

CHAPTER 3
STRATEGIES

TOWN OF PITTSFORD



1. INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive plan is by nature – comprehensive. It provides an opportunity to examine a broad range of community issues and opportunities, both separately and relative to each other. The “big picture” goals and vision set forth in a comprehensive plan ensures that it can help to guide change in a community for years to come. However, a comprehensive plan must also lay a strong foundation for the implementation of the ideas it contains. The plan strategies are the specific ideas and actions for how to accomplish the visions and goals established in Chapter 2. Whereas the goals identify a future desired state, the strategies explain “how” to get to these goals.



The following strategies represent such a foundation for the Town of Pittsford 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update. As in past Pittsford comprehensive plans, the strategies below respond to the issues and opportunities that are most on residents’ minds today. Like the plan goals, strategies are organized into three topic areas: (1) Land use; (2) Transportation; and (3) Parks, Recreation, Sidewalks and Trails. It should be noted that although strategies are organized by topic area, many strategies cut across topics.

The strategies themselves are intended to provide enough detail to indicate a way to move forward, while allowing for flexibility and common-sense if and when it comes time to implement them. Moreover, the strategies are not static. Rather, they may be adapted to respond to new issues or opportunities unforeseen at this time – so long as they are in keeping with the bigger picture goals and vision contained in this plan.

The strategies in this chapter are summarized in the table on page 79 and the goals have been repeated on the opposite page for ease of reference.

2. STRATEGIES

A. LAND USE STRATEGIES

Strategy A1: Update the Town’s Land Use and Zoning Regulations to Proactively Address Changing Land Use and Lifestyle Trends

Review and revision of the town’s land use regulations will be required to address a number of land use issues and opportunities identified in this plan. The highest priority items have been set forth below, with

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preliminary ideas for how new and/or improved regulations and tools can address them. However, it must be noted that even the best regulations and tools cannot address each and every unique situation, nor take the human element out of decision making. Fortunately, the Town of Pittsford has a long tradition of informed and dedicated individuals serving as town staff, elected officials, and on appointed boards. Such individuals, through the careful and considered implementation of the town's land use regulations, ensure that the town's high quality of life is maintained for current and future generations.

Strategy A1.1: Develop zoning and land use tools that balance improvements to existing homes with the preservation of Pittsford's character and quality of life

As noted elsewhere in this plan, pressures to improve, alter and in some cases, tear down and completely rebuild existing homes, are likely to continue increasing in the town as the supply of new land for new subdivisions and homes dwindles. Having the right land-use tools can help to ensure that modifications to existing homes do not negatively impact the town's character. When more modestly scaled existing homes are improved, they can become out of scale with the lot on which they are located, or with adjoining residential structures. Since the town does not require site plan review for single-family homes, the Planning Board does not typically review the proposed appearance and scale of new homes. The town's Architectural Review Board (ARB), however, does review new single family homes with respect to building materials and overall character. However, residential scale is generally not reviewed by the ARB if homes meet minimum lot and bulk requirements. And even in cases where the Planning Board and ARB do comment on the scale or bulk of homes, there is little "on the books" to help inform decisions.



As communities reach build-out, increased pressure is often placed on existing homes and lots to yield more living space. In more extreme cases, remodeled and rebuilt homes take on a boxy shape, as they seek to maximize living space within the required setback lines. Photo credit: Peter Dutton

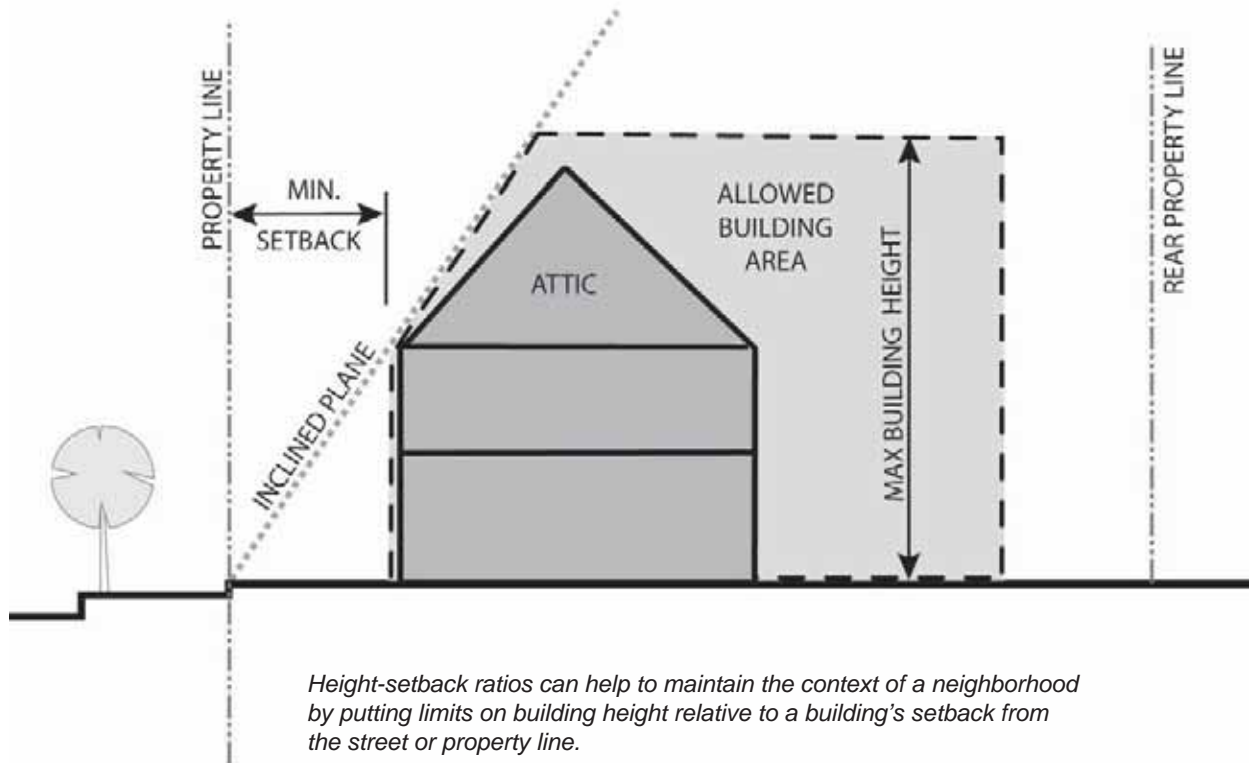
There are a number of zoning tools available to communities that are experiencing such pressures. Almost all such tools regulate the size or scale of a home relative to the lot on which it is located. The right tools for Pittsford may include some or all of the below, and may vary from neighborhood to neighborhood. Tools include:

- **Limits on impervious surface area** (portions of a lot with buildings or paved surfaces).
- **Maximum floor area** (square footage) limits, tied to lot size.
- **Height-setback ratios**, which establish limits on building height relative to a building's setback from the street or property line. In general, the maximum permitted height of a residential

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structure decreases the closer it is located to a minimum setback line or the street. (See diagram below).

