



**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**  
**VILLAGE OF LANCASTER**

**AUGUST 2018**



# **DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

## **VILLAGE OF LANCASTER**

**AUGUST 2018**

### **Steering Committee**

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This document was developed by the Village of Lancaster Steering Committee and was supported by the Empire State Development Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies Program. The document was prepared by the following Consultant Team:





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## FOREWORD

The Village of Lancaster is a compact village in east central Erie County. The Village is bisected by Cayuga Creek and multiple railroad lines. It includes a dense commercial core centrally located within the downtown; commercial uses along Broadway (US Route 20), Walden Avenue, and Central Avenue; industrial uses along the various railroads in the northern portion of the village; and dense residential neighborhoods throughout the remainder of the village.

The area known as Lancaster was originally home to the Seneca Indians of the Iroquois Confederacy. Lancaster was surveyed and subdivided by the Holland Land Company's, Joseph Ellicott. The Holland Land Company sold its first plot of land in the future Town of Lancaster in 1803. The first European settlers moved into the area around 1807. Shortly thereafter, during the War of 1812, 29 settlers agreed to fight the British and come to the aid of the Town of Buffalo which had been burned by the British. The U.S. was victorious and the settlers continued to develop the area of Lancaster.

Populations in the region grew tremendously with the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825. The Village of Lancaster was incorporated in 1849 from part of the Town of Lancaster which was itself incorporated in 1833. The area was previously known as Cayuga Creek before being renamed Lancaster.

The Village continued to grow as four railroads were built, traversing the Village. Through the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century schools, churches, and businesses developed in the community.

Various fires caused damage to the downtown area, particularly the Great Fire of 1894 which destroyed much of the west side of Central Avenue and the Grimes-Davis Mansion. Many of the wood frame buildings that had burned were replaced, this time with the imposing brick structures that characterize the center of the Village today. One such building was the Lancaster Opera House which was built in 1894 and is still the main focus of the downtown Lancaster area.

During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a trolley line was established linking the Village of Lancaster with the Village of Depew. At the same time homegrown industry and commercial enterprises grew, attracting population. A bustling and compact downtown solidified its presence along Central Avenue and West Main Street. The private automobile helped sustain growth through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Lancaster benefitted from suburban migration and commercial growth.

Despite its growth, the Village did not escape unscathed from the urban renewal era of development. During the 1950's the large Cayuga Creek Flood Control project redirected the Creek, reclaiming land south of the buildings on West Main Street. Most of the buildings along West Main Street were demolished to make way for a large, big box shopping plaza. In 1960, the Depew-Lancaster Plaza opened, signaling the death of shopping on West Main Street. The Plaza faced away from the traditional downtown, siphoning off customers from





the remaining stores along West Main Street and Central Avenue. The Plaza then began to fail housing several different retail tenants before ultimately housing the Erie 1 BOCES.

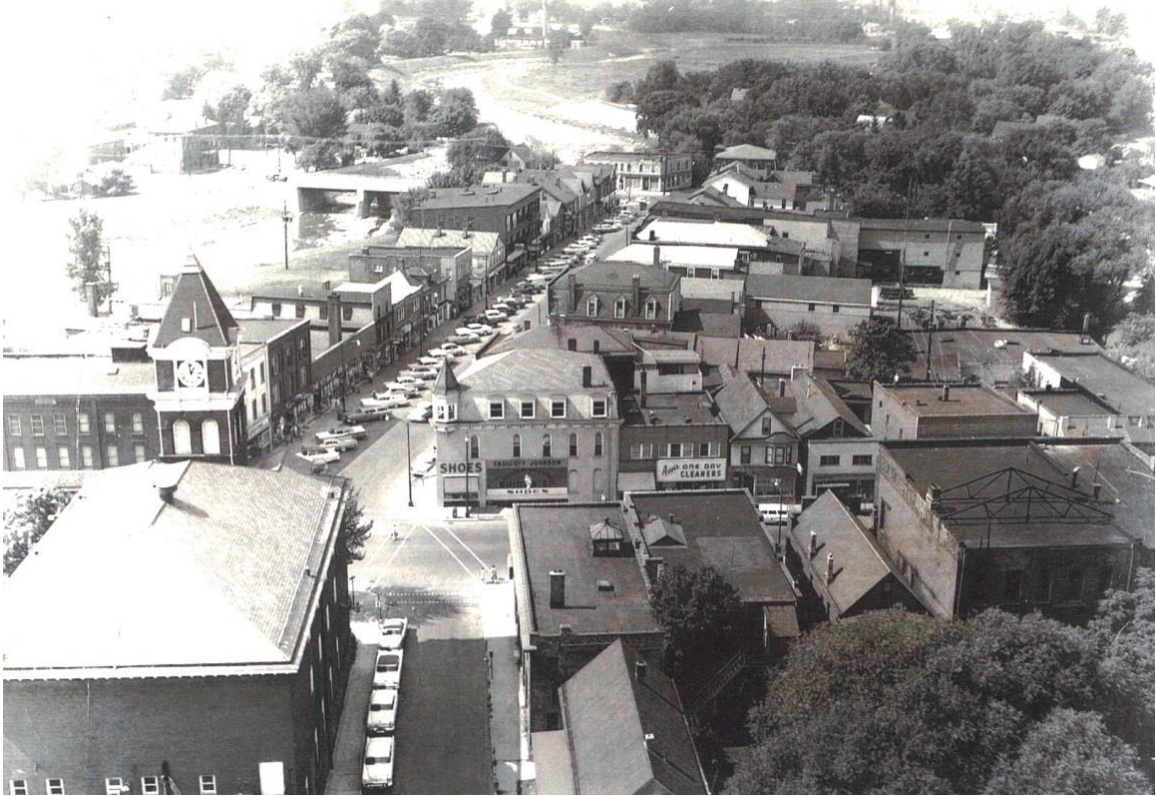
Spurred by strong retail, commercial, and residential growth in the surrounding Town, the Village has recently committed to revitalizing the downtown core to become a focal point for life in the Village and Town. In the late 1990's the Village commissioned a comprehensive study of the Village center. The 1998 study includes concept plans and documents the desire of the community for authentic history, centered on West Main Street and facades which reflect the street at the turn-of-the-century. Alternative concept plans were prepared by a citizens' advisory group in 2008. Both the original and alternative concept plans focus on mixed-use development and walkability; however, the alternative concept plan proposes that the existing West Main Street be extended westward to once again connect with Aurora Street.

Shortly after the 1998 plan was written, the Village formed the Lancaster Development Corporation (CDC), which purchased the key urban renewal properties. In 2011, a large portion of the urban renewal building was demolished to make way for the extension of West Main Street and future mixed-use development. In 2014, the Village received funds for streetscape improvements to West Main Street.

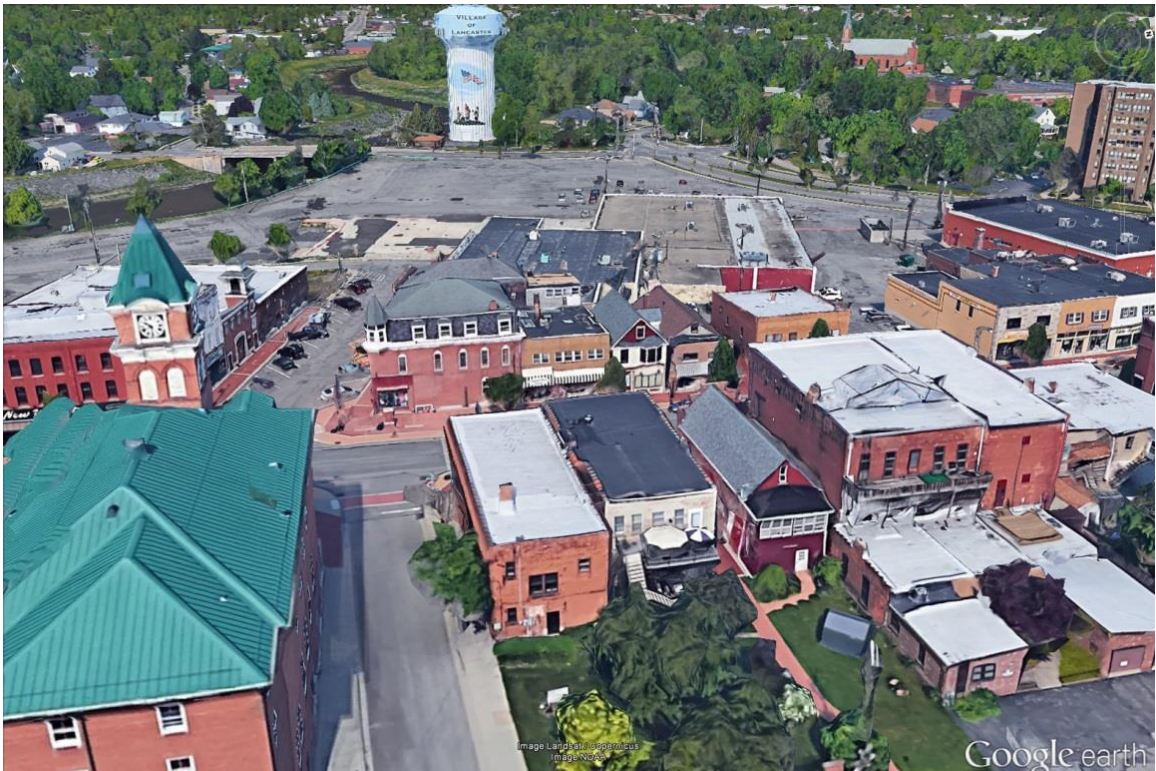
In the early 2000's, the Village invested in downtown walkability through the Central Avenue Streetscape Project. The project rehabilitated the business district with a new cobblestone look, wider sidewalks with bump outs to create safer pedestrian areas, marble curbs, and historic lighting. Additionally, new landscaping and seating areas were created. The Village is currently working on an infrastructure project to enhance walkability, linking the urban renewal site to the Lancaster Middle School, the Lancaster Towers Apartments, Keysa Park, and other centers of activity. Physical improvements include the construction and/or reconstruction of sidewalks, high visibility crosswalks, pavement markings, signage, and lighting in the area as well as an extension of the Central Avenue Business District's sidewalks and bricks northward to St. Joseph Street.

The Village is also highly supportive of its historic integrity. The Village created a Historic Preservation Commission and a Historic Overlay Zoning District which encompasses the entire Downtown area and beyond. Furthermore, the Village championed the creation of the Nationally-Registered Central Avenue Historic District (listed in 2014) and Broadway Historic District (listed in 2015).

Lastly, the Village of Lancaster has completed two rounds of New York Main Street Program grant projects for façade improvements. The 2008 grant assisted with the improvements of seven buildings along Central Avenue and West Main Street. The 2014 grant was used to complete a few of the façade and building renovations projects which were initiated during the 2008 grant.



Historic View Looking West down West Main Street towards Aurora Street  
Photo Credit: *Lancaster Memories – A Pictorial History*, by Mary Jo Monnin



Current View Looking West down West Main Street towards Aurora Street  
Photo Credit: Google Earth



Retail is beginning to return and downtown Lancaster is once again becoming a hub of activity. Two small areas within the downtown are emerging with concentrations of specialty shops that are generating traffic from a broader geographic area: West Main Street (e.g. – artisan chocolate, dog grooming spa, gift and toy shop) and the northern sector of Central Avenue (e.g. - Italian food products, clothing, antiques).

The Village has been empowered by these experiences to plan and advocate for a preferred future. This Lancaster Downtown Development Strategy is the result of these and other efforts to continue the momentum of revitalization in the Village.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Downtown Lancaster has taken the next important step in its Downtown Revitalization Journey by developing a Downtown Development Strategy. The Downtown Strategy will provide the Village and its Downtown development partners with the Vision and toolbox to propel and accelerate Downtown Lancaster's revitalization.

Downtown Lancaster is a hidden gem in Western New York. The historic downtown is centrally located in one of Western New York's fastest growing areas. Village leaders along with their Downtown partners and Erie County recognized the potential of Downtown and partnered to develop a plan that will provide catalytic impacts not only for Downtown, but for the region.

The Village involved residents and stakeholders to develop the plan to ensure it reflected community preferences and addressed concerns. A Steering Committee and consultant team also assisted in development of the plans. The Plan represents approximately a year of work by the partners that resulted in twenty four strategic recommendations to advance downtown revitalization.

Established partners and new partners will be needed to implement the plan's recommendations. Funding will also be needed to implement the plan. Consequently the plan was tailored to take advantage of existing funding and financing resources at the local, state and federal levels.

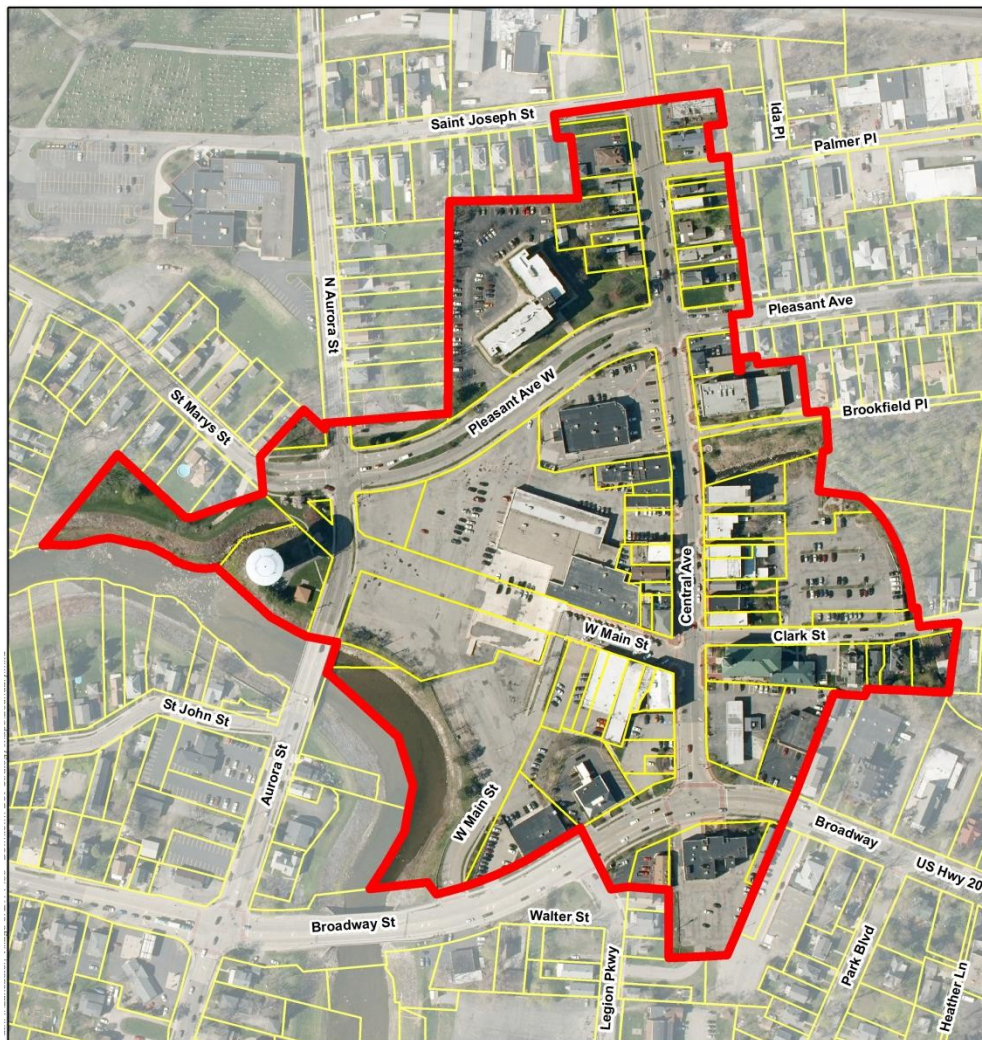
This is an exciting time in Downtown Lancaster's revitalization journey and the best is yet to come.



A rendering of the proposed Master Plan with a view from the south.

## A WALKABLE DOWNTOWN BOUNDARY

The Downtown Revitalization Initiative boundary selected by the Steering Committee is a compact 31 acre area that includes a mix of uses, all within a very comfortable walking distance. Historic Central Avenue is generally in the center of the boundary running in a north south direction with Pleasant Avenue and Broadway Avenue (Route 20) providing east-west access. The committee also decided to extend Downtown’s boundaries north of Pleasant Street to Saint Joseph Street as that acts as the unofficial entrance to Downtown for travelers going south.



<p><b>LABELLA</b> Associates, D.P.C.</p> <p>300 PEARL STREET BUFFALO, NY 14202 P: (716) 551-6281 F: (716) 551-6282 www.labellapc.com ©2019/05/01/2020</p> <p><b>Labella Project No: 2171485</b></p> <p>Sources: 1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella 2. Parcels: Obtained from Erie County 3. Roads: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database 4. Aerial background: One-foot resolution orthoimagery (2017) obtained from NYSGIS Clearinghouse</p>	<p> Downtown Study Area</p> <p> Properties</p>	<p>1:3,000</p>	<p>VILLAGE OF LANCASTER</p> <p>DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLANNING &amp; FEASIBILITY STUDY</p> <p><b>BOUNDARY MAP</b></p>
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The 31 acre compact Downtown Lancaster boundary includes Lancaster’s historic commercial and mixed use core



## AN ACTIVE AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

The Downtown Development Strategy process included a comprehensive community engagement plan to understand local priorities and to ensure those priorities were included in the final plan. The public was provided multiple opportunities to provide input including:

- The Downtown Strategy consultants and members of the Steering Committee participated in the Taste of Lancaster with a booth that included short surveys and information about the project;
- A public survey was launched that more than 1,200 residents participated in throughout the Lancaster area; and
- A final Open House was held to reveal the findings of the plan and to present the proposed master redevelopment plan for downtown infill opportunities.

The consultant team also interviewed 15 stakeholders that represented a mix of businesses, community members and economic development partners. Businesses downtown also participated in a survey.



Residents review the proposed Downtown Master Plan at the Final Public Meeting with Village Trustee Lynne Ruda



## A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN LANCASTER

Prior to developing recommendations or developing the Infill Master Plan for Downtown, the Steering Committee developed a Vision Statement supported by four goals and 16 strategies. The Vision Statement and goals provide the framework for future revitalization of Downtown – promotion, economic development, placemaking and creating the organizational capacity to implement this plan.

### VISION STATEMENT

**Downtown Lancaster will be a vibrant mixed use neighborhood that will leverage its strategic location and historic character to promote business development, downtown living, and a high quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors.**

### PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE

Downtown Lancaster will market its assets to the local and regional population.

### REVITALIZE

Downtown Lancaster will provide opportunities for redevelopment, new development, and entrepreneurship.

### TRANSFORM

The long term viability of Downtown Lancaster will be supported by capitalizing on its compact, historic pedestrian oriented core with a mix of uses, high quality design, and opportunities for alternative transportation.

### MOBILIZE

Downtown partners will include a mix of committed local and regional organizations that will organize to promote the revitalization of Downtown.



## RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION

Twenty four recommendations will need to be implemented by the Village, developers and a future formal Downtown Organization, The recommendations include a mix of public and private projects that will realize the Vision and Goals of the plan over the next decade.

Project	Timeframe	Responsibility
<b>PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE</b>		
P-1: Promote and utilize Downtown Lancaster's new website	Immediate	Village
P-2: Develop self-guided and hosted walking and/or biking tours of Downtown Lancaster.	2-3 years	Village in coordination with volunteers
P-3: Reduce the number of major Downtown events	1 year	Village and Village events coordinator
P-4: Program downtown spaces with smaller, fun activities throughout the year	2-3 years	Downtown Organization
P-5: Locate events and programming to strategically promote and acquaint the community with new developments.	2-3 years	Downtown Organization
P-6: Establish a new Downtown public square for events and other downtown activities.	2-3 years	Village in cooperation with Urban Renewal site developer
<b>REVITALIZE</b>		
R-1: Redevelop the former urban renewal property into a mixed use, pedestrian oriented district	1-5 years	Developer of Urban Renewal Area
R-2: Develop 3-5 new restaurants totaling 15,000 sq. ft. over the next 5-7 years in new or existing spaces.	3-7 years	Downtown Organization in coordination with businesses
R-3: Develop 150 new market rate residential units for more than 300 new residents over the next decade.	3-10 years	Developer of Urban Renewal Area / developers of infill sites.
R-4: Redevelop upper floors of existing downtown buildings for an additional 20-25 residential units and 10,000-20,000 sq. ft. of office space.	3-10 years	Property owners or new developers
R-5: Apply for NY Main Street funding and other funding sources to renovate historic buildings	1 year	Village
R-6: Apply for economic development funding to incentivize retail and restaurants including new entrepreneurs.	1-2 years	Village
R-7: Develop a marketing portfolio package	1-2 years	Downtown Organization



Project	Timeframe	Responsibility
<b>TRANSFORM</b>		
T-1: Provide landscaping, streetscaping and new signage at gateways into the Village.	3-5 years	Village
T-2: Extend streetscape improvements along Central Avenue to St. Joseph Street.	3-10 years	Village
T-3: Put Pleasant Avenue on a "road diet"	3-5 years	Village
T-4: Install landscaped traffic circles at the intersections of Pleasant and Central as well as Pleasant and Aurora.	3-5 years	Village
T-5: Adopt a Complete Streets policy for downtown.	6 mos.	Village
T-6: Provide a continuous alternative transportation multi-modal route/loop within downtown	3-5 years	Village
T-7: Reclaim the Cayuga Creek as a downtown amenity by creating a Creek Park.	3-10 years	Village
<b>MOBILIZE</b>		
M-1: Develop an independent Downtown organization to market, manage and coordinate downtown revitalization.	1 year	Village
M-2: Develop annual Downtown Strategic Plan reports to set goals and assess the past year's performance	Ongoing annually	Village and Downtown Organization
M-3: Lobby and promote the goals of this plan with legislators, funding agencies, the public and development partners.	Ongoing	Village and Downtown Organization

First 2 years	Years 2-5	Years 5-10
P-1: Website P-3 Reduce Events R-1 Urban Renewal Site Phase 1 R-5 NY Main St. Grant R-6 Eco. Dev. Funding R-7 Marketing Package T-5 Complete Streets Policy M-1 Create Downtown Org. M-2 Annual Strategic Plan Review M-3 Lobby & Promote	P-2 Walking Tour P-3 P-4 Program Events P-6 New Downtown Square R-1 Urban Renewal Site Phase 2 R-2 Develop Restaurants Phase 1 R-3 Develop Residential Phase 1 R-4 Develop Upper Floors Phase 1 T-1 Gateway Improvements T-2 Central Ave Streetscape Ph. 1 T-3 Pleasant Ave Road Diet T-4 Traffic Circles T-6 Alt. Transportation Loop T-7 Creek Park Phase 1	R-2 Develop Restaurants Phase 2 R-3 Develop Residential Phase 2 R-4 Develop Upper Floors Phase 2 T-2 Central Ave Streetscape Ph. 2 T-7 Creek Park Phase 2



REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN



DESIGN SCOPE: DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & FEASIBILITY STUDY

AERIAL OVERVIEW



VILLAGE OF LANCASTER  
MAY 2018



DESIGN SCOPE: DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & FEASIBILITY STUDY

OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
VIEW 7



VILLAGE OF LANCASTER  
SEPTEMBER 2018



Plan view (top) and visualization (bottom) of the redevelopment master plan for the urban renewal site





DESIGN SCOPE: DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & FEASIBILITY STUDY

ROUNDABOUT AT AURORA & PLEASANT INTO MAIN DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
VIEW 9



VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

SEPTEMBER 2018



DESIGN SCOPE: DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & FEASIBILITY STUDY

PATIO SQUARES OF DEVELOPMENT WITH SURROUNDING CONTEXT  
VIEW 13



VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

SEPTEMBER 2018



View of entrance from roundabout at Aurora and Pleasant (top) and Cayuga Square (bottom).

**DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY**

**VILLAGE OF LANCASTER**

**Section I:  
Downtown Profile  
and Assessment**





Prior to developing any recommendations for the Downtown Development Strategy, a comprehensive Profile and Assessment of the downtown is needed. The Profile and Assessment gives a snapshot of the existing and planned conditions in the downtown, providing a framework for review and analysis of potential recommendations.

Components of the Downtown Profile and Assessment include:

- A review of the Downtown Study Area and its context in the region;
- An analysis of existing conditions including an economic and market analysis;
- Information on existing local and regional plans and their relationship to downtown Lancaster;
- An inventory of relevant recent and future projects; and

Key findings of the Profile and Assessment will summarize the trends and data necessary to develop a blueprint for the revitalization of downtown Lancaster.

## DOWNTOWN INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

In order to identify opportunities and constraints in the Study Area an inventory of factors that influence development is required. This section provides more detailed information on various factors that influence the location, size, character and use of future redevelopment and development in the Study Area. The characteristics reviewed in this section include: the community and regional setting, land use, zoning, underutilized sites, transportation systems, infrastructure systems, land ownership, natural resources, historic resources, and recreational resources.

### COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL SETTING

The Village of Lancaster is located in the east-central portion of Erie County, New York, within the Town of Lancaster. The Town of Lancaster is a "second ring" suburb in the Buffalo – Niagara Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), located east of the core City. The Lancaster Downtown Study Area is located in the central section of the Village of Lancaster. Most of the Village is completely developed and little open land is available for new development.

The Village of Lancaster is home to 10,300 residents (2015 Census estimate), occupies about 2.7 square miles and is located 12 miles east of the City of Buffalo and five miles southeast from the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport. It is wholly contained within the Town of Lancaster which is bounded by the Town of Clarence to the north, the Town of Alden to the east, the Town of Elma to the south, and the Town of Cheektowaga to the west. The Village of Lancaster is also bounded by the Village of Depew to the west. In addition to its National Register-listed historic downtown, the Village boasts homes along quiet tree-lined streets, some modern subdivisions and busy streets of retail, industrial and commercial establishments.

The Town of Lancaster has excellent transportation access. I-90 traverses the northern portion of the Town, with access from NYS Highway 78. Two other nearby access points to the I-90 are located to the west of the Town via NYS Highway 33 (Kensington Expressway) or NYS Highway 81 (Walden Avenue). The Village is traversed by US Highway 20 (Broadway) and bordered by NYS Highway 81 (Walden Avenue). As a result, the Town is a residential community of choice for workers in nearby communities, and its schools, recreational opportunities and overall quality of life are major draws. The Town and Village are in need of a truly functional and full service downtown.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION

Downtown Lancaster has great potential to become a bustling downtown once again. As described previously, the Village has been investing in the downtown streetscape and building facades. A couple existing businesses have relocated to and several new businesses have popped up along West Main Street within the past several years including Purely Pets, Dark Forest Chocolate Makers, Furry Friends, Lilly Belle Meads, Lickity Splitz, and the Music Academy of Western New York. Another property on the south side of West Main Street has recently been purchased and is undergoing remodeling with the intention of creating a mixed use building. In addition, several homes along the northern portion of Central Avenue have been converted into businesses including Simply Italiano, Vintage Grace, and Lancaster Travel.

Another major asset of the downtown is the historic Lancaster Opera House. The Opera House produces and presents plays, musicals, dinner theater, and concerts. It attracts an estimated 30,000 patrons annually from throughout the region. Several local businesses have started partnering with the Opera House, providing reciprocal marketing for each other and coinciding store hours with evening productions.

Despite these steps in the right direction, the downtown still has a long way to go to become the bustling center that it wishes to be. Many of the stores are family owned and only provide limited, if any, evening and weekend hours. West Main Street has been underutilized for so long that most people are unaware of its many new businesses. There is only one full-service restaurant within the downtown which has led to a lack of variety. Many of the storefronts along Central Avenue house professional offices on the first floor, rather than retail.

In addition, the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Lancaster Community Development Corporation own the centrally located urban renewal site (approximately 6 acres) which is largely underutilized. Several development proposals for the site have been presented; however, none have moved forward.

The purpose of this Lancaster Downtown Development Strategy is to allow the Village to take a proactive approach to strategic redevelopment plans that will provide the Village with a road map for the future of its underutilized sites. This plan is especially important to create opportunities for repurposing and redeveloping areas to attract developers and ensure they do not bypass the Village for suburban development sites outside the Village. The plan will include an Economic and Market Analysis, as well as an inventory of existing conditions, and site master plans. Marketing materials will also be developed to promote redevelopment of the sites.

To develop the vision and goals for the Strategy, a comprehensive set of existing conditions—the purpose of this Existing Conditions Report—defines the need and set the stage for the recommendations of the study. Evaluation of land use, zoning, underutilized/vacant sites, transportation and utility systems, land ownership, and natural/historic/cultural resources will help the steering committee understand the opportunities and constraints of the downtown study area.





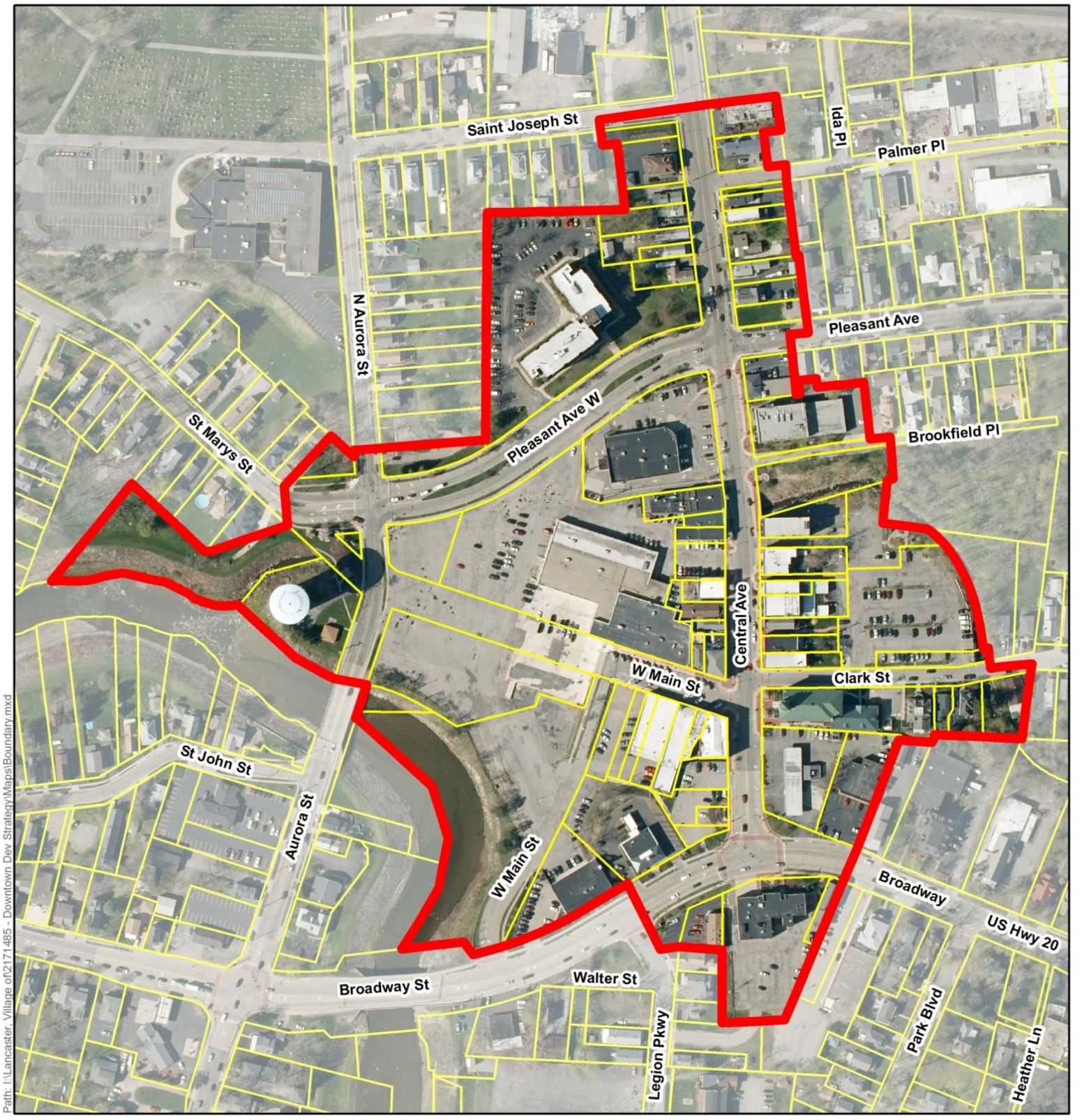
**Panorama of the Underutilized Urban Renewal Site**

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### STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

The Study Area for the Lancaster Downtown Development Strategy comprises a 31.6-acre area within the downtown core of the Village of Lancaster (Figure 1). It roughly stretches from Saint Joseph Street to Broadway and from properties along the east side of Central Avenue to Aurora Street. It includes a mixture of historic mixed use buildings, an urban renewal plaza, new retail development, single- and multi-family homes, a high rise apartment complex, and vast parking areas. Vacant parcels and underutilized sites and buildings throughout the downtown offer potential for redevelopment and revitalization.





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Sources:  
1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella  
2. Parcels: Obtained from Erie County  
3. Roads: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database  
4. Aerial background: One-foot resolution orthoimagery (2017) obtained from NYSGIS Clearinghouse

 Downtown Study Area

 Properties



0 100 200 Feet

1:3,000

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STRATEGIC PLANNING &  
FEASIBILITY STUDY

**Figure 1: Lancaster  
Downtown Study Area  
Boundary Map**



## LAND USE

Given its village setting, the Lancaster Downtown Study Area has a diverse mixture of land uses (see Table 1 and Figure 2).

The greatest percentage of land area (30 percent) within the Study Area is devoted to **commercial** and **mixed use** (commercial and residential) properties (approximately 9.6 acres). Commercial uses are located throughout the Study Area and include a landscape equipment store, Rite Aid, restaurant, grocery store, chocolate store, pet spa, blueprint business, gas station, deli, pizzeria, bank, clothing store, music store, toy shop, and real estate office to name a few. Mixed use properties are located along Central Avenue and include various commercial/retail/office uses on the first floor and an estimated 22 apartment units on the upper floors.

An additional 30 percent (approximately 9.6 acres) of the Study Area is devoted to **public road right-of-ways** and **public parking lots**. The largest of these parking lots is located on the north side of Clark Street.

Sixteen percent (approximately 4.9 acres) of the Study Area is **vacant**, the vast majority of which is publically owned.

**Residential** land occupies approximately 3.6 acres (11%). A handful of single-family and multi-family homes are located along Central Avenue (north of Pleasant Avenue) and Clark Street. The Lancaster Towers, a multi-story low-income housing complex with 157 units is located on Pleasant Avenue West.

Seven percent (approximately 2.2 acres) of the Study Area is used for **government, institutional, and cultural** uses. These uses include the U.S. Post Office, Village Municipal Building and Fire Department, and Town Hall and Opera House.

**Park** land occupies approximately 1.2 acres (4%) of the Study Area and includes Fireman's Park and a pocket park near Plum Bottom Creek.

**Infrastructure and utilities** (a Verizon building) occupies 0.5 acres (2%). Please note the Village-owned water storage tank is no longer utilized for water storage and is instead utilized to hold cellular equipment.

**Table 1: Land Use in the Study Area**

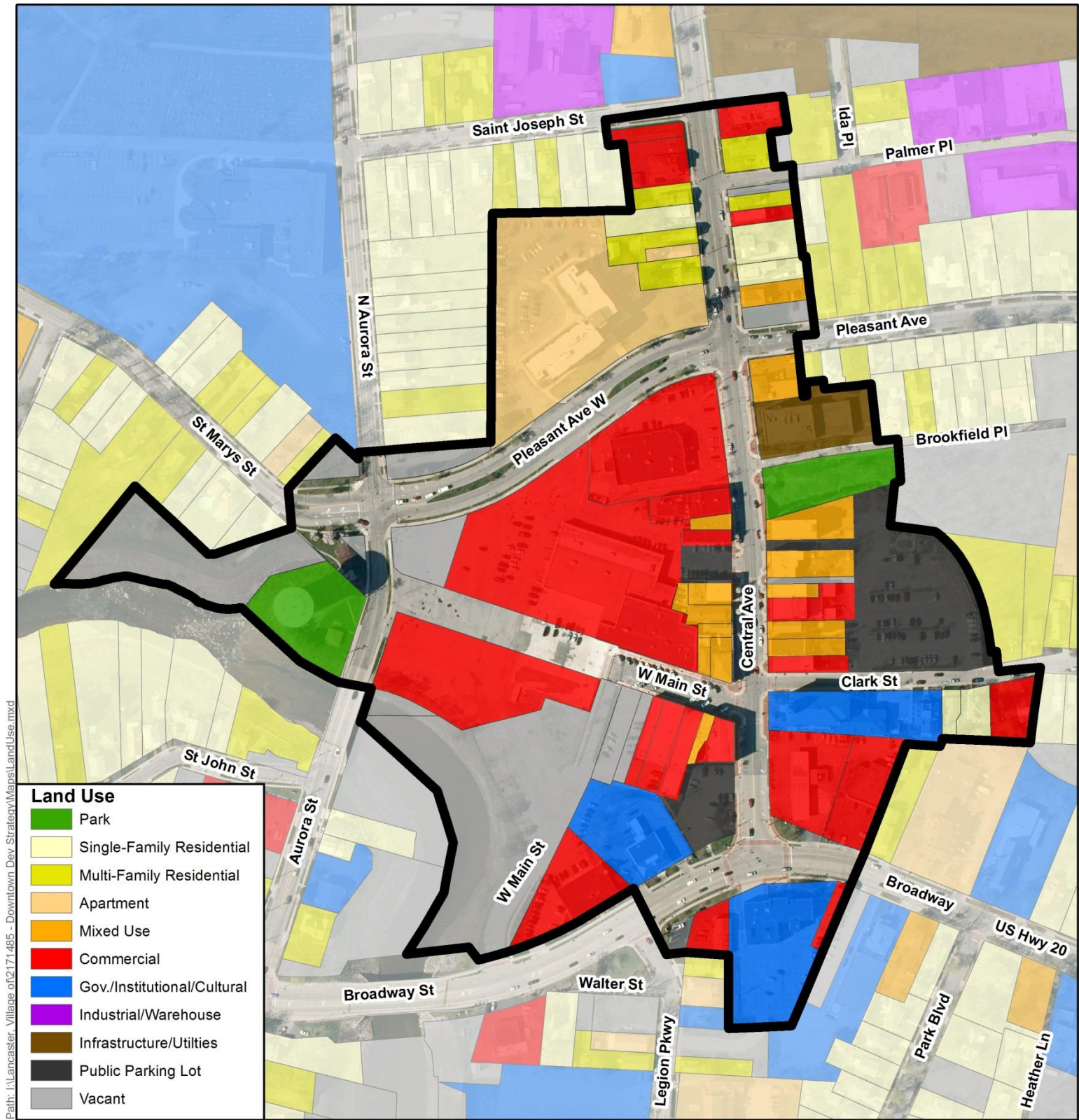
Land Use	Area		Parcels	
	Acres	Percent	#	Percent
Park	1.2	3.8%	2	2.8%
Single-Family Residential	0.7	2.2%	5	7.0%
Multi-Family Residential	0.6	1.9%	5	7.0%
Apartments	2.3	7.3%	2	2.8%
Mixed Use	1.4	4.4%	14	19.7%
Commercial	8.2	25.9%	20	28.2%
Gov./Institutional/Cultural	2.2	7.0%	3	4.2%
Infrastructure & Utilities	0.5	1.6%	1	1.4%
Public Parking Lot	2.1	6.6%	8	11.3%
Vacant	4.9	15.5%	11	15.5%
Public Road ROWs	7.5	23.7%	NA	NA
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31.6</b>		<b>71</b>	

Source: Village of Lancaster Real Property Data as provided by Erie County with minor updates by LaBella



**The Lancaster Towers is a multi-story low-income housing complex with 157 units**





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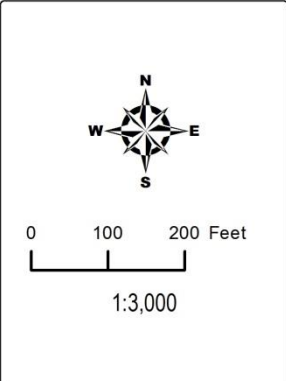
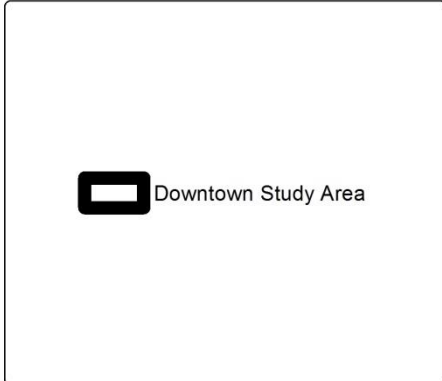
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- Sources:**
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  2. Parcels (including land use code): Obtained from Erie County with minor edits to land use by LaBella based on site visits & aerial imagery
  3. Roads: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database
  4. Aerial background: Orthoimagery (2017)



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DOWNTOWN  
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FEASIBILITY STUDY

**Figure 2: Existing Land Use Map**



## EXISTING ZONING

The current zoning in the Study Area (Figure 3) generally reflects current land uses. The Village's zoning code was adopted in 1964, readopted as amended and revised in 1976, and with many subsequent amendments since its re-adoption. Village zoning designations within the Study Area include Residential, Traditional Business, New Development, High Rise, Manufacturing, and Open Space as well as a Historic Overlay District. Basic information (including a [summary](#) of permitted principal, accessory, and special uses) about each zoning district found within the Study Area is presented in Table 2. Consult the official zoning code for a complete listing of permitted principal, accessory, and special uses by district as well as other design, density, bulk, and setback requirements.

The majority of the Study Area is located within the Zoning Code's Central Business District (CBD) which is composed of the following four zoning districts:

**TB: Traditional Business:** The purpose of this zone is to preserve and enhance the character and economic viability of existing historic structures located in the CBD. The zone promotes the development of ground-floor retail, second-floor commercial/office/residential and, if applicable, third-/fourth-floor residential development. This zone accounts for 49 percent of the Study Area and is largely located along both sides of Central Avenue and Broadway within the Study Area.

**ND: New Development:** The purpose of this zone is to promote appropriate mixed-use development on a single parcel of land that comprises the zone. These uses could include retail, commercial, and residential apartment unit developments. New development in this zone should be compatible with existing historic commercial structures within the CBD. This zone accounts for 31 percent of the Study Area and encompasses the southwest section of the Study Area.

**HR: High Rise:** The purpose of this zone is to allow for the development of high-rise apartment buildings. This zone accounts for 10 percent of the Study Area and is the location of the Lancaster Towers.

**OS: Open Space:** The purpose of this zone is to enable the passive recreational enjoyment of land located near Cayuga Creek in the CBD. Substantial development of the land in the way of buildings or structures is not desirable. This zone accounts for three percent of the Study Area and is the location of the Fireman's Park and former Village water storage tank.

Within the four CBD zones, any changes to a building or use or any new development requires site plan review. In addition, design standards are applied to these zones.

Six percent of the Study Area is located within the **R-2: Residence** district which includes the extreme eastern and western portions of the Study Area. One percent of the Study Area is located within the **M-1: Manufacturing** district which includes the extreme northeast corner of the Study Area. Uses in the M-1 district must adhere to performance and design standards.



