Collegetown

URBAN PLAN & DESIGN GUIDELINES

City of Ithaca Department of Planning and Development

GOODY CLANCY ARCHITECTURE PLANNING PRESERVATION

W-ZHA

Nelson | Nygaard

Table of Contents

Photo by Ken Vineberg

1. Executive Summary

The following pages set forth the major components of Collegetown's urban plan and the design guidelines that will shape the plan's realization. In addition to a careful delineation of Collegetown's future as seen through a series of physical and urban design recommendations, the plan also analyzes the economic and investment challenges that must be addressed as Collegetown develops.

The plan outlines the components of a multi-layered "sustainable transportation system" aimed at addressing head-on the problem – perceived and otherwise – of inadequate parking and congested circulation while showing how a fully-integrated system, including changes in required parking ratios made feasible by the implementation of this system, can positively influence the economics of development in Collegetown.

The planning process itself was notable for the range and intensity of public participation and for the deep-seated, and repeatedly expressed, desire to maintain Collegetown's unique positive characteristics while ensuring that proposed changes reflect those characteristics while strengthening the opportunities for different populations to reside, if not in totally harmony, then in a willingness to acknowledge differences.

Collegetown's singular mix of undergraduate and graduate students, families, long-time business proprietors, property owners, along with its proximity to the campus and many of the physical and intellectual assets of one of the premier universities in the country, presented its own set of challenges as the process moved forward. Meetings with the Collegetown Vision Implementation Committee, representing a cross-section of stakeholders, ensured that the multiple voices and communities in Collegetown would be heard. These and other conversations between the consulting team and City, resident, and university representatives underscored the imperative to find ways by which to do honor to the seemingly competing needs of each group while finding the fulcrum at which those needs are in balance.

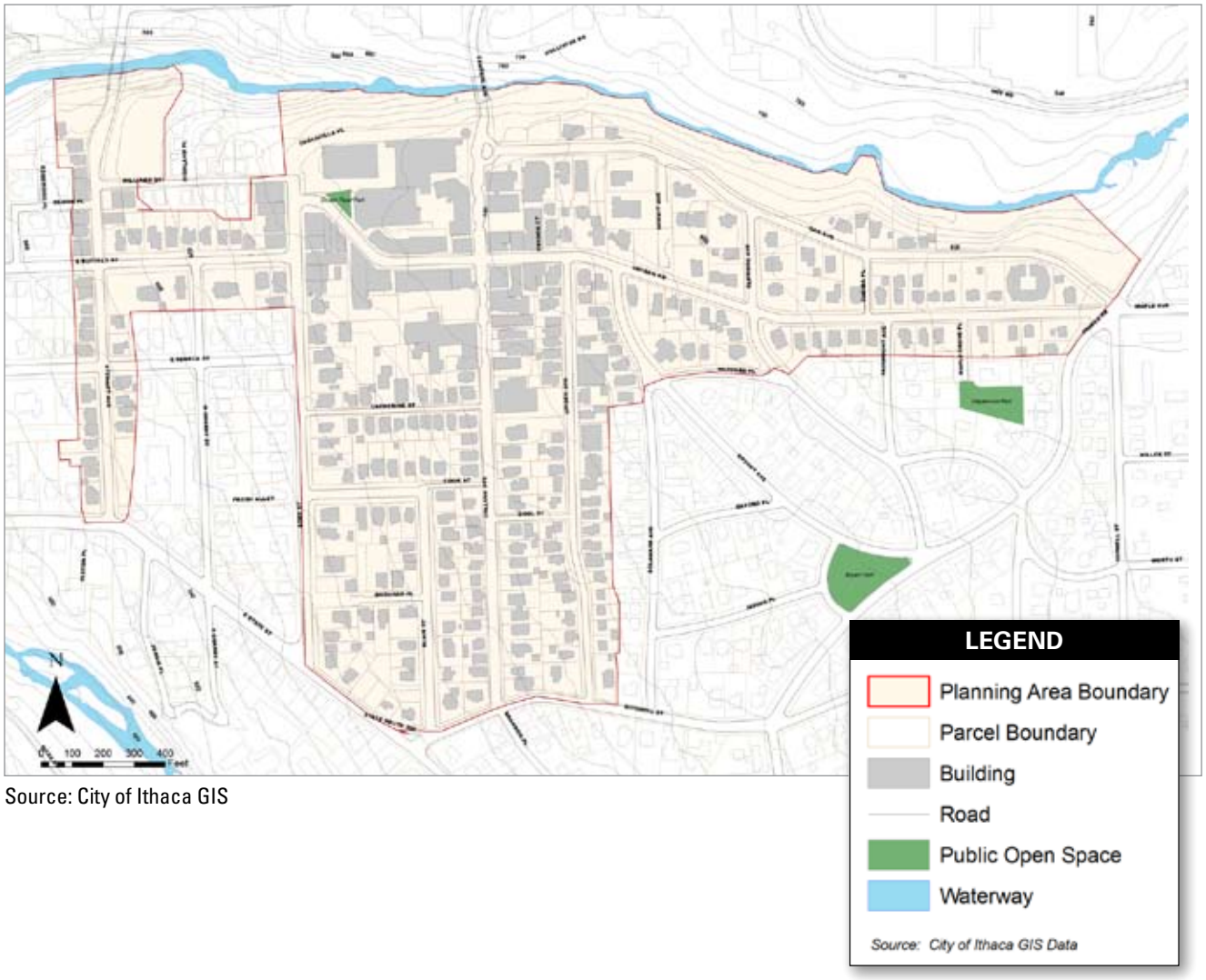
This report illustrates how the major themes articulated in the Vision Statement became the collective core of the Collegetown Plan and Design Guidelines, and laid the groundwork for the new zoning amendment that will give regulatory strength to the plan and the guidelines both. Strengthening both the concept and reality of a vibrant, multi-faceted neighborhood was the ultimate goal of all who participated in the planning process; it was made manifest by the manner in which participants talked about their neighborhood and, ultimately, will be reflected in practice as the plan and guidelines move forward through implementation and as additional opportunities arise to enrich the quality of life of Collegetown.

2. Existing Conditions
A. urban design and architecture

Throughout the development of the Collegetown Urban Plan and Design Guidelines every effort has been made to allow recommendations to emerge from the existing context by identifying those elements which are successful and those which are in need of modification.

This chapter provides a brief assessment of many interrelated issues, including existing zoning, land use, open space, land value, special characteristics of various parts of the study area, and the physical relationship between Collegetown and Cornell University. In addition, there is a discussion of the parking, transit, and circulation issues and a marketing and economic assessment.

Planning Area

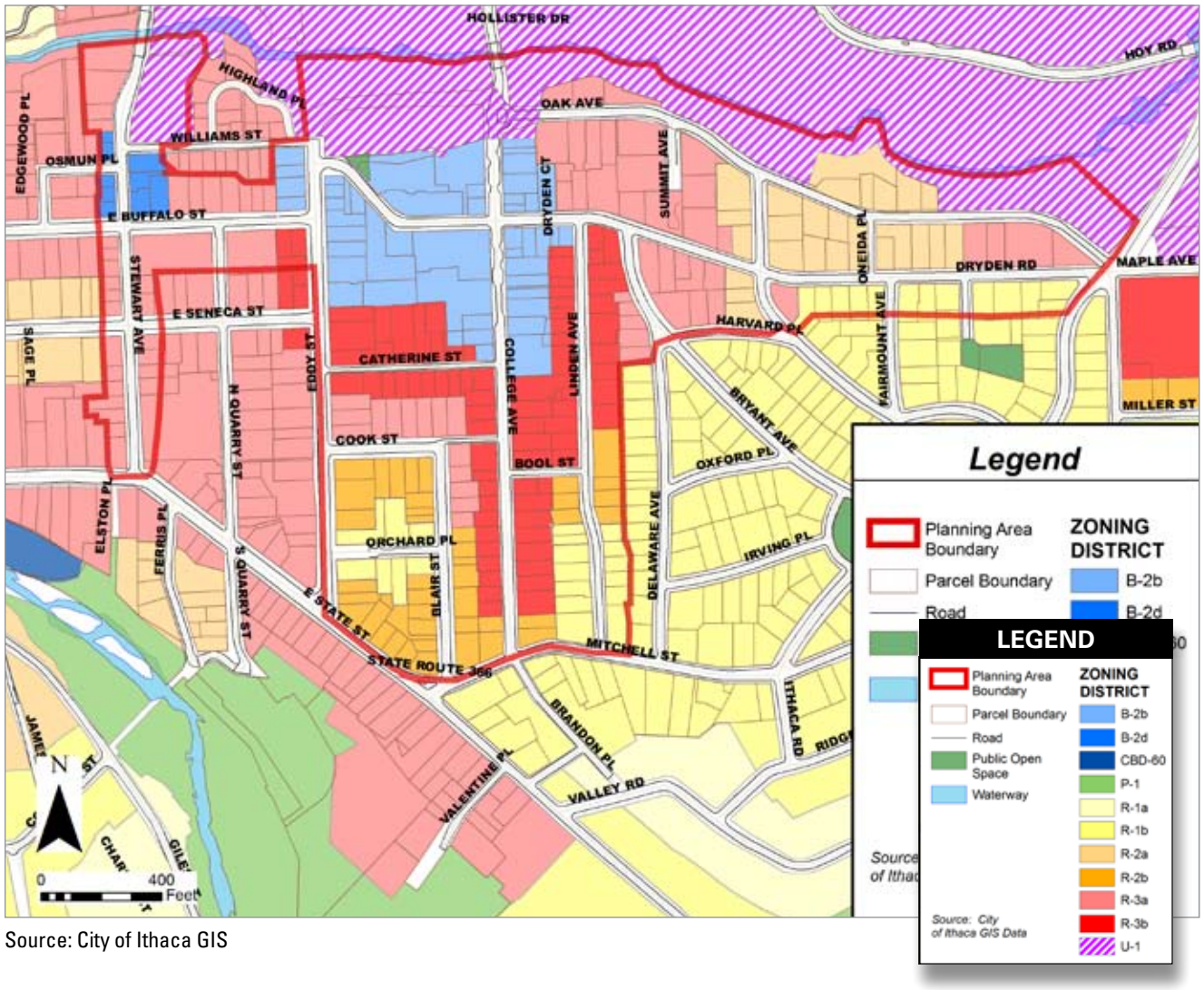


Source: City of Ithaca GIS

The study area includes a wide array of building types, uses, sizes, and characters. Conditions range from a dense, urban, mixed-use core, to tree-lined streets with stately historic homes, to narrow streets with modest homes, to a heavily wooded trail along one of Ithaca's beautiful gorges. This range of physical characteristics and the diversity of the people who live, work, and go to school in the planning area are described in detail throughout the existing conditions assessment.

Existing land uses correspond very well to the desire to concentrate commercial and retail activity at the primary node of College Avenue and Dryden road, while also supporting secondary nodes at Eddy Street and Dryden Road, and the upper part of Stewart Avenue. The balance of the area is residential, with institutional uses including the Schwartz Performing Arts Center and the academic building of Cascadilla Hall.

Existing Zoning

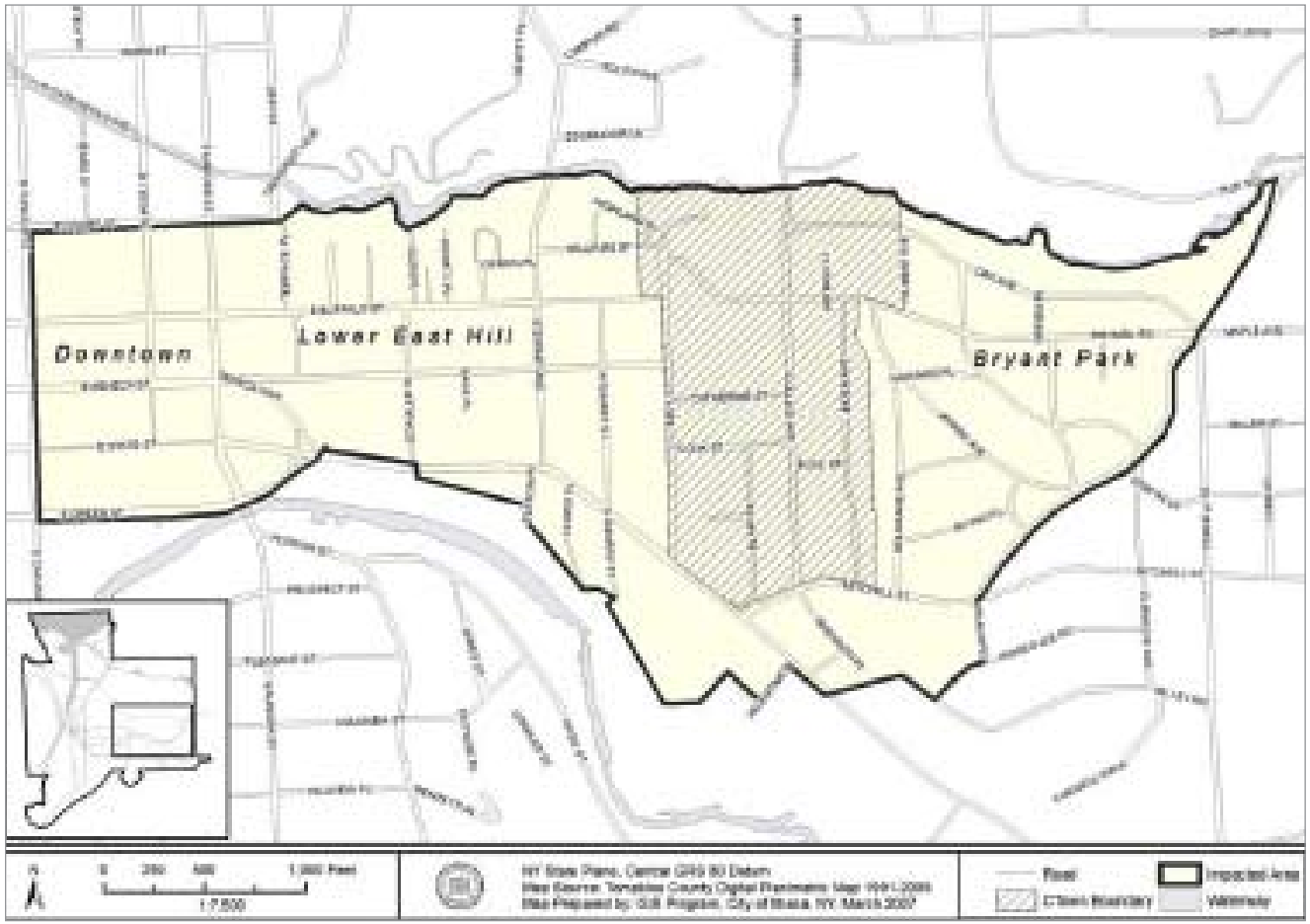


Source: City of Ithaca GIS

The existing distribution of zoning districts has generally served Collegetown well by concentrating mixed-use development at the intersection of College Avenue and Dryden Road, protecting the Belle Sherman neighborhood by encouraging owner-occupancy, and by allowing rooming and boarding houses to be focused along College Ave. Linden Ave., Bool Street, and Catharine Street.

The existing zoning ordinance does not, however, sufficiently regulate physical transitions between zones or give directly support the creation of pedestrian friendly streets.

Collegetown Impact Areas



Source: City of Ithaca GIS

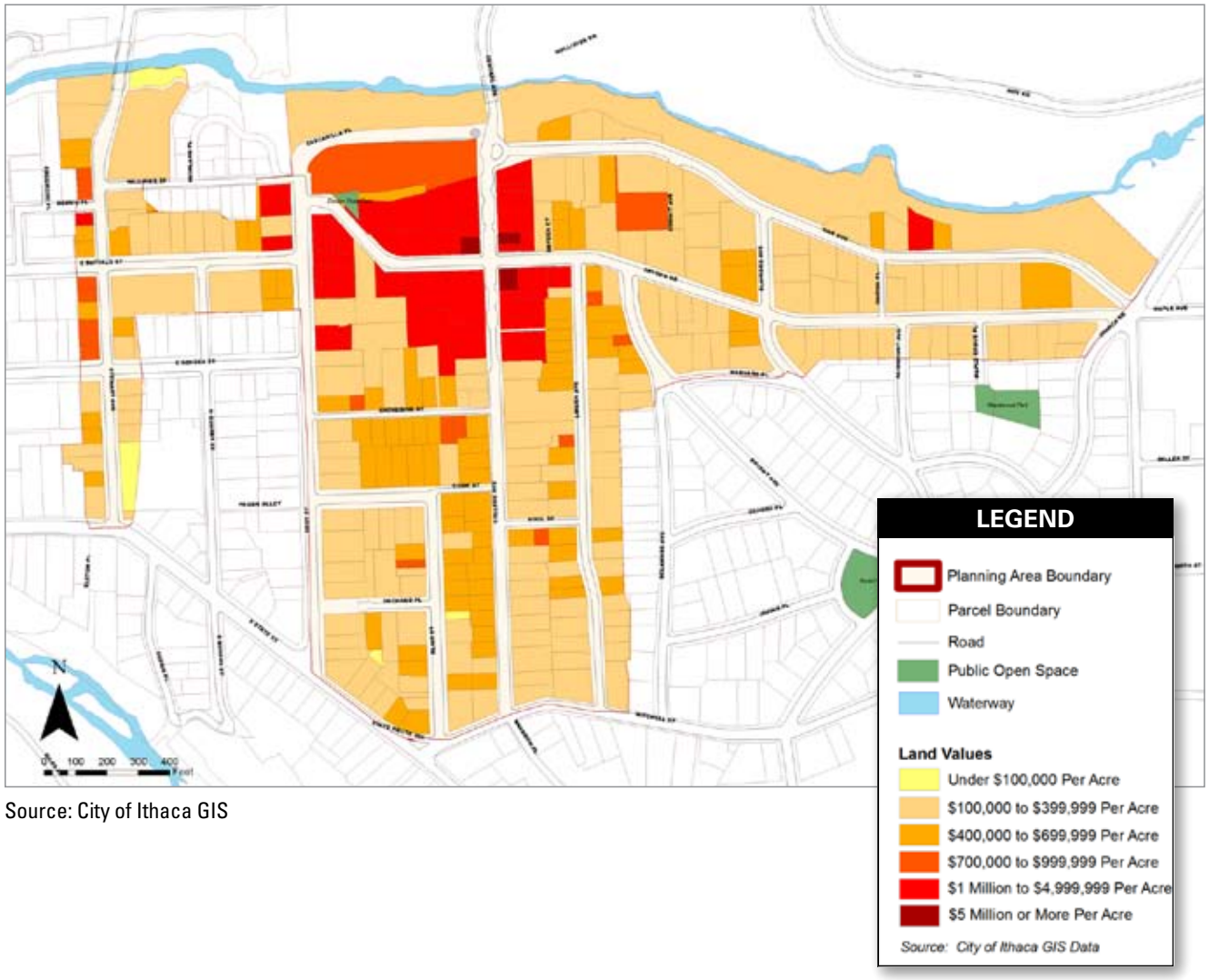
The large area to the west of Collegetown represents the East Hill Historic District, one of the largest such districts in the city. It is known for the many architecturally important residential, commercial, and institutional buildings dating from the 19th and early 20th century. Portions of Eddy Street fall within its boundary. Although not officially designated as an historic area, the Belle Sherman area, including Bryant Park to the east of Collegetown, also play a significant role in the definition of the character of Ithaca's neighborhoods. These areas were identified early in the planning process as needing special consideration to preserve and enhance their many positive attributes.

