

APPENDIX C

Community Input Summary

A valuable component of any planning project, especially the development of a Comprehensive Plan, is community involvement and input. Ideas and thoughts from residents and business owners in the Town are what help to develop future goals and recommendations to stabilize and improve the Irondequoit for current and future residents. During the planning process, several public informational meetings, focus groups, and design workshops were held to bring as many residents to the table as possible. In addition, a dedicated website (www.irondequoitplan.org) was created to post draft documents as they are prepared and update the community on progress to date. Residents were given the opportunity to provide feedback through the site throughout the process.

Appendix D provides a summary of the input received from the community through the public meetings, workshops and, focus group meetings.



Town of Irondequoit Comprehensive Master Plan

Public Kickoff Meeting

October 2008

This meeting was held at the Town Hall to introduce the community to the planning process for the Comprehensive Master Plan, the consultant team, and engage the attendees in a series of brainstorming exercises to help identify issues and ideas that may be addressed in the development of the Plan.

Exercise #1 - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

During the meeting, attendees participated in a brainstorming exercise to identify the town's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The exercise was conducted with the following guidelines:

- There are no wrong answers in brainstorming, every idea gets on the list
- Issues can appear on more than one list and maybe all four

Once the group brainstormed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, each person was given 4 sticker dots to identify their top issue(s). The number in parenthesis represents the number of dots that issue/statement received in the exercise. The issues that received one or more dots are compiled in a separate at the conclusion of the list.

Strengths

- Location **(3)**
- Open waterfront
- Schools **(2)**
- The neighborhoods are tight knit
- Mixed uses
- Housing diversity
- Economic diversity
- Sea Breeze
- Maturity of neighborhoods **(1)**
- Housing quality
- Sense of history (i.e. blacksmith's shop, oldest miniature golf course, etc)
- "Hot dog row"
- House of Guitars
- Durand Eastman Park proximity
- Sidewalks
- Proximity to water **(4)**
- Camp Eastman
- New bike path
- Community **(1)**

- Libraries
- Fourth of July celebration
- East Irondequoit H.S.
- People
- Attitudes
- Balance
- Churches
- Demographic diversity
- Integration of people
- Housing
- Police Department **(2)**
- Mature street trees
- No McMansions; smaller homes.
- Smaller lots
- Whispering pines
- Recreational Opportunities (golfing, boating, etc) **(2)**
- Beach
- Affordable housing **(2)**
- Reasonable taxes **(1)**
- Access to City **(1)**
- Expressway access **(2)**
- Public transportation
- Summer recreation
- Hospital **(2)**
- Helmer Nature Center
- McAvoy Park
- Seneca Park
- Seneca Park Zoo
- Seasonal bridge to Webster
- No dumb Town mottos (e.g. "Where life is worth living")
- Open government **(1)**
- Two Wegmans
- Marges
- Walkable schools
- "the Flats"
- The pier
- Boat launch
- Senior center and outreach
- Charlotte proximity
- Restaurants
- Night life

Weaknesses

- Empty mall **(5)**
- Stench along beach due to the WWTP **(1)**
- City proximity
- State Route 590 is all torn up **(1)**
- Weak zoning **(1)**
- Retail encroachment on residential neighborhoods **(1)**
- No railroad
- Ridge Road is hard to negotiate; there is a lack of access management
- No Town center **(3)**
- Children leave the area after high school
- Schools and the perception of the schools outside the community. **(10)**
- Organized sports recreation.
- Lack of an aquatic center.
- No bike lanes on the roads.
- Location of the existing Post Office **(1)**
- Two school districts **(3)**
- No youth center **(1)**
- Lack of industry
- Recreational facilities **(5)**
- Lack of east-west routes **(1)**
- Lack of public transportation **(1)**
- Division of the Town into east and west **(5)**
- Seasonal swing bridge
- Empty commercial stores
- Increase in the number/amount of rental units **(1)**
- Empty rentals and houses that are not seasonal units.
- No bookstores or coffee shops
- The Town is transitional; people move after buying their first house here.
- Not a lot of big home opportunities.
- Lack of a Panera Bread
- Sidewalk repair
- Paving of side streets
- Scattered sidewalks and dim lighting in certain areas of the Town. **(1)**
- Manhole covers are not at grade.
- Lack of community involvement at Town functions.
- Too much wildlife
- Not enough commercial revenue, which leads to an increased burden on the residential areas. **(2)**
- Lack of public relations
- Slow population decline **(1)**
- Lack of affordable senior housing.
- No Aldi's
- Perception of schools **(1)**
- Lack of code enforcement

Opportunities

- Utilize mall **(1)**
- YMCA
- Develop Town center areas that currently exist but are underdeveloped (i.e. community nodes) **(3)**
- Truly green community, such as incorporating bike lanes or expanding the size of tree lawns along side roads. **(2)**
- Sustainable design **(1)**
- Walking/biking opportunities
- New zoning codes to allow sustainable design
- Corridor redevelopment (i.e. physical design) **(2)**
- Other agency/municipal cooperation
- Keep undeveloped areas along the waterfront green and open.
- Centralized library **(3)**
- Limit the number of redundant stores, especially drugstores.
- Increase access to the River. **(1)**
- Keep waterfront connections open and balance them with future development. **(1)**
- Make more of a “green” movement with new and redevelopment. **(2)**
- Keep libraries non-centralized **(3)**
- Good paying jobs
- Tourism
- Better schedule for seasonal bridge
- Cooperation with the City on appearance of the travel routes into the Town.
- No parking along Titus Avenue
- Utilities below ground on Ridge Road
- Reuse of existing structures **(2)**
- Maximize the space that currently exists in the Town
- Mass transit improvements **(2)**
- Improve the beauty of Ridge Road

Threats

- Cost of running the Town **(2)**
- Negative perceptions/attitude overall **(1)**
- Loss of the little farmland that’s available
- Lack of code enforcement **(1)**
- Unfair County distribution of resources (e.g. more seems to be given to outlying suburbs). **(1)**
- Unequal Sheriff protection (less available to the Town).
- The number of people available for code enforcement
- Lack of metropolitan planning
- Lack of support for redevelopment/unwilling to change.
- NIMBY’s **(1)**
- Lack of community involvement or feedback **(1)**

- Lack of adequate mass transit
- Brownfields are unremediated **(1)**
- Uncooperative State officials
- Brownfield cleanup resources **(1)**
- Suburban sprawl
- Lack of attractions or recreation for families
- Increasing loss of jobs all over the County, region, State, etc. **(1)**
- Racism
- Urban blight encroachment **(4)**
- Crime **(1)**
- Control of taxes/increase in taxes **(2)**
- Deteriorating neighborhoods **(3)**
- Stable and unstable neighborhoods
- Demographic changes (i.e. high senior population that is moving out of the Town).
- Families moving out **(1)**
- Quality of education declines which could result in a threat.
- East-west school imbalance
- Narrowing roads and lower speed limits **(2)**
- Duplication of services in schools
- Two school districts
- Divide between east and west **(2)**
- Aging Town facilities (e.g. library, community center, etc.)
- Aging infrastructure **(2)**
- Aging housing stock and lack of community's investment/improvements to homes.
- Unwilling to change or a fear of change. **(3)**
- Developers that overrun greenspaces **(1)**
- National economy

The following are the top responses from above that received a ranking of more than one colored dot during the group exercise.

Top Strengths

- Proximity to the water **(4)**
- Location **(3)**
- Schools **(2)**
- Police department **(2)**
- Recreational opportunities (golfing, boating, etc.) **(2)**
- Affordable housing **(2)**
- Expressway access **(2)**
- Hospital **(2)**

Top Weaknesses

- Schools and the perception of the schools **(10)**
- Empty mall **(5)**

- Recreational facilities (5)
- Division of the Town into east and west (5)
- No Town center (3)
- Two school districts (3)
- Not enough commercial revenue, which leads to an increased burden on the residential areas. (2)

Top Opportunities

- Develop Town center areas that currently exist but are underdeveloped (i.e. community nodes) (3)
- Centralized library (3)
- Keep libraries non-centralized (3)
 - Corridor redevelopment (i.e. physical design) (2)
 - Make more of a “green” movement with new and redevelopment. (2)
 - Reuse of existing structures (2)
 - Mass transit improvements (2)

Top Threats

- Urban blight encroachment (4)
- Deteriorating neighborhoods (3)
- Unwilling to change or a fear of change. (3)
- Control of taxes/increase in taxes (2)
- Cost of running the Town (2)
- Narrowing roads and lower speed limits (2)
- Divide between east and west (2)
- Aging infrastructure (2)

Exercise #2 - Three Words

During the kickoff meeting, the public was asked to pick three single words that, in their opinion, best described the Town.

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|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Diverse, diversity, diversion – Lush, proximity, family-centered – Natural, historic, thriving – Religious, traditions, ethnic traditions – Folksy, traditional, stagnant – Walkable, bikeable, affordable – Bedroom, bisecting, economic – Urban, blight, encroachment – Polluted, diverse, divided | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Stagnant, proximity, challenged <p>For those who could not come up with three individual words to describe the Town, the consultants allowed members of the audience to provide single words that described the Town.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Changing – Unusual – Challenging |
|--|--|

Exercise #3 - Community's Top Five

To help the consultants and Steering Committee better understand the community's needs, desires, and priorities, attendees were asked to select the top five general statements/issues below that best reflect what they believed were the most important issues facing Irondequoit now and in the future. The issues/statements were ranked by the attendees from 1 to 5 with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.