The Village also has a **Historic Overlay Zoning District** which encompasses more than 90 percent of the Study Area (only portions of the Study Area west of North Aurora Street are outside of the Historic District). Within the Historic District, no person can carry out any exterior alteration, restoration, reconstruction, demolition, new construction or moving of a landmark or property, nor can any person make any material change in the appearance of such a property, its light fixtures, signs (excluding portable signs), sidewalks, fences, steps, paving, exterior windows (including the application of paint or other opaque covering for a duration exceeding two weeks) or other exterior elements visible from a public street or alley which affects the appearance and cohesiveness of the historic district, without first obtaining a certificate of appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission.

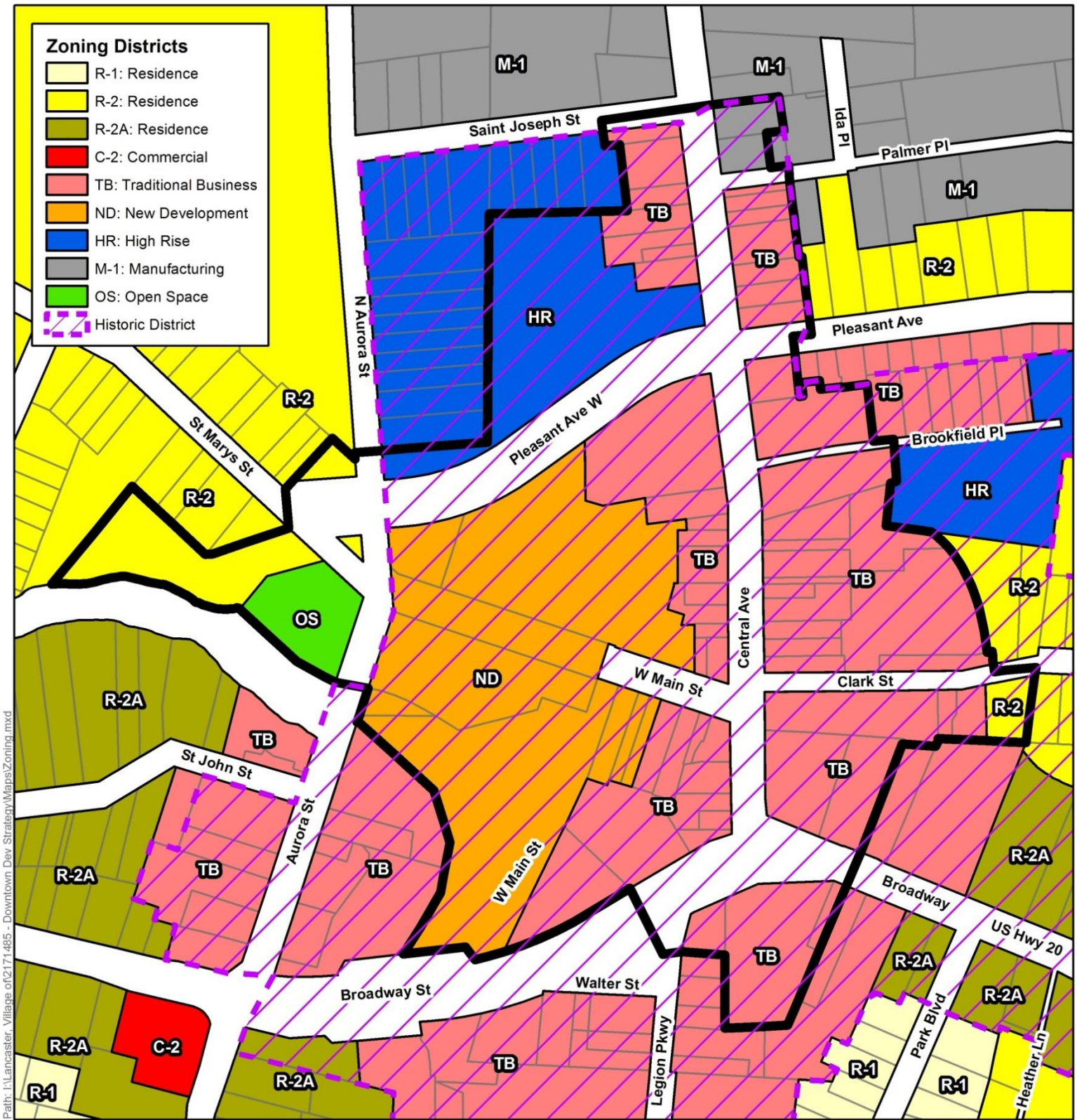


Table 2: Primary Zoning Districts within the Study Area

Zone	Permitted Uses (Summary)	Acres	% of Tot.
<b>Village Zoning Districts</b>			
<b>R-2: Residence</b>	<p><u>Principal</u>: Dwelling, place of worship, elementary or secondary school, fire station</p> <p><u>Special Use Permit</u>: Dwelling group, cemetery</p> <p><u>Accessory</u>: Quarters for servants, office or studio of resident, horticultural building, off-street parking, swimming pool, storage of personal trailers or boats, home occupation</p>	1.5	6.0%
<b>TB: Traditional Business</b>	<p>Any changes to building or use require site plan review</p> <p><u>Principal</u>: Dwelling, place of worship, elementary or secondary school, fire station, medical office, dance studio, retail sales, personal service establishment, laundromat, eating or drinking establishment, theater, bank</p> <p><u>Limited to Upper Floors</u>: professional offices, apartment units, financial services other than banks</p> <p><u>Accessory</u>: Quarters for servants, office or studio of resident, horticultural building, off-street parking, swimming pool, storage of personal trailers or boats, home occupation, shops for the manufacture of goods incidental to the sales</p>	12.3	49.2%
<b>ND: New Development</b>	<p>All development requires site plan review</p> <p><u>Principal</u>: Dwelling, place of worship, elementary or secondary school, fire station, medical office, dental clinic, dance studio, retail sales, personal service establishment, laundromat, eating or drinking establishment, theater, bank, department store, hotel, parking garage</p> <p><u>Limited to Upper Floors</u>: professional offices, apartment units, financial services other than banks</p> <p><u>Accessory</u>: Quarters for servants, office or studio of resident, horticultural building, off-street parking, swimming pool, storage of personal trailers or boats, home occupation, shops for the manufacture of goods incidental to the sales</p>	7.7	30.8%
<b>HR: High Rise</b>	<p>All development requires site plan review</p> <p><u>Principal</u>: Dwelling, place of worship, elementary or secondary school, fire station, medical office, dance studio, retail sales, personal service establishment, laundromat, eating or drinking establishment, theater, bank, high rise apartment buildings</p> <p><u>Limited to Upper Floors</u>: professional offices, apartment units, financial services other than banks</p> <p><u>Accessory</u>: Quarters for servants, office or studio of resident, horticultural building, off-street parking, swimming pool, storage of personal trailers or boats, home occupation, shops for the manufacture of goods incidental to the sales</p>	2.5	10.0%
<b>M-1: Manufacturing</b>	<p><u>Principal</u>: Commercial uses, research/testing lab or training school, contractor's equipment and material storage, public utilities, manufacture, assembly, packaging of previously prepared materials, lumberyard, office,</p> <p><u>Accessory</u>: Horticultural building, off-street parking, swimming pool, storage of personal trailers or boats, quarters for a caretaker or watchman</p>	0.3	1.2%
<b>OS: Open Space</b>	<p>All development requires site plan review</p> <p><u>Principal</u>: Public parks and playgrounds, pedestrian and bicycle trails, other similar recreation and park uses</p> <p><u>Accessory</u>: Signs, fences, walls, hedges</p>	0.7	2.8%

Source: Village of Lancaster Zoning Ordinance via ecode 360 – Adopted in 1964, readopted as amended and revised in 1976, and with many subsequent amendments since its re-adoption. Accessed October 5, 2017.







Path: I:\Lancaster\_Village\_012171485 -Downtown\_Dev\_Strategy\Maps\Zoning.mxd

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Sources:  
 1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella  
 2. Parcels: Obtained from Erie County  
 3. Roads: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database  
 4. Zoning Districts: Digitized by LaBella based on a map entitled Zoning District Map, as Amended January 12, 2009, and provided by the Village of Lancaster and updated based on boundary descriptions found within the Zoning Code

 Downtown Study Area

  
 0 100 200 Feet  
 1:3,000

VILLAGE OF LANCASTER  
 DOWNTOWN  
 STRATEGIC PLANNING &  
 FEASIBILITY STUDY

**Figure 3: Existing Zoning  
 Map**



**UNDERUTILIZED AND VACANT SITES**

Underutilized and vacant properties were identified within the Downtown Study Area based on an evaluation of occupancy and property information. **Underutilized properties** are those properties and buildings that are not fully occupied and/or that are not being employed for their highest and best use based on site visits conducted by LaBella Associates on October 26, 2017 and December 11, 2017. Many of these underutilized properties are located along Central Avenue and contain underutilized upper floors or space for rent/lease. **Vacant properties** are those properties with no buildings on them and/or designated as vacant on the real property database. Many of these properties are currently being used as parking lots and provide great potential for infill development.

Based on the evaluation, the Downtown Study Area includes 28 properties categorized as underutilized or vacant properties. Table 3 provides a summary of these 28 properties. Figure 4 shows the location of these properties.

Eight of the properties are classified as underutilized sites. The eight underutilized properties encompass 5.2 acres and are assessed at nearly \$2 million. The underutilized properties include various mixed use properties, attached row buildings, portions of the urban renewal site, Fireman’s Park, and the Sunoco gas station. Twenty of the properties are vacant sites. The 20 properties encompass 7.5 acres and are assessed at more than \$530,000. The vacant properties include portions of the urban renewal site, Village owned parking lots and walkways, residential side yards, portions of the Cayuga Creek dyke, and various pocket parks.



Given the highly visible location of this gas station at the corner of Central Ave and Broadway, the property is classified as underutilized because it is not being utilized for the highest and best use



Table 3: Underutilized and Vacant Sites

Underutilized Sites				
Address	Parcel No.	Owner	Acreage	Total Assessment
16 Central Ave	104.82-1-7	Sixteen Central Ave Inc	0.10	\$230,000
30 Central Ave	104.74-4-9	Patricia L. Besch	0.04	\$54,000
34 Central Ave	104.74-4-7	31 Central Avenue Inc	0.08	\$114,000
5424 Broadway St	104.82-2-18	Unionmart Inc	0.53	\$457,000
6 Saint Mary's St	104.19-2-18	Village of Lancaster	0.70	\$115,000
4 Main St	104.82-1-6	Clark H. Packard	0.04	\$89,000
1 Main St	104.74-4-10	Betty J. Aquila	0.07	\$154,000
11 Main St	104.74-4-1.21	Village of Lancaster Community Dev. Corp.	3.64	\$750,000
<b>Total Underutilized Sites:</b>		<b>8 Properties</b>	<b>5.20</b>	<b>\$1,963,000</b>

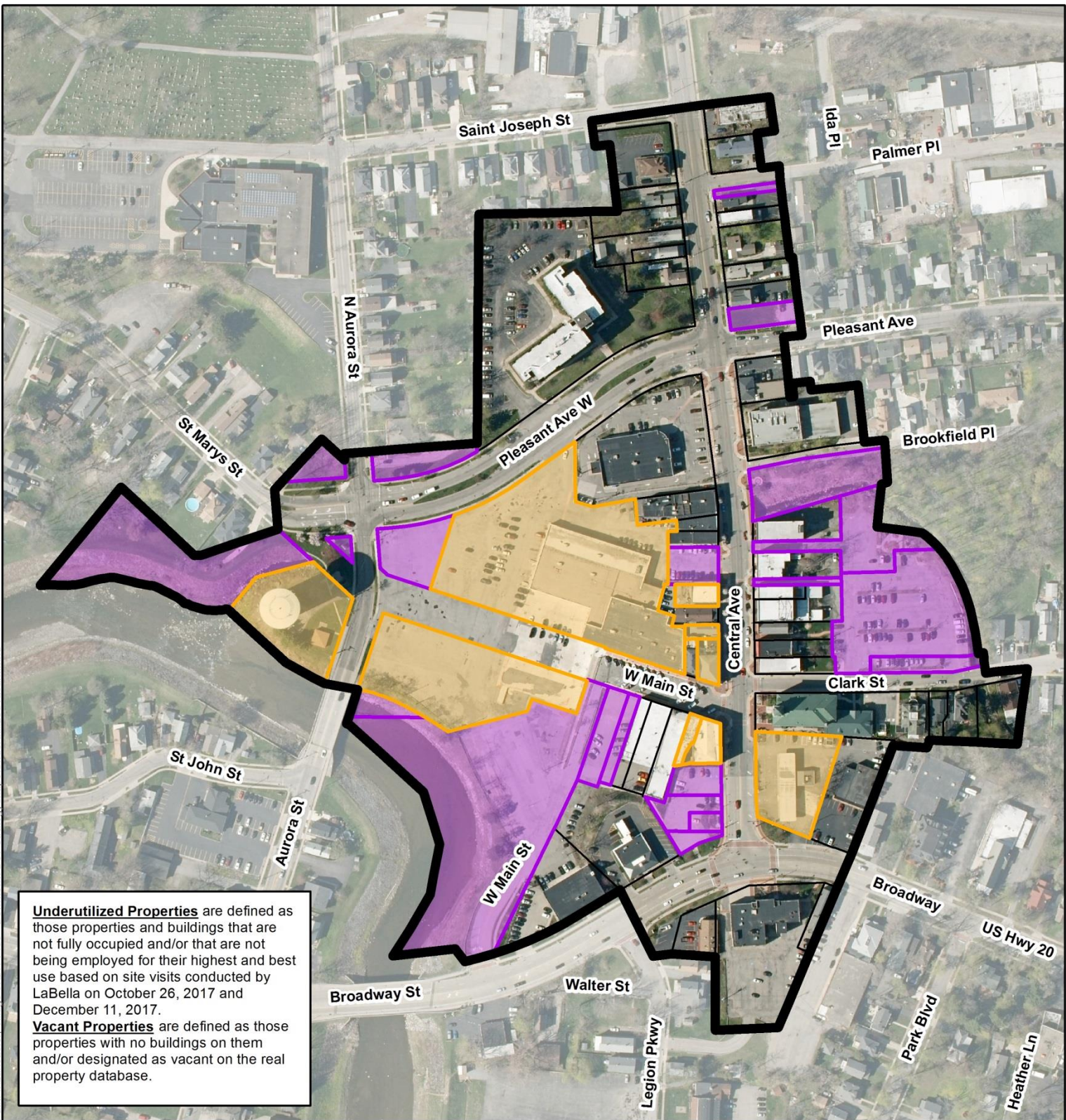
Vacant Sites				
Address	Parcel No.	Owner	Acreage	Total Assessment
0 Central Ave	104.74-3-5	Village of Lancaster	0.04	\$4,900
0 Central Ave	104.74-3-3	Village of Lancaster	0.43	\$45,100
53 Central Ave	104.74-3-1	Lancaster Urban Renewal Agency	0.48	\$35,500
71 Central Ave	104.66-3-10	Linda J. McDonnell	0.12	\$12,000
0 Central Ave	104.66-3-16	85 Central LLC	0.04	\$100
4 Central Ave	104.82-1-11	Village of Lancaster	0.05	\$6,100
6 Central Ave	104.82-1-10	Village of Lancaster	0.05	\$4,800
8 Central Ave	104.82-1-9	Village of Lancaster	0.13	\$11,600
10 Central Ave	104.82-1-8	Village of Lancaster	0.13	\$18,700
0 Central Ave	104.74-4-1.3	Village of Lancaster Community Dev. Corp.	0.15	\$14,900
41 Clark St	104.74-3-11	Village of Lancaster	1.03	\$95,000
33 Clark St	104.74-3-12	Village of Lancaster	0.14	\$1,000
0 Aurora St	104.74-1-18	Village of Lancaster	0.20	\$700
11 Saint Mary's St	104.19-1-1	Village of Lancaster	0.14	\$6,200
0 Saint Mary's St	104.19-2-17.1	Carol M. King	1.10	\$100
14 Main St	104.82-1-2	Village of Lancaster Community Dev. Corp.	0.09	\$9,600
16 Main St	104.82-1-1	Village of Lancaster Community Dev. Corp.	0.17	\$16,800
0 Aurora St	104.74-4-1.1	Village of Lancaster Community Dev. Corp.	0.28	\$27,000
0 Broadway St	104.82-1-14	Village of Lancaster	2.65	\$221,100
0 Aurora St	104.82-1-19	County of Erie	0.10	\$100
<b>Total Vacant Sites:</b>		<b>20 Properties</b>	<b>7.52</b>	<b>\$531,300</b>

Underutilized and Vacant Sites			
<b>Total:</b>	<b>28 Properties</b>	<b>12.72</b>	<b>\$2,494,300</b>

Source: Village of Lancaster Real Property Data as provided by Erie County; Underutilized and vacant properties chosen by LaBella based on site visits and property information.



Path: I:\Lancaster\_Village\_012171485 - Downtown Dev Strategy\Maps\Underutilized/Vacant.mxd



**Underutilized Properties** are defined as those properties and buildings that are not fully occupied and/or that are not being employed for their highest and best use based on site visits conducted by LaBella on October 26, 2017 and December 11, 2017.

**Vacant Properties** are defined as those properties with no buildings on them and/or designated as vacant on the real property database.

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Sources:  
1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella  
2. Parcels: Obtained from Erie County  
3. Property Utilization: Determined by LaBella based on site visits conducted on 10/26/17 and 12/11/17  
4. Roads: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database  
5. Aerial background: Orthoimagery (2017)

Downtown Study Area

**Property Utilization\***

Underutilized

Vacant

Fully Utilized

0 100 200 Feet

1:3,000

VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

DOWNTOWN  
STRATEGIC PLANNING &  
FEASIBILITY STUDY

**Figure 4: Underutilized  
and Vacant Sites Map**





TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

The Village of Lancaster has multiple transportation systems that enable people and goods to move around, into, and out of the downtown. They include roadways, public transportation, railroads, airports, and pedestrian infrastructure. This section also provides a discussion on existing downtown parking.

Roadways

One of the assets of the Study Area is its access to multiple major arterials including US Highway 20 (Broadway) and the nearby State Highway 78 (Transit Road). Multiple entrance/exit ramps to Interstate 90 are located between four to six miles from the Study Area including one at Transit Road, one at the Kensington Expressway, and one at Walden Avenue.

According to the New York State Department of Transportation Urban Functional Classification System (Figure 5), US Highway 20 (Broadway) is a "principal arterial other" which serves the major centers of activity of a metropolitan area by carrying a high proportion of the total urban area travel on a minimum mileage. US Highway 20 traverses the southern portion of the Study Area and serves both car and truck traffic. Central Avenue and West Main Street are classified as "minor arterials" which interconnect with and augment the principal arterial system and provide service to trips of moderate length at somewhat lower of travel mobility than principal arterials. Central Avenue runs in a north-south direction, bisecting the Study Area. West Main Street was reconfigured during urban renewal and provides a secondary connection between US Highway 20 and Central Avenue. It is currently a one-way street and the portion which traverses north to south is steeply graded.

As reported in Table 4 and depicted in Figure 6, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts for the major roadways within the Study Area vary with the highest counts located along the western portion of US Highway 20 (20,137); medium counts (~15,000 to 16,000) located along the eastern portions of US Highway 20 and along Central Avenue; and lower counts located along Aurora Street (6,981).

**Table 4: Annual Average Daily Traffic Counts, Major Routes in Study Area in 2015**

Road	Section	AADT
US Highway 20 (Broadway)	Transit Rd to Central Ave	20,137
US Highway 20 (Broadway)	Central Ave to Cemetery Rd	15,637
Central Avenue	Broadway to 792 ft south of Walden Ave	15,065
Aurora Street	Broadway to Pleasant Ave W	6,981

Source: NYSGIS Clearinghouse, NYSDOT 2015 AADT GIS Shapefile



### Public Transportation

The Study Area is served by a public transportation system through the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority's (NFTA) Metro Bus Service. There are two bus routes within the Village of Lancaster Study Area (Figure 7). Route 46 – Lancaster is a loop between the Thruway Mall Transit Center and Lancaster via the Walden Galleria Mall. This route travels along Broadway and Central Avenue within the Study Area. Route 69 – Alden connects downtown Buffalo with the Town of Alden via a route through the Study Area. This route travels along Broadway, Central Avenue, Pleasant Avenue West, and North Aurora Street within the Study Area. Bus stops within the Study Area are located along Central Avenue near its intersection with Broadway, along Central Avenue near its intersection with Pleasant Avenue West, at Lancaster Towers and the Save-a-Lot along Pleasant Avenue West, and at the Fireman's Park on North Aurora Street.

### Railroad and Airport

There are additional transportation systems located near the Study Area. A railroad arterial known as the Southern Tier Line (owned and operated by Norfolk Southern Railway Co.) crosses aurally over Central Avenue just north of the Study Area. In addition, an Erie County Industrial Development Agency rail spur and a series of major CSX railroad arterials are located between 0.4 and 0.6 miles north of the Study Area.

The Buffalo Niagara International Airport is located less than five miles northwest of the Study Area.

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure

The Study Area has a substantial pedestrian network (sidewalks) but a non-existent bicycle network (see Figure 7 and Table 5). Along Central Avenue between Broadway and Pleasant Avenue West, the *Central Avenue Streetscape Project* installed traffic calming devices including wider sidewalks, bump outs, brick crosswalks, and mid-street yield to pedestrian signs to improve pedestrian safety. New landscaping and seating areas were created to improve the pedestrian experience. The sidewalk network within the Study Area is nearly complete: notable gaps include portions of West Main Street and the south side of Palmer Place and Brookfield Place. The sidewalk network is in moderate to excellent condition.

