

CRTS
Economic Development and Tourism Focus Group
Held Wednesday, January 14, 2004
Meeting Summary

Residents participated in a brainstorming exercise regarding economic development and tourism in the study area. What follows is a summary of the information and input provided by participants during the exercise.

STRENGTHS

- Access from 4 Thruway exits is good
- 332 Corridor - Gateway to Canandaigua
- Airport & upgrade
- 5&20 Bypass – West-East Boulevard
- Access from all sides of the Canandaigua area (“All roads lead to Canandaigua”)
- Capacity for trucks
 - Although it can be tough to get through city
- Simple to navigate
- Capacity of 332 north of city
- Heart of emerging high tech belt
- Control of access – access management
- Alternate routes – Coolen/Michigan/CR 22
- Rail – 2 independent operators
- Little congestion
- High quality of life
- Regional cooperation, experience with regional transportation planning
- Public transit – can move labor market
- Sense of place when entering city
- Divided median – manage development
- Greenspace along area corridors
- Community/political support
- Regional location – central and accessible in New York State

WEAKNESSES

- Zoning – too much allowance of development
- Median on 332
 - U-turns are inconvenient and present safety concerns in some areas
 - Not always convenient breaks in the median
 - Tough to access some retail

- Future development limited
- Balancing development with active farming
 - Concern about maintaining farmers' access to land (large farm equipment, etc.)
- Speed on 332
 - Easy to go too fast
 - Stacking at city line resulting from reduction in speed (55 – 40 – 30)
 - Not enough transition in terms of actual speeds (despite posted speed reduction)
- Travel through the city is difficult due to congestion
 - The city is the connector for all major roads through Canandaigua (north, south, east, west)
- Perception of being far away from Rochester
- West side – Jurisdictional alignment –
 - Lacks consistency regarding quality of management
- Potential for resistance to change
- Mix of arterial and local road use that creates conflict
- Congestion in Canandaigua
 - West & 5&20 (Place where cars, trucks, and pedestrians converge)
- Tough to get from one side of Canandaigua to the other during lunch hour (North-South)
- Airport road entrance
- Wayfinding/Information Signage is lacking
- Signage at Thruway needs to be expanded or enhanced
- Limited facility and safety of trails/bike routes
- No identification of alternate routes
- Congestion impact on economic development on the south side of city
- Perception of lack of parking in the city
- Noise pollution/dust in the downtown Canandaigua (from through traffic and trucks)
- Access roads need better development
- Access to commercial and industrial districts east of the city is limited

Opportunities

- Develop access roads
- Quality of life improvements downtown (noise/traffic/pedestrian safety)
- Expand airport for business use
- Improve signage – wayfinding/not billboards
- Re-route through traffic (trucks) away from Main Street
- Improve downtown pedestrian crossing
- All transportation options and modes should be improved
- Undeveloped land
- Inter-municipal cooperation for road network planning

- City's economic development associated with improved road system
- Rail Right of Way (ROW) for utility expansion
- Improving/expanding underground utility on 332 and beyond
- Minor local road realignments
- Regional planning and consideration of impacts on transportation system
- 332 is new
- Underutilized spaces – ripe for development
- Open Main Street to lakefront by eliminating truck traffic
- Reputation/regional image
- Statewide transportation considerations – Fast Ferry/Ithaca/Rochester/Albany

THREATS

- Lack of land use control – growth
- Transportation system not effective for 21st Century high tech
- Not having accommodations for tourists
- Possible competition from Monroe County
- Transit system not keeping up with development and need
- Poorly managed development
 - impacts on Quality of Life
- NIMBY mentality (Not in my back yard)
- Monroe County does not get its act together
 - They're lack of progress could negatively impact the Canandaigua area and the entire region
- New York State's financial impact on county
 - unfunded mandate
- Utilities not improved to manage development needs
- Focusing only on the city
 - Traffic impact on retail on 332 in the town as a result of through traffic from Route 96, the Thruway and beyond
- Demand quality growth – not just any growth
- Monroe County economy changing from industry to service
 - Could compete with Canandaigua region
- Bypass impacts on CRTS economy
- Do nothing
- Don't preserve image
- Loss of "safety" or perception of reduced safety
 - Safety of traveling tourists (motorists and pedestrians) is important
- Reliability of power and access to power
- Taking the municipalities' cooperative nature for granted

Survey Response

During this meeting, participants were asked to complete a survey. The following details the results of that survey.

We asked the Committee members to rate twenty-three “economic factors” in terms of importance with respect to transportation planning in the study area, with 10 representing the highest score, meaning that the factor represented a top priority in terms of importance. Columns A and B on Exhibit 1 are the totals of the assigned scores of the Committee members and the average score based on sixteen respondents. Column C shows the standard deviation for each response. Members of the Committee returned sixteen completed forms, so the total score possible for any factor would have been “160.”