- A. Expand public access to Irondequoit Bay, Lake Ontario and the Genesee River.
- B. Improve existing infrastructure in the town (sidewalks, utilities, roads).
- C. Establish a distinctive identity for Irondequoit along the Ridge Road corridor.
- D. Maintain/improve quality school systems.
- E. Protect natural features (steep slopes, wetlands, woodlots).
- F. Ensure new commercial development is economically and environmentally sustainable.
- G. Effective code enforcement in neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- H. Enhance and maintain affordable housing.
- I. Encourage redevelopment of existing commercial properties.
- J. Limit development along the shoreline of Lake Ontario and Irondequoit Bay.
- K. Expand recreational opportunities.
- L. Encourage multi-modal transportation options (walking, biking, & transit) with new development and redevelopment.
- M. Evaluate/improve community resources and services to better meet current and/or future needs.
- N. Protect strategic open space and key scenic views.
- O. Establish a marketing campaign that highlights the town's assets and proximity to attractions and venues in the town and region.
- P. Encourage neighborhood-scaled retail/commercial developments in other areas, such as the Titus-Cooper-Hudson, Sea Breeze, and Pattonwood neighborhoods.
- Q. Manage growth and redevelopment to ensure it is compatible with the Town's character.
- R. Maintain or reduce property taxes.
- S. Enhance/improve Irondequoit's portion of the Port of Rochester to reflect the changes made in Charlotte.
- T. Preserve and enhance the historical assets within the town.
- U. Provide additional senior housing options.
- V. Limit clearing of shoreline vegetation (trees, shrubs, grass) associated with waterfront development and redevelopment.
- W. Expand partnerships and collaborative efforts with neighboring municipalities (City of Rochester, Penfield, Webster and Greece).
- X. Other _____
- Y. Other _____
- Z. Other _____

The results were tabled and analyzed on a spreadsheet and the following issues/statements were found to be the top five by those in attendance:

1. Encourage redevelopment of existing commercial properties. (I)
2. Maintain/improve quality school systems. (D)
3. Encourage multi-modal transportation options (walking, biking, & transit) with new development and redevelopment. (L)
4. Maintain or reduce property taxes. (R)
5. Encourage neighborhood-scaled retail/commercial developments in other areas, such as the Titus-Cooper-Hudson, Sea Breeze, and Pattonwood neighborhoods. (P)

Through October and into November of 2008, a series of focus groups were held that targeted specific topics and issues in the Town, including Town-wide commercial areas, community identity and appearance, East Ridge Road, the waterfront, neighborhoods and housing, and parks/trails/recreation. Participants were invited to these meetings to take part in a roundtable discussion related to each issue and help to formulate recommendations for future projects,

Focus Group #1: Town-Wide Commercial

October 15, 2008

The discussion group included business owners, residents, Town staff, and Steering Committee members. The group was convened to discuss current conditions, future outlook, and provide general comments of the Town's neighborhood commercial areas. East Ridge Road was not discussed as it is the subject of a separate focus group.

1. Where do you do most of your shopping and why?

<i>Specific Areas</i>	<i>General Comments</i>
– I usually go to a mall. – Culver Plaza has done well; Irondequoit Plaza should be more like Culver-Ridge Plaza. – I like our neighborhood "spots," like Pattonwood. – I typically shop at Wegmans or Target (for prices). – "For anything special, I go outside the Town." – For mall shopping, I go to Pittsford Plaza. – I shop at Macy's for clothing. – I shop at the Hallmark in Irondequoit Plaza. – Teenagers prefer to shop at Eastview Mall. – Everyone shops for groceries at Wegmans in Irondequoit Plaza. – I like to shop in Webster.	– Irondequoit lacks stores that sell newer clothes and shoes, boutique shops, arts and crafts stores ("Dan's doesn't cut it.", big book stores, and anything for fine arts). – It's easy and quick to get to regional malls. It's not a big deal to go outside of Irondequoit. – Redevelopment of Irondequoit Mall may destroy some of the smaller strip malls. – Zoning should be flexible (e.g. Starbucks drive-thru). – I haven't been to Irondequoit Mall in years. – Retail should target specific groups that will come to Irondequoit. – Wegmans marketing is specific to each neighborhood's demographics.

Besides the four neighborhood commercial areas highlighted, the group noted another cluster of businesses that exist at the intersection of Culver and Norton. However, most of the commercial area is within the City of Rochester.

2. Describe the current conditions of the following four commercial areas in terms of the ownership (chain or local), appearance/aesthetics, accessibility, type of uses, target market, and building scale. What would you like each of the areas to be like in the future?

Titus/Cooper/Hudson Commercial Area

	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Future</i>
Ownership	– Developers have difficulty – Neighborhood opposition and site restrictions impede new development	
Appearance	– Looks like a “downtown” (+) – Little upkeep on property, needs more (-) – Lack of variety (-) – Footprints lend themselves to smaller business (+)	– Critique of current master plan – Take advantage of “neighborhood” environment – Take advantage of United Methodist church – House of Guitars should take more initiative
Appearance (cont’d)	– Pedestrians (+) – DMV is a mess (-) – House of Guitars is a mess (-)	
Access	– On the way to Wegmans (+) – Convenient to get to (+) – Presence of school (+) – Sidewalks (improvement needed) (-) – Not enough foot traffic(-)* potential for foot traffic untapped – Currently fighting for parking (-) – Broken sidewalks (-)	– Sidewalks (improvement needed continuous) – More parking needed
Uses	– Not enough depth (footprint) – Dense housing	

Empire Boulevard Commercial Area

	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Future</i>
Ownership		
Appearance	– Plaza looks terrible – Not pedestrian-oriented – Nothing there to attract people – Similar to Penfield – lots of traffic, but hard to navigate – No “main street” feel	– Potential for offices – Perhaps more retrofitting, due to material costs – Potential to be convenient service area for the east side of Irondequoit – Make public more aware of the area; should be marketed for access. – Keep it “simple” and define what simple is with effective communication
Access	– Access to Route 590 – Low rental prices in the area (+)	

Seabreeze Commercial Area

	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Future</i>
Appearance	- Proximity to the Lake & Bay - Sea Breeze Boulevard - Hot Dog Row - Tourist potential? - Durand Eastman Park is a unique resource - Architectural & historical/charm/character - Third generation residents - Park Side Diner – interesting architecture, should be preserved - New housing to open next year - Fishing is destination - Unique because it doesn't change - Great local landmarks - Reconstructed Sea Breeze Expressway	- Could use more “resort” architecture - Potential for new development - Boat launch = destination - Increased parking capacity - More retail - Perhaps rezoning, have businesses on Culver Road - Amphitheatre - Simple design guidelines - Get rid of some homes near Sea Breeze to improve access - Potential to develop outlet - Harnessing traffic on the Bay (lodging, etc.) - Potential for 44 boat slips near Town-acquired land from NYSDOT - Like it just how it is, it just needs to be tweaked - Art Gallery across from Sunoco - Keep the character the way it is

Pattonwood Commercial Area

	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Future</i>
Ownership		
Appearance	- Plaza has a nice selection, but needs other services - Street lights	- Trees needed - Potential to harness waterfront – it is not fully reachable - Daycare could be better (low maintenance) - No restaurant to target market - Needs incentives (good planning) to “step up” - Keep people here and coming back for waterfront - Has traffic moving through the Town - Three potential markets - Vacant land next to the plaza offers potential
Access	- New bridge improves access - Plaza helpful, but not fully utilized (meets demand if needed) - The waterfront is very fragmented, little wayfinding - Sidewalks are “spotty” - Trail is a positive - CSX – not safe or attractive	Improve sidewalks

Focus Group #2: Community Identity and Appearance

October 16, 2008

The consultants met with a group of people from the Town that represented business owners, residents, the Town, neighborhood groups, adjacent municipalities, and the Steering Committee to discuss the current perception of the Town, both internally and externally, and its overall appearance. As part of the meeting, participants identified areas in which the Town could approve its appearance from both marketing as well as a property maintenance perspective. The results of this meeting are summarized below.

- Affordable housing
- The lake
- Irondequoit Bay
- Durand Eastman Park
- House of Guitars
- Sea Breeze
- Medley Center
- Marinas
- Titus-Cooper neighborhood
- St. Paul Boulevard
- Two school districts
- Two libraries
- Seneca Park Zoo
- Genesee River
- Transportation options from the City into the Town (& vice versa)
- Golf course
- East Ridge Road
- Certain neighborhoods (i.e. the Flats, Silver City, etc.)
- The view from State Route 104
- The Seaway trail
- Variety of churches
- Sidewalks
- Trees
- McAvoy Park
- Irondequoit Creek
- Local restaurants
- Community Center
- Hot Dog row
- Irondequoit Cemetery
- White Ladies Castle
- Convenience of amenities

2. How does someone know they have entered Irondequoit?

- The Town signs and landscaping at key locations.
- The speed limit changes within the Town.
- The temperature actually seems to change on Route 104.
- One needs to cross water to come into the Town from the East or West.
- The housing conditions improve in comparison to the City.
- Trees are more prevalent in the Town and they are much larger/older.
- A more visible police force.
- Streets are usually clear all the time during the winter season.
- The roads are more open, since there is little on-street parking and most sites have off-street parking spaces.

