

# 2011

## Village of Webster Comprehensive Plan





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## Section 1

### Introduction

The Village of Webster has grown from a rural hamlet and the center of a thriving agricultural community to the core of a growing suburban town. The Village is home to strong and stable residential neighborhoods, a major manufacturing complex of a Fortune 500 company, and contains a classic American Main Street and four-corners at the intersection of two primary state highways. A significant amount of change has taken place in the last 60 years, with a doubling of the population due to residential growth accompanying the expansion of the suburbs surrounding the City of Rochester. However, population growth has ceased, with projections indicating nearly stagnant population levels through 2015. Furthermore, the local economy, while stable, has struggled to cope with the forces of suburbia outside Village boundaries.

Facing these challenges, the community must ask itself, “Has the Village of Webster developed in a way which best suits our present and future needs? What is our community’s vision for the future? How will we achieve continued success?”

This Comprehensive Plan represents a collective, community effort to address these concerns. This document describes our present status, presents our vision for the future and recommends changes to policies and Village Code to help realize our vision. Discussed in the sections two - five, are these topics. Committees made up of citizens of the Village of Webster created this document. Held In 2010, were two public forums to gauge initial public comment. In addition, in an effort to gain public input, The Village of Webster had previously sent out surveys. The Comprehensive Plan contains the results of the surveys conducted and the forums. It is a plan by and for the people of the Village of Webster. It is, in the truest sense of the words, Our Community Plan.

#### **Purpose and Use of the Plan**

A comprehensive plan provides an overall framework for future public and private investment and decision making in the community. This investment can take many forms, such as, but not limited to, financial, civic and creative resources. In the Village of Webster, it is this collective investment by residents, businesses, churches, schools, volunteer organizations and local government that will shape the physical, social and economic character of the community.

It is the policy of New York State to encourage comprehensive planning for the sake of the health, welfare and general prosperity of its citizens. Therefore, many state agencies recognize the existence of a comprehensive plan as a favorable, and sometimes required, condition for grants and other assistance for municipal projects. In an effort to eliminate ad hoc projects and

assure that funds are spent in pursuit of a well-defined purpose, granting agencies desire to see that municipalities are acting in concert with stated objectives, and with a clear vision of some future goal.

This Comprehensive Plan articulates an overall vision for the Village of Webster and the means to achieve the objectives set forth. The process for and the contents of the Plan are consistent with New York State Village Law 7-722, which defines a comprehensive plan as:

“the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive materials that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the Village.”

The effect of adoption of a comprehensive plan is that:

“all village land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan.”

## **Plan Process**

In its simplest form, long-range comprehensive planning includes three key activities: understanding the present condition, identifying the desired end state and determining the best methods for achieving it. To develop the Plan, the Village established a Comprehensive Plan Committee.

Committee members represented diverse perspectives from within the Village and served as an initial information source and sounding board for ideas and recommendations. In addition to citizen representation, the Committee included representatives from the Planning Board, Village Board, Zoning Board, Parks and Recreation Committee, Historic Commission, Village Staff, and the local business community.

## **Quick Summary of Surveys:**

According to New York State Law, the comprehensive plan must be adopted by the Village Board, which requires a public hearing. However, this approval process does not preclude future review and amendment. The vision and policies contained in this document should be perceived as flexible. As the conditions upon which the documents are based change, it is reasonable to assume that its contents may need to be changed as well. The plan is intended to serve as a guide for the next 10 years. However, this plan should be reviewed at most, every three years to gauge progress on implementation and perform needed maintenance. A more formal revision should occur at the end of the 10-year planning period.

## Section 2

### Community Profile:

#### Community and Public Services

##### Location

The Village of Webster is situated within in the south central portion of the Town of Webster, in the northeast corner of Monroe County, New York, with the City of Rochester approximately 14 miles to the southwest. The Village is almost completely surrounded by the Town of Webster, with a small portion sharing the southern border with the Town of Penfield. The Village is organized around the primary intersection of State Routes 404 and 250, and is also bisected by State Route 104, a limited access highway that links the community with the interstate highway system, the City of Rochester, and beyond.

##### History

The Village of Webster is situated on the historic Ridge Road at the point where, in 1812, James Spear built the first permanent frame building in which he ran a tavern called the Stage Coach Inn. In the same year, Dr. William R. Ellis built an office and general store near the present-day four corners. By 1830, Samuel Levy had built the first brick buildings and both the Presbyterians and Baptists had erected church buildings near the four corners.

The Village was known as North Penfield before its separation from Penfield and its establishment as a separate town. Webster was named for the famous Massachusetts senator and statesman, Daniel Webster. Located in the lush Lake Ontario fruit belt, the area attracted large groups of Dutch and German immigrants in the 1850's that fled intolerance of their homelands and became Webster's first fruit farmers.

The local Grange, started in 1880, was at one time the largest in the world.

The junction of Ridge Road and Webster Nine-Mile Point Road, which connected shipping points on the Erie Canal and the New York Central Railroad with a small port on Lake Ontario, was referred to as "the Village" because some 800 people and many businesses were





concentrated there. A railroad at the north end of the Village attracted several dried or evaporated apple businesses and some small woodworking industries.

The year 1900 marked a significant turning point in the development of the Village. The first bank since the Civil War times was established and the Rochester Sodus Bay Trolley connected Webster to Rochester, leading to a major expansion of the Village residential areas (the present Lapham Park, Elm Street, Dunning Avenue and Park Avenue section of the Village). Residents began discussing the possibility of incorporating the Village in order to make improvements that were needed at that time. Better fire protection, an adequate water supply, sewage system and better lighting facilities in the area were the main reasons.

The Village of Webster was incorporated in 1905, and soon after improvements were being made. By 1906, the Village had gas streetlights and the volunteer fire department had been formed. The main reason for incorporation was a need for a better water supply; it wasn't until 1908 that money was allocated to study this issue. In 1909, water began to flow from a spring on Harris Road to the residents of the Village. This water supply continued until a new source was needed. In 1935, Harvey C. Bergh was appointed to find additional water sources, which were located in the DeWitt Road area. Today our most important resource is our water supply.

Until well after World War I, the Village continued as the shipping center for the area's dried apple industry. The Village also had the world's largest basket factory and was the center of the canning industry in Monroe County.

The Village survived the Depression and the war years that followed, times that saw the gradual decline of the traditional agricultural trade. In the late 1950's the Village annexed 182 acres of land that became the home of the Xerox Corporation.

The Village takes great pride in our progress, while at the same time; we will not forget our past. Our residents are proud of our community and continue to work to preserve the Village's hometown feeling and traditional values. In providing outstanding community services and fostering a neighborly atmosphere, the Village continues a tradition that began with those first residents in 1812.

## **Community Assets**

If one were to ask Village residents and business owners to describe the Village of Webster, they would refer to it as a historic small village that provides a pleasant residential environment within a growing community of Monroe County. They would also refer to the Village as a distinct community that has many common interests with the Town of Webster, and whose own vitality depends greatly on the economy of the City of Rochester and County of Monroe. The typical reasons why residents want to live in the Village are the following: they want to live in a small village, to live near employment, to live near the excellent public schools, and to live in a village with good services and facilities.

## Demographics

According to the 2010 census, the Village of Webster population was 5,399, 51 percent of which were female residents. The overall population reflects an increase of 3.5 percent from 2000. Children under the age of 18 account for 25 percent of the population. According to the latest American Community Survey 5-year estimates, seniors age 65 and over account for 17 percent of the population, an increase from 14 percent in 2000. The largest demographic group, individuals age 34-54, account for 27 percent of the population, down 1 percent from 2000. The size of this age group is a significant factor in the local economy, as these individuals traditionally account for a disproportionate share of income earned, necessary expenses and disposable income. The demographic group representing individuals age 20-34 accounts for 18 percent of the population, a significant decrease from the 22 percent experienced in 2000. This age group is entering prime childbearing and family development years and is traditionally responsible for making significant first-time purchases such as cars, homes, appliances, and other goods and services that help drive the consumer economy. As the 'baby boomer' generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) is entering retirement, this age group will generally have a more fixed income, yet will also have additional time for leisure pursuits, volunteering, travel, and other domestic activities.

## Community Boards & Committees

The Village of Webster is governed by the Village Board composed of five elected positions: four Trustees and the Mayor. The Zoning Board of Appeals and the Village Planning Board are the only two statutory boards, each composed of five members appointed by the Village Board: The Village Board also established the Historic Preservation Commission, which is charged with making recommendations regarding the preservation of historically and culturally significant properties within the Village. In addition, through local resolution, the Village Board has established the Parks and Recreation Committee and the Seniors and Disabled Committee. The Village Board Trustees and staff have developed numerous connections with community groups. Each Village Board member is assigned as a liaison to community groups such as the Business Improvement District (BID), the Farmers Market, Webster Association of Senior Program Supporters (WASPS), the Friends of the Trails, the Webster Museum, County Emergency Management, Garden Clubs, the School District and the Town of Webster. The Village also coordinates regionally with numerous groups, including the Council of Government (COG), the Monroe County Association of Villages, the Monroe County Clerk's Association, the Storm Water Coalition, New York Rural Water, New York State Conference of Mayors and the Finger Lakes Building Officials Association.

**Education:**

Residents of the Village are fortunate to have an excellent school system. In 2010, the Webster Central School District had an enrollment of 9,154 students. The district had 845 professional staff members and 624 support staff. The average class size varied from 19 – 24. According to the New District Report Card, 2008-2009, the percentage of students passing the New York State Regents exams in English is 97 percent, Mathematics is 90 percent, Global Studies is 95 percent, US History/Government is 98 percent. The graduation rate for the district is 86 percent. Ninety percent of all students graduate with a Regents diploma, 58 percent with Advanced Designation. Students consistently score by a large number over the state mean in standardized tests. The budget for the District in 2009-2010 was \$138,215,548. The administrative offices are located at Spry Middle School, which is near the center of the Village on the corner of Sanford Street and South Avenue. The District has many extra-curricular opportunities. The Marching Band has been nationally recognized. Student athletes consistently earn League, Sectional and State Championships. Many students have also earned All-American status in their individual sports. The art program in Webster has earned national recognition through the National Scholastic Art Scholarship Program. In addition, there is a Continuing Education program for residents of all ages. Webster also has several private and parochial schools and is close to numerous nationally ranked private and public universities and colleges.

**Healthcare and Emergency Services:****Healthcare:**

Several health care and special needs facilities are located in the Village. Three group homes and a nursing home care for citizens who have special needs. The Village has extensive health care services available including urgent care facilities and other healthcare providers.

**Emergency Services:**

The Village citizens are protected by The Town of Webster Police Department, which offers around the clock service to protect our citizens. This accredited department also works with the Village neighborhood watch program. Fire and emergency services are provided by the North East Joint Fire District located at the state of the art Enderlin Fire Station, which is manned by the Webster Volunteer Fire Department.



## Community Identity / Economic Development

The Village of Webster is home to the main manufacturing and research centers for Xerox Corporation, one of the industries that has earned this region of New York State the title of the “World’s Image Centre.” Xerox Corporation’s Webster plant employs approximately 6,000 people. In addition to Xerox, there are numerous small firms, farms and several large food processing plants in and around the Village that provide many seasonal and long-term career opportunities to residents and a strong financial base to the Village. The 2010 Census shows the Village of Webster is home to a highly-educated population whose occupations include managers, professionals, and those in technical, sales and administrative positions. The Webster Village is also home to a U.S. Post Office branch, which serves people who live and work in the Town and Village of Webster as well as people in the surrounding community.

The Village of Webster's Central Business District (CBD) is currently in the midst of a growth surge that is bringing new life to our Village. The recent development in the northeast quadrant of the Village offers new employment opportunities and new property tax revenues that have been infrequent in recent years. However, at the same time, other areas of the Village suffer from the disinvestment and physical decline that plague villages throughout the country. The shopping malls, business parks and commercial plazas that have changed our

landscape continue to work against Village growth. In response to these trends, a combination of public, private and non-profit entities are working to strengthen the CBD by recruiting new investment, revitalizing old properties and improving awareness of everything the Village has to offer. A major influence on the revitalization of the Village is the Webster Business Improvement District (BID).

The BID is a not-for-profit

organization that was formed in 2003 by a small group of Village business owners and residents. The BID was created to protect and enhance the unique character of the Village of Webster. In 2010, an expansion of the BID was approved to include a large section of businesses north of Route 104 and along the Route 250 corridor. With its increasing membership and budget, the BID is expected to eventually become self-sustaining and serve an independent role in the future to promote the Village and its business opportunities.



## Residential Neighborhoods

### Housing

As of 2010, there are approximately 2,362 housing units in the Village of Webster on 1,132 separate properties. The Village offers a diverse range of housing options, including single-family, two-family, and multi-family units, as well as apartment and townhome complexes. The downtown core of the Village provides additional apartments above retail and office establishments, providing added density and foot traffic. The following provides a brief overview of residential housing within the Village.

### Age of Housing

Approximately 20 percent of Village housing units were built prior to 1940. The largest building boom took place between 1950 and 1980, during which 67 percent (1,500) of the current housing units were constructed. The average age of non-apartment residential properties is 61 years. The largest collection of residential properties constructed on or before 1920 is located south and east of the primary intersection at State Routes 250 and 404, north of Fuller Avenue and west of Dunning Avenue. However, a significant number of existing homes on Kircher Park, Baker Street and East Main Street were constructed before 1920.

New growth in housing has largely consisted of higher density and multi-family residences. The Village has experienced pockets of new residential development on remaining vacant or underutilized land. In the early 2000s, a new patio-home neighborhood was developed along Phillips Road, and construction on new townhomes has begun along Lyon Drive. Additionally, a significant number of apartment homes and townhomes have been constructed at the end of Kittleberger Park.

### Housing Styles and Size

Over 91 percent of Village residential properties are single family, with two-family properties accounting for six percent. Based on the classification system provided by the New York State Office of Real Property Assessment, eleven separate housing styles are represented within the Village of Webster. The most common housing style is the Colonial, which accounts for approximately 31 percent of residential properties. With an average size of just over 1,800 square feet on 0.4 acres and an average age of 48 years, Colonial properties are strongly suited for growing and established families.

## Occupancy

Approximately 1,250 of the Village's 2,362 housing units are for rent (55%), accounting for 51 percent of the Village population as of 2000. The majority of rental units are located along Main Street and Route 250, with significant apartment properties located on Daniel Drive, Dean Spring Drive, Reynolds Road and Phillips Road. The 23 apartment properties account for only 2 percent of Village residential properties, yet equate to 19 percent of the residential assessed valuation. The 2010 Census states that overall vacancy rates for the Village are 6 percent for all housing units.

## Sales and Values

According to Monroe County Records, approximately 244 single-family residential property sales have taken place since 2005, with a median sale price of \$127,000. The median home size for these sales is 1,530 square feet, which is well below the average home size for the Village of Webster, which is currently 1,650 square feet.

## Historic Preservation

Historic properties are tangible links with the past that provide a sense of identity and inspire pride in our heritage. The Village of Webster Historic Preservation Commission was established in early 2005 partly in response to a survey conducted as part of the development of The Village Comprehensive Plan that was completed in 1997. That the survey found many residents wanted to preserve the Village's historic



settings, enhance the Village business district and develop a comprehensive central Village beautification plan. Fifty percent of respondents indicated that they chose to live in the Village because it is "an historic village setting that provides a pleasant residential environment".

In establishing the Historic Preservation Commission, the Webster Village Board recognized that the Village's rich and varied history and vibrant present are evident in its commercial and residential buildings and surroundings. The preservation, protection, enhancement and continued use of these structures and sites serve the best interests of all the people in the community.

The Historic Preservation Commission is comprised of five members, all residents of the Village, each of who are appointed by the Village Mayor.

The Commission has been given the power and responsibility to:

- a) Conduct surveys of the exterior of buildings and sites for the purpose of determining those of historic and/or architectural significance and pertinent facts about them.
- b) Formulate recommendations concerning the preparations of maps, brochures and historical markers for selected historic and/or architectural sites and buildings.
- c) Approve or disapprove applications for Certificates of Appropriateness pursuant to historic structures and sites. Approve or disapprove applications for local landmark status, and applications for the establishment of an historic district.
- d) Recommend acquisition of landmark structures by the Village government where its preservation is essential to Village historic preservation goals and where private preservation is not feasible.
- e) Increase public awareness of the value of historic, cultural and architectural preservation by developing and participating in public education programs.
- f) Adopt criteria for the identification of significant historic, architectural and cultural landmarks.
- g) Recommend to the Village Board, where appropriate, the acquisition of façade easements or other interests in real property as necessary to carry out the preservation of historic or architectural significant property.
- h) Encourage establishment of local landmarks within the Webster Village.
- i) A long-term goal is to establish an historic district within the Webster Village.

### **Designation of a Landmark or Historic District**

Designation of an individual property as a landmark, or as part of an historic preservation district is accomplished through the owner making application to the Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission and the Commission approving the owner's application. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission cannot designate a property as a landmark or part of an historic preservation district without the owner's consent. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission will consider the following when deeming a property/site worthy of local landmark status:

- a) It possesses special character or historic or aesthetic interest or value as part of the cultural, political, economic or social history of the locality, region, state or nation.

- b) It is identified with historic personages.
- c) It is the work of a designer whose work has significantly influenced an age.
- d) It is in a unique location or has a singular physical characteristic.
- e) It represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood.

The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission may approve a group of adjoining properties as a historic district if it:

Contains properties which meet one or more of the criteria for designation as a landmark and by reason of possessing such qualities, it constitutes a distinct section of the Village. The boundaries of an approved historic district will be specified in detail on the Webster Village Zoning Map. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission shall hold a public hearing prior to the approval of any landmark or historic district. The commission, owners, and any interested parties may present testimony or documentary evidence at the hearing that will become part of the record regarding the historic, architectural or cultural importance of the proposed landmark or historic district. The record may also contain reports, public comments, or other evidence offered outside of the hearing.

## Parks and Recreation

There are five parks within the Village of Webster, which provide a variety of facilities. These include the Schantz Village Manor Park, the Milton R. Case Memorial Park, the Wilmorite Playground, Harmony Park and the Veterans Memorial Park located on North Avenue. These parks include tennis courts, baseball diamonds, playground equipment and picnic areas. These include the Schantz Village Manor Park, the Milton R. Case Memorial Park, the Wilmorite Playground, Harmony Park



and the Veterans Memorial Park located on North Avenue. The Veterans Memorial Park contains a large gazebo, which is used for various celebrations during the year. The Town of Webster's North Ponds Park is located just north of the Village boundary, and has facilities for hiking, picnicking, and fishing. A paved bike path, located adjacent to the expressway, is easily accessible to Village residents. The Town of Webster Parks and Recreation center is located north of the Village on Chiyoda Dr. The Town Parks and Recreation Department offers recreational activities, as well as hot meals for both Town and Village senior citizens.



