

**WEST SENECA TOWN OFFICES**  
**4620 Seneca Street**  
**West Seneca, NY 14224**

**TOWN BOARD PROCEEDINGS**  
**Public Hearing: Comprehensive**  
**Plan update – March 22, 2016**

Supervisor Sheila M. Meegan called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M. with 30 seconds of silent prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Eugene Hart.

**ROLL CALL:** Present - Sheila M. Meegan Supervisor  
Eugene P. Hart Councilman  
William P. Hanley, Jr. Councilman

Absent - None

Supervisor Meegan read the Fire Prevention Code instructing the public where to exit in case of a fire or an emergency.

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Motion by Supervisor Meegan, seconded by Councilman Hart, to open the public hearing.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

John Steinmetz of Steinmetz Planning Group began the presentation by stating the town is trying to do things differently to get a better result and the current Town Board is exercising a transformational approach to government. They have a broader outlook when considering repairs and reconstruction and they engage professionals such as economic development consultants, architects and planners in addition to engineers, so the end product reflects the current and future needs of the community. Mr. Steinmetz stated in order to be transformational the town needs a vision and the Comprehensive Plan is using words and pictures to articulate West Seneca's vision, including transforming auto-oriented roads to walkable and other land use changes. A Comprehensive Plan promotes the health, safety and welfare of a community and provides background information to guide decision making, framework for programs, development and investment (public and private). Having an updated Comprehensive Plan greatly increases the town's chances to receive funding at the state and federal level. Mr. Steinmetz emphasized that completion of the Comprehensive Plan marks the beginning of the work to be accomplished. He reviewed the schedule of meetings and workshops held since the kick off of the project in April 2014 and noted there will be a 30-day public comment period until the end of April, at which time the town can then choose to make revisions and consider the plan for adoption. Mr. Steinmetz further outlined the highpoints of the draft plan recommendations that resulted from the discussions. One element is a policy framework that acts as a guide to achieve the community's vision. It has four elements - vision, policy, objectives and an action plan. Mr. Steinmetz read West Seneca's vision statement and listed the seven issues the community has identified as critical - community identity and livability; environmental quality and sustainability; safe and attractive neighborhoods; economic development and reinvestment opportunities; safe, connected, and multi-modal transportation systems; healthy, active lifestyles; and sound governmental decision-making and regional partnerships. Under each of these topics are objectives and action plans to accomplish them and there is a community development strategy that will serve as a future land use decision-making tool.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Terry Krollman questioned how surrounding communities are being addressed and how they will interact with the proposed changes to Union Road.

Councilman Hart responded the committee prioritized the items and determined the town center will be the first step, but it is part of the plan to address each of the communities in West Seneca and that will be the next step. He explained the lack of a town center is a result of the town founders; the Ebenezers did not believe in village/town centers. The point of the plan is to create economic opportunity that will help the town going forward by increasing the tax base and attracting small businesses. They will also look at the Seneca Mall site – one of the single, biggest, quickest opportunities to increase the tax base. Councilman Hart stated the current Town Board does not intend to allow that situation to exist much longer and municipalities have powers in these circumstances which they may choose to exercise. He further stated the public announcement/Code Red system will be used to notify residents of further meetings.

Mike Burzynski questioned why residents were not notified by Code Red for the Union Fire Department vote.

Councilman Hart stated he lives in Fire District #2 and mailings were sent among other methods of notification. He further noted that fire districts are independent of the town in the same way the school district is. Taxes for both are collected by the town and then given to the respective entities.

Ray Nalewajek questioned how much coordination there has been with NYS with regard to Union Road and if they have a master plan that will affect West Seneca's plans for the roadway. Mr. Nalewajek further questioned who will fund traffic studies for this area.

Mr. Steinmetz responded the town will be in discussions with NYS concerning Union Road and the next step will be to engage them to conduct a traffic study and do an analysis.

Village of Williamsville Mayor Brian Kulpa was in attendance at the public hearing and commented on their current project. He stated NYS will first want to see the town's Comprehensive Plan and the town will then express their desire to make changes to Union Road. At that point the state will ask the not-for-profit Greater Buffalo – Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) to conduct a traffic study. The council will provide the community and state with counts and modeling for the road in question. After this is accomplished, the town can work with the state to identify grant money or state capital money to be used to improve Union Road. He further stated that while Union Road is a state asset it runs through the community and West Seneca deserves to have the state put money into the road to make it as good for the town as it can be. Mayor Kulpa noted that West Seneca will be the leader in effecting change on the Union Road corridor. He also stated that having the Comprehensive Plan in place will give the Town Board ammunition to go to the state and ask for the changes and improvements. Without a municipality's plan as a guide, NYS does whatever they want to do with a road.

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Jeanmarie Cieslica referred to the natural resources and sustainability section of the Comprehensive Plan and the objective of preserving areas of rural character and open space. She questioned if actions will include private properties or just town properties. Ms. Cieslica also referred to the proposed development of the WNYDDSO space as mixed use and questioned whether alternative plans were proposed to preserve the area as park space. She commented on the lack of proposals for wildlife preservation and stated development of land in the area of East & West Road affects the existing wildlife, resulting in greater occurrences of car/deer accidents and the migration of deer into neighborhoods. Ms. Cieslica wanted to see a wildlife management plan added to the Comprehensive Plan to take these items into consideration, noting people that live in this area enjoy the wildlife.

Mr. Steinmetz responded at this point the Comprehensive Plan did not identify specific places for preservation other than Leydecker Woods. As key sites present themselves they will be reviewed and the town will engage in those discussions. Mr. Steinmetz further stated they have not done schematic plans to reconfigure the WNYDDSO site.

Councilman Hart stated extensive efforts have been made regarding the WNYDDSO site and they hope NYS will remediate the property. The new tree ordinance will also impact future development.

Evelyn Hicks, Chairwoman of the West Seneca Environmental Commission, stated the commission engages in conversations with the Town Board on these issues on a regular basis and with their assistance and support the commission is moving forward. They would like the town to consider a zoning overlay district along the creeks and they are watching the City of Buffalo as they implement a Green Code. She stated they may use this as a model for West Seneca, but noted the commission is not looking to take people's property. Mrs. Hicks commented on the many discussions of the Planning Board during the site plan review process and not allowing development into the flood plain because of the negative ramifications. There also exists a level of protection along the waterways, the Riparian Corridor, which limits development. The town has accepted property from landowners as a donation and incorporated conservation language and deed restrictions. Further, the town has been awarded two grants from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation for restoration work. Mrs. Hicks stated the current Town Board is the most supportive of any past Town Board and commented that while no specific wildlife plan is in writing, there is a natural resource plan at this point that was developed in 1999 and updated in 2006. The theme of protecting natural resources and wildlife runs through every section of the proposed Comprehensive Plan. Mrs. Hicks commented that NYS designated 123 acres at the WNYDDSO site as the Cazenovia Creek Wildlife Management area. The town does not currently control this area and she would like to invite the state to discuss their intentions. She stated that "mixed use" has not been defined and discussions and planning will need to happen. The value of that property is a negative \$12 million due to the presence of asbestos and the area will be a Brownfield site.

Joanne Czechowski stated there are many things to accomplish to make a new West Seneca and she questioned the timeframe.

Councilman Hart responded it will take years, but some things will happen quickly (i.e. rezoning and economic development) and the Town Board will be going to NYSDOT to start discussions about enhancements to Union Road. He further commented on a current example of the town enforcing new architectural standards in the proposed Tim Horton's on the corner of Union Road and Indian Church Road. The initial proposal was refused due to the "square box" design. The revised plans look similar to the Burchfield Nature and Arts Center and the bank across the street.

Bill O'Rourke referred to the old Tops building on Ridge Road and questioned if the town has any control when a building is abandoned because another is built.

Supervisor Meegan responded that Tops never owns the buildings they occupy, they rent them. The building and property is owned by S & R and they have replaced the parking lot and made some cosmetic updates. In addition, the new Verizon store has further enhanced the property. Supervisor Meegan stated the current Town Board has done what they can to mitigate the eyesore and dismal state that was left when Tops moved to their current location; however, if there are no code violations there is nothing the town can do. Going forward, the Town Board would like to have incentives/financial assistance for businesses to change and meet architectural standards.

Councilman Hart explained that the plan is to work with Erie County for a 10 year reduction in taxes to allow a business to afford the updates.

Jeanmarie Cieslica questioned if the town plans to work with Assemblyman Kearns on vacant properties.

Councilman Hart responded that Town Board members work with Assemblyman Kearns all the time and since he became a councilman the number of vacant homes is down from 90 to 58. The town is also in the Homestead Program with Erie County and they have flipped two vacant properties and demolished four.

Maryann O'Rourke referred to the color of Techno Phobia at the corner of Berg Road and Orchard Park Road and the used car dealership across the street. She questioned if the town can prevent another unattractive corner.

Mrs. Hicks responded the former car dealership property is under new ownership and the owner has applied to the Zoning Board multiple times for approval of improvements to the property including the fence and painting. The work is still in the process and the property will look better when it is complete.

In response to an inquiry on the status of the property next to Country Peddlers, Councilman Hart stated they are in litigation. The process of addressing code violations starts with notifying a property owner with a letter stating the violation. If the noncompliance continues, the owner receives another violation letter followed by a citation requiring a court appearance. At that point the courts take over.

Councilman Hart referred again to the property at Ridge Road and Orchard Park Road and asked legal counsel if the Town Code could be changed to give the Town Board powers to address the issue of leaving an eyesore behind. He further questioned if the town can license property managers.

Attorney Charles Grieco stated the Town Code could be amended to address the issue of leaving behind an eyesore from a property maintenance standpoint or a development approval standpoint for the new property. Mr. Grieco did not see any reason the town could not license property managers.

Bob Rigby questioned if the town has a grantwriter to apply for assistance.

Supervisor Meegan responded that Connie Miner is the town's grantwriter and she has helped the town secure grants for the library project, police expansion project, ice rink repairs and the FEMA money recovered.

Councilman Hanley stated they brought in many experts, including high profile developers, to advise the town how to be successful in bringing development into West Seneca. The participants expressed the need to improve the town entrances to make it more attractive. Councilman Hanley further commented on the lighting project and stated the town has completed phase 1 of lighting changes which involved installing 900 LED lights throughout the town. Phase 2 will be to change 3500 street lights and as a result of this different type of lighting the town will experience a savings. There will be a 5 - 6 year payback on this project and then electricity use will go way down.

Maryann O'Rourke questioned if the town could cooperate with neighboring districts on abandoned homes to save time and money on efforts already being made.

Mr. Grieco commented on the Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation (BENLIC), a not-for-profit corporation created under the Land Bank Act that is a regional approach to the problem. It is a local public authority that has more powers than individual municipalities to acquire, improve and sell distressed, vacant, abandoned and/or tax delinquent properties.

Councilman Hart responded this is a state and nationwide issue and West Seneca has a Housing Inspector who executes the plan.

Supervisor Meegan commented that West Seneca has many shared services already in place including an assessor and electrical inspector. They also chose to outsource the Engineering Department as a cost savings to the town.

Bill O'Rourke commented on the abysmal state of the bridge over Smokes Creek on Berg Road.

Supervisor Meegan responded that is a county road located in the Town of Orchard Park and she will contact the county with his comment.