3. What is the perception of the Town?*Externally*

Negative	Positive
– Old or aging – Crime – From the City, it's a step up, but from outer Towns, it's a step down. – An extension of the City of Rochester. – There is a lack of any new subdivisions or large housing tracts. – "That place with the empty mall." – An old, dying Town.	– It has a lot of natural beauty. – Quaint – A lot of parks – Lots of opportunity and beauty along Irondequoit Bay – When discussed or looked at "on paper" it's not as good looking or appealing as it is when you physically see it and experience the Town. – A lot of the homes in the Town are much lower in price or under valued and they are then seen as being "not as good" when in reality the homes are quite nice.

Internally

Negative	Positive
– East vs. West – 20-30 year old age group seems to be lacking or missing.	– High level of services – Not old – Young families

4. What is the extent of the east-west division in the Town, what is the cause, and does it still exist?

- Although the Town has only one zip code, some people refer to where they live as East Irondequoit or West Irondequoit - no such actual location or place exists by either of those names.
- The division seems to be based on the perception that the level of education/schools is better on the west side than the east side.
- One hypothetical question raised was since the division is based on the schools, why not combine them into one district; would it change the perception? This was studied in the past and the NYS Department of Education said they would not do this since the Town currently has two large high schools. In addition, the point was raised that the class size may be increased; the sizes are currently adequate according to the group

- The division also was/is based on income levels, as the east was historically blue-collar and the west was white-collar. This trend is shrinking now as most of the region is becoming predominantly white-collar.
- Is the east vs. west gap shrinking? An older generation of families/residents may still hold on to this division as a way to hold onto their identity in the community. As younger families move into the area, they may be unaware of the division and are looking to change the perception.
- The division does appear to resurface or be brought back up around large issues, such as the current issue of a potential library consolidation.

5. What are the most attractive parts of the Town? Least attractive?

Most Attractive	Least Attractive
– “Gold Coast” – Neighborhoods, such as Huntington Hills (near Culver Road by the cemetery), Summerville, the Flats, etc. – Durand Eastman Park – Irondequoit Bay – The drive down St. Paul Boulevard with all the stately homes and trees. – Thomas Avenue – The Bay “hills” – Lakeshore – Sea Breeze, especially the miniature golf course, restaurants, bars; Culver Road portion – White City – Rodger’s Parkway with its great landscaping, homes, and central landscaped median – Town Hall campus is a central hub for activities without there being a village in the Town (which is typically the activity hub) – Butterfly garden – Hidden gems such as Marge’s	– East Ridge Road – Some of the neighborhoods around the Sea Breeze area. – Bayview Road homes could be much better looking than they currently are (property maintenance). – The condition of fences and backyards that face SR 590. – The backs of businesses that face SR 104 look unsightly. – Parking and general road condition along Lake Shore Boulevard (edge of roads always looks deteriorated and worn). – Median condition on Kings Highway (large weeds grow up in the cracks). – Titus-Cooper strip plaza needs maintenance. – There is not central theme or identity for the Town for what really are the good points/attributes.

6. What are some of the things that could be done to improve the identity or appearance of the Town?

- There needs to be one central theme, but the theme also needs to celebrate the uniqueness of each neighborhood.
- “This is not the home of Irondequoit Mall.” (To quote an old sign that used to be in the

Town.)

- A Town where the land and water meet, just like what your Town name means.
- The design theme/idea should incorporate a mix of words, colors and graphics that can be put on everything Town related to establish some sort of branding or identity in and of the Town.
- The water on three sides is very unique to Irondequoit.
- There needs to be an increase in pride also in the local businesses, especially along East Ridge Road.
- We need to promote the feeling of the neighborhoods in the theme too. "We need to sell the sizzle, not the steak."

Geographic notes

- Currently there are nice looking, wooden welcome signs as the following locations: Saint Paul Boulevard @ Town line, Seneca Street @ Town line, Ridge Road East near the Post Office, Portland Avenue @ Portland Parkway, Empire Boulevard on the west side of the Bay, and @ the SR 104 and 590 split.
- In the following locations there are either no signs or the signs are the NYS DOT typical metal signs: Pattonwood Drive @ Sagamore Drive, Seneca Street @ Long Acre Road, Hudson Avenue @ Town line, North Goodman @ Town line, Culver Road @ Town line, Empire Boulevard @ the west Town line, Winton Road North @ Town line, SR 590 @ southern Town line, SR 104 @ the Bay, and Culver Road @ the northeastern Town line.

General Comments/Notes

- East Ridge Road is probably the biggest eyesore
- Concern about increasing rental properties' impact on the appearance of the town.
- There is a lack of continuity among the condition and appearance of the various stores there.
- "Planting Irondequoit Pride" has been working to improve the landscaping and physical appearance within the Town.
- An increase in marketing and public relations needs to be done to get the word out about the highlights of the Town. Many people do not know how great the Town is until they live here. There have been many instances where people have moved to the Town, moved away, and then came back because the feel of the Town could not be replicated elsewhere.
- The scale of the neighborhoods is close and tight knit.
- "It's the best kept secret in Monroe County."
- There needs to be higher expectations from businesses for property maintenance.
- The zoning code in general is outdated and sets the bar low for expectations for development design.
- The Planning and Zoning Boards needs to follow through with conditions that are set on site plans for businesses.
- Some young people are living just outside of the Center City, but outside of the Town as well in areas such as Culver Road or North Winton Road.

Focus Group #3: East Ridge Road Corridor

October 28, 2008

How Often Do You Go On Ridge Road?

Meeting attendees ranged in answers:

- Every day.
- More frequently to drive past it, infrequently to go there.
- They because they have to go there (work) and not because they necessarily want to go.
- It's not a thoroughfare.
- Others in the group go to the Ridge several times a week.

Observed traffic conditions on the corridor:

- Lousy road to ride on because the lights aren't timed right and lanes are not marked correctly.
- Very little appealing to the eye when either walking or driving.
- Tough place for pedestrians and no place to ride for bicyclists.
- Not a lot of places to cross roadways safely (with traffic lights).
- The corridor lost its appeal.
- Awful for bicycling, not a level road where the curb cuts are.
- No consistent setbacks – visually doesn't flow.
- Traffic is less than it used to be. When mall was going strong, the traffic was much heavier (motorists were waiting at multiple light cycles to get through intersections).
- Pedestrians can't get to the places where pedestrian access is better.

General Observations:

- Business climate on ridge road doesn't feel healthy.
- Appearance of the corridor doesn't feel healthy (old, tired, outdated).
- How many new businesses in old buildings?
- Seems like a lot of commercial turn over.
- The corridor has gone through transition, but it seems healthier than others.
- Narrow corridor limits what you can do.
- Disjointed corridor.
- No flow at all along the corridor.
- For development community, the parcels are smaller, the buildings are smaller and individually owned (harder to assemble). Makes it difficult for developers to come in. It's a lot of work for smaller projects to make it work.
- Access to the town is limited by geography (surrounded by water on three sides). So the market for Ridge Road is largely Irondequoit and NE Rochester.
- We should be thinking of Ridge Road as our community's "main street" not like Ridge Road in Greece.

- E. Ridge function like Main Street, but doesn't look it. "It looks like Main Street on crack."

Geographic Comments:

- Need greater connectivity with the City of Rochester.
- There should be decorative gateways at key intersections.
- High intensity commercial area is/should be predominantly on the south side of Ridge Road from North Goodman to Culver Road and on both sides on Ridge from Culver Road to East Ridge H.S.
- Difficult to pay for greenspace.
- A good example of individual developments in the corridor includes Reed Eye Associates in the Culver Ridge Plaza.
- Increase/improve connectivity and cross-access among adjacent businesses.
- Explore opportunities for shared parking between adjacent businesses.
- There needs more residential mixed use.
- Various visual improvements include streetscaping/landscaping, pavement treatments such as stamped or textured pavements, burying the overhead utility wires, and replacing the current street lights with more decorative lighting that also incorporates pedestrian lighting.
- The number of curb cuts is uneven on the north and south sides.
- Limited room for adding dedicated turn lanes.
- There should be fewer walkers and more bikers on the sidewalks.
- Planted/landscaped center median
- Widen travel lanes

Shop on Ridge for:	Shop someplace else for:
– Restaurants – Rubinos – Home Depot – eye doctor – local services – hair stylist – Wegmans – Black's hardware – Lots of diners	– Park Ave restaurants – book store – fitness center – furniture – sporting goods and supplies – "good"/upscale restaurants – Electronics – fine art supplies – independent living (for nice facilities)

Update from Monroe County DOT on East Ridge Road improvements (as of October 2008)

- The corridor’s 66-foot right of way limits what can be done without increasing the ROW and space is limited anyway due to the topography (therefore no space for bike lanes).
- The current project rehabilitation program will look at improved signal timing, repaving/ restriping (including at Deltasonic area where the two-way, dedicated left-turn lane is narrowing and causes accidents), access management (reduced curb cuts) where possible (and where property owners agree), improved driveway cut angles, and the possibility of some landscaped medians or turn lanes at key intersections. The goal of the rehabilitation project is to increase safety. The existing pavement and underground utilities (sewer/ water) are in good shape.
- Long-term major improvements would require land acquisition to accomplish some of the design improvements that the community desires for this corridor.
- Signal timings would be improved for overall traffic flow, but “pedestrian only” phases would not be added. People commented that crossings were difficult due to the green left turn arrows and the right on reds.
- Moving utilities underground would be costly.