## Community Activities

The Village of Webster is located approximately 12 miles from the center of the City of Rochester. As a result, people who live in the Village can easily attend numerous activities downtown including: Concerts at the renovated Eastman Theater, stage plays at several theaters, professional baseball games, professional basketball games, professional soccer games, professional hockey games and professional lacrosse games.

Locally, there is an excellent museum on Lapham Park that illustrates the history of the community as well as the life of residents in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The oldest active Grange in the United States is located on East Main Street, and is home to the Chorus of the Genesee.



Seasonal activities include the Webster Village Band performances each summer at the Village-owned band shell at Harmony Park, Summer Concert Series in the Gazebo Park, the Jazz Festival, Village Days, the Firemen's Carnival, Town Celebration Day and White Christmas in the Village. The Webster Joe Obbie Farmers Market is located behind the Baptist Church in the Village parking lot. This operates on Saturdays providing a local outlet for numerous fruit and vegetable farmers in the area.

Excellent educational and athletic facilities are available for use by the Village residents including: indoor and outdoor track and field center, a state-of-the-art aquatics center, an ice skating rink and a new multipurpose field located on Salt Road. Sports Illustrated Magazine has designated the Webster Community as Sports Town USA for New York State. The school district offers an extensive Community Education Program to all residents, providing classes in a variety of subjects offered in several locations throughout the district.

## Infrastructure /Utilities

Sometimes forgotten, except on the rare occasions when they are unavailable, are the services that people who live, work and own businesses in the Village enjoy:

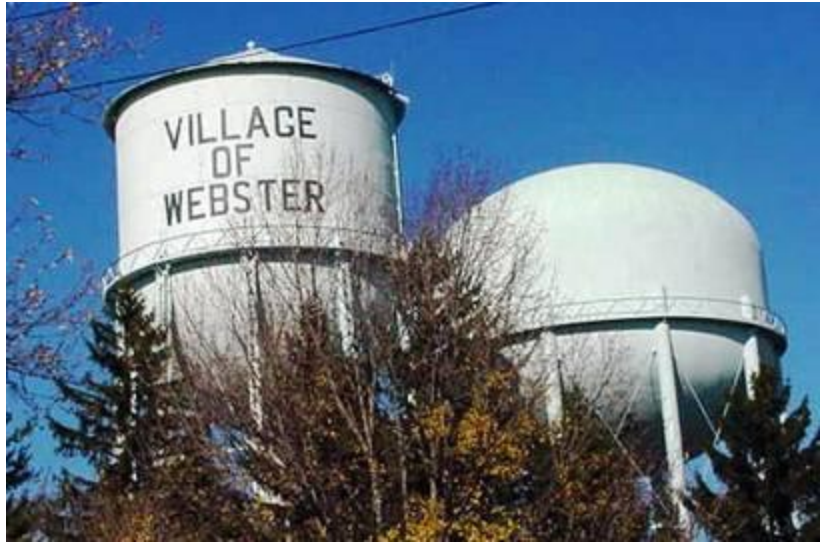
### Roadways

The Village of Webster maintains nearly 15 miles of roadways, containing more than 28 lane miles. This maintenance includes snow removal, salting, asphalt maintenance, repair and replacement, as well as repairs and replacements of gutters and curbing. Parking has been a topic of discussion for a number of years in the Village. The Village owns eight parking lots and leases or has an easement over an additional eight lots. In recent years, an effort has begun to move towards easements rather than leases to facilitate long term planning.

## Water

Water wells were drilled on the western edge of the Town the result the work of Dr. Herman Fairchild in the early 1900's. Since confirming the location of, and access to, the Ironde-Genesee Aquifer, the Village has used this source to supply its water customers. The Village of Webster maintains a water treatment facility off Dewitt Road on the shore of Irondequoit Bay.

The Village also owns five wells and pump houses along the sandbar on the northern edge of Irondequoit Bay. The 45-acre facility on Dewitt Road houses the Village's drilled wells, the treatment facility and accessory buildings. The well fields are the starting point of a distribution system, which provides drinking water to over 5200 residents. This distribution system includes more than 30 miles of water mains ranging in size from 4 to 24 inches in diameter. The Dewitt Road wells have the



capacity to provide approximately 5 million gallons a day to our customers. The sandbar wells provide access to approximately 5 million additional gallons per day. Three enclosed storage tanks have a 4.5 million gallon capacity to provide water supply for our customers use and for firefighting. The water department personnel provide around the clock emergency service to our customers.

## Sanitary Sewer

The Village of Webster owns and maintains a sanitary sewer collection system. Our collection system begins where the privately owned and maintained sanitary laterals tie into the sewer mains. The sanitary sewer system is composed of over 20 miles of sewer mains ranging from 8 to 24 inches in diameter. The system also includes nearly 500 manholes. All the Village sanitary flow is sent to the Village of Webster Sewage Treatment Plant. This 2.5 million gallon a day facility treats the wastewater and sends effluent to the combined outfall shared with the Town of Webster. The Sewage Treatment Plant also houses the Village's composting operation, which process nearly 1,000 cubic yards of leaves each year to produce compost for use by residents.

## Storm Sewer

The Village of Webster's extensive storm sewer collection system includes numerous elements that catch the water and ultimately delivers it to Lake Ontario. The system includes 200 manholes, over 800 drain inlets and 24 inlet grates, outfalls and drain structures combined. All these are connected by miles of pipe ranging in size from 4 to 42-inches diameter.

## Sidewalks

The Village has over 20 miles of sidewalks to assist with residents' and visitors safety and comfort while traveling on foot throughout the Village. Students from the elementary and middle schools use these paths daily as they travel to and from school. The Village maintains the sidewalks including repair and replacement, as well as snow and ice removal in the winter months.



## Streetlights

Hundreds of streetlights illuminate Village streets and sidewalks. The streetlights primarily fall under one of three ownership models: wholly owned by the utility company, dual ownership and wholly owned by the Village. Village crews repair and maintain the street lights based upon ownership.

## Utilities

### Energy

Gas and electric service is provided to our residents through a regional utility. Recent changes have allowed our residents and businesses to select different energy suppliers while energy transmission is provided through an established distribution system. Green energy sources are offered to our residents at a premium from some of the suppliers. Numerous suppliers meet the needs of our residents who utilize alternative energy sources such as wood or heating oil.

## Communication

The Village residents are provided telephone and internet services through a host of suppliers. Traditional cable television companies are now also providing telephone and internet services to our residents. Likewise, companies, which have traditionally supplied telephone services only now offer internet, telephone and entertainment packages. Cellular phone coverage is strong and consistent throughout the Village. Wireless internet connections are available at a small number of businesses including the Village offices. There is not a community based Wi-Fi network at this time.

## Vehicular and Pedestrian Access

Integral to our road system is our sidewalks. Keeping the Village a walkable community is a main focus of the maintenance efforts on more than 20 miles of sidewalks. Sidewalk maintenance includes repair, replacement, painting of crosswalks and snowplowing. Between the streets and sidewalks you will often find beautiful shade trees. The Village of Webster owns and maintains over 2000 trees in the right of way area.



## Natural Resources

The Village of Webster has numerous natural resources. Foremost, it is blessed with a plentiful, quality water supply originating from the Village well fields on DeWitt Rd. The Village has a forested, passive recreation area at Milton R. Case Park in addition to several private parcels that have wooded areas. The Village maintains two drainage areas, one near the west periphery and the other along Orchard Street. There are several defined private retention ponds in the Village at Heartland Estates, along Lyon Dr and within North Ponds Village. The Village has a variety of wildlife. There are two trailways through the Village, one along the Route 104 expressway ("the bike trail") and the other along the abandoned Hojak Line extending behind North Ponds Village to Phillips Rd.

## Intermunicipal Cooperation

Our Village has great strength in its ability to reach out and cooperate with our partners in government. The Village has current intermunicipal agreements with Monroe County and some of the towns and villages in the county for equipment sharing. We also have agreements with the school district, Town of Webster and the Town of Ontario for cost sharing on equipment, lab services, fuel, salt storage, plowing, sewer service, sewer outfall. The Village has partnered with the Webster Central School District, the Town of Webster, the Webster Chamber of Commerce and the Village Business Improvement District in the formation of the Webster Community Coalition for Economic Development or WCCED. The Village Board has a joint meeting every other month with the Webster Town Board to keep the lines of communication open and to seek opportunities for synergistic solutions to provide services to our residents.



## Section 3

### Community Vision & Values- Goals and Objectives

The following is the Vision Statement for the Village of Webster:

“The Village of Webster is a thriving community with pedestrian-friendly streets and sidewalks that connect stable and diverse residential neighborhoods with services found in a strong commercial core. The Village Core is a vibrant center of activity focused on Main Street and four-corners, forming the central identity of this unique community and creating a distinct sense of place. Commercial and residential areas promote high-quality architecture and site design that complement the valued historic forms of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, while providing a walkable environment that retains traditional village character. The community strives to provide necessary services, parks and recreation opportunities that meet the needs of residents and businesses in an efficient and cost effective manner, while encouraging appropriate growth and investment.

#### Community and Public Services

Objective 1: Expand senior citizen facilities and community resources in order to accommodate the growing senior population.

Objective 2: Identify alternative transportation opportunities and the effectiveness of existing transit service and utilization rates.

#### Community Identity and Economic Development

Objective 1: Make the Village a choice destination for new and expanding businesses.

Objective 2: Connect the Village to local and regional amenities, destinations and resources.

Objective 3: Ensure the Village is safe, accessible and aesthetically pleasing.

Objective 4: Promote the commercial core as a place for people.

Objective 5: Identify and promote critical community gateways.

Objective 6: Maintain the Village of Webster as a unique entity.



## Residential Neighborhoods

Objective 1: Provide family-friendly and economically stable residential neighborhoods.

Objective 2: Protect neighborhood character and resident quality of life.

Objective 3: Improve and enhance the character of neighborhood streetscapes.

## Historical Preservation

Objective 1: To preserve and protect the unique residential character of the Village neighborhoods, including but not limited to those with a distinct architectural and/or historic character.

Objective 2: To preserve and enhance the character of the Village's non-residential areas, including its commercial districts and public uses, particularly those exhibiting a distinct architectural and/or historic character.



## Parks and Recreation

The goal of our Village parks is to provide spaces for Webster Village and Town residents to enjoy leisure opportunities in a safe and pleasant environment. The Village Parks and Recreation Committee proposes to assist in providing this environment by carrying out the following objectives.

Objective 1: Improve existing recreational facilities to optimize use and eliminate hazards and/or obsolescence (Including access and signage).

Objective 2: Provide information on current park opportunities to both Village and Town residents.

Objective 3: Investigate and create proposals to acquire land for new parks and expansion of existing parks where possible.

## Infrastructure/Utilities

Objective 1: Continue to reinvest and upgrade existing Village-owned infrastructure as funds become available to secure the economic, social and cultural well-being of the community.

Objective 2: Investigate opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Village's water treatment and wastewater treatment capacities for economic development and revenue generation purposes.

Objective 3: Stay apprised of technological advances and investigates opportunities to improve government efficiency, economic vitality and community quality of life through the provision of new and improved infrastructure.

## Vehicular and Pedestrian Accessibility

Objective 1: Provide safe and convenient pedestrian access between residential areas and major community destinations.

Objective 2: Identify opportunities and needs for traffic calming design elements.

Objective 3: Identify opportunities to enhance the availability of and access to public parking.

Objective 4: Enhance the Village way-finding system.

## Natural Resources

Objective 1: Protect existing Village wooded lots.

Objective 2: Designate Village staff whose mission would be to identify and implement cost saving green initiatives.

Objective 3: Establish and enhance the extension of the Town of Webster Hojak Trail from the Village line to Phillips Rd; ensure the use of such trail as a recreation trail and a nature corridor for deer.



## Intermunicipal Cooperation

Objective 1: Continue to collaborate with the Town of Webster, Webster Central School District and North East Joint Fire District on mutually beneficial issues such as economic development, quality of life services and highways.

Objective 2: Continue communications and relations with Monroe County and its operating division and other regional or state agencies to establish future partnerships.

Objective 3: Collaborate with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) and Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) regarding future transportation and infrastructure improvements to Route 104, Route 250 and Route 404.



## Section 4

### Community Land Use Plan

#### Existing Land Use

The Village of Webster consists of 1,374 parcels on 1,199 acres of land. As depicted in Table 1 and Map 1, residential land uses account for the greatest number of properties and assessed valuation, while industrial land uses account for the largest land area. The New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services utilizes a system of nine categories to catalogue and determine the value of real property for assessment purposes. The following is a brief overview of land use categories represented in the Village of Webster.

##### **Residential**

Residential uses are largely found south of Route 404, with the largest contiguous neighborhood located in the southeast quadrant of the Village. There are approximately 1,132 residential properties, 91 percent of which are classified as single-family. Approximately 77 residential properties are multifamily, accounting for 6 percent of residential assessed valuation. Apartment buildings (those structures with more than 3-residential units) are classified as commercial structures. However, to facilitate discussion they are included under the residential land use. There are only 20 apartment properties within the Village, accounting for 2 percent of residential properties, and 19 percent of total assessed valuation.

##### **Vacant**

There are 87 vacant properties scattered throughout the Village. The largest vacant property is an approximately 40-acre parcel located at the southeast corner of the intersection of State Road and Route 250. Additional vacant properties, which account for 11 percent of total Village area, are found north of Route 404 along Lyon Drive, Donovan Park and Barrett Drive. The majority of these parcels are undeveloped, with a few parking lots serving as interim land uses.

##### **Commercial**

Commercial land uses are concentrated along Main Street, North Avenue, Commercial Street and Donovan Park. The most frequently categorized commercial use is motor vehicle services, which includes repair shops and gas stations. Commercial uses account for 8 percent and 10 percent of total parcels and assessed valuation, respectively.

##### **Recreation and Entertainment**

Recreation and entertainment uses include land uses such as parks and playgrounds, as well as theaters social clubs, and recreation-based businesses, such as Northern Hemisphere Gymnastics on Barrett Drive. According to property assessment data, there are five Recreation and Entertainment uses in the Village accounting for 25 acres.

##### **Community Services**

Community services include land uses such as the Village Hall, Fire Department, Post Office, schools, churches and daycare facilities. These land uses account for 22 Village parcels, and 9 percent of assessed valuation, although the majority of these uses are tax exempt. These land uses are scattered

throughout the Village, though most are found along the Main Street corridor and represent publicly owned parcels.

**Industrial**

There are only eight industrial properties within the Village. However, industrial land uses are the largest land use by area, and the second largest by assessed value. The single largest Village property is owned by Xerox Corporation as part of its massive complex between Panama Drive and Salt Road, north of Route 104. The Xerox property alone accounts for 450 acres, or 37 percent of the Village land area, and 24 percent of its assessed valuation. Additional industrial properties are located along Commercial Street and Orchard Street, with a large parcel also located in the Baker-Kircher neighborhood north of Route 404.

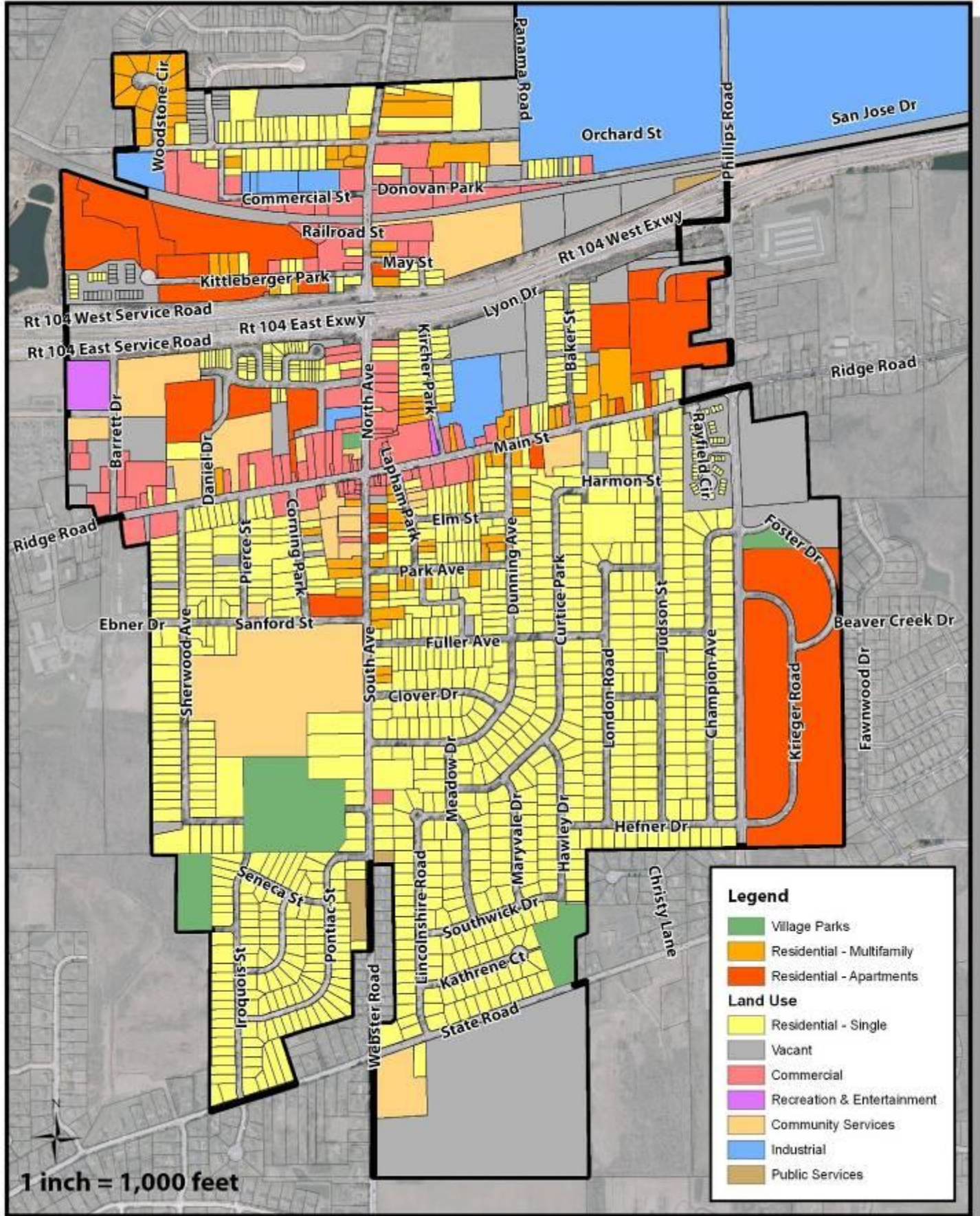
**Public Services**

Public services include uses such as utilities and infrastructure components. There are only three Public Services uses within the Village, which include the Village water towers and private utility parcels located on Route 250 and Phillips Road.