Open Space Resources

Source: City of Ithaca GIS

Access to open space in Collegetown is dominated by Cascadilla Gorge and the trails seasonally available to residents and students. The gorge provides an experience that is unique and dramatic, yet it is virtually the only green space in the entire study area. One small patch of grass is located to the west of the municipal garage along Dryden Road, but it is awkwardly located with no pedestrian-oriented activity at its perimeter, sloped, and furnished with four benches. Outside the study area are Bryant Park and Maplewood Park, which primarily serve the residents of Belle Sherman.

Land Values



Source: City of Ithaca GIS

One of the greatest challenges to redevelopment opportunities on Collegetown is the perceived high cost of land. While the intersection of College Avenue and Dryden Road has values at the high end of the scale, they reduce quickly after moving in any direction, allowing more flexibility in looking toward scenarios which can help revitalize and diversify the range of housing opportunities for the area and support the rationale for the greatest density at the core of the area.

At the same time, potential redevelopment of individual parcels is constrained because of the relatively small size of individual parcels. For redevelopment to occur, parcels would in all probability have to be aggregated with the total land values closer to those found at the core.

Areas

College Avenue and Dryden Road Intersection

As the location of the largest collection of tall buildings and concentration of residential units, the area immediately surrounding this intersection provides the most urban experience in Collegetown. The concentration of retail and commercial activity makes it a crossroads for pedestrian traffic and serves as a natural destination for students as they flow south from the Cornell campus. Amid the many tall structures, this primary intersection contains two buildings, the southeast and southwest corners, which remain at one-story. There is very little in the way of street trees or landscaping. The architecture is a mixture of traditionally detailed four-and five story brick buildings, six- story concrete block apartments, and new brick buildings with little ornamentation, all of which have non-residential ground floor uses, both retail and commercial.

Well-scaled brick buildings with active ground floor uses line the east side of the 400-block of College Avenue

Tall, modern apartment buildings create a canyon effect along Dryden Road west of College Avenue

Narrow sidewalks limit the amount of outdoor seating and cause crowding during the academic year

College Avenue

College Avenue changes along its length as one travels south toward Mitchell Street. Beginning with the tall buildings, active sidewalks, and minimal setbacks in the 300- and 400-blocks, the character, uses, and building types change dramatically approaching Catherine Street. These sometime jarring transitions are accompanied by design decisions that have placed solid blank walls along the sidewalk at the ground floor, or located garage entries facing the street. The lower end of College Avenue turns into a residential area, with college students filling the traditionally detailed wood-clad housing stock. Deeper setbacks and more trees and landscaping also help this portion transition to the owner-occupied residential areas along Mitchell Street.

Lower College Avenue is home to many college students, living primarily in older rooming houses

Boarded-up windows, garage entrances, and dramatic shifts in scale and character detract from the quality of the pedestrian experience

A small outdoor space north of Collegetown Bagels is a center of activity in the warmer months

Dryden Road (East)

Heading east from the intersection of College Avenue and Dryden Road, the streetscape quickly transitions from mixed-use to residential. The street is lined with traditional 2-½-story detached houses from the early 20th century with a wide variety of colors, architectural details, roof shapes, and window types. Common to most houses is the fact that main entrances face the street and are accessed by a walkway leading from the sidewalk, through small front yard setbacks, to a one-story porch or overhang. At the east end of the street a three-story brick apartment building, with its modest scale, detailing, and massing, sits comfortably among the residential vernacular housing.

Houses are composed of a variety of traditional materials, and interesting details, and generally have one-story transitional elements between the sidewalk and main building volume.

A new residential building along the north side of Dryden Road stands in stark contrast to the neighboring structures.

Tree-lined sidewalks, porches, and fine residential buildings are typical along Dryden Road east.

Eddy Street

Eddy Street is similar to College Avenue in that it contains both a higher density mixed use area at its northern end and transitions to a residential area within older housing stock. The mixed use area is concentrated at the bottom of Dryden Road and serves as a secondary commercial node. Most buildings are either traditional three-story brick or five-story concrete block with active ground floor uses. The residential areas below E. Seneca Street are filled with large traditional homes on larger lots which are part of the East Hill Historic District. There are many mature trees and dense landscaping in deep setbacks, giving the street a unique feeling of spaciousness within the study area.

Large lots, old trees, and grand houses are common along Eddy Street.

Wider streets and deeper setbacks allow for long views to the south.

The northern end of Eddy Street is defined by modern mixed-use buildings with active ground floor uses, minimal setbacks, and no landscaping.

Linden Avenue

The entire length of Linden Avenue is dominated by residential uses, but they vary greatly in character and overall condition. At the northern end of the street near the activity of the mixed-use core of Collegetown, old houses are occupied by students and have began to deteriorate physically due to the lack of owner-occupancy. The middle of the street feels very connected to the service and parking areas for the uses located along College Avenue. Large parking lots and retaining walls open large holes in the continuity of the building fabric, although they allow for long views out to the west.

Large parking and service areas open views to College Avenue from the mid-section of Linden Avenue.

Houses are given a special character and charm through the use of creative details.

Setbacks and owner-occupancies increase toward the lower section of the street.

Cascadilla Gorge

One of the most exciting and important amenities in Collegetown is Cascadilla Gorge, which runs along the entire northern boundary. Lying between the center of activity at College Avenue and Dryden Road and Cornell University, the Gorge plays a powerful symbolic role as a transitional element between the two areas. It also enables pedestrians to enjoy a wooded natural experience while still being in close proximity to the most urban part of Collegetown.

Beautiful wooded trails lead away from the heart of Collegetown toward the east and west.

The area behind Cascadilla Hall and the Schwartz Center is unattractive and lacks pedestrian amenities, despite being an important connection along the Gorge between Eddy Street, College Avenue, and the Cornell campus.

At the same time, there are many areas which are currently vastly underutilized, particularly given their proximity to such a wonderful resource. The areas north of the Eddy Gate, Cascadilla Hall, and the Schwartz Center hold promise to become a greater part of the open space network along the Gorge.

The footbridge from Oak Street to Cornell's Engineering Quad is heavily used and affords a dramatic view of the rushing water below.

Other Streets

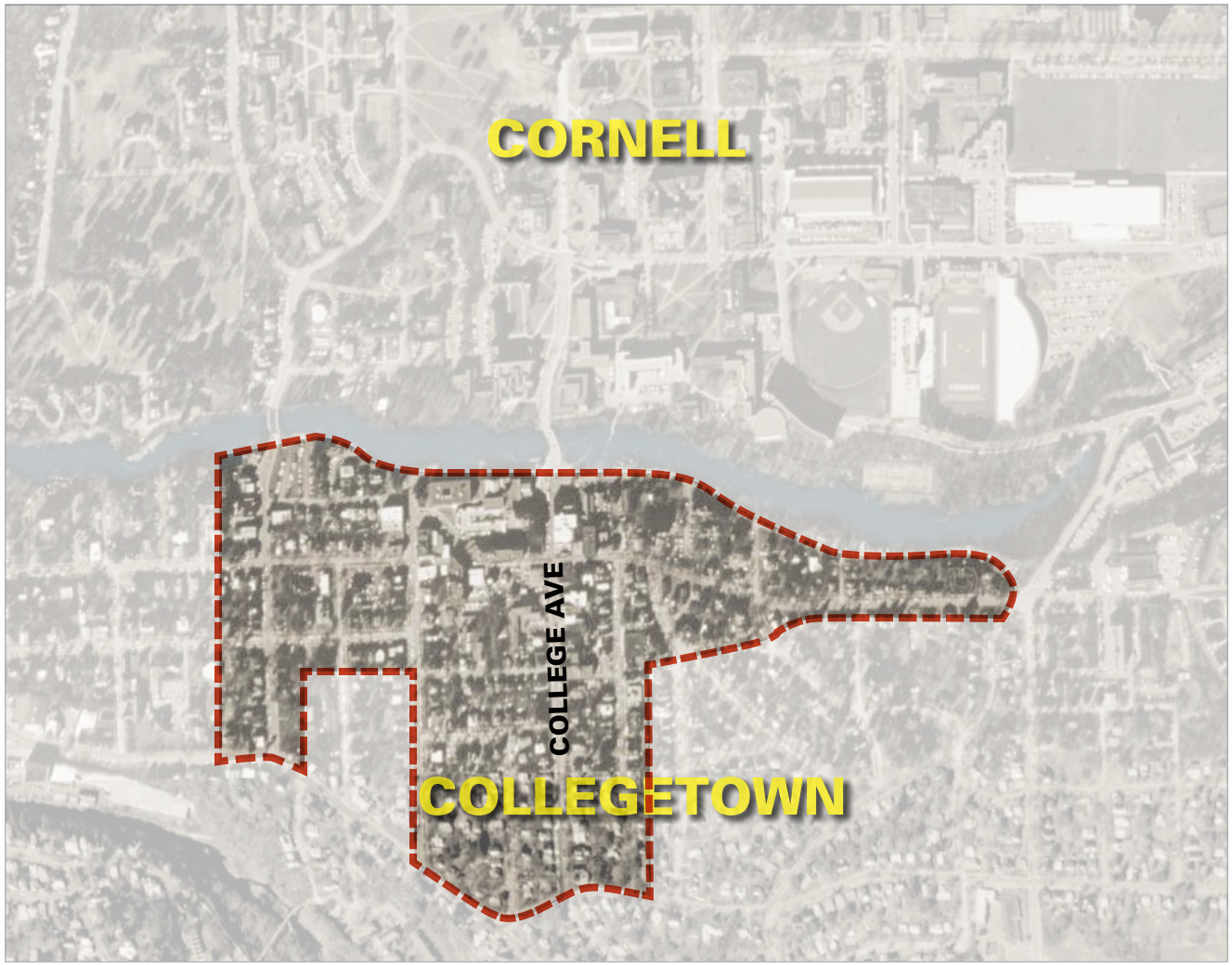
While not highlighted individually, the surrounding streets of Catherine, Cook, Bool, Blair, Mitchell, Orchard, Oak, Buffalo, Summit, Oneida, Williams, and Stewart each have a unique character relating to their topography, street width, and building stock. All these areas are residential, with the notable exception Stewart Avenue between Williams and Buffalo, which contains a small number of commercial and mixed-use buildings.

Beautiful, well-maintained homes line Mitchell Street, the southern boundary of the study area.

A small number of mixed-use buildings occupy the northern end of Stewart Avenue, including the popular *Chapter House* and *Carriage House Cafe*.

Tight and narrow Catherine Street is lined with the porches of old houses now occupied by students. A mixed-use building along College Avenue terminates the view.

Relationship to Cornell University



Cornell University's campus spreads across the entire northern side of the planning area's boundary. There are four points of access across the Gorge, one at Stewart Avenue (the western boundary to this study), one at Cornell Street (the eastern boundary to this study), and two which converge at the intersection of College Avenue and Oak Street. The confluence of the major vehicular and pedestrian connections at Oak Street places special significance on this crossroads which should be carefully considered during the planning process.

B. parking, transit & circulation

Parking is the single most frequently cited transportation problem in Collegetown. Whether from the perspective of a student, a long-time resident, a merchant, or even the City of Ithaca, parking is perceived to be a significant part of what doesn't work right in the district. While data support the view that there are many problems with Collegetown's parking system, parking challenges are symptoms of much greater transportation problems.

Any transportation system can be broken into four discrete parts: access, connectivity, circulation, and parking.

- **Access** describes the means by which people travel to and from a place. For Collegetown, the primary means of access is driving. While a remarkably strong transit system exists for an urbanized area the size of Ithaca, it is not heavily utilized by Collegetown residents and employees (see Table 2b-1).

This access profile for Collegetown stands in contrast to the modes of transportation used by commuters to Cornell University, a short walk across bridges from Collegetown. Cornell began a program in the early 1990's to incentivize the use of public transit and other alternatives to the private vehicle. Cornell's campus includes an extensive system of well-maintained walking, biking, shown and transit infrastructure that has led to the mode shares in Table 2b-1.

- **Connectivity** describes the degree to which a place is connected to adjacent places. Generally, connectivity is illustrated by the number

Table 2b-1 Journey to Work Work Mode Shares for Collegetown and Cornell University

		DRIVING		ALTERNATIVE				
		Drove alone	Carpool	Transit	Bicycle or walked	Taxicab, motorcycle or other means	Worked at home	Total, Means of transportation (11)
FROM HOME	College Town	535	167	120	2715	0	204	3730
		14%	4%	3%	73%	0%	5%	
		19%		81%				
	Cornell	80	0	0	280	0	80	440
		18%	0%	0%	64%	0%	18%	
		18%		82%				
TO WORK	College Town	794	205	84	600	0	204	1895
		42%	11%	4%	32%	0%	11%	
		53%		47%				
	Cornell	12160	4509	3300	8269	60	80	28365
		43%	16%	12%	29%	0%	0%	
		59%		41%				

Fig. 2b-1 Connectivity to Collegetown

of street or path connections between neighborhoods. It is an essential component of increasing access to a neighborhood by all modes of transportation. When connectivity is limited, neighborhoods are less convenient for travelers to access, limiting their viability. Furthermore, the limited points of access serve as funnels for traffic, becoming congested and creating barriers to access. As illustrated in Fig. 2b-1, Collegetown is poorly connected to adjacent neighborhoods, with two effective barriers created by the discontinuous street connections to the east and west, as well as limited crossings of the gorge to the north. The result is an island effect that forces most travelers to use the same congested means of access.

- **Circulation** describes how people move within a place. The quality of the built environment and the public rights-of-way determine how people circulate. Where infrastructure is focused mostly on vehicular transportation, overall circulation suffers, greatly impacting the ability of residents to conduct tasks and businesses to see customers. While automobile circulation has been the primary focus in U.S. downtowns, truly successful places recognize the greater carrying capacity of pedestrian, bicycling, and transit systems.

Circulation in Collegetown is heavily biased towards the automobile. Nonetheless, portions of College Avenue see nearly twice as many pedestrians as automobiles, even though no more than 30% of all public rights-of-way is dedicated to pedestrians.

- **Parking** is not just for automobiles. Parking is the storage system that is required for all modes of transportation. Just as ships dock at ports and airplanes arrive at terminals, cars, bicycles, buses, and pedestrians need to be "parked" at the beginning and end of a trip. Collegetown's perceived parking problems are limited to cars. However, this limited focus has helped create many of these problems by overlooking the lack of good parking for bicycles and pedestrians, as well as interim parking for buses at bus stops – forcing many to decide to drive. Very little bicycle parking exists in the district. Few benches exist for pedestrians, and bus stops are poorly defined.

Transit Access

Transit service in Collegetown is excellent for a community the size of Ithaca. Fourteen routes serve Collegetown, day and night, along College Avenue, Dryden Road, Stewart Avenue, and Mitchell Street. Three stops in each direction are conveniently located along Collegetown's spine, College Avenue. Frequencies between Cornell and downtown Ithaca through Collegetown reach as high as every 15 minutes. Nonetheless, bus ridership in Collegetown is limited, with under 10% utilizing transit for work trips.

No transit route or schedule information is posted at any stop in Collegetown, only bus stop signs with route numbers. This lack of readily-available transit information is a large barrier to seeing new ridership as many area residents and employees find the system confusing. Furthermore, no shelters exist at any Collegetown bus stop, resulting in little attraction to using transit in an area with variable weather extremes.

Pedestrian Connectivity

As illustrated above, roadway connectivity between Collegetown and surrounding neighborhoods is limited by disconnected street grids to the east, west, and north. This directly affects pedestrian connections to an even greater degree. Pedestrians inherently try to travel in straight paths as much as possible when traveling to destinations, since shorter distances are preferable when traveling at a walking pace. However, the disconnected street grid forces pedestrians enter-

ing and exiting Collegetown to make repeated 90-degree turns from their desire-lines, increasing walk times and reducing the appeal of walking. Furthermore, the lack of clear visual destinations at the end of streets adds to the perception of longer walking times.

The lack of connectivity continues within Collegetown itself. The size of several blocks forces pedestrians traveling on sidewalks to take long routes around the blocks to some destinations. The blocks containing Dryden Court as well as the Dryden Road garage are particularly large. Pedestrians have made inroads through these and other blocks, as evidenced by walking routes that involve backyards, access stairs, parking lots, driveways, and alleys. However, buildings, fences, and chains cut off many key desire lines. Combined, this lack of internal and external pedestrian connectivity diminishes the pedestrian experience in Collegetown by limiting the number of easy connections to residences, businesses, and merchants. This serves to encourage more driving, even when trips by foot could be the shortest trip possible if better connections were available.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Circulation within Collegetown on foot or by bicycle is compromised in a number of ways. For bicyclists, there are no dedicated or shared bicycle facilities, leaving riders to contend with cars on street, or pedestrians on sidewalks. This is in stark contrast to the welcoming bicycling environment on Cornell's campus. Furthermore, a complete lack of adequate short-term bike parking anywhere in Collegetown leaves the adventurous bicyclist no choice but to lock his or her bike to anything available: poles, trees, signs, etc. Finally, pavement conditions throughout Collegetown – especially in the shoulders where bicycles often ride – are poor, with frequent seams, divots, and debris.

Sidewalk widths are narrow in most places in Collegetown, with the exception of Dryden Road between College and Eddy. Most sidewalks are only 5-feet wide, which is barely enough to pass on-coming pedestrians comfortably and not enough if a signpost, meter, or other obstruction is present. The most heavily-walked sidewalks – the 400 block of College – are only 8-feet wide with obstructions that reduce the effective width to 5-feet: completely inadequate in an area that may see 5,000 to 10,000 pedestrians per day. Several key pedestrian crossing locations are encumbered by excessive pavement cross-sections, including Oak at College, Eddy at Dryden, Mitchell at College, and Eddy at State. Meanwhile, the primary intersection in Collegetown – Dryden and College – is signalized but no pedestrian indications are present, leaving pedestrians to coordinate concurrent walks based on vehicle indications.

