

APPENDIX J

Preparing Village "Main Streets" for Planning



A Guidebook for the Planning of Main Streets and Commercial Districts

June 2008



Preparing Village "Main Streets" for Planning

A Guidebook for the Planning of Main Streets and Commercial Districts

maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.

Economic Restructuring

Economic Restructuring strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The Main Street program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers' needs. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district.

Funding Your Main Street Revitalization Effort

While financing a capital improvement program is probably at the top of the list when municipalities consider revitalization efforts, in many respects, funding should follow a well-conceived organization and community visioning process. As a community's vision for its downtown and main street area begins to coalesce, and as local needs and priorities are clarified, the proper funding sources will be easier to identify and applications and proposals will be more likely to be successful.

It is important to note that state and regional transportation authorities have strict timelines and budget constraints that guide their work. In many cases, work is planned many years in advance. Funding sources described below such as the Transportation Improvement Program are subject to Federal budgetary constraints and cyclical allocations.

Local Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

While state and federal transportation agencies will provide considerable funding for the construction and maintenance of their roadways, the construction of non-critical local facilities (referred to as "betterments") will typically be the responsibility of the municipality. Communities should therefore look to the framework of a capital improvement program (CIP) as a means of identifying and saving adequate capital early enough in the project development process.

As stated in *Planning and Urban Design Standards*:

Capital planning involves the purchase or construction, major repair, reconstruction, or replacement of capital items, such as buildings, utility systems, roadways, bridges, parks, landfills, and heavy equipment, which are expensive and have a long, useful life...

The capital improvement program is a five to six year schedule of capital projects. The first year of the CIP is the capital budget, which the local government formally adopts and implements, along with the operating budget. The CIP is one of the most powerful tools for implementing a local comprehensive plan. Advanced planning and scheduling of community facilities may avoid costly mistakes. A systematic, organized approach to planning capital facilities provides a number of practical advantages.⁴⁶

Some of those advantages include:

⁴⁶ *Planning and Urban Design Standards*. American Planning Association. 2006. p. 637-638.

Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning

A Guidebook for the Planning of Main Streets and Commercial Districts

- Using taxpayers dollars wisely;
- Focusing on community needs and capabilities;
- Obtaining community support;
- Encouraging economic development;
- Increasing administration efficiency;
- Maintaining a stable financial program; and
- Taking advantage of federal and state grant and loan programs (better positioning for using matching funds).

Examples of federal and state grant and loan programs follow in the sections below.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The following text has been adopted from the Introduction of the *2007 – 2012 Transportation Improvement Program* guidebook, a publication of Genesee Transportation Council.⁴⁷

Federal regulations require that the urban transportation planning process include the cooperative development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a staged multi-year program of projects consistent with the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).⁴⁸ This region’s TIP is developed cooperatively by a team lead by the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) staff and New York State Department of Transportation Region 4 staff (NYSDOT-4).

What is the TIP?

The TIP identifies the timing and funding of all highway, bridge, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, air quality improvement, and other surface transportation projects scheduled for implementation in this region over the next five years that use federal transportation funds.

The TIP reflects the priorities and direction of the region and its state and federal partners in the transportation planning process. The TIP and the projects it contains must be consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the current LRTP for the region.

The TIP is part of this region’s effort to establish and maintain the planning process required by the federal government as a condition for receipt of federal transportation funding. The federal government requires that the TIP be updated at least every two years, and adopted by the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) – in this region, the Genesee Transportation Council. The TIP development process involves only projects eligible for federal aid.

What types of projects should be included in the TIP?

Federal regulations require that any transportation project within the TMA that is to be funded with U.S. Department of Transportation funds (federal transportation funding) must be included in the TIP.

⁴⁷ “2007 – 2012 Transportation Improvement Program Guidebook.” Genesee Transportation Council. August 2006. Requests for copies should be submitted to GTC staff. Visit <http://gtcmop.org/> for contact information.

⁴⁸ “Long Range Transportation Plan for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region: 2005-2025 (LRTP: 2005-2025).” Genesee Transportation Council. Available online at <http://gtcmop.org/>.

Preparing Village "Main Streets" for Planning

A Guidebook for the Planning of Main Streets and Commercial Districts

The types of projects listed below are eligible for federal transportation funding. Any municipality or agency desiring federal transportation funding to advance any of the project types listed below should submit a project proposal to be considered for inclusion in the TIP.

- Projects on the federal aid system (e.g., road and bridge construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, preventive maintenance, Intelligent Transportation Systems deployment, etc.)
- Public transportation projects (e.g., vehicle maintenance and operations, capital improvement projects, mass transit system construction, etc.)
- Projects that are not on the federal aid system but may be eligible for federal funding for other reasons (e.g., bridge projects, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, Intelligent Transportation Systems deployment, air quality improvement, etc.)
- Bridge preventive maintenance projects that address Element-Specific Bridge Work (as delineated by NYSDOT Engineering Instruction).