### Parking

Developers also consider parking opportunities and multi-modal travel opportunities. As shown in Table 5, on-street parking is not available along many of the major streets within the Study Area. However, on-street parking is available along most of Central Avenue (about 35 spaces) and portions of West Main Street (about 33 spaces). Large off-street public parking lots are located off the north side of Clark Street (about 100 spaces), mid-block Central Avenue between West Main Street and Pleasant Avenue West (about 20 spaces), and at the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Broadway (about 31 spaces). Informal off-street



parking is located at the Village owned urban renewal area east of North Aurora Street (acres of unmarked paved areas). Many of the businesses along Broadway and the Rite Aid on Central Avenue have large private parking lots.

**Table 5: Major Study Area Streets, Multi-Modal, On-street Parking and Roadway Condition Data**

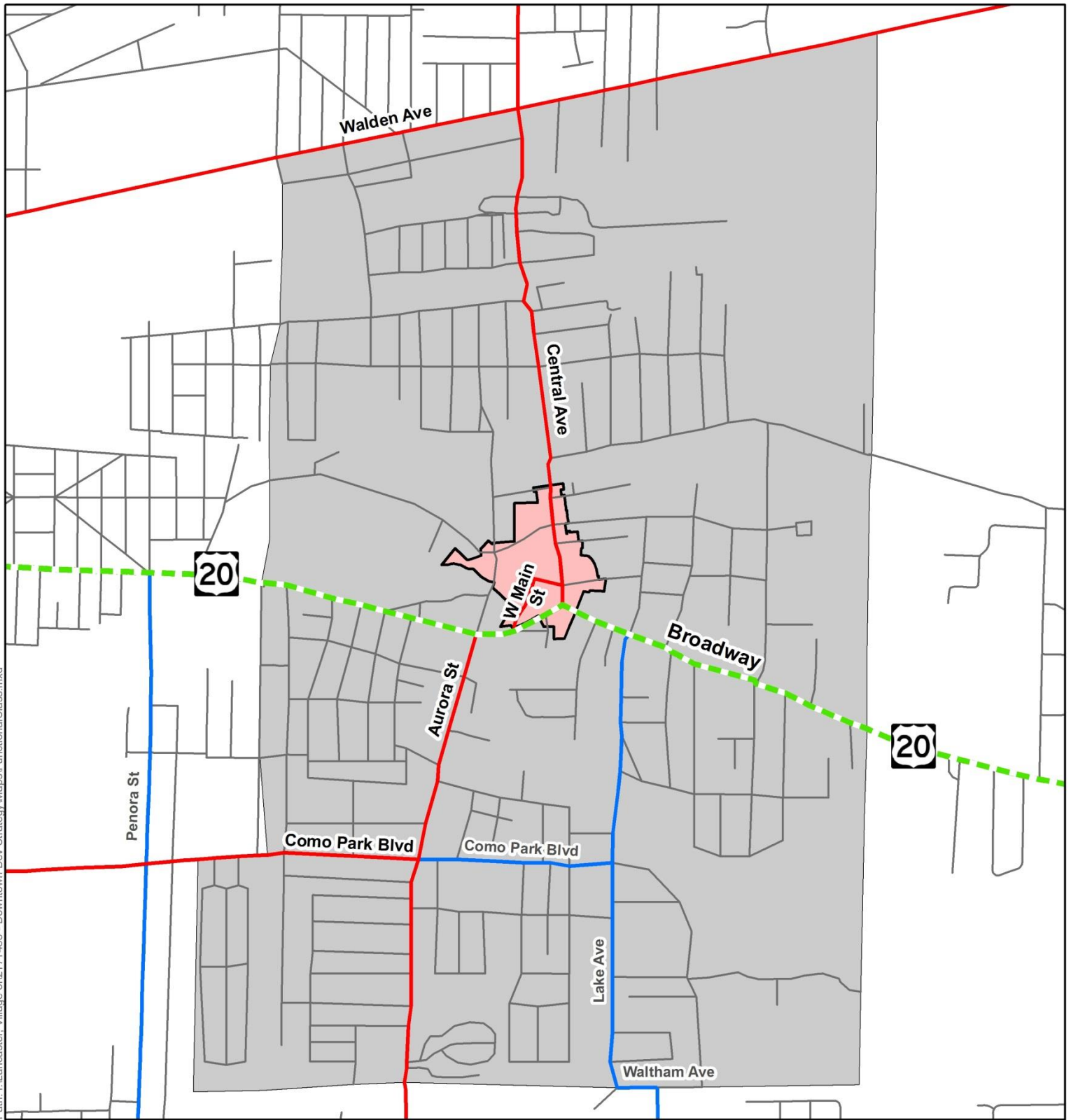
Street Name*	On-Street Parking	Sidewalks/Bike Lanes	General Roadway Condition
US Highway 20 (Broadway)	None	Sidewalks: Both Sides (Complete) No Bike Lanes	Good
Central Ave	Both Sides (south of Pleasant) None (north of Pleasant)	Sidewalks: Both Sides (Complete) No Bike Lanes	Fair
West Main St	Both Sides (east-west section) None (north-south section)	Sidewalks: Various gaps along the north-south section No Bike Lanes	Fair
Pleasant Ave W	None	Sidewalks: Both Sides (Complete) No Bike Lanes	Good
N Aurora St	None	Sidewalks: Both Sides (Complete) No Bike Lanes	Fair
Clark St	None (all of north side and western section of south side) Parking allowed on eastern section of south side	Sidewalks: Both Sides (Complete) No Bike Lanes	Good

Note: \*Noted characteristics are only for sections of the roadways located within the Study Area  
Source: Google Aerial Imagery and Street View, Site Visits



**Streetscape and Safety Improvements along Central Avenue**

Path: I:\Lancaster\_Village\_012171485 - Downtown Dev Strategy\Maps\FunctionalClass.mxd



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- Sources:
1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella
  2. Roads and Municipal Boundaries: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database
  3. Functional Classification: Digitized from NYSDOT's online Functional Class Viewer

- Downtown Study Area
  - Village of Lancaster
- Functional Classification**
- Principal Arterial Other
  - Minor Arterial
  - Major Collector
  - Other Roadways



0 500 1,000 Feet

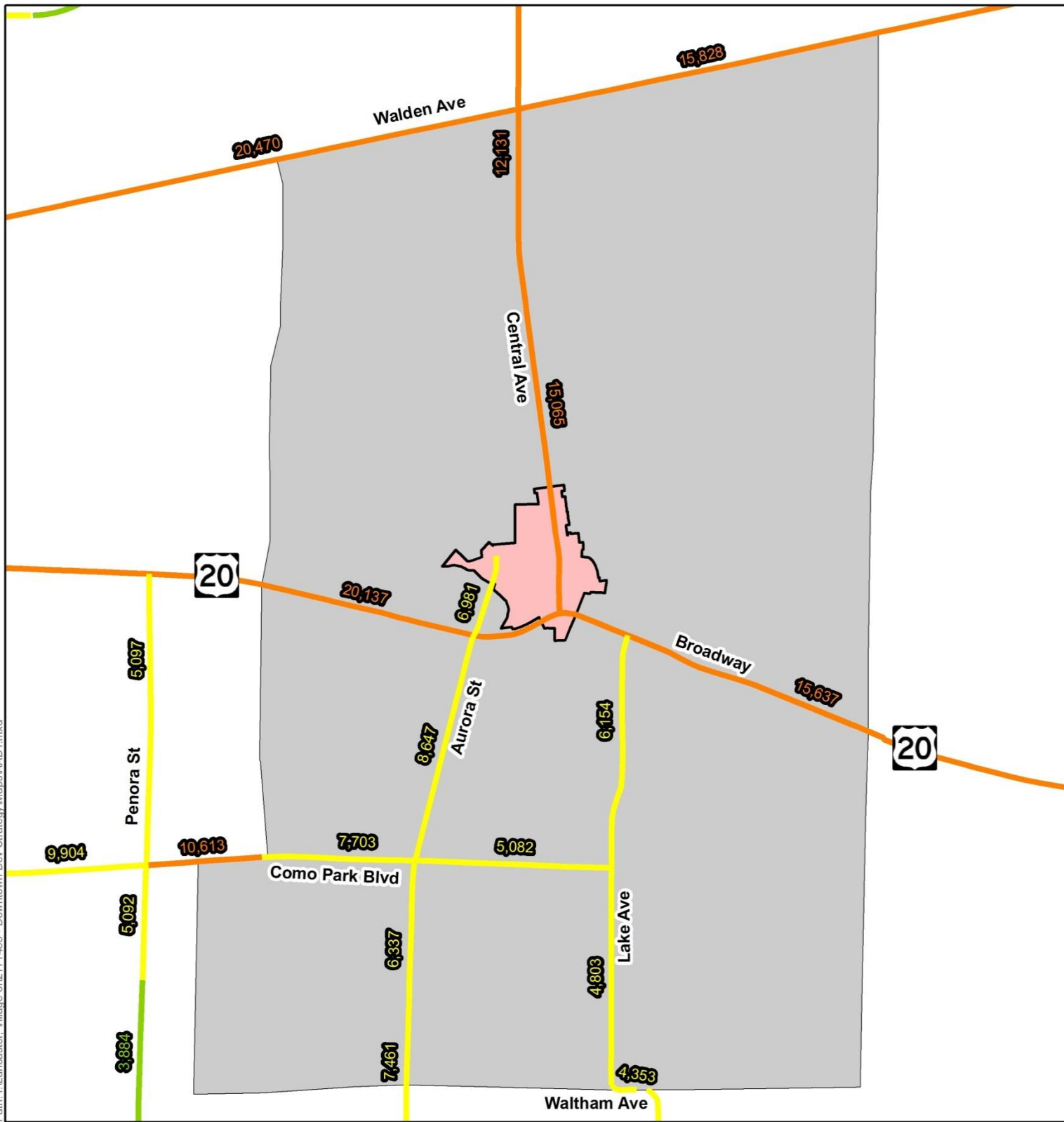


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## VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

### DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLANNING & FEASIBILITY STUDY

**Figure 5: Functional  
 Classification Map**



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- Sources:
1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella
  2. Roads and Municipal Boundaries: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database
  3. Annual Average Daily Traffic: NYSDOT via NYS GIS Clearinghouse

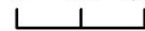
- Downtown Study Area
- Village of Lancaster

**AADT Counts for 2015 (NYSDOT)**

- 1,501 - 4,000
- 4,001 - 10,000
- 10,001 - 25,000
- Other Roadways (No AADT Data)



0 500 1,000 Feet



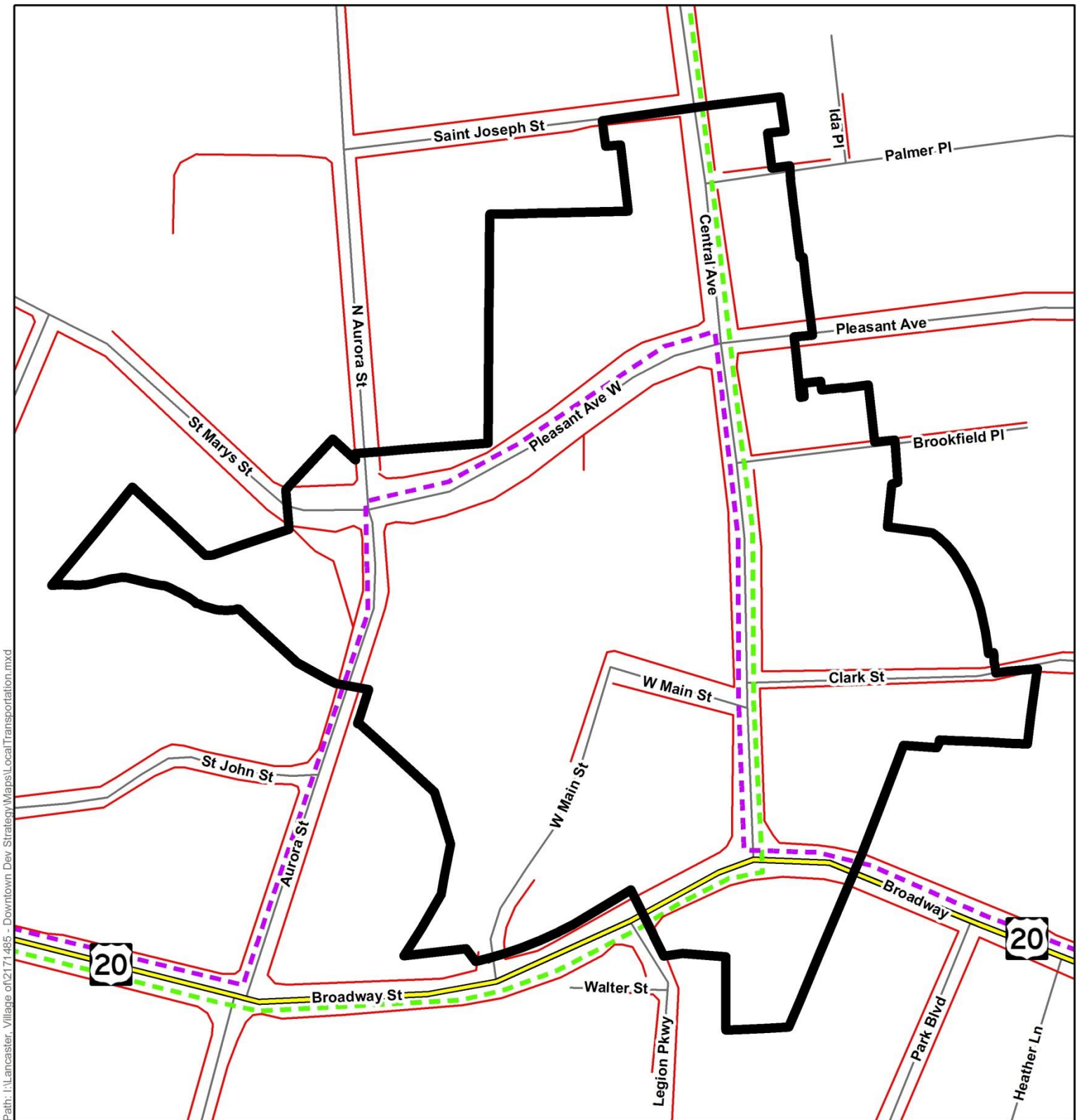
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VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

DOWNTOWN  
 STRATEGIC PLANNING &  
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**Figure 6: Annual  
 Average Daily Traffic  
 (AADT) Map**





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Sources:  
1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella  
2. US Highway and Local Roads: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database with minor edits to location by LaBella based on aerial imagery  
3. Public Transit: Digitized by LaBella from NFTA Route Maps found online  
4. Sidewalks: Digitized from aerial imagery

Downtown Study Area

**Roads**  
 US Highway  
 Local Road

**Public Transit (NFTA Bus Routes)\***  
 Route 46 - Lancaster  
 Route 69 - Alden

**Pedestrian Infrastructure**  
 Sidewalk

Note: \* NFTA Routes are offset from the road for display purposes only.

0 100 200 Feet

1:3,000

VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

DOWNTOWN  
STRATEGIC PLANNING &  
FEASIBILITY STUDY

**Figure 7: Transportation  
Systems Map**

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITY SYSTEMS

The entire Study Area is served by a comprehensive network of public infrastructure and private utilities (Figures 8 and 9). Infrastructure and utility systems available in the Study Area include public water, public sewer, public stormwater system, telecommunications, electric, and natural gas.

### Water

The Village of Lancaster obtains its water supply from the Erie County Water Authority's (ECWA) Van de Water Treatment Plant located in the Town of Tonawanda. The plant draws water from the Niagara River, treats it, and then distributes it to customers. The plant capacity is adequate for future development within the Study Area.

The Village's water distribution system is in a Direct Service Area. In the Direct Service Area, ECWA owns and operates the water distribution system. ECWA is also responsible for all customer service, billing, maintenance, and capital improvements.

Generally, there is capacity within the water distribution system to handle future development. However, if a particularly water intensive use was proposed, it would be advisable for the developer to conduct additional studies (such as hydraulic models) to determine if there is sufficient flow and pressure in the area to meet the needs of the proposed development.

Public water supply is available to all of the properties along public roads within the Study Area as depicted in Figure 8. Twelve-inch diameter water lines service properties along North Aurora Street, Pleasant Avenue West, portions of West Main Street, and across the urban renewal site. Ten-inch diameter water lines service properties along Central Avenue, portions of West Main Street, and portions of Broadway. Eight-inch diameter water lines service Palmer Place, Brookfield Place, Clark Street, and portions of Broadway. Lastly, six-inch diameter water lines service Pleasant Avenue and portions of Broadway. While these areas have a sufficient supply of water for typical daily uses, current standards recommend a minimum of 8 inch diameter water lines for proper fire protection. Fire hydrants are located throughout the Study Area.

The water storage tank is a vestige of the Village's old water system before ECWA took over operations. The tank is owned and maintained by the Village; however, it is no longer used as a water storage tank. Instead it holds cellular equipment for several companies.



**Village-Owned Former Water Storage Tank now Utilized to Hold Cellular Equipment**

### Sanitary Sewer

The Village of Lancaster sanitary sewer system is part of Erie County Sewer District No. 4 (ECSD #4). ECSD #4 provides the village with full service sanitary transmission and treatment. The Village operates and maintains the wastewater collection system within the bounds of the village. Then all flows are transmitted via the ECSD #4 trunk lines to the Bird Island Sewage Treatment Plant, owned by the Buffalo Sewer Authority. Generally, the Bird Island Sewage Treatment Plant and major trunk lines have available capacity to handle future development. The capacity of the local collection system will need to be determined on a case by case basis. Due to statewide weather related capacity problems, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation requires the submittal of a Downstream Sewer Capacity Analysis for sewer extensions (defined as any connection to convey 2,500 gallons per day or more of residential sewage alone or in combination with storm water).

Public sanitary sewer is available to all of the properties along public roads within the Study Area as depicted in Figure 9. Eighteen-inch to 24-inch diameter sewer lines service properties along North Aurora Street and Saint Mary's Street. Ten-inch to 12-inch diameter sewer lines service properties along Central Avenue, West Main Street, portions of Broadway, Saint Joseph Street, Palmer Place, and across the urban renewal site. Eight-inch diameter sewer lines service Saint Joseph Place, Palmer Place, portions of Central Avenue, Pleasant Avenue, Pleasant Avenue W, Brookfield Place, Clark Street, and portions of Broadway.

### Stormwater System

The Village has an extensive stormwater drainage system composed of an underground gravity pipe system as depicted in Figure 9. Within the Study Area, all of the stormwater is conveyed to Cayuga Creek or to Plum Bottom Creek which empties into Cayuga Creek.

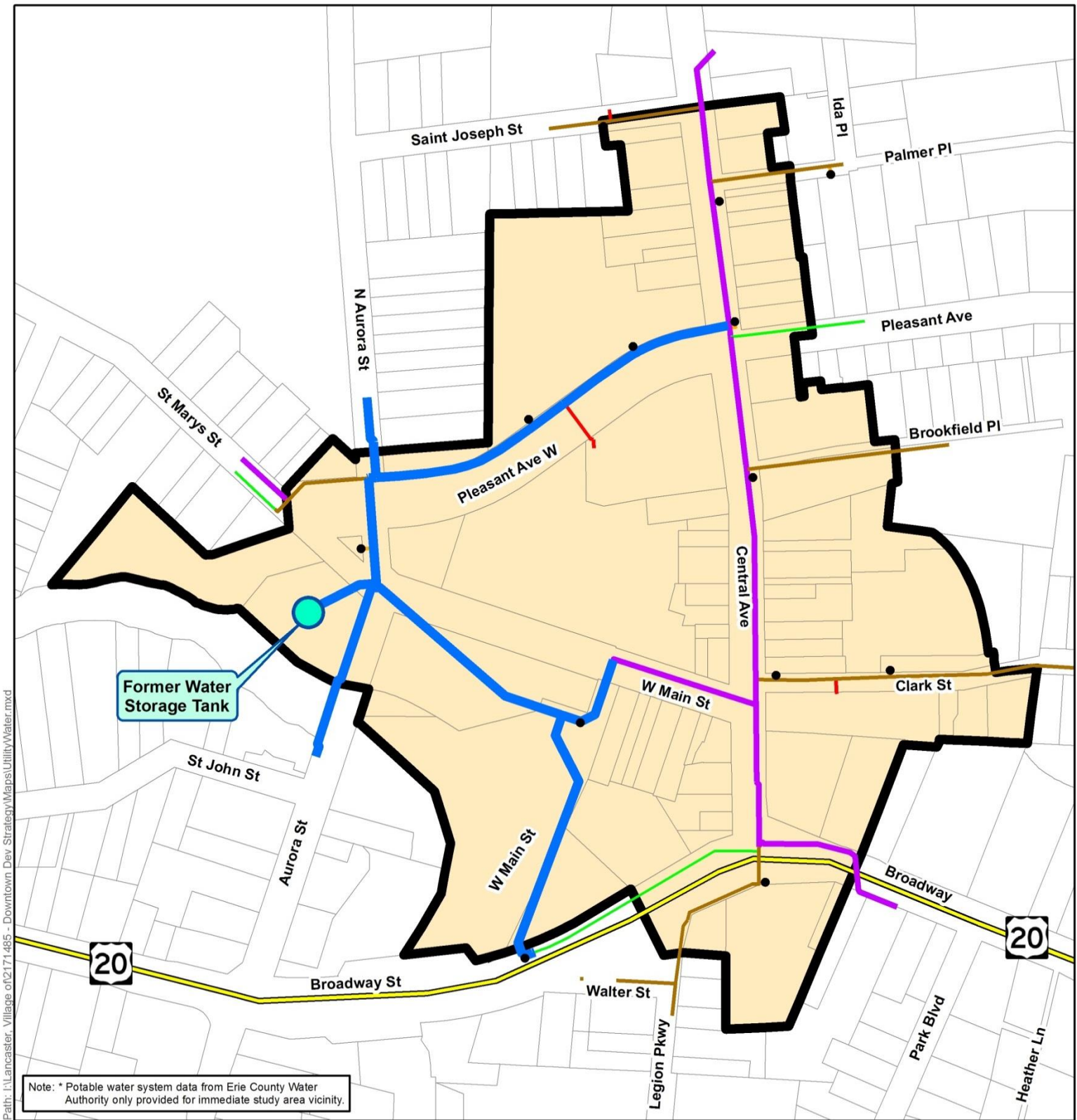
### Telecommunications

Spectrum and Verizon provide broadband internet, phone and cable TV services throughout the Study Area.