Parking

A parking report completed in 2000 for Collegetown revealed a number of on-street utilization characteristics that suggested the parking system needed improvements, including:

- Excessive overtime meter violations without enforcement action;
- High utilization of the Dryden Road garage at all hours except overnight;
- On-street parking at capacity all-day long at un-regulated spaces;
- Only 60% average utilization of on-street meters
- Complaints about lack of parking from Collegetown employees;
- Complaints about spill-over parking from nearby residents;
- Heavy utilization of off-street supply;
- Average parking rates district-wide of $50/month.

These results stand in contrast to downtown Ithaca where parking is easier to find and often free for short stays or within a short walk. The report also identified repeated complaints about loading operations conflicting with parking in the district.

Based on these data, the average public on-street space was producing about $2/day in revenue and the Dryden Road garage was producing about $5/day per space. Collegetown residents and employees reported an average cost to park of about $2.25/day ($50 divided by 21.72 days per month). These numbers stand in stark contrast to the estimated cost of providing off-street in the district or the estimated on-street space values in the district, as illustrated in Table 2b-2.

Table 2b-2 Estimated Parking Cost Pro Formas in Collegetown

ASSUMPTIONS:

Variables	Input value	Comments
expected useful life of the parking lot:	35 years	
long-term interest rate (i.e., discount rate):	6.00%	
workdays per moth:	21.72	

DEFINITIONS

"Construction Costs" (aka "Hard Costs") are the brick-and-mortar expenses. Hard costs include all the costs for visible improvements, such as grading the site, pouring concrete, steel and steel workers, electrical work, carpentry, and plumbing.
"Soft Costs" are the costs that you cannot visibly see, such as architectural and engineering fees, environmental reports and any government fees, such as building permits. In the spreadsheet below, soft costs are entered as a percentage of construction costs. A typical rule of thumb is that soft costs will be equal to 27% of construction costs.
"Project Costs" equals Land Costs plus Construction Costs plus Soft Costs.
"Inflation Factor" is defined as the cumulative rise in the building cost index since the year the structure was built, using the Engineering News Record Building Costs Index for the region, as reported at http://enr.construction.com
"Original Costs" means the cost at the time that the parking facility was built.
"Project Cost in Current Dollars" means the cost in today's dollars. This cost is arrived at by adjusting the original construction cost for inflation. In the spreadsheet below, "Project Cost in Current Dollars" is equal to the Original Project Cost multiplied by the Inflation Factor.

CAPITAL COSTS		ON-STREET PARKING	PARKING LOT	ABOVE GRADE GARAGE	BELOW GRADE GARAGE
a.	Spaces Built	1	1	1	1
b.	Number of Parking Spaces Per Acre	124	124	124	124
c.	Acres of Land Required (c=a/b)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
d.	Land Value, Per Acre*	$0	$8,000,000	$0	$0
e.	Land Costs (e=c*d)	$0	$64,516	$0	$0
f.	Original Construction Costs (industry average)	$5,000	$3,000	$22,000	$35,500
g.	Original Soft Costs	27%	27%	27%	27%
h.	Original Project Costs (h=e+f+f*g)	$6,350	$68,326	$27,940	$45,085
i.	Year Completed	2007	2007	2007	2007
j.	Inflation Factor	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
k.	Project Cost in Current Dollars (i=F*h)	$6,350	$68,326	$27,940	$45,085
m.	**Cost Per Space Gained in Current Dollars (k=i/c)**	$6,350	$68,326	$27,940	$45,085
RESULTING COSTS PER SPACE PER YEAR					
	Annual Debt Service, per Space (at 5%)	$438	$4,713	$1,927	$3,110
	Operations & Maintenance, per Space (US avg.)	$327	$327	$327	$327
	Total Annual Cost per Space per Year	$765	$5,040	$2,254	$3,437
	Total Annual Cost per Space per Month	$64	$420	$188	$286
	Total Annual Cost per Space per Workday	$2.99	$19.34	$8.65	$13.19
	Daily Parking Revenues	$2.00	$2.25	$5.00	$5.00
	Net Subsidy	$0.94	$17.9	$3.65	$8.19
	Net Annual Parking Revenue	($244)	($4,450)	($951)	($2,133)

* Land value only factored for land with higher use potential.

C. market and economic overview

Economic Framework

Ithaca's Economy Is Driven by the Presence of Cornell and Ithaca College

Table 2c-1

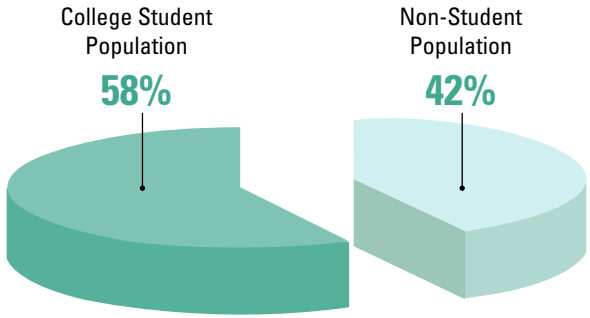
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY Tompkins County, 2006		
Industry	**Tompkins County**	
	Jobs	**Shara of total**
Accomodations & Food Service	3,303	6.7%
Construction	911	1.8%
Education	21,180	42.7%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1,665	3.4%
Government	2,113	4.3%
Health Services	4,035	8.1%
Manufacturing	4,021	8.1%
Retail	5,053	10.2%
Professional & Business Services	2,746	5.5%
Wholesale, Transportation & Utilities	1,634	33.%
Other	2,935	5.9%
Total	49,596	100.0%

Source: Chmura Economics & Analytics; Bureau of Labor Statistics

Ithaca is the home of Cornell University and Ithaca College. Cornell University contains approximately 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students and employs over 13,000 people. Ithaca College enrolls approximately 6,500 full-time students with approximately 1,500 faculty and staff members. Accounting for over 40% of the jobs in Tompkins County, education is the largest industry in Ithaca and Tompkins County.

With a current population of 30,000, Ithaca is unique in that permanent residents are the minority population in the City. In 2000, College students represented just less then 60% of Ithaca's population.

Fig. 2c-1 Student Population
City of Ithaca, 2007



Source: Claritas, Inc.

Table 2c-2

MEDIAN INCOME TRENDS State of New York, Tompkins County and Ithaca, 1990, 2000, 2007					
	Average Annual Change				
	1990	2000	2007	1990-00	2000-07
New York	$32,965	$43,689	$50,294	2.9%	2.0%
Tompkins County	$27,746	$37,597	$43,809	3.15%	2.2%
Ithaca	$17,735	$21,957	$25,831	2.2%	2.3%

Source: U.S. Census; Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

Ithaca's median income is low due to its significant student population. The income data are based on U.S. Census information. It is important to note that, student income does not take into consideration the income or wealth of the student's parents.

Collegetown Is a Distinct Place with Unique Demographics

Census Tract 2 in Tompkins County incorporates Collegetown. The boundary of this census tract is illustrated above. For analytic purposes, we have used the census tract data as a proxy for Collegetown.

Census Tract 1 in Tompkins County incorporates Ithaca's Downtown. For analytic purposes, we have used Census Tract 1 data as a proxy for Downtown.

Fig. 2c-2 Census Tract 2 Boundaries Collegetown

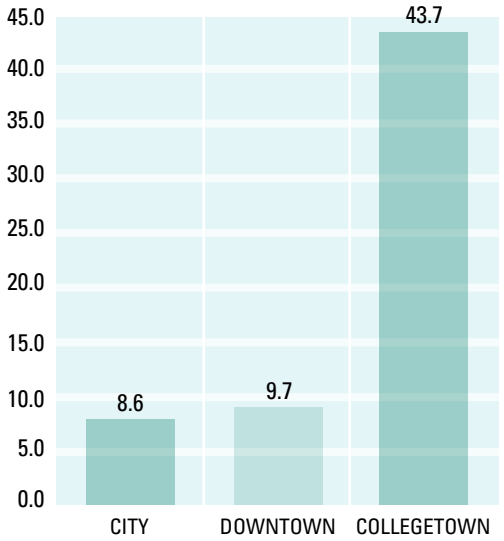
Source: U.S. Census

Fig. 2c-3 Census Tract 1 Boundaries Downtown Ithaca

Source: U.S. Census

Claritas, Inc., a nationally recognized source of consumer information, estimates that 4,695 people lived in Collegetown in 2007. Downtown had 1,280 people. The population density is four times higher in Collegetown than it is Downtown.

Fig. 2c-4 People Per Acre
Ithaca, Downtown, and Collegetown, 2007

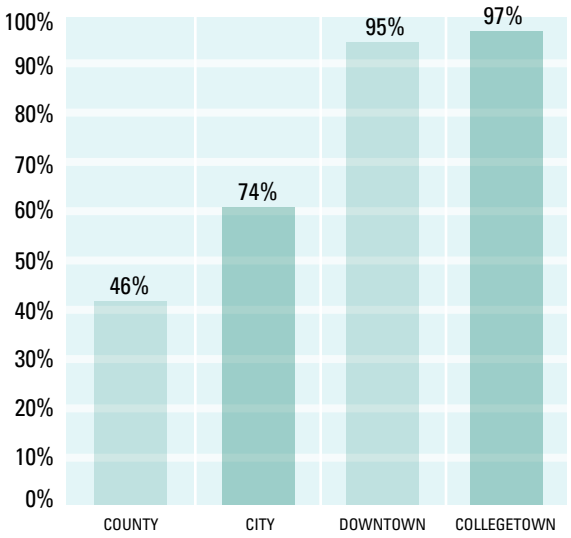


Source: Claritas, Inc.; U.S. Census; W-ZHA

Note: *Census tract 1 data used for Downtown and census tract 2 data used for Collegetown*

Over 90% of the households residing in Downtown and Collegetown are renters. Less than half of the County's households rent.

Fig. 2c-5 Share of Households That Rent , 2007

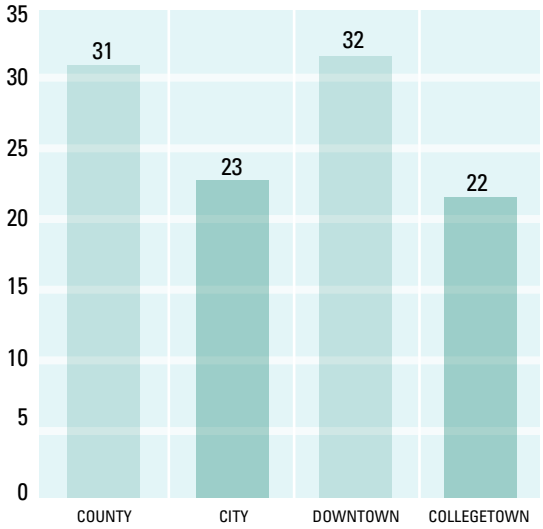


Source: Claritas, Inc.; U.S. Census; W-ZHA

Note: *Census tract 1 data used for Downtown and census tract 2 data used for Collegetown*

With a median age of 23, Ithaca is among the top 100 youngest cities in the United States. The median age among Collegetown residents is even younger at 22. Interestingly, the Downtown resident is older than the average resident in the County and City.

Fig. 2c-6 Median Age , 2007



Source: Claritas, Inc.; U.S. Census; W-ZHA

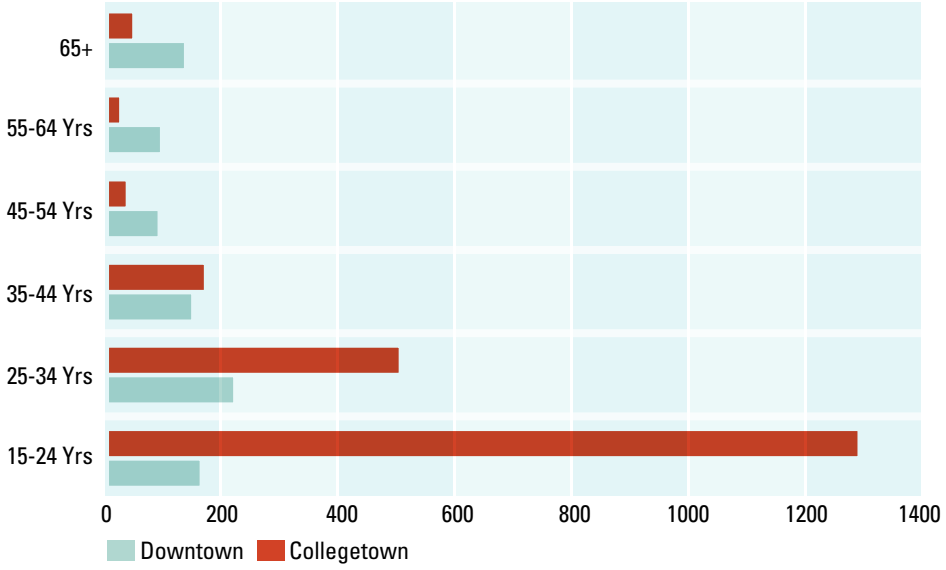
Note: *Census tract 1 data used for Downtown and census tract 2 data used for Collegetown*

Almost two thirds (63%) of the households in Collegetown are headed by a person between the ages of 15 and 24. The Collegetown market is distinct from the Downtown market where less than 20% of the households are headed by persons under the age of 24.

As might be expected with such young households, household income, as tracked by the U.S. Census, is low in Collegetown. When assessing household incomes, however, it is important to note that many of the student households in Collegetown likely have income from outside sources like parents.

The distinct demographics of Collegetown make it a unique place, not easily replicated in the Downtown, East Hill, and/or other neighborhoods in Ithaca. The data demonstrate that Collegetown is comprised mostly of students with relatively few other types of households.

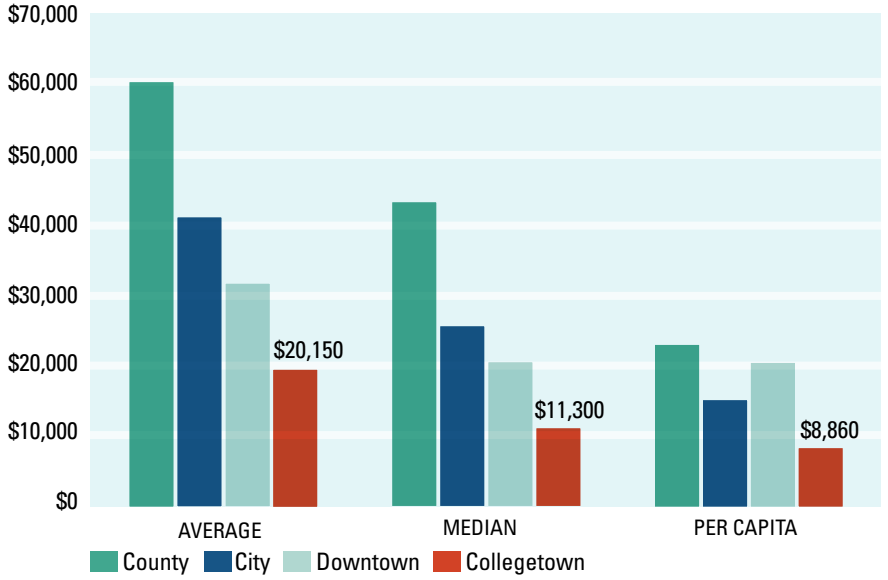
Fig. 2c-7 Age Distribution
Downtown and Collegetown, 2007



Note: *Census tract 1 data used for Downtown and census tract 2 data used for Collegetown*

Source: Claritas, Inc.; U.S. Census; W-ZHA

Fig. 2c-8 Average, Median and Per Capita Income
Tompkins County, Ithaca, Downtown, and Collegetown, 2007



Collegetown Is a One-Of-A-Kind Place and Its Economics Reflect This Fact

Collegetown is Cornell's urban, mixed-use center. Collegetown is within easy walking distance for Cornell's 20,000 students and the University workforce. Being on the top of a hill, Collegetown is physically separated from other areas of Ithaca. The hill acts as a natural market barrier; it is not convenient for students to walk up and down the hill. This natural barrier prevents Collegetown from spreading geographically. Because the competitive supply of land cannot be expanded, the land and the land uses in Collegetown command premium prices.

Land values are estimated to be $4 million to $10 million per acre in Collegetown. This amounts to approximately $75 per developable square foot[1]. Property is extremely expensive in Collegetown.

According to data published by NAI Global, a real estate brokerage firm, Collegetown's land values are slightly less than the prices commanded in downtown Boston and downtown Washington, DC which sell at approximately $100 per buildable square foot[2]. As a point of reference, new office in Boston and Washington rents for between $65 and $90 per square foot.

Collegetown's land values on a buildable square foot basis are comparable to the price of a buildable square foot in downtown Los Angeles and downtown San Diego. Average rent for a new office building in these markets ranges from $40 to $50 per square foot.

The chart below compares asking rents in Collegetown to Downtown for a variety of land uses. On average, Collegetown is more expensive than Downtown for residential and, to a lesser extent, retail space. There is currently no office space for rent in Collegetown.

Table 2c-3

PRICES Downtown Ithaca and Collegetown		
	Downtown	**Collegetown**
Office/SF/Yr	$16-$22	n/a
Retail/SF/Yr	$21-$22	$21-$50+
Residential Studio/Mo	$660-$710	$890-$1,300

Source: Apartments.com; Ithacarenting.com; Property Management Interviews; W-ZHA

As will be discussed in the following section, economics greatly impacts the pace of development in Collegetown and the type of land uses developed. Economics also influences the actors involved in Collegetown development.

[1] Assumes five story building on an acre of land. A developable foot is the same as a floor area ratio (FAR) foot. A developable foot is the number of square feet that can be developed on the site given zoning.
[2] IBID.

Challenges Facing Collegetown's Future

Current Economics Suggest that Revitalization will be the Product of Local Investment

Many students who reside in Collegetown rent a room in what was once a single family home. Many of these properties have been owned by the same owner for a long time. For this reason, there is likely no debt on these properties. Rents vary on the basis of location and building condition, but generally they range from $650 to $750 per bed per month in these houses.

Table 2c-4

Economics of a 7-Bedroom House		
Collegetown		
Bed Rent /Month		$650
Annual Rent		$7,800
Operating Expenses	45%	($3,510)
Net Operating Income		**$4,290**
Number of Bedrooms		$7
Total Net Operating Income (NOI)		**$30,030**
Capitalization Rate (Cap Rate)		6%
Sale Price (NOI/Cap Rate)		**$500,500**
Land Area	2,500	sf
PRICE PER ACRE		**$8,721,000**

Source: Collegetown Property Owners; W-ZHA

According to property owners, operating costs account for approximately 45% of the lease revenue. Therefore, at a lease rate of $650 per bed per month, the property owner is making approximately $358 per bed per month after operating expenses or $4,290 per bed per year. Therefore, a seven bedroom single family house can generate approximately $30,000 in income per year to its owner, net of all expenses. In Collegetown, this house is likely sitting on a 2,500 square foot parcel of land.