Focus Group #4: Waterfront

October 29, 2008

After introductions, the consultants gave a brief overview of the comprehensive plan process and then introduced the four Irondequoit waterfront areas to be discussed. These areas were identified in previous planning efforts by the Town as potential sites for economic development. (Note: the waterfront opportunity areas were later expanded to coincide with the update to the Town's Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP). The sites can be found in Section 8.) Several sites have active development proposals and/or offer potential opportunities for development and or improved public access to the water. The discussion addressing each area is summarized below:

South Bay Shore – Area along Empire Boulevard between base of hill and Irondequoit Creek Bridge (Penfield town line). The area is currently is home to masters Stone Supply, MacMillan Marina and a small bar/restaurant.

- The south end of the bay is shallow and much of it consists of mudflats.
- There are plans to construct a new trail through the wetlands to the south (Monroe County Tryon Park). The trail will connect Empire Boulevard with Browncroft Boulevard.
- Land in this area should be reserved to maintain public access including an area for public parking.
- Plans for this area should be coordinated with what Penfield does on its larger area abutting the south end of the bay.
- Traffic along Empire Boulevard is heavy and travels too fast making left turn dangerous.
- The area needs trees along the shoreline and along the road.
- An eagle has a nest nearby this area.
- South of the bay is a geologically and environmentally distinctive area of wetland filled long, narrow ravines bounded by forested sandy bluffs.
- Small boat launching (canoes/kayaks) in this area is an important use that should be maintained and improved.
- The views over the bay and wetlands make this a nice area for eating/restaurants.
- Muck/fill may pose construction and development constraints.
- Narrow width of land between bay and Road limits development potential.

West side of Irondequoit Bay

- Town website contains link with information describing proposed development at the Newport House. Condominiums are proposed using existing boat slips.
- Bay faces boat saturation.
- There are too many boats and they travel too fast.
- We don't want to see more boats.
- The Newport property has steep highly erode able slopes.

- The density and scale of the proposed project is not in keeping with existing development.
- A representative from the Town explained that the project site was developed as one of eight “economic opportunity” sites in the 1985 Town Master Plan and 1988 Local Waterfront Redevelopment Program (LWRP). The current proposal is being reviewed by the Planning Board following existing zoning and the recommendations of previous planning efforts. The developer is currently preparing Environmental Impact Statement for the project.
- There should be more businesses and possibly restaurants on the bay.
- A restaurant is a good use for the Newport house site and other bay locations. There should be more restaurants along the bay.
- Four-story condo buildings will not fit in.
- The Bay has a unique nodal development pattern that includes both areas of concentrated activity as well as long stretches that are quiet and remain in their natural state.
- Public access to the bay should be improved. In the summer, the lots at the north end of the bay are inadequate.
- The Newport House development should include public access...perhaps a waterfront promenade.
- Public access is disappearing around the country as well as in Rochester so it is important to maintain/expand water access in Irondequoit.
- Unstable, eroding, steep, sandy slopes are a problem all around the bay.
- New development should be designed to avoid impacting existing slopes or removing trees where they are needed to prevent erosion.
- The State Tunnel property does not abut the bay but does drain into Densmore Creek which flows into the bay. The property is a former ravine which was filled 25 years ago when the Eastern Monroe County Sanitary sewer tunnel was excavated. The stability and carrying capacity of the site is unknown. It would be suitable for ball fields.
- Residential or commercial development on the sewer property would generate new tax revenue.
- The Glen Haven Property is zoned for residential use. The site’s zoning should be evaluated to ensure what eventually is built on the site is appropriate and in harmony with the surrounding area.
- The Glen haven site is more suited to low rather than high density residential development.
- Public waterfront access should be incorporated into every new development project abutting the water.
- Public access needs to “feel” like public access and not just be public in name or so remote that no one knows about it or uses it.
- There is a gap in activity between Seabreeze Amusement Park (top of the hill) and Hot Dog Row.
- Opposite the lower Seabreeze parking lot on Culver is a narrow vacant lot. It is part of the old Hojack Line railroad bed but may be too narrow to develop. Clearing brush would allow views of the lake.

Sea Breeze

- The Seabreeze Expressway reconstruction as a boulevard with roundabouts is an important improvement.
- The 590 terminus is being relocated to the west which will open space next to the bay. The state will sell the land to the Town of Irondequoit for one dollar. It is not designated as parkland so the Town has latitude to study what the best future use is. The town may sell the land but would have to reimburse the state for its market value. The Town may add up to 40 boat slips on the property.
- An access road behind Hot Dog Row will allow more room for boat launch queuing.
- During the design development phase of the 590 project, parallel parking along the roadway was considered but it is not included in the final design.
- The Seabreeze area needs more parking.
- If the Town adds boat slips, boaters would be able to patronize the restaurants.
- The area needs a playground, benches and picnic tables. Rentable picnic shelters/lodges would also be a nice addition.
- Street trees, landscaping and gardens are needed throughout the area.
- The beach and grove of trees next to the bay outlet needs to be cleaned up. It would make a nice picnic area.
- Perhaps the waterfront zoning district should be expanded to include Seabreeze Amusement Park.

Genesee Harbor (Pattonwood, Summerville area)

- Access to east jetty along Genesee River mouth is difficult to access, in poor shape, and a hazard to boaters because it is unlit at night.
- Lighthouse Pointe development – 50 acres. This property was the site of a City landfill in the 1950s. Brownfield cleanup is required. Developer believes that inclusion in New York State's Brownfield program will be required to make project viable. A water taxi to Charlotte may be considered.
- Several members of the group expressed support for the project.
- It is an appropriate location to accommodate dense residential development.
- Charles Morgan presented an overview of the project and preliminary concept design drawings. The project will contain retail, restaurants, a boutique hotel, town houses, and condominiums.
- Shumway Marina will stay in its present location.
- The parcel of land between Rock Beach Road and lakeshore boulevard is for sale.
- Van Lare Sewage plant odors are still a problem in the northwest part of town.

Focus Group #5: Neighborhoods & Housing

October 30, 2008

The discussion group with the consultants included residents from various neighborhoods in the Town, Town staff, Steering Committee members, and some representatives from a local real estate agency. This focus group met to discuss the makeup and general condition of the Town's various neighborhoods and housing. The results of this meeting are summarized below.

The group represented various neighborhoods or areas throughout the Town, including Merchants/Empire, Norton/Culver, Deerfield (Association), Oakridge Drive, Orchard Park, Coronado Drive, and Belhurst Drive.

1. What are some of the good and bad points about the Town's neighborhoods and homes?

Good

- Diverse housing stock
- The neighborhoods are well-established (you know what is next door to you since there is little open, developable land)
- There are sidewalks that connect to various areas in the Town
- The sidewalks are utilized by school kids
- Proximity to waterways (great potential)
- Neighborhood schools
- Tree lined streets in many areas

Bad

- No room for growth or expansion
- The sidewalks are limited in some areas, not all of them connect (sidewalks go to nowhere)
- Ignorance - lack of acknowledgement that there are other great neighborhoods in the Town
- Deteriorating neighborhoods/homes in some areas
- Conversion of homes from residential to commercial use
- Some schools/neighborhoods are fragmented
- Not replacing trees when they are removed (sometimes by property owner request, even though tree lawn is in the right-of-way).

Good and Bad

- Affordable housing - people only think of Irondequoit as a place to start and there aren't "step-up" housing options
- Older neighborhoods, especially the housing stock
- Smaller lots and close neighbors ("eyes on the street" for safety, but sometimes a lack of privacy)

2. What is the general feeling and condition of the housing stock in the Town?

- Overall the homes are in fair to good condition.
- There are pockets of lower quality housing stock throughout the Town. A lot of these homes are lower quality because they were built that way years ago, they require substantial improvements that the owners cannot afford, or just due to owner apathy.
- Complaints or violations about property maintenance are split pretty evenly between renter-occupied and owner-occupied housing. But there is a negative perception about rentals
- In addition, the number of complaints the Town receives are equally shared between property maintenance issues and tenant issues.
- Owner/renter apathy and lack of pride in one's house is an issue – and may be the reason for the deteriorated look/complaints
- A dated zoning code and a lack of enforcement (numbers of officers available) adds to the property maintenance issue.
- In some complaint cases, the size of the lots restricts modern day conveniences that have caused the complaint in the first case. (i.e. cars parking on the grass, when the driveway is full and the lot is too small to have a larger driveway. The lot was designed and built for a family with one car, yet today most homes have a minimum of two and designed for such.)