- Relatively **simple revisions to existing zoning** and land use regulations, such as revised setback requirements that are more in keeping with the established neighborhood character.



New regulations and tools to govern the scale of residential structures can take their cues from good examples in the town. For instance, a pattern and feel established by existing homes can be quantified by taking measurements from building plans, or in the field. These measurements can then form the basis for new requirements for additions and rebuilds. Good examples of *new* additions and re-builds can also be utilized – measuring from building plans can help to quantify the characteristics (heights, setbacks, etc.) that make new and expanded homes fit in.

Lastly, there are some areas of town where existing lot and building bulk requirements may be unnecessarily hampering town residents' ability to reasonably upgrade and/or enlarge existing homes. In these areas, such requirements should be reviewed and revised, to allow for homeowners to undertake reasonable upgrades and additions to their homes, while maintaining the established character of the neighborhood.

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Strategy A1.2: Develop zoning and land use tools that balance re-subdivisions with the preservation of Pittsford’s character and quality of life

Similar to pressures on existing homes, pressures will mount on “existing lots” – those lots on which there is an existing home, but which is large enough under current zoning to be further subdivided. The town should look at existing zoning and lot size requirements and determine if they should be refined to better reflect the density and development pattern desired by residents. Re-subdivision pressures will likely first be felt in the northern portion of town, where homes tend to be located on historically larger lots. The town could also explore the idea of residential design guidelines that can set clear expectations for how re-subdivided lots are developed. Guidelines can illustrate techniques for blending new development gracefully with the old. Possible areas of focus include driveways, home placement and landscaping. Such guidelines can not only help potential sub-dividers and home-builders better understand expectations, but also the town boards and staff charged with the review and approval of such development.

Strategy A1.3: Develop zoning and land use tools to ensure that the development of infill properties makes a positive contribution to Pittsford’s character and quality of life

As the Town of Pittsford reaches build-out, the question of how the town’s remaining parcels are developed becomes increasingly important. In some cases, parcels have not been developed because of unique or challenging site conditions. In other cases, the use on a parcel is, or is likely in the near future to become obsolete. The town’s zoning and land use tools should be re-evaluated to ensure that desirable development outcomes occur on these remaining “infill” parcels. In many cases, standard zoning approaches based on “one size fits all” maximums and minimums (setbacks, lot sizes,



The Powers Farm is an agricultural icon in the Town of Pittsford. Because of the town’s supportive environment for agriculture, the farm was preserved and the family has continued to grow their successful business operation.

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permitted uses, etc.), while appropriate for the regulation of land use in areas or neighborhoods that are already substantially developed, may not yield the best results for more unique properties. Many communities, including the Town of Pittsford, employ zoning approaches and tools that allow for flexibility and creativity in land use outcomes, while ensuring that the finished product represents a net benefit to the community.

The Town of Pittsford currently has two land use tools at its disposal – incentive zoning and Planned Unit Development (PUD) – to help guide development on unique properties. Broadly speaking, incentive zoning provides an incentive to a developer, in exchange for the provision of one or more desired community amenities. Amenities can include many things, including parks or trails, or a higher standard of design. The incentive for a developer to provide such amenities can range from increased density or scope of permitted uses, to less concrete incentives, such as more flexibility than what may be permitted by the underlying zoning. The town should reevaluate its incentive zoning regulations to ensure that they are responsive to residents' land use vision for the town. The town's existing incentive zoning regulations only apply to certain portions of town (mainly portions of the RRAA and SRAA zoning districts).

A PUD is another tool used by communities, including Pittsford to yield better land use outcomes on unique properties. Specifically, the Town of Pittsford's PUD regulations serve as a framework for the development of larger properties – allowing and encouraging flexibility and creativity, while ensuring a high quality end product. The town should reevaluate its PUD regulations to ensure that they are responsive to residents' land use vision for the town. Currently, the principal use permitted by the town's PUD regulations is residential. Non-residential uses may be integrated into the PUD, provided that the primary use of the project remains residential. The minimum project acreage for a residential PUD is 40 acres. A minimum of 200 acres are required for PUDs that include non-residential uses.

Lastly, as noted in Chapter 2, the town's existing 50-50 zoning does not apply to properties less than 10 acres in size. The town should investigate other land use tools, to ensure that the development of such smaller properties is in keeping with the town's desired character.



50-50 zoning has been successful for larger parcels such as the one above, however the town should ensure that tools are in place to guide development of smaller parcels.

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Ultimately, any land use tool can be tailored to fit a community's goals. Creative land use tools can also put the community squarely in the driver's seat, while allowing for flexibility and creativity in development plans for specific sites, which are often difficult if not impossible to achieve through traditional, one-size fits all zoning districts. By having the right zoning and land use tools in place, the Town of Pittsford can ensure that future development is in keeping with the town's character, particularly on properties that possess unique challenges and opportunities that are often not addressed by standard land use regulations.

Strategy A1.4: Update the town's home occupations regulations to reflect contemporary lifestyles, while preserving the character of residential neighborhoods

More and more town residents are availing themselves of the option to work at home – brought upon largely by advances in communication technology, including the internet. Residents have expressed a desire that the town re-evaluate its existing policies and regulations governing home occupations. In addition to an expanded set of permitted home occupations, design standards can be developed to ensure that such uses respect and maintain the existing residential character of the neighborhoods in which they locate. Lastly, the town may want to re-evaluate the appropriateness of some home occupations currently permitted by zoning.

Strategy A2: Engage in a Dialogue between the Town and the Administration of St. John Fisher and Nazareth College on Matters of Shared Interest

The town should engage in a continuing dialogue with the administrations of St. John Fisher and Nazareth Colleges to partner on matters of shared interest. The dialogue should involve the identification of key issues and opportunities, as well as agreement on an overall framework for cooperation and mutual support. An emphasis could be placed on identifying and implementing projects that yield tangible benefits for both the town and the colleges.



St. John Fisher College is an active part of the Pittsford community.

B. TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES

Strategy B1: Town Policy Statement on Future Road and Intersection Improvements

The following policy statement will guide future town decisions on traffic management and on improvements to town roads and intersections. The policy statement also clearly communicates the town's viewpoint to other transportation decision makers, such as New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and Monroe County, both of which have jurisdiction over numerous roads within the town. A strong and clear policy statement is an important strategy to help ensure that the transportation issues and opportunities of today and tomorrow are addressed within a distinctly Pittsford context.