**Table 1: Existing Land Use by Property Classification Category**

Land Use	Parcels		Acres		Assessed Value	
Residential	1,132	82%	415	35%	\$157,783,951	54%
Vacant	87	6%	130	11%	\$3,016,200	1%
Commercial	108	8%	64	6%	\$29,246,904	10%
Recreation & Entertainment	5	<1%	25	2%	\$1,852,900	1%
Community Services	22	2%	63	5%	\$25,873,899	9%
Industrial	8	1%	463	39%	\$73,187,300	25%
Public Services	3	<1%	4	<1%	\$1,445,589	<1%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,374</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,199</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$293,707,448</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Map 1: Village of Webster Existing Land Use



## Future Land use

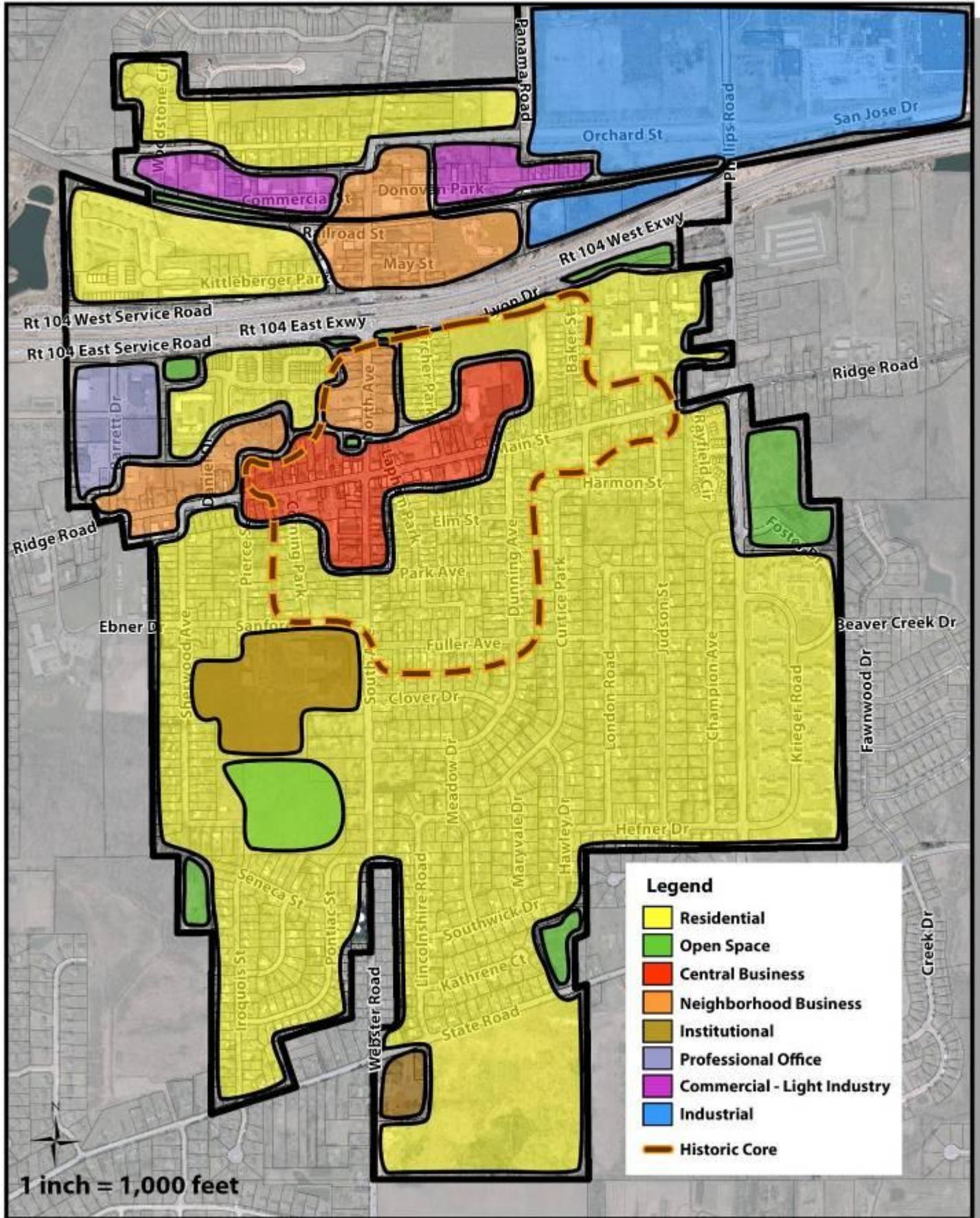
### North Village

- a) Neighborhood Commercial would extend up North Avenue to Commercial Street.
- b) Light Industrial Use would be proposed to the east and west of the Neighborhood Commercial use area along North Avenue.
- c) The east Light Industrial Use would end at the Village line and Orchard Street. The west Light Industrial Use would be a transition area leading to a more heavy industrial use along the east and to the north of Orchard Street, (the Light Industrial Use would continue as a frontage to the north along Orchard Street).
- d) Light Industrial Use would have limited noise and odor production.
- e) Where daycare facilities are located or permitted, a process should be developed to evaluate contiguous properties for appropriateness of use.
- f) Multifamily would be permitted in the Light Industrial Area.
- g) A small neighborhood park and public parking area should be established to the north of Route 104 Expressway.

### Other Areas

- a) The area along South Avenue should be multifamily to Clover Drive. It should be kept residential with parking to the rear. Front lawns should be retained.
- b) Residential buildings with separate walls should characterize the quadrant east of North Avenue bordered.
- c) Kircher Park should be included in any discussion of an old Village character or design.
- d) Areas that are presently zoned R2 should be rezoned as an R1 type zoning.
- e) The large parcel near Kircher Park on Lyon Drive should have a use similar to that of Kircher Park.
- f) There are two parcels north of Foster Drive. The more southerly parcel should become an extension of Harmony Park. The northerly one might be used for a park or for single-family use.
- g) The Village should look into squaring off Village boundary lines.
- h) The large parcel south of State Road and east of Webster Road should be some kind of single-family residential use.
- i) Connecting sidewalks to the existing Village sidewalk system should be present in every new subdivision and should be on both sides of the street, where possible.

# Map 2: Village of Webster Future Land Use



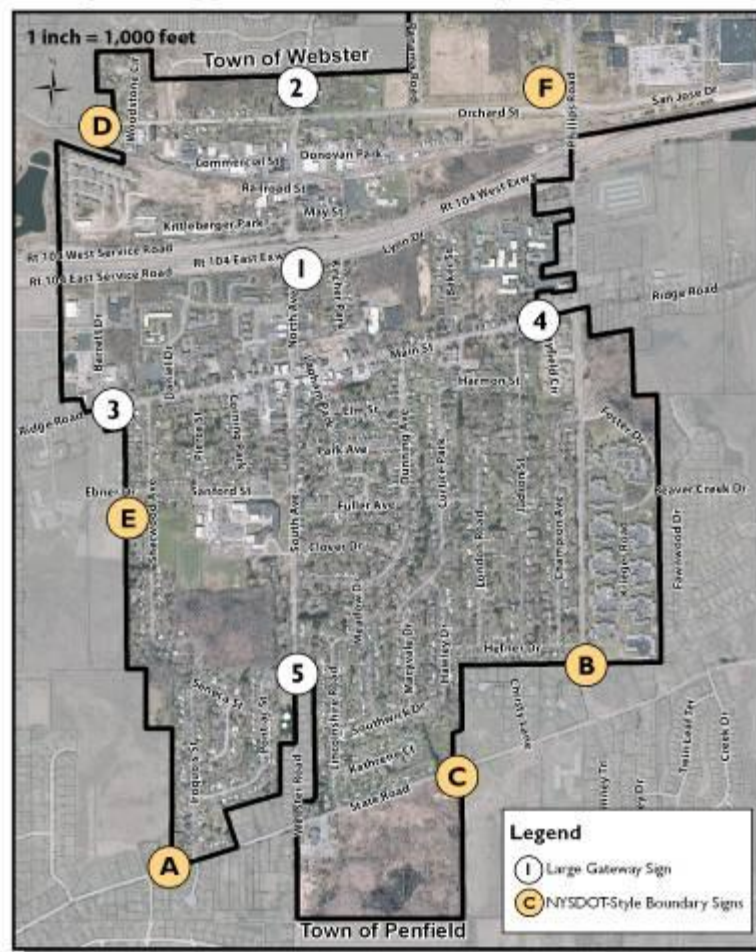
### Community Gateways

- a) Each gateway should have a uniform style. The style might be by contest with input from the Historic Preservation Commission. The Committee recommends that the design incorporate some sort of brick and use of the Village logo.
- b) Develop standards for sign illumination.
- c) Incorporate a speed sign and informational signage into the gateway.
- d) There appears to be 11 signs that announce entry into the Village. The first five listed here should be permanent, monument signs. The other six can remain “green” signs. Signs within the BID should receive BID input.

### Map 3: Gateways

- 1. Southeast corner of Expressway and North Ave. This is a critical sign and must have a permanent base. It might be moved to the state land opposite its present location.
- 2. West side of North Ave.
- 3. South side of W Main Street.
- 4. North side of E Main Street.
- 5. East side of South Ave.
- A. East side of Iroquois Street.
- B. East side of Phillips Rd south of Phillips Village.
- C. North side of State Rd near Schantz Park.
- D. South side of Orchard Street.
- E. South side of Sanford Street.
- F. West side of Phillips Rd at Village line.

Map 3: Village of Webster Gateway Sign Locations



## Section 5

### Community Action Plan

#### Community and Public Services

Objective 1: Expand senior citizen facilities and community resources in order to accommodate the growing population.

- a) Identify service gaps and resource needs for the disabled.
- b) Create a benchmark for community services.
- c) Gauge community interest in services.

Objective 2: Identify alternative transportation opportunities and the effectiveness of existing transit service and utilization rates.

- a) Work with Town to identify location of Webster Area Senior Program Supporters office.
- b) Work with Rochester General Hospital to provide services to Webster.
- c) Lobby the Rochester Greater Regional Transit Authority to place a future Suburban Transit Center or Transit Oriented Development within the Village of Webster.

#### Community Identity and Economic Development

Objective 1: Make the Village a choice destination for new and expanding businesses.

- a) Identify and fully utilize business assistance and incentive programs that are currently available to both retain and attract businesses to the Village Core.
- b) Develop a vision of the types of businesses that are desirable in the Village Core and shape a marketing program around this vision.





- c) Work with Federal and State agencies and the banking community to establish a revolving loan fund program to assist business expansion efforts.
- d) Expand efforts to engage Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE), SUNY's Small Business Development Center and other business counseling programs to work individually with businesses and assist them in start-up and expansion plans.
- e) Develop and maintain an information database of various grant and loan programs that can assist Village Core businesses or prospects.
- f) Develop marketing brochures/material for business attraction. Include demographic and market data, the current mix of traffic and pedestrian counts, information on special events, business assistance programs and incentives, and contact information.
- g) Evaluate maintaining a part-time staff person or presence as principle contact for revitalization efforts in the Village Core. This could increase the likelihood of securing outside aid and would develop relationships within the business community. This individual would also utilize networks of existing businesses, locally and regionally, to target prospects who may be interested in a Webster location.
- h) Coordinate and fully involve existing business and economic development organizations in revitalization and marketing programs to ensure that their individual efforts are fully aligned and that scarce resources are used most effectively. The Village Board, the Village Planning Board, the Village Preservation Committee, the Village of Webster Business Implement District, the Webster Community Coalition for Economic Development, the Webster Chamber of Commerce and others must be involved in revitalization.

Objective 2: Connect the Village to local and regional amenities, destinations and resources.

- a) Require housing and commercial developers to incorporate sidewalks or trails into their site design, linking to existing facilities.
- b) Adopt access management regulations that dictate the use of inter-parcel connection requirements, shared driveways, etc.
- c) Address the need to overcome the barriers to safe and convenient connectivity, which have been created by the Route 104 interchange.

Objective 3: Ensure the Village is safe, accessible and aesthetically pleasing.

- a) Work with property owners in the Village Core to access grants and loans for improvements (façade, signage, landscaping).

- b) Continue to provide appropriate building code information to property owners.
- c) Investigate means for providing tax incentives for property owners interested in rehabilitating buildings in the Core area.
- d) Create and adopt design and architectural standards or guidelines to complement use and bulk requirements for commercial developments.
- e) Convene a forum(s) and/or undertake other ways of communicating with business district property owners in order to educate them as to the advantage of maintaining and improving their properties.
- f) A property standards checklist and design standards should be developed to provide clear and concise guidelines to property owners in the business district.

Objective 4: Promote the commercial core as a place for people.

- a) Continue Village and BID support and organization of festivals, movies, concerts and other events that draw residents and visitors to the Village Core.
- b) Encourage organizations sponsoring events and development activities in Webster to cooperatively promote the Village Core and coordinate marketing efforts. i.e. BID, Farmers Market, Chamber, Churches, Historical Society, School District, Town Parks and Recreation Commission, and others.
- c) Housing in the Village Core area is important and developers should be encouraged to build market rate and upscale housing.
- d) North Avenue needs to be promoted as an area with viable development potential.
- e) Improvements and coordination of various websites promoting Webster should be undertaken with consideration given to sharing of resources and development of one central website that is superior in quality and usability.

Objective 5: Identify and promote critical community gateways.

- a) Prepare a “gateway” plan for the Village of Webster that will define limits or boundaries for the Village Core, stress the unique characteristics of Webster’s neighborhoods and quality of life and provide visitors with a definitive image of Webster.
- b) Select and install various components of a gateway plan such as:

1. Signs.
2. Art.
3. Landscaping.
4. Surface materials.
5. Banners.
6. Lighting.
7. Streetscapes.
8. Information.
9. Way-finding.

Objective 6: Maintain the Village of Webster as a unique municipality.

- a) Municipal theme or themes for the Village Core and districts should be developed that will describe Webster to visitors. i.e. family and community, history (people, events, industry, activities, commerce), etc.
- b) Recognize the importance of “branding” and the need to “sell” the Village with cohesive approaches that involve the Chamber of Commerce, the BID, SCORE, and marketing professionals as appropriate.
- c) Various State programs such as the “Brownfields” program could potentially be a source of funding for a targeted marketing strategy.



## Residential Neighborhoods

Objective 1: Provide family-friendly and economically stable residential neighborhoods.

- a) Enhance the supply and accessibility of neighborhood parks and recreation resources in all residential areas.
- b) Promote and support the formation of Neighborhood Watch groups.
- c) Provide tools to Increase code enforcement effectiveness and to deal with derelict properties.

Objective 2: Protect neighborhood character and resident quality of life.

- a) Identify and eliminate hazardous traffic and safety concerns. Enhance the oversight roles of the Code Enforcement Officer and Planning Board on major building façade renovations.

- b) Develop policies within the zoning code on the installation of existing and new technologies in residential districts, including satellite dishes, solar panels, wind harnessing technology, personal telecommunications devices, and others as deemed appropriate by the Planning and Zoning Boards.

Objective 3: Improve and enhance the character of neighborhood streetscapes.

- a) Create a listing of appropriate large shade trees for use in right-of-ways, and avoid the use of minor deciduous trees in these areas.
- b) Require the planting of one large shade tree per 50 linear feet of new roadway construction, to be placed in the right-of-ways.
- c) Require the planting of a minimum of one large shade tree per housing unit in new residential developments, in addition to street tree plantings.
- d) Require the installation of sidewalks and curbing on all new public or private streets in the Village.
- e) Modify the zoning code in the R1-13.6 and R1-9.6 concerning setback and area requirements such that new development in these districts will conform to the existing community character of adjacent residences.

## Historical Preservation Action Plan

Objective 1: To preserve and protect the unique residential character of the Village neighborhoods, including but not limited to those with a distinct architectural and/or historic character.

- a) The Village Board should pursue grant funding to conduct an historic resources inventory of properties in the Village. This inventory can be used to draw attention to historic resources but the decision of whether to pursue State and National Register listing and/or local landmark status listing would remain with the property owner.
- b) Provide incentives for adaptive re-use of historic structures by permitting a wider range of uses to occur in such structures as special uses. These may include but are not limited to:
  1. Artist studio.
  2. Antique shop or art gallery.
  3. Bed & breakfast.
  4. Museum.
  5. Office use.
  6. Mixed residential/commercial.

- c) The Village should protect and preserve existing historic resources by continuing to support local efforts to place historically significant buildings on the State and National register of Historic Places.
- d) The Village Board should consider adopting regulations, special conditions and restrictions for the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and uses of buildings and structures that have historical value and significance. Such regulations may go beyond the voluntary ordinance currently in place.
- e) Create Village recognition of historic resources. The Village could develop its own recognition program for historic properties to recognize property owners who have restored historic resources in the community. Such programs raise awareness of the importance of historic preservation and acknowledge those who contribute to preservation efforts.
- f) Pursue funding through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Resources including grants for projects that improve, protect, preserve, rehabilitate or restore properties on the State or National Register for use by all segments of the population.
- g) Raise awareness of the State’s existing Real property Tax Exemptions for Historic Properties and have local officials consider adopting tax incentive provisions of the program.
- h) Have the Village sponsor workshops on historic preservation techniques for homeowners. Encourage Village trustees and other employees to attend workshops sponsored by the Landmark Society of Western New York or other workshops that provide education in the area of historic preservation. These workshops also offer opportunities to network with representatives from other villages and towns who have ideas on historic preservation.



Objective 2: To preserve and enhance the character of the Village’s non-residential areas, including its commercial districts and public uses, particularly those exhibiting a distinct architectural and/or historic character.

- a) Have the Village adopt design guidelines currently under development for various districts in the Village.
- b) Seek grants to offer low interest loans to improve building facades of Village center buildings and historic homes.
- c) Dedicate resources to pursue specific action items identified by the Preservation Commission including:
  1. Establishing an historic district theme.
  2. Encouraging the placement of awnings and shutters on windows.
  3. Requiring uniform sign design consistent with the Colonial Revival period.
  4. Establishing a business district theme consistent with the historic district theme.
  5. Providing benches, railings, planters and trash receptacles reflecting the business district.
  6. Encourage street festivals, garden and house tours, and community events to promote Village spirit and an awareness of historical heritage.
  7. Review current zoning for areas now designated Neighborhood Business, Central Business and General Industrial to allow for the expansion of business and industry. This should include historic preservation.
- d) To preserve, and enhance historic sites, structures and districts within the Village.

## Parks and Recreation Action Plan

Objective 1: Improve existing recreational facilities to optimize use and eliminate hazards and/or obsolescence (Includes access and signage).

- a) Perform bi-annual walkthrough of each park to assess condition for needed repairs and replacement of equipment.
- b) Provide recommendations to the Village Superintendent of Public Works and follow up on scheduled completion of these tasks.
- c) Assist as needed in cost analysis and justification of updates and upgrades of existing equipment.
- d) Research and create proposals for improved access to existing facilities.
- e) Research and create proposals for new facilities (indoor winter park facility).

Objective 2: Provide information on current park opportunities to both Village and Town residents.