3. How are some of the neighborhoods in the Town designated or defined?

- Defined by proximity to a school
- Neighborhood associations
- Subdivisions
- Fire districts
- Proximity to churches
- Sports
- East vs. west; sometimes on the west side it is also a case of north vs. south of Titus Avenue

4. What are some of the similarities in the neighborhoods?

- Tree-lined streets
- Sidewalks
- Kids
- Athletic organizations

5. What are some improvements or issues that you believe should be addressed?

- There should be better transitions or buffers between residential and commercial areas; however, the proximity of residential and commercial areas is an asset too.
- An increase in access to public transportation within the Town, not just into the City.
- More “quaintness”
- Walkable communities

- There are not a lot of places for kids to “hang out”
- Competition is hard for mom & pop stores vs. the larger chain stores
- The number and variety of restaurants is sporadic and limited to certain areas.
- Lack of senior patio homes or upscale apartments
- Perception of the schools may drive people out of the town, or in some cases to one side of town or another
- The town needs a strong program for tree replacement; and other agencies (state/county) should have to replace or install new trees when they do a street project.
- The neighborhoods are turning over (from seniors to younger families or singles) and the new residents don’t have the same ties to the neighborhood that the older residents did. As a consequence, there isn’t as much appreciation or connection to the community.
- General lack of neighborhood “values”
- Due to the amount of turnover in the Town (between 1990 and 2000, 19% of the Town moved out or in), people do not know what services are available. Also, some people who have lived here for a long time may not know what is available in the Town.

Building on the last question above, some of the reasons given as to why people have moved out of the Town include the schools/perception of schools, the need for more upscale housing, or senior housing opportunities. It was also noted that, in general, people who move out of the Town follow this pattern: residents on the west side move to Pittsford and east side residents move to Webster.

Geographic Notes

Identifiable Neighborhoods:

- Summerville (area encompassing north of Pattonwood Drive and the west half of Rock Beach Road)
- White City (in general the area north of Rock Beach Road within Summerville)
- Silver Coast (east half of Rock Beach Road)
- Gold Coast (Rock Beach Road extension)
- Flats (Seneca Park Avenue to Sagamore Drive, west of St Paul Blvd)
- Titus-Cooper-Hudson (St Paul Blvd, Titus Avenue, Oakview Drive)
- East Parkway (Titus Ave, Winona Blvd, Maplehurst Road, St Paul Blvd)
- Southeast Neighborhood Association (Norton Street, Town line, Pardee Road, Empire Blvd)
- Laurelton (Whittington Road, Empire Blvd, Town line, North Winton Road)
- Orchard Park (Route 590, Empire Blvd, Irondequoit Bay, Bay Shore Blvd)
- Bayfront (Newport Road, Bay Shore Blvd)
- Bay View (Route 590, Bay Shore Blvd, Bay View Road)
- Huntington Hills (Hoffman Road, west side of Culver Road)
- German Village (Route 590, Point Pleasant Road, Irondequoit Bay)
- Sea Breeze (Culver Road, Town line, Lake Shore Blvd)

Specific areas of concern:

- Sea Breeze
- Van Lare WWTF (odors especially)
- Ridge Road East
- Area around Kings Highway, south of East Ridge Road
- Small area west of Culver Road, south of Echo Street
- West end of Empire Blvd near the Town line
- Southwestern corner of Town near Merchants & Culver Road in the City (a lot more rental properties that are spilling over from the City)

Specific areas of opportunity:

- Cooper\Titus intersection
- Sea Breeze area

Areas that may need buffering from adjacent uses/areas:

- Titus Avenue & Oak Ridge Drive
- West of the Cooper-Titus intersection
- Hudson Avenue near the Town line
- Portland Avenue near the Town line

Focus Group #6: Parks, Trails & Recreation

November 5, 2008

The discussion group with the consultants included residents in the Town, Town staff, and Steering Committee members to discuss the general condition of the Town's recreation facilities. The Town has eight recreation areas or parks, three County parks, and multiple trails available for public use, not including any facilities available at the local schools. The results of this meeting are summarized below.

McAvoy Park

Current Conditions

- The park was updated approximately five years ago and currently has one football/soccer/lacrosse field, one smaller soccer field (40'x70'), and two softball fields. Artificial turf.
- Field lighting is adjustable and the entire park is fully lit.
- Storage capacity is inadequate, especially at the snack bar/concession stand.
- The hours of operation at the park are usually from 9am to 9pm; sometimes it is open until 11pm for special events. It is closed from mid-November to March 1st.
- The park is consistently used and the schedule is almost always full. Everyone who uses the park must sign in.
- The neighbors complain that the park does not meet the neighborhoods needs. Perception??
- Past improvements have increased the use of the park.
- Previously, the park only had one baseball field available. Now many sports are played there.
- Fees to use the facility only cover maintenance.
- Adult softball leagues
- The park is fully programmed
- East Ridge H.S. plays here sporadically.

Potential Improvements

- Redevelopment of the park should include fencing so that the park can be locked at night to "protect our investment."
- Parking is inadequate (approximately 198 spaces). Beginning in the fall, sectional athletics begins. Fifty more parking spaces would be adequate to accommodate this.
- The obvious area to expand the parking is to the south towards the church. There is approximately 113 acres of land available. Thirty-five spaces could easily fit on a portion of the property.
- Expanding the concession stand would take up around two spaces.
- Press box with score board control and a sound system – this would need to be secured. The schools have a media program that could utilize/man this.

- Other notes: Vote on December 9, 2008 for East Irondequoit CSD for the construction of a multi-purpose field, a reconstructed softball field, new tennis courts, new bus garage, expanded gymnasium, & a new pool.

Camp Eastman

Current Conditions

- One soccer field
- Approximately 90 acres in size
- A large berm is located down the east side of the property to protect the view of homes along Oakridge Drive.
- Irondequoit's soccer tournament cannot be held there.
- The berm is constructed from rock excavated from the tunnel project and is hard to remove. It is approximately 35 yards wide.

Potential Improvements

- A secondary access is needed to make it safer for more people on the site.
- Camp Eastman needs some of the Van Lare property to really make the Camp usable for additional fields.
- In general, the Camp should be investigated more for the potential for fields.
- Soccer events at Eastman

Senior Center

Current Conditions

- Recreational space doubles as dining space.
- In 1977, the number of gymnasiums was inadequate and only one additional gym has been added since then. The building has been in use since 1977.
- The fitness room has both equipment and instructional space.
- The center serves approximately 45-60 people per day.
- The fees for the center never cover operation or debt service.

Potential Improvements

- 20-25,000 square feet needed – would double for use by other groups
- Larger dining room with a prep kitchen/area, game area, meeting area, space for community groups at minimal cost, arts/craft areas.
- The Town needs to improve the control and/or scheduling of the space that is available in the center and provide more flexibility to needs.
- The center needs a “child-friendly” space.
- Two years ago, a community forum identified the need for a new community center. Preliminary visioning identified the old Chase-Pitkin site; however, that was unavailable. Funding is needed from the State for design/construction, but due to the condition of the State's finances/economy, the outlook looks grim.

Heyer-Bayer Memorial Park

Current Conditions

- Previously called Remond Road Park
- Over the last five years vandalism has increased in the park.

Potential Improvements

- Hot in the summer – needs trees for shading
- Needs off-street parking (road reconstruction on SR 590 may provide additional space).
- Local service clubs could provide assistance with the construction of amenities such as shelters or planting trees.

Bateau Terrace Play Area

Current Conditions

- The neighbor's deeds include beach access rights.
- The homeowners bought sections of the old Hojack RR line.
- There are concerns about the value of the homes with the play area nearby as lake access is critical to the value of the neighborhood.
- The Town owns to the low/high (??) water mark ...
- The Town recently improved the lawn in the play area.
- The high usage of the play area annoys adjacent neighbors.
- The terraces are so narrow that beach parking causes problems for the neighborhood in general.
- The play area is heavily used by teenagers and dog owners.

Potential Improvements

- There needs to be a balance between the neighborhood and public access to the play area.
- If the neighbors used the beach area more frequently, the number of problems might be reduced.
- The play area needs to be investigated for the best use for the neighborhoods.

Spezio Park

Current Conditions

- Two tennis courts and a playground
- Neighbors think they own it.

Potential Improvements

- Maintenance needed for the tennis courts and playground equipment.

New SR 590/Culver recreational area

Current Conditions

- Area being reconstructed as part of the SR 590 improvements.

Potential Improvements

- Forty boat slips
- Increased access to the bay and lake
- There is enough room for only one or two fields.
- "Tot lot," picnic shelter, family trail
- Increased public parking
- Speed table across the access road to preserve pedestrian access and promote walkability in and around the Bay.

Helmer Nature Center

Current Conditions

- Owned by the West Irondequoit CSD and the Town owns two acres where the building is located.
- The fields are owned by the school – four soccer fields and a lacrosse field
- Inadequate parking and overflow is a common problem.
- The center is not in a central location; it is too far from the east side of Town.
- The school would like to buyback the land owned by the Town.
- Difficult to turn left from Pinegrove to St Paul Street.
- The seniors previously had space in the basement of the Town Hall.
- In 1977, a study stated that the building would be inadequate in 1985.