The rational property owner would only sell the asset if offered a price that could generate a comparable yield with less risk and/or effort. We have assumed that the capital markets can generate a 6% return on investment over a 10 year period. This means that the owner should be willing to sell the property at a 6% capitalization rate or $500,500. If the parcel is 2,500 square feet, this price equates to $8.5 million per acre! As will be illustrated, applying standard investment practices, the Collegetown market cannot support such high land costs.

In sum, regional and/or national developer investors cannot afford to enter the Collegetown marketplace without a local partner. Therefore, to realize new development will require that existing property owners be engaged in redevelopment. Collegetown's revitalization will depend on local entrepreneurship – whether this comes from Cornell or from other existing property owners.

For the Conventional Investor, the Market May Not Support the Cost of Redevelopment

The cost of land and parking are so high in Collegetown that conventional development is nearly impossible without subsidy. "Conventional" development means that the developer pursues normal, industry-standard-type returns for their investment. The conventional investor will often test the viability of a prospective project by applying the basic return-on-cost methodology.

The return-on-cost method to test a prospective investment divides the project's projected net operating income into its development cost. (Net operating income is defined as revenue less operating costs – it does not include debt service.) In the predevelopment or feasibility stage of development, an acceptable ratio between net operating income and development cost for office space is between 7.5% and 8.5%. Rental residential tends to be lower at 7% to 8%.

If a project's economics cannot achieve these "return-on-cost" thresholds the investor will

either a) not pursue the project or b) seek public subsidy to reduce development costs.

W-ZHA tested the feasibility of developing an office project on the southeast corner of College Avenue and Dryden Road in Collegetown. As per current zoning, height was assumed to be limited to 60 feet. Current zoning requires 4 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of office space. To maximize the program on the site required a mix of underground and structured parking spaces. Given existing land use regulations the site can accommodate 20,000 square feet of office and 5,000 square feet of retail with 80 parking spaces.

For the economic analysis land was assumed to cost $8 million per acre. The site is approximately .33 acres. Applying industry standards and information from interviews with local developers, a development cost of $225 per gross square foot for office and retail space was assumed. The total cost to develop an office building with ground floor retail at this location is approximately $11 million.

To achieve a return-on-cost of 8.5%, a $45.50 rent per square foot is required. This rental rate is significantly higher than office market rents; premier Downtown office is currently marketed in the mid- to low-$20's per square foot. With the possible exception of Cornell, it is unlikely that office tenants will be willing to pay such a premium to locate in Collegetown.

Project economics improve if residential is developed; however, new construction still requires rents above the current market. The market has already exhibited its willingness to pay a premium for housing in Collegetown and residential uses have a lower parking requirement. The top rental rate for a studio apartment in Collegetown is currently approximately $1,760 per month. The cost of new development will require that residential units command prices of $1,880 per month to achieve an 8.5% return-on-cost.

Table 2c-5

ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS: OFFICE DEVELOPMENT COST					
College Avenue and Dryden Road Site, As-Of-Right Zoning					
	Acre		**Site Size**		**Cost**
Land Cost	$8,000,000		0.33	acres	$2,640,000
	Cost /Gross Square Foot		**Total Square Feet**		**Cost**
Building Cost	$225		25,000		$5,625,000
	Number Of Spaces Required		**Cost Per Space**		
	Structured	**Underground**	**Structured**	**Underground**	**Cost**
Parking Cost	54	26	$28,000	$45,000	$2,682,000
Total Cost					**$10,947,000**

Source: W-ZHA

Table 2c-6

ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS: REQUIRED RENT OFFICE	
College Avenue and Dryden Road Site, As-Of-Right Zoning	
Development Cost	$10,947,000
Required Net Operating Income @ 8.5%	$930,000
Less: Parking Income @ $150 /space /month	($180,000)
Net Operating Income Required From Office Space	$750,000
Rentable Space	23,000
Required Net Operating Income /Rentable Square Foot	$33.00
Gross Rent /Square Foot	$45.50

Source: W-ZHA

These rental rates are well above what is affordable to the average household earning just over $40,000 per year. To increase affordability and enhance feasibility creative approaches must be undertaken to reduce the cost of development in Collegetown. One approach is to encourage existing property owners to redevelop their properties (thereby removing the high land cost from the development equation), while another is to reduce the cost of parking – a strategy that is further explored in Chapter 4.

Collegetown's Retail Economy Is Challenged By The Lack Of New Retail Space And Dependence On The University Market

Retail space in Collegetown is occupied; there is relatively little vacancy. Retailers in Collegetown pay premium rents. With 90% of the Collegetown households renters and likely students, the retail mix is targeted to the student population.

Cornell drives the Collegetown retail economy. Unfortunately, the school year lasts only nine months of a year and students generally leave for home during the Christmas holiday season. (Typically, the Christmas season accounts for a significant share of a retailer's annual sales.) During the summer and vacation periods retail activity languishes.

The cyclical nature of the Collegetown economy is challenging for retail. One approach to mitigate the cycle is to draw non-student households to Collegetown. This approach is problematic given housing costs in Collegetown; the average non-student household cannot afford to buy or rent housing in Collegetown proper. The development of non-undergraduate-student housing will require Cornell intervention. Cornell may be one of the few stakeholders in the marketplace willing to pay the premium for a Collegetown location to develop faculty and/or undergraduate housing.

Another approach is to introduce additional office space into Collegetown. The employees occupying the office space can help to support retail throughout the year. In 2003, the average

Table 2c-7

ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS: RESIDENTIAL USES					
College Avenue and Dryden Road Site, As-Of-Right Zoning					
	Acre		**Site Size**		**Cost**
Land Cost	$8,000,000		0.33	acres	$2,640,000
	Cost /Gross Square Foot		**Total Square Feet**		**Cost**
Building Cost	$210 - $225		25,000		$5,325,000
	Number Of Spaces Required		Cost Per Space		
	Structured	**Underground**	**Structured**	**Underground**	**Cost**
Parking Cost	29	0	$28,000	$45,000	$812,000
Total Cost					$8,777,000
Required Net Operating Income @ 8.5%					$746,700
Less: Parking Income @ $150 /space /month					-$52,200
Net Operating Income Required From Residential Space					$693,800
Rentable Space					23,000
Required Rent /Studio/Month					**$1,760**

Source: W-ZHA

white-collar employee spent between $2,630 and $2,860 per year on retail near their place of work. This spending was generally split between eating and drinking and shopping. Office worker spending will not significantly change the retail mix or retail economics in Collegetown, but it will create street activity during the summer and vacation periods.

As important as office worker spending is the provision of state-of-the-art leaseable retail space at the base of new office buildings in Collegetown. Leaseable retail spaces with standard storefront and depth dimensions are scarce in Collegetown due to the age of the building stock and the hills. Given the magnitude of the Cornell market and the limited retail supply, standard retail spaces should be attractive to credit tenants (for example FedEx/Kinkos, Noodles & Company) and lease quickly. Additional quality retail will be of benefit to Cornell students and the surrounding neighborhood.

Given the cost to develop in Collegetown it is highly unlikely that multi-tenant, for-lease office space will be successful in Collegetown. The prices required for a Collegetown address ($45.50 per square foot) will be too high for most office tenants. Cornell would have to develop or cause the development of office space in Collegetown. Cornell may be one of the few tenants in the marketplace willing to pay the premium associated with a Collegetown location.

The Economic Implications of Regulatory Changes

Introduction

W-ZHA examined the economic implications of reducing the parking requirement and increasing the height limit on two conceptual projects. One project concept is a mixed-use office project at College Avenue/Dryden Road. The second project concept is a mixed-use residential project incorporating the existing Fire Station at 309 College Avenue, the vacant drug store (307 College Avenue), and abutting parcels that face onto Linden Avenue.

College Avenue and Dryden Road Redevelopment Concept

For purposes of this illustrative economic analysis we have assumed that office space can be rented at $35.00 per square foot full service at College Avenue and Dryden Road. Retail is assumed to rent at $30.00 per square foot, triple net. Parking is assumed to lease at $150 per month.

Currently, the City's land use regulations limit the height of the building to 60 feet at this location. Four (4) parking spaces are required per 1,000 square feet of office space. The City's existing land use regulations are applied in the "Base Scenario."

Even without land costs, the economics of development fail to satisfy normal investment thresholds; the return-on-cost should be at least 7.5%.

Scenario 1 tests the economic implications of a regulation that reduces the number of parking spaces required on-site and uses an annual in-lieu parking payment to compensate the City for the off-site parking demand. The second scenario assumes no parking requirement on-site, but an annual in-lieu parking payment. The third scenario assumes a height bonus and reduced parking requirements on-site with an in-lieu parking payment.

For all scenarios, the parking requirement of 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of office space is kept constant. If the on-site parking requirement drops to 1.5 spaces per thousand, the developer must pay the the annual in-lieu parking fee associated with 2.5 off-site parking spaces.

Table 2c-8

ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS: MIXED-USE OFFICE				
College Avenue and Dryden Road Development Concept; Base Case (1 Parking Space per 1,000 Square Feet)				
				Cost
	Cost		**Building Sq Ft**	
Building Cost	$225	/SF	25,000	$5,625,000
Parking Cost	Cost		Spaces On-Site	
Structured	$28,000	/Space	54	$1,512,000
Partially Underground	$33,000	/Space	0	$0
Underground	$45,000	/Space	26	$1,170,000
Total			80	$2,682,000
Total Cost (Building and Parking)				**$8,307,000**
				Operations
Income	**/SF**		**Rentable /SF**	
Office Rent	$35.00	/Yr	18,000	$630,000
Retail Rent	$30.00	/Yr	5,000	$150,000
Parking Rent	$150.00	/Mo	80	$144,000
Total				$924,000
Expenses				
Office Expense	$15.75	/Yr	18,000	($283,500)
Retail Expense	$1.50	/Yr	5,000	($7,500)
Parking Expense	$500.00	/Yr	80	($40,000)
Total				($331,000)
Net Operating Income				**$593,000**
Return-On-Cost				**7.1%**

Source: Goody Clancy Associates; W-ZHA

The illustrative annual in-lieu fee is equal to the debt service on a $25,000 parking space assuming a 35-year term and a 5% tax exempt interest rate. This amounts to an annual payment of approximately $1,525 per off-site space per year.

As the Scenarios will demonstrate when the on-site parking requirement decreases, the amount of developable square feet on the site increases and the project becomes more attractive from an investor's perspective. This occurs either because more revenue generating development is allowed on the site. This occurs either because more of the site can be developed and/or less of the project's height is occupied by structured parking.

Scenario 1

In this scenario, the on-site parking requirement drops from 4 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet to 1.5 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet. The 2.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet that are not developed on-site are subject to the annual in-lieu parking fee of approximately $1,525 per space per year.

The project becomes more valuable under this scenario. The square footage of productive, rentable space doubles from 25,000 square feet under the Base scenario to 50,500 square feet under Scenario 1. The net operating income in Scenario 1 is almost 80% higher than it is in the Base scenario. The relationship between net operating income and development cost remains the same. Reducing the on-site parking requirement increases the productivity of this valuable Collegetown land.

Table 2c-9

ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS: MIXED-USE OFFICE						
College Avenue and Dryden Road Development Concept Reduced On-Site Parking Requirement and In-Lieu Payment						
			Base Case: 4 spaces/1,000 Square Feet		**Reduced Parking Ratio 1.5 Spaces /1,000 Square Feet & In-Lieu Payment**	
				Cost		**Cost**
	Cost /SF		**Building Sq Ft**		**Building Sq Ft**	
Building Cost	$225		25,000	$5,625,000	50,500	$11,362,500
Parking Cost	**Cost /Space**		**Spaces On-Site**	**Cost**	**Spaces On-Site**	**Cost**
Structured	$28,000		54	$1,512,000	35	$980,000
Partially Underground	$33,000		0	$0	30	$990,000
Underground	$45,000		26	$1,170,000	0	$0
Total			80	$2,682,000	65	$1,970,000
Total Cost (Building and Parking)				$8,307,000		$13,332,500
				Operations		**Operations**
Income	/SF		**Rentable /SF**		**Rentable /SF**	
Office Rent	$35.00	/Yr	18,000	$630,000	39,150	$1,370,250
Retail Rent	$30.00	/Yr	5,000	$150,000	7,000	$210,000
Parking Rent	$150.00	/Mo	80	$144,000	65	$117,000
Total				$924,000		$1,697,250
Expenses						
Office Expense	$15.75	/Yr	18,000	$283,500	39,150	$426,020
Retail Expense	$1.50	/Yr	5,000	$7,500	7,000	$10,500
Parking Expense	$500.00	/Yr	80	$40,000	65	$32,500
Annual In-Lieu Parking Fee	$1,527.00		-	$0	109	$166,443
Total				$331,000		$635,463
Net Operating Income				$593,000		$1,061,787
Return-On-Cost				**7.1%**		**8.0%**

Source: Goody Clancy Associates; W-ZHA

Scenario 2

In this scenario, there is no on-site parking requirement. The 4.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet that are not developed on-site are subject to the annual in-lieu parking fee of approximately $1,525 per space per year.

Like the previous scenario the project's value is enhanced with more productive space and a higher net operating income. The return-on-cost increases from 6.5% to 6.9% under this scenario.

Table 2c-10

ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS: MIXED-USE OFFICE						
College Avenue and Dryden Road Development Concept; No On-Site Parking Requirement and Annual In-Lieu Payment						
			Base Case: 4 spaces/1,000 Square Feet		**No On-Site Pkg Requirement & Annual In-Lieu Payment**	
				Cost		**Cost**
Land Cost				$0		$0
	Cost /SF		**Building Sq Ft**		**Building Sq Ft**	
Building Cost	$225		25,000	$5,625,000	50,500	$11,362,500
Parking Cost	**Cost /Space**		**Spaces On-Site**	**Cost**	**Spaces On-Site**	**Cost**
Structured	$28,000		54	$1,512,000	0	$0
Partially Underground	$33,000		0	$0	0	$0
Underground	$45,000		26	$1,170,000	0	$0
Total			80	$2,682,000	0	$0
Total Cost (Building and Parking)				$8,307,000		$11,362,500
				Operations		**Operations**
Income	/SF		**Rentable /SF**		**Rentable /SF**	
Office Rent	$35.00	/Yr	18,000	$630,000	39,150	$1,370,250
Retail Rent	$30.00	/Yr	5,000	$150,000	7,000	$210,000
Parking Rent	$150.00	/Mo	80	$144,000	0	$0
Total				$924,000		$1,580,250
Expenses						
Office Expense	$15.75	/Yr	18,000	$283,500	39,150	$384,661
Retail Expense	$1.50	/Yr	5,000	$7,500	7,000	$10,500
Parking Expense	$500.00	/Yr	80	$40,000	0	$0
Annual In-Lieu Parking Fee	$1,527.00		-	$0	174	$265,698
Total				$331,000		$660,859
Net Operating Income				$593,000		$919,391
Return-On-Cost				**7.1%**		**8.1%**

Source: Goody Clancy Associates; W-ZHA

Scenario 3

In this scenario, the 60 foot height limitation is increased to allow an additional 30 feet. To make the height increase less noticeable, this scenario assumes that for every additional foot of height the building is set back a foot. This scenario results in two additional floors of only 8,500 square feet each. This scenario assumes 1.2 on-site parking spaces per 1,000 square feet.

The increase in height increases the value of the project, and the return-on-cost slightly increases. In other words, the project does not become more feasible as a result of the height bonus.

Table 2c-11

ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS: MIXED-USE OFFICE						
College Avenue and Dryden Road Development Concept; Two Additional Stories, No On-Site Spaces and Annual In-Lieu Payment						
			Base Case: 4 spaces/1,000 Square Feet		Two Additional Stories, No On-Site Spaces and Annual In-Lieu Payment	
				Cost		Cost
Land Cost				$0		$0
	Cost /SF		Building Sq Ft		Building Sq Ft	
Building Cost	$225		25,000	$5,625,000	67,500	$15,187,500
Parking Cost	Cost /Space		Spaces On-Site	Cost	Spaces On-Site	Cost
Structured	$28,000		54	$1,512,000	0	$0
Partially Underground	$33,000		0	$0	0	$0
Underground	$45,000		26	$1,170,000	0	$0
Total			80	$2,682,000	0	$0
Total Cost (Building and Parking)				$8,307,000		$15,187,500
				Operations		Operations
Income	/SF		Rentable /SF		Rentable /SF	
Office Rent	$35.00	/Yr	18,000	$630,000	54,450	$1,905,750
Retail Rent	$30.00	/Yr	5,000	$150,000	7,000	$210,000
Parking Rent	$150.00	/Mo	80	$144,000	-	$0
Total				$924,000		$2,115,750
Expenses						
Office Expense	$15.75	/Yr	18,000	$283,500	54,450	$491,740
Retail Expense	$1.50	/Yr	5,000	$7,500	7,000	$10,500
Parking Expense	$500.00	/Yr	80	$40,000	-	$0
Annual In-Lieu Parking Fee	$1,527.00		-	$0	242	$369,534
Total				$331,000		$871,774
Net Operating Income				$593,000		$1,243,976
Return-On-Cost				**7.1%**		**8.2%**

Source: Goody Clancy Associates; W-ZHA

College Avenue To Linden Avenue Development Concept

This development concept assumes mixed-use development on approximately an acre of land fronting both College and Linden Avenues. We have assumed that new residential space can be rented at $1,100 per bed. Retail is assumed to rent at $30.00 per square foot, triple net. Parking is assumed to lease at $150 per month. Once again, the calculations in the following paragraphs exclude land cost.

Currently, the City's land use regulations have a maximum lot coverage of 40% for properties on Linden Avenue. The base case assumes that the lot coverage is increased to 65% on Linden Avenue properties. Existing regulations require one (1) parking space for every 2 bedrooms. A bedroom is assumed to be 400 square feet. The City's existing land use regulations are applied in the "Base Scenario."

