and transportation service needs and developing solutions within the context of the project. The goal is to build and maintain safe, sustainable transportation projects that contribute to community character and quality of life. Local governments and citizens should become involved early in a State Highway Projects Planning and Design to assure that Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) are incorporated into the design and that the project contributes to community character and enhancement. This concept of multi-objective, multi-modal planning should be a part of all infrastructure and land use decisions. By using CSS “Quality Communities” can be created in a timely manner and funded at a reasonable cost

Qualities of Excellence in Transportation Design

- The project satisfies the purpose and needs as agreed to by a full range of stakeholders. This agreement is forged in the earliest phase of the project and amended as warranted as the project develops.
- The project is a safe facility for both the user and the community.
- The project is in harmony with the community and it preserves environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of the area, i.e., exhibits context sensitive design.
- The project exceeds the expectations of both designers and stakeholders and achieves a level of excellence in people's minds.
- The project involves efficient and effective use of the resources (time, budget, community) of all involved parties.
- The project is designed and built with minimal disruption to the community.
- The project is seen as having added lasting value to the community.

Characteristics of the Process Contributing to Excellence

- Communication with all stakeholders is open, honest, early, and continuous.
- A multidisciplinary team is established early, with disciplines based on the needs of the specific project, and with the inclusion of the public.
- A full range of stakeholders is involved with transportation officials in the scoping phase. The purposes of the project are clearly defined, and consensus on the scope is forged before proceeding.
- The highway development process is tailored to meet the circumstances. This process should examine multiple alternatives that will result in a consensus of approach methods.
- A commitment to the process from top agency officials and local leaders is secured.
- The public involvement process, which includes informal meetings, is tailored to the project.
- The landscape, the community, and valued resources are understood before engineering design is started.
- A full range of tools for communication about project alternatives is used (e.g., visualization) with public/ private partnerships.



Develop Corridor Management Plans

Corridor management combines right-of-way preservation, advance acquisition, land use planning, community enhancements, multi-modal transportation facilities and access management techniques to provide a balance of smooth traffic flow and access to adjacent land use.

Corridor management helps assure that transportation facilities will be adequate to serve existing and planned development and contribute to and enhance community character.

It benefits communities by:

Reducing property damage and displacement of homes and businesses
 Minimizing environmental, social, and economic impacts of the highway system

- Preventing foreclosure of desirable locations by defining access, permitted land uses and transportation enhancements along a corridor prior to the existence of a transportation problem
- Permitting orderly project development
- Reducing the costs of transportation facilities.

Corridor management takes a holistic approach to managing the transportation system in a community by including access management, land use, motorized and non-motorized transportation needs (including bicycle and pedestrian facilities), community and environmental enhancements and landscape design. Through the proper management of all of these factors, it is possible to create a well-balanced travel corridor with few conflicting uses.

Corridor management can best be achieved by designating corridors through local comprehensive planning initiatives consistent with quality community policy. Compatible development is identified and promoted along designated corridors.

The best way to manage corridors is to prepare corridor management plans for critical locations and then incorporate the plan recommendations into all phases of the zoning process, land use codes, regulations, ordinances and site plan review. Corridor overlay zones are another technique that can be used to implement corridor plan recommendations. A corridor management ordinance can also coordinate land use and transportation to enhance a community.

Integrating Land-Use and Transportation Management:

Transportation related land-use management in New York is dominantly a local government responsibility (below). There are, however, 1,609 localities in New York - 62 counties, 62 cities, 932 towns and 553 villages (bottom) ... with very different developmental environments and transportation needs. These basic facts were fundamental in defining two elements of the Arterial Access Management Initiative: its focus on growth corridors and the necessity of tailoring each access initiative to the specific needs and objectives of the community involved.

<u>Element</u>	<u>Local Authority</u>	<u>State Authority</u>
Comprehensive Planning	Yes	No
Zoning	Yes	No
Subdivision Approval	Yes	No
Site Plan Approval	Yes	No
SEORA (Lead)	Yes	State Projects
GEIS	Yes	?
Advance Acquisition (ROW)	Yes	Yes
Official Mapping (ROW)	Yes	No
Transportation Planning & Mgmt.	Local System	State System
Highway Work (Access) Permit	Local Roads	State Roads

Source: NYSDOT Arterial Access Management Team

Corridor Management Concepts

There are five (5) concepts of corridor management plans that relate to local land use planning :

- Vision
- Partnership
- Integration of Land Use
- Modal Activities
- Ongoing Management

Concept 1: Vision - Corridor visions are an important element of a plan. A corridor vision defines how a corridor will ultimately perform. The vision should consider the facility's users and reflect the context of the corridor's cultural and environmental setting.