- a) Create and maintain an updated brochure on existing parks and recreational facilities available in the Village.
- b) Distribute brochures to locations and make sure supply is replenished as needed.
- c) Provide information on parks and recreation facilities for display on Village web site.
- d) Maintain consistent signage for all Village parks and recreational facilities.
- e) Create, distribute and analyze a regular conducted survey concerning facility usage.

Objective 3: Investigate and create proposals to acquire land for new parks and expansion of existing parks where possible.

- a) Identify all open land in the Village and determine its assessed value and desirability.
- b) Create proposals for Village Board consideration.
- c) Investigate the feasibility of developing a small neighborhood park on excess Federal property (1.6 acres) behind the U.S. Post Office at the terminus of Reynolds Road.
- d) Investigate the feasibility of utilizing excess Village property adjacent to the water towers on Route 250 for a community park.
- e) Investigate feasible development of a public park north of Route 104, potentially as part of future private real estate development activities.

## Infrastructure/Utility Action Plan

Objective 1: Continue to reinvest and upgrade existing Village-owned infrastructure as funds becomes available to secure the economic, social and cultural well-being of the community.

- a) Update five year and ten year capital improvement plans on an annual basis that prioritize and coordinate infrastructure improvements.
- b) Investigate opportunities to utilize a Geographic Information System to sporadically inventory existing infrastructure.
- c) Field verify and rate the sufficiency/deficiency of existing infrastructure on a rolling-basis to assist in the formation of capital improvement plans.

Objective 2: Investigate opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Village’s water treatment and wastewater treatment capacities for economic development and revenue generation purposes.

- a) Identify alternative uses for the Village water system, such as district cooling, to take advantage of the water’s constant 52° F temperature.
- b) Investigate the marketable use of Village water for various sectors of the food preparation and food production industries, such as prepared fruits and breweries.
- c) Identify additional users and geographic markets for the Village’s excess water supply.
- d) Install a water treatment system at the Village water plant to lower hardness levels.
- e) Identify additional users for the Village’s excess wastewater treatment capacity.
- f) Investigate and mitigate storm water infiltration into the sanitary sewer system.

Objective 3: Stay apprised of technological advances and investigates opportunities to improve government efficiency, economic vitality and community quality of life through the provision of new and improved infrastructure.

- a) Investigate the formation of an Energy Services Company as a means to reduce government and residents energy costs, while generating revenue for the Village.
- b) Investigate the use of non-fossil fuel-based energy sources, such as geothermal, wind and solar resources to reduce government energy costs.
- c) Investigate the provision of a Wi-Fi network to improve the economic competitiveness of Village business districts.
- d) Look into the possibility of providing vehicle-charging stations.

## Vehicular and Pedestrian Accessibility

Objective 1: Provide safe and convenient pedestrian access between residential areas and major community destinations.

- a) Inventory sidewalk conditions throughout the Village, and identify critical gaps in service.





- b) Identify funding sources such as the Federal Safe Routes to Schools program, to repair and extend sidewalks in targeted areas.
- c) Perform a gap analysis for potential crosswalks along South Avenue, North Avenue, West Main Street and East Main Street to improve pedestrian mobility between Village quadrants.
- d) Identify improvements to pedestrian accessibility through the Route 104 interchange with North Avenue.
- e) Extend sidewalks or dedicated non-motorized trails to all Village parks.
- f) Require the installation of sidewalk and trail connections to adjacent streets, parks and pedestrian networks for all new development.

Objective 2: Identify opportunities and needs for traffic calming design elements.

- a) Seek consultation and commitment from Monroe County, the State Department of Transportation and the Genesee Transportation Council on the development of an action plan to mitigate safety concerns.
- b) Encourage other entities to make necessary improvements as needed, which occur outside of the Village of Webster's jurisdiction.

Objective 3: Identify opportunities to enhance the availability of and access to public parking.

- a) Enhance the Village's current parking way finding system with a public educational and marketing campaign that promotes Village businesses and the location of available parking.
- b) Investigate the provision of dedicated and visually enhanced sidewalk connectivity between the municipal parking lot behind the Village Hall and Routes 250 and 404 to service adjacent businesses.
- c) Investigate the feasible relocation and consolidation of both the stand-alone Village highway department garage behind Village Hall and the stand-alone salt storage barn on Dean Spring Drive to an alternate location, opening these areas to expanded public parking.
- d) Investigate alternative parking configurations for the area in front of the Webster Museum on Lapham Park to increase capacity.

## Natural Resources

Objective 1: Protect existing Village wooded lots.

- a) Identify these natural resources.
- b) Maintain an aggressive shade tree planting program.



Objective 2: Designate Village staff whose mission would be to identify and implement cost saving green initiatives.

- a) Explore energy saving alternatives, which are environmentally friendly.
- b) Look into green grants.

Objective 3: Establish and enhance the extension of the Town of Webster Hojak Trail from the Village line to Phillips Road; ensure the use of such trail as a recreation trail and a nature corridor for deer.

- a) Investigate funding sources for beautification of trail.
- b) Identify signage, which will indicate local wildlife in the area.

## Intermunicipal Cooperation

Objective 1: Continue to collaborate with the Town of Webster, Webster Central School District and North East Joint Fire District on mutually beneficial issues such as economic development, quality of life services and highways.

- a) Conduct an annual meeting in order to capitalize on grants or funding for equipment and services.
- b) Investigate additional shared service agreements.

Objective 2: Continue communications and relations with Monroe County and its operating division and other regional or State agencies to establish future partnerships.

- a) Work on relations with Monroe County, Genesee Finger Lake Regional Planning Council, Department of State and Comptroller's office.
- b) Work with Monroe County, Department of State and Comptroller's Office on obtaining current and accurate information.
- c) Enhance relationship with the local Department of State division of local governmental services.

Objective 3: Collaborate with the NYS DOT and GTC regarding future transportation improvements to Route 104, Route 250 and Route 404.

- a) Meet with the Department of Transportation on a regular basis.
- b) Appoint a liaison to the Genesee Transportation Council.
- c) Transfer Route 404 corridor from New York State to the Village.



## Comprehensive Plan Committee

Mayor Peter Elder  
Matthew Chatfield – Chairman  
Mark Nicholson - Chairman  
Peter Adams  
Peter Bowers  
Dorothea Ciccarelli  
Pam Elder  
Robert Fantauzzo  
Jude Lancy  
Bill MacDonald  
Donna Rickard  
Paul Scheible Jr.  
Jerry Spronz  
Jake Swingly  
Dimitri Stefanou  
Rick Walter  
David White

## Glossary of Terms

BID	Webster Business Improvement District
COG	Council of Government
CBD	Village of Webster's Central Business District
GTC	Genesee Transportation Council
NEJFD	North East Joint Fire District
NYS DOT	New York State Department of Transportation
SCORE	Service Core of Retired Executives
WASPS	Webster Association of Senior Program Supporters
Way-finding	Directory System
WCCED	Webster Community Coalition for Economic Development



## Appendix

Village of Webster Core Revitalization Study

Village of Webster Design Guidelines

Village of Webster Historic Comprehensive Plan Report



DRAFT

# Village of Webster Village Core Revitalization Plan



Prepared by:

**Webster Community  
Coalition for Economic  
Development (WCCED)**

**November 2010**

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VILLAGE CORE REVITALIZATION STUDY  
VILLAGE OF WEBSTER

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Matthew Chatfield

Mayor Peter Elder

David Galeazzo

David McLellan

Amy Werther

Kevin Werther

**Plan Consultants**

Webster Community Coalition  
For Economic Development  
(WCCED)

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## VILLAGE OF WEBSTER VILLAGE CORE REVITALIZATION PLAN

### **Preface**

The purpose of the Village Core Revitalization Plan for the Village of Webster is to:

- Provide a guide for Village government, for property owners and for businesses in their decision-making in order to capitalize on village core assets and to strengthen commerce in the business district.
- Intended to strengthen the business core of the community and preserve its unique characteristics.
- Improves the competitiveness of the Village in securing federal and state assistance for Village priority projects.

### **Section I: Introduction**

A review is made of both the need for and the purposes of preparing the Village Core Revitalization Plan, its relationship to the Village's Comprehensive Plan, and background on the purposes of comprehensive planning. The Revitalization Plan is intended to serve as both a stand-alone document that can be used as the basis for grant assistance applications as well as an integral part of the Village's Comprehensive Plan which is being prepared on a parallel course.

The section provides discussion of a SWOT analysis undertaken as part of the planning work and reviews public participation efforts and a survey of building property owners in the Village Core. There is also a listing of the various elements included in the Plan.

### **Section II: History of Webster's Village Core, Current Land Uses and Boundaries of the Village Core Study Area**

The origins of Webster's Village core or center are reviewed from the early 1800's. Originally an agricultural center and distribution point for the larger Town, the Village core developed into the primary hub of commercial and industrial developments well as the focus of the community's social life. Later, suburban residential growth along with the location of a major Xerox Corporation facility and the construction of Rt. 104 transformed the community. Since 2000, commercial expansion in the surrounding Town has diminished the role of the Village as the primary center for commercial activity in

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the area but the Village core is still attractive and vibrant and there is potential for new retail, residential, and office uses.

The section provides brief review of current land uses in the Village Core. There is also a description of the boundaries of the area defined as the Village Core for purposes of the Plan.

### **Section III: Plan Vision, Goals and Objectives**

A vision statement for the future of the Village Core is set forth as are goals that support the vision statement. These are organized around the following community planning concerns:

- Making Webster's Core a Good Place to Do Business
- Regional Connections
- Village Core to be Aesthetically Pleasing
- Stress Village Core Identity and Role as a Gateway
- The Village Core as a Place for People
- Wayfinding and Convenient Parking
- Accessibility and Safety

### **Section IV: Implementation Strategies**

This section of the Plan presents a number of planning recommendations that will, if implemented, further the goals established for the Village Core Revitalization Plan. These recommendations or strategies are organized around the major topics established in the goals section of the plan. The timing for implementation of each strategy and identification of responsible parties are addressed in this section. The section concludes with a discussion of the Main Street Four Point Approach and its potential usefulness for Webster's Village Core Revitalization

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## **A. I.: INTRODUCTION**

### **A. VILLAGE CORE REVITALIZATION PLAN**

This Village Core Revitalization Plan for the Village of Webster is intended to guide Village Government, local development organizations, property owners and businesses in their decision-making in order to capitalize on downtown assets and to strengthen commerce in the business district. The plan is also intended to strengthen the core of the community and preserve its unique characteristics.

### **B. COORDINATION WITH VILLAGE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The Village Core Revitalization Plan has been prepared in concert with the preparation of an updated Comprehensive Plan for the Village of Webster. The Revitalization Plan is to be incorporated as part of the Comprehensive Plan and is intended to advance comprehensive planning goals for the community.

Comprehensive Plans, often referred to as master plans, are intended to establish guidelines for the future growth and development of a community. They represent the adopted official statement of a local legislative in regard to both future development and conservation of existing resources. Master Plans set goals, examine existing conditions, and provide long term visions for the physical, social, and economic characteristics of the community in the years ahead. Equally important, master plans outline the policies, guidelines and recommendations that will bring these visions to reality. The Village of Webster is preparing its updated Comprehensive Plan under New York State General enabling legislation including Municipal Law Article 5-J, Sections 7-722 and 7-741 of Village Law. The purposes of the Plan are to:

- Identify community goals and recommended actions to achieve those goals
- Provide an outline for orderly growth, providing continued guidance for decision-making
- Forge a document which focuses on immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development

While New York State does not require the preparation and adoption of master plans by local governments by local governments, it does greatly encourage such planning and provides a process for this in the statutes including the means to adopt a formal master plan. Equally important, New York State's statutes require that local zoning laws, and all other land use regulations, be adopted in accordance with a comprehensive (or well considered) plan. Accordingly, master or comprehensive plans should provide the backbone for local zoning ordinances and will provide a legal defense for community regulations. Adopted plans also can provide the basis for other actions affecting the development of the community.

Comprehensive Plans bring a number of other benefits to communities as the Plan:

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- Represents the adopted official statement of a local legislative body in regard to both future development and conservation of existing resources
  - Examines existing conditions, sets goals, and provides long-term visions of the community's future and strategies for reaching these goals
  - Improves chances for grants and loans
  - Provides a more welcoming environment for economic growth.

### C. PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process began in October of 2009 when the Webster Community Coalition for Economic Development (WCCED) authorized staff to begin preparation of the Revitalization Plan. WCCED is a public-private non-profit Local Development Corporation formed under the laws of the State of New York and is recognized as a 501 C-3 organization by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. WCCED was created by representatives of the Town and Village of Webster, the Webster Central School District, the Village of Webster Business Improvement District, and the Webster Chamber of Commerce. These entities contribute financially to the organization to support staff and programs. Additional contributions come from private businesses and individuals in the community.

WCCED's primary goals are to plan, organize and implement local community and economic development activities for the Webster area. One of its primary activities involves the provision of assistance for the preparation of community and economic development plans and strategies. When WCCED was being organized, Village representatives had expressed great interest in seeing a Village core revitalization plan. The Village has not had such a plan and its absence was seen as an impediment to securing outside aid such as grant assistance from New York State's Main Street Program.

In addition to the above, there were a number of reasons identified by WCCED for developing a Village Core Revitalization plan. These included:

- The Downtown area is a symbol of community health, local quality of life, pride and community history. These are all factors in the community's efforts to sustain itself and improve economic vitality. They also have town-wide implications as it is much easier to attract investment to any area of the community when you can proudly exhibit a vibrant center.
- A vibrant downtown retains and creates jobs which translate into a stronger tax base. Long term revitalization strategies facilitate the establishment of viable businesses that use public services and provide tax revenues for the community.
- The downtown area is a good incubator for new small businesses which form the building blocks of a healthy economy.

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- ❑ A vital downtown area uses land, infrastructure, and tax dollars efficiently by concentrating activities and creating a “critical mass” of complimentary uses.
  - ❑ A healthy downtown helps protect property values in surrounding residential neighborhoods.
  - ❑ The traditional downtown area is an ideal location for independent businesses.
  - ❑ A revitalized downtown increases the community’s options for goods and services including basic staples, professional services, restaurants or other functions such as housing and entertainment.
  - ❑ Downtown provides an important civic forum where citizens can congregate and interact. Parades, festivals, street parties, and other celebrations along with farmers’ markets reinforce the sense of community.

A SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Weaknesses) of the area was also undertaken by the Steering Committee to identify the positive and negative forces within and without the area and to develop a full awareness of the local situation. This awareness was intended to help with planning and decision-making. Additionally, the SWOT analysis was intended to help the Steering Committee to focus on goals, objectives and strategies which would:

- ❖ Build on strengths
- ❖ Minimize weaknesses
- ❖ Seize opportunities
- ❖ Counteract threats.

A summary of the SWOT Analysis based on community input is provided as Appendix A.

#### D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

From the beginning of the process, the opportunity for public involvement was of great importance. Two public informational meetings were held at the start of the planning exercise and another session was held to review the preliminary recommendations of the study. Additionally, the Plan Steering Committee, with the assistance of the Village of Webster Business Improvement District (BID), developed and distributed a community survey which was mailed to owners of properties in the Village core area,

Some 200 properties were identified as being within the Village core and, after eliminating multiple properties owned by the same individual or firm, government, or utilities, the mailing list was reduced to 150 property owners. Some 17 surveys were returned as undeliverable and 47 respondents returned completed surveys which represented an outstanding response rate of 35%. A copy of the survey is included as Appendix B.

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A copy of the survey response compilation is included with Appendix C. The survey disclosed that a number of Commercial property owners in the Village viewed location and business opportunity as the principal reasons why they invested in the area. These owners overwhelmingly (78% to 22%) felt that access to their facilities and parking was adequate. Property owners also appeared to be very positive about the future of the Village's business district as over 64% indicated that they are considering making property improvements within the next two years.

Respondents to the WCCED survey identified the property tax load, building upkeep, utility costs and building appearance as the principal challenges of owning property in the Village. A full 86% also viewed revitalization of the business district as important to them.

In addressing the types of incentives or assistance that would be most helpful, façade improvement grants, energy efficiency grants and loans, and business assistance loans were selected in that order by survey respondents. These property owners also identified the types of services that were most needed from the Village and/or the Business Improvement District. These include tax incentives for investment, help with façade improvements, and more business activity.

#### E. PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Village Core Revitalization Plan is organized around the following elements:

1. Introduction
2. History of Webster's Village Core, Current Land Uses and Study Boundaries
3. Community Vision and Planning Goals for the Village Core
4. Recommended Strategies and Implementation Recommendations

Additionally, appendices are included which provide background on community strengths and weaknesses as perceived by the public. Additionally, information is provided on a survey of property owners used in the planning process.

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## II. HISTORY OF DOWNTOWN WEBSTER, CURRENT LAND USE, AND VILLAGE CORE BOUNDARIES

### A. HISTORY OF WEBSTER'S VILLAGE CORE

Many communities throughout the United States have a downtown or core area that has historically served as the core or center of civic and commercial activity. In the Village of Webster, the origins of the area referred to as downtown, or perhaps more appropriately, the town center, date back to 1812 when the first two buildings were constructed near the present four corners. One of these buildings was a store and the other a tavern. From this modest beginning, the community and its center began to grow becoming the commercial, social, and educational center of the town.<sup>1</sup>

The history of Village center reflects the changing economy of the community. The Village core was originally an agricultural center and distribution point for the town. The junction of Ridge Road and Webster Nine-Mile Point Road, which connected shipping points on the Erie Canal and the New York Central Railroad with a small port on Lake Ontario, was referred to as “the Village” because of a concentration of population and businesses. The railroad at the north end of the Village attracted dried or evaporated apple businesses and small wood-working industries. The Village continued to be the shipping center for the area’s dried apple industry until well after the First World War. The Village also had the world’s largest basket factory and was the center for the canning industry in Monroe County.<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning of the 1900’s, several events significantly influenced the development of the Village and its downtown core. The first bank since the Civil War era was established in the core area and the Rochester-Sodus Bay Trolley connected Webster to Rochester leading to a major expansion of the Village residential area. In 1905, the Village was incorporated followed by municipal infrastructure improvements and services including fire protection, water service and sewage disposal.<sup>3</sup>

As the primary commercial hub of the area, the downtown area of Webster also became the focus of the community’s social life. The presence of the post office, library, banks, and government offices all served to bring people into the area. Further, downtown buildings also had several function providing retail space on the ground floor and offices or residential apartments on the upper floors. These tenants provided sufficient rental income for property owners to both make a profit and properly maintain their buildings.<sup>4</sup>

After World War Two, there were striking changes that transformed Webster’s character. First, the agricultural nature of the area has been seen major encroachment by suburban growth moving outward

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<sup>1</sup> Webster ... Through The Years, Esther Dunn

<sup>2</sup> Village of Webster Comprehensive Plan, 1998

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Reed, Materials prepared for Development study, 1965

<sup>4</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, “What Happened to America’s Main Streets?”