Table 2c-12

ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS					
College Avenue to Linden Avenue Development Concept; As-Of-Right Zoning					
					Cost
Land Cost					$0
	Cost		**Building Sq Ft**		
Building Cost	$225	/SF	80,000		$18,000,000
Parking Cost	**Cost**		**Spaces On-Site**		**Cost**
Structured	$28,000	/Space	80		$2,240,000
Partially Underground	$33,000	/Space	0		$0
Underground	$45,000	/Space	0		$0
Total			80		$2,240,000
Total Cost (Building and Parking)					$20,240,000
					Operations
Income					
Residential Rent	$1,100.00	/Mo/Bed	159	Beds	$2,098,800
Retail Rent	$30.00	/Yr	5,000	SF	$150,000
Parking Rent	$150.00	/Mo	80	Spaces	$144,000
Total					$2,392,800
Expenses					
Residential Expense	40%	Gross Revenue	159		$839,520
Retail Expense	$1.50	/Yr	5,000		$7,500
Parking Expense	$500.00	/Yr	80		$40,000
Total					$887,020
Net Operating Income					$1,505,780
Return-On-Cost					**7.4%**

Source: Goody Clancy Associates; W-ZHA

Scenario 1

In this scenario, the on-site parking requirement of 1 parking space for every 3 beds is removed in exchange for an annual in-lieu parking fee of $1,525 per off-site space. The elimination of the on-site parking requirement allows for a larger building (80,000 square feet to 104,000 square feet). The value of the project increases by almost one-quarter. Finally, the project's return-on-cost improves with the annual in-lieu parking fee.

Table 2c-13

ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS								
College Avenue to Linden Avenue Development Concept In-Lieu Parking Payment								
			Base Case 1 Space/2 Beds			**In-Lieu Parking Payment**		
Land Cost					$0			$0
	Cost		**Building Sq Ft**			**Building Sq Ft**		
Building Cost	$220	/SF	80,000		$17,600,000	104,000		$22,880,000
Parking Cost	**Cost**		**Spaces On-Site**		**Cost**	**Spaces On-Site**		**Cost**
Structured	$28,000	/Space	80		$2,240,000	0		$0
Partially Underground	$33,000	/Space	0		$0	0		$0
Underground	$45,000	/Space	0		$0	0		$0
Total			80		$2,240,000	0		$0
Total Cost (Building and Parking)					$19,840,000			$22,880,000
					Operations			**Operations**
Income								
Residential Rent	$1,100.00	/Mo/Bed	159	Beds	$2,098,800	221	Beds	$2,917,200
Retail Rent	$30.00	/Yr	5,000	SF	$150,000	5,000	SF	$150,000
Parking Rent	$150.00	/Mo	80	Spaces	$144,000	0	Spaces	$0
Total					$2,392,800			$3,067,200
Expenses								
Residential Expense	40%	Gross Revenue	159		$839,520	221		$967,143
Retail Expense	$1.50	/Yr	5,000		$7,500	5,000		$7,500
Parking Expense	$500.00	/Yr	80		$40,000	0		$0
Annual In-Lieu Parking Fee	$1,527.00		-		$0	111		$168,734
Total					$887,020			$1,143,377
Net Operating Income					$1,505,780			$1,923,823
Return-On-Cost					**7.6%**			**8.4%**

Source: Goody Clancy Associates; W-ZHA

Summary: The Economic Implications of Regulatory Changes

A challenge facing Collegetown's future economic development is the high cost of redevelopment. Creative approaches are required to enhance the economics of redevelopment in Collegetown. The redevelopment Scenarios presented demonstrate that reducing the on-site parking requirements in exchange for an in-lieu payment and increasing height enhances the productivity of Collegetown land and enhances investment yield.

Conclusion

New development can introduce new markets and additional goods and services into a marketplace. New projects refresh urban environments and stimulate additional investment. Investment is critical to economic development.

Capturing new investment in Collegetown will be challenging given current development economics and Collegetown's specialized character. To support land and development costs, private investors are forced to develop premium product targeted to the University population (in particular, undergraduates). If left up to market forces alone, land uses will be generally limited to residential and retail.

Applying normal investment principles, it will be next to impossible to develop housing affordable to households earning less than $65,000 per year in Collegetown; land costs are simply too high. The rents required to support new office in Collegetown are too high for the average office tenant. Collegetown's unique market position makes it a very expensive place to develop.

Regulatory changes as they relate to on-site parking requirements and building height can improve the economics of new development. The City must be both creative and proactive as it relates to land use regulation in Collegetown. The numbers demonstrate, however, that on-site parking reductions and increases in building height, while improving project economics, will not fully solve the economic issues. This makes planning all the more important; regulations must reflect the community's vision for Collegetown.

Just as Collegetown's current economy is inexorably linked to Cornell University, its future revitalization is too. The University can be instrumental in helping to create a 365-day economy in Collegetown. The University should take the lead in causing the development of faculty and graduate student housing in Collegetown. Faculty and graduate students could take full advantage of the campus' proximity. New office development with Cornell as a tenant could create a captive employee market throughout the year and provide much needed ground floor retail space.

Cornell's support in Collegetown revitalization should not result in additional tax exempt property. Cornell can be a tenant in a privately financed and managed office building. In terms of residential, Cornell can work with the private development community to acquire and write-down land for privately financed graduate and faculty housing development. Cornell University involvement is necessary to unlock Collegetown's development potential.

3. Public Process

Setting the stage

As members of the consulting team for the Collegetown project – led by the Boston-based firm of Goody Clancy, and including transportation consultants Nelson|Nygaard and economic analysts W-ZHA – continued their exploration of existing conditions, they expanded on the public that was central to development of the Vision Statement and that would prove to be equally central to creation of both the urban plan and design guidelines.

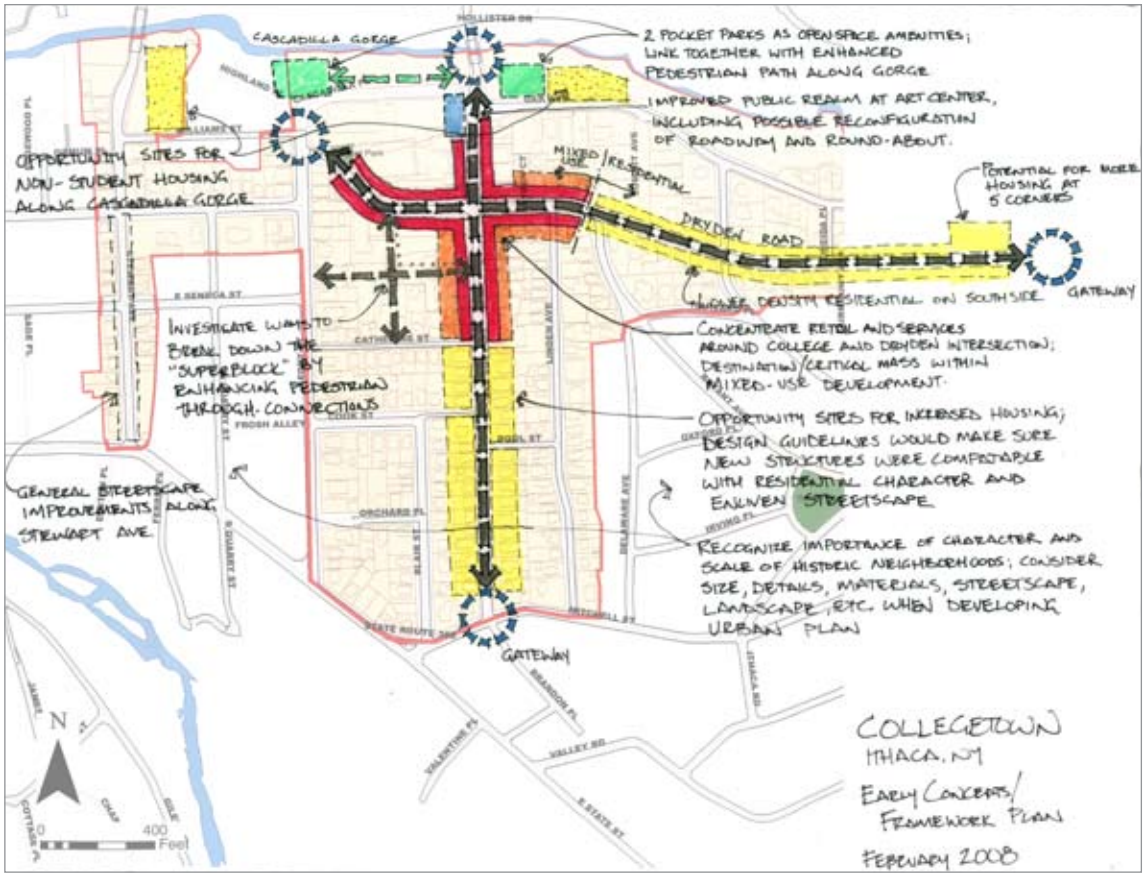
Working throughout the process with senior staff from the City of Ithaca's Department of Planning and Development, as well as with the Collegetown Vision Implementation Committee (CVIC), the team identified the Vision Statement's major themes that would shape both the planning process and the outcomes of that process:

- Strengthening and sustaining Collegetown's residential and commercial diversity and activity;
- Identifying opportunities and appropriate locations for increased density while ensuring sensitive transitions from high- to low-density areas;
- Improving pedestrian amenities and connections;
- Rationalizing Collegetown's parking options and opportunities;
- Focusing on new development options that are revenue-generating.

Continuing the Process: Moving from Vision to Reality

As the team prepared for a series of early February 2008 orientation meetings with stakeholders groups, it developed an early-stage visual sketch of the Vision Statement's themes and main ideas. Among the items included were opportunity sites (near Cascadilla Gorge) for non-student housing and pocket parks; an improved public realm at the Schwartz Performing Arts Center, along with a possible reconfiguration of the nearby roadway and round-about; opportunity sites for something higher-density housing; and improved streetscapes.

The meetings themselves, convened by the City's Department of Planning and Development,



An early concept/framework plan was offered to participants at the February meetings for their reactions.

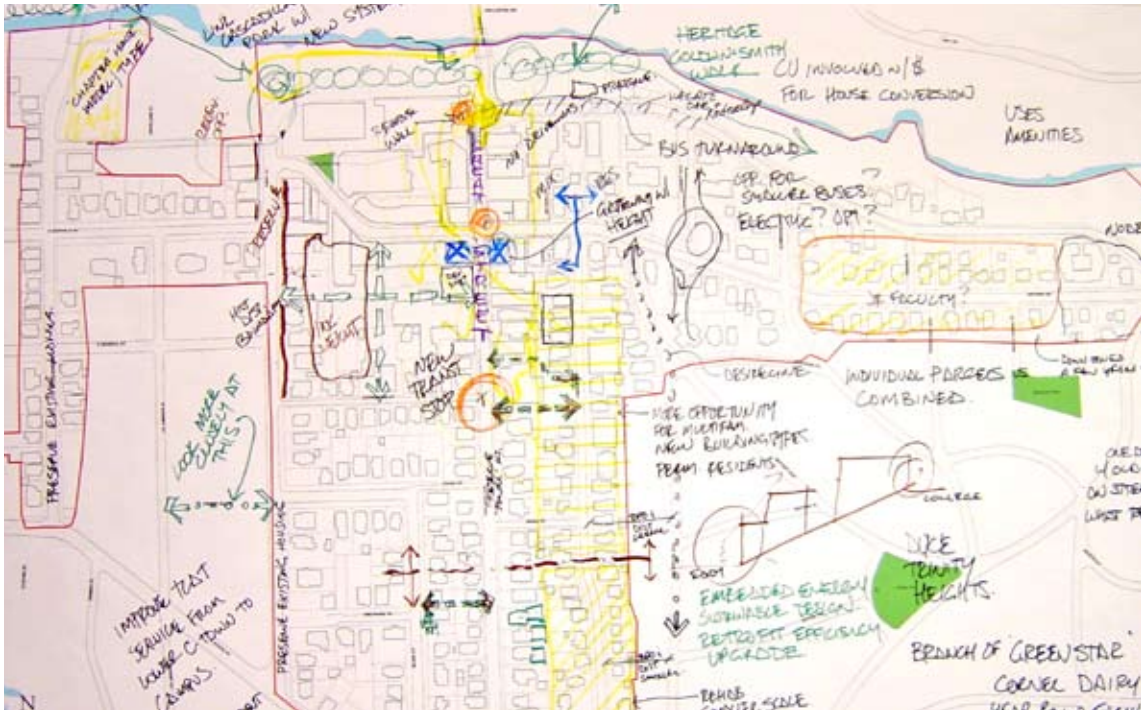
provided the consulting team with the opportunity to engage all major stakeholder groups in discussions regarding their perspectives on these themes and the concept plan. In addition to meeting with the CVIC, the team also discussed the project with members of the Bryant Park Civic Association as well as other Collegetown and neighborhood residents; Mayor Peterson and members of the Common Council; Cornell University senior staff; undergraduate and graduate students; and property owners, private developers, and other leaders within the business community. While elaborating on the major themes and core issues from their respective points of view, there was agreement on the need for an upgrade of much of the local student housing; significantly greater attention to issues of regulatory enforcement in connection with building codes, cleanliness, and safety throughout the area; and sustainability in all aspects.

The groups were also provided with a series of photographs of sites around the country – titled "Looking at Possibilities" –showing example, of higher-density housing, mixed-use development, and enhanced streetscapes. As the Collegetown plan and design guidelines moved forward, these – and other – images served as fodder for further thought and ideas.

Throughout the planning process the team continued to meet with other representatives from various City agencies – public works, police, fire – both to gain additional insights into existing enforcement conditions and to engage them early on in helping to shape the plan and its implementation.

Education Briefings

The next major phase of the public process occurred the weekend of March 7-9, 2008, with a series of education and design workshops. The evening of March 7 provided the public with a set of briefings focused on the economics of development, on transportation, on urban design, and



Large-scale maps were used by workshop participants to indicate location, and types, of preservation , renewal, development, and new connections.

During the weekend, participants were asked to mark their responses to photographs showing different approaches to housing, to mixed-use development, and to streetscape enhancements.

on zoning. The consultant team discussed issues ranging from the cost of land in Collegetown, and the impact of those costs on the neighborhood's redevelopment and property improvement opportunities. The team also provided a preliminary analysis of Collegetown's transportation, circulation, and parking challenges, setting out a series of preliminary – and interrelated – ideas for improvements, including pricing and policy changes, increased TCAT signage; and changes in zoning that would include changes in required parking ratios. (Chapter 4 of this report elaborates on these, and the other components, including timing and phasing, of an integrated transportation strategy.)

A major goal of the design workshop was to provide the opportunity for the Collegetown community to get as many ideas as possible on the table and into a broader discussion about the area's future.

In the area of urban design, the team again offered examples of – and asked for feedback on – different approaches to housing, mixed-use development, and streetscape improvements; the objective was to incorporate, where appropriate, aspects of the most desirable of these models into the plan's design guidelines.

The final briefing outlined the ways in which new zoning emerging from this process will ensure enforcement of the approved plan and design guidelines.

Marking the Maps and Designing the Future

Saturday's design charrette provided opportunities to members of the community, working in small groups at one of four tables and using large-scale base-maps, to indicate where preservation or renovation should happen; where Collegetown could benefit from new pedestrian connections; and where higher densities might occur that would provide new housing opportunities that at the same time maintain and strengthen the area's overall physical character.

All four groups, first and foremost, emphasized the importance of Collegetown's human scale and, on a related note, the need to protect the integrity of existing stable residential neighborhoods – such as the areas to the east of Linden Avenue and along the southern edge of Mitchell Street – while continuing to offer housing opportunities to Cornell's undergraduate and graduate student populations. In that light, participants marked, as "opportunity sites" for redevelopment, the northern portion of Linden Avenue. They also identified possible infill development opportunities along both Dryden Road east of College Avenue and Eddy Street, while emphasizing the need to be sensitive to historically significant buildings along the latter and the residential neighborhood to the south of the former.

In various ways the four groups talked about

enhancing Collegetown's walkability, whether by increasing pedestrian connections to College Avenue from, for example, Linden Avenue, or by widening the sidewalks, particularly along College Avenue's 400 blocks. Further recommendations included possibly reducing parking at the 400 block along with adding a new bus stop at Catherine Street. Both Eddy Street and College Avenue were recognized as highly significant corridors (in line with the Vision Statement's identification of College Avenue as a possible future "great street"), with an emphasis on enhancing their roles as gateways to the Cornell campus.

The beautification of the area surrounding Eddy Gate, Cornell's historic entry, loomed as a major opportunity or new public space that would be linked more explicitly with Cascadilla Park and, ultimately, the Goldwin Smith Walk, and underscoring this area's role as one of Collegetown's most significant natural assets and amenities.

Again building on the Vision Statement, participants reiterated the need for an overall expansion of retail and entertainment offerings, including a possible hotel or b&b, a green-grocer, etc. And finally, charrette attendees called for consistency in enforcement of existing regulations, and for a set of strategies by which to implement basic street and sidewalk improvements.

Bringing it All Together

On the last day of the workshop weekend, the consulting team took up residence in the former

On Sunday, the consulting team brought together the many recommendations produced during the previous day's design workshop, presenting the results of their work to members of the Collegetown community later in the afternoon.

Kraftees Dryden Road storefront and proceeded to compile the results of Saturday's workshop as a major step toward the development of a single land use plan for Collegetown. The public was invited in during the afternoon for further discussions, while the team continued to integrate the previous day's work and further refine the kinds of uses – and their location – that were at the heart of the Saturday workshop. The major goals of preservation and protection, as well as renovation and revitalization, shaped the emerging plan and served as the basis for a presentation back to the public toward the end of the afternoon. The presentation, for the first time, discussed Collegetown in terms of a series of related "character areas" that would help to determine development and preservation scenarios appropriate to each of the areas and the design guidelines to shape those scenarios.

Presenting the Plan and Design

Guidelines

On May 20 the complete draft plan and design guidelines were presented first to the CVIC and then, via an open-house at the St. Luke Lutheran Church, to the public. With the major elements of the character areas and the guidelines on a series of poster-sized boards, attendees were able to engage in informal conversations with members of the team and City staff regarding the plan and its components and to have the team respond to their concerns and questions. Similar discussions were held the following day with the City's Planning Department, the Common Council's Planning and Development Committee, and the Board of Public Works. At subsequent meetings of the CVIC, members continued to debate several of the plan's major recommendations, including proposed heights/or the area near Collegetown's commercial center and elements of the transportation strategy. Comments from the CVIC, the public, and Committee and Board members were incorporated into the final draft, presented to the City at the end of May.

The City Planning Department reviewed all major components of the plan and design guidelines.

The May public meeting provided additional opportunities for community feedboards.

4. A Sustainable Transportation System

Central to preserving and improving the prosperity of Collegetown will be the successful management of its transportation systems, which today severely limit walking, biking, and transit opportunities as described earlier in Chapter 2. The current heavy subsidy for driving in the district promotes excessive vehicle trips.