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Mr. Steinmetz stated the public comment period will remain open and any further comments or questions should be forwarded to the Town Clerk's Office.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Supervisor Meegan, seconded by Councilman Hanley, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 P.M.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

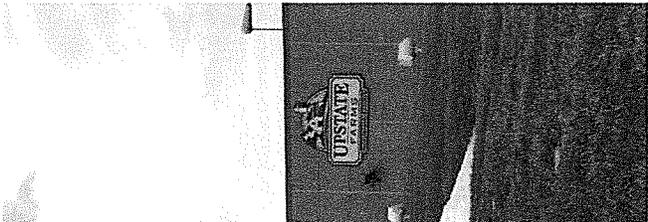
Motion Carried

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**JACQUELINE A FELSER, TOWN CLERK**



TOWN OF  
**WEST SENECA**   
 2016 Comprehensive Plan Strategic Update



**“Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result.”**

~ Albert Einstein

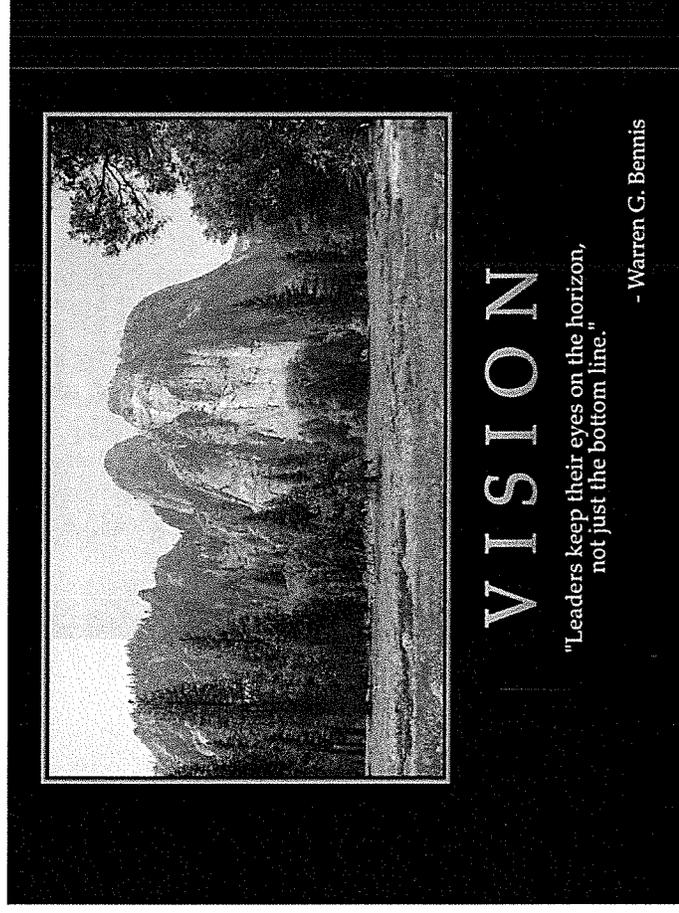
# Today's Agenda

1. Comprehensive Plan Overview
2. What's in Your Plan?
3. Your Vision
4. Key Recommendations
5. Next Steps



# What Is Your Community's Mindset?

- Transactional (aka Managerial)
- Transformational (aka Visionary)



# What Do Communities Focus On?

## Transactional

- ✓ Budgeting & Taxes
- ✓ Replacement of existing infrastructure in kind
- ✓ Dotting the "I"s & crossing the "T"s during the administration of development proposals (SEQR)
- ✓ Engineering comments (Drainage, Traffic)
- ✓ Legal Issues

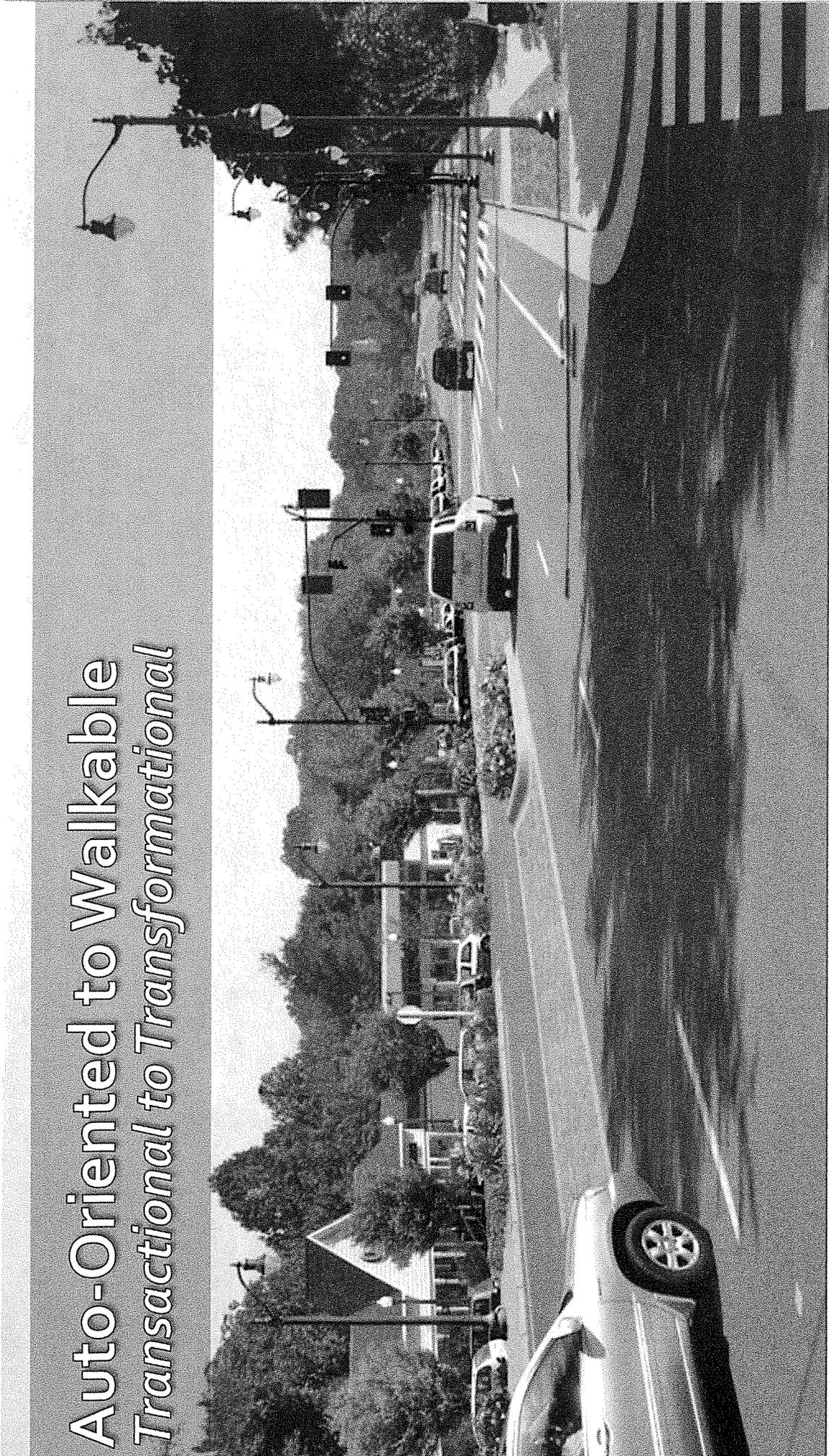
## Transformational

- ✓ Budgeting & Taxes
- ✓ Replacement of existing infrastructure in a manner that enhances the community
- ✓ Using the development review process to protect or improve the community (SEQR)
- ✓ Engineering Comments
- ✓ Legal Issues
- ✓ Community Character - Architectural comments
- ✓ Community Priorities - Planner comments

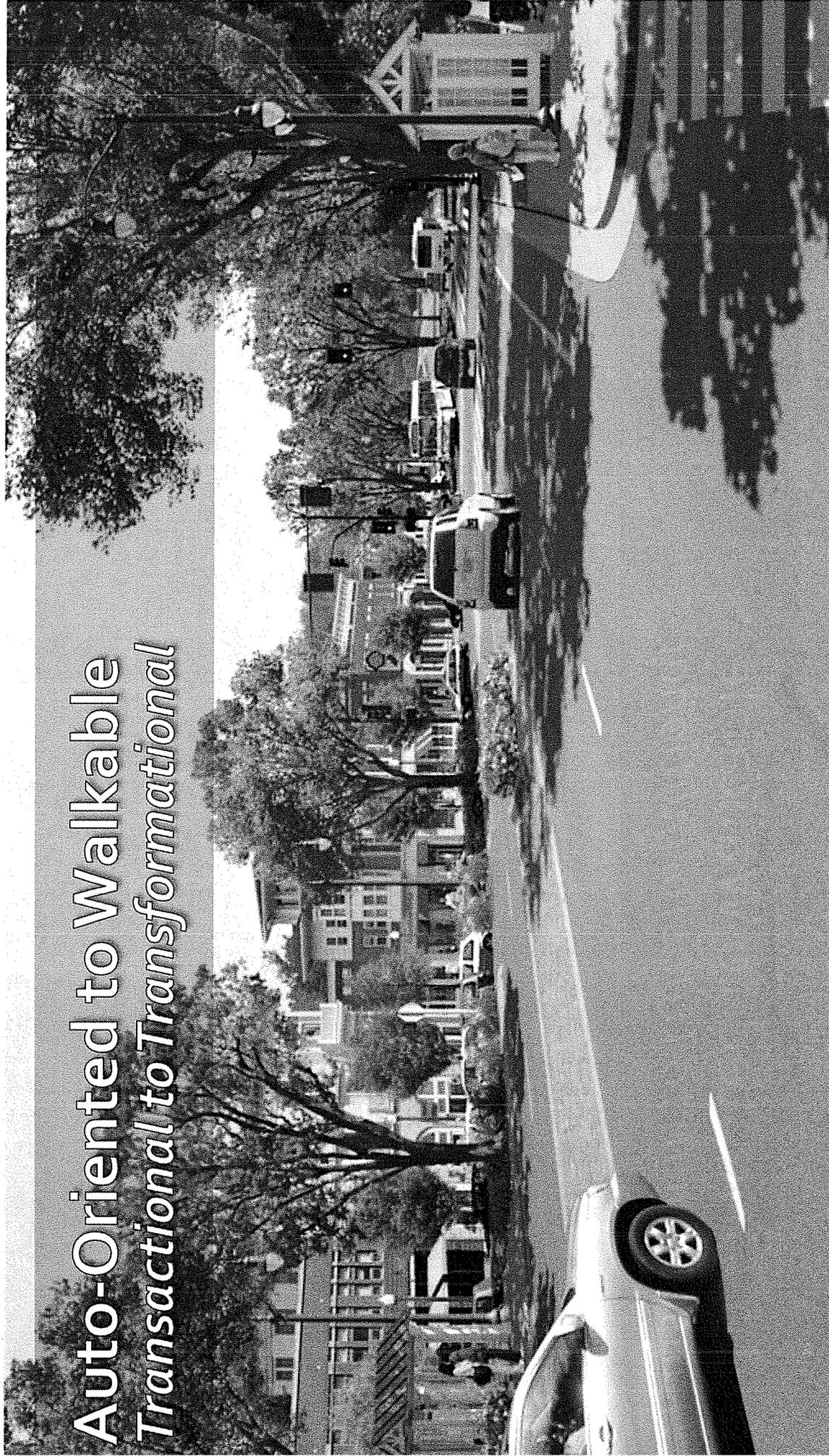
**Auto-Oriented to Walkable**  
***Transactional to Transformational***