Interpreting these numbers, the ratings and comments raise important points for the strategy:

- Members assigned the highest score to the factor that we called “**quality of life**.” This is not a defined term but it typically refers to the overall attractiveness of a location as a place to live. For most people the term encompasses social and economic dimensions of a culture, including family life, jobs, schools, pace of living, recreational opportunities and other measurable and immeasurable factors. We can not specify exactly what the term means here---everyone has their own definition---but we can see how quality of life will play out in the context of our work in general. Clearly it should take an important role in the strategy. In many cases those who use this term mean that non-economic factors are more important than economic ones, although this distinction does is not a rigid one. In some situations it refers to the quality of life in rural or agricultural areas in contrast to cities. The few comments on this issue do not help to define the term: “community prosperity preparedness”; “#1 priority to build and maintain.” One respondent added “rural character” in the list of “other” factors, and this is probably a close variation on the theme of quality of life. It is interesting that this factor has the lowest standard deviation, by a significant margin: there is very strong consensus that quality of life is the most important issue in the planning process relative to the study corridor.
- It is interesting that the next two highest scores go to measurable economic factors that are distinct local components of quality of life: business retention and job development. The high priority assigned to **business retention** suggests that keeping jobs in the community is a very important matter for our group. This is not surprising in this area where there are many forces at work - taxes, climate, cost of labor and other factors - that may cause businesses to relocate elsewhere. It is also interesting that there is very strong consensus on the importance of this

factor. There may be some insecurity about companies relocating outside the area. This means that plans should serve businesses already in place in Ontario County and that we should address the existing business environment as a top priority.

- The third factor, **job development**, usually refers to the training programs and educational processes associated with the business environment. There is infrastructure in place to address this matter. One of the strongest resources is the Community College, located in the southeast portion of the study area, and we discussed the excellent offerings in digital sound technology there. One comment links job development with “aging population,” probably meaning that adults may need retraining for new work. It is not surprising that our Steering Committee places such a high level of importance on this factor, but I am not sure at this time how we connect it to our study. This is an idea that we will develop and feature as we proceed.
- The factor ranked fourth in priority, **tourism travel/access**, is clearly an important element in planning related to the study area, since tourism is a strong and growing component of the County’s economy. For much of the downtown retail and restaurant base, tourism is an essential element of market support. The Committee members are expressing recognition of the importance of this industry to the culture and economy of the area. There is also a clear connection between this factor and “rural character,” a fundamental attraction in the minds of the respondents. (“Tourism and recreation are the biggest reasons for traveling here during the summer.” This would suggest that we feature tourism issues and tourism enhancement in our work.
- **Highway access** takes a fifth position. Respondents recognized the critical importance of the four I-90 interchanges to the economy of the area. There was very strong consensus on this factor. This is a corollary of tourism/travel access, discussed above, but it has broader implications for business development and quality of life. We should promote preservation and enhancement of highway access as a priority concern in our study.
- **Recreational opportunities** ranked sixth, not surprising in light of the strong connections among, recreation, quality of life and tourism. Comments linked recreation with other important considerations that we discussed in the “SWOT” analysis: open space preservation and retention of young people. This priority rating suggests that we should give special attention to recreation issues and opportunities in the study area.
- The **attraction of new businesses** was seventh in priority, meaning that three of the four standard economic development factors are all in the top

third tier of priorities (the other two that ranked highly were business retention and job development). Somewhat surprisingly, the factor called “expansion of existing businesses” was in the lower half of the list. The respondents may not know, or may not agree, that most new jobs come from the expansion of companies in an area rather than the attraction of new businesses. Or, there may be some other way to understand the way that the members of the Committee evaluated the balance between business attraction and business expansion. I am sure that the County’s Economic Development Department will be able to shed light on this and work with us to relate business development issues in the context of our work.

- It was somewhat surprising, at least to me, that congestion, that bugbear of transportation economics, was a third of the way down the list and that the level of consensus was relatively weak, as indicated by the wide variation in assessments. I had understood from the discussion that preceded the analysis that this was a very important matter, and surely it is, but perhaps it is most important to a relatively small number of individuals. Of course we will have to put this issue in the correct perspective as we proceed.
- It is noteworthy that the factors related to land development (grouped together and named by category: mixed-use, residential, commercial, redevelopment) are all in the middle third of the list by priority. Real estate issues are a secondary concern to our group. The types of development typically associated with transportation planning, commercial and industrial development, did not emerge as issues of major importance.

There were nine “other” factors, in addition to the factors we listed; in retrospect I think that “telecommunications/infrastructure” should have been included on the form, and if that had been done it would have ranked rather high on the list. We did discuss most of these other factors in the course of the meeting.