When combined with the resulting disinvestment in alternatives to driving, Collegetown has become the victim of unsustainable transportation policies that rely too much on the private automobile and not enough on more cost-effective, high-capacity – and sustainable – modes.

In addition to a solid set of neighborhood design guidelines and zoning changes, a new set of transportation management programs needs to be put in place to help create the lively and walkable environment current residents seek and future residents and employees will need to break the over-reliance on private vehicles. This section lays out the elements of a "sustainable transportation system" or "STS" for Collegetown.

SUMMARY

Summary of Program

The STS program would include the following steps:

Pursue a "Park Once" Strategy.

Make efficient use of the existing parking supply by including as many spaces as possible in a common pool of shared, publicly available spaces. Parking supply for all Collegetown retail, office, and residential users should be shared, with the exception of residents and employees who are willing to pay a premium for exclusive, assigned spaces. A "Park Once" strategy also includes clear parking signage and is complemented by parking management and pricing policies that encourage maximizing the number of destinations accessed by one parker from one parking space. Improvements to the walking environment are another necessary complement.

Create a Commercial Parking Benefit District.

To create vacancies and turnover of the most convenient "front door" curb parking spaces for merchants' customers, install multi-space parking meters with parking prices set at rates that create a 15% vacancy rate on each block, and do not institute time limits. Dedicate all resulting meter revenue to public improvements in Collegetown.

Provide Universal Transit Passes.

A universal transit pass program would provide all residents and employees of Collegetown with a fully-subsidized transit pass for unlimited rides on TCAT buses at no cost to the rider. Universal transit pass programs allow annual passes to be purchased at a deeply discounted bulk rate for all members of a specified group, such as all of a firm's employees, or all of the residents of an apartment complex. Negotiating a similar program for Collegetown with TCAT will benefit both employees and residents, and cost-effectively reduce parking demand. TCAT already receives a subsidy from Cornell for their successful universal transit pass program,

Omnipass, which provides transit services to Cornell employees at no cost to the employee. With Cornell's assistance, this program could be easily expanded and administered for Collegetown.

Require "Parking Cash-Out."

Many employers in Collegetown are likely to wish to provide free parking for their employees as a fringe benefit. Employers should be allowed to do so, provided that they also offer the cash value of the parking subsidy (i.e., $290 per month) to any employee who does not drive to work. Such "Parking Cash Out" programs provide an equal transportation subsidy to employees who ride transit, carpool, walk, or bicycle to work. A primary benefit of parking cash of such programs is their proven effect on reducing auto congestion and parking demand.

Charge for parking separately from the cost of residential or commercial space.

For all residential units, the full cost of providing parking should be "unbundled" from the cost of the housing itself, by creating a separate parking charge. Currently, it is estimated that the construction cost for underground parking spaces in Collegetown will total approximately $45,000 per space. This translates to an annualized cost of almost $290 per space per month. Unbundling this large cost will change parking in Collegetown from a required purchase to an optional amenity, so that residents can freely choose how many spaces they wish to lease. For lower income residents, many of whom have no car or only one car, this will provide substantial savings. Charging separately for parking is also the single most effective strategy to encourage households to own fewer cars. Designated parking spaces should be leased for a rate which covers the full cost to build and operate the space (i.e., $290 per month), whereas shared parking spaces should be leased to residents at a discount.

As with parking for residential units, the full cost of providing employee spaces should be unbundled from the cost of leasing commercial space, providing employers with a strong financial in-

centive to participate in transportation demand management programs that will reduce employee parking demand. As with residential, designated parking spaces should be leased at a rate which covers the full cost to build and operate the space (i.e., $290 per month), whereas shared parking spaces should be leased to businesses at a discount. A key strategy to complement unbundling is the use of a parking in-lieu payment.

Implement a "parking in-lieu" payment.

Where zoning requirements for minimum numbers of parking spaces exist, a "Parking In-Lieu" fee or payment has found great success in the U.S. at reducing parking supply for dense mixed-use areas that have lower parking demand or high potential for sharing. The in-lieu value is intended to be set lower than the cost to build parking structures, providing an incentive to reduce supplies. In jurisdictions such as Collegetown that have zoning minimums far in excess of the actual demand (the office requirement of four spaces per 1,000 square foot building area is nearly twice the national observed average in areas with little transit access), the in-lieu amount may be lowered substantially below the construction cost to encourage sharing of existing supplies of parking. While one-time payments are common, a recurring annual payment that is specifically dedicated to promoting and developing shared parking facilities and programs or alternate modal improvements is best for creating a sustainable transportation environment. This strategy must be complemented by zoning flexibility with regard to proximity of accessory parking, sharing of parking, and third-party ownership of required supplies. If there are fears of reducing supplies too much, a lowered minimum may still be enforced for participating developments.

Establish a car sharing program.

Contract with the new local car sharing provider, Ithaca Car Share, to provide one or more car sharing vehicles in Collegetown. Car sharing makes a common fleet of vehicles available to members for rental by the hour or by the day, and can be an important tool to reduce parking demand. Combined with a parking cash-out, user fees can be heavily subsidized.

Institute additional supportive transportation demand management measures.

Provide and actively market additional measures to support alternative transportation, such as a Guaranteed Ride Home program, and a transportation information package for new employees and residents. Many successful programs exist for Cornell faculty and staff that could easily be cost-effectively expanded to Collegetown employees with Cornell's assistance.

Establish a residential parking benefit district.

To prevent unwanted spillover parking into the neighborhoods adjacent to Collegetown, implement a Residential Parking Benefit District for these neighborhoods. Many cities implement residential permit districts (also known as preferential parking districts) by reserving on-street parking spaces for residents only, usually issuing permits for free or a nominal fee. Residential Parking Benefit Districts are similar, but also allow a limited number of commuters to pay to use any surplus on-street parking spaces in the neighborhood. The resulting revenue is returned to the neighborhood to fund public improvements.

Investigate alternative infrastructure improvements.

Provide bicycle parking.

Provide both bicycle racks for short-term parking throughout Collegetown – especially near popular retail destinations – as well as secure, fully-enclosed long-term bicycle parking for residents and employees in all new buildings. All parking should adhere to the latest design standards advocated by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (www.apbp.org). Cornell may be able to function as an initial provider based on their success with abundant bike parking on their campus immediately across the gorge from Collegetown.

Install improvements to the pedestrian realm.

The high numbers of pedestrians walking in Collegetown today occurs despite many narrow sidewalks with frequent obstructions. The potential to greatly increase walk shares – particu-

larly for non-student residents, employees, and visitors – is high in Collegetown given a program that enhances transit access and the "Park Once" environment.

Improve transit facilities.
Basic improvements that increase the visibility, convenience, and amenity of riding transit can be made in Collegetown, including installation of bus shelters, installation of schedule holders or route kiosks, branding of key routes to remote parking and other key destinations, development of Collegetown-specific transit guides, etc.

When implemented as a package, the measures described above reinforce each other. For example, unbundling the cost of parking from the cost of renting an apartment allows low-income residents to save several hundred dollars a month by giving up a car. Providing a car-sharing service makes it easier for residents to make that choice, since they can have access to a vehicle when they need one. For the car-sharing provider, unbundling parking costs increases the financial viability of their operation, since residents have a powerful financial incentive to reduce their vehicle ownership.

Understanding the Imbalance of Modal Priorities

Central to understanding the need for the proposed Sustainable Transportation System is understanding the role that parking plays in the development and daily life of Collegetown or, for that matter, any semi-urban district in America. Parking has a unique roll in American life that has largely been overlooked by planners, developers, and drivers alike. Unlike any other form of transportation, the cost of parking is disassociated from its mode of transportation: the car. All modes have vehicles and terminals to access those vehicles: airplanes have expensive airports shared by multiple airlines with multiple flights that pay high user fees passed on to travelers; ships have enormous ports with vast longshore resources, each serving entire regions, with terminal and shipping costs a part of passenger tickets and bills of lading; and trains operate between stations, each with valuable land connections serving multiple purposes – of which a large part of the cost is passed on to the rider. However, the automobile must have a terminal at each and every destination, but 99% of all terminal arrivals are free to the driver in America. The user rarely pays the real cost to park. Even in Collegetown, where drivers must usually pay to park, the fees that are charged do not begin to cover the real cost of providing the terminal space for automobiles. The most expensive parking garage in Collegetown – which charges $225 per month – has an estimated actual cost of $330 per month (see Chapter 2). As a result, drivers parking there receive a subsidy to drive and park their car of over $100 per month. If land value is factored in, an undeveloped surface parking space in Collegetown is estimated to have a value of at least $420 per month, but the average surface parking charge is only $50 per month – a subsidy of $370 per month to anyone who wants to drive.
This economic reality has been a way of life for Americans since the automobile began to proliferate as a means of transportation. Federal subsidies, local land use regulations, and development costs have largely hidden the cost of parking from the user, forcing it to be absorbed in many other aspects of our economy, such as housing and insurance costs, taxes, and the cost of goods and services. One source placed the annual national subsidy for parking infrastructure in America at over $300B in 2002 dollars[1]. In 2002, the budget

for national defense was $349B. The hidden cost of motor vehicle transportation has recently become very clear as spiking gas prices have increased many other costs in our daily lives.

In the past several years, many communities have begun to rationalize the subsidy that is given to driving through the hidden cost of parking. Communities such as Pasadena California, Boulder Colorado, Austin Texas, and Arlington County Virginia have recognized that their transit, walking, and biking infrastructure was receiving far less subsidy if any at all. These communities, along with many large and small businesses throughout America, also began to recognize that the cost of building superior transit, walking, and biking facilities was much cheaper than building more parking, especially in places like Collegetown that have high land values and high construction costs. Often driven by the accountants as their private partners[2], these communities quickly recognized that the massive amount of money directed at parking could instead be directed at broader community improvements that simultaneously reduced the demand for parking. Today, these communities have extensive and attractive multi-modal transportation systems that are financed almost entirely by the cost savings of not building parking structures.

Collegetown stands to learn a great amount from the experiences of these communities and businesses. By recognizing the growing modal inequity that is propagated by huge parking subsidies, Collegetown can redirect this enormous parking cost into community improvements that can achieve the goals of the Collegetown Vision Statement while preserving a vital mixed-use neighborhood for years to come.

The following program suggestions are derived from a review of best parking and transportation demand management practices conducted in communities throughout the United States.

[1] Mark Delucchi, University of California at Davis, 1997.

[2] For example, see Boulder's Central Area General Improvement District, where downtown parking construction decisions are managed by business members who directed investment in alternative modes of transportation when presented with the true cost of building new parking.

The following program suggestions are derived from a review of best parking and transportation demand management practices conducted in communities throughout the United States.

STS Program Elements

The detailed parking management and transportation demand management measures for the proposed sustainable system follow. These elements are designed to meet several goals:

- Provide shoppers, employees and residents with sufficient parking, in a manner that is convenient and cost-effective;
- Provide additional transportation choices, including transit, carpool, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and services;
- Advance the broader goals of the Collegetown vision statement by creating a neighborhood that is genuinely oriented towards transit, walking, and bicycling.

The STS program emerges from an understanding that parking and transportation policies have powerful effects not merely on parking demand, but on development feasibility, housing affordability, the amount of traffic produced by new developments, the quality of its urban design, and many other fundamental aspects that make Collegetown a place.

element 1 pursue a "Park Once" strategy

Goals

Make efficient use of the parking supply by including as many spaces as possible in a common pool of shared, publicly available spaces. Share existing parking resources efficiently as a flexible pool, rather than as many small, inefficient private parking areas. Complement with clear signing and pedestrian-oriented strategies.

Fundamentals

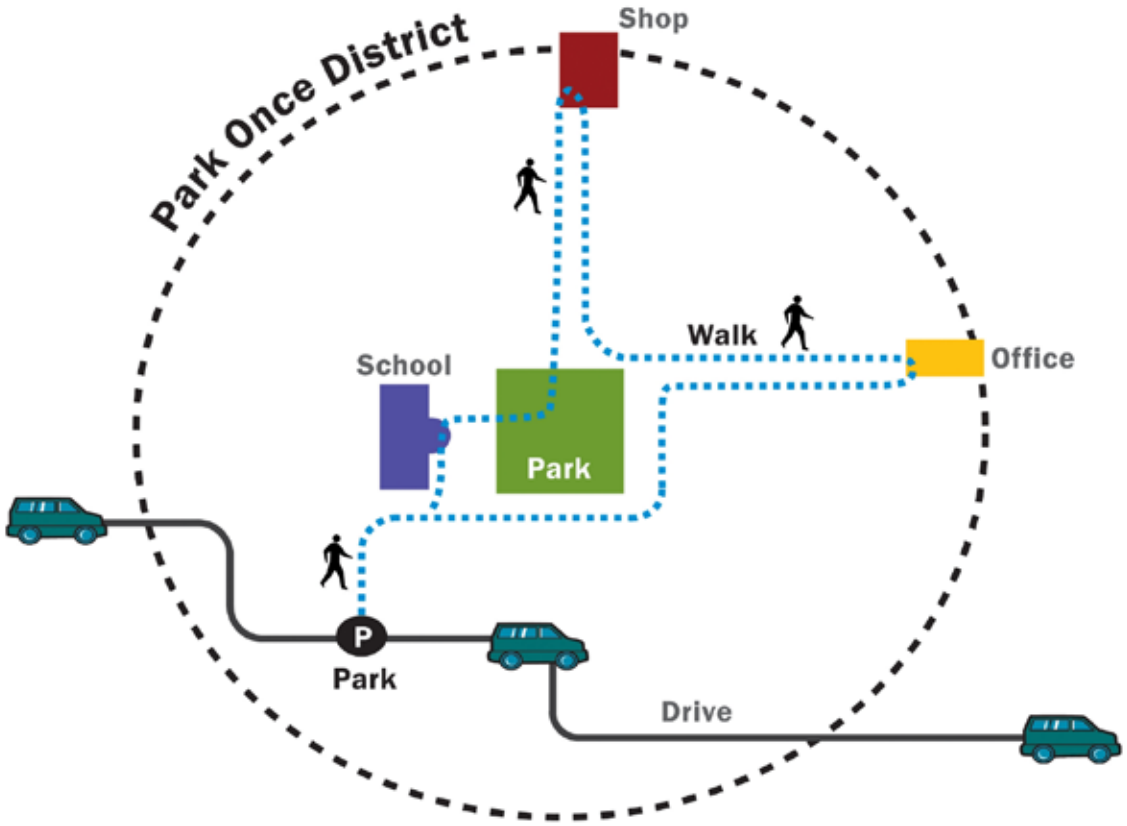
The creation of a "Park Once" environment is fundamental to Collegetown's goal of creating a walkable district. The typical pattern of individual buildings, each with its own parking supply, requires two vehicular movements and a parking space to be dedicated for each visit to a shop, office, or residence. To accomplish three errands in this type of environment requires six movements in three parking spaces for three tasks. With virtually all parking held in private hands, spaces are not efficiently shared between uses, and each building's private parking is typically sized to handle a worst-case parking load.[1] Most significantly, when new buildings are required to provide such worst-case parking ratios, the result is often pedestrian-hostile buildings that hover above parking decks.

When the practice of building individual private lots or garages for each building is adopted, the result is also a lack of welcome for customers: at each parking lot, the visitor is informed that his vehicle will be towed if he or she visits any place besides the adjacent building. When this occurs, nearby shopping malls gain a distinct advantage over a district with fragmented parking. Mall owners understand that they should not divide their mall's parking supply into small fiefdoms: they operate their supply as a single pool for all of the shops, so that customers are welcomed wherever they park.

The compactness and mixed-use nature of Collegetown lends itself to this kind of "Park Once" strategy. Operating the downtown parking supply as a single shared pool results in significant savings in daily vehicle trips and required parking spaces, for three reasons:

1 Most minimum zoning requirements for parking supplies assume a conservative margin above the estimates produced by sources such as Parking Generation, Third Edition, published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers. For instance, in Ithaca the standard of 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of office space is used, while ITE's average rate for offices is 2.5 spaces. This manual provides parking occupancy data observed at various individual land uses throughout the United States, and is the most commonly used reference for parking studies. It should be noted, however, that the parking occupancy rates in Parking Generation were measured at stand-alone, single-use suburban sites with little or no transit and ample free parking. Using these rates without any adjustment would be likely to overstate the parking demand in a pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use place like Collegetown.

Fig. 4-1 "Park Once" District



Based on an original illustration by Walter Kulash.

Park once

Those arriving by car can easily follow a "park once" pattern: they park their car just once and complete multiple daily tasks on foot before returning to their car (see Fig. 4-1).

Shared parking among uses with differing peak times.

Spaces can be efficiently shared between uses with differing peak hours, peak days, and peak seasons of parking demand (such as office, restaurant, retail, and the performing arts center).

Shared parking to spread peak loads.

The parking supply can be sized to meet average parking loads (instead of the worst-case parking ratios needed for isolated buildings), since the common supply allows shops and offices with above-average demand to be balanced by shops and offices that have below-average demand or are temporarily vacant.

To implement a "Park Once" strategy, parking in Collegetown must be managed as a public utility, just like streets and sewers, with public parking provided in strategically-placed lots and garages. In the future, development should be prohibited (or strongly discouraged) from building private parking: in cases where certain tenants, such as new offices, require a guarantee

of a certain number of spaces at particular hours (e.g., Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.), they should be provided with the opportunity to lease those spaces in a public lot or garage, with the exclusive right to use them during the hours required. As described above, such arrangements leave the parking available during evening and weekend hours for other users (e.g., patrons of restaurants), resulting in an efficient sharing of the parking supply and lower costs for all.

Implementation of simple signing improvements helps motorists easily find shared parking facilities when they chose not to seek on-street parking. Current signing for and visibility of the Dryden Road garage, for example, is very poor, and the pedestrian experience entering and exiting it is threatening. This highly valuable asset should be made significantly more inviting and secure for all users.

Overall, the benefits of fully implementing a "Park Once" strategy for the entire district include:

- A more welcoming environment for customers and visitors (fewer "Thou Shalt Not Park Here" signs scattered about).
- The need for fewer, strategically placed lots and garages, resulting in better urban design and greater development opportunities.
- Construction of larger, more space-efficient (and therefore more cost-effective) lots and garages.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, by transforming motorists into pedestrians, who walk instead of drive to different nearby destinations, a "Park Once" strategy is an immediate generator of pedestrian life, creating crowds of people who animate public life on the streets and generate the patrons of street friendly retail businesses.