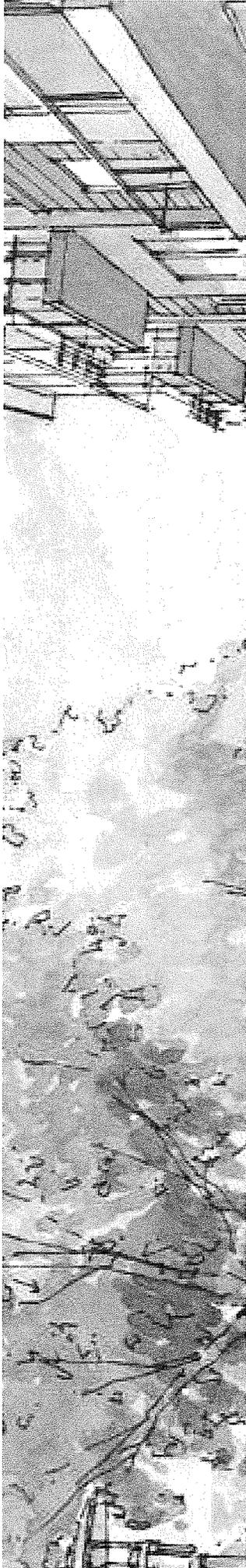


**Auto-Oriented to Walkable**  
*Transactional to Transformational*

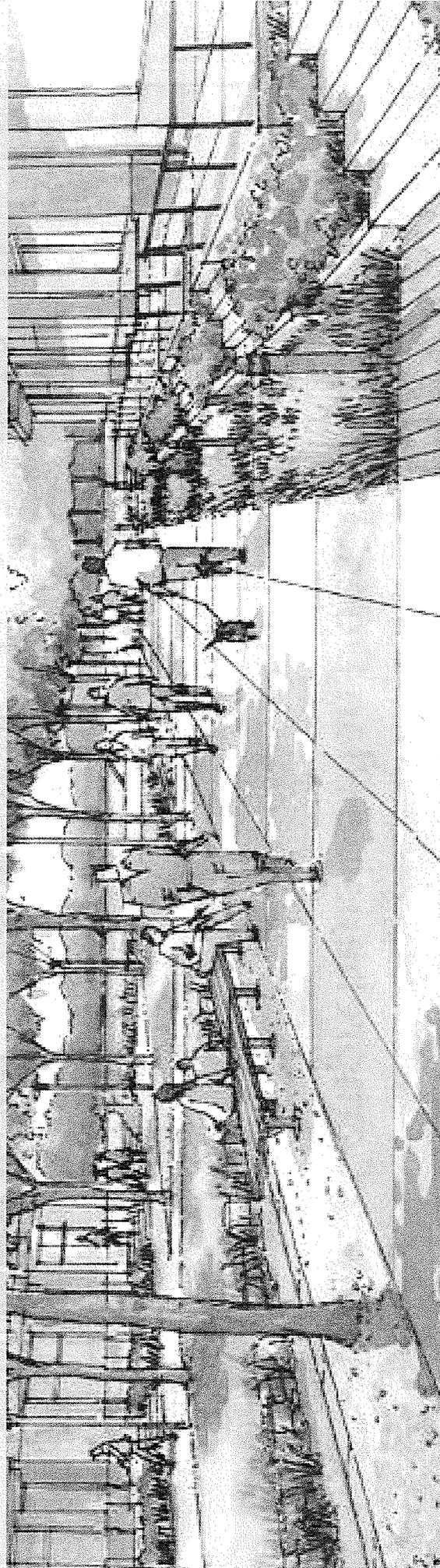


**Auto-Oriented to Walkable**  
***Transactional to Transformational***





# In Order to Be Transformational You Need A Vision For



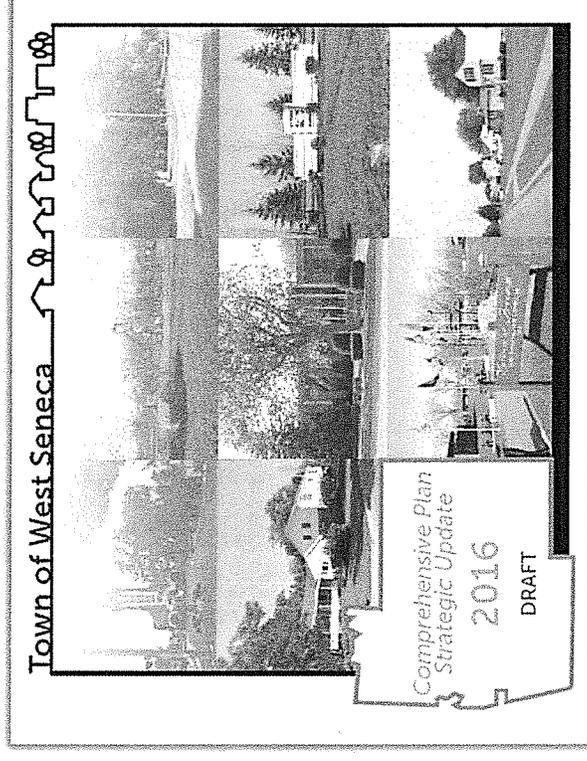
Public Hearing  
March 22, 2016

Town of  
**WEST SENECA**  
2016 Comprehensive Plan Strategic Update

# What a Comprehensive Plan Does...

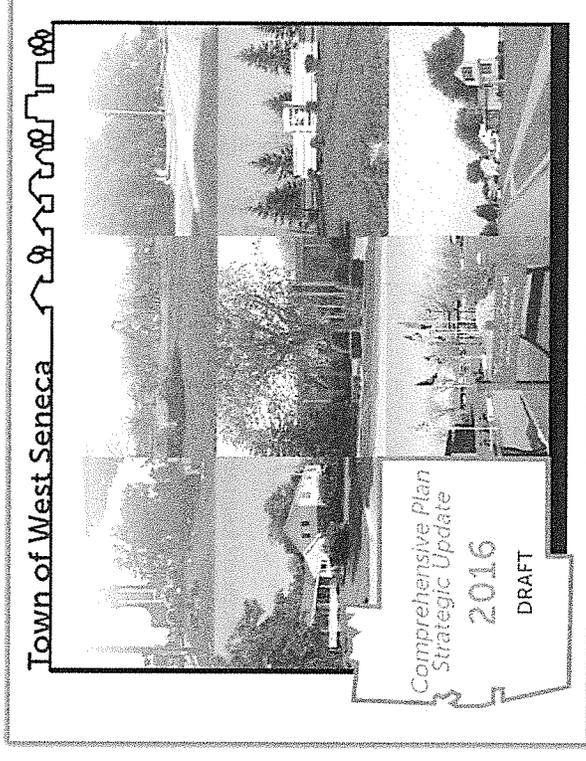
- Provided for by New York State Law
- Promotes the health, safety, & welfare of the public
- Provides background information and policies to assist with decision making
- Framework for programs, development, & investment

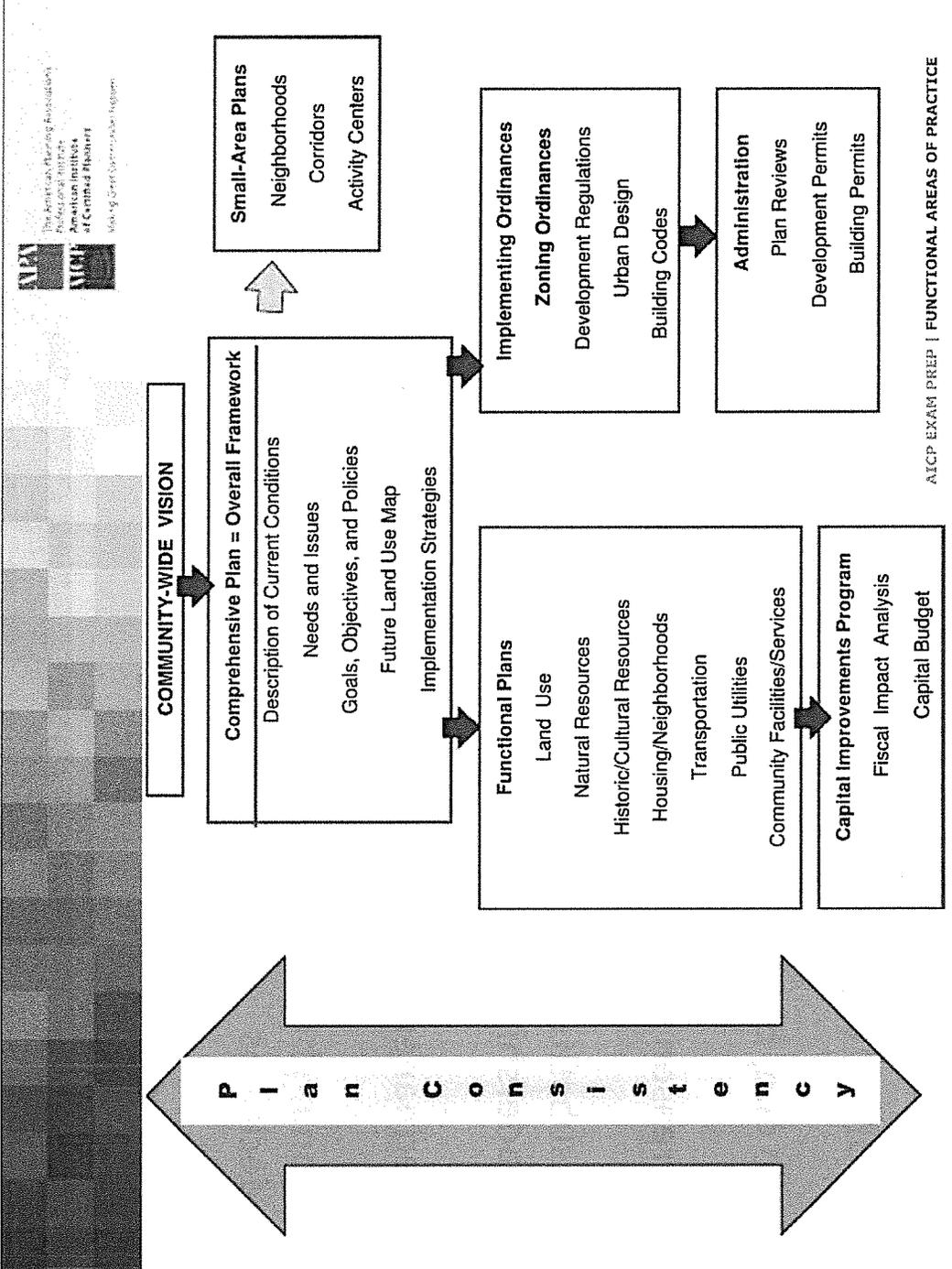
*~ Dramatically increases your chances of obtaining funding ~*