Town Policy Statement on Future Road and Intersection Improvements:

The town does not support improvements to its transportation network simply to facilitate further development in the region's outlying suburbs, by making it easier to drive through Pittsford on the way to and from Rochester and other surrounding communities. Any proposals for road or intersection widening to accommodate additional automobile traffic, including for those roads or intersections under county or state jurisdiction, will receive careful evaluation by the town. Instead, the community is willing to accept some level of congestion as an appropriate trade-off for preserving the walkable and livable character of Pittsford. Creative solutions will need to be found for today's and tomorrow's transportation issues, starting with getting the most out of the town's existing transportation infrastructure before significantly expanding it. Significant capacity expansions to roads and intersections in the town will only be undertaken if it can be determined that they:

- (1) *Are in keeping with the town's character;*
- (2) *Provide long-lasting traffic relief; and*
- (3) *Are consistent with the town's long-term land use vision for the areas in which they are proposed.*

Strategy B2: Utilize Information to Address the Safety and Efficiency of the Town's Transportation Network

The town's strategy for addressing pressure points in the transportation network will rely on management and strategic improvements. Significant capacity expansions to roads – widening, new lanes, etc. – will be a measure of last resort, particularly as such measures often yield short term results at best and can often exacerbate the original problem in the long term. By making the most of its existing transportation network, the town can minimize the need to increase its capacity and the resulting detriment to community character. Key to management of the transportation network and the identification of appropriate improvements is

information. The more information the town has at its disposal, the better able it is to fine-tune its responses to transportation issues. Moreover, an informed town is in a strong position to advocate for itself when it comes to taking part in regional transportation conversations and decision making. Where possible, the town should partner with regional transportation entities, such as the Genesee Transportation Council, to avail itself of all available information on the town's transportation network, and its relationship to the region's transportation network. The following sub-strategies are designed to keep the town as informed as possible with respect to the dynamic conditions of its transportation network.

Strategy B2.1: Develop and continuously update a Roadway Monitoring System that includes major intersections to identify physical and operating conditions throughout the town's transportation network

A Roadway Monitoring System can be established by the town to monitor conditions at major intersections within the town's transportation network. Detailed information and monitoring can help the town to make fully informed decisions about how best to improve safety and efficiency of the town's transportation network. Information analyzed and tracked can include physical conditions, such as the quality of pavement; pavement markings; traffic signs and signals; and how well such items perform with respect to safety, efficiency and the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. Future land use decisions can also be informed by a more thorough understanding of the transportation network. Periodic updates to the Roadway Monitoring System will ensure that information is up-to-date and allow the town to monitor trends and patterns over time.

Strategy B2.2: Develop a Travel Time Study of the major transportation corridors in Pittsford

Similar to a Roadway Monitoring System, a Travel Time Study evaluates the efficiency of a transportation network. A Travel Time Study, however, does not limit itself to intersections, but extends its focus across the transportation network. In particular, it evaluates the amount of time it takes to travel through various segments of the transportation network and identifies specific points of congestion and delay. A Travel Time Study can also help paint a picture of broader town and regional traffic patterns. In addition to informing decision making by the town, information gathered from a Travel Time Study can be proactively shared with the public, posted on the town's website for instance, to educate travelers about most optimum times to travel the various corridors in the town.

Strategy B2.3: Continue to utilize corridor studies and project-specific traffic studies to review and mitigate the traffic impacts of new development

The Town of Pittsford regularly conducts corridor studies for area-wide transportation planning and often requires traffic impact studies as part of the review process for proposed development projects. In some cases, the town has required proposed projects to be modified and/or scaled back, in order to mitigate traffic impacts. The town will continue to study and monitor the conditions of its most heavily trafficked

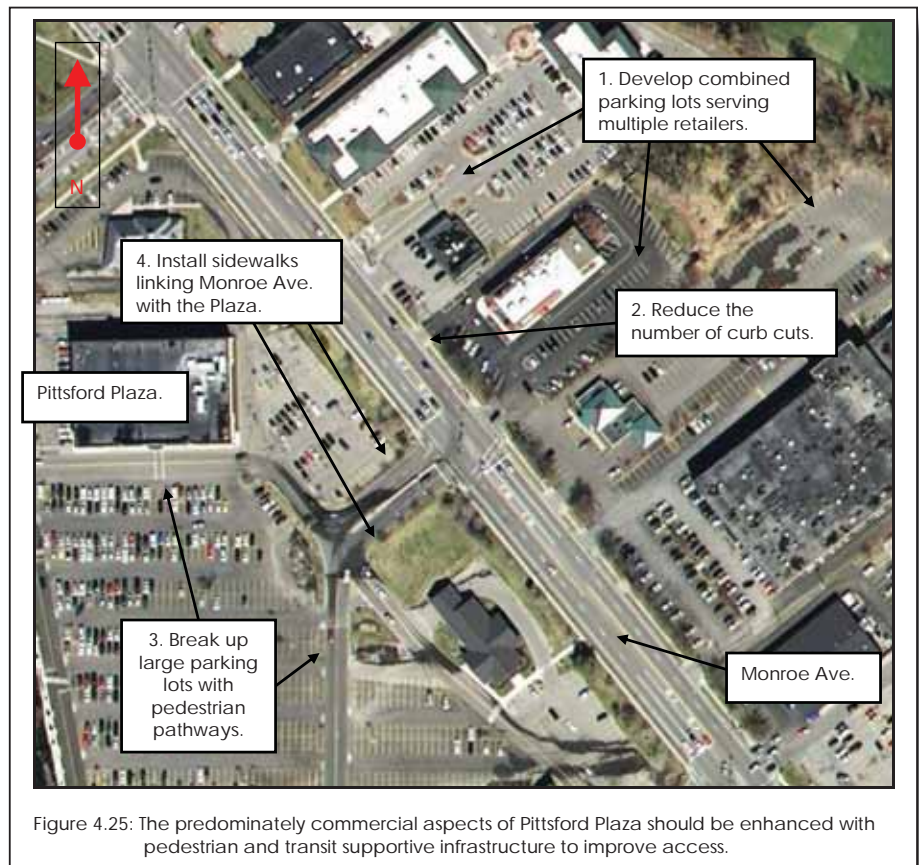
corridors and review and mitigate traffic impacts associated with new development. Review of potential traffic impacts will be undertaken in the context of surrounding land uses. Approaches for mitigating traffic will focus on maintaining quality of life, while allowing for a reasonable level of development on a given project site.

Strategy B3: Proactively Engage Regional Partners to Address the Town's Transportation Issues

Traffic issues and opportunities neither begin nor end at the town's borders. In fact, as the town reaches full build-out, the transportation issues it faces will be increasingly influenced by what takes place outside the town, particularly in newly developing communities located at the periphery of the metropolitan area. To this end, the town will need to continue partnering with regional transportation entities, such as Monroe County, the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) and NYSDOT, and with neighboring municipalities to address and solve transportation issues within the town, as further described in the following sub-strategies.