Program Details

Make efficient use of the parking supply by including as many spaces as possible in a common pool of shared, publicly available spaces. This "Park Once" strategy should be implemented through the following policies:

1. Incentives to encourage participation by existing parking facility owners and operators need to be in place. These can take the following forms:
   a. Increased regulatory flexibility to encourage sharing, including elimination of distance requirements for accessory parking, elimination of any stipulation on shared parking, elimination of any code-based requirements that discourage public access, etc.
   b. Pooled liability protection whereby multiple parking facility owners can purchase a replacement joint policy to allow public access for lower rates than existing policies.
   c. Creation of a parking authority or other public-private entity that manages the shared off-street (and on-street) parking supply. This entity can offer greater economies of scale than individual parking operators can afford, greatly reducing labor, security, insurance, maintenance, and other related costs, while also allowing greater purchasing power. When combined with revenues from a parking benefit district (see Element 2 below), this entity has the ability to afford regular maintenance, improve parking amenities (lighting, signing, driver services), and offer guaranteed lease rates to private operators in return for the ability to operate those lots in the shared pool.
2. The parking supply for the retail, office, and residential users in Collegetown should be shared among all users, with the following exception: residents and employees who are willing to pay a premium rate for exclusive, assigned spaces should be allowed to do so. (Residents of market rate units are most likely to take advantage of this option.) To implement this policy, parking leases can be struc-

tured in the following manner:

a. Under the *standard lease rate*, the parking permit holder is guaranteed that a parking space will be available within the shared pool of spaces for him or her to use, but no particular space is marked with his or her name.
b. Under the *premium* rate for assigned spaces, the parking permit holder has a particular space designated (with signs and markings) for his or her use. For example, an assigned residential space may be marked "Reserved for Unit #101", while assigned employee spaces may be marked reserved for an individual permit holder ("Reserved for Permit #81"). Two types of premium spaces should be made available. The most expensive option is a space that is reserved 24 hours per day, seven days a week for the permit holder's exclusive use. The less expensive alternative is reserved for the permit holder's exclusive use only during the hours when the space is typically needed. For example, a typical retail tenant may wish to choose a space that is reserved for his or her firm's use only when the business is open – say, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday through Friday, in the case of a realtor's office. (With this latter alternative, the retail tenant saves money by having the space assigned for their use only part-time, and the space becomes available for other users – such as restaurant patrons – on evenings and weekends). In general, tenants should be encouraged to lease assigned spaces only for the hours and days of the week when they most require exclusive use.

3. As future properties are developed, their parking supplies should also become part of the Park Once district. This may be accomplished either by creating additional new joint or remote public parking facilities as part of development agreements for each site or through conditions of approval that require that the privately-owned parking supply be made available for public use.
4. As the area becomes fully developed and demand for parking increases, instituting valet parking services (particularly for restaurant patrons, if a strong restaurant trade developed) should be considered, since this will allow the most effective use of out of the way parking spaces and can increase the effective parking supply by allowing for parking of additional vehicles in parking aisles and in tandem parking arrangements.

element 2 create a commercial parking benefit district

Goals

To (1) efficiently manage demand for parking while accommodating customer, employee and resident parking needs, and (2) put customers first: create vacancies and turnover of the most convenient "front door" curb parking spaces to ensure availability for customers and visitors.

Fundamentals

Many downtown districts suffer from a common problem. The most visible and most convenient parking spaces are frequently entirely full, while simultaneously, parking spaces just behind or just under a building – or a block away – sit largely vacant. The result is often a perceived parking shortage, even when a district as a whole has hundreds of vacant parking spaces available. In many downtowns, employees occupy the best spaces, even when time limits are instituted to try to reserve these spots for customers. As one downtown merchant describes the situation in his town, "Parking is a problem for businesses because employees park on Main St. and side streets and prevent customers from parking...We need parking management and enforcement strategies to prevent employees from doing the 'two-hour shuffle' downtown."

Always available, convenient, on-street customer parking is of primary importance for Collegetown retail to succeed. To create vacancies and rapid turnover in the best, most convenient, front door parking spaces, it is crucial to have price incentives to persuade some drivers – especially employees – to park in the less convenient spaces (in underground garages or in available on-street parking a block or two away): higher prices for the best spots and cheap or free prices for the less convenient, currently underused spaces.

Motorists can be thought of as falling into two primary categories: bargain hunters and convenience seekers. Convenience seekers are more willing to pay for an available front door spot. Many shoppers and diners are convenience seekers: they are typically less sensitive to parking charges because they stay for relatively short periods of time, meaning that they will accumulate less of a fee than an employee or other all-day visitor. By contrast, many long-stay parkers, such as employees, find it more worthwhile to walk a block to save on eight hours worth of parking fees. With proper pricing, the bargain hunters will choose currently underutilized lots, leaving the prime spots free for those convenience seekers who are willing to spend a bit more. For Collegetown merchants, it will be important to make prime spots available for these people: those who are willing to pay a small fee to park are also those who are willing to spend money in stores and restaurants.

What are the alternatives to charging for parking?

The primary alternative that cities can use to create vacancies in prime parking spaces is to set time limits and give tickets to violators. Time limits, however, bring several disadvantages: enforcement of time limits is labor-intensive and difficult, and downtown employees, who quickly become familiar with enforcement patterns, often become adept at the "two hour shuffle", moving their cars regularly or swapping spaces with a coworker several times during the workday. Even

with strictly enforced time limits, if there is no price incentive to persuade employees to seek out less convenient, bargain-priced spots, employees will probably still park in prime spaces.

For customers, strict enforcement can bring "ticket anxiety," the fear of getting a ticket if one lingers a minute too long (for example, in order to have dessert after lunch). As Dan Zack, Downtown Development Manager for Redwood City, CA, puts it, "Even if a visitor is quick enough to avoid a ticket, they don't want to spend the evening watching the clock and moving their car around. If a customer is having a good time in a restaurant, and they are happy to pay the market price for their parking spot, do we want them to wrap up their evening early because their time limit wasn't long enough? Do we want them to skip dessert or that last cappuccino in order to avoid a ticket?"

A recent Redwood City staff report summarizes the results found in downtown Burlingame, California:

In a recent "intercept" survey, shoppers in downtown Burlingame were asked which factor made their parking experience less pleasant recently... The number one response was "difficulty in finding a space" followed by "chance of getting a ticket." "Need to carry change" was third, and the factor that least concerned the respondents was "cost of parking." It is interesting to note that Burlingame has the most expensive on-street parking on the [San Francisco] Peninsula ($.75 per hour) and yet cost was the least troubling factor for most people.

This is not an isolated result. Repeatedly, surveys of downtown shoppers have shown that the availability of parking, rather than price, is of prime importance.

What is the right price for on-street parking?

If prices are used to create vacancies and turnover in the prime parking spots, then what is the right price? An ideal occupancy rate (on each and every block) is approximately 85% at even the busiest hour, a rate which leaves about one out of every seven spaces available[2]. This provides enough vacancies that visitors can easily find a spot near their destination when they first arrive. For each block and each parking lot in Collegetown, the right price is the price that will achieve this goal. This means that pricing should not be uniform: the most desirable spaces need higher prices, while less convenient spots are cheap or may even be free. Prices should also vary by time of day and day of week: for example, higher at noon and lower at midnight.

Ideally, parking occupancy for each block of on-street spaces and each garage should be monitored carefully, and prices adjusted regularly to keep enough spaces available. In short, prices should be set at market rate, according to demand, so that just enough spaces are always available. Professor Donald Shoup of UCLA advocates setting prices for parking according to the "Goldilocks Principle":

2 This rate is a widely-accepted industry standard that provides a high level of convenience for parkers and largely eliminates the circling for parking which contributes to increased driver frustration, traffic congestion and collisions.

The price is too high if many spaces are vacant, and too low if no spaces are vacant. Children learn that porridge shouldn't be too hot or too cold, and that beds shouldn't be too soft or too firm. Likewise, the price of curb parking shouldn't be too high or too low. When about 15 percent of curb spaces are vacant, the price is just right. What alternative price could be better?[3]

If this principle is followed, then there need be no fear that pricing parking will drive customers away. After all, when the front-door parking spots at the curb are entirely full, under-pricing parking cannot create more curb parking spaces for customers, because it cannot create more spaces. And, if the initial parking meter rate on a block is accidentally set too high, so that there are too many vacancies, then a policy goal of achieving an 85% occupancy rate will result in lowering the parking rate until the parking is once again well used (including making parking free, if need be).

3 Shoup, D. (2005) The High Cost of Free Parking. Chicago: Planners Press.

Do not institute time limits

Once a policy of market rate pricing is adopted, with the goal of achieving an 85% occupancy rate on each block, even at the busiest hours, then time limits need not be instituted. With no time limits, much of the worry and "ticket anxiety" for downtown customers disappears. In Redwood City, where this policy was recently adopted, Dan Zack describes the thinking behind the City's decision in this way:

Market-rate prices are the only known way to consistently create available parking spaces in popular areas. If we institute market-rate prices, and adequate spaces are made available, then what purpose do time limits serve? None, other than to inconvenience customers. If there is a space or two available on all blocks, then who cares how long each individual car is there? The reality is that it doesn't matter.

Program Details

The recommendations for pricing parking, not instituting time limits, and the creation of a commercial parking benefit district, are discussed in greater detail below.

Initial meter rates and hours of operations for paid parking in the Commercial Parking Benefit District

To create vacancies and turnover of the most convenient "front door" curb parking spaces, install multi-space parking meters in all time-limited areas of Collegetown. Set parking prices at rates that create a 15% vacancy rate on each block, and do not institute time limits. (Note that in some areas, rates that provide the first hour or 90 minutes free of charge may be sufficient to create a 15% vacancy rate.) Dedicate all resulting surplus meter revenue to public improvements for Collegetown.

Ideal hourly parking rates vary according to the time of day. The first 20 minutes may be free but every additional hour is priced according to the best value at that period of time in the day. Morning hours are generally cheaper, lunch hours demand a higher fee, afternoon hours reduce in price, and evening hours – especially on weekends – are likely to demand the highest rates. This rate structure makes parking free or cheap

for short-stay visitors (such as retail customers), makes all day parking much more expensive, and creates availability during high demand dining and entertainment hours. Employees and residents are discouraged from parking at the meter spaces that are intended for customers, and are encouraged to purchase a monthly permit. Because of the variable rates, monthly permits (intended for residents and employees) are less expensive than parking all day at the meters. However, any monthly fee would ideally cover the actual full cost of providing parking.

The following rates are illustrative of the principles described above. A more detailed assessment of current revenues and utilization is necessary to finalize rates.

For prime, front door, curb spaces:

	10am-12pm	12pm-2pm	2pm-6pm	6pm-12am	12am-10am
Mon – Sat	$1/hr	$2/hr	$1/hr	$2/hr	$0
Sunday	$.50	$1/hr	$.50	$1/hr	$0

For Dryden Road Garage Spaces:

	10am-12pm	12pm-2pm	2pm-6pm	6pm-12am	12am-10am
Mon – Sat	$.75/hr	$1.50/hr	$.75/hr	$1.50/hr	$0
Sunday	$.25	$.75/hr	$.25	$.75/hr	$0

Curb Parking On Edges of District:

	10am-12pm	12pm-2pm	2pm-6pm	6pm-12am	12am-10am
Mon – Sat	$.75/hr	$1.50/hr	$.75/hr	$1.50/hr	$0
Sunday	$.25	$.75/hr	$.25	$.75/hr	$0

Monthly permit rates

Monthly permits should be sold for garage spaces and some more remote portions of the district.

- Assigned garage space, 24 hours per day: $250 per month
- Standard monthly garage permit, 24 hours per day: $200 per month
- Assigned garage space, eight hours per day: $90 per month
- Standard monthly garage permit, eight hours per day: $60 per month
- Monthly on-street permit or hang-tags, 24 hours per day (remote locations): $60 per month

As discussed earlier, a standard monthly permit guarantees that the resident or employee holding the permit will be able to find a space somewhere within a parking garage, but does not mark a particular space as exclusively reserved for the permit holder's vehicle.

Adjust meter rates and hours of operation

After an initial trial period, occupancy rates for each block and each parking facility should be reviewed and then adjusted down or up to achieve the 85% occupancy goal, as described earlier. To ensure that this happens on a regular schedule, promptly, and with clear assurance to policymakers, citizens and other stakeholders – especially retail tenants – that the goal of parking prices is to achieve the desired vacancy rate, the following procedure for adjusting parking meter rates and hours is recommended:

1. **Set Policy:** By ordinance, City Council should establish that the primary goal in setting parking meter rates and hours for each block and each lot is to achieve an 85% occupancy rate. Additionally, the ordinance should both require and authorize City staff to raise or lower parking prices to meet this goal, without requiring further action by the Board of Public Works or Common Council. A Transportation Manager should be hired and charged with the responsibility of running the district, including monitoring occupancy rates and adjusting rates.
2. **Monitor occupancy:** Modern, wirelessly-networked multi-space parking meters (as described below) are capable of instantly transmitting current information on the number of spaces in use on each block where the meters are installed, giving the Transportation Manager the ability to constantly monitor parking usage in the system. Reports can also be generated to track occupancy by the hour over the course of a day, weeks, or months.
3. **Adjust rates:** Armed with good information on recent parking occupancy rates, the Transportation Manager should adjust the rates (and hours of operation) up or down on each block, to achieve the policy goal (an 85% occupancy rate) set by the Council. Typically, rates should be adjusted quarterly (four times per year), but in the case of major changes, such as the opening of a new building or a major new use, it may be advisable to adjust rates in response. In later years, it is likely that the initial free period for parking will need to be phased out, in order to maintain sufficient vacancies (and to make more money).

Recommended payment system and metering technology

There are several meter technologies and payment systems that Collegetown could use. Best approaches include:

- Multi-space meters (not single-space meters) that:
  - Can control 10-20 parking spaces, resulting in just one or two meters per block face.
  - Accept multiple forms of payment (coins, credit cards) and allow the user to extend time from any other meter, or by cell

phone, to provide ease of use.
  - Are solar powered and centrally networked with wireless technology, to reduce operations costs and improve parking management and pricing decisions.
- A "pay-by-space" payment system which allows motorists to park, pay, and go (not pay-and-display, which requires a customer to return to his or her vehicle to display a receipt and can contribute to litter problems)

Establish Commercial Parking Benefit District: Dedicate parking revenues to public improvements and services that benefit the Collegetown Area.

Net revenues from paid parking in the Commercial Parking Benefit District should fund public improvements that benefit Collegetown. ("Net revenues" means total parking revenues from the area, less existing base costs, such as revenue collection costs, such as purchase and operation of the meters, enforcement and the administration of the district.) If downtown parking revenues seem to disappear into the General Fund, where they may appear to produce no direct benefit for Collegetown, there will be little support for installing parking meters, or for raising rates when needed to maintain decent vacancy rates. When Collegetown merchants and residents can clearly see that the monies collected are being spent for the benefit of their district, on projects that they have helped to choose, they become willing to support market rate pricing – and if experience from other cities is any guide, many will become active advocates for the concept.[4]

To ensure such continuing support for a Parking Benefit District, and for continuing to charge fair market rates for parking, it is crucial to give local stakeholders a strong voice in setting policies for the district, deciding how downtown parking revenues should be spent, and overseeing the operation of district to ensure that the monies collected from their customers are spent wisely.

4 Parking Benefit Districts are currently in place in Pasadena, Boulder, San Diego, Austin, Seattle, and Aspen.

Potential uses of meter revenue from Parking Benefit District

Potential uses for Parking Benefit District revenues include:

- Landscaping and streetscape greening
- Increased frequency of trash collection
- Street cleaning, power-washing of sidewalks, and graffiti removal
- Parking, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure and amenities
- Additional police patrols or "Collegetown Ambassadors" to provide additional security
- Additional parking enforcement
- Marketing and promotion of Collegetown merchants
- Purchase and installation costs of meters (e.g., through revenue bonds or a "build-operate-transfer" financing agreement with a vendor)
- Additional programs and projects as recommended by Collegetown stakeholders and approved by City Council

Organizational Structure For the Parking Benefit District

A number of different organizational structures can be used to establish a Parking Benefit District in Collegetown. The district can be a quasi-public entity, similar to a Business Improvement District. Alternatively, the district can be established as simply a financial entity (somewhat like

an assessment district), which would require by ordinance that meter revenues raised within the district be spent to benefit the district. In this latter case, establishing the district would serve primarily to reassure Collegetown stakeholders that the revenues will remain within the district. Under this arrangement, the district would be managed and housed within an existing City agency such as the Department or Public Works.

Regardless of the ultimate organizational structure implemented, a focused effort, with well-trained staff, will be needed to refine and implement the recommendations made within this document and to then manage the ongoing operation of the system. The most important actions include:

- **Establishing the Commercial Parking Benefit District, and managing it thereafter.** This includes responsibility for installing and operating the parking meter system, selling monthly permits, monitoring parking occupancy and proposing rate adjustments, overseeing collection and expenditure of parking revenues, and in general, operating the Collegetown parking system in a customer-friendly way.
- **Establishing and managing the "Park Once" strategy for the district**, working to ensure that both new and existing parking is managed and operated as a common pool. This would encompass everyday operations, such keeping parking areas clean, properly signed and well lit. It would also mean the administration of lease-back programs for private parking supplies that are managed by the district.
- **Establishing and managing alternative transportation programs for the district**, to ensure that the district invests in the most cost-effective mix of parking, transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, including those recommended in Element 10 below.
- **Explain and assist in enforcing the transportation demand management requirements** (such as "unbundling" parking costs from office leases and residential rents) as recommended in Elements 3 through 7 of this plan.

Alternatively, some of the responsibilities listed above could be managed by the property manager or building manager for each new development. However, if responsibilities are divided, it is essential that the different pieces of the parking and transportation program (especially the setting of parking prices) continue to be operated as a single coherent system.

Additional recommendations for implementing a commercial Parking Benefit District

The City should pursue the following additional strategies when implementing the Commercial Parking Benefit District:

- Conduct community outreach & education prior to launch of new pricing.
- Install user-friendly signage to explain meter operation, rates, and hours/days of operation.
- Use "Mobility Ambassadors" to assist with meters during first few weeks of implementation & during peak visitor demand periods.
- Create mechanisms (such as regular advisory meetings, surveys, etc.) for soliciting ongoing input from Collegetown businesses, visitors, and other key stakeholders and for resolving customer service issues and stakeholder concerns.

element 3 provide universal transit passes

Goal

Increase transit ridership and provide incentives to reduce vehicle ownership by providing free transit passes to all Collegetown residents and employees.