# A Comprehensive Plan Is NOT...

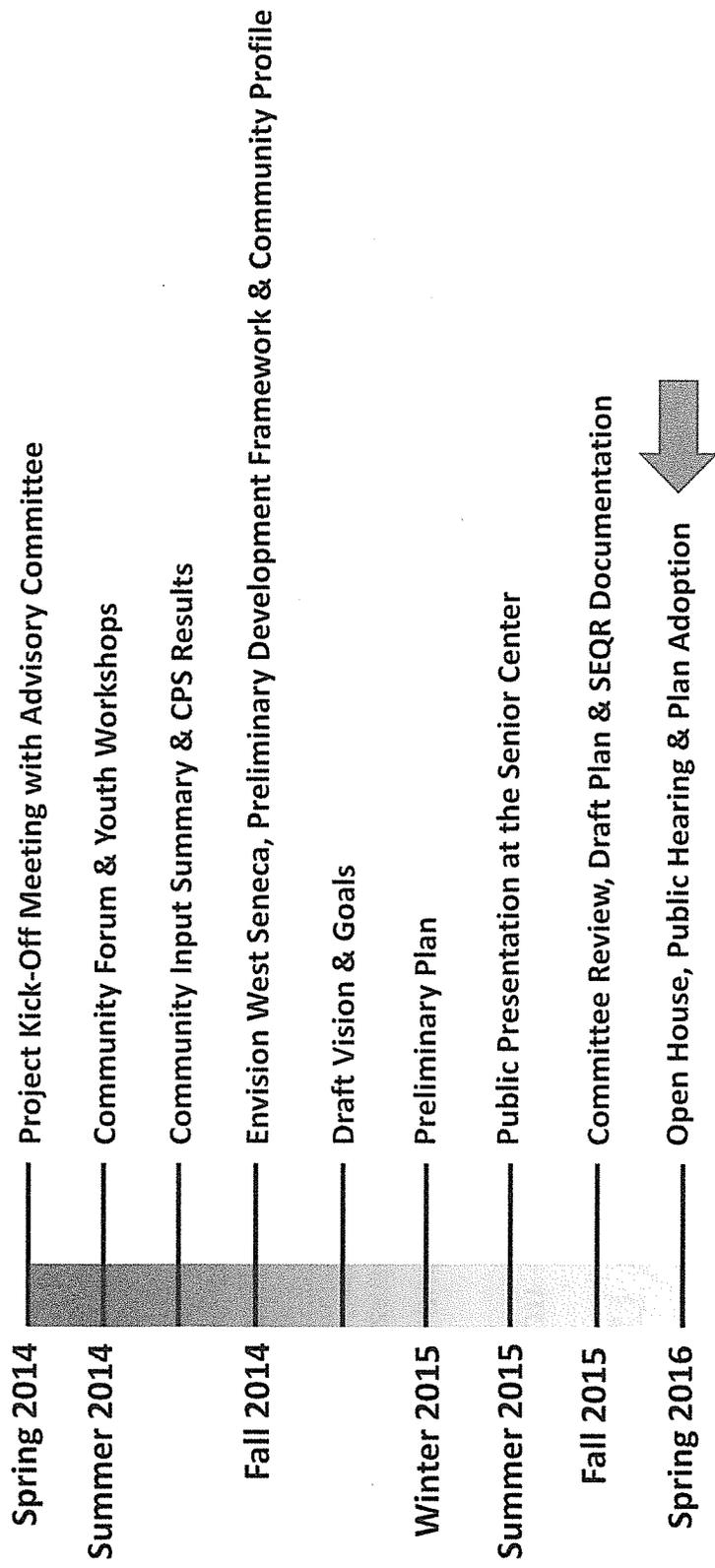
- An end, but the beginning of a process
- A reason to expect immediate changes
- A substitute for action or strong leadership
- Permanent or rigid
- Zoning but does inform land use decisions
- Intended to take away rights





AICP EXAM PREP | FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF PRACTICE

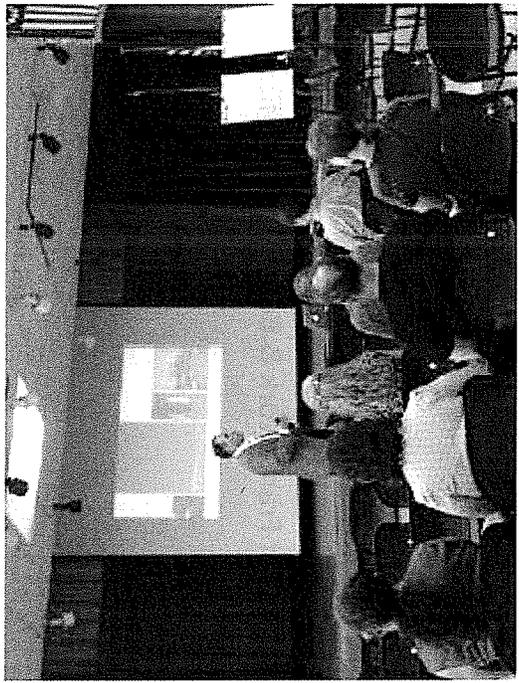
# Our Planning Process



*Where are we now?*

## What's in Your Plan?

- Introduction – “*The how and why*”
  - Plan purpose
  - Utilization
  - Project process & Public input
- Community Profile – “*Our current conditions*”
  - Demographic data & trends
  - Community Assets
- Implications – “*What does this mean?*”



At the start of the Community Workshop, a brief presentation was given outlining the Comprehensive Planning Process and its benefits.

*Where are we going?*

## What's in Your Plan?

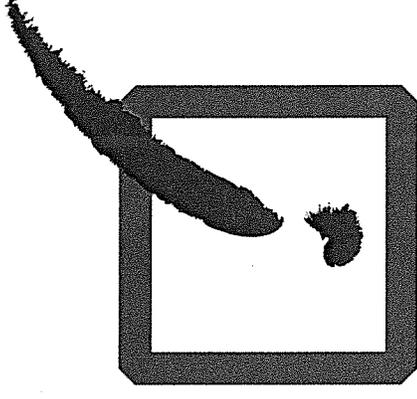
- Vision Statement – *"What do we want to be?"*
- Policy Framework – *"What's important to us"*
  - ✧ *Community Identity & Livability*
  - ✧ *Neighborhoods*
  - ✧ *Economic Development & Reinvestment*
  - ✧ *Transportation, Access & Connectivity*
  - ✧ *Public Health & Wellness*
  - ✧ *Governmental Partnerships*
  - ✧ *Community Development Strategy*



*How will we get there?*

## What's in Your Plan?

- Community Development Strategy & Map – *“What we want to look like”*
  - Informs future land use decision-making
  - Includes specific regulatory recommendations
- Priority Action Plan – *“Our big impact plans/next steps”*
  - In depth summary of 12 catalytic projects
  - Also listed in Policy Framework
- Conclusion – *“Final thoughts moving forward”*



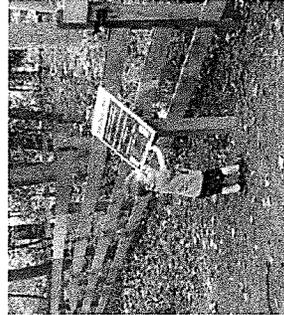
# Draft Plan Recommendations

## Our Vision

West Seneca will be a place where people, business, and industry come together in support of our community. Our Town will be known for its efforts to maintain and enhance its assets by actively promoting:

- » Community identity and livability;
- » Environmental quality and sustainability;
- » Safe and attractive neighborhoods;
- » Economic development and reinvestment opportunities;
- » Safe, connected, and multi-modal transportation systems;
- » Healthy, active lifestyles; and
- » Sound governmental decision-making and regional partnerships.

To achieve a sustainable and successful future, we will implement our Community Development Strategy. This Strategy is designed to revitalize our community fabric through focused investment in a manner that respects our heritage and appeals to future generations.



Burroughfield Square 5, Art Center  
Photo: Yelp.com, Theresa R.



Update Farms facility in the North America Center



Barkshire Drive looking south to Calverton Creek  
Photo: Google, 2015

# Draft Plan Recommendations

## Community Identity & Livability

The Town will employ high-quality land use planning and design practices to enhance the public and private realm, while recognizing our cultural identity and improving livability for all residents. The layout of our natural and built environments, street and block design, define our community character and identity. Therefore, future development and investments made by the Town will recognize the value and importance of connectivity, architecture, and well-designed places in connection with the desired character of the community. Although each neighborhood and district will highlight its own history and character, all should positively contribute to the Town's overall identity and livability.



### Objectives

- A: Encourage density-building efforts as part of developing a strong community character.
- B: Improve the design and aesthetics of our shopping and business districts, public spaces, and environments, and make them more pedestrian friendly.
- C: Ensure the compatibility of new development projects with neighboring uses.
- D: Stress the importance of placemaking techniques in all new public and private developments.
- E: Encourage additional cultural and tourism-related uses within our neighborhood centers.
- F: Preserve the historical integrity of the Town's buildings, sites, and landmarks.

### Placemaking (noun) [pley-mey-king]:

A process by which we shape our public spaces in order to maximize their potential and their value. Placemaking is not about just providing a better urban environment. It encompasses a variety of social, physical, and cultural activities that shape the public realm and create a place that is exciting and vibrant. (See Project for Public Spaces - [www.projectforpublicspaces.org](http://www.projectforpublicspaces.org))

## COMMUNITY IDENTITY & LIVABILITY

### Action Items (by Objective)

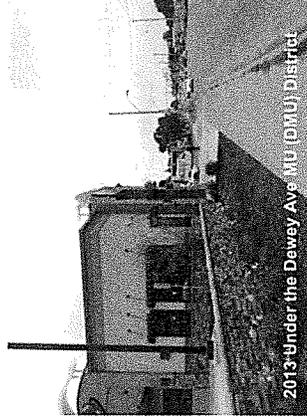
- 1) Meet with developers, business owners, and residents in annual forums to detail the requirements that need to be met by new construction or remodeling projects.
- 2) Establish an Architectural Review Committee and draft design guidelines to assist the Planning Board in the review of development applications.
  - 1) Review and update the Town Zoning Code to improve building and site design controls, sign regulations, and enforcement.
  - 2) Provide incentives to commercial property owners to make improvements to their properties through tax incentives, facade programs, community educational forums, etc.
- 3) Formalize a preliminary sketch review process as part of a pre-application conference for new development applications.
- 4) Review and revise Site Plan Review language to provide better approval criteria and a more predictable process for new commercial development and redevelopment.
- 5) Expand the industrial park overlay to other industrial areas of the Town to offer design guidelines and protection of neighboring uses.
- 6) Improve the aesthetics of major north-south corridors (Union Road, Transit Road, Harlem Road, Orchard Park Road) with a streetscape plan that includes but is not limited to landscaping, facade, and right-of-way improvements.
- 7) Require the creation of more pleasant pedestrian connections and access within development sites (e.g. between stores, parking, etc.).
- 8) Define and strengthen the identity of the original settlements, such as Ebenezer and Gardenville.
  - 1) Identify and facilitate the preservation of historic structures, Native American cultural sites, and archaeologically sensitive areas.
  - 2) Mark historic sites and buildings with unique plaques denoting their construction date and/or significance.
- 9) Update the State and National Historic Registry and their associated programs to help guide and fund the rehabilitation of historic structures.
- 10) Pursue enrollment in the Certified Local Government program.