Concept 2: Partnership - Creation of corridor management plans is a partnership effort involving local boards, highway agencies, and stakeholders along and affected by the corridor. The structure should define partners' roles and responsibilities, provide a context for ongoing decision-making and a forum for communicating community values and other interests. It should also maintain relationships and be responsible for ensuring mutual accountability.

Managing Corridors

The separate and distinct character of roadway corridors should be recognized consisting of: a) Open space corridors including those with natural features, agriculture, and rural residential development; b) suburban residential corridors; c) intensive use corridors including: mixed-use development and business corridors; and d) limited access highways.

Edges of corridor segments should be easily recognized and a sense of arrival between less intense and more intense uses preserved.

Intensive use corridor segments should be developed as a series of activity centers based first on reinforcement of the hamlet/village/city pattern with planned additional centers to accommodate additional growth. Along these corridors increasing density of development or its depth should be favored rather than linear expansion. Over time a mixed-use multi-modal corridor development pattern should evolve.

Design guidelines should be applied to manage and improve the character of all corridors.

Community assets such as historic structures, public areas, viewsheds, and natural features should be preserved in all corridors.

Active and inactive rail corridors should be further utilized to enhance current transportation alternatives and provide future transportation options.

Pedestrian and bicycle linkages should be common to all corridors as alternative transportation modes and recreation facilities.

Capital improvements along corridors should utilize context sensitive design

Plan for connections - from driveways to collector roads, access to all

Integrating Transportation and Land Use

- ❑ Encourage use of the local road system for short to medium length trips.
- ❑ Support current and future land uses, whether or not they are located near the access nodes.
- ❑ Promote an intensity of development that is in balance with the level of supporting roadway system and community goals, and discourage development that is not in balance (that is, does not have the supporting roadway network or is not consistent with community plans).
- ❑ Define the frequency and type of access based on the corridor performance analysis.
- ❑ Encourage orderly development along regional corridors by making developments accountable for their land use, transportation, and environmental impacts.
- ❑ When considering alternatives, consider other factors including the corridors' community, cultural and environmental context.

Concept 3: Integration of Land Use - All parties have a responsibility to integrate land use, access and transportation in their decision-making. The plans should identify major local land use, zoning and transportation network issues and provide general concepts and strategies that support the corridor vision. Plans should recognize that corridors extend beyond the traditional right-of-way (width may vary by corridor), and incorporate the supporting roadway system (parallel and connecting arterials and collectors), as well as consider existing and future land uses.

Concept 4: Modal activities - Corridor management plans should include discussions of modal issues with providers and users, review statewide and/ or regional modal plans and incorporate major elements in the corridor analysis, and identify modal access issues to the regional corridor. Most corridors will need to address, to a greater or lesser extent, the following modal and access areas:

- Pedestrian and trail activities
- Truck and freight movements
- Rail and highway interaction and conflicts
- Access to transit facilities and services
- Access to air- and water-based facilities
- Communication facilities and linkages

Concept 5: Ongoing Management - The partnership team should identify and develop an ongoing process for managing the corridor. Partners must continue to monitor and manage the corridor, and refine the management plan to reflect major changes in conditions. Statewide plans, other agency plans, and local land use and transportation plans should be incorporated into the management plan. All partners should endorse the plan. Partners should discuss corridor changes, funding options, priorities, and provide an on-going structure for making decisions in the corridor, including when the plan needs to be updated.

Manage Transportation Access Effectively

Major thoroughfares, including highways and other arterials, serve as the primary network for moving people and goods. These transportation corridors also provide access to businesses and homes and have served as the focus for commercial and residential development. If access systems are not properly designed, these thoroughfares will be unable to accommodate the access needs of development and unable to retain their primary transportation function. Therefore, access management needs to balance the right of reasonable access to private property with the right of citizens to safe and efficient travel.