NYSDOT-4 has specific guidelines for developing project cost estimates. These costs are guidelines only and may need to be adjusted for proposed projects. Applicants should specify the source of the project cost estimate; realistic project cost estimates with appropriate contingencies are required to properly evaluate project proposals.

Who can submit project proposals?

Any county, city, town, or village in the seven-county TIP region (Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Wayne, and Wyoming counties) as well as NYSDOT, the New York State Thruway Authority, and the Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA) can submit project proposals for the TIP. Private individuals and organizations can submit project proposals if the project is sponsored by the local government in which the project will be located.

How are projects selected for the TIP?

The GTC/NYSDOT team scores all project proposals pursuant to set Project Evaluation Criteria. The resulting scores provide a preliminary basis for ranking project proposals within each mode (e.g., Highway projects, Bridge projects, Public Transportation projects, Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation projects, Intelligent Transportation Systems projects, Goods Movement projects, Air Quality Improvement projects, and Other projects).

The preliminary rankings are reviewed and discussed with the TIP Development Committee and adjustments to rankings are made as necessary to reflect overall funding considerations, geographic balance, and other factors not specifically captured by the Project Evaluation Criteria. Based on estimates of available revenue, funding is then assigned to the ranked projects in accordance with funding availability and eligibility restriction.

A draft TIP document is developed and made available for public review and comment, including one or more public meetings, in order to solicit input on the proposed program of projects. The draft TIP, public comments, and suggested revisions (based on the public comments) are presented to and reviewed by the GTC Planning Committee. The GTC Planning Committee then sends its recommendations to the GTC Board for adoption of the TIP.

Preparing Village “Main Streets” for Planning

A Guidebook for the Planning of Main Streets and Commercial Districts

Many of the surface transportation improvements identified along village main streets are eligible for specific federal funding programs through the TIP. The programs include the following:

The Transportation Enhancements Program (TEP)

Quoting the Introduction of the Transportation Enhancements Program Guidebook for 2008:

The Transportation Enhancements Program was created in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), and continued in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

Through the Transportation Enhancements Program, Congress provided innovative opportunities to improve the transportation system through the implementation of a specific list of activities intended to benefit the traveling public, to increase transportation choices and access, to enhance the built and natural environment, and to provide a sense of place. Transportation enhancement activities offer communities funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices, such as safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic routes, beautification and other investments that increase recreation, accessibility and safety for everyone beyond traditional highway programs. Communities also may use transportation enhancements funds to contribute to the revitalization of local and regional economies by restoring historic buildings, renovating streetscapes or providing transportation museums and visitors centers.⁴⁹

The twelve eligible enhancement categories for project proposals include:

1. Provision of Facilities for Pedestrians and Bicycles
2. Provision of Safety and Educational Activities for Pedestrians and Bicycles
3. Acquisition of Scenic Easements and Scenic or Historic Sites (including Historic Battlefields)
4. Scenic or Historic Highway Programs (including the Provision of Tourist and Welcome Center Facilities)
5. Landscaping and Other Scenic Beautification
6. Historic Preservation
7. Rehabilitation and Operation of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures or Facilities (including Historic Railroad Facilities and Canals)
8. Preservation of Abandoned Railway Corridors (Including Conversion and Use thereof for Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails)
9. Inventory, Control and Removal of Outdoor Advertising
10. Archaeological Planning and Research
11. Environmental Mitigation to Address Water Pollution due to Highway Runoff or Reduce Vehicle-Caused Wildlife Mortality while Maintaining Habitat Connectivity
12. Establishment of Transportation Museums

TEP funding rounds are cyclical. For further information on funding, the rules & requirements, an application, the Guidebook for application preparation, a list of NYSDOT Regional TEP Coordinators, and, when available, workshop schedules, refer to the reference included on the bottom of the previous page.

⁴⁹ “Transportation Enhancements Program Guidebook.” NYSDOT. (1).
<https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/re/tep>

Preparing Village "Main Streets" for Planning

A Guidebook for the Planning of Main Streets and Commercial Districts

National Highway System (NHS)

The NHS program provides funding for improvements to rural and urban roads that are part of the NHS, including the Interstate System and designated connections to major intermodal terminals. Under certain circumstances, NHS funds may also be used to fund transit improvements in NHS corridors. Projects involving highway safety improvements and/or bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities are eligible if they occur on the National Highway System. Some villages throughout the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region may be included in the NHS.