# Community Identity & Livability

- Improve appearance of business districts
- Modify zoning code to improve building & site design requirements

## Greece Case Study

- 2001 Master Plan
- Placeholder for Dewey Ave
- 2006 Corridor Study
- 2007 Traffic Calming Study
- 2011 Mixed Use Zoning
- Implementation



# Natural Resources & Sustainability

- Strengthen and support the Town's park system.
  - Utilize the vacant rail corridor along the NYS Thruway to link West Seneca to the regional rails-to-trails system



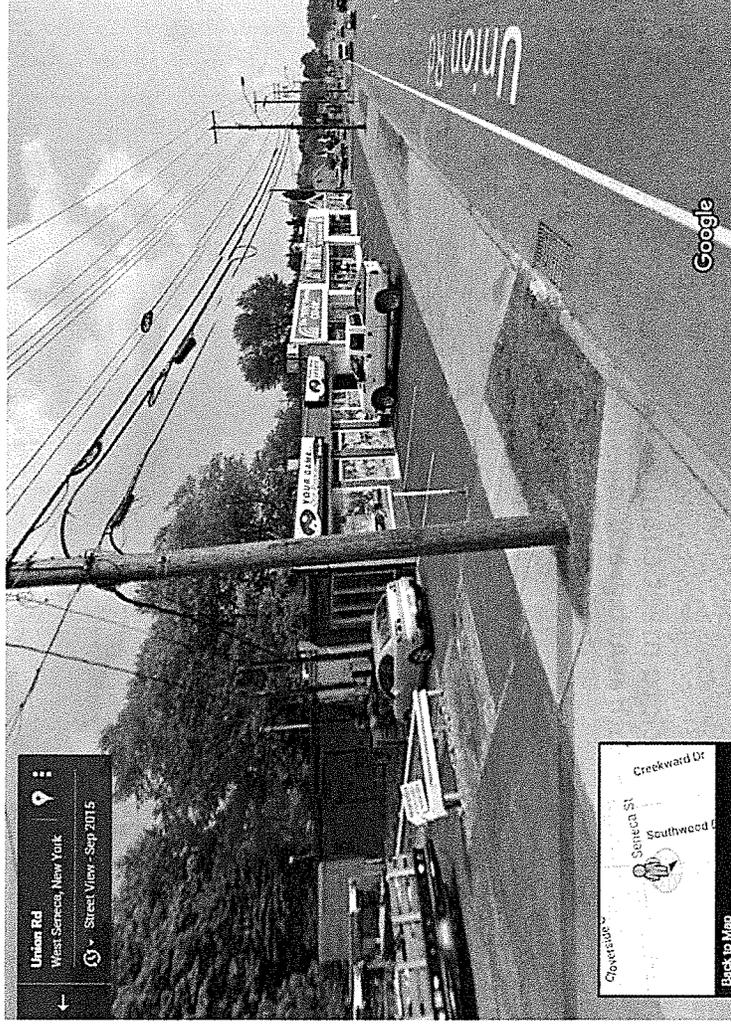
# Neighborhoods

- Consider ways to permit adaptability of existing housing stock to meet changing resident needs.
- Research and draft policy for short-term rental properties or lodging, such as Airbnb and other rental/extended-stay options.

The screenshot shows a news article from the Fortuna Journal. At the top left, the Fortuna Journal logo is visible, along with navigation links for 'NEWS', 'POPULAR', 'TOPICS', and 'CONTACT US'. The article title is 'San Francisco to Airbnb: Please Help Us Fight Illegal Hotels'. Below the title, it says 'By Kia Kociljitskova' and 'PUBLISHED JANUARY 7, 2016, 10:00 PM EDT'. There are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Email. The main image is a black and white aerial photograph of San Francisco, showing the city's dense urban landscape and the Golden Gate Bridge in the distance. To the right of the image, there is a caption: 'Downtown San Francisco stands in this aerial photograph in San Francisco, California, U.S., on January 7, 2016. Photo by David Paul'. Below the image, the article text begins: 'San Francisco officials ask home-sharing companies for cooperation in spotting illegal rentals.'

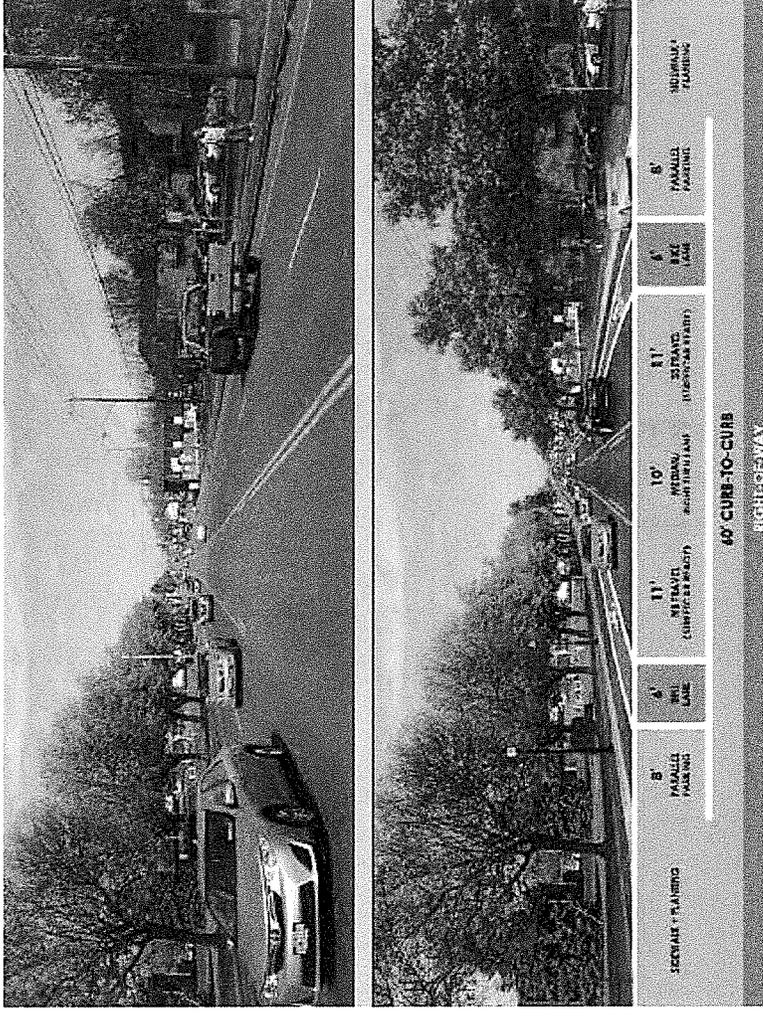
# Economic Development & Reinvestment

- Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized, vacant commercial properties and areas that have suffered from disinvestment.
- Review and address areas in the Town Zoning Code that may restrict opportunities for redevelopment.
- Assist developers with grant applications and funding sources for the purchase and development of vacant or dilapidated buildings.



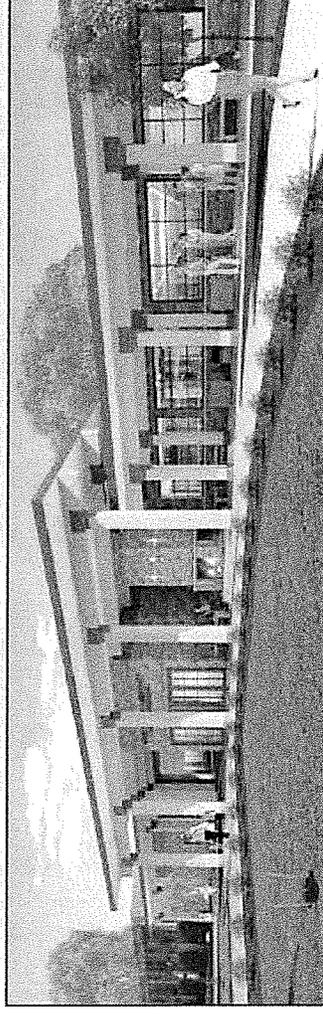
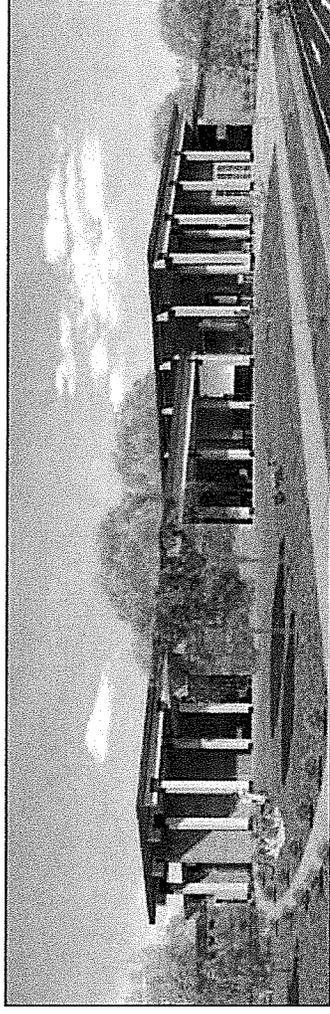
# Transportation, Access, & Connectivity

- Implement traffic-calming measures where desired and appropriate.
- Consider traffic calming methods to improve the comfort of the Union Road corridor for all modes of travel.



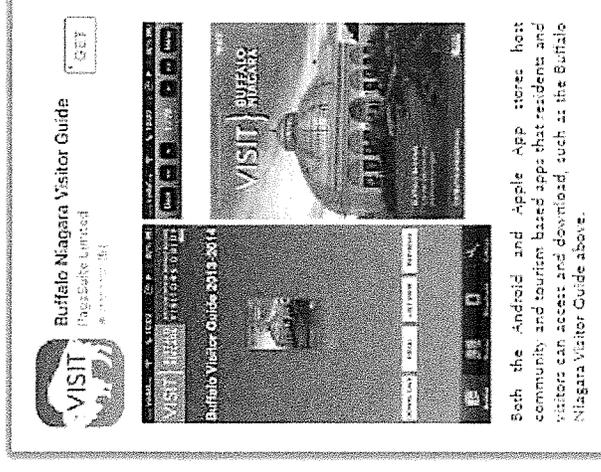
## Public Health & Wellness

- Ensure public service operations and Town facilities have adequate space and resources to meet demand for operation.
- Market the Town Hall Campus as a multi-service complex to residents.



# Governmental Partnerships & Decision-making

- Strengthen relationships with surrounding municipalities and public agencies to pursue common goals.
- Work with local, county, and regional economic development agencies to coordinate programs and projects.
- Partner with adjacent municipalities to pursue joint grant opportunities to help fund local and regional projects.
- Work with the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning to discuss regional efforts that may be beneficial to West Seneca.