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from Rochester. The Town of Webster became one of the major suburban residential areas in Monroe County with its population more than doubling between 1950 and 1960. Substantial residential development has continued to the present. As a consequence, the agricultural industry that made the Village center a market point, administrative, social, and institutional center has largely disappeared.

Secondly, decisions made in the 1950's and 60's by the former Haloid Company, now Xerox Corporation, to invest in major office, research and manufacturing facilities to be located in the Village and the Town of Webster brought about extensive changes in population growth trends in the area. The construction of Route 104 also contributed greatly to the area's growth as access to the metropolitan area was vastly improved.

The most recent stage of growth in the Town of Webster (1980 to present) has been characterized by rapid expansion of residential development, the growth in commercial development undeveloped properties transferring to park land. Undeveloped land experienced a large reduction in total acreage from 6,944 in 2000 to 3,366 in 2006, a decline of 3,578 acres (51.5%). Undeveloped land presently accounts for 17.7 percent of the Town's total land area, down from 39.5percent in 2000.<sup>5</sup>

The population of the Webster area, outside the Village, grew substantially between 1980 and 2000 (latest census data available) claiming from 28,925 in 1980 to 37,926, an increase of 9,001 or 31.12%. In the same period, the Village of Webster went from 5,499 to 5,216, a loss of 283 residents or 5.15%.<sup>6</sup>

Along with population growth in the Town, there has been significant commercial expansion in the Town, particularly since 2000. This expansion includes the Webster Town Center and the Webster Woods Plaza along with a number of retail and service establishments located along the Route 404/Ridge Road Corridor. Other shopping and commercial centers in Webster include Webster Square, Webster Plaza, Wegmans Plaza and Lowes. These developments have certainly diminished the role of the Village core as the center for commercial activity in the Town but the downtown area is still attractive and vibrant. There is potential for new retail, residential, and office uses as evidenced by recent developments including the construction of an upscale steak house restaurant and a new multi-use office building as well as conversion of the former Key Bank into commercial and residential uses.

## **B. CURRENT LAND USE IN VILLAGE CORE**

Webster's Village Core is made up of a mixture of uses, including residential units in the form of single-family and multi-family dwellings and apartments, a variety of commercial units such as retail, restaurants, pubs, service businesses and banks, professional offices, as well as vacant storefronts and land. There are community services located within the Village Core including a Village Park, Village Hall, and the Northeast Joint Fire District Fire Station.

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<sup>5</sup> Town of Webster Comprehensive Plan Update, 2008

<sup>6</sup> Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council and 2000 Census



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The main clusters of commercial uses occur along Main Street, divided by Rt. 250 (North Avenue) and on North Avenue up to Commercial Street and Donovan Park. There are relatively few vacant buildings in the study area and very few industrial uses.

Public parking is currently available in the following locations:

- Directly on East and West Main Street
- Behind the Village Hall and Fire Station
- Behind Village DPW buildings adjacent to Corning park
- Areas around Veteran’s Memorial Park behind the north side of West Main Street
- Areas behind commercial bindings on the north side of East Main Street
- Area behind the north side of West Main Street opposite Pierce Street.

The majority of properties within the study area are owned by residents of Webster, Rochester and other areas in Monroe and Wayne Counties. A very small number of properties are held by owners in other parts of New York State or outside the state.

### **C. VILLAGER CORE BOUNDARIES**

The study area was defined by the Study Steering Committee as including all of the parcels that are currently zoned as Central Business including those with frontage on Main Street from just west of Corning Park to beyond Kircher Park. Other areas considered as part of the Village Core include the Barrett Road area which is classified as the West End Business District, an area adjacent to Daniel Drive which is classified in the zoning ordinance as neighborhood business, properties adjacent to North Avenue , south of Rt. 104, that are currently classified as neighborhood business, properties on the west side of North Avenue between Rt. 104 and Donovan park that are currently industrial, and properties on the east side of North Avenue that are zoned industrial and include properties abutting May Street, Donovan Park, and Orchard Street. The following maps illustrate the Project Study Area and Planning Sub-Areas.



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## II. III. VISION AND GOALS FOR WEBSTER’S VILLAGE CORE REVITALIZATION

### A. Vision Statement

A Vision Statement for the future of Webster’s Core area was decided upon by the Study’s Steering Committee. Visioning is a process by which a community envisions the future it wants, and then plans on how to achieve it. The process brings people together to develop a shared image of “where” they want their community to be in the future. Once a community has envisioned where it wants to be, it can begin to consciously work toward that goal.

The following statement reflects the Village Core Revitalization Committee’s vision of what the Village Core should be in the future:

***Webster’s Village Core will host mixed uses featuring shopping including niche retail, commercial and professional offices, dining, recreation, leisure-time activities, and living arrangements. The “small town” feel of the downtown will be emphasized by it being a walkable and bicycle friendly area. The historic nature will be enhanced through architectural features of new and old buildings. The core area will draw local residents as well as visitors to the area for local events, shopping and dining experiences. The Village Core, including the West End (route 404), the north part of the Village (Rt.104) and Main Street, will continue to function as gateways to the community and serve as the focal point of community activity.***

### B. GOALS FOR WEBSTER’S VILLAGE CORE REVITALIZATION

The Village Core Revitalization Plan will be used as a basis for decisions that affect the physical, economic, and social character of the Village of Webster. Accordingly, it must reflect the special needs,

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values and desires of residents in those communities. Goals provide this specialized guidance, transforming collective community values into implementation strategies. These implementation strategies (Section IV) may be action items, coordination items, and/or require further study.

- **Goals:** General aims of the community that describe desired end situations toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are both broad and long-range and represent an end to be sought although they may never actually be attained.

The following are the goals established for the revitalization of Webster's Village Core:

**A. Making Webster's Core a Good Place to Do Business**

Revitalization efforts need to enhance the mix of uses in the Village Core particularly on the ground floors of businesses that open up to the street. The Village Core should promote a synergy between the community and businesses to allow for increased diversity and activity.

**B. Regional Connections**

The core area should connect to nearby amenities and resources, such as hiking and biking trails, Town Centre, and Village Neighborhoods. Impediments to this connectivity, such as existing railroad tracks, should be removed.

**C. Village Core to be Aesthetically Pleasing**

The Village Core should be aesthetically pleasing with more cohesiveness in design and the identity of the area which it conveys to residents and visitors alike. Architectural and building standards should be employed to improve the future physical attractiveness of the core area.

**D. Stress Village Core Identity and Role as a Gateway**

The Village Core should be a highly identifiable unique part of the community and various improvements such as signs and streetscapes should maintain and enhance that identity. There should be BID signs marking the Village Core and incentives for improving landscaping and building appearance along with decorative improvements and features that would be unique to the downtown area.

**E. The Village Core as a Place for People**

The Village Core should be a place for people to live and do business, dine out, walk around, meet others, see art and local history, hear music and concerts, and enjoy holidays, festivals and local events. The streets, parking and open space should be designed to be flexible, attractive and to ensure a safe pedestrian environment. The Center Square should continue to function as the premier public place in the core area.

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**F. Wayfinding and Convenient Parking**

The Village Core will continue to be an important civic, commercial, and residential district for the Village of Webster. Signage and markers must clearly direct residents and visitors to convenient parking close to downtown businesses and events. There should be a cohesive and comprehensive approach to wayfinding using design guidelines and stressing a unique sense of place for the core area.

**G. Accessibility and Safety**

The Village Core should be a place for people of all ages and abilities and access by car, bike, or feet should be safe and convenient.

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### III. IV. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

#### A. INTRODUCTION

Implementation strategies offer the means to achieve the goals and objectives identified in the Plan. These strategies vary in scope depending upon the intended result. For example, an implementation strategy can be specific, such as “pursue funding opportunities for renovation of the Town Hall” or more general such as “continue efforts to actively promote and attract desired types of industry in the Village”.

The implementation program also sets forth time frames for implantation of the strategies and identifies the responsibility for achieving them.

#### B. Types of Strategies

Implementation strategies are categorized into four different types including:

**Action:** Can be acted upon to produce a result

**Village and/or Town Board Action:** Reflects a policy which must be adopted by the legislative board(s) of one or more of the communities participating in this Plan

**Special Study Needs:** Additional study to determine best course of action

**Coordination:** Requires ongoing coordination with other parties outside a community or group of communities

#### C. Related Goals

Strategies are organized by each of the goals identified in Section III.

#### D. Priority for Implementation

Indicates when the strategy should be implemented on the basis of the following terms:

- Short-term (under 12 months)
- Medium-term (12 to 36 months)
- Long-term (over 36 months – ongoing)

#### E. Responsible Government, Agencies and other Entities

Lists the governmental department as well as other agencies or groups that will lead implementation of the strategy.

**A. Goal A: MAKING WEBSTER’S CORE A GOOD PLACE TO DO BUSINESS**

Revitalization efforts need to enhance the mix of uses in the Village Core particularly on the ground floors of businesses that open up to the street. The Village Core should promote a synergy between the community and businesses to allow for increased diversity and activity

Strategy	Timing	Type of Strategy and Responsibility
Identify and fully utilize business assistance and incentive programs that are currently available to both retain and attract businesses to the Village Core	Short-Term	Action/ Coordination ----- BID / Village Board / Chamber / WCCED
Develop a vision of the types of businesses that are desirable in the Village Core and shape a marketing program around this vision	Short-Term	Special Study / Action ----- BID / Village Board / Chamber / WCCED
Work with Federal and State agencies and the banking community to establish a revolving loan fund program to assist business expansion efforts	Short-Term	Coordination / Action ----- BID / Village Board / WCCED
Expand efforts to engage SCORE, SUNY’s Small Business Development Center, and other business counseling programs to work individually with businesses and assist them in start-up and expansion plans	Short-Term	Coordination / Action ----- BID / Village Board / WCCED
Develop and maintain an information database of various grant and loan programs that can assist Village Core businesses or prospects	Short-Term	Action ----- BID / Village Board / WCCED
Develop marketing brochures/material for business attraction. Include demographic and market data, the current mix of traffic and pedestrian counts, information on special events, business assistance programs and incentives, and contact information	Medium Term	Action ----- BID / Village Board
Designate one person as principle contact for revitalization efforts in the Village core. This could increase the likelihood of securing outside aid and would develop relationships with the business community. This individual would also utilize networks of existing businesses, locally and regionally, to target prospects who may be interested in a Webster	Short-Term	Action -----

location		Village Board
Coordinate and fully involve existing business and economic development organizations in revitalization and marketing programs to ensure that their individual efforts are fully aligned and that scarce resources are used most effectively. The Village Board, the Village Planning Board, the Village Preservation Committee, the Village of Webster Business Implement District, the Webster Community Coalition for Economic Development, the Webster Chamber of Commerce and others must be involved in revitalization	Medium-Term	Action ----- Village Board / Village Planning Board / Village Historic Preservation Commission / BID / WCCED / Chamber / others

**Goal B: REGIONAL CONNECTIONS**

The core area should connect to nearby amenities and resources, such as hiking and biking trails, Town Centre, and Village Neighborhoods. Impediments to this connectivity, such as existing railroad tracks, should be removed.

Strategy	Timing	Type of Strategy and Responsibility
Require housing and commercial developers to incorporate sidewalks or trails into their site design, linking to existing facilities	On-going	Special Study / Action ----- Village Board
Adopt access management regulations that dictate the use of inter-parcel connection requirements, shared driveways, etc	On-going	Action ----- Village Board
Address the need to overcome the barriers to safe and convenient connectivity which have been created by the Route 104 interchange	On-going	Special Study / Action ----- Village Board



## Goal C: VILLAGE CORE TO BE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING

The Village Core should be aesthetically pleasing with more cohesiveness in design and the identity of the area which it conveys to residents and visitors alike. Architectural and building standards should be employed to improve the future physical attractiveness of the core area.

Strategy	Timing	Type of Strategy and Responsibility
Work with property owners in the Village Core to access grants and loans for improvements (façade, signage, landscaping)	Short Term	Action ----- BID / Village Board /WCCED
Continue to provide appropriate building code information to property owners	On-going	Action ----- Village Board
Investigate means for providing tax incentives for property owners interested in rehabilitating building in the core area	Short-Term	Special Study / Action ----- WCCED / Village Board
Create and adopt design and architectural standards or guidelines to complement use and bulk requirements for commercial developments	Short-Term	Special Study / Action ----- WCCED / Village Board
Convene a forum(s) and/or undertake other ways of communicating with business district property owners in order to educate them as to the advantage of maintaining and improving their properties.	Short-Term	Action ----- BID / Village Board
A property standards checklist and design standards should be developed to provide clear and concise guidelines to property owners in the business district	Short-Term	Special Study / Action ----- Village Board

**Goal D: STRESS VILLAGE CORE IDENTITY AND ROLE AS A GATEWAY**

The Village Core should be a highly identifiable unique part of the community and various improvements such as signs and streetscapes should maintain and enhance that identity. There should be BID signs marking the Village Core and incentives for improving landscaping and building appearance along with decorative improvements and features that would be unique to the core area.

Strategy	Timing	Type of Strategy And Responsibility
Prepare a “gateway” plan for the Village of Webster that will define limits or boundaries for the Village Core, stress the unique characteristics of Webster’s neighborhoods and quality of life, and provide visitors with a definitive image of Webster.	Medium-Term	Special Study / Action ----- BID / Village Board
Municipal theme or themes for the Village Core and districts should be developed that will describe Webster to visitors. i.e. family and community, history (people, events, industry, activities, commerce), etc.	Medium-Term	Action ----- BID /Village Board / WCCED / Chamber
Select and install various components of a gateway plan such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Signs</li> <li>▪ Art</li> <li>▪ Landscaping</li> <li>▪ Surface materials</li> <li>▪ Banners</li> <li>▪ Lighting</li> <li>▪ Streetscapes</li> <li>▪ Information</li> <li>▪ Wayfinding</li> </ul>	Long-term and On-going	Special Study / Village Action ----- BID / Village Board
Recognize the importance of “branding” and the need to “sell” the Village with cohesive approaches that involve the Chamber of Commerce, the BID, SCORE, and marketing professional as appropriate.	Medium-Term	Action ----- BID / Village Board

Strategy	Timing	Type of Strategy And Responsibility
Various State programs such as the “Brownfields” program could potentially be a source of funding for a targeted marketing strategy	Medium-term	Action ----- BID / Village Board

### Goal E: THE VILLAGE CORE AS A PLACE FOR PEOPLE

The Village Core should be a place for people to live and do business, dine out, walk around, meet others, see art and local history, hear music and concerts, and enjoy holidays, festivals and local events. The streets, parking and open space should be designed to be flexible, attractive and to ensure a safe pedestrian environment. The Center Square should continue to function as the premier public place in the core area

Strategy	Timing	Type of Strategy and Responsibility
Continue Village and BID support and organization of festivals, movies, concerts and other events that draw residents and visitors to the Village Core	On- going	Action / Coordination ----- Village Board / BID
Encourage organizations sponsoring events and development activities in Webster to cooperatively promote the Village Core and coordinate marketing efforts. i.e. BID, Farmers Market, Chamber, Churches, Historical Society, School District, Town Parks and Recreation Commission, and others	Short term and On-going	Action / Coordination ----- BID / Village Board
Housing in the Village core area is important and developers should be encouraged to build market rate and upscale housing	Medium-Term	Action ----- Village Board
North Avenue needs to be promoted as an area with viable development potential	Medium Term	Special Study / Action ----- BID / Village Board
Improvements and coordination of various websites promoting Webster should be undertaken with consideration given to sharing of resources and development of one central website that is superior in quality and usability	Short -Term	Action ----- BID / Village Board / Chamber / WCCED

## Goal F: WAYFINDING AND CONVENIENT PARKING

The Village Core will continue to be an important civic, commercial, and residential district for the Village of Webster. Signage and markers must clearly direct residents and visitors to convenient parking close to downtown businesses and events. There should be a cohesive and comprehensive approach to wayfinding using design guidelines and stressing a unique sense of place for the core area.

Strategy	Timing	Type of Strategy And Responsibility
The Village and the BID should consider the design and installation of distinctive wayfinding signs that are unique to Webster yet centered around a common theme to help make people feel welcome in the Village Core and to make it easier to maneuver it, whether by foot, bicycle or car.	Medium Term	Action ----- BID / Village Board
Public parking in the Village Core needs to be effectively managed with improved signage and efforts to dispel the perceptions that there are too few parking spaces	Medium term	Action ----- BID / Village Board
Maps and kiosks should be considered and village quadrants should be labeled	Medium Term	Action ----- BID / Village Board

## Goal G: ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY

The Village Core should be a place for people of all ages and abilities and access by car, bike, or feet should be safe and convenient.

Strategy	Timing	Responsibility
Provide ample accommodations for non-motorized forms of transportation	Short Term	Action ----- BID / Village Board
Educate community about benefits of non-motorized travel and available facilities.	On-going	Action ----- Village Board
Continue to look for opportunities to improve parking in the Village Core to support the business customer base	On-going	Action ----- BID / Village Board
Investigate means for improving pedestrian safety such as installing additional crosswalks. Capacity studies should be undertaken as part of this process	Medium-Term	Special Study / Coordination/ Action ----- Village Board / NYSDOT / Genesee Transportation Council

### MAIN STREET FOUR-POINT APPROACH

As part of its work in identifying goals for revitalization of the Village of Webster’s core area and strategies for reaching these goals, the Study Steering Committee examined the Main Street Four-Point Approach. Main Street is a national program born out of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Since 1980, the National Main Street Center has been working with communities across the nation to revitalize historic commercial areas. Based on historic preservation, the Main Street approach was developed to save historic commercial architecture, but has become a powerful economic development tool as well. The Main Street program is designed to improve all aspects of the downtown, producing both tangible and intangible benefits. Improving economic management, strengthening public participation, and marketing downtown as a fun place to visit is as critical to Main Street's future as recruiting new businesses, and rehabilitating buildings. Building on downtown's inherent assets -- rich architecture, personal service, and traditional values and most of all, a sense of place -- the Main Street approach supports entrepreneurship, downtown cooperation and civic concern. It has earned national recognition as a practical strategy appropriately scaled to local resources and conditions. And because it is a locally driven program, all initiatives stem from local issues and concerns.

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## **FOUR POINT APPROACH**

The Main Street Four-Point Approach to commercial district revitalization:

### **The Four Points:**

The National Trust's Main Street Center offers a comprehensive commercial district revitalization strategy that has been widely successful in towns and cities nationwide. Described below are the four points of the Main Street approach which work to revitalize our commercial district.

#### **Design**

takes advantage of the visual inherent in Downtown by directing attention to all its physical elements: public and private buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, landscaping, merchandising, displays and promotional materials. Its aim is to stress the importance of quality design in all of these areas, to educate people about quality design and to expedite improvements in the Downtown.