### Other Utilities

As private utilities, New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) and National Fuel do not provide maps of their services but may provide information upon request. However, it is known that the entire Study Area is served by electric (through NYSEG) and gas (through National Fuel) services.





Path: I:\Lancaster\_Village\_02171485 - Downtown Dev Strategy\Map\Utility\Water.mxd

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2. US Highway: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database with minor edits to location by LaBella based on aerial imagery  
3. Property Boundaries: Obtained from Erie County  
4. Potable Water System Data: Obtained from Erie County Water Authority (ECWA)

**Downtown Study Area**

- Downtown Study Area
- Property Boundaries
- US Highway
- Potable Water (Approx. Locations)\***
- Hydrant Branch
- Large Service Laterals
- 6 inch diameter Water Main
- 8 inch diameter Water Main
- 10 inch diameter Water Main
- 12 inch diameter Water Main
- Fire Hydrant

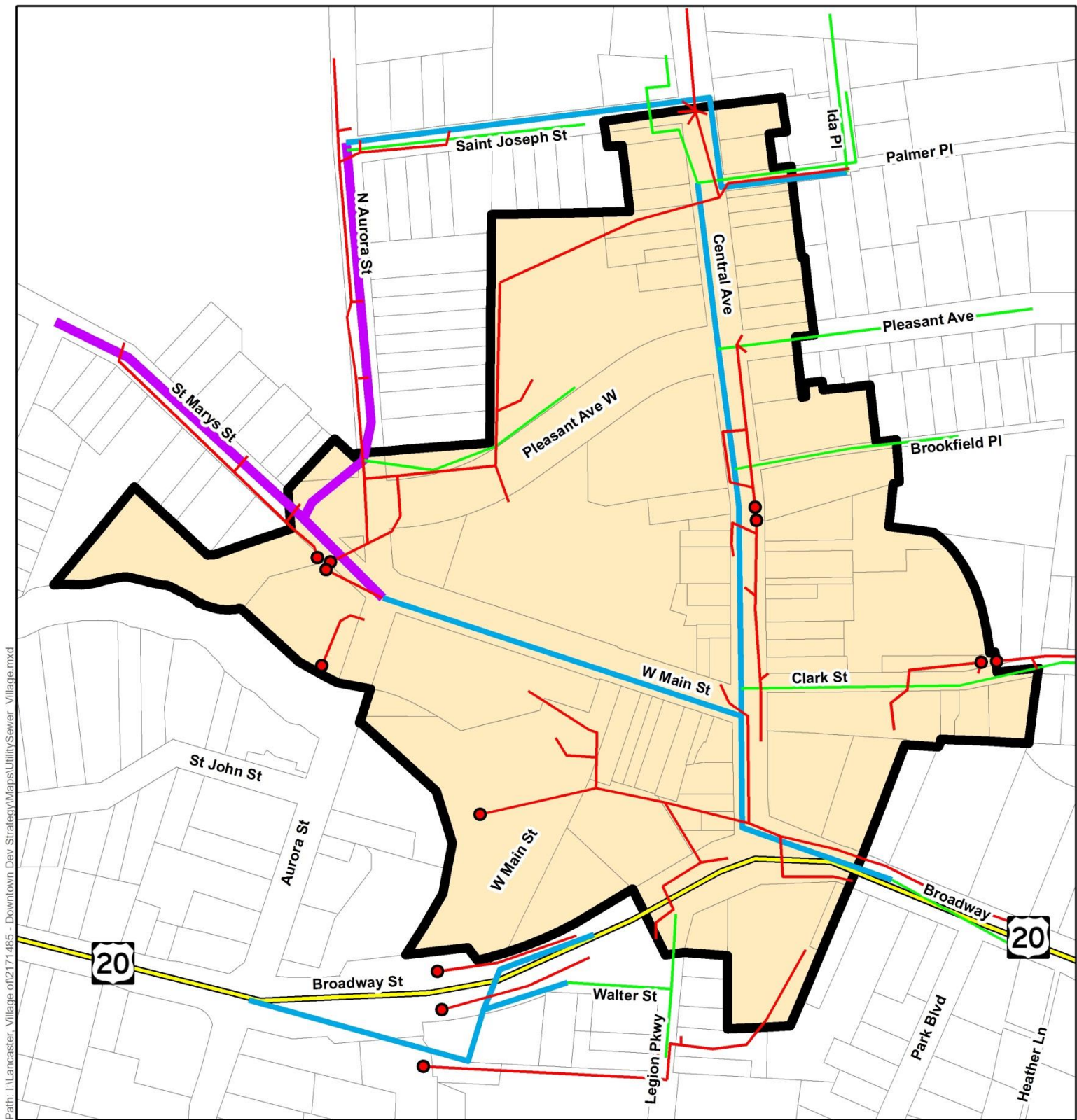
0 100 200 Feet

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VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

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**Figure 8: Utilities -  
Potable Water System  
Map**



Path: I:\Lancaster\_Village on2171485 - Downtown Dev Strategy\Maps\UtilitySewer\_Village.mxd

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Sources:  
 1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella  
 2. US Highway: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database with minor edits by LaBella  
 3. Property Boundaries: Obtained from Erie County  
 4. Sanitary Sewer System Data: Digitized by LaBella based on 2016 Watts produced map provided by the Village of Lancaster  
 5. Stormwater System Data: Digitized by LaBella based on 2013 Erie County DEP produced map provided by the Village of Lancaster

**Downtown Study Area**  
 Property Boundaries  
 US Highway

**Sanitary Sewer (Approx. Locations)\***  
 8 inch diameter Sewer Line  
 10 to 12 inch diameter Sewer Line  
 18 to 24 inch diameter Sewer Line

**Stormwater (Approx. Locations)\***  
 Stormwater Line  
 Stormwater Outfall

Note: \* Sanitary sewer and stormwater system data digitized by LaBella for immediate study area vicinity only. Locations are approximate.

North arrow pointing North (N), South (S), East (E), West (W).

Scale bar: 0, 100, 200 Feet

1:3,000

VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLANNING & FEASIBILITY STUDY

**Figure 9: Utilities - Sanitary Sewer and Stormwater System Map**



PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

The majority of the land in the Study Area is owned by public and quasi-public entities as shown in Figure 10 and described in Table 6. Approximately 55 percent of the land area and 32 percent of the parcels in the Study Area are owned by public or quasi-public agencies. The Village of Lancaster owns 28 percent of the land area including the Village Municipal Building and Fire Department, two public parking lots (off of Clark Street and Central Avenue), a large underutilized property between West Main Street and Cayuga Creek, Fireman’s Park, and a former water storage tank, among others. The Village’s Community Development Corp owns an additional 18 percent of the land area including a largely underutilized big box store, a public parking lot (off of Central Avenue), and 14-16 West Main Street. Other public or quasi-public agencies that own land within the Study Area include the Lancaster Urban Renewal Agency (Plum Bottom Creek Nature Park and Plum Bottom Creek), Town of Lancaster (Town Hall and Opera House), Erie County (vacant), U.S. Postal Service, and Verizon.

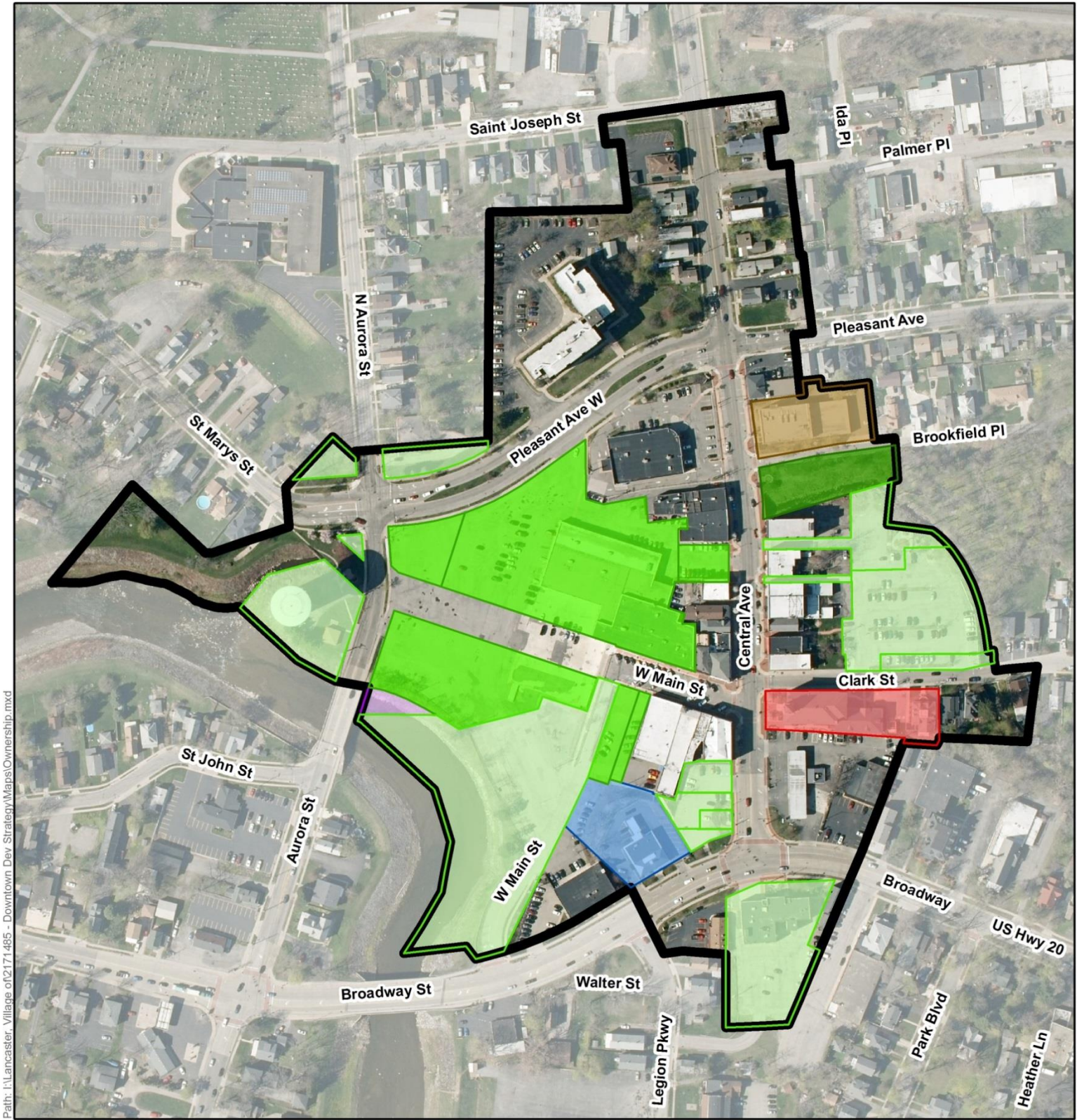
Nearly 45 percent of the land area and 68 percent of the parcels in the Study Area are privately owned as shown by the un-shaded areas in Figure 10. Many of the privately owned parcels are located along Central Avenue.

**Table 6: Public Land Ownership Distribution**

Ownership	Acres		Parcels	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Public and Quasi-Public</b>				
Village of Lancaster	6.7	27.6%	13	18.3%
Village of Lancaster - Community Development Corp.	4.3	17.7%	5	7.0%
Lancaster Urban Renewal Agency	0.5	2.1%	1	1.4%
Town of Lancaster	0.6	2.5%	1	1.4%
Erie County	0.1	0.4%	1	1.4%
U.S. Postal Service	0.6	2.5%	1	1.4%
Verizon	0.6	2.5%	1	1.4%
<b>Sub-total of Public and Quasi-Public</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>55.1%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32.4%</b>
<b>Private</b>	10.9	44.9%	48	67.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.3</b>		<b>71</b>	

Source: Village of Lancaster Real Property Data as provided by Erie County with minor updates by LaBella





Path: I:\Lancaster\_Village of 2171485 - Downtown\_Dev\_Strategy\Maps\Ownership.mxd

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Sources:  
1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella  
2. Parcels (including ownership): Obtained from Erie County with minor edits to ownership by LaBella based on online research  
3. Roads: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database  
4. Aerial background: Orthoimagery (2017)

**Downtown Study Area**

**Land Ownership**

- Village of Lancaster
- V. of L. Community Dev. Corp.
- Lancaster Urban Renewal Agency
- Town of Lancaster
- Erie County
- U.S. Postal Service
- Verizon
- Private Property (no bounds or fill)

0 100 200 Feet

1:3,000

VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

DOWNTOWN  
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**Figure 10: Property  
Ownership Map**



## NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

The Study Area is blessed with an abundance of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. These resources are amenities which add value to Study Area properties because they enhance Lancaster's quality of life; however, they can also create constraints on future development. Figures 11 through 13 exhibit the locations of all of the incredible natural, cultural, and recreational assets in the Study Area. A summary of the assets is described below.

### Topography

The Study area has both natural and man-made topographic changes. Central Avenue and its adjacent properties are relatively flat between Broadway and Pleasant Avenue at about 670 feet above sea level. North of Pleasant Avenue, Central Avenue begins to slope downward in order to go underneath a railroad overpass. This gives the impression that properties along Central Avenue are rising; however, they are in reality remaining flat.

Pleasant Avenue West somewhat naturally slopes downward (about 15 feet) from Central Avenue towards North Aurora Street. Broadway slopes downward slightly (about 5 feet) from the eastern Study Area boundary to the western Study Area boundary.

The largest topographical changes within the Study Area were exacerbated by man and occur along Cayuga Creek and on the urban renewal site. During the 1950's the large Cayuga Creek Flood Control project redirected the Creek, reclaiming land south of the buildings on the historic West Main Street. Earthen levees were installed. There is currently an approximate 10 to 15 foot drop from the top of the levees to the ordinary water level of the creek.

The area of the urban renewal site historically sloped downwards gently towards Cayuga Creek. With the creation of the plaza, much of the site was leveled out, West Main Street was truncated and rerouted southward, and retaining walls were installed. The north-south portion of the new West Main Street decreases nearly 15 feet in height over a 220 foot length before flattening out and then rising back up along Pacway to meet Broadway. The ground level of the current Save-A-Lot is approximately 10 feet lower than Central Avenue. Overall, the majority of the urban renewal site tends to slope downward gently towards the southeast, while the northern most portions slope downwards towards Pleasant Avenue West.

### Water Based Resources

Several water based resources, including Cayuga Creek, Plum Bottom Creek, and Federal riverine wetlands, are located within the Study Area (see Figure 11).

Cayuga Creek generally flows westward along the western boundary of the Study Area. It is classified by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) as a

Class C stream from the channelized Plum Bottom Creek to the west and as a Class B stream from the channelized Plum Bottom Creek to the southeast. By definition, a Class C stream is best used for fishing; the water quality is suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation, although other factors may limit the use for these purposes. A Class B stream is best used for primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing and is protected by the NYSDEC: any disturbance to the bed or bank of the stream would require a NYSDEC permit.

Historically, the Class C Plum Bottom Creek naturally traversed the Study Area in a westerly direction, discharging into Cayuga Creek. Years ago a portion of the creek (from Central Avenue to the west side of North Aurora Street) was channelized and piped under the Village. A small area of the creek west of North Aurora Street and areas to the east of Central Avenue (and along the eastern boundary of the Study Area) are still open air.

Both Cayuga Creek and open air portions of Plum Bottom Creek are Federally-designated riverine wetlands. Specifically they are classified as R2UBH which means that they are permanently flooded, lower perennial, riverine wetlands with an unconsolidated bottom. The underground portions of Plum Bottom Creek are also mapped as Federally-designated wetlands. Specifically they are classified as R4SBC which means that they are seasonally flooded, intermittent, streambed, riverine wetlands. Disturbance to these wetlands would require coordination with, and likely a permit from, the NYSDEC and U.S. Army Corps.

### Flood Areas

Flood areas designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are one of the potential constraints on development or redevelopment of properties within the Study Area. As shown in Figure 11 areas along and extending outwards from Cayuga Creek and the open air portions of Plum Bottom Creek are within the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) based on the 1979 Federal Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the Village of Lancaster. Previously known as the 100 year flood zone, the SFHA has a 1% chance per year of flooding. In addition, portions of the Study Area near the north-south section of West Main Street and near the crossing of Plum Bottom Creek at Clark Street are within the 500 year flood zone (also known as the 0.2% annual chance flood area).

It should be noted that FEMA is preparing to update their FIRM maps of Erie County. Based on a preliminary map issued February 19, 2016 for this particular portion of the Village of Lancaster, the SFHA and 500 year flood zone boundaries would change (see Figure 12). Areas of greatest change would include:

- Areas along Cayuga Creek within the confines of the levees as well as areas along the open air portion of Plum Bottom Creek will be classified as floodway areas. The floodway is the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroachment so that the 1% annual chance flood can be carried without substantial increases in flood heights.
- The SFHA and 500 year flood zone will extend further north and east on the urban renewal site and across West Main Street.



- The SFHA will shift to better follow the water course of the open air portion of Plum Bottom Creek.
- A 500 year flood zone will be added along the edges of the SFHA associated with the open air portion of Plum Bottom Creek.
- The channelized portion of Plum Bottom Creek will contain the 0.2% annual chance flood discharge.

The 1979 FIRM map (as depicted in Figure 11) is still the official map until FEMA finalizes the newer one. However, once the newer map is finalized, the Village must adopt and replace the current floodplain laws and map with newer model laws and the newer map. At this point it is unknown when the newer map will be finalized.

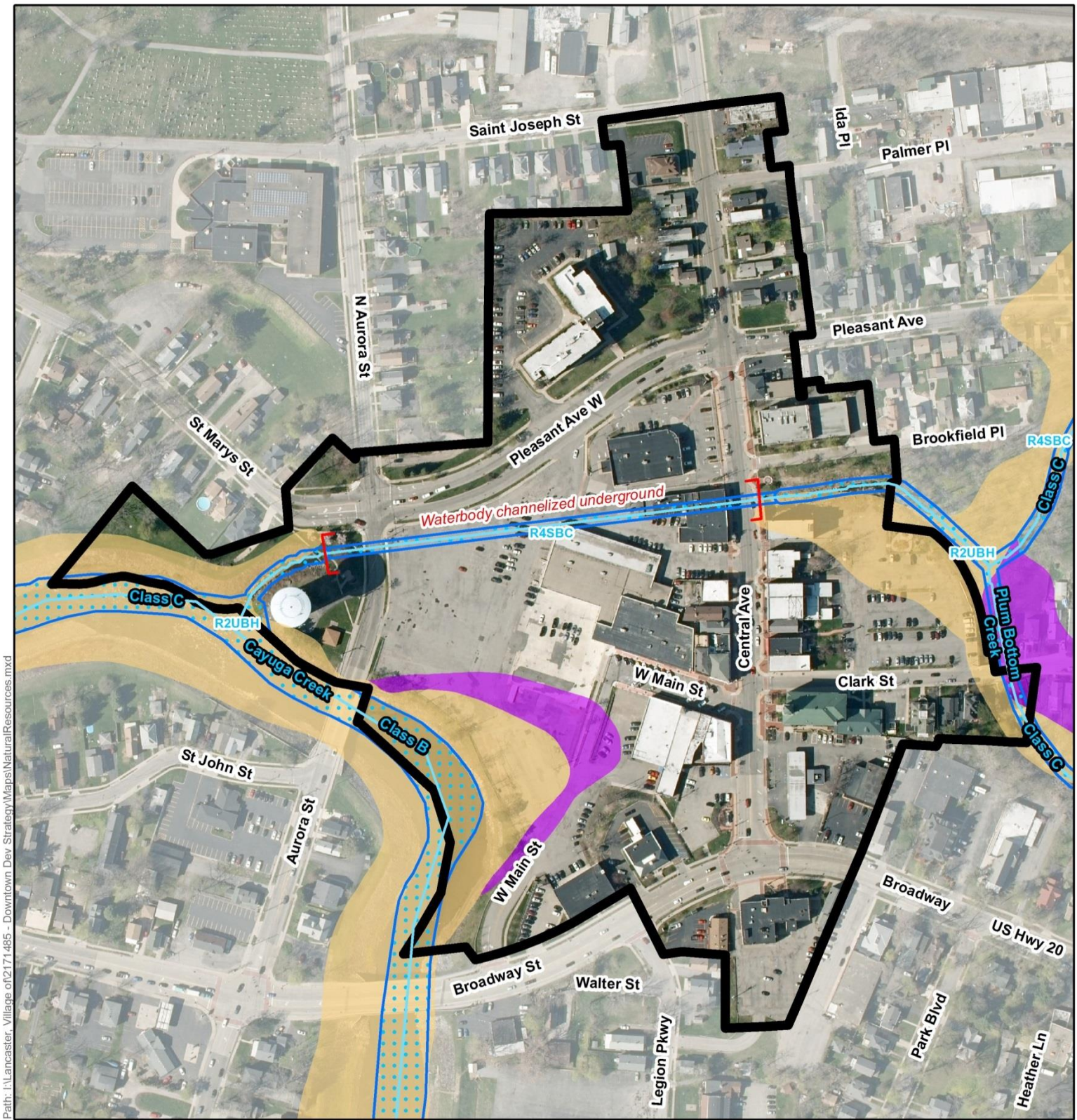
Chapter 160 of the Village of Lancaster Code regulates construction and development in the SFHA to ensure that buildings will be protected from flood damage. All development within the SFHA (not just construction of buildings, but also filling, excavation, paving, fences, etc.) is required to obtain a Village of Lancaster Floodplain Development Permit.