Effective access management requires planning as well as regulatory solutions. Communities should establish a policy framework that supports access management in the local comprehensive plan. Communities should also prepare corridor or access management plans for specific problem areas and encourage good site planning techniques. Land development and subdivision regulations should be amended accordingly and communities may also consider a separate access management ordinance. Specific information is provided in the Ulster County Access Management Guidelines.

Develop and Maintain a Well-connected Local Street System

The most compelling argument for a well connected street network is dispersal - its ability to spread traffic over many streets - rather than focus it all onto small "bottleneck" links or single



Proposed shared access along Washington Ave. in Kingston creates signalized intersection for left turns.

Approximately two-thirds of accidents involve left turns subdivision or commercial site entrances.

With the connected street system, motorists are able to travel to their daily destinations (which comprise almost two-thirds of all travel) on local streets. Drivers need not contend with traffic on arterial highways for their daily travel needs, an increasingly important advantage for older and inexperienced drivers, and visitors. The large volume of short trips and associated turning movements on arterial streets is also greatly reduced, freeing arterials for their intended purpose of longer-distance mobility. A well-connected street network powerful factor in creating destination patterns of neighborhood commercial and village centers, rather than those arrayed in a strip development fashion along major roads.

There are five major principles that lead to well connected local streets:

- Maintain existing connecting streets
- Provide multiple entrances into and out of large residential developments
- Avoid cul-de-sacs and dead end streets in subdivisions
- Create additional connections with new minor roadways (when opportunities are available)
- Manage traffic and high vehicular speed through neighborhood traffic calming programs .



Rear access service road - Town of Lloyd

Create Livable Streets

Livable streets provide for the well being of those who use them, and the formula for this is simple. Safe, comfortable streets are *shaped, shaded, traffic-calmed, connected, and interesting*. A livable street incorporates many factors that contribute to a “traditional neighborhood street.” It takes into account environmental conditions, safety, comfort, a community feeling while maintaining a balance between the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles. Livable streets as outlined in the November 1997 Metro Regional Services design manual “Creating Livable Street”; seek to:

Provide travel mode choice-having access to a variety of transportation services provides people with a sense of independence and freedom.



Trailways bus station - Kingston

Support regional multi-modal travel- a local transportation system should provide access to and integrate with the larger scale regional transportation system.

Create pedestrian and bicycle accessibility- this contributes to the notion of travel mode choices and allows people to travel around a community safely by whatever means chosen.

Support public social contact-a sense of community is strengthened by the ability to interact with neighbors socially at events such as festivals and/or open air markets; these events need a designated space.

Provide orientation and identity to the region - creating a road system that has a distinguishable identity gives residents a sense of place in the larger picture.

Provide a safe environment-people like to have the feeling that they can walk around without concern for danger; this is accomplished by limiting traffic, pollution, crime and other undesirable impacts.

Provide for physical comfort- a community’s attractive appearance supports peoples’ desire to be outside in the community.

Provide spatial definition by orienting buildings to the street-spatial definition supports walking and pedestrian accessibility and promotes social contact as well as enhances the economic value of the community.



New Paltz - highly interactive street scene - outdoor dining and sales - note also well maintained sidewalk

Provide high quality of construction and design- well-built and maintained facilities are important factors in attractiveness, comfort, safety, and economic value.



Kingston Waterfront - landscaped raised median, period light fixtures, wide sidewalks, buildings to the street line

Maintain the quality of the environment- The quality of man-made and natural environments is a major factor in the overall quality of an area and its sense of place or character. It is essential to preserve and enhance the environment to create a quality community.

Strengthen Inter-governmental relationships- Strengthening inter-governmental relationships helps to coordinate planning objectives and speeds the permit approval process; both agencies and applicants benefit. Jurisdictional impacts of different agencies and municipalities can be reduced with cooperation and coordination. Shoulder widths, consistent adjacent land uses, corridor management, regional traffic patterns, capital improvements, and comprehensive planning are just a few of the items that can be part of the discussion.

Adopt community roadway design - Roadway design seeks to accommodate the highest potential traffic volume. Straightening and widening a road often results, encouraging higher speeds. Appropriate road design standards consistent with existing and proposed land uses, the intended purpose of the roadway, and community goals and character can insure that form and function of the roadway remain consistent.