#### **Economic Re-development**

strengthens Downtown's existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base. This is accomplished by retaining and expanding existing businesses to provide a balanced commercial mix, by converting unused or underutilized space into productive property and by sharpening the competitiveness and merchandising skills of Downtown business people.

#### **Organization**

Establishes consensus by building partnerships among various groups that have a stake in Downtown. This allows the Main Street revitalization program to provide effective, ongoing management and advocacy of the Downtown. Diverse groups from the public and private sectors (city and county governments, local bankers, merchants, the chamber of commerce, property owners, community leaders, etc.) must work together to create and maintain a successful program.

#### **Promotion**

Promotion takes many forms, but the aim is to create a positive image in order to rekindle community pride in Downtown. Promotion seeks to improve retail sales events and festivals and to create a positive public image of the Downtown in order to attract investors, developers and new business.

#### **Recommendations for Webster**

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The Study Steering Committee recommends that the Village of Webster and its Business Improvement District (BID) follow the Main Street Approach as it provides a tried and proven model for prompting revitalization and economic development in the Village Core. Advancement of the goals and strategies set forth in the plan will help achieve the goals of the Main Street Approach relative to design, economic re-development, organization and promotion.

Organization is viewed by the Study Committee as the most important element in this approach and the Committee feels that a strong working relationship needs to be maintained between Village Government, the Business Improvement District, property owners and businesses. These parties are all crucial to the revitalization effort although it is recognized that Village government should be the driving force in bringing people together, determining needed projects and priorities, and marshalling the resources needed to revitalize the commercial district.

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## V. REFERENCES CONSULTED

U.S. Census of Population

Webster ... Through the Years, Esther A. Dunn, 1971

Planning and Urban Design Standards, Frederick Steiner and Kent Butler, 2007

<sup>1</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, “What Happened to America’s Main Streets?”

<sup>1</sup> Town of Webster Comprehensive Plan Update, 2008

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<sup>1</sup> Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council

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## **APPENDIX A – SWOT EXERCISES (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)**

### **DOWNTOWN WEBSTER REVITALIZATION STUDY PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSIONS October 21 and 24, 2009 CITIZEN INPUT FROM VISIONING AND SWOT EXERCISES**

SWOT analyses help communities to develop realistic assessments of how strengths and opportunities (internal factors) can counter weaknesses and threats (external factors) to their futures. They are simple yet comprehensive ways of identifying the positive and negative forces within and without communities and are critical to developing a full awareness of the local situation. In turn, this awareness can help with planning and decision-making. Finally, SWOT analyses help communities to:

- Build on strengths
- Minimize weaknesses
- Seize opportunities
- Counteract threats

A SWOT identification exercise was undertaken by WCCED during two public informational meetings in the fall of 2009. Below are the various SWOT factors identified through community input.

#### **STRENGTHS OF DOWNTOWN WEBSTER**

Location  
Family-oriented  
Connectivity/Access  
Good demographics/Household Income  
Diverse Businesses Jobs  
Ample parking  
New development  
Form intact  
Charm & history  
Dual frontage  
E-Baum development  
Rich Historic background  
Cooperation between various agencies  
Political cooperation  
Surrounding neighborhoods  
Quality of Village life'  
BID / businesses working together  
Lack vacancies  
Vet park/events

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## **WEAKNESSES OF DOWNTOWN WEBSTER**

Parking – location  
Type of Businesses  
Too specialized  
Lack of convenience goods  
Aesthetics/building conditions  
Signs detract  
Enforcement of codes  
Too busy – garish in appearance

## **WEAKNESSES (continued)**

Ridge Road/Rt. 250  
○ Lack of vitality – 4 corners  
Parking – location  
Perception of too little parking  
Main Street parking  
1 or 2 bad looking businesses  
Code process  
Absentee landlords  
Not obtaining grants  
Some lack of pride in property  
Lack of financial resources

## **OPPORTUNITIES IN DOWNTOWN WEBSTER**

E-Baum Steakhouse  
State aid  
In-fill development  
Growth – stimulus / Interest in Village  
Tax credits  
Upper-story residential development / upper-scale  
Momentum  
Improved marketing  
Grants  
Nearby waterfront  
Work with churches  
Walkability  
Image – good strengths  
Expand sidewalks

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Location  
Proximity to new development  
Trail development  
Rails to trails  
Momentum and personnel

#### **THREATS TO DOWNTOWN WEBSTER**

- ❖ Cost of doing business
- ❖ Lack of resources

#### **THREATS (continued)**

- ❖ Real estate taxes
- ❖ Competition and pressures of other development in Town
- ❖ Water quality
- ❖ Increased traffic
- ❖ Truck traffic
- ❖ Poor signage
- ❖ Absentee landlords
- ❖ Lack of design guidelines
- ❖ Lack of uniformity / reverse
- ❖ Code enforcement
- ❖ Changing attitudes/ Take chances
- ❖ Apathy
- ❖ Visual pollution
- ❖ Lack of design guides
- ❖ Economy
- ❖ New York State government
- ❖ Government – not sympathetic to local needs
- ❖ State not business friendly
- ❖ Outside / unfunded mandates
- ❖ Future of Xerox

## Building Owner Survey

### Webster Downtown Revitalization Plan

Dear Property Owner:

The Webster Community Coalition for Economic Development (WCCED), in cooperation with the Village of Webster Comprehensive Planning Committee and the Webster Business Improvement District (BID), is developing a downtown revitalization plan for the Village of Webster. As a property owner located within downtown, your insight is important to the planning process. All answers will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous with data reporting occurring only in the aggregate. If you have questions regarding this survey, please contact WCCED's Economic Development Coordinator, Glenn Cooke, at (585) 269-4939 or by e-mail at [gcooke1@rochester.rr.com](mailto:gcooke1@rochester.rr.com). You can also visit with Glenn at his office in the Webster Village Hall. Please complete surveys by Friday, \_\_\_\_\_, 2010. Completed surveys can be dropped off at the Village Hall or faxed to Glenn at (585) 265-1004. Thank you for helping us make downtown Webster a better place to do business!

1. How many years have you owned this property? \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Is this your only commercial property? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
  
3. Do you operate a business on this property or rent or lease to another business?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Please describe the primary use of your property (i.e. food preparation service/service, office, tavern, retail, residential, etc.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
5. What initially attracted you to buy property in downtown Webster?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Is the access to your facility and parking sufficient?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
7. How many commercial spaces do you have in this building? \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. How many commercial renters have you had in the last 10 years? \_\_\_\_\_
  
9. How many residential units do you have in this building? \_\_\_\_\_
  
10. How many residential renters have you had in the last 10 years? \_\_\_\_\_
  
11. Are you considering improvements to your property within the next 2 years? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

---

12. Are you experiencing any of the following challenges with your property?

- Building appearance \_\_\_\_\_
- Building upkeep and maintenance \_\_\_\_\_
- Filling vacancies \_\_\_\_\_
- Finding quality renters \_\_\_\_\_
- Crime such as vandalism or burglary \_\_\_\_\_
- Utility costs \_\_\_\_\_
- Property tax load \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

13. How important is the revitalization of Webster's downtown area to the success of your business?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Not important
- \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat unimportant
- \_\_\_\_\_ Somewhat important
- \_\_\_\_\_ Important

16. Have you used any incentives or government assistance programs for your business? (i.e. COMIDA, SBA Loans, SBA Loan Guarantee Program, etc)

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17. What types of assistance would be useful to you?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Façade improvement grants
- \_\_\_\_\_ Energy efficiency grants or loans
- \_\_\_\_\_ Business assistance loans
- \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

18. What types of services would you like to see Village government and/or the Business Improvement District offer?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Help with façade improvements
- \_\_\_\_\_ Design standards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Increased business activity
- \_\_\_\_\_ More events
- \_\_\_\_\_ Expanded parking
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tax incentives for property investments
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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19. Is it a challenge for you to meet handicapped accessibility requirements? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

**Thank you for your help!**

**BUSINESS DISTRICT PROPERTY OWNER SURVEY - VILLAGE OF WEBSTER**

April, 2010

**200 Properties / 150 Surveys Mailed / 15 Undeliverables Returned/  
50 Respondents to Survey / 37% Response Rate for Surveys Delivered**

**Q1 -How many years have you owned this property?**

Years	Average
15.6	

**Q2 - Is this your only commercial property?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	yes	42	87.5%
2	no	6	12.5%
total		48	100.0%

**Q3- Do you operate a business on property or lease to another business?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Operate a business	24	49.0%
2	Lease to another	7	14.3%
3	Neither	9	18.4%
4	Do both	9	18.4%
Total		49	100.0%

**Q4- Please describe primary use of property?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Residential	19	29.2%
2	Food preparation	4	6.2%
3	Office	16	24.6%
4	Tavern	3	4.6%
5	Retail	8	12.3%
6	Other	15	23.1%
Total		65	100.0%

**Q5 - What initially attracted you to buy property in downtown Webster?**

**Q5 A** *Hometown*

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Hometown	8	18.2%

**Q5B** *Family- owned*

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Family- owned	3	6.8%

**Q5C** *Good opportunity*

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
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1	Good opportunity	14	31.8%
<b>Q5D</b>			
Code	Response	<b>Frequency</b>	Percent
1	Location	15	34.1%
<b>Q5E</b>			
Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Price	1	2.3%
<b>Q5F</b>			
Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Other	3	6.8%
Total of Q5 responses	44		100.0%

**Q6 - Is access to your facility and parking adequate?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	37	78.7%
2	No	10	21.3%
Total	47		100.0%

**Q7- How many commercial spaces do you have in this building?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	1	19	45.2%
2	2	11	26.2%
3	3	3	7.1%
4	4	1	2.4%
5	5	0	0.0%
6	6 or more	2	4.8%
0	0	6	14.3%
Total	42		100.0%

**Q8- How many commercial renters have you had in the past 10 years?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	1	17	53.1%
2	2	5	15.6%
3	3	4	12.5%
4	4	3	9.4%
5	5	2	6.3%
6	6 or more	1	3.1%
0	0	14	
Total	32		100.0%

**Q9 -How many residential units do you have in this building?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	1	12	26.1%

2	2	4	8.7%
3	3	3	6.5%
4	4	2	4.3%
5	5	1	2.2%
6	6 or more	0	0.0%
0	0	24	52.2%
Total	46		100.0%

**Q10- How many residential renters have you had in the last 10 years?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	1	1	2.3%
2	2	1	2.3%
3	3	7	16.3%
4	4	2	4.7%
5	5	2	4.7%
6	6 or more	1	2.3%
0	0	29	67.4%
Total	43		100.0%

**Q11- Are you considering improvements to your property within the next 2 years?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	yes	31	66.0%
2	no	16	34.0%
total	47		100.0%

**Q12 Are you experiencing any of the following challenges with your property?**

Code		<b>Building appearance</b>	
1		Response	
<b>12A</b>	Building appearance	13	12.6%
Code		<b>Building Upkeep &amp; Maint.</b>	
1		Response	
<b>12B</b>	Building Upkeep & Maint.	15	14.6%
Code		<b>Filling vacancies</b>	
1		Response	
<b>12C</b>	Filling vacancies	8	7.8%
Code		<b>Finding quality renters</b>	
1		Response	
<b>12D</b>	Finding quality renters	7	6.8%
Code		<b>Crime - i.e. vandalism, burg</b>	
1		Response	
<b>12E</b>	Crime - i.e. vandalism, burg	8	7.8%
Code		<b>Utility Costs</b>	
1		Response	
<b>12F</b>	Utility Costs	17	16.5%



Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Property tax load	28	27.2%
12G	Property tax load	28	27.2%
Code	<b>Other</b>		
1	Other	7	6.8%
Other		7	6.8%
<b>Total</b>		<b>103</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Q13 D How important is the revitalization of Webster's downtown area to the success of your business?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Not important	5	11.1%
2	Somewhat unimportant	1	2.2%
3	Somewhat Important	17	37.8%
4	Important	22	48.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Q14 Have you used any incentives or government assistance programs for your business?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	COMIDA	1	2.2%
2	SBA Loans	2	4.3%
3	SBA Loan Guarantee program	0	0.0%
4	Other	0	0.0%
5	No	43	93.5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>46</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Q15 What types of assistance would be useful to you?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Façade improvement grants	20	40.8%
2	Energy efficiency grants/loans	19	38.8%
3	Business assistance loans	7	14.3%
4	other	3	6.1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Q16 What types of services would you like to see Village government and/or the Business Improvement District Offer?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Help with façade improvements	23	21.7%
2	Design standards	12	11.3%
3	Increased business activity	15	14.2%
4	More events	5	4.7%
5	Expanded parking	17	16.0%
6	Tax incentives for prop.inves.	29	27.4%
7	Other	5	4.7%
<b>Total</b>		<b>106</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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**Q17 Is it a challenge for you to meet handicapped accessibility requirements?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	16	34.0%
2	No	31	66.0%
Total		47	100.0%

# **VILLAGE OF WEBSTER DESIGN GUIDELINES**



**April 2011**

**Adopted as part of the 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update**

## **Village of Webster Design Guidelines Committee**

Matthew Chatfield

Mayor Peter Elder

Peter Adams

Amy Werther

Kevin Werther

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## **1.0 Purpose**

The Village's 2005 Comprehensive Plan recognizes the community's desire to maintain the Village's historic character, provide for enhanced walkability, and support a vibrant economic and neighborhood environment. The traditional community character presented within the Village is of paramount importance to the provision of these elements. It is the intent of the Village of Webster through the establishment of the Design Guidelines to recognize the special significance of the building character and neighborhood atmosphere of the community. These guidelines may be superimposed on the principle zoning districts and should be considered as additional requirements should be considered within the respective principle zoning district.

### **1.1 Applicability**

These design guidelines shall apply to all commercial and mixed-use properties within the Character Areas as defined within this document whenever one or more of the following events occur:

- (a) New building construction;
- (b) An increase in gross building area by the lesser of 300 square feet or 20 percent;
- (c) A change in use that results in an increase in parking demand by more than 30 percent according to standards established by the Institute of Transportation Engineers in their publication, *Parking Generation* (Only Section 3.1 shall be applicable);

### **1.2 Property Improvement Permit**

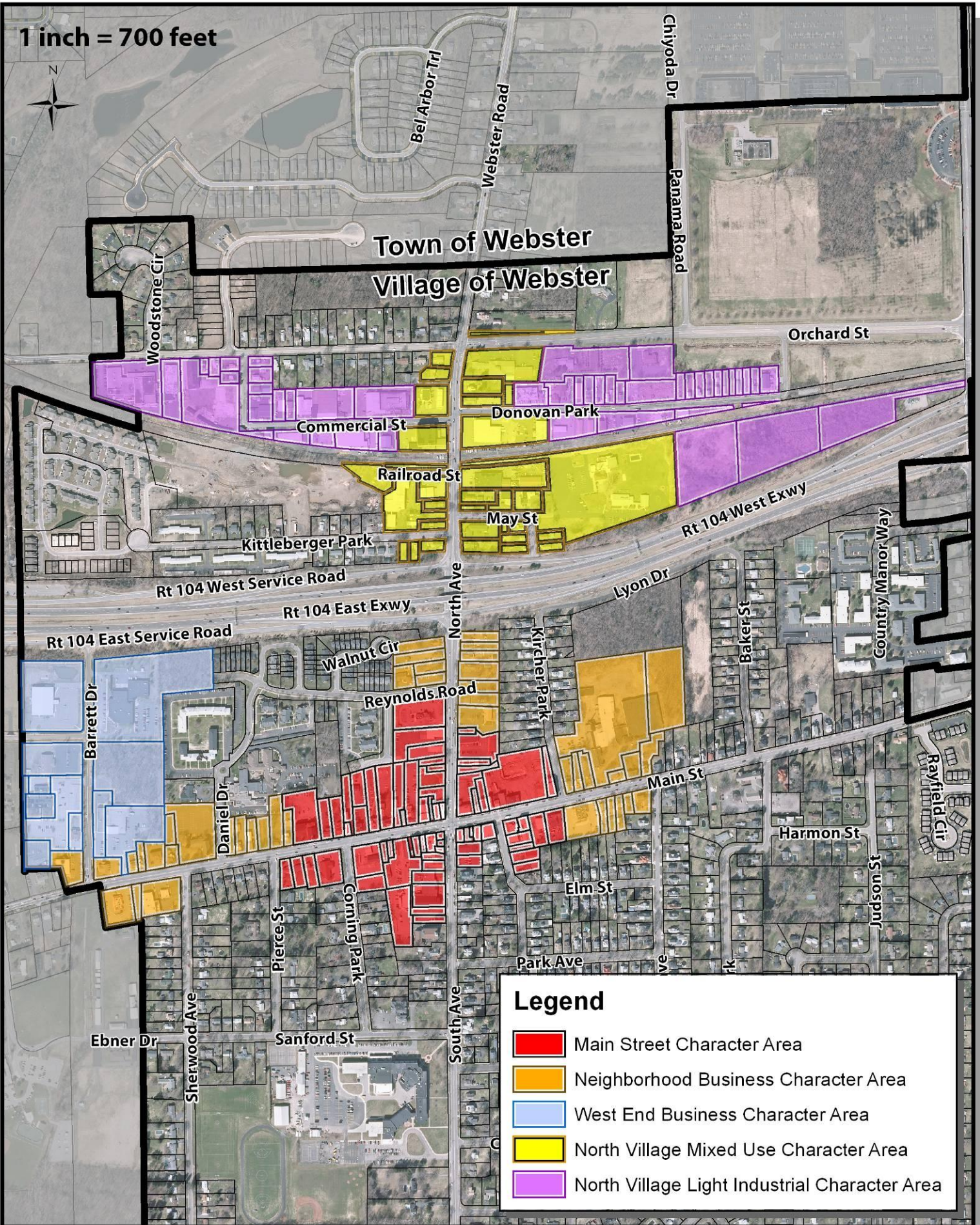
It is recommended the Village Board investigate the creation of a Property Improvement Permit, whereby exterior site and building changes would trigger adherence to the Village of Webster Design Guidelines. Changes which would trigger the need for a Property Improvement Permit include:

- (a) A change in façade materials, color and/or design greater than 200 square feet in the aggregate within an 18-month period (only Section 3.2 shall be applicable);
- (b) Installation of landscaping features such as plantings, fencing, or lighting within an 18-month period (only Section 3.1 shall be applicable).
- (c) Any exterior building or site property investments exceeding two-hundred-fifty dollars (\$250.00) in the aggregate within an 18-month period.

It is recommended that the Property Improvement Permit have a term of 12-months. It is recommended that the Village Board limit the number of Property Improvement Permits per taxable parcel to a single instance per calendar year in an effort to prevent the circumvention of adherence to the Design Guidelines through the aggregation of multiple improvements under the thresholds established in 1.1 (b), 1.1 (c), 1.2 (a), 1.2 (b) and 1.2 (c) above. In the event the Village of Webster Code Enforcement Office believes a property owner has circumvented or avoided compliance with the Property Improvement Permit process through incremental improvements to their property, the Code Enforcement Office should be given the authority to require compliance. It is also recommended that the Village of Webster Design Guidelines be appended to the Village of Webster Comprehensive Plan and included in the Site Plan Permit and Zoning Variance Permit processes.