Strategy B3.1: Continue to partner with regional entities such as Monroe County, the Genesee Transportation Council and NYSDOT to address town transportation issues

The Town of Pittsford should continue to partner with transportation agencies in the region (Genesee Transportation Council [GTC], Monroe County, and the NYSDOT) to take advantage of opportunities for maximizing the safety and efficiency of the existing roadway system. For example, simple enhancements to signalization (such as left turn arrows, coordinated signal timing, etc.) could improve the safety and function of difficult intersections. Such improvements are best implemented on a regional level. Well-defined crosswalks and walk/

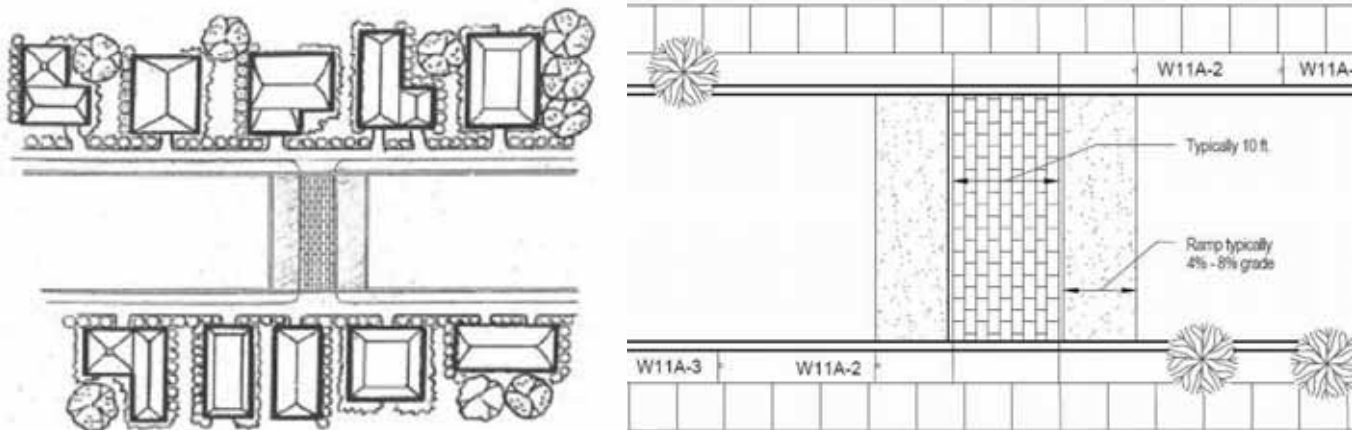


An image from the Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (G/FLRPC) recently completed a report entitled *Optimizing Transportation Infrastructure Through Effective Land Use: Opportunities for Transit Supportive Development in the Greater Rochester Area* (2008).

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don't walk signals (where appropriate) could improve the safety of intersections for pedestrians on the numerous roads and intersections in town that are under the jurisdiction of the county and the state. Well-maintained roadway shoulders could improve the safety and function of roadways for bicyclists. In the longer-term, if and when fiber is extended into Pittsford on Monroe Avenue or along other corridors, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies could further enhance the efficiency of these corridors without significant physical alterations.

A concern that has been repeatedly expressed by the public is the apparent lack of knowledge on the part of motorists about the relatively new state law requiring cars to stop for pedestrians in a crosswalk (in particular, at non-signalized intersections). Unlike in other states that have had such laws in place for many years, drivers here are not accustomed to stopping for pedestrians who are waiting to cross. The town, with the village and other partners in the region – such as the Genesee Transportation Council, Monroe County or NYSDOT – could develop an education and enforcement campaign around this issue to raise awareness of this important rule.



Illustrations of a Raised Crosswalk, from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's publication entitled, "Pennsylvania's Traffic Calming Handbook" (Publication No. 383, January 2001).

As an implementation activity following the adoption of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update, the town could potentially initiate a joint meeting with Monroe County, NYSDOT, GTC and other transportation partners, as appropriate, to discuss the transportation goals and strategies contained in the plan and how regional partners could help to achieve them.

Strategy B3.2: Continue to partner with adjacent communities to address town transportation issues

While municipalities operate independently of one another, there are many issues that cross municipal borders, not the least of which are transportation issues. As Pittsford reaches build-out, future traffic pressures will have increasingly less to do with development activity within the town and more to do with what goes on outside it, in particular, land use and transportation decisions made in newly developing

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communities beyond Pittsford. To this end, the town should continue to partner with adjacent communities to solve regional transportation issues. Working together, Pittsford and similarly minded communities can ensure that their voices are heard at the regional, state and federal levels when it comes to transportation planning. The town may also wish to partner with neighboring communities on joint transportation management planning for transportation corridors that cross municipal boundaries. Regional planning agencies routinely support and fund such joint efforts.



Main Street in the village is a central node of activity in Pittsford.

A brief summary of current planning efforts in adjacent communities and their relevance to Pittsford, including transportation related issues, is provided on page 29.

Strategy B4: Identify and Implement Improvements to Make Pittsford Walkable and Bikeable

Town residents appreciate and utilize the town's network of trails and sidewalks. Many town residents also bicycle for recreation and health benefits, and as a means of getting from "Point A" to "Point B." Fortunately, the town has been proactive over the years, assembling an impressive system of sidewalks and trails. As the town approaches build-out, it will be important to build on the existing system of trails and sidewalks, as well as to look for opportunities to safely accommodate the needs of bicyclists. The following sub-strategies provide guidance on how to achieve this.

Strategy B4.1: Incorporate the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists and public transit users during all stages of the implementation of road and development projects in the town, including but not limited to planning, design and construction

Any development project or road project proposed for the town should be viewed as an opportunity to address the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists and public transit users. Addressing such needs early on in the project planning and review process ensures that they can be accommodated, as appropriate. It is equally important to ensure that such needs are followed through within the construction phase of a project. In the long run, planning for and accommodating all modes of transportation in conjunction with development and road projects makes sense, rather than trying to retrofit roads and neighborhoods with pedestrian and bicycle amenities at a later date. Lastly, the town may also consider proactively providing new trail and sidewalk connections independently, as opportunities arise.

Strategy B4.2: Use the Potential Sidewalks and Trails Map (Map 6) as a guide to completing the town's trail and sidewalk systems

For many years, the town has been incorporating trails and sidewalks into development projects through the project review process. The town has also implemented trails and sidewalks independently, through direct capital expenditures and/or in conjunction with capital projects in the town, such as the reconstruction of roads. When projects come before the town for review and approval, or when plans for capital projects are formulated, the *Potential Sidewalks and Trails Map* (Map 6) should always be consulted to ensure that opportunities for completing and extending trails and sidewalks can be considered and potentially implemented as part of the project.

Creating “loop trails,” in particular, is a priority. A loop trail is a trail or sidewalk circuit that allows the user to return to the beginning point without having to double-back - i.e., the opposite of a dead-end trail/sidewalk. Looped trail and sidewalk circuits are not only more interesting, but provide more opportunities for connections to important destinations and to adjacent branches of the trail and sidewalk system.

In general, priority should be given to the following trail and sidewalk goals:

- Extend existing trails to create long-distance trail experiences
- Close gaps in the trail and sidewalk system
- Make connections between trails, sidewalks, parks and other destinations
- Create loop trails
- Expand access to the Erie Canal Trail

It should be noted that the *Potential Sidewalks and Trails Map* does not depict every possible future sidewalk and trail segment in the town. Therefore, opportunities for pursuing sidewalk and trail connections not shown on the map should also be considered by the town – see Strategy B4.3.