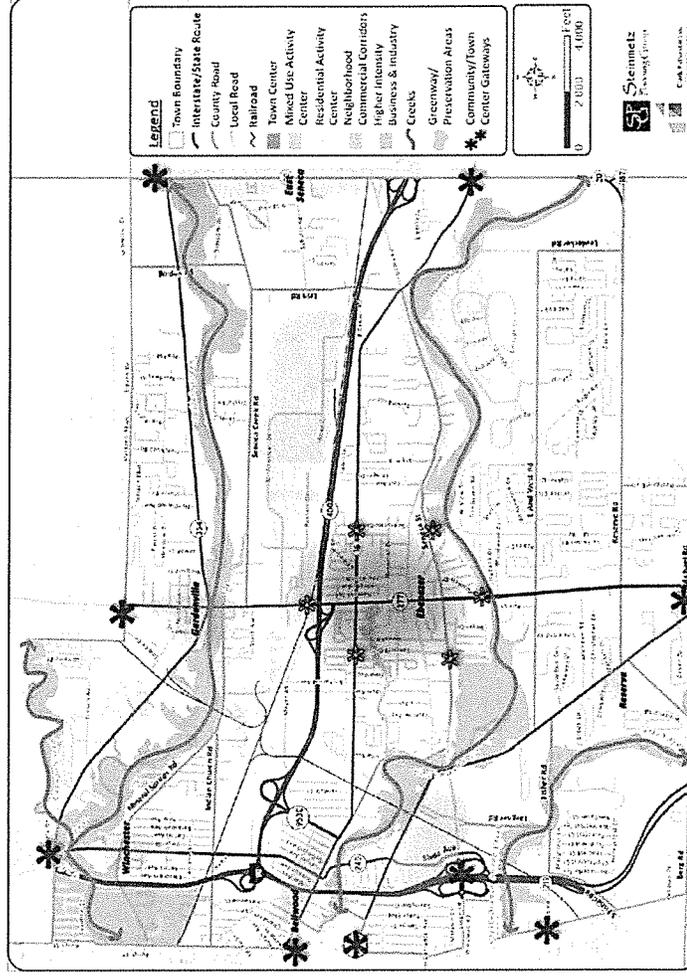


# Community Development Strategy (CDS)

- A Town Center surrounding the intersection of Union Road and Main Street
- Seven historic Neighborhood Commercial Corridors
- A Mixed-Use Activity Center in the area bordered by the NYS Thruway, Ridge Road, and the Cazenovia Creek
- A Residential Activity Center located on the former Developmental Center Site
- Higher intensity Business Centers that include the North America Drive Industrial Park
- Greenways, Creeks, and Preservation Areas along the Town's many waterways
- Gateways that serve to welcome residents and visitors into the community and the Town Center

Map 8: CDS

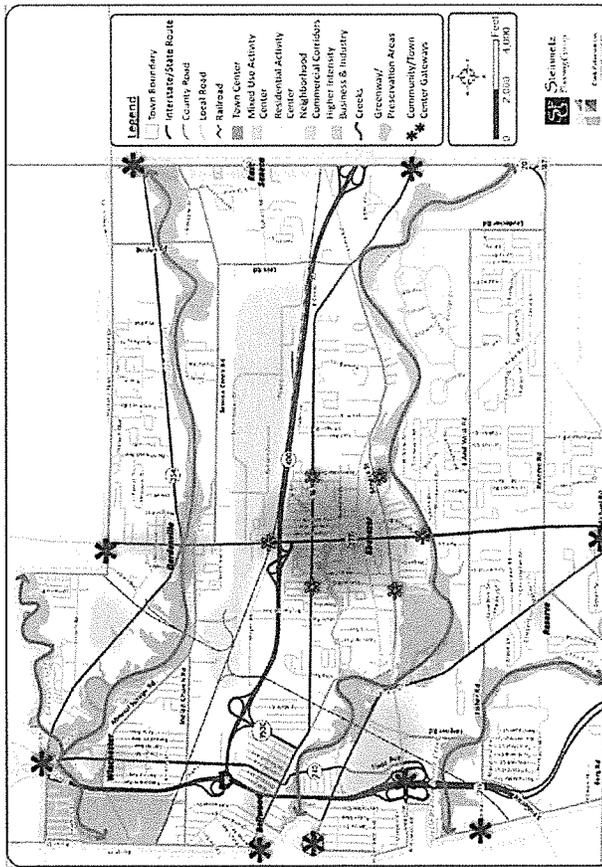
## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



# Community Development Strategy (CDS)

## Town Center

Map 8: CDS



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### TO BE AVOIDED



Public Realm



Private Realm

In order to achieve the objective of developing a more walkable Town Center along this stretch of Union Road, the Town must make deliberate efforts to improve the character of both the public and private realms over time. The following recommendations include efforts that would provide traffic-calming effects as well as improve the aesthetic of the overall streetscape and strengthen the sense of place within the Town Center.

Specific action items related to the development of the Town Center context can be found on pages 72-74 of the Priority Action Plan.

### TO BE ENCOURAGED

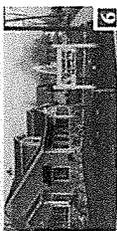


- #### Public Realm
- Provide frequent opportunities to cross Union Road on foot and ensure these crossings are highlighted to ensure better visibility of crosswalks
  - Narrow crossing distances for pedestrians at intersections. (As shown in images 2 and 3)
  - Include tree lawns with street trees a maximum of 40 feet apart along both sides of Union Road. (As shown in image 3)
  - Increase the number of lanes or bike ways, if possible by reducing the curbside road width or with the placement of a landscaped median. (As shown in image 3)
  - Reduce the number of curb cuts and driveways along Union Road

#### Private Realm

- Require shared access and encourage shared parking agreements.
- Require shared lots to be located to the rear or side of building. (As shown in images 5 and 6)
- Require additional screening of parking lots that front Union Road
- Encourage the development of multi-story, widely interesting buildings.

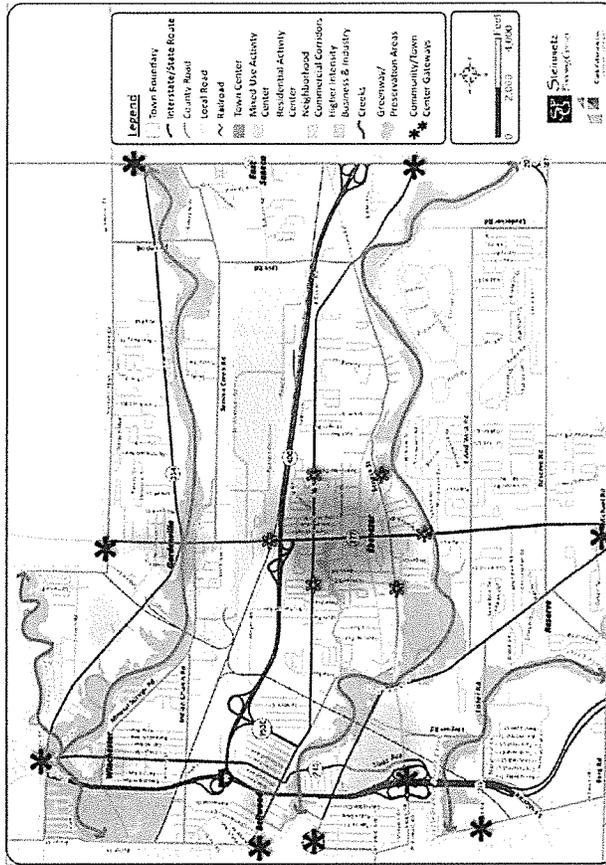
### TO BE ENCOURAGED



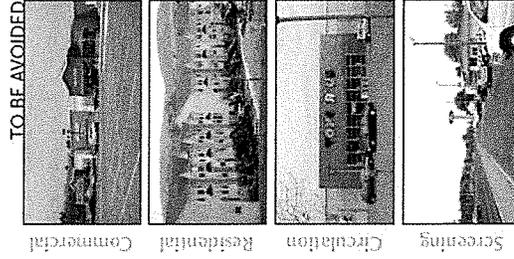
# Community Development Strategy (CDS)

## Mixed-Use Activity Center

Map 8: CDS



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



TO BE AVOIDED TO BE ENCOURAGED

In order to accommodate the preferred type and pattern of development in this area, it is recommended that the Town's Zoning Code be updated to reflect the following in the Mixed-Use Activity Center requirements:

- » Limit the height of buildings to no more than 4 or 5 stories (50 to 60ft).
- » Create a maximum setback requirement.
- » Require a maximum of 50 to 60% of the lot frontage to be occupied by building footprints, decorative architectural walk, or other site amenities such as public art, or require parking lots to be located to the side of rear of a building.
- » Ensure parking lots are adequately landscaped to 9-10 ft planted planter per bay of 20 spaces and screened from adjacent streets or walkways.
- » Require an internal circulation system that promotes pedestrian and vehicular connectivity to the street, public sidewalk network, between parcels, and through parking lots.
- » Permit mixed-use buildings that would provide retail space on the lower floors and residential or office above.
- » Consider building and site design techniques to help create smaller, walkable blocks within a development, and
- » Develop building and site design standards that provides a visually appealing and pedestrian friendly architectural and streetscape.

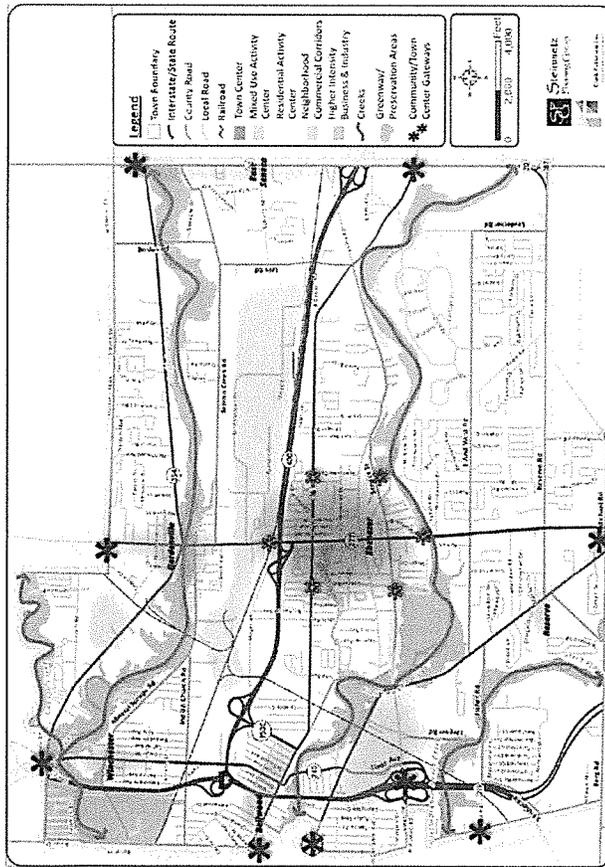
The Town should consider adding a Planned Unit Development (PUD) provision to its code. A PUD provision may assist the Town and potential developers in creating a Mixed-Use Activity Center that achieves the vision for the community and meets the objectives listed on the previous page. For more information on a PUD, please refer to page 59.

# Community Development Strategy (CDS)

## Residential Activity Center

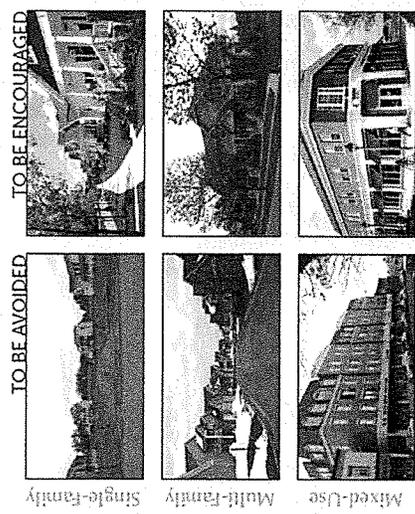
### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Map 8: CDS



### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- In order to achieve the desired development pattern of the Residential Activity Center, all future development should be consistent with the following objectives:
- Establish neighborhoods that are consistent with the scale of suburban neighborhoods and created through pedestrian activity.
  - Accommodate a variety of housing types, neighborhood amenities, community resources, and public facilities.
  - Encourage sidewalks and community resources are accessible to the elderly, poor and are in close proximity to each other.
  - Create a network of interconnecting streets and blocks that provide an opportunity for the natural landscape.
  - Encourage natural features and undeveloped areas are preserved and integrated into the open space of the neighborhoods.
  - Develop well-designed squares, plazas, greens, landscaped streets, parks, and parks that are woven into the pattern of the neighborhood and dedicated to the social interaction, recreation, and visual enjoyment of the residents, and
  - Design the public and private rights using architecture, landscaping, and other elements that are human-scaled and pedestrian oriented.