Joshua Park

Current Conditions

- Five years old
- Located behind Wegmans and next to Saint Margaret Mary's Church/School, which is closed.
- The Church is selling the land next to the park (approximately 6.5-7 acres).
- Two bocce ball courts, one horseshoe pit, two fields (40'x70'), and a walking path.
- The park is a target for vandals.
- Younger people hang out at the park at night – all ages, genders, and ethnicities.
- The trees have been improperly maintained (topped off, not pruned effectively).
- The rubber safety surface under the playground has been ruined.
- This park has some of the worst problems among all the Town parks with \$5,000-\$7,000 in repairs alone required.
- The park is difficult to maintain.
- The Ivy Ridge Apartments (Section 8 housing) seem to be the source of many of the problems.
- Many adults are scared to go into the park.
- The security cameras have been removed in the past.

- The park is typically used during the day while children are in school.
- Belligerent behavior by users.

Town Hall

Current Conditions

- Summer concert series, Farmers Market, other entertainment events, 4th of July festival
- Gazebos (donated by the local Kiwanis Club)
- Ukrainian memorial, Fireman's monument
- Very attractive campus with historic buildings
- The Town has talked about moving the Department of Public Works; however, the cost is prohibitive.
- Traffic flow issues within the campus.

Potential Improvements

- Baseball events at Town Hall
- The site is attractive for a new library.

Irondequoit Bay Marine Park

Current Conditions

- No parking for non-boat users
- Public beach
- Swing bridge is a nightmare
- 11 years old
- Five months of traffic; seven months available for boats
- Money is not available for a higher bridge.
- Parking is prohibitive.
- Webster residents are opposed to opening the bridge to more traffic.
- The bridge is "a major pain in the neck" to some residents.
- The bridge has hampered commercial businesses in the area.

Potential Improvements

- A study is being done on the swing bridge to investigate the possibility of more operations, which would require a more powerful motor and leveling of the surrounding site. The bridge could potentially be opened quickly in case a storm or event arises – public safety issue, especially with the proximity of Ginna.

Tryon Park

Current Conditions

- Irondequoit Bay West
- Steep slopes
- Undeveloped

- LaSalle's Landing boardwalk approved at Tryon Park

Potential Improvements

- Destination area proposed at the end of the bay
- Boardwalk through the park? Neighbors opposed.
- Environmental areas need protection

Durand Eastman Park

Current Conditions

- A much loved park throughout the Town
- E. Coli pollution at the beach and the ponds further east from the adjoining streams.
- Problems at the creeks through the western portion of the park.
- Dog waste is a problem.
- Dog walkers keep the park safe.
- Aging septic systems on the homes located in the park; an expanded sewer system may be needed.
- Huntington Hills is on septic as well.
- Vandalism has been a problem this year (2008).
- The park closes at 11 p.m.
- The park has an outstanding arboretum.
- Lovers Lane activities have been cleaned up.
- Durand is a popular place for walking, jogging, dog walking, and other passive recreational activities.

Bristol Play Park/Pardee Road Play Area

Current Conditions

- Works well
- Located off of Pardee Road
- Includes a playground

Vinton Playground

Current Conditions

- Small play area that works well.
- The least used of the three play areas available

General Comments

- The Town has no dedicated little league facilities, yet other Town's do.
- The field locations are fragmented, which makes it difficult for parents ...
- In general, the Town would prefer to have one single 5-6 field complex, which would be much more efficient to maintain.
- There is a vote on December 9, 2008 for East Irondequoit CSD for the construction of a multi-purpose field, a reconstructed softball field, new tennis courts, new bus garage,

- expanded gymnasium, & a new pool.
- How many athletic fields do we (the Town) really need? Typically, there are industry standards to follow, but community-specific factors really determine the need.
- There are plenty of fields for baseball, but not enough fields for soccer.
- There is no “community feel” at the various baseball events and the fields don’t feel like community space.
- One community facility with multiple fields (4-5) would allow tournaments to be played.
- Most of the athletic programs are dependent on fields available at the various schools.
- Natural grass fields do not hold up well under an ever increasing demand for athletics.
- Providing more fields is a challenge.
- The youth population rises and falls.
- The lack of fields encourages younger families to go to other towns where facilities exist.
- The children suffer while the community waits for more fields to be built.
- One central location with 4-6 fields would give teams a home base for activities and events.
- The Town does do a good job with what it has available.
- Any proposals for an expansion must be fiscally realistic.
- Perhaps the scheduling of games should be investigated and altered; more Saturday games could be considered.
- Recreational and athletic activities are an important part of the Town’s social life.
- Recreational programs are the “building blocks” of the community.
- In general, programmatic outreach exceeds the availability and capacity of the fields that exist.
- In order for the Parks & Recreation Plan to be truly comprehensive, the inventory of available facilities must include school facilities (at a reduced rate of availability).
- Personal recreational opportunities (i.e., marked bike lanes, sidewalk networks, gyms) should be incorporated into the plan.
- Demand analysis for services is necessary and should include ACTUAL demands (ie, enrollment) on facilities PLUS forecasts. It must distinguish what we need vs. what we want.

Town of Irondequoit Comprehensive Master Plan

Public Informational Meeting

February 2009

This meeting was held at the Town Hall to provide the community with an overview of the Town's existing conditions, including natural features, demographics, and economic conditions. In addition, attendees were engaged in a hands-on activity to develop and refine Town-wide goals.

Goal Area: Economic Vitality

- Add to the “internal” economic vitality – why not a town trolley? This would help with parking (especially for the many elderly) and during our long winter. Seems like a no-brainer.
- The statement should reference the value of businesses integrated in neighborhoods. That's a value to residents – that it's a walk, short bike ride or drive to a local business.
- To have a vibrant economy we need to attract regional consumers. We need to figure out what would make someone in Pittsford or Brighton drive to Irondequoit. We need unique businesses or a “theme” to attract people.
- Bike trails are needed throughout [the eastern portion] of Irondequoit and along ...
- Titus/Cooper/Hudson is a neighborhood nexus and a vital commercial district. The Town, residents and businesses need to continue to promote and improve this important area.
- Serious consideration to retail space near Smith Boys and open lots on Pattonwood Drive
- Changing the layout on Titus between Cooper and Hudson. Small shops that are pedestrian friendly, but facades that are small town like; not hodge-podge. Nice looking!!
- It seems that the strip mall at Hudson & Titus has never recovered from the movement of stores to the Ridge Mall (now Medley Center). I believe we could support more than three dollar stores and a liquor store. Specialty restaurants with outside [seating] (possibly covered) connected possibly to a book store and specialty shops. The whole Main Street is need of a face lift or a complete change with a park; currently there is property behind this area that could be developed.
- Waterfront revitalization concerns me – does it mean putting more traffic in the bay? Does it mean preserving the beauty surrounding the bay and waterways? I find it very difficult even to find a place to park to even jog what surrounds. Do we need more congestion with boaters, more commercial businesses surrounding the bay?
- We have had two failed Irondequoit Mall/Medley Center efforts to bring commerce, etc. here. We need to scale back our objectives & face the reality of our location, demographics, competition and wealth of residents. Most folks I know have no faith in the viability of current Medley Center plan – unless this is prelude to a casino! Let's hope not.

Goal Area: Parks, Recreation & Trails

- Partner with the Helmer Nature Center to use the facility for summer day-camps about the natural world.

- Develop a master plan for Camp Eastman to make best use of this open space and lovely forested area.
- A “challenge path” with markers. [Trail with a mix of nature/interpretive/activity signs]
- More snow/wintertime events and post them where residents will see and benefit.

Goal Area: Environmental Stewardship

- Continue to protect the natural resources we have in our community
- If we continue to bring business development into the area, limit that amount of space (natural land) that is used. If the business fails, it leaves behind an empty, hollow and unappealing structure.
- [Support local environmental groups such as the] local weather group or bird watcher group. (How are the eagles doing? The eagle “meeting” had people standing in the vestibule.)
- Use the Town plow/sidewalk plow in all of Irondequoit and perhaps long the lake path.
- Close a lane on St. Paul Blvd. and install a bike lane.
- Keep branch libraries to maintain neighborhood access.
- Promote neighborhood businesses rather than a subsidized, expanded Medley Center.

Goal Area: Residential Living

- [We] need local shuttle bus service to connect people to these services, schools and community centers. Bike trails with free bike that you can pick up and leave places [for other to use].
- Do the homes show an increase in value? What did the recent assessment indicate?

Goal Area: Community Resources

- Stop with the beauty, trees, ravines, water – people know. How do we make it benefit the Town? What, besides this, can separate us? Nail it and put a dollar amount to it.
- Too wordy.
- Consolidate fire departments and save money in property taxes!
- The value and cost of our community services are well-understood by the community members, publicly benchmarked (to help understand the value) and supported by community members through regular, solicited feedback and reported metrics. [*Responding to the “What specific objectives and/or actions should be included in this goal area?”*]
- In terms of town government communication – the town website is very comprehensive, but I still feel as though many residents do not know about town government happenings and decisions.
- It would be great to have “central” community services, whether it would be a recreation center, pool, library, senior center. But what the people like in Irondequoit is that everything is close, walkable, etc. So to preserve that, some sort of shuttle service, local public

transportation, borrowable bikes, etc. would bridge the concepts of “central” and “local, walkable.” It would also be a unique offering for a community.

