

## Village of Pittsford Active Transportation Safety Study

### Scope of Work

#### A. Objective

To develop a plan with recommendations for public and private transportation improvements and transportation-related design guidelines to support a healthier, safer, and more livable village that prioritizes greater physical mobility.

#### B. Background

Over the last two decades, the Village of Pittsford has successfully employed and implemented historic preservation, traditional neighborhood planning principles, an award winning comprehensive plan, strategic planning, and carefully targeted capital projects to maintain its residents' quality of life, revitalize its commercial district, establish an outstanding public waterfront and emerge as a popular community center and regional destination.

Despite the Village's successes, the management of traffic, parking, and the "suburban highway" design of some village streets continue to pose obstacles hindering the Village's ability to move its primary planning objectives forward.

For decades, the suburban towns surrounding village of Pittsford have approved sprawling suburban development with no meaningful analysis of the cumulative effect and impact of the resulting traffic volume growth. The expectation generally has been to keep widening roads. Unfortunately such an approach does not work in an historic village setting. In a village, widened streets reduce property values, erode neighborhood livability, create busy "moats" that discourage pedestrian mobility, and threaten the viability of traditional walkable downtown business districts. What has not been well recognized by people outside the village is that walkability is directly tied to the overall health of the village, the well being of village residents, and the state of the village economy.

Five state highways intersect within the village. These streets have become busy suburban arterials. Projects completed by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) in the 1970s and 1980s widened several streets and removed street parking in order to enhance traffic flow through the Village. Unfortunately, over time the resulting changes also eroded the quality of streetside public space and diminished the comfort level for pedestrians and other non vehicular roadway users. The current state of these streets conflicts with the Village's adopted goals by discouraging pedestrian activity. Wide traffic lanes and excess pavement width encourage vehicular speeding in many areas of the village.

Since the mid 1980s, Village officials have vigorously opposed road widening projects and attempts to remove street parking from arterial streets. A 2008 Monroe Avenue corridor traffic study conducted by the Town and Village of Pittsford suggested that over the prior twenty-year period there had been very limited traffic volume growth through the Four Corners intersection. A logical theory explaining this result is that because primary village streets have been at capacity during peak periods there is no room to accommodate additional volume. There is also a belief that the daily congestion and backups occurring within the Village may encourage commuters to find alternate routes.

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Today, it is the Village's adopted policy to treat streets as important public spaces that must safely, comfortably, and attractively accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, public events, and social gathering. This concept was introduced in the Village's 2002 Comprehensive Plan and further expanded in a 2004 Local Waterfront Redevelopment Program (LWRP), a 2005 Traffic Calming Plan and a 2011 Complete Streets policy. The Village has implemented a number of capital projects and cooperative projects executed with the assistance of NYSDOT to achieve these goals. Examples include:

- The Village has opposed and prevented the further widening of village streets.
- Following decades of street tree removal, the Village instituted an urban forestry program with the goal of restoring the street tree canopy along every street. This effort is nearly complete.
- The Village developed a decorative lighting plan to restore pedestrian scale street lights to arterial streets.
- Curbs, sidewalks, and speed-table crosswalks were installed along the length of Schoen Place and the street was narrowed from 28 feet to 20 feet. The project also included the removal of a highway-style guard rail and the introduction of street trees and other landscaping.
- "Yield to Pedestrians in the Crosswalk" signs have been installed at key non signalized intersections throughout the village.
- Experimental traffic calming measures have been installed on side streets.
- The North Main Street/Washington Road intersection was reconstructed eliminating a "sweep" turn lane, widening the center median to narrow traffic lanes, and replaced asphalt areas with trees and landscaping. Curbs were installed along the length of Washington Road.
- The Village lobbied NYSDOT to restripe the four-lane section of North Main north of the canal to two lanes with a center-turn lane and parallel street parking.
- The Village required a developer as part of a special use permit to construct a 250-foot center median to provide traffic calming at the Monroe Avenue village gateway.
- Shortened transition to Monroe Avenue right-hand turn lane at Four Corners intersection to slow speeds and improve safety.

The Village of Pittsford Active Transportation Safety Study must consider the village of Pittsford's unique historic character. The Village constitutes an historic cultural landscape and is one of the only municipalities in New York State to be entirely designated as a local historic district. The Village also contains a National Register District and most of the village outside the existing district has been deemed potentially eligible for National Register listing. Rather than just preserving individual buildings, preservation in the village must consider the big picture including landscape, historic circulation patterns, historic streetscape, comparative street scale, and the way buildings engage with their surroundings. The Village is a Certified Local Government, meaning that it is the Village's official policy to comply with the National Park Service's guidelines for preservation planning practice, design review, and the administration of the Village Preservation Code.