One technique that can be applied in Ulster County rural areas is use of the “new old-fashioned country road” concept that seeks to restore safely the multi-modal function of historical country roads, balancing community interests and preserving valued rural character. Design philosophy for these roads uses the following principals:

- Safety for all users
- Narrow travel lanes with close roadside features
- Curving roads conforming to natural landscape
- Slow traffic speeds

The technique allows local jurisdictions to develop a design using an “outside-in” approach, focusing first on the needs of children, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and then on people driving motorized vehicles.



Rural road - Town of Gardiner

Traffic Calming Techniques

- ❑ **Narrowing the street** reduces the speed that most drivers find reasonable and comfortable (the design speed). Reducing the pavement width, adding on-street parking, or adding a median is actual narrowing. Speed reduction (the effect of narrowing) can be accomplished with street trees along the curb, a tree canopy in the median, and buildings placed closer to the street.
- ❑ **Deflecting the vehicle path** causes drivers to slow and pay more attention to the task of driving. Deflection is done through changing the automobile's route slightly. Some measures apply at mid-block locations, while others are appropriate for intersections.
- ❑ **Changing the pavement surface** demands attention from drivers and reduces speed. Speed humps, speed tables, and special pavement materials are common methods for changing the pavement surface.
- ❑ **Sharing the pavement** with other vehicles slows vehicles and raises the attention level of drivers. Long a feature of traditional local streets, shared-use can be reintroduced into other streets by selective short sections of narrow pavement, either at mid-block locations or near intersections.
- ❑ **Diverting the driver's route** makes vehicular access more difficult, and encourages the driver to use another route. Diagonal street closures, one-way streets, median closings, and turning movement restrictions are primary examples.
- ❑ **Traffic control devices** slow traffic through regulation. STOP signs, traffic signals, and posted speed limits are frequently used to calm traffic. Intensified enforcement of traffic regulations can calm traffic, generally by reminding drivers of posted speed limits and by enforcing STOP signs.

Source: Collier County Mobility Manual



Implement traffic calming

To insure that neighborhood streets function for the neighborhood a variety of techniques known as traffic calming can be applied. The Institute of Transportation Engineers defines traffic calming as the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users

Preserve Vitality of Existing Centers

There is substantial public investment in existing centers not only in community facilities such as schools and village halls, but also in water, sewer, sidewalks and street lighting. The villages of Saugerties, Woodstock and New Paltz are successful examples of communities that have maintained the focus and economic viability of their main street business districts. Saugerties became an antique shopper's treasure filled with over 30 shops with an exceptional range of antiques and collectibles. Woodstock and Phoenicia are eclectic mixes of small shops that draws visitors to walk and enjoy the hamlets. New Paltz's easy access to the Thruway, its location as a gateway to Minnewaska State Park and Mohonk Preserve, the Huguenot Historic District and its college population keep its downtown a vibrant place. The City of Kingston is also a remarkable



Village of New Paltz

success story with a vibrant waterfront, reuse of loft buildings and a bustling uptown business district. These successes represent a concerted effort of reinvestment both public and private as well as design choices that make them convenient, safe, and attractive to pedestrians. The following are some techniques that can be used to preserve and/or reinvigorate centers:

Encourage Pedestrian Use - Safe, ADA compliant and attractive sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting are a must. Establish pedestrian zones giving those on foot the right-of-way and enforcing it. Limit drive-thrus this not only gets people out of their vehicles but also reduces pedestrian vehicle conflicts. Other items include seating, bicycle racks and directional signage.

Building Location is Important- Infill new buildings so that they relate to the street making them more accessible to pedestrians for window-shopping and visible to passing motorists. Move buildings toward the street by reducing setbacks or better still setting maximum setbacks that force building envelopes toward the street. Consider restrictions that require first floor retail/office use in commercial districts. Similarly, residential buildings should be encouraged to fill the gaps and relate to the street and adjoining buildings.



Hamlet of Phoenicia

Slow is Safe and Compatible - It should be no surprise that pedestrian fatalities greatly increase with speed. Applying traffic calming techniques (see previous) such as street trees, bump outs, raised crosswalks, and pedestrian refuges, can slow traffic through a center and increase pedestrian safety.