Strategy B4.3: Pursue additional trail and sidewalk connections beyond those depicted in the Potential Trail and Sidewalk Map, as opportunities arise and/or as strategically identified by the town

As noted in Strategy B4.2 above, the town's *Potential Sidewalks and Trails Map* is a good starting point for identifying trail and sidewalk extensions. However, as also noted above, not every possible trail and sidewalk segment is depicted on the map. Therefore, while the provision of new sidewalks and trails should start with a consultation of the Potential Sidewalks and Trails Map, any trail or sidewalk segment that improves the functionality of the overall system should be considered, regardless of whether it is shown on the map – particularly segments that complete loops. The best time for exploring opportunities for new trail and sidewalk segments not specifically depicted on the Potential Sidewalks and Trails Map is still during the planning phases for proposed development and road projects in the town. The conditions

and location of the project site, the scope of the proposed project, and the proximity of existing trails and sidewalks to the site are just some of the factors that can be weighed when considering trail and sidewalk extensions not shown on the map.

Strategy B4.4: Evaluate the town's major transportation corridors for opportunities to make them more attractive, safer and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly

Though major roadway capacity improvements are not envisioned in this plan, there are several corridors and a few specific locations (around nodes of development) where enhancements to the street system might be appropriate. In general, corridor enhancements would seek to make particular corridors safer and more appealing for a variety of users: pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, and perhaps public transportation if applicable. Around particular nodes of development in the community, enhancements would be aimed at slowing down automobiles and improving the design character of the street in context with the surrounding area.

An example of a corridor that might be appropriate for study is East Avenue north from the Village of Pittsford. Sections of East Avenue have four travel lanes, two in each direction. Observations and public comments indicate that this cross-section might actually provide excess vehicular capacity. If that is indeed true, there would be an opportunity to evaluate whether a "road diet" (a reduction in pavement width) might be appropriate. Shrinking the road could make it possible to add a walking path or sidewalks, and/or a bike lane to improve non-vehicular travel. These pedestrian and bicycle improvements could connect to existing sidewalk and trail systems in the neighborhoods and college campuses along the road, and connect these areas to other parts of Pittsford, including the Village, and to the Town of Brighton.



Road Diet. Top: Original road. Middle: After road diet – four lanes become three lanes plus bicycle lanes. Bottom: mid-block pedestrian crossing island added in the center lane.

Similar techniques should be considered for specific corridors in Pittsford; however, these could be designed more in keeping with Pittsford's unique community character.

Photos by Dan Burden from <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org> - National Center for Safe Routes to School (funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration)

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Another corridor that could benefit from additional attention is the Monroe Avenue Corridor. Though the town has been successful in fostering the revitalization of the commercial district on Monroe Avenue, dramatically improving the design and function of this suburban commercial strip, and controlling development in the transition zone between French Road and the Village of Pittsford, there may still be additional opportunities for improvement. For example, Monroe Avenue is one of the main corridors in Pittsford where enhanced public transportation could be viable in the future. The Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council (G/FLRPC) recently completed a report entitled, *Optimizing Transportation Infrastructure Through Effective Land Use: Opportunities for Transit Supportive Development in the Greater Rochester Area* (2008), which looked at the possibility of applying transit supportive land use and design practices to particular corridors in the region, including Monroe Avenue.

The G/FLRPC report is intended for municipal boards and officials. It provides recommendations that they can use to “encourage transit-supportive development (TSD) along these corridors.” The report describes TSD as “a land use technique that calls for focusing public and private investment into clearly defined areas where several transportation options are readily available to the people who live, work and recreate within those areas. Typically, TSD projects consist of mixed-use (some combination of residential, commercial, institutional, and

recreational land uses) developments that are designed to provide their inhabitants with a range of viable transportation options.”

Monroe Avenue is part of one of the three “regionally significant public transportation corridors in the Greater Rochester Area” considered in this report. Running from Irondequoit Town Center on the north, to the Village of Pittsford on the south, this corridor – known as “Corridor A” in the study – is based on Regional Transit Service’s Route 7. Nine “nodal points” along the corridor are identified; these nodal points “represent regionally and locally significant residential, commercial, educational, institutional, and recreational centers of activity.” The Pittsford Plaza area and the Village of

What is a Node?

The term “node” in this plan is used to denote an area of concentrated land uses and activity, relative to the surrounding context. In the Town of Pittsford, an obvious node is the Village of Pittsford itself – with its fine grained mix of uses (restaurants, offices, public buildings) and its pedestrian-friendly setting. However, a node can be something much simpler, such as a post-office, or a neighborhood school. When it comes to transportation planning, nodes have different requirements than surrounding areas. For instance, in a node, facilitating pedestrian movement across the road is as important, if not more important, than facilitating movement along the road. Communities can strengthen nodes by providing amenities such as sidewalks and crosswalks, and ensuring that transportation policies, including the design of road improvements, help to reinforce nodes and the “sense of place” that they possess. In addition to transportation strategies, communities can also support and reinforce existing nodes by adopting land use policies that allow for a mix of uses and increased activity.

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Pittsford are the final two nodes discussed for Corridor A. Recommendations for each node generally “focus on improving pedestrian connections within and around Nodal Points; encouraging higher density, mixed-use development projects in the Nodal Points; and general urban design recommendations aimed at improving the functionality and appearance of the streetscape of pedestrians and public transportation users.” Over the long term, some of the ideas from this study could be advanced by the town in concert with its partners in the region as investments



When the Cheesecake Factory wanted to open a new store along Monroe Avenue, the Planning Board worked closely with the store designers to ensure that the building would be an attractive addition to the commercial corridor.

in improved public transportation (such as Bus Rapid Transit or others) are considered. In the short term, simple improvements such as additional bus shelters would make the existing bus service in this corridor more attractive for those who need or choose to utilize public transportation.

Some corridors, or portions of corridors, could benefit from simple efforts at beautification. Additional trees and landscaping can significantly improve the character of these corridors. Using Monroe Avenue as an example, the commercial area around Pittsford Plaza has been greatly enhanced in this manner. However, the transition area between French Road and the village could be improved by planting street trees and other landscaping to reinforce the largely residential nature of this portion of Monroe Avenue.

The most obvious “node of development” in Pittsford is, of course, the village. As noted elsewhere, the village has worked to improve its streetscape design and enhance the safety and function of the pedestrian environment along its principal streets over the years. The town has fully supported these efforts in the past and will continue to do so in the future. Outside of the Village of Pittsford, there might be a few much smaller nodes in the town where similar treatments would be appropriate. In particular, on state and county highways where posted speed limits tend to be higher, the town will continue to advocate for speed limit reductions for short sections that travel through small concentrations of development (certain neighborhoods, near schools or other institutions, small commercial areas, etc.). Reinforcing the desire for slower speeds through traffic calming and context sensitive design along and adjacent to these short sections of roadway could greatly enhance the safety and character of these areas. It must be noted that while it can advocate, ultimately the town has no jurisdiction on setting speed limits on state and county roads. However, both Monroe County and New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) rank transportation safety – for all users of the transportation network – as the highest priority. Therefore, both Monroe County and NYSDOT should be at the table to address

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safety issues at the town level on roads under their respective jurisdictions and across the town's entire transportation network – since all roads in the town, regardless of their jurisdiction, connect and relate to one another.