Lower scores do not mean that we will exclude any specific issue from further consideration, of course. Some of the finer points of future analysis may be connected to terms that were raised in a peripheral way. “Home-based business activity” (mentioned in a comment as an “other” factor, may be an example, as the national economy moves towards stronger models of at-home employment, particularly in commuter-origin and exurban locations. Issues associated with education, including financial support for schools, are probably some of the most important matters that the community must address, and there may be connections with our work, in some way.

CRTS
Land Use and Utilities Focus Group
Held Wednesday, March 17, 2004
Meeting Summary

**Where is Development Happening in Study Area Communities?
(Current, Pending, Anticipated)**

Town of Canandaigua

Residential

- There is residential development pressure in the southern corridor of the town within the study area.
 1. Phase 2 Lakeside (230 new homes)
 2. Lakewood (60 ±)
 3. Fox Ridge Phase 5 (55 ±)
 4. Landings (35 ±)
 5. Old Brookside area – Buffalo Street extension – PUD for townhouses, etc.
- North and West of the City in the town sewers limited by the town of Canandaigua. However, Farmington sewer facilities can/could be extended south into the Town of Canandaigua.
- West of Middle Cheshire – slated in new zoning code for extension of sewer and water. Concern is that agricultural land and rural character may be threatened by this proposed change.

Commercial

- Routes 332 and 5&20 East are major commercial areas for the town

Cheshire

- Probably won't be developed because sewer and water are not available. A package plant waste system is being explored to serve existing businesses/residents, but wouldn't promote/support new development.

Town of Hopewell

- There is not great pressure for residential development with limited/no public water or sanitary sewer systems.
- Community desire to preserve rural character is a clear preference
- CATS facility development could bring some changes
- Commercial development in the town will depend on where sewers are constructed in the future.

- Route 5&20 is the location for the town's commercial development – Lowes and additional 150,000 sq. ft. of development is scheduled (or in final review?)

City of Canandaigua

- The whole city is serviced by public sewer and water systems.
- Major new development is not expected since the city is largely built out.
- There is potential for some new residential development in the northeast quadrant of the city (150 units ±).
- Commercial development will focus mainly on redevelopment.
- There is room for some development along the lakeshore.
- The City also anticipates modest growth at the hospital (2-5 percent per year)
- The airport and the industrial area around the airport present some redevelopment opportunities if/when the airport is expanded.
- The City of Canandaigua is/should be a destination. Removing through-traffic from Main Street if possible would help develop the Main Street area more. Truck traffic – shifting, noise, exhaust, etc. – is a particular problem. Also boat-launch bound visitors could be rerouted since few/none are stopping on Main Street.

Is the current transportation network adequate? Can it sustain anticipated development?

City of Canandaigua

- In the City, especially Main Street, it's an issue of quantity versus quality. What can be handed in terms of capacity and engineering standards may not be desirable from a quality of life perspective.
- Pedestrian activity/access is strained. The width of Main Street (7 lanes total) and the amount of through-traffic make crossing difficult.
- Problem intersections include Route 332 & North, Parish and Main Street, Parish and West Lake

Town of Canandaigua

- Transportation system will work, but it will frustrate drivers, especially local drivers not used to traffic.
- Traffic congestion and development are relative (perception based on local experience/expectation/etc.)
- A disconnect between engineering standards and residents' standards for what level of traffic can be tolerated on a given roadway.
- Alternative Routes (official and unofficial bypasses) in the Town include:
 - County Road 10 bypass
 - County Road 30 is a major point of access
 - Cooley (between North Michigan and 332)

- Bruce Road (near Victor)
- County Road 22 (CR 10 near Walmart) could be truck alternative except for the 2 jogs that the road takes – truck drivers won't use it in its current configuration
- Through-town travel is the problem – commuter circle is expanding and this study area is the center point/pass-through point for an increasing number of commuters

Town of Hopewell

- Commercial development and county facilities are big traffic generators in the town.
- Smith and Freshour Roads are commonly used cut through roads
- CR 10 not a viable bypass because of the stop sign at intersection with Route CR 46
- Side town roads are informal bypass routes (east side) for people trying to avoid the city – problem is truck traffic will use them even if/when weight restrictions are placed.
- Holiday time travel (Christmas) along 5&20 is a very big problem

Farmland/Agriculture Concerns (Where should development be avoided?)

- Town of Canandaigua has open space program but no specific spots have been targeted as of yet
- Ontario County has done a good job of managing farming impacts within the watershed (Canandaigua watershed), which has cut down on ag-related problems/concerns.
- No definitive answer about whether farmland needs to be preserved to support the viability of active agricultural industry or to preserve the appearance of open space and hobby farming.
- Local, small farmers can't do grain now since there is no local mill in city/town.
- Supporting and sustaining businesses for farming industry is needed to sustain viability of smaller local farms.
- Site plan review and zoning have a major impact on farming viability/operations
- Maria Rudzinski, Ontario County Planner, mentioned that as part of the renewal process for Ag Districts 1 and 7, farmland owners and operators will be participating in meetings (in March) to create a composite map of existing farmland. Should be ready for public/committee in April. The map will be a resource for communities in those districts in identifying prime farmland and setting priorities for agricultural land protection.