The Village of Lancaster is an active participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) which provides federally backed flood insurance in communities that enact and enforce floodplain regulations.



**Cayuga Creek looking northwesterly towards the North Aurora Street Bridge**





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**Sources:**  
1. Downtown Study Area: Created by LaBella  
2. Roads: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line  
3. Federal Classification: Obtained from National Wetland Survey - USFWS  
4. State Classified Waterbodies and FEMA Classified Flood Hazard Areas: Obtained from NYSGIS Clearinghouse  
5. Aerial background: Orthoimagery (2017)

Downtown Study Area

**Federal Classification**

Riverine

**State Classification**

Classified Waterbodies

**FEMA Classification**

Special Flood Hazard Area (1%)

0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard

NOTE: There are no State Wetlands located within the map extent

0 100 200 Feet

1:3,000

VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

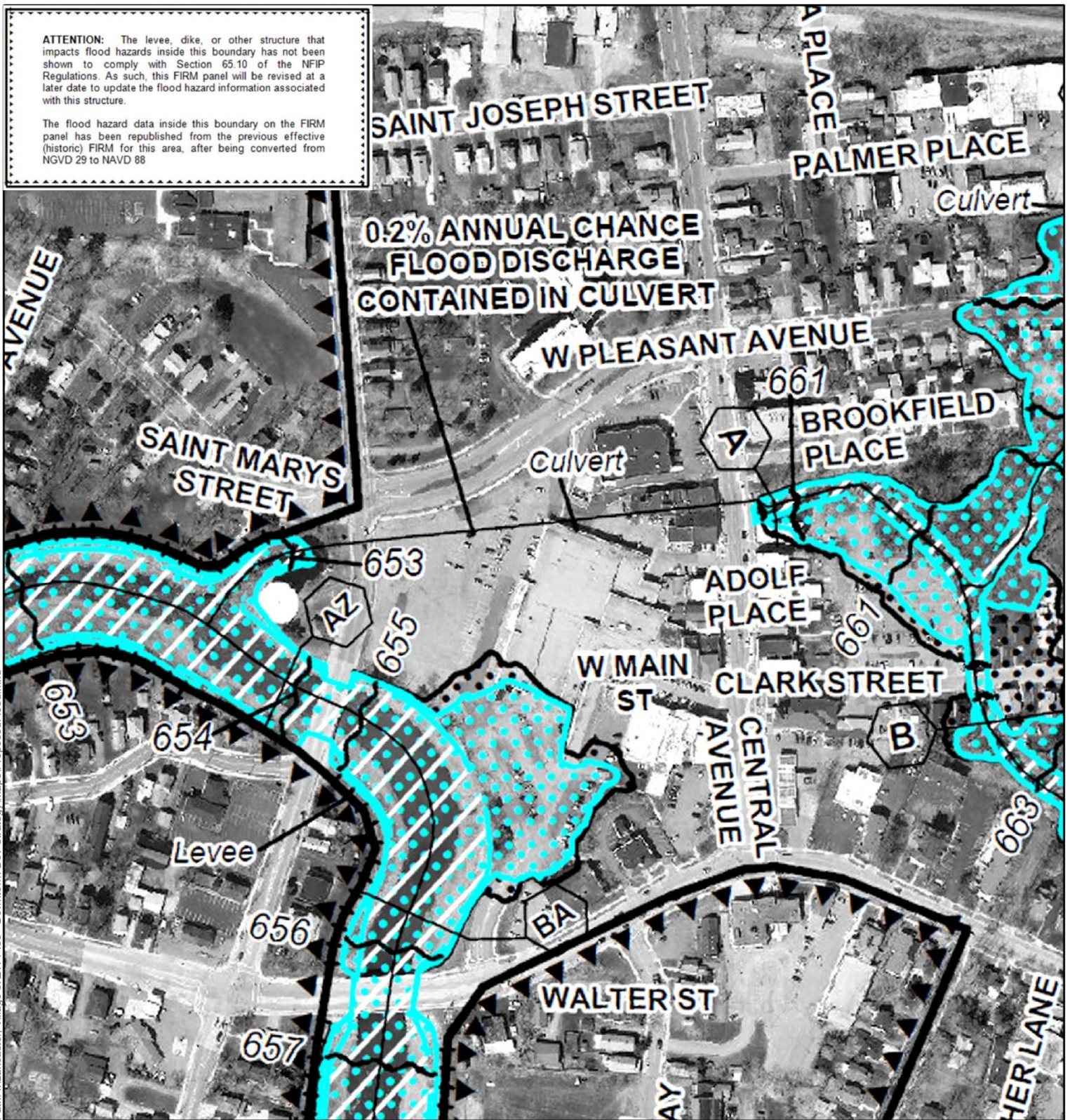
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**Figure 11: Natural  
Resources Map**



**ATTENTION:** The levee, dike, or other structure that impacts flood hazards inside this boundary has not been shown to comply with Section 65.10 of the NFIP Regulations. As such, this FIRM panel will be revised at a later date to update the flood hazard information associated with this structure.

The flood hazard data inside this boundary on the FIRM panel has been republished from the previous effective (historic) FIRM for this area, after being converted from NGVD 29 to NAVD 88



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Sources:  
1. Flood Insurance Rate Map: Image clipped from Panel 0243H, Map Number 36029C0243H for Erie County, New York issued 2/19/2016 and obtained from <<https://hazards.fema.gov/femaportal/prelimdownload>>

## LEGEND

-  SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS SUBJECT TO INUNDATION BY THE 1% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD
-  OTHER FLOOD AREAS
-  FLOODWAY AREAS IN ZONE AE



**PANEL 243 OF 807**  
**MAP SUFFIX: H**

Federal Emergency Management Agency

**MAP NUMBER**  
**36029C0243H**

**MAP REVISED**

## VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

DOWNTOWN  
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**Figure 12: 2016 Proposed  
Flood Insurance Rate  
Map**



### Historic, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources

The Study Area contains numerous historic and cultural resources (Figure 13). There are two Nationally Registered Historic Districts located within the Study Area. The Central Avenue Historic District encompasses the historic mixed-use core of the downtown along both sides of Central Avenue. The Broadway Historic District extends from the southeast corner of the Study Area eastward along both sides of Broadway. In addition, the Lancaster Municipal Building (which is also within the Broadway Historic District) and US Post Office are included in the National Register of Historic Places. Historically appropriate redevelopment of these Nationally Registered buildings or of buildings within the Historic Districts qualify for historic tax credits if certain conditions are met. Any redevelopment of those same properties that require State or Federal permits or funding must coordinate with and get approval from the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

As discussed previously within the Zoning section, the Village has also created a local Historic Overlay Zoning District which encompasses more than 90 percent of the Study Area (see Figure 3). Redevelopment of properties within the local Historic Overlay District requires a certificate of appropriateness from the local Historic Preservation Commission.

According to SHPO's online Cultural Resource Information System, there are no archeologically sensitive areas within the Study Area.

The historic 1897 Lancaster Opera House combines a music hall with the Town of Lancaster's main governmental building. Located at the intersection of Central Avenue and Clark Street, the building is one of only a few such Town Hall Opera Houses left in the country. Besides its historical significance, the Opera House provides an important cultural asset. The Opera House produces and presents plays, musicals, dinner theater, and concerts. It can also be rented for public and private gatherings.

The Village also sponsors a popular series of community events held throughout the year including the Spring Euro Market, Car and Cycle Show, Independence Day Celebration, Garden Walk, Taste of Lancaster, Arts in the Village, Fall Euro Market, Fire Safety Day, Zombieville, Light Up Lancaster, and Christmasville. These events attract local and regional residents and create a sense of pride in the community.



**National Register of Historic Places: US Post Office**

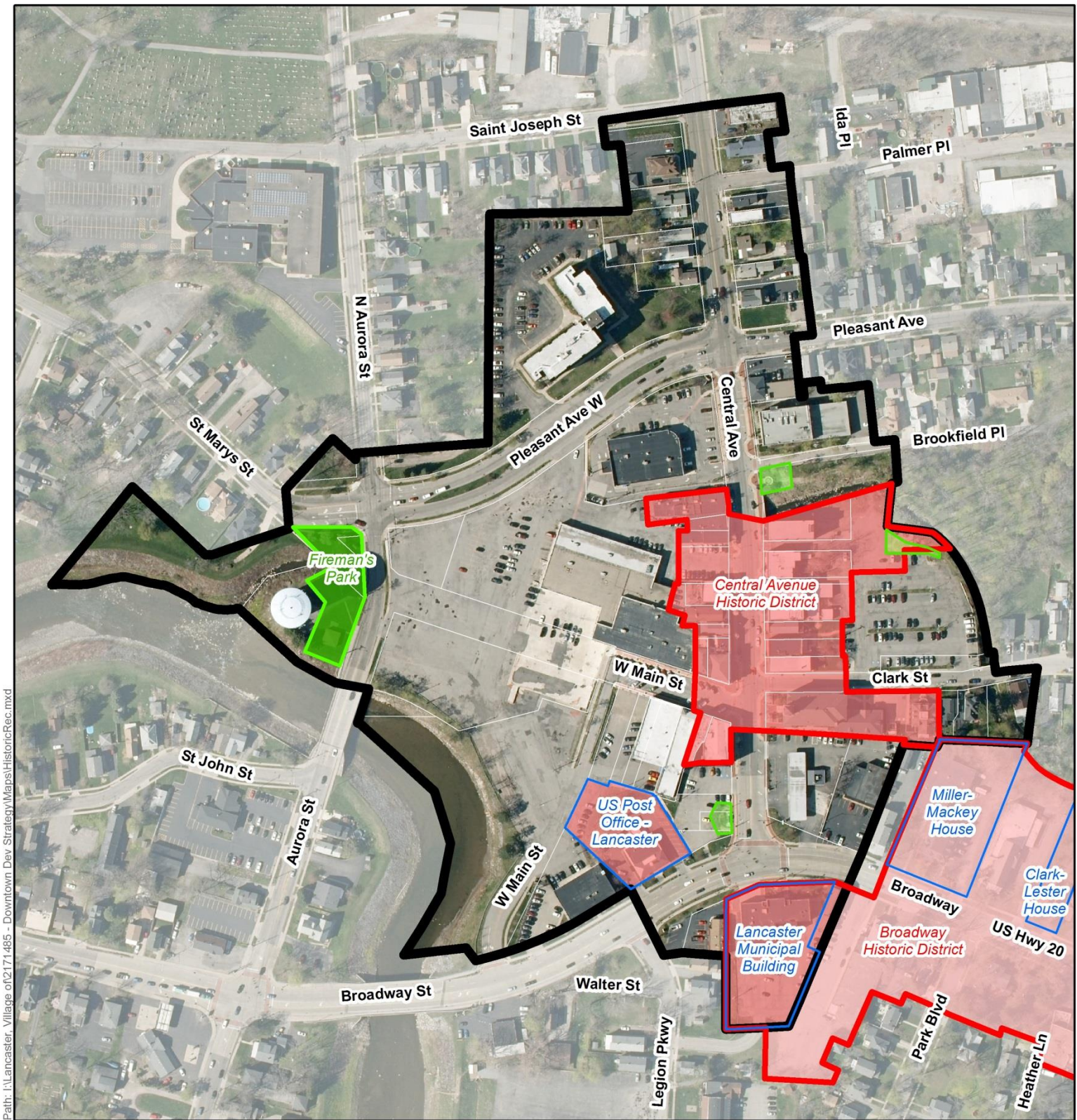
### Recreational Resources

There are various recreational and open space assets found within the Study Area (Figure 13). Fireman’s Park is located at the southwest intersection of Pleasant Avenue West and North Aurora Street near the Village’s former water storage tank. The park overlooks Cayuga Creek and includes several seating areas, a small picnic shelter, and a monument to everyone that volunteers their lifesaving skills. A pocket park is located at the corner of Central Avenue and Broadway and includes seating, landscaping, and a Village sign. A second pocket park is located at the corner of Central Avenue and Brookfield Place overlooking Plum Bottom Creek and includes seating and landscaping. A third pocket park is located at the rear of the Clark Street public parking lot overlooking Plum Bottom Creek. It is known as the Plum Bottom Creek Nature Park and was designed and constructed by the Boy Scouts of America Troop 468 in May of 2014.



**Plum Bottom Creek Nature Park**





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**Sources:**  
1. Downtown Study Area and Recreation: Created by LaBella  
2. Parcels: Obtained from Erie County  
3. Roads: Census Shapefiles from TIGER/Line database  
4. National Register Historic Places and Districts: Obtained from OPHRP  
5. Aerial background: Orthoimagery (2017)

Downtown Study Area

**National Register of Historic Places**

Historic Building

Historic District

**Recreation**

Park

Pocket Park

Note: There are no archeological sensitive areas within the map extent according to SHPO's online CRIS. This map should not be used as a substitute to proper coordination with SHPO.

0 100 200 Feet

1:3,000

VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

DOWNTOWN  
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**Figure 13: Historic and  
Recreational Resources  
Map**

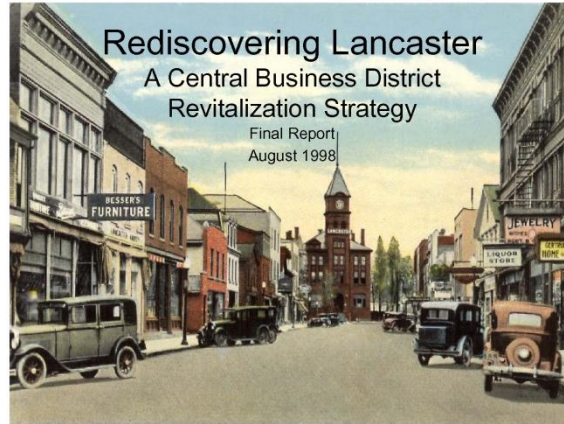


## PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

Multiple community plans were reviewed to develop the vision for the Lancaster Downtown Development Strategy. A summary and key relevant recommendations of each follows.

### Rediscovering Lancaster: A Central Business District Revitalization Strategy (1998)

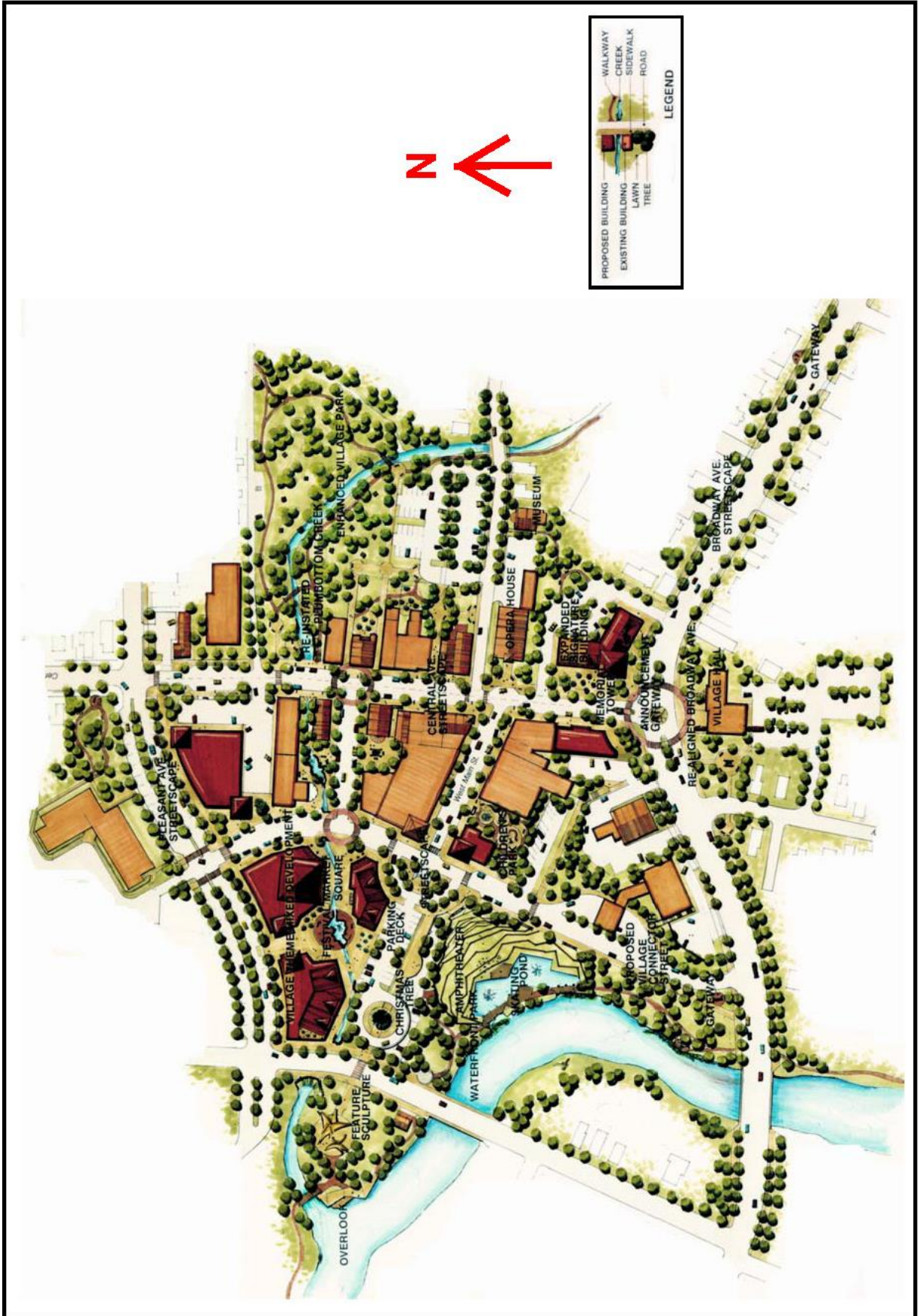
*Rediscovering Lancaster: A Central Business District Revitalization Strategy* was prepared with the overall goal of recapturing its past energy and reclaiming the CBD as the “core” of the Village and Town of Lancaster. The plan included a physical concept, economic concept, and administrative concept all with associated recommendations. While the plan in its entirety is relevant to the creation of an updated plan, below are some of the key recommendations.



### KEY RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a street level commercial ordinance.
- Establish CBD gateways and improve signage.
- Improve circulation in the CBD.
- Create new mixed use development to support market potentials.
- Establish new gathering/recreation areas.
- Pursue new retail, residential, and commercial opportunities in the CBD
- Pursue special opportunities for entertainment.
- Hire a Main Street Manager.

The following page includes the physical concept plan produced as part of the 1998 study. In 2008 an alternative concept plan was prepared by a citizens' advisory group. The 2008 alternative concept plan follows the 1998 concept plan.



Lancaster CBD Master Plan from the *Rediscovering Lancaster: A Central Business District Revitalization Strategy* (1998)



# VILLAGE OF LANCASTER, NY

## CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

A meandering stream that was once buried beneath a sea of pavement now sees the light of day and provides a destination for all who live, work and play within and around Lancaster's expanded Central Business District.

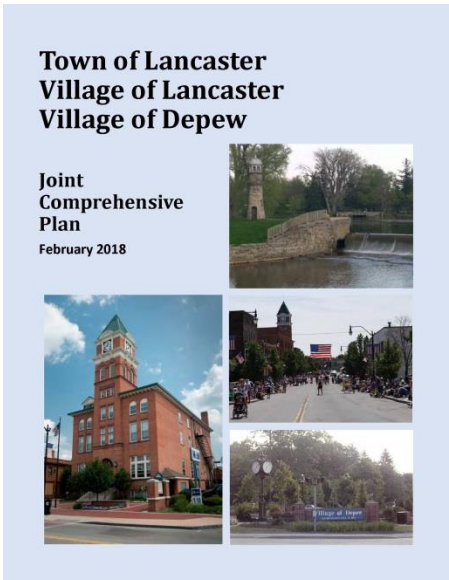


Alternative Lancaster Conceptual Design (2008)



**Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, and Village of Depew Joint Comprehensive Plan (2018)**

The *Town of Lancaster, Village of Lancaster, Village of Depew Joint Comprehensive Plan* was recently completed in early 2018. The plan presents a shared vision for the three communities' future, and encourages a cooperative approach to achieving community character, housing, recreation and parks, transportation, environment, agricultural land, municipal services and economic development goals. It presents an inventory and analysis of existing conditions, a vision for the future, a list of shared community goals, a strategy for achieving those goals through a detailed list of recommended actions, and an implementation strategy to guide the recommendations to reality.



**KEY RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- All strategies and recommendations found within the Village of Lancaster Downtown Development Strategy [i.e. this report].
- Streetscaping improvements to West Main Street.
- Infill development along North Aurora Street (in large parking lot).
- Undertake enhancements to the pocket park along Cayuga Creek to improve use and enjoyment.
- Promotion of historic character of the Village.
- Preparation of design standards to ensure that new development is attractive and in character with the historic qualities of the Village.
- Encourage mixed use development, with rental apartments above commercial uses.
- Enhance key gateways into the community to promote recognition of the Village.
- Sponsor new joint events (e.g. historic walking tours, community picnics, ethnic festivals, garden walks, and farmers market).
- Encourage community groups/organizations to participate in planning and improvement decisions at the neighborhood level to increase a local sense of pride and engagement.
- Use websites and social media to increase civic participation.
- Create complete streets, bike routes, and trails, and improve walkability.
- Embrace green infrastructure improvements.
- Consider daylighting enclosed portions of Plum Creek and integrating the restored waterway into the existing trail system through the Village of Lancaster.