Bird's eye view of a pedestrian-friendly town center
Source: *Regional Road Corridor Design*

Put Parking in its Place - On-street parking is not only convenient but also serves as a buffer for sidewalks it should be maintained in nearly all instances and provisions to include its presence in meeting parking standards. Rethink minimum parking standards and consider means to provide public parking areas. Place parking behind buildings and interconnect lots to improve efficiency. Include needed sidewalks and adequate lighting to provide safe and efficient means to reach the street.

Public Buildings & Public Spaces - A community's investment in its public buildings should reinforce its preferred development pattern. Placing public buildings in existing centers encourages business investment as well as allowing those who work or do business with the public to shop, eat, and visit in convenient surroundings. The City of Kingston's uptown district is, in part, successful due to the investment Ulster County has made in its historic courthouse and modern office building. Similarly, the refurbished City Hall and the Kingston Hospital anchor the City's midtown and investment in parks, docks and public amenities have rejuvenated the waterfront. The street should function in a broader sense as a public space with seating, outdoor activity areas, and open-air business uses, such as sidewalk sales and cafes keeping in mind the need for mobility for all users.

Develop and Participate in Transportation Capital Improvements

Locally, comprehensive plans try to envision the needs of communities for public improvements and provide a funding program for meeting those needs over the long term. The capital improvement program provides a short-term list of the specific projects, estimated costs of these improvements and the development of logical priorities for their provision.

Regional capital improvement programs for transportation and other infrastructure changes that impact Ulster County communities are prepared by the New York State Department of Transportation, Ulster County Public Works Department, Ulster County Highways and Bridges Department.

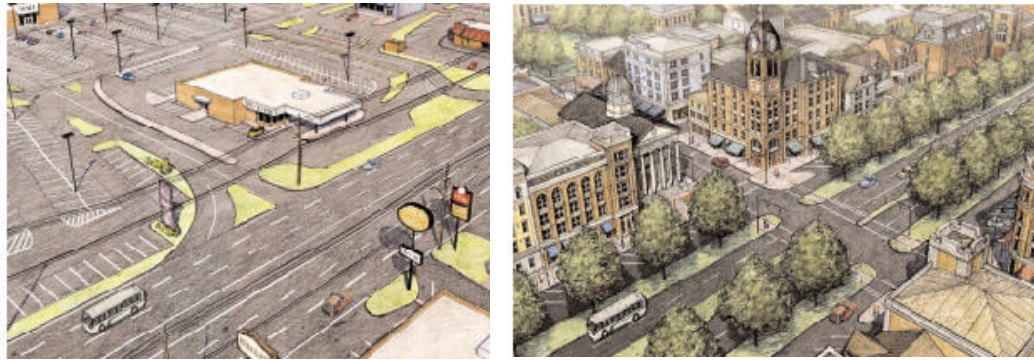
The recent status as an Urbanized area means that Ulster County will establish a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). This will allow even greater input from local governments on how transportation dollars are spent. The Ulster County Transportation Plan should serve as one of the key documents when preparing the list of improvements. The program costs must be related to the economic base of the community, available funding from both Federal, State and local sources, and what funding techniques are possible (e.g. public/private partnerships, bonding, etc.)



Ulster County Court House - Uptown Kingston

Rethink Regional Corridors

Transportation corridors are the means for goods to enter and exit a community, as well as access points for customers and employees. At both a regional and community level, financial success may depend on how efficiently traffic is routed through and around commerce centers. Balancing regional needs for shopping, business and industry with a community's character can be a challenge. Design solutions are available to meet these needs. These call for moving beyond the one dimensional retail zone to mixed-use development utilizing the concepts contained in this report.



*Incorporating quality community concepts regional corridors can enhance a community
Source: Collier County - Rethinking Corridors*

Preserve Important Historic Resources



Ulster County communities possess a rich history. Local codes can be utilized in the preservation of historic buildings, structures, or areas. Together with other programs these can provide regulatory and financial incentives for the rehabilitation of old buildings, establish design standards so that new construction compliments existing development and protects existing historical districts. Road design can also help promote historic preservation. Existing roads through historic districts can be altered in a manner to slow traffic, enhance pedestrian activity, and protect structures from degradation caused by vehicle exhaust and vibration. A response to these types of pressures can be seen in the recent diverter on Huguenot Street in New Paltz. The County's historic transportation facilities offer another opportunity for preserving elements of the past. The D & H Canal Trailway, the railroad bridge on the Walkkill Valley rail trail in New Paltz as well as Perrines Bridge in Esopus are all examples older transportation facilities that have been preserved to play a role in today's transportation system.