Whenever the town engages in a study of these transportation corridors or nodes, it will do so in partnership with adjoining neighborhoods and abutting land owners to ensure that proposed solutions are contextually appropriate. The town should be opportunistic about pursuing these efforts, looking to its partners in the region and at the state and federal levels for funding and technical assistance. Finally, the study of transportation corridors or nodes in the town should always consider options for enhancing connectivity between parts of the town, including integration with the town's trail and sidewalk systems.

Strategy B5: Pursue Traffic Calming Measures and Beautification across the Town's Transportation Network

The town's road network is more than a transportation network – it helps to define the character of the community and serves as a setting for where residents live, work and play. Calming traffic on town roads, particularly neighborhood roads and major travel corridors, is key to ensuring that roads contribute to the town's quality of life. Strategic beautification of key transportation corridors, and at key town gateways, can also go a long way to improving quality of life. Lastly, with a tried-and-true set of best practices for traffic calming and beautification to follow, the town can implement such improvements efficiently and consistently across the community. The following sub-strategies were developed with these ideas in mind.



Planted median slows traffic on this state highway and creates an attractive gateway to downtown Saratoga Springs.

Strategy B5.1: Pursue traffic calming measures

While town policies and practices over the years have increased the amount of trails and sidewalks in the town, and the village has made a commitment to a pedestrian friendly downtown, pedestrian safety and automobile etiquette with respect to pedestrians remain a concern to many residents. There are a number of roads in the town where speeding has been noted to be a problem – both on neighborhood streets as well as larger through streets. Speeding raises safety concerns and can negatively impact the quality of life for surrounding residential neighborhoods. The town should explore strategies for effectively discouraging excessive speeds, particularly in noted problem areas. Combinations of enforcement and design solutions (i.e. traffic calming) should be considered.

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Strategy B5.2: Beautify the town's important transportation gateways and corridors

A community's character is largely established by the roads that traverse it. Aesthetic improvements to roads, intersections and community gateways can therefore greatly enhance community character. Even modest improvements – the strategic placement of a flowering tree, or the planting of groundcover – can have a big impact. The town should identify opportunities along its transportation network for beautification. The landscaped triangle at the intersection of East Avenue and Fairport Road, opposite the entrance to St. John Fisher College, is a good example of how relatively modest landscaping improvements can make a big difference.

Strategy B5.3: Develop a toolbox of best practices to address safety and aesthetics of the town's transportation network

The Town of Pittsford, in cooperation with the village and/or in partnership with other municipalities or the GTC, should develop guidance documents for traffic calming and gateway improvements. Utilizing examples from communities around the country, several state DOTs, and organizations such as the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), a traffic calming primer could be developed to demonstrate preferred methods for traffic calming in the town or the region. At a minimum, the tool box should provide guidance on customized traffic calming measures for major and minor town streets and gateway techniques that could be applied with consistency at important town and town/village gateways. Where available, inspiration should be drawn from successful local examples.

Similarly, design guidelines for important entranceways or gateways to the community could be developed to improve the sense of arrival to Pittsford along key corridors into the community. Consistent design practices (planting choices, materials, colors, etc.) could help to reinforce overall community character, while variations could respond to the unique qualities of the particular location.



Traffic calming in action. Left: bulb outs, raised median, and textured crosswalk in Oregon. Right: speed table with crosswalk in New Jersey.

C. PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIES

Strategy C1: Update the Town Park and Recreation Master Plan to Identify and Provide Solutions to the Parks and Recreational Needs of the Community

Many different parks and recreation needs and opportunities have been brought forth by residents who participated in the planning process for this plan. Some participants expressed concerns about the overuse of fields, especially at peak hours and expressed the desire for additional field space, or a centralized area for field sports. Others identified the desire for a new recreation center in Pittsford. Yet others expressed a desire to develop new parks or expand the types of uses within existing parks. Obviously, all of these opportunities come with a cost to the town's taxpayers. Before any improvements are made to the town's existing park and recreation system, it is important to understand the current and future needs and identify gaps and deficiencies. Once the needs are documented, the town can begin to explore the costs associated with various options to fill these needs.

Specifically, a parks and recreation master plan should include the following elements:

- Identification of current parks and recreation amenities, facilities, and programs and their capacity;
- Identification of current need/demand for parks and recreation facilities and programs;
- A forecast of future need/demand for parks and recreation facilities and programs;
- Identification of alternatives for filling parks and recreation needs; and
- An evaluation of the costs of various alternatives.



An aerial image of Thornell Farm Park shows an extensive system of athletic fields. There are many fields distributed throughout town. A recreation needs assessment can help to quantify needs and identify if there are gaps that should be filled.

Strategy C2: Promote the Use of Parks, Trails and Sidewalks to Encourage Healthy Lifestyles for Town Residents

Pittsford's diverse and extensive system of parks, trails and sidewalks is impressive and contributes enormously to residents' quality-of-life and health. Children, in particular, stand to benefit from easy access to such amenities, given a national trend of increasing obesity rates amongst young people. Strategic improvements to the town's parks, trails, and sidewalks, and promotion of such amenities, can help to ensure that they are fully utilized by town residents and that an active, healthy lifestyle is attainable by all residents who choose to pursue one.

Strategy C2.1: Provide safe and convenient locations to walk and bicycle

The town's system of trails and sidewalks provides many opportunities to travel throughout the town on foot. As the town approaches build-out, it should continue the ongoing process of completing its trail and sidewalk system. The more the town's trails and sidewalks connect people to where they want to go and provide a safe alternative to driving, the more they will be used. With respect to bicycling, most any day of the year and particularly during the milder months, many bicyclists can be seen traveling the town's roads. Despite this well documented community enthusiasm for biking, there are few dedicated bicycle lanes in the town.

The most opportune time to provide trails, sidewalks and bicycle paths/lanes is in conjunction with the planning and review of proposed developments and road projects in the town. The needs of pedestrians and bicyclists should be incorporated as early as possible into the planning stages of such projects. The town's *Potential Sidewalks and Trails Map* (Map 6) should be consulted as a first step in identifying opportunities for trail and sidewalk extensions. However, this should not rule out the pursuit of sidewalks and trails not depicted on the map, particularly when they serve to complete a trail or sidewalk loop.



Great Embankment Park provides access to the Erie Canal at the eastern edge of Pittsford.

Because of its close relationship to transportation issues, this topic is also discussed in several strategies within the Transportation section of this plan. Specifically, Transportation Strategy B4, "Create a Walkable and Bikeable Community," and sub-Strategies B4.1 through B4.4, provide more detail on how to ensure that pedestrian and bicycle amenities are incorporated into future development and road projects. Transportation Strategy B5 discusses approaches for calming traffic on the town's roads.