Surface Transportation Program – Rural (STP-Rural) or Flex (STP-Flex)

STP funding is allocated into four categories: Urban, Small Urban, Rural, and Flex. STP funds can be used on all facilities except roads functionally classified as local or rural minor collector. Eligible projects in villages could be allocated STP-Rural or STP-Flex funds. Examples of eligible projects include highway and transit safety improvements and programs, transportation enhancement activities, and construction or reconstruction necessary to accommodate other transportation modes. Alternate mode projects eligible for funding include bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities and modification of public sidewalks to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Preparing Village "Main Streets" for Planning

A Guidebook for the Planning of Main Streets and Commercial Districts

Other Possible Funding Sources for Your Main Street

Program	Organization	Details	Additional Information
Brownfields Econ. Dev. Initiative	US Department of Housing and Urban Development	To assist cities with the redevelopment of abandoned, idled and underused industrial and commercial facilities.	http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/bedi/index.cfm
Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, and Cleanup Grants	US Environmental Protection Agency	These grants may be used to address sites contaminated by petroleum and hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants (including hazardous substances co-mingled with petroleum).	http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicat.htm
Making Smart Growth Happen	US Environmental Protection Agency	To prevent and redevelop vacant properties to state, regional, and/or national level applications.	http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sg_implementation.htm
Certified Local Government Grants Program	NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau	To identify, evaluate, nominate, and protect cultural resources.	http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/programs/certified.asp
Historic Preservation Grant Programs	NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau	To improve, protect, preserve, rehabilitate or restore properties on the State or National Register for park, recreation, conservation or preservation purposes.	http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/grants/programs/historic.asp
NYS Small Cities Program	NYS Governor's Office for Small Cities	To implement community and economic development activities directed toward neighborhood revitalization, economic development and improved community facilities and services.	http://www.nysmallcities.com/FundingOpportunities/fundingavailability.asp
NYS Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program	NYS Departments of State and Environmental Conservation	To provide financial and technical assistance to municipalities and community-based organizations.	http://www.nyswaterfronts.com/grantopps_BOA.asp
EnergySmart programs	New York State Energy Research and Development Authority	To help utility customers solve their energy and environmental problems while developing new, innovative products and services.	http://www.nysesda.org/programs/Default.asp
Green Building Initiative	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation	To ensure that new buildings are designed and constructed to save energy and minimize their impact on the environment	http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/218.html
Architecture, Planning and Design Program	New York State Council on the Arts	To stimulate and promote excellence in design and planning in the public realm.	http://www.nysca.org/public/guidelines/architecture/index.htm
National Preservation Loan Fund	National Trust for Historic Preservation	To provide funding for a variety of preservation projects, including establishing or expanding local and statewide preservation revolving funds, acquiring and/or rehabilitating historic buildings, sites, structures and districts.	http://www.mainstreet.org/MediaLibrary/NtlTrustLoanFunds.pdf
Bank of America Historic Tax Credit Fund	National Trust Community Investment Corporation and Bank of America	To make tax credit investments in projects, such as apartment lofts, office and retail use, mixed-use development and governmental and nonprofit facilities.	http://www.ntcicfunds.com

Preparing Village "Main Streets" for Planning

A Guidebook for the Planning of Main Streets and Commercial Districts

Program	Organization	Details	Additional Information
NYS Main Street Program	Housing Trust Fund Corporation, Division of Housing & Community Renewal	To provide financial and technical resources to help community's business districts.	http://www.nymainstreet.org
Revolving Loan Funds	Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, IDAs, other county or city specific loans	To provide gap financing to small and medium sized manufacturing and service businesses. <i>Note: Retail businesses are often not eligible.</i>	http://www.glrpc.org/ProgramAreas/EconomicDevelopment/RLF.htm
Main Street/ Commercial District Revitalization	National Grid	To assist communities in developing "smart growth" and private sector investment in central business districts and commercial corridors; provides matching grants of up to \$50,000 to non-profit and municipal organizations that are undertaking efforts to revitalize commercial corridors.	http://www.nationalgridus.com/niagamohawk/business/ecdev/documents/Mainstreet%20Revitalization.pdf
Preserve New York	Preservation League of New York State and the New York State Council on the Arts	To provide projects including historic structure reports for public buildings, historic landscape reports for municipal parks and cultural resource surveys of neighborhoods with funding	http://www.preservenys.org/funding.htm
Hope VI Revitalization Grant	Department of Housing and Urban Development	To revitalize site with public housing, improve living environment for public housing residents, provide housing for very low income families	http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/plv/hope6/index.cfm
Environmental Restoration Projects Program	Department of Environmental Conservation	To advertise the availability of State funding to investigate and/or fix hazardous substances on municipality held property	http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8444.html
Environmental Services Unit	New York State Department of Economic Development	To support projects that lead to pollution prevention and economic development	http://www.empire.state.ny.us/pdf/polution_prevention_recycle/2003_PROG_GUIDE.pdf
Look Upstate NY	New York State Electric and Gas/ Rochester Gas & Electric	Assistance and incentive programs for funding building rehabilitation, brownfield redevelopment, utility infrastructure investment, and other public and private community development projects.	http://www.lookupstateny.com/