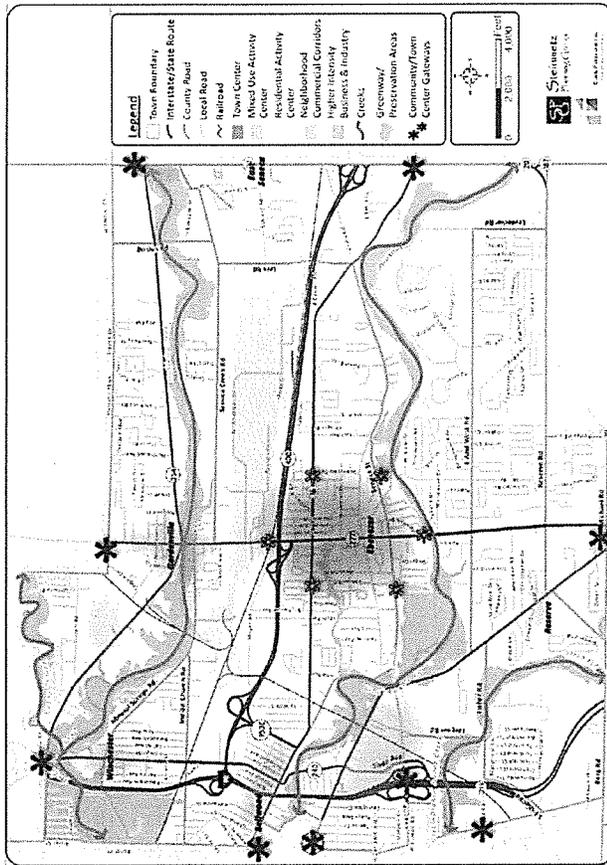
As the images above indicate, the Town should encourage the development of smaller-scale, medium-density, mixed-use and residential development types (single-family, two-family, and multi-family) in both urban and rural areas. However, that the Town utilize a PUD and clustering approach to ensure proper building form, design, and placement.

A Planned Unit Development (PUD) is a large, integrated development adhering to a comprehensive plan and located on a single tract of land or on two or more tracts of land that may be separated only by a street or other high-way. PUDs are typically written and administered. PUDs can offer a degree of flexibility that allows creativity in land planning, site design, and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands not possible with conventional subdivision and land development practices. (See APAs Planning Advisory Service for more info: [www.planning.org/pas](http://www.planning.org/pas))

# Community Development Strategy (CDS)

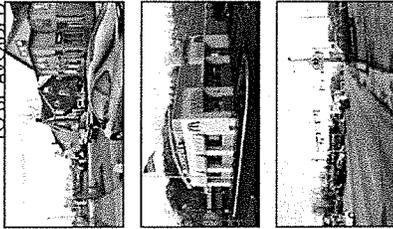
## Neighborhood Commercial Corridors

Map 8: CDS

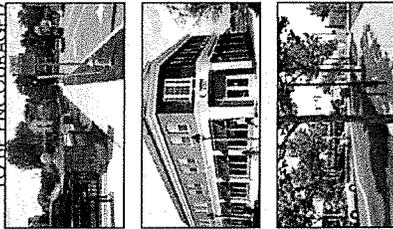


## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

TO BE AVOIDED



TO BE ENCOURAGED



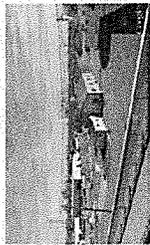
Seneca Street Corridors are the only segments of Seneca Street that are not within the town boundary. The town should encourage development that supports the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods. New development and investment should respect the scale of the surrounding environment, while also contributing to the corridor's walkability and connectivity.

The intent of identifying these NCCs is to identify and treat these corridors as larger commercial development corridors along the corridor that supports the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods. New development and investment should respect the scale of the surrounding environment, while also contributing to the corridor's walkability and connectivity.

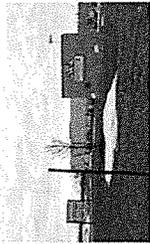
- Reduce off-street parking space requirements for uses to modest standards and encourage the use of shared parking where feasible.
- Limit the number and spacing of curb cuts at each site and require shared access provisions between adjacent sites.
- Review the location of parking lots to be to the rear or side of buildings, as well as ensuring adequate landscaping and screening.
- Ensure building setbacks do not encroach desired limits by establishing a minimum building setback.
- Encourage the development of human-scale and visually interesting buildings that reflect the desired character of the area.
- Develop streetscapes that calm vehicular traffic and comfortably accommodate pedestrian and bicycle activity.
- Focus residential neighborhoods that are well-connected to the corridor and other commercial activity nodes via sidewalks and/or bike lanes.

# Community Development Strategy (CDS)

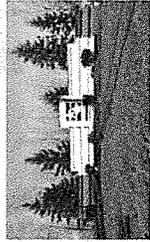
## Higher Intensity Business & Industry



View of North America Drive site from Union Road at Route 400. (Photo: Google, 2015)



The business and industrial units located in these areas are typically large operations that require a significant amount of land area.



The north side of the Long North America Drive continues to be a priority of the Town.

The Town of West Seneca is well-connected to major travel routes: 400, 190, Route 219, etc.) that make it a prime location for higher intensity business and industrial uses that rely on more frequent truck traffic. The gray areas on the CDS indicate the designated areas where these more intensive uses have been deemed appropriate.

As of the writing of this plan, the town has a vacant industrial park at North America Drive. The town has already made significant land use investment to the east and west of Union Road. These areas are already zoned for manufacturing uses, so the intent of the CDS is to ensure that future development in these areas is consistent with the overall vision and desired character of the town.

Union Road bisects the Higher Intensity Business and Industrial Area, and provides a gateway to the community from Route 400. It is important that the town consider limiting the intensity and sprawl of uses located along this gateway to help provide a more

visually appealing entrance to West Seneca. More specifically, industrial uses with significant outdoor operations or storage needs may better be accommodated internally to the industrial park.

**One way the Town may improve access to the North America Drive Industrial Park while reducing truck traffic impacts on Union Road would be to build an entrance/exit ramp directly from Route 400 into the site.**

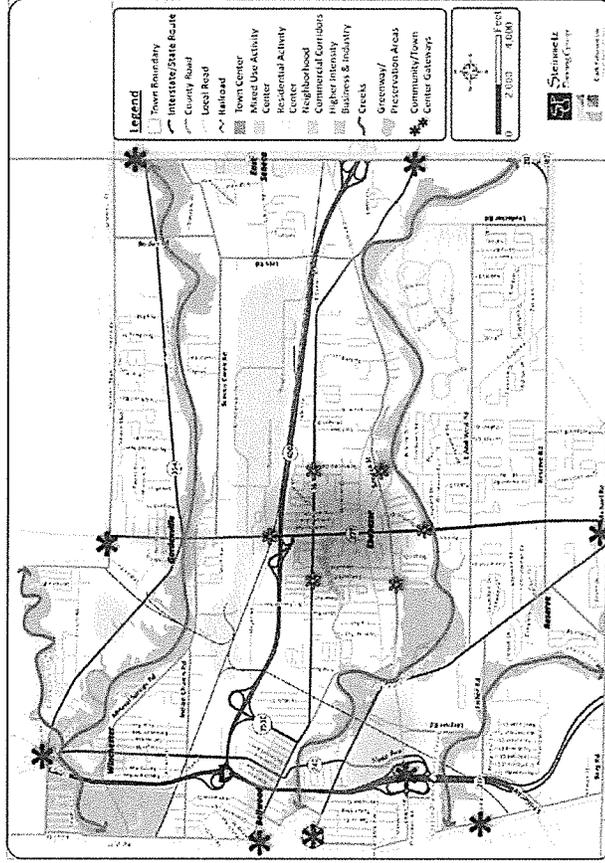
It is also recommended that the industrial Park Overlay Review District be revised to include additional screening and buffering regulations for higher intensity uses adjacent to major viewsheds gateway, commercial corridors or residential neighborhoods.

For example, there are a number of residential homes located along Seneca Creek Road to the north of the North America Drive site. In the past there has been conflict between the residents and any development occurring within the industrial park. Additional tree planting, screening, and buffering or some combination thereof should be required to provide an increased natural barrier between the industrial site and the existing neighborhoods.

## Gateways

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Map 8: CDS

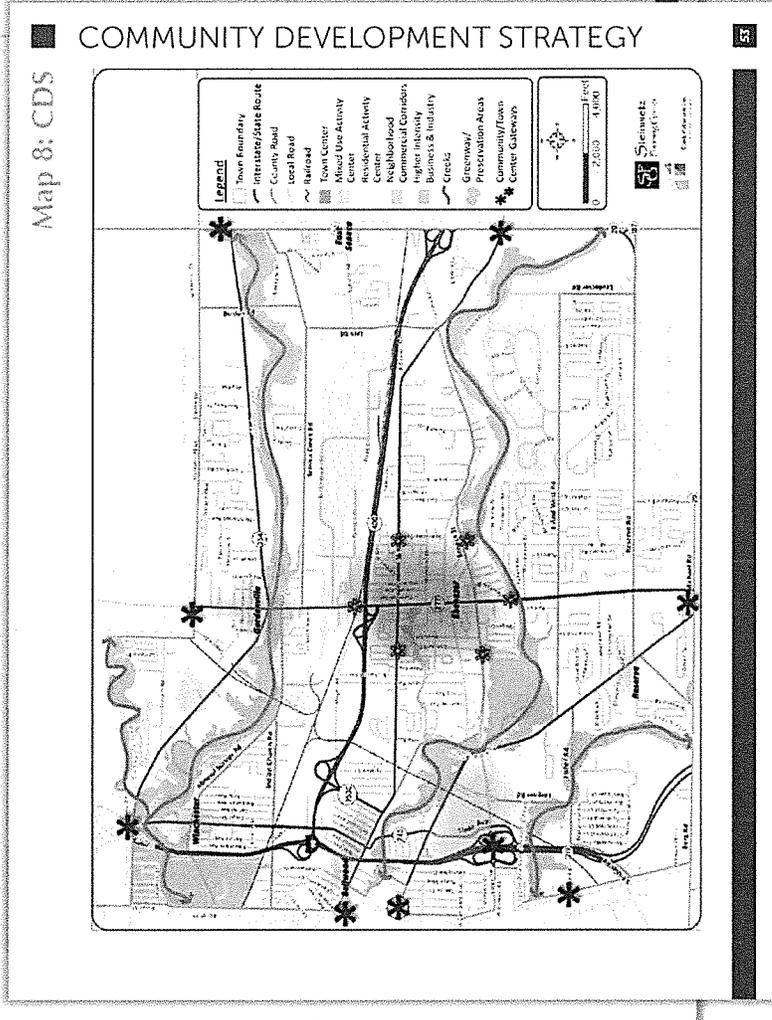


Public Hearing  
March 22, 2016

TOWN OF WEST SENECA  
2016 Comprehensive Plan Strategic Update

# Community Development Strategy (CDS)

## Higher Intensity Business & Industry



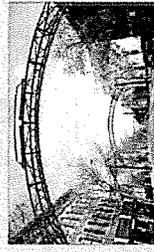
## Gateways

The major gateways into the Town are identified by a red star on the CDS map. As part of its effort to redefine the identity of the West Seneca, special consideration should be given to these community arrival points. Gateways are important not only to improve the aesthetics of entering a community, but also to attract investment and create a positive first impression with visitors.