Protect Scenic Resources

Protection of scenic resources includes the protection of the viewsheds, and landscape features that contribute to a community's sense of place. Numerous tools are available including sign controls and site plan standards allowing planning boards to review aesthetics as part of



Architectural wall along Rt. 9W in Esopus

the approval process. Design standards can coordinate building styles, color, and material to reduce their impact on the surrounding environs. Zoning codes can also limit the height of buildings to reduce the impact they have on the surrounding scenery. Communities can establish specialized land use zones restrict the amount of development in conflict with views considered important to the community (established through surveys). Designation of scenic byways also provides a means to develop a management plan that recognizes the special aspects of a scenic corridor.

Preserve Agriculture

Agriculture has historically been an important industry in Ulster County and its protection is vital not only to the County's economic health, but also to its character. At the forefront of agriculture preservation should be an understanding of the economics of farming and a priority to preserve the farm and then the land. Although agricultural preservation efforts often focus on decreasing development density this overlooks the economic viability of the farm.

A more enlighten approach is to help insure the farm remains viable by considering tax inducements, purchase of development rights, fee waivers, and allowing the farm to generate non-farm income through festivals., auctions, farmstands, overnight accommodations, and the like.

Another method of protecting core agricultural lands is through subdivision design. Conservation subdivisions and cluster development allows homes on smaller parcels with common open space, in this instance the core farmland.

Protect Natural Resources

Natural resource protection is an essential component of a comprehensive plan. An effective plan inventories and assesses the value of the natural resources throughout the community including or threatened species of wildlife and other resources. It then provides an effective set of standards that serve to guide the open space, water supply, forests, soil, marshes, wetlands, harbors, rivers and other waters, fisheries, endangered development of various planning projects.



The Shawangunk Ridge and agricultural lands on Route 299 west of New Paltz. Rt.299 is proposed for scenic byway designation.

3.0 Funding Opportunities for Projects and Programs

New York State and U.S. Departments of Transportation. Federal and State Transportation Funding Programs are available to local governments. Contact NYSDOT Regional Office for more information. 845-431-5723. or Contact Federal Department of Transportation

Federal Surface Transportation Act (TEA-21, ISTEA). Every five or six-years a Federal Transportation Act is enacted to allocate multi-modal transportation funds to the states for a wide variety of transportation purposes. Funds are also available for related enhancements such as scenic easements, conservation of abandoned railways to trails, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, removal of outdoor advertising, archaeological planning, scenic byways, and landscape beautification, including restoration of native species in disturbed habitats.

County and Local Government Funding- County and Local government budgets and their ability to access a wide range of federal and state funding programs and local tax bases can provide for funding transportation and community enhancement projects and programs.

Empire Opportunity Fund –EOF provides financial assistance to infrastructure or capital facilities related to the development of industrial facilities, business parks and incubators; the development of downtown and rural area projects that increase the availability of commercial and retail activity; the development of tourism destinations that contribute to the development of a recreational, historic, cultural or conventional facility that is likely to attract a significant number of visitors from outside the region.

Main Street New York Downtown Development Initiative Program –The fund provides for capital facility and infrastructure projects located in Central Business District or commercial area that are available to the general public, will result in a benefit to the general public and will improve the viability of downtown commercial areas.

The New York State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond - Environmental Conservation Law Article 56. Project eligibility should be evaluated under different Bond Act funds, including the Safe Drinking Water Fund (Title 2), the Clean Water Fund (Title 3), and the Municipal Environmental Restoration Project Fund (Title 5);

The New York State Environmental Protection Fund - Environmental Conservation Law Article 54. This fund provides assistance for park, recreation and historic preservation projects. Funding for the implementation of Local Waterfront funding for the implementation of Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs is also available through this program.