The Village of Pittsford Active Transportation Safety Study should establish a path forward for the Village to accomplish the goals of its Complete Streets policy. The plan shall include the entire Village of Pittsford while focusing on the following issues and specific areas of concern:

- Reduce vehicular speeds throughout the village to appropriately safe levels and identify ways to encourage safer driver behavior.
- Identify ways to better and more safely accommodate bicyclists within the existing geometry of village streets.
- NYSDOT has striped most village streets with 11 foot wide lanes. Ten foot wide lanes may be a more appropriate standard for a walkable village environment. The Village of

Hamburg has “safety lanes” striped between traffic lanes and on street parking. Would that approach work in Pittsford?

- Four Corners intersection – the Four Corners is regarded by most residents to be the Village’s single largest pedestrian challenge. Because it is located at the center of the village’s traditional pedestrian oriented business district ease of crossing is essential to ensure a healthy and vital business district. Look at the conflict between the right-hand turn lanes and pedestrian movement and comfort. Consider restoring street parking and eliminating right-hand turn lanes.
- Jefferson Road Corridor – High vehicular speeds are a problem for the length of this street. The street lacks many of the village streetscape features found on other village arterial streets. Jefferson Road is the longest village residential street. Preserving its residential quality and livability is important for the Village’s tax base as well as preserving the character and sense of community associated with village life. It is equally import that the street not be allowed to become a traffic moat isolating the southern village and town neighborhoods from the village center. The study should address traffic calming, streetscape enhancement and completion of missing sidewalks.
- North Main Street – North Main Street carries less traffic than South Main, yet it is wider and lacks street parking. Currently, wide lane widths and an excessively long left-hand - turn lane encourage excessive speeds. This situation may contribute to accidents at the Schoen Place/Main intersection and makes crossing the street a challenge for pedestrians. Speeding traffic and narrow sidewalks with no buffer make the pedestrian experience over the North Main Canal Bridge one of the most uncomfortable in the entire village. Shortening the left-hand turning lane and restoring street parking should be studied.
- State Street and East Avenue gateways – Traffic entering the village and traffic leaving the village both travel at unsafe speeds. How can these speeds be reduced to safe levels?
- North Main between Schoen Place and the CSX overpass – Excessive speeding remains a problem on this block of North Main. Options that should be considered to reduce speeds and provide a safer pedestrian environment should include, but not be limited to, a raised median and adding more on-street parking to the west side of the street.

### **C. Tasks**

1. Establish steering committee.
2. Solicit community input on active transportation goals and objectives.
3. Inventory existing active transportation conditions.
4. Identify and prioritize needed investments.
5. Develop design guidelines and funding strategies.
6. Produce final report.

### **D. Products**

1. Final Report and Executive Summary on findings and recommendations
2. Pedestrian and bicycle design guidelines
3. Project steering committee and public meeting materials

### **E. Public Participation Plan**

Per the GTC Public Participation Policy public involvement will include a Village Steering Committee, one public meeting early in the process to solicit public input on the opportunities

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and issues related to the project, and one public meeting to solicit public input on the draft project recommendations prior to finalizing the project.

**F. Schedule**

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|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Scope of work approved            | May 2013         |
| 2. Consultant selection completed    | July 2013        |
| 3. Inventory of conditions completed | October 2013     |
| 4. First public meeting              | November 2013    |
| 5. Draft report completed            | December 2013    |
| 6. Second public meeting             | January 2014     |
| 7. Final report completed            | March/April 2014 |

**G. Project Budget**

Sources of Funds		Uses of Funds	
	FY 2013-14		FY 2013-14
<u>Federal Funds</u>		<u>GTC</u>	
FHWA	\$30,000	Staff	\$0
FTA	0	Contractual	0
Subtotal	\$30,000	Subtotal	\$0
<u>Matching Funds</u>		<u>Other Agency</u>	
State (In-kind)	\$0	Staff	\$0
Local (In-kind)	3,500	Contractual	31,500
Local (Cash)	1,500	In-kind Exp.	3,500
Subtotal	\$5,000	Subtotal	\$35,000
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$35,000</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>\$35,000</u>