One of the simplest ways to convey a unified and welcoming community identity at these gateways is to utilize coordinated, quality signage, abundant landscaping, and night-lighting local history. The shape, size, color, and message of these signs should be consistent with the overall branding strategy of the Town, while conveying the local historical and character of the adjacent neighborhood or development. The physical character of the area surrounding these gateways has a significant impact on how they are perceived by visitors and residents. As opportunities arise to redesign or renovate the public and private realm surrounding these entrance points, the Town should give special consideration to the following:

- 1. Appropriate scale and architectural character of buildings visible from the gateway point.
- 2. Additional landscaping, screening, or buffering needed to help minimize visual impacts of undesirable or incompatible uses.
- 3. Traffic calming measures that provide a more aesthetically pleasing and inviting

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



The West Seneca Archway is a landmark in the Town. It is a symbol of the Town's history and is a key feature of the Town's identity.



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The West Seneca Archway is a landmark in the Town. It is a symbol of the Town's history and is a key feature of the Town's identity.

- 1. Increased parking for screening and buffering techniques that limit exposure while also contributing to the aesthetics of the streetwall and streetscape.

The gateways to the Town Center are indicated by slightly smaller orange stars on the CDS map. These have been identified separately as they play an additional key role in helping the Town Center and establish the significance of the Town Center. It should be noted that the placement of these gateways is approximate as the actual transitional gateway point will depend on the implementation of the Town Center concept.

Although all signage and gateway features should be coordinated throughout West Seneca, there is an opportunity for special or additional treatments to these arrival points. The design and character of the Town Center gateways should celebrate West Seneca and foster a strong sense of community for the heart of the Town.

# Community Development Strategy (CDS)

## Creeks & Greenways

The major creeks within the Town are highlighted in **dark blue** on the CDS Map. The borders of the areas highlighted in green indicate the greenways or utility easement areas. The greenways are a majority of the existing floodplains, creeks, and water features highlighted in the map (See Map X, Water Features). The intent of including local creeks and their respective flood zones in the CDS is to illustrate the significant areas of land cover and connectors that these creeks and greenways create within the Town.

Not only are these features important for their aesthetic and environmental value, but also for their potential to connect residents and visitors to the greenways of the Town. These blueways and greenways provide opportunities for off-road east-west connectors that could accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and even kayakers across West Seneca.

Currently there are only a limited number of designated public access points to the creeks such as:

- 1) The trail and park located at the Charles E. Burchfield Art and Nature Center;
- 2) The Loughslee Woods area along Cazenovia Creek;
- 3) The DEC fishing access point at 880 Harlem Road.

The images at right show the existing conditions of Buffalo Creek (top) along Indian Church Road and the addition of a trail (bottom). The development of a comprehensive trail system along both Buffalo Creek and Cazenovia Creek, and the many nearby greenways, would provide public park areas, would help to protect and enhance the greenways and blueways



Existing Buffalo Creek



Potential Trail Connection

Photo Simulation: CH2M, 2016

It is also recommended that the Town utilize floodplain protection policies above and beyond that of the DEC's existing regulations to limit future development along the creeks. The intent of this would be to protect the floodways, greenways, and riparian habitat, and provide the best land for the implementation of a trail system as previously mentioned.

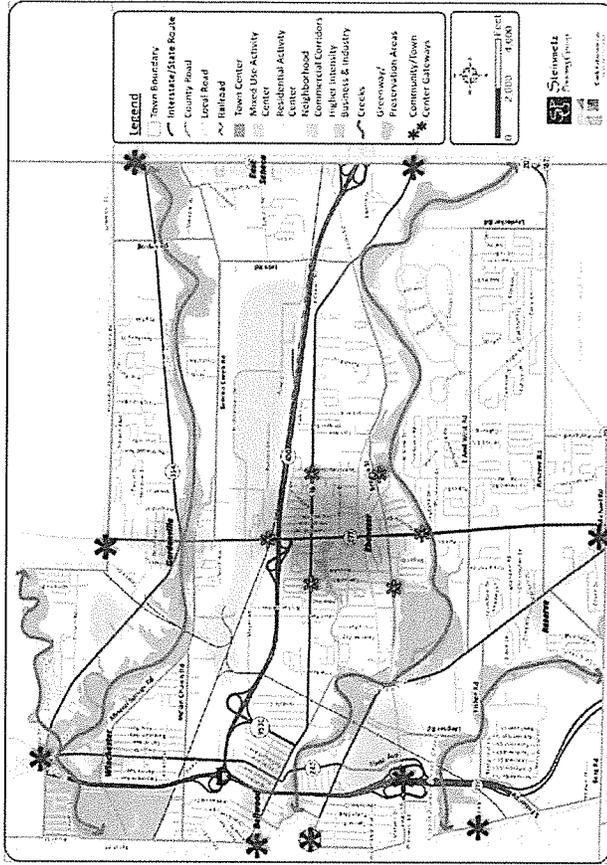
One way the Town can achieve this is by adopting a Floodplain Overlay (FPO) District. A sample purpose statement for a FPO District has been included below:

**Floodplain Overlay (FPO) District:** The purpose of this district is to provide floodplain protection, to regulate the siting, design, and construction of buildings and structures, to regulate the siting, design, and construction of bridges, and to regulate the siting, design, and construction of other structures and facilities. This district is intended to provide for the protection of public health, safety, and property, and to regulate the siting, design, and construction of buildings and structures, to regulate the siting, design, and construction of bridges, and to regulate the siting, design, and construction of other structures and facilities. This district is intended to provide for the protection of public health, safety, and property, and to regulate the siting, design, and construction of buildings and structures, to regulate the siting, design, and construction of bridges, and to regulate the siting, design, and construction of other structures and facilities.

1. Protect the safety and welfare of the community;
2. Minimize public expense for flood damage prevention;
3. Minimize the need for flood damage prevention;
4. Where appropriate, provide for the siting, design, and construction of buildings and structures, to regulate the siting, design, and construction of bridges, and to regulate the siting, design, and construction of other structures and facilities;
5. Provide for the siting, design, and construction of buildings and structures, to regulate the siting, design, and construction of bridges, and to regulate the siting, design, and construction of other structures and facilities.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Map 8: CDS



# Community Development Strategy (CDS)

## Priority Action Plan

The table on the following page is a list of priority action items as identified by the Steering Committee as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update process. These items include key goals or strategic projects that the Committee feels warrant immediate attention from the Town for implementation. That is not to say the other action items listed in the Plan are not important or significant to the future success of the Town. Rather, that these action items have been highlighted as a top priority due to their potential for a greater overall positive impact to the community.

The table is organized by policy area and provides basic information on the priority action items for ease of reference. Each column includes:

- **Policy:** The policy area under which the action item can be found in the Policy Framework.
- **Action Item:** A description of the specified action item as part of the Priority Action Plan
- **Page:** The page number of the Plan where the action item can be found within the Policy Framework, as well as the objective that it contributes to for that policy area.
- **Partner(s):** Any group, agency, organization or board that the Town may desire to partner with in order to implement the specific action item.

In the following pages of this section (pages 68 - 75), the Plan seeks to provide additional information and guidance to the Town of West Seneca on the implementation of the Action Items listed as part of the Priority Action Plan.

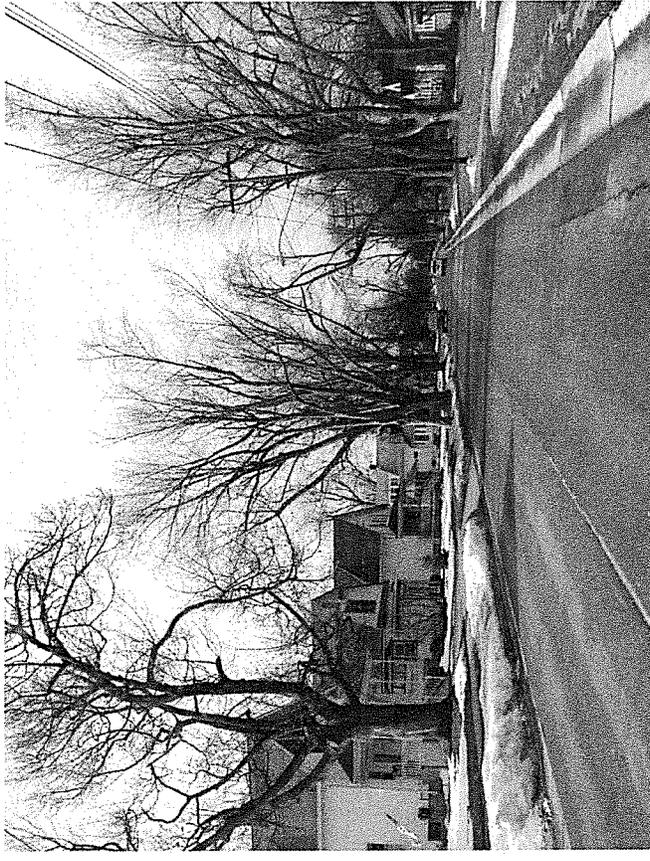
## PRIORITY ACTION PLAN

Policy Area	Action Item	Page	Partner(s)
Community Identity & Livability	Increase the aesthetic of major north-south corridors (Huron Road, Walnut Road, Huron Road, Orchard Pike Road) with a streetscape plan that includes but is not limited to landscaping, lighting, and right-of-way improvements	37, D	NYSDOT, FDOT, Developer, Property Owners
Neighborhoods	Maximize the revitalization activities in neighborhoods by researching and securing funding sources (CDEB, Homestead Program, NYS Consolidated Funding Process, etc)	41, A	Property Owners, Developers
Economic Development & Reinvestment	Support small, local businesses looking to expand or locate in Town	43, D	Chamber
	Enhance tourism and community marketing efforts by working with local economic development resources	43, F	Partner, EDC, etc
	Develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that inventories and analyzes existing and potential pedestrian, bicycle, and transit routes for improved connectivity and access	45, A	Consultant, NYSDOT, FDOT, NTHA
Transportation, Access & Connectivity	Develop a direct access connection to North America Drive Industrial Park from Route 100	45, D	NYSDOT, Developers
	Consider, adopting, standards that require minimum accommodations for pedestrians, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, benches, shade trees, walking paths, and amenities	45, A	Fanning Board, Zoning Board
Public Health & Wellness	Develop a community center that includes recreational, professional, and educational accommodations such as a gym, pool, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc	47, A	Youth Center, Community Group
	Upgrade the Town High Campus as a multi-service complex to residents	47, B	Chamber
Governmental Partnerships	Work with local, county, and regional economic development agencies to coordinate programs and projects	49, B	Local, County, State Agencies
Community Development Strategy	Establish "Elevator" and the area surrounding Town Hill as a stronger "Town Center"	51, A	Community Group
	Encourage and assist the application of projects and enterprises in urban areas where the CDS policies in increase density may be desirable	51, A	Developer, Planning Board, Zoning Board

## Next Steps

1. Receive comments for 30 days
2. Complete SEQR Review
3. Town Board may adopt as early as end of April





# Questions & Comments?