# Map 1: Village of Webster Character Areas

1 inch = 700 feet



## 2.0 Character Area Overview

The Design Guidelines provide specific objectives and guidance for development within the Village's separate character areas as seen on Map 1, above. For each character area included within the design guidelines, a boundary, descriptive narrative, and design objectives and specific guidelines are provided. The descriptive narrative and objectives provide the desired state for each character area. As well, general design guidelines relevant throughout the village are provided in Section 3.0 to facilitate a cohesive and coordinated design approach throughout the community.

### 2.1 Main Street Character Area

#### *Boundaries*

The boundaries for this character area are all properties fronted on Main Street from Kircher Park to Pierce Street; and all properties fronted on NYS Route 250 from Main Street to Dunkin Donuts (street address?) and on South Avenue from Main Street down to the Webster Baptist Church.

#### *Neighborhood Characterization*

The character of this neighborhood is defined by the historical traits of Upstate New York, and resembles the traditional appearance of the center of commerce of the area. Buildings are commercial in appearance while maintaining the historical integrity of the area. Possibilities for design features include architecturally pleasing windows and entrances, awnings, and other appropriate elements. Structures are constructed from traditional materials such as brick, stone, and horizontally-hung clapboard. Building colors are consistent with those used historically in Western New York towns and villages. Tree-lined streets and plantings are encouraged and provide a welcoming environment for visitors and patrons of the Central Business District. Structures are placed with a zero setback to promote foot traffic to businesses directly from the sidewalk system. Ground-level spaces are occupied by retail, restaurants and commercial services, while upper-story residential and office space enhances neighborhood vibrancy. When possible, lower-level rear establishments are encouraged.

#### *Design Objectives*

- Promote economic viability, offer a diverse lifestyle and mix of uses, and help maintain the Village's unique character.
- Maintain and enhance the district as a location for market-rate multi-family housing, townhouse development and business space.
- Foster civic pride and provide economic benefits through the continued utilization, preservation and restoration of structures within the district.
- Maintain the district's viability by addressing potential problems such as parking, traffic and other issues in a cooperative effort with businesses, property owners and other interested groups.
- Encourage a concentration of commercial, office, civic, cultural and residential uses all within walking distance of one another, creating a working, growing and attractive Village center full of vitality and pedestrian activity.



## 2.2 West End Business Character Area

### *Boundaries*

This character area includes all properties between the NYS Route 104 Service Road on the north and NYS Route 404 on the south, from the western municipal boundary and including all properties with frontage on Barrett Drive.

### *Neighborhood Characterization*

The West End Business Character Area exhibits traits commonly found throughout the remainder of the village business areas, such as traditional architecture, convenient sidewalk connections, appropriate landscaping and streetscape amenities. The character area is centered on Barrett Drive, a tree-lined route with sidewalks which connects Routes 104 and 404, and provides access to Crosspointe Lane into the Town of Webster. The character area provides an ample supply of surface parking, the appearance of which is buffered and minimized from the surrounding public rights-of-way by sufficient landscaping at both the periphery and interior of the lots. Infill development projects located along Barrett Drive do not place parking or drive aisles between the building and roadway. Safe and convenient pedestrian access opportunities are provided to the large high-density residential developments surround the character area to the west and east, connecting these large population centers with commercial services within the West End Business Character Area. Architectural character is consistent within the character area through the utilization of masonry and brick exteriors. Sidewalk connections are safely and conveniently provided from the street to primary building entrances through parking areas on dedicated and highly visible pathways.

### *Design Objectives*

- Promote a coordinated architectural and signage character that utilizes design cues found throughout the Village's historic vernacular architecture.
- Improve the identity and functionality of the business district as a destination for services within the surrounding community.
- Maintain and improve Barrett Drive and its terminal intersections as significant gateway points into the Village of Webster community.
- Decrease the prominence and visual impact of surface parking areas through appropriate infill development and landscape buffering.

## 2.3 Neighborhood Commercial Character Areas

### *Boundaries*

This character area includes three distinct areas:

1. Commercial properties bordering West Main Street from approximately Barrett Drive to Pierce Street;
2. Properties bordering East Main Street from Dunning Ave to Kircher Park;
3. Properties along North Avenue from the Central Business District character area to the expressway.

### *Neighborhood Characterization*

The Neighborhood Commercial Character Area exhibits transitional characteristics from the Main Street Character to that of North Village. Structures have consistent shallow setbacks that mimic the historic residential character of the area. Building architecture is complementary to historic residential uses in character, style, form and massing. Facades are characterized by brick, stone, cobblestone, and clapboard siding. Primary building entrances face the street and sidewalks connect to the public pedestrian sidewalk system. Parking is located only in the rear of the buildings, and the sharing of parking between adjoining properties is encouraged. Signage is complementary in scale, design and materials to surrounding historic structures. Areas between the building and street line include pedestrian-scaled plantings and large shade trees to add structure to the streetscape, as well as streetlights, sidewalks and small tree lawns within the right-of-way.

### *Design Objectives*

- Provide an orderly transition between the Main Street Character Area and the North Village and West End Business Character Areas.
- Retain the historic scale, character and charm of the former residences in these areas for both new construction and the conversion of buildings from residential to commercial uses.
- Encourage a walkable business and service district that is pedestrian-oriented in both design, scale and character.
- Prevent the use of franchise-architecture or inappropriate building designs that do not complement the Village's cherished forms from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## 2.4 North Village Mixed Use Character Area

### *Boundaries*

This character area includes all properties fronting on North Avenue from the expressway north to the Village boundary and all properties bordering May Street and the Kircher Park extension.

### *Neighborhood Characterization*

The North Village Mixed Use Character Area is distinct from that of the Main Street and Neighborhood Business Character Areas in that it provides a unique environment for mixed-use commercial and residential development. Structures in this Character Area offer contemporary interpretations of historic forms, without the use of typical suburban or franchise architecture. All buildings have a primary entrance that faces North Avenue (except those off the corridor) and is connected to the street with sidewalks. The scale of commercial buildings maintains a pedestrian-oriented environment, and building facades and massing do not overpower the neighborhood. Mixed-use buildings differentiate between residential and non-residential uses through changes in materials and façade treatments, and are two to three stories in height. Parking areas are predominantly behind the building and screened from view from the street and surrounding residential uses. Utilities and service areas are screened from view by design elements characteristic of historic village forms and materials.

### *Design Objectives*

- Promote a contemporary mixed-use node that complements the Main Street Character Area and provides a destination for goods and services within the Village.
- Promote walkability and the pedestrian experience by keeping the scale of structures and site distances appropriate for the Village atmosphere.
- Maintain a community character unique to the Village of Webster and district from outlying suburban areas.
- Encourage appropriate adaptive reuse of existing commercial structures for mixed-uses, including residential.

## 2.5 North Village Light Industrial Character Area

### *Boundaries*

This character area includes all non-residential properties bordering Commercial Street, Donovan Park and Orchard Street.

### *Neighborhood Characterization*

The North Village Light Industrial Character Area offers a neighborhood environment with that promotes the growth and expansion of commercial business and light industry in the village core. Building architecture is utilitarian in form and design, yet avoid exteriors devoid of character and detail. Building entrances are highlighted by subtle architectural cues that signify appropriate entrances for the public, and are connected to the available sidewalk system. Signage is complementary to the building design and use, though is not proportional to the larger building facades. Service, utility and storage areas are screened from the street and surrounding residential uses.

### *Design Objectives*

- Promote modern light industrial uses that complement the North Village Character Area and functions as an employment center within the Village.
- Promote a pedestrian-friendly experience by keeping the scale of structures and site distances appropriate for the Village atmosphere, and buffering adjacent uses from noxious activities.
- Maintain a commercial character unique to the Village of Webster and district from outlying suburban areas.
- Protect surrounding residential uses from unacceptable levels of noise, odor, and vehicular traffic.

### 3.0 Design Guidelines Overview

#### **Site Planning • Building orientation/setbacks • Parking • Landscaping • Circulation**

Site planning guidelines primarily address the organization of a project's components. They deal with the location of buildings and site features such as parking lots, open space and service areas, as well as the organization of circulation patterns for vehicles and pedestrians.

##### **A. Building orientation and setback**

##### **B. Building entry**

##### **C. Site infrastructure and facilities**

(1) *Drive-in facilities; (2) Loading and service areas; (3) Refuse storage, staging and enclosures.*

(4) *Storm water facilities; (5) Shared access and parking;*

##### **D. Parking location, massing and orientation**

(1) *Location, massing and orientation of parking facilities.*

##### **E. Landscaping and buffering**

(1) *Site, parking lot and foundation landscaping.*

(2) *Buffering and Screening.*

##### **F. Internal sidewalks, pedestrian and vehicular circulation**

(1) *Sidewalks; (2) Pedestrian circulation; (3) Vehicular circulation.*

##### **G. Public transit.**

(1) *Stops.*

#### **Architectural Expression • Building form and massing • Architectural details • High-quality materials**

Architectural guidelines deal with the exterior elements of buildings and components that define the look of a building, such as roofs, windows, articulation and details. Guidelines for architectural elements will encourage new development to define a unique district identity while allowing for flexibility of expression at the individual building level.

##### **A. Building form and massing**

(1) *Building width; (2) Facade articulation; (3) Active building elevations*

##### **B. Architectural details**

(1) *Foundations; (2) Roofs, cornices, eaves, overhangs and parapets*

(3) *Windows; (4) Doors and entryways*

##### **C. High quality materials .**

#### **Streetscape • Street-level transparency • Pedestrian Connectivity • Signage and Lighting**

The streetscape guidelines are intended to improve connectivity and character. A community's streets are its largest and most continuous system of public spaces, and it is especially important to acknowledge their significance in the retention or development of high quality neighborhoods and districts.

##### **A. Street-level transparency.**

(1) *Building first floors.*

(2) *Front yards.*

##### **B. Signage**

##### **C. Lighting**

### 3.1 Site Planning Guidelines

#### A. Building orientation and setback

- (1) For the purposes of these design guidelines, the term 'primary street' shall refer to Routes 250 and 404
- (2) The shallowest possible setback shall be encouraged in all instances.

#### B. Building entry

- (1) For the purposes of these design guidelines, the terms 'frontage' and 'fronting' shall be synonymous, and shall refer to a building having a façade which is parallel to the street or drive in / drive thru question.
- (2) For buildings with frontage on Routes 250 and 404, the principal building entrance shall face Routes 250 and 404, or, at the discretion of the Planning Board, at the side or rear of the structure depending on the site layout.
- (3) Buildings fronting on roads other than primary streets shall have the principal entrance located on the secondary street or drive servicing such building. Regardless of where the entrance is built, building facades and yards facing primary streets shall always receive design considerations, details and treatments consistent with front facades and yards.

#### C. Site infrastructure and facilities

- (1) *Drive-in facilities.*
  - (a) Drive-in facilities are not permitted on commercial properties abutting residential districts.
- (2) *Loading and service areas.*
  - (a) Loading docks, bays and service areas shall be located to the rear of the structure. In cases where this is not feasible, a side loading area may be approved by the Planning Board if appropriate screening is provided.
  - (b) When rear of structure abuts a primary street or residential district, loading areas shall receive appropriate screening in accordance with District Design Guidelines.
  - (c) See Section 3E(3) for more information regarding the screening of loading and service areas.
- (3) *Refuse storage, staging and enclosures.*
  - (a) The storage and/or staging of refuse shall take place in the rear yard, and shall be buffered or screened from view of parking facilities, adjacent properties, and primary and secondary streets.
  - (b) Refuse/garbage dumpsters shall be located within a screened enclosure with no less than three sides constructed of the same or similar materials found in the principal structure.
  - (c) Where possible, gate access to the enclosure should be located out of direct view from parking areas and principal building entrances, and efforts should be made to maintain the gates in a closed position other than times of refuse pick-up or delivery.
- (4) *Storm water facilities.*
  - (a) Storm water detention or retention facilities are not permitted in front yards unless they provide positive and attractive design elements to the project, at which point the

location of these facilities in front yards is left to the discretion of the Planning Board. Where the lay of the land or other physical constraints makes the placement of such facilities elsewhere infeasible, the Planning Board may also approve placement in front or side yards subject to enhanced landscaping provisions in accordance with the District Design Guidelines.

- (b) Storm water facilities shall be integrated into the overall site design, or where existing, a larger regional retention and management system, and the use of earthen basins kept to a minimum towards achieving required regulatory guidelines.
- (c) The siting, construction and management of all storm water facilities in front yards should provide a positive and attractive design element, including the provision of enhanced landscaping, fountains or other water features, and a pleasing aesthetic to make these facilities appear to exist in a natural setting, with the overt use of rip-rap and stone fill kept to a minimum.
- (d) The provision of fencing around storm water facilities shall not be allowed, unless such fencing provides a positive design element as determined by the Planning Board.
- (e) Chain-link fencing around storm water facilities shall not be allowed in front yards.
- (f) The subterranean storage of storm water runoff is encouraged where practicable. Applicants shall follow all appropriate testing measures and obtain all applicable permits prior to construction of such measures.
- (g) Applicants shall ensure that measures taken in consideration of these design guidelines is in conformance and coordination with the development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan according to state environmental regulations.

(5) *Shared access and parking.*

- (a) The provision for shared access and parking among adjacent properties along Routes 250, 404 and Barrett Drive shall be required to internalize traffic movements and reduce turning movements onto these primary streets.
- (b) Where appropriate and feasible, shared entrances and exits shall be provided.
- (c) Where appropriate and feasible, common or shared parking facilities between two principal businesses with differing hours of peak operation shall be required to decrease the amount of impervious surface and increase the amounts of open space.

(6) *Projects with multiple buildings*

- (a) Projects with multiple buildings shall be sited with pedestrian connections between structures, parking areas and adjacent uses.
- (b) Multiple structures shall be placed in a fashion that creates a well organized, accessible and functional site. The Village encourages site layouts that create a unique sense of place and do not result in large parking lots lacking landscaping or pedestrian accommodations.
- (c) Projects with multiple structures are encouraged to attend a sketch plan meeting with the Village Planning Board.

**D. Parking location, massing and orientation** (see also Internal sidewalks, pedestrian and vehicular circulation)

(1) *Location of parking facilities.*

- (a) Vehicular parking, standing and loading facilities shall be located in the rear of structures whenever possible but may be allowed in the side yard if screened appropriately.
- (b) For sites proposed with multiple structures, central courtyard parking may be approved by the Planning Board.

- (c) The linear distance at the front lot line parallel to primary streets of individual lots shall not be composed of more than 30 percent parking lot and drive aisle as a combined percentage of total distance along Routes 250, 404 or Barrett Drive, including convenience parking.

**Figure 1: Development at lot frontage**



(2) *Massing of parking facilities*

- (a) Parking lots shall be arranged such that long uninterrupted views across large areas of parking are not visible from the primary road. To achieve this, parking lots shall be designed in 'rooms' containing no more than 50 vehicles each.
- (b) Multiple rooms shall be broken up by vegetated medians that preclude an uninterrupted view from 'room' to 'room'. Pedestrian accommodations within the vegetative medians are required.

(3) *Orientation of parking facilities.*

- (a) Parking facilities shall be oriented such that drive aisles traverse perpendicular to the adjacent plane of the building, where applicable.
- (b) Whenever possible, parking lots shall be designed and oriented to allow for cross lot access and internal access management.

(4) *Curbing and bump stops.*

- (a) Whenever appropriate, as determined by the Planning Board, parking areas shall be bounded by concrete or granite curbing to delineate vehicular and pedestrian zones and to control drainage, as needed.
- (b) Pedestrian walks, landscaped islands and medians, and building foundations shall be separated from parking facilities by raised concrete or granite curbing.
- (c) Asphalt curbing is not permitted.
- (d) Where curbing is not possible, pedestrian and foundation areas shall be protected by bump stops to prevent errant vehicles from injuring persons or property.



## **E. Landscaping and buffering**

### *(1) Site landscaping.*

- (a) Site landscaping shall be required at the location of all entrances, exits and signage.
- (b) Planting shall be limited to species native, salt tolerant, non-invasive to this area and deer-resistant.
- (c) Shade trees shall be planted where appropriate along the frontage, parallel to the street with a spacing not to exceed 50' or consistent with existing tree spacing on neighboring lots when present.

### *(2) Foundation landscaping.*

- (a) In Neighborhood Commercial, North Village Mixed Use and North Village Light Industrial Character areas, plantings and mulches shall be installed at an appropriate distance along the foundation of the proposed structure in front yards and along other facades where principal entrances are present, as required by the Planning Board.
- (b) Foundation plantings shall consist of woody and/or herbaceous, deciduous and/or coniferous shrubs, trees and groundcovers, and shall not be limited to annual/perennial-type plant material.
- (c) In instances where outdoor seating is desired in the frontage of the lot, foundation landscaping may be waived by the Planning Board or can be used to create a seating courtyard area.

### *(3) Buffering and Screening.*

- (a) Buffer plantings of coniferous/deciduous trees and shrubs, with fencing where desired, will be required alongside and rear property boundaries of adjacent, non-compatible uses or established residential areas to a density and height deemed appropriate by the Planning Board.
- (b) Loading, service, refuse, and drive-in areas shall also be buffered from adjacent non-compatible uses, established residential areas, and primary and secondary streets. In instances where neighboring uses are compatible and rear lots are connected, refuse areas shall be combined.
- (c) Parking facilities located along the front setback shall be buffered and/or screened from view using landscaping, attractive fencing, or a combination thereof. Materials shall complement the primary structure, and buffering shall not exceed four feet. In no instance will large coniferous trees be approved as a frontage buffer material.
- (d) A landscape plan for all required buffer and screening areas shall be prepared by a licensed landscape architect or certified arborist and submitted for approval by the Planning Board.

### *(4) Parking lot landscaping.*

- (a) Parking lot medians shall be required between parking 'rooms.' Medians shall be between six and ten feet in width, and shall be planted to provide visual buffering between 'rooms' to a density and arrangement deemed appropriate by the Planning Board.
- (b) Curbed end islands no less than six feet in width shall be required for all parking configurations entirely surrounded by drive aisles, provided such configurations contain more than five spaces in a single row and ten spaces in a double row.
- (c) Islands shall be planted with trees and shrubs to a density deemed appropriate by the Planning Board, but shall not contain less than two trees per 20 parking spaces.
- (d) Circulatory drive aisles and curbed end medians shall be installed such that no more than 20 parking stalls in a single row, or 40 in a double row, shall go uninterrupted.
- (e) A minimum of two percent of the total parking facility area shall be required open space

in addition to requirements for parking lot islands and medians.