---

## LOCAL ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The Village of Lancaster has several groups working to improve Downtown Lancaster including:

- Downtown Business Association
- Lancaster Community Development Corporation (LCDC)
- Village of Lancaster

However, there is not one group specifically focused on implementing both economic and community development initiatives that are needed to realize Downtown Lancaster's full potential. The LCDC, for instance, primarily focuses on the Village's former Urban Renewal areas.

Most successful downtowns have a dedicated organization for Downtown Redevelopment including:

- Business Improvement District – property owners pay a special assessment that provides funding for promotion, marketing, economic development and other special services as needed (i.e. staffing, streetscape, maintenance, flowers, etc.).
- Special Improvement District – property owners pay a special assessment for infrastructure or streetscape improvements only.
- Local Development Corporation – a local development corporation is established specifically for Downtown redevelopment.

There are also other organizational models but the ones listed, because they are formal, tend to be more effective in implementing downtown redevelopment objectives.

---

## RECENT, ONGOING AND PLANNED PROJECTS

Spurred by strong retail, commercial, and residential growth in the surrounding Town, the Village has recently committed to revitalizing the downtown core to become a focal point for life in the Village and Town. In the late 1990's the Village commissioned a comprehensive study of the Village center. The 1998 study includes concept plans and documents the desire of the community for authentic history, centered on West Main Street and facades which reflect the street at the turn-of-the-century. Alternative concept plans were prepared by a citizens' advisory group in 2008. Both the original and alternative concept plans focus on mixed-use development and walkability; however, the alternative concept plan proposes that the existing West Main Street be extended westward to once again connect with Aurora Street.

Shortly after the 1998 plan was written, the Village formed the Lancaster Community Development Corporation (CDC), which purchased the key urban renewal properties. In 2011, a large portion of the urban renewal building was demolished to make way for the extension of West Main Street and future mixed-use development. In 2014, the Village received funds for streetscape improvements to West Main Street.



In the early 2000's, the Village invested in downtown walkability through the Central Avenue Streetscape Project. The project rehabilitated the business district with a new cobblestone look, wider sidewalks with bump outs to create safer pedestrian areas, marble curbs, and historic lighting. Additionally, new landscaping and seating areas were created. The Village is currently working on an infrastructure project to enhance walkability, linking the urban renewal site to the Lancaster Middle School, the Lancaster Towers Apartments, Keysa Park, and other centers of activity. Physical improvements include the construction and/or reconstruction of sidewalks, high visibility crosswalks, pavement markings, signage, and lighting in the area as well as an extension of the Central Avenue Business District's sidewalks and bricks northward to St. Joseph Street.

The Village is also highly supportive of its historic integrity. The Village created a Historic Preservation Commission and a Historic Overlay Zoning District which encompasses the entire Downtown area and beyond. Furthermore, the Village championed the creation of the Nationally-Registered Central Avenue Historic District (listed in 2014) and Broadway Historic District (listed in 2015).



#### **Central Avenue National Register Historic District**

Lastly, the Village of Lancaster has completed two rounds of New York Main Street Program grant projects for façade improvements. The 2008 grant assisted with the improvements of seven buildings along Central Avenue and West Main Street. The 2014 grant was used to complete a few of the façade and building renovations projects which were initiated during the 2008 grant.

Retail is beginning to return and downtown Lancaster is once again becoming a hub of activity. Two small areas within the downtown are emerging with concentrations of specialty shops that are generating traffic from a broader geographic area: West Main Street (e.g. –



artisan chocolate, dog grooming spa, gift and toy shop) and the northern sector of Central Avenue (e.g. - Italian food products, clothing, antiques). A couple existing businesses have relocated to and several new businesses have popped up along West Main Street within the past several years including Purely Pets, Dark Forest Chocolate Makers, Furry Friends, Lilly Belle Meads, Lickity Splitz, and the Music Academy of Western New York. Another property on the south side of West Main Street has recently been purchased and is undergoing remodeling with the intention of creating a mixed use building. In addition, several homes along the northern portion of Central Avenue have been converted into businesses including Simply Italiano, Vintage Grace, and Lancaster Travel.

Another major asset of the downtown is the historic Lancaster Opera House. The Opera House produces and presents plays, musicals, dinner theater, and concerts. It attracts an estimated 30,000 patrons annually from throughout the region. Several local businesses have started partnering with the Opera House, providing reciprocal marketing for each other and coinciding store hours with evening productions.

Recently the Village and the Local Development Corporation are negotiating with a preferred developer, Tommy Sweeny, for the urban renewal site. The Village is working closely with the developer to ensure there is consistency between his plans and the plans proposed in the Downtown Strategy.



## ECONOMIC AND MARKET ANALYSIS

An Economic and Market Analysis was prepared for this Plan (see Appendix A). The purpose of the analysis was to provide an overview of the economic and market trends in and around the Lancaster Downtown Study Area. These trends were taken into consideration in the evaluation of the various potential uses and scenarios for development of strategic downtown sites. Key findings from the Economic and Market Analysis include:

- The Village's location is advantageous. Easy access to employment centers in and around Buffalo and its suburbs makes Lancaster a desirable residential community of choice. In addition, the Village is on the edge of burgeoning development around Transit Road, Walden Avenue, and Route 20.
- The Village's "bones" are what investors are looking for – the downtown is compact, pedestrian oriented, and blessed with a variety of attractive historic buildings (including two Nationally-registered Historic Districts).
- Downtown Lancaster is poised for redevelopment and growth. Several downtown buildings or spaces are vacant, and some buildings are in need of upgrades. In addition, several properties owned by the Village of Lancaster and Village of Lancaster Community Development Corporation (along West Main Street, Aurora Street, and Pleasant Avenue West) are largely underutilized (referred to as the urban renewal site). While these sites warrant environmental investigation, these are valuable opportunities for wholesale redevelopment.
- The Lancaster community has developed the necessary tools and partnerships to advance redevelopment. The Village is progressive and wants to invest in the Downtown's future. Erie County is also forward looking and has made Downtown redevelopment a priority. The Community Development Corporation is another critical partner and tool for downtown development along with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Lancaster has strong existing traffic counts, particularly on Central Avenue and Broadway that will support shopping, dining, and tourism developments.
- Employment projections indicate the potential to attract additional office space, particularly within the health care and social assistance sector.
- Residential projections indicate the potential to attract new renter- and owner-occupied condos, townhomes, and apartment complexes to attract new residents, particularly millennials and young families, and to house seniors who want to stay in Lancaster but are ready to downsize.
- Retail data indicates the potential to recapture sales leakage. Any development in Lancaster will compete with existing retail attractions along Transit Road, Walden Avenue, and Route 20, as well as the regional Walden Galleria Mall.



- The potential demand for additional office, residential, and retail space, combined with the Village's compact, pedestrian oriented design suggests a mixed used redevelopment strategy would be successful.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from the economic and market analysis result in the following overall recommendations:

### **Office Market:**

**Projected demand for somewhere between 10,750 square feet to 76,800 square feet of office space over the next 10 years** – The Study Area is best suited for Class A office space in new development and Class B office space in existing vacancies (as opposed to flex office space).

### **Industrial Market:**

While industrial uses are still an important contributor to the local economy, **LaBella does not recommend the addition of any industrial space within the Study Area.**

### **Hospitality Market:**

**Encourage a Bed & Breakfast or tourist home-style accommodation** – Lancaster's accommodations market is well saturated with flag hotels with business travelers as their primary market associated with the nearby Buffalo Niagara International Airport. A B&B or tourist home-style accommodation within or near the Downtown Study Area could help build the community's tourism brand.

### **Residential Development:**

**Projected demand for 3,863 new housing units (2,587 owner-occupied units and 1,276 renter-occupied units) over the next 20 years for the 14086 ZIP Code** – The Study Area is best suited to focus on the development of renter- and owner-occupied condos, townhomes, and apartment complexes.

**Projected demand for 275 new and rehabbed owner-occupied townhomes, 245 new and rehabbed owner-occupied condos, 176 new and rehabbed renter-occupied townhomes, and 217 renter-occupied multi-family apartments over the next 20 years for the 14086 ZIP Code** – If the Study Area were to conservatively attract 20% of the demand in the 14086 ZIP Code for these downtown inclined housing types, 180 new and rehabbed renter and owner occupied housing units could be built downtown.

**The largest demands for owner-occupied units will be for households in the \$35K to \$50K and \$75K to \$100K income ranges.**

**The largest demands for rental-occupied units will be for households in the three lowest income ranges (below \$50K)** – although lesser demand will exist for the higher income ranges as well.



**Build small rental units** – The average household size of renter-occupied housing units in Lancaster is smaller than that of Erie County.

**Develop housing for younger households and families** – Lancaster’s median age is decreasing (they are getting younger) which is contrary to most municipalities within Erie County and to Erie County itself where there has been a general aging trend. Continue to accommodate existing younger households and attract new young families and residents.

**Consider developing housing for seniors** – A large proportion of owner-occupied households within the Village are over the age of 55. There has been a national trend for older householders to want to downsize from their large single-family homes to smaller townhomes, condos, or apartments.

**Retail Development:**

**Projected demand for somewhere between 9,405 square feet and 18,450 square feet of eating and drinking space over the next 10 years.**

**Projected demand for 68,737 square feet of retail space** – The Study Area is best suited for cosmetics, jewelry, shoes and apparel, hobbies, specialty food, sewing, music, beer/wine/liquor, used merchandise, and electronic stores.

**Leverage the success of downtown Lancaster** – Downtown Lancaster is a distinctive walkable destination with a major attraction (Lancaster Opera House) and small shops. A market exists for stores that would fill niches complementing the existing mix and for stores and restaurants that would support the Lancaster Opera House.

**Don’t bother trying to compete with big box retailers** – The Village cannot compete with big box “category killers” and it should not try. It is a setting that is best for independent local retailers and small regional chains (Spot Coffee for example).

**Shops should be appropriately sized, cater to specific specialties and niches, and provide attentive customer support.**





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**DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY  
VILLAGE OF LANCASTER**

**Section II:  
Downtown Vision,  
Goals & Strategies**



## VISION STATEMENT

The Steering Committee developed a Vision Statement for the Downtown Strategy based on a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise as well as an assessment of existing conditions. The Vision Statement was developed to provide a filter for future decisions on downtown development.

Several key principles were included in the Vision Statement:

- The character, scale and aesthetics of Lancaster's traditional, historic downtown along Central Avenue and section of West Main Street should be leveraged for future development and redevelopment;
- Economic development and redevelopment should be a focus of future Village downtown efforts; and
- Placemaking activities to provide a high quality of life for residents and businesses in a compact, pedestrian oriented downtown neighborhood including opportunities for arts, culture, downtown living and entertainment should be pursued.

Downtown Lancaster will be a vibrant mixed use neighborhood that will leverage its strategic location and historic character to promote business development, downtown living, and a high quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors.



**GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

The vision statement provides an overall framework for the Downtown Strategy. Plan goals and strategies will guide the development of the recommendations.

The goals identify conceptual ideas while the strategies outline specific outcomes the Plan will achieve. The goals support the vision statement and the strategies provide tools to implement the goals.

The Steering Committee agreed with the following goals and strategies:

**PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE**

**Downtown Lancaster will market its assets to the local and regional population.**

- Promote Downtown Lancaster via online and social media platforms
- Establish a placed based brand for Downtown
- Market Downtown’s historic character
- Focus Downtown programming and events to provide the greatest community benefits
- Celebrate Downtown’s natural resources



**The Village of Lancaster should focus on programming and events that have the greatest community benefits**

## REVITALIZE

**Downtown Lancaster will provide opportunities for redevelopment, new development, and entrepreneurship.**

- Increase the number of market rate residential units
- Focus residential and office development on upper floors
- Attract restaurants
- Infill vacant and underutilized parcels with new buildings
- Provide opportunities for entrepreneurship



Vacant lots downtown should be infilled with new development

## TRANSFORM

**The long term viability of Downtown Lancaster will be supported by capitalizing on its compact, historic pedestrian oriented core with a mix of uses, high quality design, and opportunities for alternative transportation.**

- Improve gateways into the Village
- Incorporate natural resources into development or redevelopment projects
- Calm traffic in the downtown
- Encourage transportation options for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Update zoning to encourage compatible development throughout downtown and high quality design



New development should be compatible with the existing historic fabric and codified in the Zoning ordinance.

## MOBILIZE

Downtown partners will include a mix of committed local and regional organizations that will organize to promote the revitalization of Downtown.

- Develop a formal organization to promote and coordinate the revitalization of Downtown Lancaster.



**DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY  
VILLAGE OF LANCASTER**

**Section III:  
Public  
Involvement**





To ensure the Downtown Development Strategy reflects the community's consensus on the future direction of Downtown, several methods were used to obtain their input. A Public Participation Plan was created to insure the project process was transparent by engaging the community through a local steering committee; focus group workshop; stakeholder interviews; public events; and resident, student, and business surveys. The public and stakeholder participation helped develop goals, strategies, and recommendations as well as define the key elements included in this final Master Plan.

### **STEERING COMMITTEE INPUT**

A steering committee was formed by the Village of Lancaster and included individuals from the Village and Town staff, Village trustees, and Erie County Office of Economic Development. The steering committee was a key player in the development of the Master Plan, providing valuable input and feedback throughout the duration of the project.

The steering committee met numerous times to review products and provide input on the following:

- July 13, 2017 – Kickoff meeting to introduce the project and discuss the project scope, schedule, and first steps.
- October 26, 2017 – Review initial existing conditions, economic and market analysis, and preliminary results of residents' survey.
- February 15, 2018 – Review and discuss initial sketch concept plan, discuss direction of marketing website, and discuss potential New York Main Street grant opportunities.
- March 7, 2018 – Review and discuss two different updated sketch concept plan alternatives and discuss needed zoning modifications.
- April 26, 2018 – Review and discuss the fourth updated sketch concept plan alternative, review draft goals and strategies, website, and logo.

### **FOCUS GROUP WORKSHOP**

A focus group including members of the steering committee as well as some key stakeholders met on December 11, 2017. The consultant team introduced the project scope, discussed the project boundaries, and presented on the survey results, existing conditions, and economic and market analysis. They then initiated the workshop portion of the meeting by providing a presentation of issues and opportunities, instructions to the attendees, and key topics to consider.

Focus group members were split into two groups and instructed to create a master redevelopment plan by drawing and writing on large maps of the Study Area. The focus group provided input on land uses, layout, traffic circulation, traffic calming, infill development, building renovations, parks and trails, streetscapes, and landscaping.



Focus group members and steering committee members develop and discuss strategies for downtown development at a focus group workshop on December 11, 2017.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholders were interviewed via phone or in person during October 2017 for informal dialogue sessions. The discussions provided an opportunity for the consultant team to introduce the project objectives to participants, for the stakeholders to provide information based on a series of questions asked by the consultant team, and for the consultant team to understand the stakeholders' thoughts and opinions.

Stakeholders included an assortment of individuals and organizations representing businesses, property owners, and public agencies that play a role in redevelopment within Downtown Lancaster.



Comments from the stakeholders are summarized below:

**Bold & underline** = greater than 2 responses; **Bold** = 2 responses

1) *Current assets in Downtown Lancaster*

- **Opera House**
- **Walkable**
- **Historic buildings**
- **Great public services (fire, highway, schools, etc.)**
- **Grocery store brings people downtown and its convenient and affordable**
- **Small and quaint atmosphere**
- Businesses/Opera House Partnerships
- More going on downtown now than there has been in years
- Residents
- Lots of growth
- Architecture and density
- Diversity of businesses
- Some of the Village events

2) *Impediments to redevelopment in Downtown Lancaster*

- **Lack of cooperation among key players**
- **Competition with development on nearby Transit Road**
- **Lots of talk but limited action**
- **Grocery store lease**
- **Lack the "right" investor**
- Historic District Commission

3) *Opportunities/Vision for future redevelopment in Downtown Lancaster*

- **Restaurants**
- **West Main Street should go through to Aurora**
- **Development of the urban renewal site - additional businesses, residences, restaurants, greenspace, walkable**
- **Green space by the creek**
- **Coffee shop**
- **Empty storefronts should be filled**
- **Upper floor residential**
- **Extend business hours into the night and weekends**
- Something for kids to do (ex. **movie theater**, roller rink, bowling alley)
- Cool/classy bar
- Coordinate Village events with the businesses and opera house
- Allow more signage at the Opera House
- Redevelop urban renewal area with a new image
- Live/work units



- Nightlife
- Business incubator
- Promote tourism via history

4) *What area(s) should receive the highest priority*

- **Parking lot at the urban renewal site**
- **Central Ave**
- **Southern portion of parking lot at urban renewal site near the creek**
- **West Main Street**
- Urban renewal site in its entirety (including removal of grocery store)
- Grocery store
- Empty lots

5) *Needed amenities, improvements to infrastructure or circulation*

- **West Main Street should go through to Aurora**
- **Develop the Gar Galvin Trail/Heritage Trail along the dyke and connect it to attractions**
- **More parking**
- Senior apartments
- Handicap accessibility to many of the buildings
- Signs on Central Ave advertising businesses on West Main Street
- Dog Park
- Two-way bus route (currently one large loop)
- Public wifi
- Public restrooms
- Historic light fixtures should be extended to Saint Joseph Street
- Pleasant Avenue crossing
- Parks
- The urban renewal building has issues (roof leaks, not good landlords, etc.)

6) *Uses you would like to see more of*

- **A wide variety of restaurants (non-chain)**
- **Fine dining restaurant**
- **Younger people to breathe life back into the downtown**
- **Retail**
- **Cool/classy bar or microbrewery**
- **Higher end grocery store (ex. Trader Joes or Dash's)**
- **Coffee shop**
- Gift shops
- Niche shops
- Jeweler
- Shoe store



## DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY VILLAGE OF LANCASTER

- Stage for bands
- Upper floor residential

7) *Uses you would like to see less of*

- **1<sup>st</sup> Floor Office**
- **Fewer major public events – focus on just a couple per year**
- Food trucks (let local businesses provide food)

8) *Using another downtown as an example, how would you envision downtown Lancaster in 20 years*

- **East Aurora**
- **Niagara on the Lake**
- **Elmwood Village**
- **Village of Hamburg**
- **Village of Williamsville**
- Lewiston
- Skaneateles



## PUBLIC EVENTS

Public participation is critical to reflect community preferences. To document the various concerns and opinions of the community, a non-traditional method was used. Instead of holding an initial public meeting, the consultants and steering committee members hosted a booth at the Taste of Lancaster event on Friday, August 11, 2017 from 5-7 pm and Saturday, August 12, 2017 from 10 am to 4 pm. The event was used to promote the project and collect survey information from community members.

Notable results from the community survey collected at the event include:

- Nearly two-thirds of respondents were either neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statement that "there are a lot of products and services in downtown Lancaster."
- Nearly half of all respondents pass through the Village five or more times a week on their way to somewhere else.
- 30 percent of respondents were interested or would consider living in downtown Lancaster (27 percent already lived in downtown Lancaster).
- Respondents want new restaurants in the downtown – they are particularly interested in Italian, Mexican, burgers, and a cafe.

In addition, an Open House was held on the evening of May 16, 2018 at the Village Hall. The well attended meeting provided participants with an opportunity to review and comment on:

- Goals, Strategies and Recommendations
- Economic & Market Findings
- The new [www.downtownlancasterny.com](http://www.downtownlancasterny.com) website; and
- Proposed infill redevelopment strategies for the Urban Renewal site

Those that attended agreed with the findings of the report. The only comments were that the redevelopment plan buildings could benefit from different façade treatments and that the scale of four stories could potentially be reduced to three stories.



The final Open House on May 16, 2018 was well attended and provided opportunities for public input and dialogue with Steering Committee members and the consultant

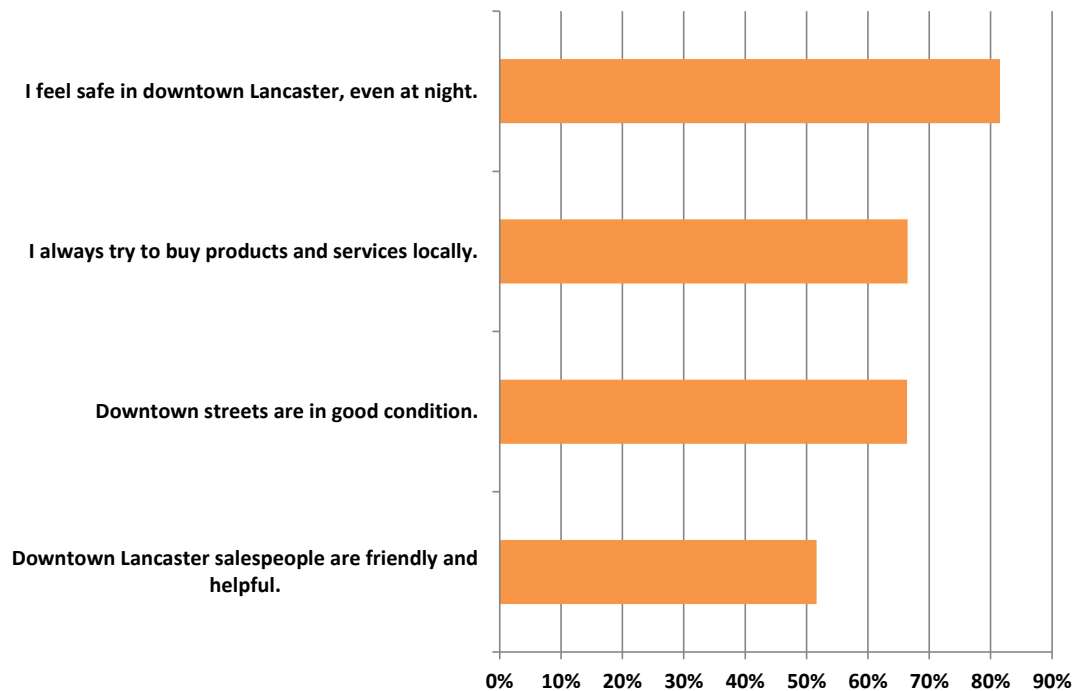


## RESIDENT AND STUDENT SURVEYS

In the late summer and early fall of 2017 the Steering Committee launched surveys for residents and students to determine community preferences and opinions regarding Downtown Lancaster. The surveys were well publicized and received more than 1,200 responses which is substantial in a community the size of Lancaster.