CRTS
Emergency Services Focus Group
Held Wednesday, June 2, 2004
Meeting Summary

Overview of Emergency Response Resources:

Ambulance

Canandaigua Emergency Squad serves the entire study area

- Four Ambulances – combination of paid staff and volunteers
- Assigned Crews 24/7
- Number of vehicles assigned changes daily/hourly
- On-duty crews are in-house until calls come in. During special, large events (at lake, etc.) ambulance crews may be stationed at key sites in the field.
- One station for EMS (same since 1940). Response time to outer edges of service area is 15-17 minutes (e.g. Gorham, both sides of the lake).
- Annual call volume: 4,000 (3,000 911 responses, 1,000 transport calls)
- Monthly data available and will be provided to the project team

Ambulance service is also provided by Finger Lakes Ambulance. They respond to ALS (advanced life support) calls within the study area.

Fire

City of Canandaigua

- City of Canandaigua has combination of paid staff and volunteers.
- City of Canandaigua's FD only responds to ALS – BLS go to EMS only

Towns

- All surrounding towns have their own fire companies. Fire company First Responders respond to medical emergencies within their respective service areas

Police

- Will make arrangements to get information from local police agencies (Canandaigua Police, Ontario Sheriff's Department and NYS Troopers)

Medical Facilities

Emergency Care Providers:

- FF Thompson Hospital
- Clifton Springs Hospital
- Strong Hospital (Monroe County)
- Highland Hospital (Monroe County)

Other:

- Veteran's Hospital
- Ontario County Health Services

Emergency Service Hot Spots:

Emergency Care (Where do emergency calls get sent?):

- FF Thompson Hospital (destination for roughly 85% of calls, annually)
- Clifton Springs Hospital (10% of calls, annually)
- Strong/Highland ED (5% of calls, annually)

Other key pick up sites:

- Ontario County Health Facilities – CR 46
- Veteran's Hospital
- Ferris Hills Assisted Living
- Quail Summit Assisted Living
- Horizons Assisted Living

Key Accident Locations:

Vehicular:

- 5&20 and Freshour
- CR 488 and Freshour
- Freshour and East
- Thomas and 332 (left hand turns)
- 5&20 and CR 10 (near Walmart. The intersection and site design/access present some major difficulties/problems for motorists.)
- Middle Cheshire Road and 5&20 – it is signalized, but still problematic due to natural surroundings. The strobe light in the red hasn't fixed the problem.

Pedestrian:

- Main Street between West and 5&20

Route 332 Considerations:

- Severe accidents have reduced significantly since installation of Median
- Motorists do not always know where to move for emergency vehicles along 332, between S. Main and 364 (some move left, some move right)

Other Problem Streets/Access Issues:

- Lakeshore Drive – narrow pavement width with granite curb is a problem; tires lost on ambulance/fire trucks, not mountable design)

- Phelps Road and Saltonstall
- N. Bloomfield Road speed humps in the City - problem for fire and ambulance vehicles – grade is too high to travel over at any speed. Vehicles must come to complete stop to traverse
- Buffalo extension out to 5& 20 – sharp turn is a problem

Emergency Response:

- The Route 5&20 and 332 intersection is difficult for emergency vehicles to maneuver through. The traffic controls need to be fixed/adjusted to move traffic out of the way.
- Traffic light control on Main Street would help emergency access through the city's Main Street area
- There is an increase in emergency calls in the seasonal peaks.
- Attendees noted that sometimes it's faster to drive with the flow of traffic (with lights off) to improve response time to the emergency call. (It's not always faster with lights on.)
- Local 1st responders are notified first for BLS and ALS.
- Airport expansion proposes making Thomas Road a dead end – this will impact emergency access through the area.
- Airport has no emergency service equipment on site.

Priority Improvements:

- Light Controls on Main Street and 5&20, with improved controls at the intersection of 5&20/332
- Curb design should include mountable curbs (to avoid problems like Lakeshore Dr.)
- CR 10/5&20 – site design improvements to help alleviate problems with the intersection
- Add left turn lane to 332 south at Fort Hill and Chapel Streets (the lack of turn lanes at these intersections has caused problems)
- Improvements to Thad Chapin Street (preferred route, but poor road conditions make it very difficult for ambulance patients).

Other Considerations:

- Expansion of FF Thompson's Emergency Department is expected to attract increased "traffic" from southern Monroe County. The 24 bed emergency department may be the preferred destination over more overcrowded Rochester area hospitals, such as Highland or Strong.