Strategy C2.2: Make it easier for town residents to know about and use the town trail and park system

The town's trail and park system represents a significant town investment that greatly enhances the town's quality of life. This investment is maximized when all town residents who wish to use trails and parks, both know about these recreational assets and can access them with relative ease. Making the most out of what the town already has is the essence of this strategy.

Strategy C2.2a: Enhance access, signage and parking for trails, where appropriate

There are different types of trails that exist within the town. Trails within neighborhoods are primarily used by residents of the neighborhood. They often have limited or informal access and parking, if any. Other trails such as the Erie Canal Trail, or the trails within Isaac Gordon Nature Park, have more formal access and parking areas. As the town's trail system matures, additional trailhead access, parking, and signage may be necessary. Formalized access, parking and signage for trails can help increase the use of trails by making them more convenient and/or safe to access. Consistent signage can also help people become more comfortable using the trails once they are familiar with the town's trail signage system. The type and extent of improvements needed for trails will vary with the context of the trail. For example, trails located within neighborhoods may not need formal parking because they are accessed by people who live in the area. Other trails such as the Erie Canal Trail and the Auburn Trail may need additional access points, signage, or parking areas.

Strategy C2.2b: Develop consistent, user-friendly informational materials to promote the town's trails and park system

Informational materials (such as trail maps and website information) can help residents access and utilize parks and trails. Consistency in the design of such materials, at all locations of use (maps, trailhead signage, website, etc.) can help the trail system become more "legible" and easy to navigate for users.

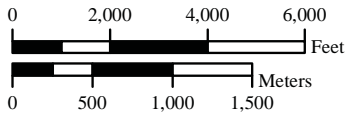
Below are some options to consider in further promoting the town's existing trails and parks:

- Develop a town-wide trail and sidewalk map to illustrate the major trail and sidewalk connections in the town.
- Create maps /brochures for parks and major town trail segments, such as the Erie Canal Trail, Auburn Trail, Great Embankment Park, and Isaac Gordon Nature Park. These brochures can provide information on how to access the trail (parking and trailheads); route options and mileage; and information about the trail experience and things to see or do along the way.
- Provide information for accessing various town trails and routes on the town website.



Map 6 Potential Sidewalks and Trails

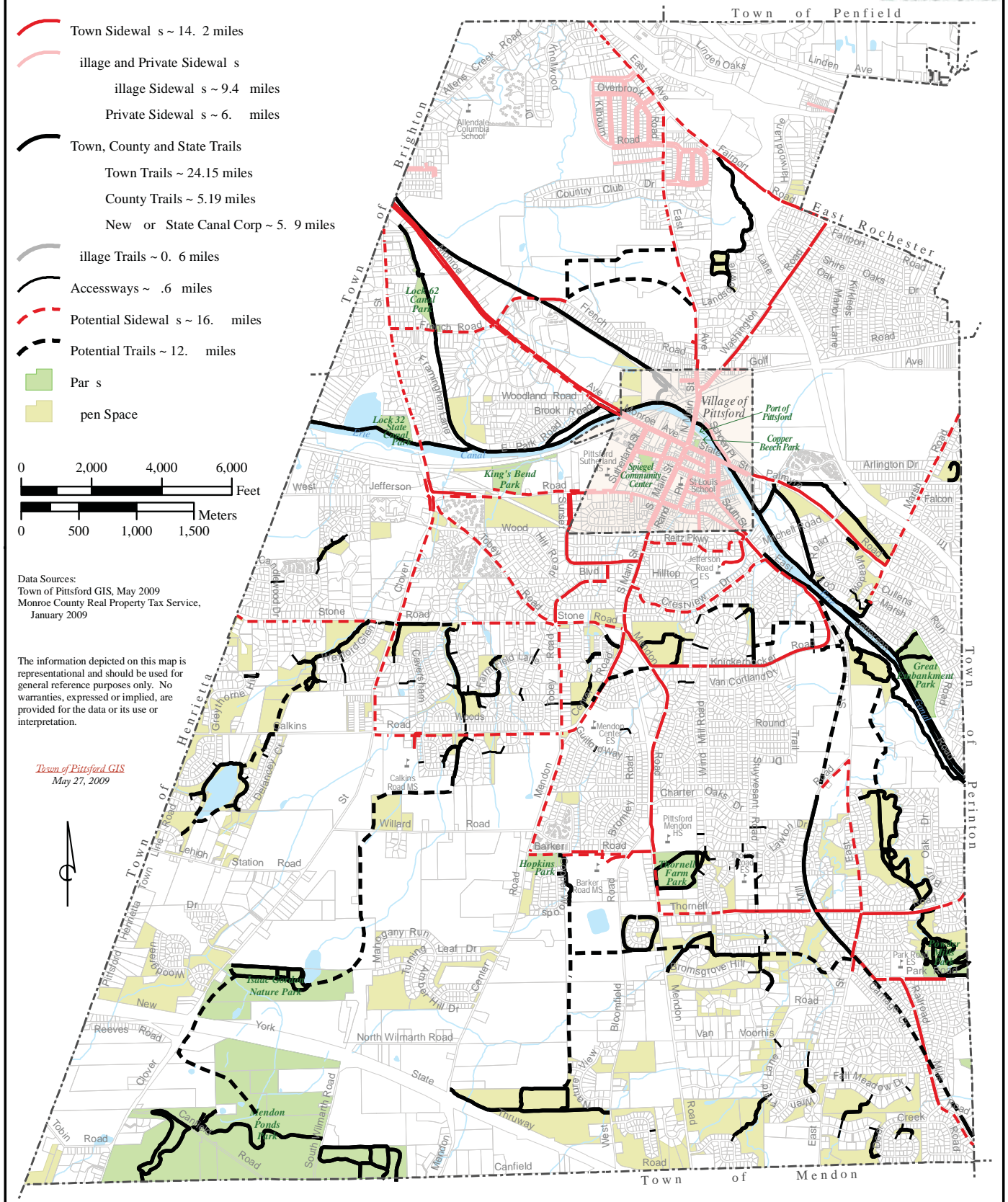
- Town Sidewalks ~ 14.2 miles
- Village and Private Sidewalks
 - Village Sidewalks ~ 9.4 miles
 - Private Sidewalks ~ 6.4 miles
- Town, County and State Trails
 - Town Trails ~ 24.15 miles
 - County Trails ~ 5.19 miles
 - New or State Canal Corp ~ 5.9 miles
- Village Trails ~ 0.6 miles
- Accessways ~ .6 miles
- Potential Sidewalks ~ 16.4 miles
- Potential Trails ~ 12.4 miles
- Parks
- Open Space



Data Sources:
Town of Pittsford GIS, May 2009
Monroe County Real Property Tax Service,
January 2009

The information depicted on this map is
representational and should be used for
general reference purposes only. No
warranties, expressed or implied, are
provided for the data or its use or
interpretation.