- Look for efficiencies to be gained by combining school, fire, etc. services now divided into east and west.
- Given demographics, expand services for older population.
- Maintain libraries as [they] enhance local neighborhoods and retain libraries in close proximity to both high schools.
- Enhance public transport on demand.
- To dispel existing or perceived divisiveness and promote unity among all Town residents, the following initiatives should be undertaken: Eliminate the designation of East and West Irondequoit. There isn't a topographical element (i.e. a river, a mountain) separating the Town; combine East Irondequoit Central School District and West Irondequoit Central School District into one identity simply named the Irondequoit Central School District. Added benefit: a reduction in administrative levels will result in saving taxpayer dollars; consolidate East and West branch libraries into one, easily accessible structure for all to share; and upgrade the Pinegrove Senior Community Center or construct a new building but rename it the "Irondequoit Community Center". By doing so, you will give it a sense of acceptance, of accommodation for all Irondequoit residents, no matter of age.
- The Town should promote itself as the "Resort Town of Monroe County". Why not advertise our abundant natural resources to people throughout the local region? We could lure fishermen here by describing the many outlets available to them such as the bay, creeks, ponds and the lake. We could interest hikers to come here by describing the hiking trails existing in our parks and detail the many elevated areas and hills. Some other activities we could promote are golf, bird watching, jogging, boating, sledding, camping, ice-skating and cross-country skiing. This could provide an economic boost to the Town (hotel occupancy may increase, visitors buying at local stores, and eateries etc.)
- The current library is woefully inadequate. In some instances, books are not available at a branch and can be ordered from other libraries, for a fee. Other options could be going to the downtown library hoping that it is in stock or going to the university library. Either way, it is at least an hour of travel time back and forth. Please consider combining and updating our library!

Goal Area: Community Identity and Appearance

- The statement will write itself once Irondequoit develops a true identity.
- I believe a colonial theme with brick/iron-work fences would enhance the appearance of Irondequoit. Possibly an outside performance area such as the one in Penfield. Use the Indian influence to identify the Town.
- Specific action – focus on southern most part of the Town to improve specific areas i.e. Grant Hill. Encourage home ownership and maintenance.
- Irondequoit is also a town where many generations of families stay to live. Our family is in its fourth generation of living in Irondequoit. It is a unique town that fosters roots and

encourages connections. Children graduate from the high schools, go to college and many return to raise their families.

- Identify and “name” the neighborhoods. Have “neighborhood” booths at July 4th celebration. We need a mid-winter town celebration.
- Don’t subsidize massive expansion of Medley Center with property tax breaks. That would affect our image. Our identity would be defined by that, rather than the great neighborhoods and neighborhood businesses we have. Let Medley Center become a mix of residences and businesses and allow retail improvement not so much at Medley, but back at our plazas, which used to be rich with clothing, shoe, book stores, etc.
- Plant trees!! It’s ok to cut down diseased trees, but replant them. Trees should be large and appropriate species. Town money applied toward new trees; anything above and beyond (i.e. larger, more mature trees or more expensive species) would be at additional cost to the homeowner. Trees should be mandatory as part of a mission statement.

Goal Area: Waterfront Revitalization

- Water quality issues: have you checked how often the beach is closed due to bacteria? The water treatment plant – walk the paths on a Tuesday/Wednesday, especially in warmer months. Fly over and note the water color as it flows in from “other” sources.
- It might be more beneficial to write the statement assuming and encouraging residential and commercial property owners will have a sense of pride in the community. Help us all to have a feeling of ownership.
- Explore different incentives programs.
- Improving the Summerville Pier – it has deteriorated, but could be an amenity like the Charlotte Pier.
- Integrate the lakefront, lakefront trail and Bateau Terrace’s pocket park.
- Install an Irondequoit Bay Ecology kiosk as LaSalle Landing.
- Partner with the City and County to improve the beach area, possibly with a small visitor center or kiosk that educates about Lake Ontario.
- Fix the outlet bridge problem.
- Develop a few more neighborhood accesses to Seneca Park.
- Bay Front South – Monroe County owns the land; develop it for public use.
- Irondequoit needs to “take back” the waterfront. Is there a way to gain ownership of the land to the river? Work out a deal with the City and County for more control of the Park [Durand-Eastman]?
- Address one area and attack. Waterfront is your greatest asset. Use the lake-river area and bring in businesses/residential, but especially businesses that could raise tax revenue and create jobs for the Town.
- We have four areas that need addressing: lake & river, lake & bay, Ridge Road, Titus-Cooper-Hudson. Address these one at a time – aggressively pursue until completion and then move to the next project.

As part of the Comprehensive Master Plan, three sub-plans were developed that were integrated with the overall Plan to target specific issues/areas in the Town. The three plans targeted East Ridge Road, the waterfront, and parks and recreation and were the subject of design workshops. The workshops included a visual survey, overview of design and development and best practices, and a hands-on drawing session for the participants. The ideas and concepts

East Ridge Road Design Workshop

March 30, 2009

Compilation of break-out group notes

Table 1

- The corridor itself is pretty ugly
- The utility poles are an issue/bury them
- Needs to be greener
- Sidewalks are too narrow
- It looks like a 1950's asphalt jungle
- Too many drugstores
- Crossing the street is dangerous
- A lack of pride in the businesses – could this be remedied by cleaning up garbage in front of the stores and adding some planters/greenery?
- Existing landscaping is not maintained
- Greening the front lots
- Establishment of a business development district
- Lots of traffic at the post office
- Post office is not in a central location
- Delta Sonic traffic is creating a problem on the Ridge
- Old medical building, new medical building half full
- St. Josephate building is attractive
- Inadequate transit service along the Ridge
- Improve the corridor with some new signage?
- Anything to beautify the road should be considered
- Underserved by specialty or a variety of restaurants; only thing around is pizza, Italian and burgers
- There is nothing that draws people to come together as a community such as recreation centers/arenas/bowling
- Town library? Maybe not.
- Sign policy is strict but it seems to work
- Pretty walkways and plantings may help
- Recommend new buildings be moved more to the front, along the roadway
- Goodman and East Ridge Road needs improvements
- Redevelop existing apartments for new housing

- The older apartment complexes are a potential development opportunity
- Area around the Ivan Green school has a 48% poverty level
- Neighborhood center at Culver-Ridge?
- Wegmans parcel could be bigger (parking?)
- Improvements to the School (Eastridge) will enhance the Ridge
- Kings Park [current ESL HQ] is a target for redevelopment
- Dan Kappa property in limbo [location?]
- No more drugstores

Table 4

- Ridge Road needs to be prettier
- Center median with plantings the entire length of Ridge Road
- Bus shelters
- Burying telephone [and utility] lines
- Kmart plaza – move the buildings toward the road with parking in the back
- Pedestrian areas especially around the hospital and High School
- Reduce to one lane from Culver Road to Eastridge H.S.
- Allow u-turns at certain intersections
- Bike lanes
- Building styles – architectural review board
- Rolling [digital message] signs are distracting
- Uniform sign code

Table 6

- How to work better with the City to improve the corridor
- Entry signage/gateway/physical cues are important
- Four main intersections need treatment
- Traffic, safety, feeling of comfort important for cyclists and walkers
- Prominent crosswalks; timing of signals for pedestrians
- Bring more activity (landscaping and/or buildings) to the road
- Crosswalk not always in most convenient location for pedestrians, particularly near Eastridge H.S.
- Possibility of lane reductions on East Ridge near Eastridge and Library
- Re-introduce mixed use model
- Streetscape preferences from the group include:
 - o Smaller, lower signage
 - o More “intimate” design
 - o Front convenience parking with larger lots in rear
 - o Awnings
 - o Variety of façade materials
 - o Landscaping (more & higher quality) on private frontage, if necessary
 - o Shared parking for smaller parcels & fewer curb cuts

- o Variety of heights
- o High density/mixed use

Right now I think East Ridge Road is:

- Urban looking than suburban
- Mix-matched
- Not attractive
- Tired
- Busy & dangerous in places
- Ugly (wires, treeless, rundown)
- Not pretty
- Ugly
- Abysmal looking
- Ugly – the poor aesthetics of some overpower the good aesthetics of others
- In need of improvement
- Unorganized

In the future I visualize it as being:

- More presentable and efficient/safe. More green.
- Thought out and flowing design i.e. landscaping, signage, streetscape
- Neat & clean
- Healthy
- Pleasant & well landscaped
- Vibrant commercial nodes with pedestrian friendly areas
- Much better and safer
- Better landscaped and more pedestrian friendly



Preferred Development Survey Results

As part of the East Ridge Road Design Workshop, we asked everyone in attendance to rate a series of corridor-related images using the scale below:



Clark Patterson Lee



Preferred Development Survey Results

The pages that follow present a summary of the preferences and the average rating for each image shown as part of the visual survey.

The images that received the highest rating provide us with a guideline for future development. The images with the lowest rating help to illustrate the types of streetscapes, buildings and signage to be avoided in the future.