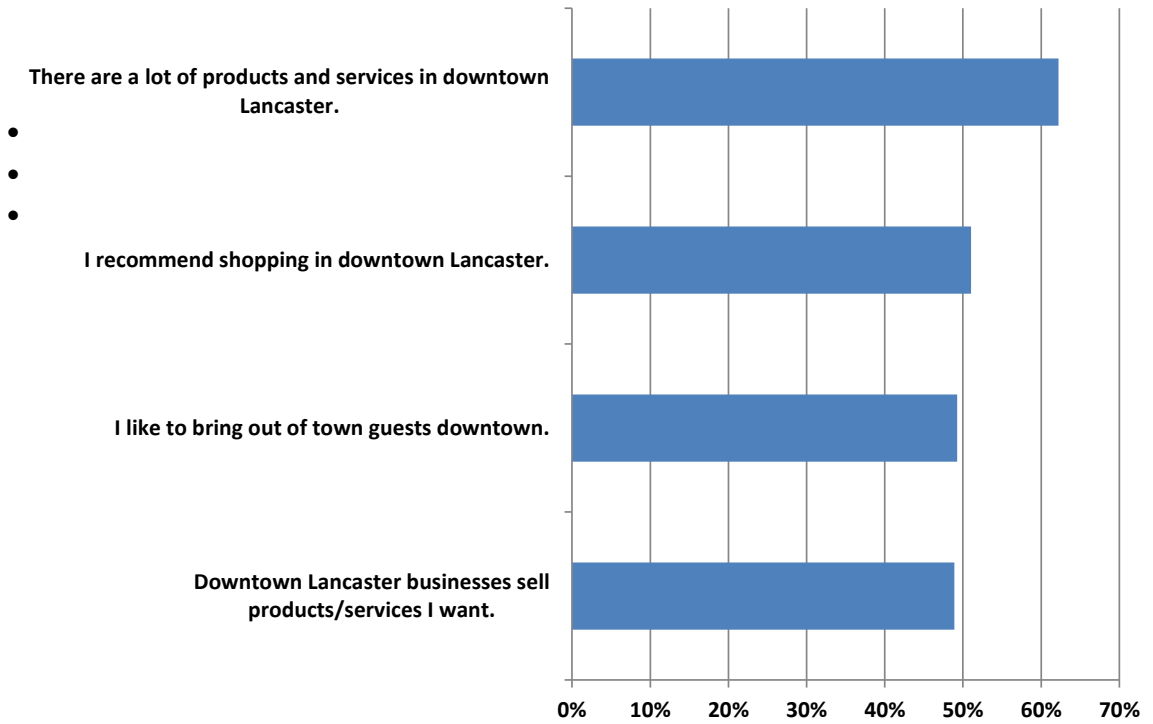
Some of the key findings from the surveys included:

- **More than 50 percent of respondents strongly agree or agree** that Downtown was a safe place, with good infrastructure and shops and businesses that people like:

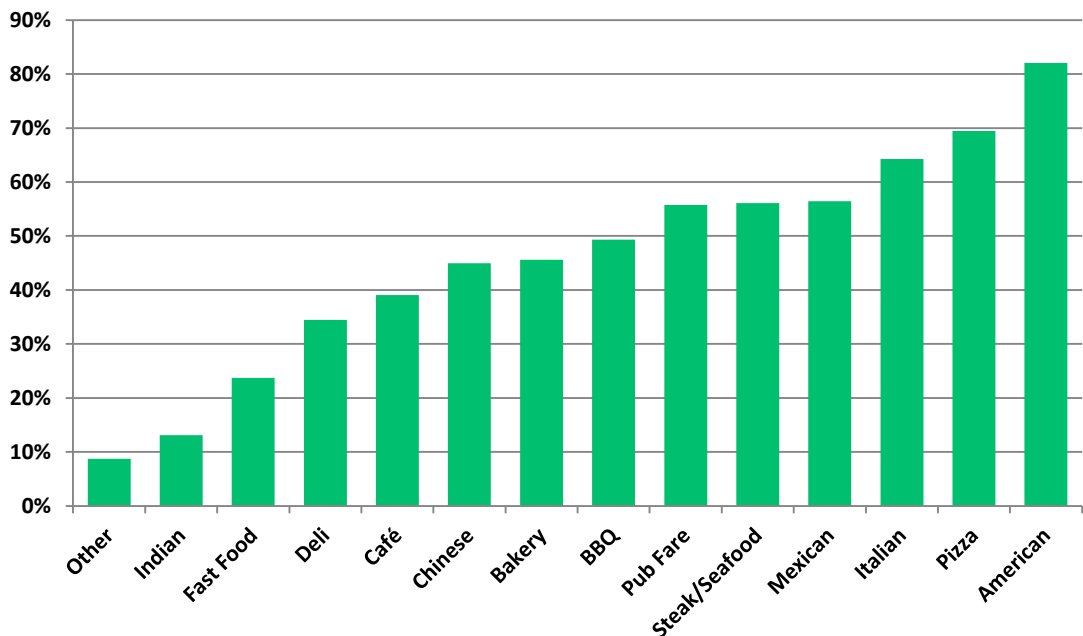




- However, more than 48 percent strongly disagree or disagree that Downtown Lancaster provides goods or services they need or that it is a place to bring out of town guests:



- Most respondents prefer traditional cuisines like American, Pizza and Steak, However many also prefer Mexican:





- **Also – when specifically asked what kind of businesses are needed downtown the large majority wanted more restaurants downtown**, with preferences for Mexican, Italian, pub/brewery and a café/bakery/coffee shop.
- Businesses respondents did not want to see more of included fast food, adult and vaping.
- Regarding Social media – most respondents preferred Twitter and Instagram over Facebook.

Q17 Which social media platforms do you use most? (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram)



**DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY**

**VILLAGE OF LANCASTER**

**Section IV:  
Recommendations  
& Implementation  
Strategy**





## RECOMMENDATIONS

For each of the goals outlined by the Steering Committee a set of recommendations to implement and realize the goals were developed. There are 24 focused goals that, if implemented, will have a catalytic impact on the revitalization of Downtown Lancaster. They are a mix of short, medium and long term goals and are based on the Village's current capacity and a desired future capacity that would include an effective and focused downtown organization.

## PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE

**Downtown Lancaster will market its assets to the local and regional population.**

P-1: Promote and utilize Downtown Lancaster's new website and logo as the foundation for a comprehensive media campaign.

Downtown Lancaster has a new website and logo as a result of this project:

[www.downtownlancasterny.com](http://www.downtownlancasterny.com)



Home page of [www.downtownlancasterny.com](http://www.downtownlancasterny.com)

The website has recently been launched and it provides information on Downtown Lancaster as well as individual shops and event. To make the website and logo effective there are also some sub-goals associated with this recommendation:

P-1A: Link the website to regional economic and community development websites.



P-1B: Establish a linked Twitter account and utilize it for updates on events, new businesses and other activities.

P-1C: Place logo on all letterhead, websites, welcome signage and event advertising.

P-2: Develop self-guided and hosted walking and/or biking tours of Downtown Lancaster to promote its history and natural resources locally and within the Buffalo-Niagara Region.

To complement the website promotion and reinforce the placemaking goals of this report, the history of Downtown Lancaster should be promoted. Lancaster played an important part in Western New York's history and that history, and Downtown Lancaster, is not well known throughout Western New York. Walking and biking tours would not only increase the visibility of Lancaster, but it would also tie into the public's desire to have active experiences and could be included as part of a WNY tourism agenda.

P-3: Reduce the number of major Downtown events to focus on one for every season and hold them throughout Downtown.

Multiple stakeholders noted the numerous festivals that are held throughout the year in Downtown Lancaster. Many include closing off Central Avenue. While the stakeholders appreciated the events as a way to promote Downtown, they thought it would be more impactful to hold fewer events and to spend more time and effort on those events so they are larger, regional events.

P-4: Program downtown spaces with smaller, fun activities throughout the year including a relocated Farmers' Market.

While it is recommended to reduce the number of community events to have a greater impact, it is also recommended to increase the number of smaller activities throughout the year in Downtown. These could be similar to the programmed events at Canalside – exercise, public art, bike rides, etc. – as well as moving the Farmers' Market from Transit Road to Downtown.

P-5: Locate events and programming to strategically promote and acquaint the community with new development areas.

Similarly, spreading the events throughout Downtown, including at the parks and plaza areas proposed in the redevelopment Master Plan, would also be effective in promoting those new areas prior to and after development (again - similar to Canalside in Buffalo). Spreading events would also reduce the number of times Central Avenue is closed to traffic.

P-6: Establish a new Downtown public square for events and other downtown activities.

As realized in the redevelopment Master Plan, establish a new public square for large regional events and smaller activities throughout the year.



DESIGN SCOPE: DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & FEASIBILITY STUDY

AERIAL OVERVIEW



VILLAGE OF LANCASTER  
MAY 2018



DESIGN SCOPE: DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY & FEASIBILITY STUDY

OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
VIEW 7



VILLAGE OF LANCASTER  
SEPTEMBER 2018



Plan view (top) and visualization (bottom) of the redevelopment master plan for the urban renewal site



## REVITALIZE

**Downtown Lancaster will provide opportunities for redevelopment, new development, and entrepreneurship.**

**R-1: Redevelop the former urban renewal property into a mixed use, pedestrian oriented district that is synergistic and complementary with the historic downtown.**

The former urban renewal plaza between Pleasant Avenue and Broadway Avenue presents an incredible opportunity to provide a catalytic new anchor for Downtown. The development program proposed in the redevelopment master plan recommends more than 150,000 sq. ft. of new mixed use space with commercial spaces on the first floor and residential units on the upper floors. Not only would this create a new "neighborhood" downtown, but the proposed scale is compatible with the existing historic fabric Downtown and would also add vitality to the Downtown core.

**R-2: Develop 3-5 new restaurants totaling 15,000 sq. ft. over the next 5-7 years in new or existing spaces.**

Based on the market analysis, and further reinforced by the consumer survey, Downtown Lancaster could conservatively support 15,000 sq. ft. or 3-5 new restaurants in the next 5-7 years. The preferences among those surveyed were a brewpub/pub, Mexican, Italian and a café (coffee, sandwiches, etc.).

**R-3: Develop 150 new market rate residential units for more than 300 new residents over the next decade.**

Adding more residential units in Downtown Lancaster will not only improve its vitality, but it will also help support additional retail and restaurants. Based on the market analysis, Downtown Lancaster could conservatively support 150 new build market rate residential units over the next decade.



**Restaurants and residential are envisioned for the mixed use development at the Urban Renewal site.**



**R-4: Redevelop upper floors of existing downtown buildings for an additional 20-25 residential units and 10,000-20,000 sq. ft. of office space.**

The market study, and the community's support of the historic core, supports filling in vacant upper floors downtown with up to 25 residential units and 20,000 sq. ft. of offices.

**R-5: Apply for NY Main Street funding and other funding sources to renovate historic buildings for a mix of uses and to enhance downtown's aesthetics.**

The Village of Lancaster and has been successful in obtaining and administering New York Main Street grants. NY Main Street grants provide building owners up to 75% of renovation costs for interior and exterior renovations. While some buildings have benefited in the past, there are more buildings in the historic downtown core that could benefit from the program.

**R-6: Apply for economic development funding for equipment and working capital to incentivize retail and restaurant development including new entrepreneurs.**

While the NY Main Street program provides funding for building improvements, some businesses may also need funding to improve sales, performance or operations. Therefore the Village should apply for funding to help business owners with equipment and working capital needs with an emphasis on funding the retail and restaurant targets supported by the market study and public survey.

**R-7: Develop a marketing portfolio package to attract new businesses.**

Downtown Lancaster has a lot to offer new businesses – a great central location in Western New York, outstanding demographics in the area (including a high median household income and population growth), and both sites and buildings that are available for occupancy, redevelopment or new buildings. That information, however, needs to be organized and promoted in an attractive portfolio of information to hand to potential businesses and developers.

## TRANSFORM

**The long term viability of Downtown Lancaster will be supported by capitalizing on its compact, historic pedestrian oriented core with a mix of uses, high quality design, and opportunities for alternative transportation.**

**T-1: Provide landscaping, streetscaping and new signage at gateways into the Village.**

The Downtown core has multiple gateways that should be landscaped and enhanced. One of the most critical ones is at the intersection of Central Avenue and St. Joseph's Street as proposed in the redevelopment master plan. That is one of the primary entrances into downtown and the one that needs treatment.

**T-2: Extend streetscape improvements along Central Avenue to St. Joseph Street.**

Along with the new gateway improvements at St. Joseph's Street, the redevelopment master plan also recommends extending the types of streetscape improvements on Central Avenue in the historic core to St. Joseph's Street. That may include additional landscaping, decorative lighting, bump outs/curb extensions and enhanced crosswalks.

**T-3: Put Pleasant Avenue on a "road diet" by extending the curb lines, adding parallel parking, and reducing the number of lanes to one in each direction.**

Pleasant Avenue has four lanes of traffic and limited traffic that would permit a "road diet" to reduce it to two lanes of traffic. The reduction would allow for on-street parking and extending the curb lines on both sides of the road to calm traffic.



Pleasant Avenue (on right hand side in the illustration above) would be put on a "road diet" by reducing pavement width via extending curb lanes and adding landscaping as well as parallel parking. The existing median would be enhanced by adding decorative lighting, upgrading trees, and replacing grass with brick.



**T-4: Install landscaped traffic circles at the intersections of Pleasant and Central as well as Pleasant and Aurora.**

To improve traffic flow, install two traffic circles at both Pleasant Avenue intersections in Downtown. This is critical for the Pleasant Avenue and Central Avenue intersection where traffic backs up significantly during busy times of the day. Not only would the traffic circles improve flows, but they would also calm traffic.

**T-5: Adopt a Complete Streets policy for downtown.**

In August, 2011, Governor Cuomo signed the statewide Complete Streets bill into law. NY State passed a Complete Street bill in 2011 that requires that complete street design guidelines are considered for the planning, design, construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of roadways receiving federal or state funding. The Complete Streets Policy encompasses the design, planning, and operations of transportation systems and encourages travel by all users including cyclists, pedestrians of all ages and abilities, and public transportation users, in accordance with established best practices.

**T-6: Provide a continuous alternative transportation route/loop within downtown to provide access for pedestrians and bicyclists.**

The proposed redevelopment master plan recommends a continuous alternative transportation route along trails and sidewalks in the Downtown. The loop starts west of the downtown historic core near Plum Bottom Creek, west to Pleasant Avenue, south along Aurora, east and south along the creek, and back into the historic downtown core.

**T-7: Reclaim the Cayuga Creek as a downtown amenity by creating a Creek Park.**

The Cayuga Creek is one of Lancaster’s most underused natural resources in the Downtown. The redevelopment plan recommends that the northern bank would be converted into a Creek Park including a multi-use trail.



**Reclaiming the Cayuga Creek as a Downtown asset and amenity is recommended in the redevelopment Master Plan by creating a Creek Park and trail along its banks.**

## MOBILIZE

**Downtown partners will include a mix of committed local and regional organizations that will organize to promote the revitalization of Downtown.**

**M-1: Develop an independent Downtown organization to market, manage and coordinate downtown revitalization.**

Municipal governments, especially smaller municipal governments, have limited resources to focus on one specific area like downtown. Consequently, an organization explicitly dedicated to implementing the recommendations of this plan, and other downtown objectives is needed:

- Options include a Business Improvement District (BID), Special Improvement District or a new local development corporation.
- Members should include:
  - Downtown property owners (at least 51% percent)
  - Village representatives
  - Town representatives
  - Downtown Tenants
  - Arts/Cultural representatives

**M-2: Develop an annual Downtown Strategic Plan report to set goals and assess the past year's performance on achieving goals.**

As with all plans it is highly recommended that an annual review of the accomplishments made on the plan be reviewed. This provides an opportunity to celebrate successes and develop an action plan for the next year or to update recommendations based on current conditions.

**M-3: Lobby and promote the goals of this plan with legislators, funding agencies, the public and economic development partners.**

Plans get implemented via funding and partnerships. Funding opportunities are often improved when applicants lobby for their approval. Therefore, continuously promote the objectives of this plan and its projects so more people know about it and can support future funding proposals or development projects.



## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

For a community the size of Lancaster, there will need to be a concerted team approach to implement the recommendations in the plan. Recommendation M-1, to develop an independent organization to manage and implement the plan, is therefore critical for the long term success of downtown. Initial efforts could start with a task force but eventually a formal downtown organization will need to lead the effort.

Some recommendations, however, including those in the infill Master Plan, will be implemented by a developer with the Village providing guidance and reviews of those plans to ensure their consistency with proposed master plan. Improvements to public areas (streets, creek area) and obtaining funding for those projects will be led by the Village. Changes to regulations and policies will also need to be led by the Village.





**Table 7: Implementation Matrix**

Project	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
<b>PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE</b>			
P-1: Promote and utilize Downtown Lancaster’s new website	Immediate	Village	Village annual budgeting
P-2: Develop self-guided and hosted walking and/or biking tours of Downtown Lancaster.	2-3 years	Village in coordination with volunteers	GBCF, NYSCA
P-3: Reduce the number of major Downtown events	1 year	Village and Village events coordinator	No funding required
P-4: Program downtown spaces with smaller, fun activities throughout the year	2-3 years	Downtown Organization	Event Coordinator funding
P-5: Locate events and programming to strategically promote and acquaint the community with new	2-3 years	Downtown Organization	Event Coordinator funding
P-6: Establish a new Downtown public square for events and other downtown activities.	2-3 years	Village in cooperation with Urban Renewal site	DRI
<b>REVITALIZE</b>			
R-1: Redevelop the former urban renewal property into a mixed use, pedestrian oriented district	1-5 years	Developer of Urban Renewal Area	ESDC Capital, DRI, Restore NY, CSC, ECIDA, Natl Grid
R-2: Develop 3-5 new restaurants totaling 15,000 sq. ft. over the next 5-7 years in new or existing spaces.	3-7 years	Downtown Organization in coordination with businesses	NY Main Street, Natl Grid, County Micro-enterprise, DRI
R-3: Develop 150 new market rate residential units for more than 300 new residents over the next decade.	3-10 years	Developer of Urban Renewal Area / developers of infill sites.	Restore NY, Natl Grid (mixed use), DRI
R-4: Redevelop upper floors of existing downtown buildings for an additional 20-25 residential units and 10,000-	3-10 years	Property owners or new developers	NY Main Street, Tax Credits, HTFC, Restore NY, DRI
R-5: Apply for NY Main Street funding and other funding sources to renovate historic buildings	1 year	Village	NY Main Street, DRI, County CCIP, Restore NY, Natl
R-6: Apply for economic development funding to incentivize retail and restaurants including new	1-2 years	Village	County Micro-enterprise Program
R-7: Develop a marketing portfolio package	1-2 years	Downtown Organization	ESDC Strategic Planning

GBCF- Greater Buffalo Community Fund, NYSCA- NYS Council on the Arts, DRI – Downtown Revitalization Initiative, ESDC – Empire State Development Corp., CSC – Climate Smart Communities, Natl Grid, National Grid Economic Development Programs, ECIDA – Erie County Industrial Development Agency, HTFC – Housing Trust Fund Corporation, CCIP – Commercial Center Improvement Program, TAP – Transportation Alternatives Program, CMAQ – Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, EPF – Environmental Protection Fund



Project	Timeframe	Responsibility	Funding
<b>TRANSFORM</b>			
T-1: Provide landscaping, streetscaping and new signage at gateways into the Village.	3-5 years	Village	TAP, DRI
T-2: Extend streetscape improvements along Central Avenue to St. Joseph Street.	3-10 years	Village	TAP, DRI
T-3: Put Pleasant Avenue on a "road diet"	3-5 years	Village	TAP, DRI
T-4: Install landscaped traffic circles at the intersections of Pleasant and Central as well as Pleasant and Aurora.	3-5 years	Village	CMAQ, DRI
T-5: Adopt a Complete Streets policy for downtown.	6 mos.	Village	No costs
T-6: Provide a continuous alternative transportation multi-modal route/loop within downtown	3-5 years	Village	TAP, DRI
T-7: Reclaim the Cayuga Creek as a downtown amenity by creating a Creek Park.	3-10 years	Village	EPF Parks, DRI, TAP (trail)
<b>MOBILIZE</b>			
M-1: Develop an independent Downtown organization to market, manage and coordinate downtown revitalization.	1 year	Village	No costs
M-2: Develop annual Downtown Strategic Plan reports to set goals and assess the past year's performance	Ongoing annually	Village and Downtown Organization	No costs
M-3: Lobby and promote the goals of this plan with legislators, funding agencies, the public and development partners.	Ongoing	Village and Downtown Organization	No costs

GBCF- Greater Buffalo Community Fund, NYSCA- NYS Council on the Arts, DRI – Downtown Revitalization Initiative, ESDC – Empire State Development Corp., CSC – Climate Smart Communities, Natl Grid, National Grid Economic Development Programs, ECIDA – Erie County Industrial Development Agency, HTFC – Housing Trust Fund Corporation, CCIP – Commercial Center Improvement Program, TAP – Transportation Alternatives Program, CMAQ – Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, EPF – Environmental Protection Fund