Town of Pittsford GIS
May 27, 2009



3. CONCLUSION

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update strategies set forth above are intentionally “big picture” and comprehensive in nature in order to provide guidance to the town for years to come. Implementing the strategies will occur over several years and will in some cases happen as funding is available to support them. Moving forward, it will be necessary for the town to prioritize which strategies to initially implement and focus on. The town’s success in implementing its past plans has rested on this focused approach. To this end, priority strategies for implementation are identified and discussed in Chapter 4.



2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



Land Use Goals

A1	<p>Grow Pittsford Gracefully</p> <p>A1.1: Balance the needs of homeowners to enlarge and improve existing homes with the preservation of neighborhood and town character and quality of life</p> <p>A1.2: Balance the re-subdivision of lots with the preservation of neighborhood and town character and quality of life</p> <p>A1.3: Ensure that infill development is in keeping with the character of the town and contributes to the town's quality of life</p> <p>A1.4: Plan for and accommodate home occupations</p>
A2	<p>Expand the Town and College Partnership</p>
A3	<p>Maintain Pittsford's Character and Quality of Life</p> <p>A3.1: Support the Village of Pittsford</p> <p>A3.2: Support the Pittsford Central School District</p> <p>A3.3: Support the long-term viability of agriculture</p> <p>A3.4: Maintain the integrity of Pittsford's open spaces</p> <p>A3.5: Continue the commitment to historic preservation</p> <p>A3.6: Ensure the town's long-term fiscal health as it approaches build-out</p> <p>A3.7: Continue to strive for a sustainable community</p> <p>A3.8: Continue to provide for a variety of housing needs</p>

Transportation Goals

B1	<p>Adopt a Clear Policy Statement on the Level of Road and Intersection Improvements the Town is Willing to Accept</p>
B2	<p>Continue to Improve the Safety and Efficiency of the Town's Transportation Network</p>
B3	<p>Take a Regional Approach to Town Transportation Issues and Opportunities</p>
B4	<p>Create a Walkable and Bikeable Community</p>
B5	<p>Address Transportation Issues for Quality of Life and Community Character</p>

Parks and Recreation Goals

C1	<p>Identify and Fill Parks and Recreation Needs for Town Residents</p>
C2	<p>Promote Pittsford's Parks, Trails and Sidewalks for a Healthy Community</p>

Land Use Strategies

A1	<p>Update the Town’s Land Use and Zoning Regulations to Proactively Address Changing Land Use and Lifestyle Trends</p> <p>A1.1: Develop zoning and land use tools that balance improvements to existing homes with the preservation of Pittsford’s character and quality of life</p> <p>A1.2: Develop zoning and land use tools that balance re-subdivisions with the preservation of Pittsford’s character and quality of life</p> <p>A1.3: Develop zoning and land use tools to ensure that the development of infill properties makes a positive contribution to Pittsford’s character and quality of life.</p> <p>A1.4: Update the Town’s home occupations regulations to reflect contemporary lifestyles, while preserving the character of residential neighborhoods</p>
A2	<p>Engage in a Dialogue between the Town and the Administration of St. John Fisher and Nazareth Colleges on Matters of Shared Interest</p>
A3	<p>No immediate strategies are required to implement the policy statements set forth in Goal A3. Rather, the policy statements themselves should be consulted to guide actions, investments and decisions made by the town and its various boards and committees across a range of situations. Specific actions to implement the policy statements can be identified and implemented on an as-needed, context-dependent basis. Lastly, many of the policy statements simply reaffirm existing town policies. By inclusion in this plan, they support the ongoing and continued efforts to implement them.</p>

Transportation Strategies

B1	<p>Town Policy Statement on Future Road and Intersection Improvements:</p> <p>The town does not support improvements to its transportation network simply to facilitate further development in the region’s outlying suburbs, by making it easier to drive through Pittsford on the way to and from Rochester and other surrounding communities. Any proposals for road or intersection widening to accommodate additional automobile traffic, including for those roads or intersections under county or state ownership, will receive careful scrutiny by the town. Instead, the community is willing to accept some level of congestion as an appropriate trade-off for preserving the walkable and livable character of Pittsford. Creative solutions will need to be found for today’s and tomorrow’s transportation issues, starting with getting the most out of the town’s existing transportation infrastructure before significantly expanding it. Significant capacity expansions to roads and intersections in the town will only be undertaken if it can be determined that they:</p> <p><i>(1) Are in keeping with the town’s character;</i> <i>(2) Provide long-lasting traffic relief; and</i> <i>(3) Are consistent with the town’s long-term land use vision for the area in which they are proposed.</i></p>
B2	<p>Utilize Information to Address the Safety and Efficiency of the Town’s Transportation Network</p> <p>B2.1: Develop and continuously update a Roadway Monitoring System that includes major intersections to identify physical and operating conditions throughout the town’s transportation network</p> <p>B2.2: Develop a Travel Time study of the major transportation corridors in Pittsford</p> <p>B2.3: Continue to utilize corridor studies and project specific traffic studies to review and mitigate the traffic impacts of new development</p>
B3	<p>Proactively Engage Regional Partners to Address the Town’s Transportation Issues</p> <p>B3.1: Continue to partner with regional entities such as Monroe County, the Genesee Transportation Council and NYS DOT to address town transportation issues</p> <p>B3.2: Continue to partner with adjacent communities to address town transportation issues</p>
B4	<p>Identify and Implement Improvements to Make Pittsford Walkable and Bikeable</p> <p>B4.1: Incorporate the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists and public transit users during all stages of the implementation of road and development projects in the town, including but not limited to planning, design and construction</p> <p>B4.2: Use the “Potential Sidewalks and Trails Map” (Map 6) as a guide to completing the town’s trail and sidewalk systems</p> <p>B4.3: Pursue additional trail and sidewalk connections beyond those depicted in the <i>Potential Sidewalks and Trails Map</i>, as opportunities arise and/or as strategically identified by the town</p> <p>B4.4: Evaluate the town’s major transportation corridors for opportunities to make them more attractive, safer and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly</p>
B5	<p>Pursue Traffic Calming Measures and Beautification Across the Town’s Transportation Network</p> <p>B5.1: Pursue traffic calming measures</p> <p>B5.2: Beautify the town’s important transportation corridors and gateways</p> <p>B5.3: Develop a toolbox of best practices to address safety and aesthetics of the town’s transportation network</p>

Parks and Recreation Strategies

C1	<p>Update the Town Park and Recreation Master Plan to Identify and Provide Solutions to the Parks and Recreational Needs of the Community</p>
C2	<p>Promote the Use of Parks, Trails and Sidewalks to Encourage Healthy Lifestyles for Town Residents</p> <p>C2.1: Provide safe and convenient locations to walk and bicycle</p> <p>C2.2: Make it easier for town residents to know about and use the town trail and park system</p> <p>C2.2a: Enhance access, signage and parking for trails, where appropriate</p> <p>C2.2b: Develop consistent, user friendly informational materials to promote the town’s trails and park system</p>

TOWN OF PITTSFORD