**F. Internal sidewalks, pedestrian and vehicular circulation**

*(1) Internal sidewalks.*

- (a) Sidewalks shall be constructed along the entire frontage length at a minimum width of five feet or consistent with adjacent sidewalk widths, or wider at the discretion of the Planning Board based on anticipated pedestrian volumes.
- (b) Sidewalks and dedicated paths shall be constructed to provide access from principal building entrances to the sidewalk system.
- (c) Curbed sidewalks shall be located along the building frontage to provide separation between pedestrians and vehicles.
- (d) Where possible, sidewalks shall traverse parking lot medians and islands to permit safe and efficient pedestrian travel from parked vehicles to building entrances.

*(2) Pedestrian circulation.*

- (a) Pedestrian circulation patterns shall be shielded and separated from vehicular patterns where possible.
- (b) Designated crosswalks shall be located between primary building entrances/exits and parking facilities.
- (c) Safe, convenient and efficient pedestrian circulation patterns shall be provided between structures in a multiple structure development.

*(3) Vehicular circulation.*

- (a) Vehicular circulation patterns shall be designed to minimize potential conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.
- (b) Parking and vehicle circulation patterns shall be designed to reduce speeds and increase pedestrian friendliness, efficiency and convenience.

**G. Public transit.**

*(1) Stops.*

- (a) Public transit stops shall be constructed to the guidelines set forth by the RGRTA and RTS, on an easement provided to the Village of Webster, with siting and design requiring approval by the Village Board.
- (b) Transit stops that are integrated into the development as a feature of a primary structure or as part of an open space feature are encouraged by the Village.
- (c) In all instances, transit stops shall be accessible and integrated into the pedestrian circulation system, and must include uninterrupted sidewalk and crosswalk access to principal building entrances.
- (d) Adequate space for an immediate or eventual transit stop must be allocated during site plan review if the principal building entrance is greater than 800 feet from an existing transit stop. Actual provision of such transit stop shall be coordinated with RGRTA and RTS.

## 3.2 Architectural Expression Guidelines

### A. Building form and massing

#### (1) *Building width.*

- (a) In instances where the front façade is greater than 50 feet in width, appropriate delineations and treatments shall be used to break up the appearance of a single facade.

#### (2) *Facade articulation*

- (a) Structures shall incorporate fascias, canopies, arcades, building setbacks of four feet or more or other design features to break up large wall surfaces on the street-facing elevations
- (b) Wall surfaces shall be visually divided by such features into areas of 750 square feet or less.
- (c) Structures shall not have any wall surface longer than 50 feet without a break, which entails a recess or offset measuring at least four feet in depth that vary the depth of the building wall.
- (d) Not less than 25 percent of the building wall shall be varied in this way. The objective of this standard is to avoid large, undifferentiated wall surfaces. Acceptable substitutes may be granted at the discretion of the Planning Board.

#### (3) *Active building elevations* (see also Streetscape).

- (a) New non-residential construction with frontage on primary streets shall provide areas of transparency equal to or greater than 70 percent of the wall area between the height of three feet and ten feet from the ground.
- (b) The infilling of existing commercial storefronts and/or the creation of blank walls lacking windows and doorways along primary streets is not permitted.

### B. Architectural details

#### (1) *Foundation base.*

- (a) Where appropriate, elements that add detail and define the base of the building are encouraged.

#### (2) *Roofs, cornices, eaves, overhangs and parapets*

- (a) Elements that define the roof and the upper quartile of the façade shall incorporate design details that provide an added level of design and articulation to the architectural expression of the building.
- (b) The choice of design elements and their scale, height, proportion and mass should draw from design cues provided by the historical character of the Town and Village.
- (c) Modern interpretation and variation is not precluded, yet shall be subject to the discretion of the Planning Board.

#### (3) *Windows*

- (a) Windows shall be of a scale, proportion and coverage appropriate to the overall style of architecture of the building.
- (b) Window openings shall be trimmed with an appropriate material (brick, stone, wood, wood-like, cementitious board, vinyl) to provide added definition and interest to the overall façade.

#### (4) *Doors and entryway*

- (a) Doors and entryways shall be of a scale, proportion and coverage appropriate to the

- overall style of architecture of the building.
- (b) Commercial buildings shall have a transparent primary entryway that will be considered as part of the overall transparency requirement for the building frontage.
  - (c) Entryways shall be detailed and announced to the general public through thoughtful trim, moldings, overhangs and other defining architectural features such that its purpose as the primary entrance is evident from the street. The same treatment is encouraged for all secondary entryways near parking locations.

**C. High quality materials**

- (1) Along street frontages, all exterior building walls and structures shall be constructed with durable materials including masonry, stone, brick, finishing wood, and glass.
- (2) Vertical aluminum, metal or T111 siding shall not be permitted.
- (3) Stucco or exterior insulated finishing systems (EIFS) are not encouraged.
- (4) No more than three exterior wall materials shall be used on any one side of a building.
- (5) Changes in materials shall occur at inside corners. Material changes at the outside corners or in a plane shall be avoided.
- (6) Precast and poured-in-place concrete walls and foundations without an architectural or decorative finished surface are not an approved finishing material and shall be prohibited on all exterior walls.
- (7) Standard masonry block walls shall be prohibited on exterior walls containing primary entryways and adjacent to streets.

### 3.3 Streetscape Guidelines

#### A. Street-level transparency.

##### (1) *Building first floors.*

- (a) For buildings fronting on primary streets the primary building entrance shall be on said street or, at the discretion of the Planning Board, at the side or rear of the structure depending on the site layout. Buildings fronting on roads other than primary streets shall have the principal entrance located on the secondary street or drive servicing such building.
- (b) Regardless of where the entrance is built, building facades and yards facing primary streets shall always be considered front facades and yards, and shall be treated accordingly.
- (c) Windows and doors shall be provided on all building facades fronting on streets or drives to improve the streetscape aesthetic and provide an increased level of transparency into the structure. No façade facing a primary street shall be a blank wall without appropriately spaced windows and/or doors.
- (d) Clear glass shall be permitted. In no instance shall glass inhibit views into the first floor. Flexibility shall be provided at the discretion of the Planning Board for non-retail uses.

##### (2) *Front yards.*

- (a) In no instance shall vegetation, walls, fences or other structures or design elements be placed in yards as to prohibit views into the transparent portions of a façade of principal structures placed along a public right-of-way.
- (b) Sidewalks along public rights-of-way. Sidewalks along all streets shall be required to provide for the health, safety and general welfare of Town residents.
- (c) Signage
  - 1. Signage along the right-of-way shall be designed in accordance with the Signage Guidelines set forth in Chapter 175, Article XIV of the Village Code.
- (d) Lighting
  - 1. Lighting along the public and private rights-of-way and along sidewalk and pedestrian zones shall be designed such that poles, fixtures, ornamentation and materials are of a pedestrian scale and height, and provide for enhanced pedestrian experience and safety.
  - 2. Pole heights shall be limited to 14 feet along sidewalks and pedestrian zones, and 20 feet within parking areas.
  - 3. Fixtures shall be “Dark Sky” compliant.

# VILLAGE OF WEBSTER HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION – COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – 2010

This document describes the present status of the historic preservation efforts in the Village of Webster, presents a vision and goals for the future and recommends actions/strategies designed to achieve the vision. These topics are discussed in three sections including: **Where We Are, Where we want to go, and how we will get there.** This background information, vision for the future and recommended strategies are intended to be incorporated in the Village of Webster’s Comprehensive Plan.

## **WHERE WE ARE:**

Historic properties are tangible links with the past that provide a sense of identity and inspire pride in our heritage. The Village of Webster Historic Preservation Commission was established in early 2005 partly in response to a survey conducted in 1995 as part of the development of a Village Comprehensive Plan that was completed in 1997. The survey found that many residents wanted to preserve the village’s historic settings, enhance the village business district and develop a comprehensive central village beautification plan. Fifty percent of respondents indicated that they chose to live in the Village because it is “an historic village setting that provides a pleasant residential environment”.

In establishing the Historic Preservation Commission, the Webster Village Board recognized that the Village’s rich and varied history and vibrant present are evident in its commercial and residential buildings and surroundings. The preservation, protection, enhancement and continued use of these structures and sites serve the best interests of all the people in the community

The Historic Preservation Commission is comprised of 5 members, all residents of the Village, each of who are appointed by the Village Mayor. At least one should be an architect experienced in working with historic structures. At least one should be an historian. At least one should be a resident of an historic district or structure. At least two should demonstrate significant interest in, and commitment to, the field of historic preservation. Involvement in a local historic preservation group, employment, or volunteer activity in the field of historic preservation, would demonstrate serious interest in the field. All members should have shown interest in historic preservation and architectural development within the Village of Webster. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission members should serve for a term of six years, with exception of the initial term of four members, two of which should be three years, one who should be four years, and one which should be six years A quorum for the transaction of business should consist of three members of the commission’s members, but not less than a majority of the full authorized membership may approve or disapprove applications for certificate of appropriateness applications for the designation of an individual property as a landmark, and the approval or disapproval of applications for the establishment of a historic district. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission should meet monthly on the first Tuesday of each month. The Chairperson should be appointed by the Mayor and should serve a period of one year. The Commission has been given the power and responsibility to:

1. Conduct surveys of the exterior of buildings and sites for the purpose of determining those of historic and/or architectural significance and pertinent facts about them.

2. Formulate recommendations concerning the preparations of maps, brochures and historical markers for selected historic and/or architectural sites and buildings.
3. Approve or disapprove applications for Certificates of Appropriateness pursuant to historic structures and sites. Approve or disapprove applications for local landmark status, and applications for the establishment of an historic district.
4. Recommend acquisition of landmark structures by the village government where its preservation is essential to Village historic preservation goals and where private preservation is not feasible.
5. Increase public awareness of the value of historic, cultural, and architectural preservation by developing and participating in public education programs.
6. Adopt criteria for the identification of significant historic, architectural and cultural landmarks.
7. Recommend to the Village Board, where appropriate, the acquisition of façade easements or other interests in real property as necessary to carry out the preservation of historic or architectural significant property.
8. Encourage establishment of local landmarks within the Webster Village.
9. A long-term goal is to establish an historic district within the Webster Village.

### **Designation of a Landmark or Historic District**

1. Designation of an individual property as a landmark, or as part of an historic preservation district is accomplished through the owner making application to the Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission and the Commission approving the owner's application. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission cannot designate a property as a landmark or part of an historic preservation district without the owner's consent. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission will consider the following when deeming a property/site worthy of local landmark status:
  - a. It possesses special character or historic or aesthetic interest or value as part of the cultural, political, economic, or social history of the locality, region, state, or nation.
  - b. It is identified with historic personages.
  - c. It is the work of a designer whose work has significantly influenced an age.
  - d. It is in a unique location or has a singular physical characteristic.
  - e. It represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood.
2. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission may approve a group of adjoining properties as a historic district if it:

Contains properties which meet one or more of the criteria for designation as a landmark and by reason of possessing such qualities, it constitutes a distinct section of the village. The boundaries of an approved historic district will be specified in detail on the Webster Village Zoning Map. The

Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission shall hold a public hearing prior to the approval of any landmark or historic district. The commission, owners, and any interested parties may present testimony or documentary evidence at the hearing that will become part of the record regarding the historic, architectural, or cultural importance of the proposed landmark or historic district. The record may also contain reports, public comments, or other evidence offered outside of the hearing

### **Certificate of Appropriateness for Alteration, Demolition or New Construction Affecting Landmarks or Historic Districts** *(this should go in the appendix)*

No person shall carry out exterior alterations, restorations, reconstruction, demolition, new construction, or moving of a landmark or property within a historic district, nor shall any person make any material change in the appearance of such property, in its light fixtures, signs, sidewalks, fences, steps, paving or other exterior elements which affect the appearance and cohesiveness of the landmark or historic district, without first obtaining a certificate of appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission.

## **IV. Criteria for Approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness**

1. In passing upon an application for a certificate of appropriateness, the Historic Preservation Commission shall not consider changes to the interior spaces, unless they are open to the public. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission's decision shall be based on the following principles:
  - Properties which contribute to the character of the historic district shall be retained, with their historic features altered as little as possible;
  - Any alteration of existing properties shall be compatible with its historic character, as well as with the surrounding district; and
  - New construction shall be compatible with the district in which it is located.
2. In applying the principle of compatibility, the Commission shall consider the following factors:
  - The general design, character, and appropriateness to the property of the proposed alteration or new construction;
  - The scale of the proposed alteration or new construction in relation to the property itself, surrounding properties, and the neighborhood;
  - Texture, materials, and color and their relation to similar features to other properties in the neighborhood;
  - Visual compatibility with surrounding properties, including proportion of the property's front facade, proportion and arrangement of windows and other openings within the facade, roof shape, and the rhythm of spacing of properties on streets, including setback; and
  - The importance of historic, architectural, or other features to the significance of the property.

## **V. Certificate of Appropriateness Application Procedure**



1. Prior to the commencement of any work requiring a certificate of appropriateness (for properties that have been designated historic landmarks in accordance with this article), the owner shall file an application for such a certificate with the Building Inspector. The application shall contain:
  - Name, address and telephone number of applicant;
  - Location and photographs of property;
  - Perspective drawings, including relationship to adjacent properties, if available;
  - Samples of color or materials to be used;
  - Where the proposal includes signs or lettering, a scale drawing showing the type of lettering to be used, all dimensions and colors, a description of materials to be used, method of illumination, and a plan showing the sign's location on the property; and
  - Any other information, which the Commission may deem necessary in order to visualize the proposed work.
2. No building permit shall be issued for such proposed work until the Historic Preservation Commission has issued a certificate of appropriateness. The certificate of appropriateness required by this section shall be in addition to and not in lieu of any building permit that may be required by any other ordinance of the Village.
3. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission shall approve or deny the permit with modifications within 60 days from receipt of the completed application. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission shall hold a public hearing on all applications at which an opportunity will be provided for the public to present their views.
4. All decisions of the Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission shall be in writing. A copy shall be sent the applicant and a copy filed with the Village Clerk's office for public inspection. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission's decision shall state the reasons for denying or modifying the application.
5. Certificates of appropriateness shall be valid for one year, after which time the owner must reapply if he/she still wishes to undertake work on the property.

## **VI. Alteration Hardship Criteria**

An applicant whose certificate of appropriateness for a proposed alteration has been denied may apply for relief on the grounds of unnecessary hardship as defined in connection with use variance applications to this Code in Section 175-56.C.1.a.thru d. *\*\* (this may need to be changed)* within 30 days of receiving the disapproval notice from the Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission. The application shall be made in writing to the Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission for review of said decision. The Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission shall, after public notice, hold a public hearing to which the Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission, the owners of the property in question, and other interested parties shall be invited. Within 30 days after the hearing, the Webster Village Historic Preservation Commission shall either confirm or disallow the original decision.

While the creation of the Village of Webster Historic Preservation Committee provides a foundation for meaningful historic preservation, considerable work is needed in order to establish visions and goals for historic preservation, in the context of the Comprehensive Plan, and in identifying the strategies and

actions that can help realize the vision and goals. The next section is intended to provide a discussion of historic preservation visions and goals.

## WHERE WE WANT TO GO:

### Vision Statement

The following statement reflects the Historic Preservation Commission’s vision of how historic preservation considerations should be part of the community’s future, particularly in the village core or commercial area:

***The Webster village community should promote the development of a visually coherent and aesthetically pleasing commercial and residential atmosphere thereby preserving its historic character. Such an atmosphere is needed to encourage visitors to the central Village. The historic nature will be enhanced through the architectural features of both old and new buildings.***

### Historic Preservation Goals (move to page 1)

1. To preserve and protect the unique character of the Village’s residential neighborhoods, including but not limited to those with a distinct architectural and/or historic character.
2. To preserve and enhance the character of the Village’s non-residential areas, including its commercial districts and public uses, particularly those exhibiting a distinct architectural and/or historic character.
3. To preserve and enhance historic sites, structures and districts within the Village.

## HOW WILL WE GET THERE:

There are a number of strategies and implementation actions that can be utilized in Webster to achieve the vision and goals for preserving historic resources. Some specific recommendations are provided below.

- The Village Board could pursue grant funding to conduct an historic resources inventory of properties in the Village. This inventory can be used to draw attention to historic resources but the decision of whether to pursue State and National Register listing and/or local landmark status listing would remain with the property owner.*

*The purpose of the inventory will be to clarify what qualifies as an “historic” structure and identify all historically significant buildings in the Village so they can be saved for future generations. The inventory may also point to opportunities to create an historic district that could include the central business district and the older residential part of the village.*

- Provide incentives for adaptive reuse of historic structures by permitting wider range of uses to occur in such structures as special uses. These may include:
  - *Artist studios*
  - *Antique shop or art gallery*
  - *Bed & breakfast*
  - *Museum*
  - *Office use*
  - *Mixed residential/commercial.**
  
- The Village should protect and preserve existing historic resources by continuing to support local efforts to place historically significant buildings on the State and National register of Historic Places.*
  
- The Village Board should consider adopting regulations, special conditions and restrictions for the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and uses of buildings and structures that have historical value and significance. Such regulations would go beyond the voluntary ordinance currently in place.*
  
- Create Village recognition of historic resources. The Village could develop its own recognition program for historic properties to recognize property owners who have restored historic resources in the community. Such programs raise awareness of the importance of historic preservation and acknowledge those who contribute to preservation efforts.*
  
- Pursue funding through the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Resources including grants for projects that improve, protect, preserve, rehabilitate or restore properties on the State or National Register for use by all segments of the population.*
  
- Raise awareness of the State’s existing Real property Tax Exemptions for Historic Properties and have local officials consider adopting tax incentive provisions of the program.*
  
- Have Village sponsor workshops on historic preservation techniques for homeowners. Encourage village trustees and other employees to attend workshops sponsored by the Landmark Society of Western New York or other workshops that provide education in the area of historic preservation. These workshops also offer opportunities to network with folks from other villages and towns who have ideas on historic preservation.*
  
- Have Village adopt design guidelines currently under development for various districts in the Village*
  
- Seek grants to offer low interest loans to improve building facades of Village center buildings and historic homes.*

- *Dedicate resources to pursue specific action items identified by the Preservation Commission including:*
  - *Establishing an historic district theme*
  - *Encouraging the placement of awnings and shutters on windows*
  - *Requiring uniform sign design consistent with the Colonial Revival period*
  - *Establishing a business district theme consistent with the historic district theme*
  - *Providing benches, railings, planters and trash receptacles reflecting the business district*
  - *Encourage street festivals, garden and house tours, and community events to promote Village spirit and an awareness of historical heritage.*
  - *Review current zoning for areas now designated Neighborhood Business, Central Business and General Industrial to allow for the expansion of business and industry. This should include historic preservation.*
  
- *Have Village Board consider the creation of the position of Director of Development and Grant Applications to recruit new businesses and secure funding for central Village improvement and growth with consideration of historic preservation.*