Clark Patterson Lee



Highest Rated Images



Clark Patterson Lee



Highest Rated Images



Clark Patterson Lee





Waterfront Areas Design Workshop

April 7, 2009

Compilation of break-out group notes

LaSalle's Landing

- Gateway
- It would be nice to cross Empire Blvd on foot – footbridge possible?
- Depth issue for boat access
- Go-to spot for non-motorized boat access
- Store boats more efficiently/attractively
- Observation/picnic area
- In general, foot traffic in the area is difficult
- Public parking issue
- Set design standards for buildings/landscape
- Home of eagles – environmentally sensitive
- Bike path that was proposed is a huge environmental concern because of steep slopes
- No residential development
- It would be nice to be able to cross Empire Blvd (pedestrian access/footbridge/sidewalks) and access Ellison Park wetlands and water.
- Suitable for kayaks/canoes – too shallow for other boats “should make a golden spot for canoes and kayaks”
- Could store boats more efficiently and utilize land better
- Ideal for an observation area, low-key landside activity
- Design of buildings important (need a cohesive look)
- Proposed bike paths are problematic due to environmental/topographical concern; bike paths should be natural, not concrete.
- Need public parking and better access to Ellison Park and the waterfront
- Landscaping (street trees) along the boulevard
- Possible boardwalk winding along similar to boardwalk along west side of River south of O'Rourke bridge

Summerville-Lakeshore

- Compliment Charlotte side
- Better lighting on pier
- Concern about putting a lot of money into areas that are not secure
- Westage apartments [condominiums] – in the future, develop as mixed uses
- Poor access because of Coast Guard station
- Mixed use, higher density, upscale uses preferred near Lighthouse Point area
- Development should complement other side of the River
- Bettering lighting on the pier
- Old CSX line as a paved trail
- Restore beach

- If Westage ever replaced, residential preferred
- Boardwalk along lake
- More parking is needed for public access to park/beach
- Most of this is private and so anything too big here would upset some people –the Town would first have to acquire the land
- The Town should purchase the parcel of land along lakeshore (at bend of St. Paul) for public use. Parcel is high enough where a structure could be built on it.

Genesee River Corridor

- No access to turning point on west side of the river
- Connection at O'Rourke Bridge?
- Entry points by O'Rourke
- Add public art to designate as a gateway
- Should the proposed path tie into existing path at Seneca Park?
- Safety/access for emergency vehicles/personal safety
- Safety/security of vehicles parked should be a concern – parking should be strategically placed
- Lighthouse Point well planned
- Low level buildings north of Lighthouse Point, higher building height on south side of Pattonwood Drive
- Group marked neighborhood access points and connectivity trails on west bank of the River on the map
- Safety must be addressed on trail and adjacent parking areas
- Where is parking?
- We want more activity on the waterfront
- If residential, smaller homes with single floors, especially for empty-nesters
- Hotel to service boaters? With seminar center?
- Develop CSX area to connect trail to Zoo trail
- Public spaces down at the water with places to walk and retail such as ice cream or food service or smaller playground
- Design guidelines for grassy areas and cohesion of style
- How much space for public use? Promenade or plaza?
- Lighthouse point or something like it would be great
- Trails to the waterfront – what about a trail south of Pattonwood? Connections are great.
- Small shops with character /restaurants; something a little “higher end” or a small night club
- Maintain the river corridor as a trail area and improve access along the way as appropriate
- Pattonwood area needs a gateway to the Town coming off of the bridge.
- Shopping plaza will likely commend more commercial development
- More street trees along Pattonwood Drive
- Preserve the old RR beds as greenway trails
- Public boat launch south of the bridge although this are is City-owned

Sea Breeze

- Buildings should have a cohesive design
- Culver Road area local retail, no chain stores (i.e. B&Bs, boutique, small hotel, coffee shops)
- Concern that transient boaters will be “stacking” their boats along restaurant ROW. The area needs to be developed to allow for seasonal boat access.
- Hard turns are an issue for large boat trailers
- Create a parking area on existing 590 (designated only for cars)
- Current public beach are near the outlet – clean up and re-landscape
- Rafting of boats is an issue near Marge’s [multiple boats tie up in water]
- On the Bayside, keep green near sloped area
- Boat wake a concern
- Proposed transient docks in Bay – not suitable for canoes, etc. Also shallow area not suitable for boats
- Standard signage/retro look
- Concerns about trucks with boat trailers blocking Culver Road, impeding emergency access, businesses and residences
- Prefer seasonal access road to boat launch to avoid congestion
- Need more parking, perhaps diagonal in old 590 route
- Public beach needs to be cleaned up and approach better landscaped (“make public beach attractive so private beach can stay private”)
- Rafting of boats should be made illegal
- Culver Road streetscape enhancements needed, room for more retail, no chains, B&Bs okay (?) > design standards like Pittsford
- Parking problems with overflow
- Town to possibly build a boat launch staging area for safety of cars with trailers
- Issues with dredging, town would like to hire a consultant to see if a marina would be doable
- Overlook on cliff/sloped area, an additional pedestrian loop off of multi-use trail on 590
- Need ways to draw people other than restaurants – ice skating rink, indoor water park, playgrounds, open Sea Breeze for winter activities?
- Parking issues – shuttle/trolleys? Additional parking space?
- Little beach – hidden behind trees at the point
- How to walk along the water and experience it?
- Too much residential lakefront development; need more services and food
- Not enough restaurants right on the water
- There needs to be a reason or multiple reasons to be there at the waterfront
- Currently at the State Marine Park there are 65 spaces for trailers and a few spaces for cars, but not enough
- Bus people in from parking elsewhere/trolley for parking area down to beach
- Make it a destination for beach or picnicking
- Make a ten-minute parking, unload, drop-off area
- Get rid of trees and scrub trees

- Add a family area with tree line for separation
- Gazebo
- Need a 104 ramp westbound from Webster so people can get to the Bay outlet now that the bridge is out for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year – earthwork is done by the project stopped.
- People like Durand Beach because they can walk – we need walkways and bike trails
- The outlet park does get filled up in winter also with ice fisherman, so hot dog row gets used well then too.
- Make the bridge movable – hourly like the O'Rourke Bridge?
- Defined edge for the Bay side
- Better development up the hill on Culver to connect both districts
- Needs sidewalks and other amenities – pedestrian connectivity throughout

Bay Bridge

- Topography issues
- Drainage issues?
- Passive recreation
- Non motorized boats
- Walkable commercial/residential area
- Bring road in from the top down the center of the parcel/area
- Area should be kept as natural as possible with trails, nature area and benches for Bay overlooks.
- Maybe a canoe/kayak launch
- Bay Shore Blvd needs better pedestrian access - sidewalks

Plateau

- Playing fields
- Residential
- Community center
- Environmental concern? What was dumped there?
- Playing fields, community center
- "A lot of opportunity"
- Baseball fields
- Town festival site – Bayfest or Sea Breeze fest?
- Need a way to get back there
- Festival site
- Also build fields, golf course, tennis courts?
- A few buildings/restaurants
- Tower – an attraction to view the lake and Bay
- Gathering site for events or activities (one idea mentioned was for HS proms/dances, students go to other Towns)
- Just a question – where does our brush/leaves go? To a landfill?
- Something more unique there such as boutique businesses/restaurant area
- Walkable

Parks & Recreation Design Workshop

May 27, 2009

Trails & Linkages

- CSX owns the railroad bed along the River – who has policing jurisdiction? County sheriffs?
- It has been rumored that the Zoo is trying to see if the County could acquire the railroad bed for Zoo related transport
- Link State Route 590 to the Lakeside trail at the north end of Seabreeze
- State Route 104 bike trail off the side of the bridge or possibly a separate area on the bridge to connect with the Webster trails
- Penfield trail up Irondequoit Creek (eventually) and ends @ Empire Blvd. Can the Town link this to the Lake?
- SCORP (Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan) funding status? Funding is limited.
- Citizen advisory board for trails & parks (Trails Advisory Committee suggested)
- Old State Route 104 offramp connection possible? (located at north end of split between Routes 590 and 104)
- LaSalle's Landing – Bay Shore Boulevard plan for roadside trail (west side owned by County). See Ellison Park Master Plan from the County as well.
- Can you reproduce the easement process used for the Lakeside Trail for additional trails through Durand Eastman Park?
- Woodcraft Trail through Durand-Eastman Park
- Improved trail signage in Park (by County)
- SR 590 multi-use trail – separation of bikers and walkers with striping and signage
- Biking Advisory Committee as well
- Possible marking of roadways for bikes

Parks & Fields

- Camp Eastman for fields
- Some open areas at the Van Lare plant site hold potential – discussion with County needed.
- Plateau site – can Town acquire this? Town initiating discussion with the State; there may be some stipulations for future uses.
- Land behind the Town Hall usable? Currently, the Town is adding fill and flattening areas
- Fields, where possible, should be grouped together for maintenance ease and also it builds community atmosphere.
- Screen roadside along Plateau site if used for fields; do this early in the process to hide Routes 104 and 590 from view and shield traffic noise.
- Second artificial turf field in the Town? (expensive and health issue?)

Community Center

- Actual community center with space for all ages
- Multi-use facility
- Community Center/YMCA option behind Town Hall?