The Federal "Superfund" - Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). This fund provides the federal government with funds to implement short-term "removal" actions, or longer term remedial investigation and remediation of hazardous waste sites listed on the National Priorities List (NPL). The NYSDEC must request that a site be listed on the NPL. This fund was used to implement limited clean-up activities at the former Diamond International site;

Federal Environmental Response and Spill Compensation Fund - Navigation Law Article 12. This fund is available to states to implement investigation and clean up of petroleum discharges and removal of underground storage tanks. The fund is also available to compensate injured parties, including municipalities which have lost revenue as a result of the discharge of petroleum;

Clean Water State Revolving Fund for Water Pollution Control. Financing is available to respond to non-point source pollution projects. Non-point source refers to water pollution from diffuse sources that are not directly related to a piped discharge. Examples include remediation of contamination from leaking underground storage tanks or collection and treatment of road runoff, and water body restoration such as stream bank stabilization, drainage erosion and sediment control.

Industrial Finance Program. Provides low interest loans to private businesses for environmental improvement capital projects, including Brownfields site remediation and solid waste management.

The State Revolving Fund Program is one of the largest environmental infrastructure financing programs in the nation. Three primary loans are available through EFC: Bond-Funded Loans, Financial Hardship Loans, (including interest-free long-term), and Interest-Free Short-Term (up to two years).

Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). This program provides funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for activities that support housing, public facilities, or economic development. CDBG funds can be used as grants, loans, loan guarantees, and technical assistance activities. The funds are managed by New York State Governor's Office of Small Cities.

Section 108 Federal Loan Guarantees. Another HUD program that has the same objectives as the CDBG program but funds are repayable loans rather than grants.

New York State Empire State Development Corporation (EDC). Program grants and loans are available as incentives to attract commercial development and may be applicable to Brownfields development.

U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. Grants are available to assist economic development projects.

New York State Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants Program. The NYSDEC has a grant program under its Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants Program. The Program provides grants for up to fifty percent (50%) of the cost of eligible nonpoint source water pollution assessment, planning and abatement projects.

Private Foundation Grants. The Environmental Grantmaker's Association, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 3450 New York, New York, 10104 compiles a listing of hundreds of potential foundations and trusts which may provide funding assistance to creative environmental/economic development initiatives.

Greenway Communities Grant Program. Provides natural and cultural resource protection regional planning, economic development, heritage and environmentally education, promotion of access to the Hudson River.

Greenway Conservancy. Provides funding for trail related projects.

Land and Water Conservation Fund. Federal monies allocated to the States by the Department of the Interior for land acquisition and development of outdoor recreation.

State Revolving Loan Fund. Provides low-interest loans to municipalities to construct and expand sewage treatment facilities. Continuation of the state revolving loan fund depends on reauthorization of the Clean Water Act with grants to states to capitalize the loan fund.

Gifts and Donations. A direct way for individuals and businesses to contribute directly to the conservation of open space through donations of land or easements.

The Wallace Fund for the Hudson Highlands. A private foundation supporting land acquisition in the Hudson Valley.

The Hudson River Foundation. A private foundation supporting research, education and public access to the river. Its purpose is to contribute to the development of sound public policy concerning the Hudson River's ecosystem.

4.0 List of Resources

Creating Livable Streets 11/97-Oregon

Managing Corridor Development: A Municipal Handbook, 12/96 Center for Urban

Transportation Research

10 Ways to Manage Roadway Access in Your Community

Bridging Gap Between Access Management Ideals and LU Practice

Collier County FL., Community Character Plan - Mobility Manual

Development of a Transportation and Land Use Public Policy Education Program for Iowa 6/0

Dutchess County Greenway Connections

Maryland's-Smart Neighborhoods Models and Guidelines Building Better Communities: A Tool Kit for Quality Growth

New Community Design to the Rescue-2001 National Governors Association

Orange County Comprehensive Plan 10/200

Park 'N' Ride

Regional Plan Association, Building Transit-Friendly Communities, August 1997

Research, Develop and Implementation of Pedestrian Safety Facilities. in United Kingdom 11/99

Road Hierarchy Plan

Road Work-Rural Road Design Standards 12/00 Washington State

Smart Growth-A Look at Best Management Practices

State and Local Governments Partnering for a Better NY Quality Communities Task Force Jan. 2001

Take Back Your Streets-Conservation Law Foundation

Transportation Plan- PDTC -1994 (Poughkeepsie Dutchess County Transportation Council)

Vermont Long Range Transportation Plan