Fundamentals

In recent years, growing numbers of transit agencies have teamed with universities, employers, operators of multi-family residential complexes and even with entire residential neighborhoods to provide universal transit passes. Universal transit pass programs, such as the Ecopass program created by Santa Clara County's Valley Transportation Authority, allow annual passes to be purchased at a deeply discounted bulk rate for all members of a specified group, such as all of a firm's employees, or all of the residents of an apartment complex. Negotiating with TCAT a similar program for Collegetown will benefit both employees and residents while cost-effectively reducing parking demand.

TCAT already has years of experience with a universal transit pass program. Cornell's existing Omnipass has been highly successful at reducing parking demand at Cornell for over 15 years. However, the program is limited to faculty and staff. As Collegetown seeks to take advantage of the benefits of this program, the high proportion of Cornell students among Collegetown residents may necessitate expanding the Omnipass to the student body. Cornell should be encouraged to evaluate how this could occur, especially since the exclusion of students from Omnipass essentially preserves higher parking demand among students – and that parking demand directly affects land values, aesthetics, and development potential in Collegetown. The notable cost savings benefit that Cornell has experienced for years with Omnipass by not having to build hundred of extra faculty and staff parking spaces should be shared by Collegetown with an expansion of the program to students.

A typical example of an ideal universal transit pass is the Eco-Pass program in downtown Boulder, which provides free transit on Denver's Regional Transportation District (RTD) light rail and buses to more than 7,500 employees, employed by 700 different businesses in downtown Boulder. To fund this program, Boulder's downtown parking benefit district pays a flat fee for each employee who is enrolled in the program, regardless of whether the employee actually rides transit. Because every single employee in the downtown is enrolled in the program, the Regional Transportation District in turn provides the transit passes at a deep bulk discount.

A review of existing universal transit pass programs found that the annual per employee fees are between 1% and 17% of the retail price for an equivalent annual transit pass.[5] The principle of employee or residential transit passes is similar to that of group insurance plans – transit agencies can offer deep bulk discounts when selling passes to a large group with universal enrollment on the basis that not all those offered the pass will actually use them regularly.

5 INSERT REFERENCE

Residential Transit Pass Programs

Universal Transit Pass programs have also been successfully created for a wide range of residential developments. In Santa Clara County, CA and Portland, OR property managers can bulk-purchase transit passes for their residents at deeply discounted rates. An affordable housing provider in San Jose, First Community Housing, provides all tenants of their developments (10 complexes in all) with a VTA Ecopass, giving them unlimited rides on VTA bus and light rail lines in Santa Clara County. First Community Housing pays $30 per year for each pass issued, and is required to purchase a pass for every resident. Residents receive their Ecopasses for free, saving each resident the $700 per year cost of an annual bus pass. In a survey of First Community Housing residents, 22% of the survey respondents indicated that having an Ecopass has allowed them to reduce the number of cars in their household, resulting in less traffic, lower parking demand and reduced parking costs. Jeff Oberdorfer, Executive Director of First Community Housing, reports that, "Saving the construction cost of two parking spaces pays for our entire Eco Pass program."[6] Universal transit passes are usually extremely effective means to reduce the number of car trips in an area, as shown in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1 Effects of Universal Transit Pass Introduction

Location	Drive to work		Transit to work	
Municipalities	**Before**	**After**	**Before**	**After**
Santa Clara (VTA)	76%	60%	11%	27%
Bellevue, Washington	81%	57%	13%	18%
Ann Arbor, Michigan	N/A	(4%)	20%	25%
Downtown Boulder, Colorado	56%	36%	15%	34%
Universities				
UCLA (faculty and staff)	46%	42%	8%	13%
Univ. of Washington, Seattle	33%	24%	21%	36%
Univ. of British Colombia	68%	57%	26%	38%
Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee	54%	41%	12%	26%
Colorado Univ. Boulder (students)	43%	33%	4%	7%

6 First Community Housing Residential Ecopass Program, Jeff Oberdorfer, accessed at www.firsthousing.org/pdfs/ EcoPass2.pdf on August 27, 2006.

Benefits from a universal transit pass program

Universal transit passes provide multiple benefits, as discussed below.

For transit riders

- Free access to transit
- Rewards existing riders, attracts new ones
- For employees who drive, making existing transit free can effectively create convenient park-and-ride shuttles to any existing underused remote parking areas

For transit operators

- Provides a stable source of income
- Increases transit ridership, helping to meet agency ridership goals
- Can help improve cost recovery, reduce agency subsidy, and/or fund service improvements

For downtown districts

- Reduces traffic congestion and increases transit ridership
- Reduces existing parking demand: Santa Clara County's (CA) ECO Pass program resulted in a 19% reduction in parking demand
- Reduces future growth in parking demand: University of Washington's U-Pass program helped avoid construction of 3,600 new spaces, saving $100 million (since 1983, the

university population increased by 8,000 but actually reduced the number of parking spaces)

Fordevelopers

- Universal transit pass programs can benefit developers if implemented concurrently with reduced parking requirements, which consequently lower construction costs
- Providing free cost transit passes for large developments provides an amenity that can help attract renters or home buyers as part of lifestyle marketing campaign appealing to those seeking a "downtown lifestyle"

For employees/employers

- Reduces demand for parking on-site
- Provides a tax-advantaged transportation benefit that can help recruit and retain employees

Free transit passes are often an extremely effective means to reduce the number of car trips in an area. By removing any cost barrier to using transit, including the need to search for spare change for each trip, people become much more likely to take transit to work or for non-work trips.

A cost-effective transportation investment

Many cities and institutions have found that trying to provide additional parking spaces costs much more than reducing parking demand by simply providing everyone with a free transit pass. For example, a study of UCLA's universal transit pass program found that a new parking space costs more than three times as much as a free transit pass ($223/month versus $71/month).[7]

Program Details

Purchase of a universal transit pass program for all downtown employees and existing residents should be managed by the Parking Benefit District's Transportation Manager (as described in Element 2).

Funding sources

The transit pass program should be paid for through some combination of the following sources:

- Parking revenues.
- A portion of commercial lease revenues, rents (for rental units) or a portion of condominium association dues (for the market-rate condominium units) can be used, if funding is needed in addition to that provided by parking revenues.
- Grants from environmental, public health, traffic mitigation sources (grants usually funds pilot projects).

Implementation priorities

In implementing a universal transit pass program, Collegetown's program should emphasize:

- Universal coverage for all residents, which allows lower per rider costs and a deeper discount to be offered.
- Automatic opt-in, which lowers sign-up barriers and encourages greater participation and ridership gains.
- Plan for targeted transit service improvements to further encourage usage of the universal transit pass and/or to respond to increased ridership after the program is launched.

7 Jeffrey Brown, et. al. "Fare-Free Public Transit at Universities: An Evaluation." Journal of Planning and Education Research, 2003: Vol 28, No. 1, pp 69-82.

element 4 require parking cash out

Goal

Subsidize all employee commute modes equally and create incentives for commuters to carpool, take transit, and bike or walk to work.

Fundamentals

Many employers in Collegetown may wish to provide free or reduced price parking for their employees as a fringe benefit. Under a parking cash out requirement, employers will be able to do this *on the condition that they offer the cash value of the parking subsidy to any employee who does not drive to work.*

Employees who opt to cash out their parking subsidies would not be eligible to receive free parking from the employer and would be responsible for their parking charges on any days when they do drive to work.

Benefits of Parking Cash Out

The benefits of parking cash out are numerous, and include:

- Provides an equal transportation subsidy to employees who ride transit, carpool, vanpool, walk or bicycle to work. The benefit is particularly valuable to low-income employees, who are less likely to drive to work alone.
- Provides a low-cost fringe benefit that can help individual businesses recruit and retain employees.
- Employers report that parking cash-out requirements are simple to administer and enforce, typically requiring just one to two minutes per employee per month to administer.

In addition to these benefits, the primary benefit of parking cash-out programs is their proven effect on reducing auto congestion and parking demand. Table 4-2 illustrates the effect of parking cash-out at seven different employers located in and around Los Angeles. It should be noted that most of the case study employers are located in areas that do not have good access to transit service, so that a large part of the reduced parking demand that occurred with these parking cash-out programs resulted when former solo drivers began carpooling.

Table 4-2 Effects of parking cash-out on parking demand

Location	Scope of Study	Parking Fee in $/Month (2006 $)	Decrease in Parking Demand
Group A: Areas with little public transportation			
Century City, CA[1]	3500 employees at 100+ firms	$107	15%
Cornell University, NY[2]	9000 faculty and staff	$45	26%
Warner Center, CA[1]	1 large employer (850 employees)	$49	30%
Bellevue, WA[3]	1 medium-size firm (430 empl)	$72	39%
Costa Mesa, CA[4]	State Farm Insurance employees	$49	22%
Average		$64	26%
Group B: Areas with fair public transportation			
Los Angeles Civic Center[1]	10,000+ employees, several firms	$166	36%
Mid-Wilshire Blvd, LA[1]	1 mid-sized firm	$119	38%
Washington DC suburbs[5]	5500 employees at 3 worksites	$90	26%
Downtown Los Angeles[6]	5000 employees at 118 firms	$167	25%
Average		$135	31%
Group C: Areas with good public transportation			
University of Washington[7]	50,000 faculty, staff and students	$24	24%
Downtown Ottawa[1]	3500+ government staff	$95	18%
Average		$59	21%
Overall Average		$89	27%

Sources:

[1] Willson, Richard W. and Donald C. Shoup. "Parking Subsidies and Travel Choices: Assessing the Evidence." Transportation, 1990, Vol. 17b, 141-157 (p145).

[2] Cornell University Office of Transportation Services. "Summary of Transportation Demand Management Program." Unpublished, 1992.

[3] United States Department of Transportation. "Proceedings of the Commuter Parking Symposium," USDOT Report No. DOT-T-91-14, 1990.

[4] Employers Manage Transportation. State Farm Insurance Company and Surface Transportation Policy Project, 1994.

[5] Miller, Gerald K. "The Impacts of Parking Prices on Commuter Travel," Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, 1991.

[6] Shoup, Donald and Richard W. Wilson. "Employer-paid Parking: The Problem and Proposed Solutions," Transportation Quarterly, 1992, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp169-192 (p189).

[7] Williams, Michael E. and Kathleen L Petrait. "U-PASS: A Model Transportation Management Program That Works," Transportation Research Record, 1994, No.1404, p73-81.

Program Details

The cash value of the parking subsidy should be offered in one of two forms:

- A cash subsidy for carpoolers, walkers, bicyclists and transit commuters equal to the value of the parking subsidy given to those who drive alone. For example, if employees who drive alone are given a free assigned space, reserved for them 24 hours per day (a $290 per month permit price, at the recommended rates), then an employee who does not drive would receive up to $290 per month in cash.
- Under federal law, for transit and vanpool commuters, up to $105 per month of the subsidy may be given tax-free (for both employer and employee) as a subsidy for transit pass purchases and vanpool expenses.[8]
- The cash subsidy for carpoolers, walkers, bicyclists and transit commuters can be equal to the Federal tax-free limit of $105, and participating employers would pay a portion of their $185 remaining cost savings from not constructing parking ($290 minus $105) to the Parking Benefit District.

As described in Element 5 below, this program recommends that the cost of leasing employee parking be separated from the cost of leasing commercial space. This means that the parking cash-out requirement will have relatively little cost for employers: when employees respond to the cash offer by giving up their parking permit, the employer will be able to recover the cost by leasing fewer employee parking spaces.[9]

[8] Under the federal "Commuter Choice" law. More info at the Federal Transit Administrations' Commuter Choice website http://www.fta.dot.gov/initiatives_tech_assistance/customer_service/2172_ENG_HTML.htm.

[9] Of course, an employer can also choose to let employees pay for their own parking: in this case, the employer will not have to provide a parking cash-out program, since there will be no parking subsidies to cash out.

element 5 require "unbundled" parking costs

Goal

To (1) increase housing affordability and housing choice, and (2) reveal the true cost of parking to employers and their employees.

Fundamentals

Parking costs are generally subsumed into the sale or rental price of housing for the sake of simplicity, and because that is the more traditional practice in real estate. But although the cost of parking is often hidden in this way, parking is never free. The expected cost for each space in a Collegetown underground parking garage is $45,000 per space. Given land values in the area, surface spaces will be at least as valuable (which accounts for the decision to create underground parking).

Looking at parking as a tool to achieve the Collegetown Vision Statement's goals for more affordable housing and less traffic requires some changes to status quo practices, since providing anything for free or at highly subsidized rates encourages use and means that more parking spaces have to be provided to achieve the same rate of availability.

For both below-market rental units and market-rate condominiums, the full cost of parking should be unbundled from the cost of the housing itself, by creating a separate parking charge. This provides a financial reward to households who decide to dispense with one of their cars and helps attract that niche market of households who wish to live in a walkable, transit-oriented neighborhood where it is possible to live well with only one car (or even no car) per household. Unbundling parking costs changes parking from a required purchase to an optional amenity, so that households can freely choose how many spaces they wish to lease. Among households with below average vehicle ownership rates (e.g., low income people, singles and single parents, seniors on fixed incomes, and college students), allowing this choice can provide a substantial financial benefit. For example, more than 24% of Ithaca's households do not have a car, while in Collegetown, 38% of households have no car. Unbundling parking costs means that these households no longer have to pay for parking spaces that they may not be able to use or afford.

It is important to note that construction costs for residential parking spaces can substantially increase the sale/rental price of housing. This is because the space needs of residential parking spaces can restrict how many housing units can be built within allowable zoning and building envelope. For example, a study of Oakland's 1961 decision to require one parking space per apartment (where none had been required before) found that construction cost increased 18% per unit, units per acre decreased by 30% and land values fell 33%.[10]

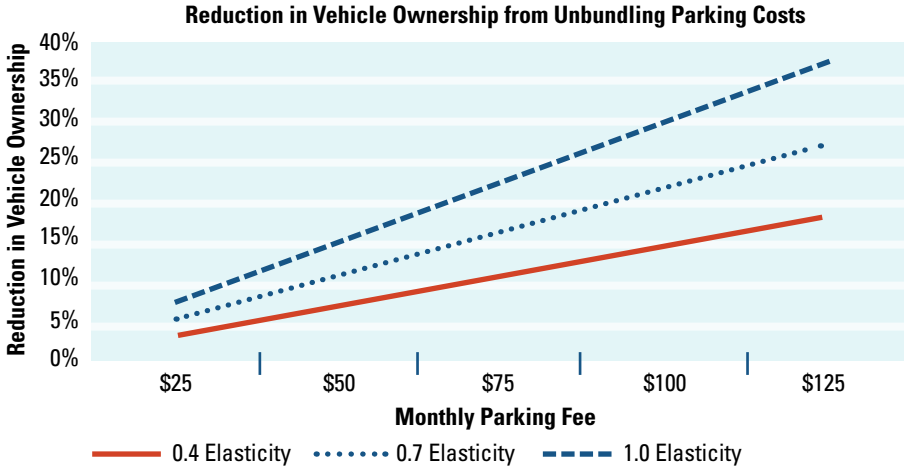
As a result, bundled residential parking can significantly increase "per-unit housing costs" for individual renters or buyers. Two studies of San Francisco housing found that units with off-street

[10] Bertha, Brian. "Appendix A" in The Low-Rise Speculative Apartment by Wallace Smith UC Berkeley Center for Real Estate and Urban Economics, Institute of Urban and Regional Development, 1964.

parking bundled with the unit sell for 11% to 12% more than comparable units without included parking.[11] One study of San Francisco housing found the increased affordability of units without off-street parking on-site can increase their absorption rate and make home ownership a reality for more people.[12] In that study, units without off-street parking:

- Sold on average 41 days faster than comparable units with off-street parking
- Allowed 20% more San Francisco households to afford a condominium (compared to units with bundled off-street parking)
- Allowed 24 more San Francisco households to afford a single-family house (compared to units with bundled off-street parking)

Fig. 4-2 Reduced Vehicle Ownership with Unbundled Residential Parking



Source: Litman, Todd. "Parking Requirement Impacts on Housing Affordability." Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 2004.

Charging separately for parking is also the single most effective strategy to encourage households to own fewer cars, and rely more on walking, cycling and transit. According to one study, unbundling residential parking can significantly reduce household vehicle ownership and parking demand.[13] These effects are presented in Fig. 4-2.

Program Details

Instituting a parking unbundling program is a simple matter of requiring that any approved parking within Collegetown have its own lease or deed that is rented or purchased separate from the cost of housing.

For rental units, unbundling parking costs is straightforward: the fees charged for the parking spaces will cover the full cost of providing the parking spaces. As described earlier, the proposed fees would be $290 per month (the full cost to build a space) for an assigned space that is reserved 24 hours per day for the resident, with a discount for a permit for spaces that are shared

[11] Wenyu Jia and Martin Wachs. "Parking Requirements and Housing Affordability: A Case Study of San Francisco." University of California Transportation Center Paper No. 380,1998 and Amy Herman, "Study Findings Regarding Condominium Parking Ratios," Sedway Group, 2001.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Litman, Todd. "Parking Requirement Impacts on Housing Affordability." Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 2004.

during the day with retail customers.[14] Then, rents for the housing can be reduced up to an amount equal to the amount of parking revenue collected.

In the case of for-sale condominium units, the title to the property should give the owner the right to lease at least one parking space (and these owners will have first priority for leasing parking spaces in a garage). However, as with renters, owners would not be required to lease any parking spaces and could rent as many or as few as they choose. The resulting parking revenue should be used to reduce the amount of the condominium owners' association dues that the owners would otherwise have to pay.

It is critical that residents and tenants are made aware that rents, sale prices and lease fees are reduced because parking is charged for separately. Rather than paying "extra" for parking, the cost is simply separated out allowing residents and businesses to choose how much they wish to purchase. No tenant, resident, employer or employee should be required to lease any minimum amount of parking.

[14] When residential spaces are shared with daytime users, other users – such as lunchtime restaurant customers – are allowed to use the residential spaces during the day when residents have driven to work; if a resident chooses not to drive somewhere during the day, there is no penalty, and that space is simply not available for sharing on that day.

element 6 offer parking in-lieu fees

Goal

Create a financial incentive for new developments to participate directly in the STS at initial conceptual design while creating a revenue stream to support the STS's elements.

Fundamentals

Parking in-lieu fees have been in place in dozens of communities throughout America for years. By making a payment to the municipality, new developments can waive their minimum parking requirements. The fee is usually utilized for transportation improvements, particularly shared public parking facilities. An in-lieu fee has a number of advantages, as summarized by Donald Shoup[15]

1) Enables developers on constrained sites to build less parking.
2) Encourages development of shared parking facilities financed by in-lieu fees. A public parking facility shared by many users requires fewer total spaces than multiple individual developments due to the inherent overlap of peak demand times.
3) Shared public parking facilities financed by in-lieu fees can be placed strategically to serve many while reducing the potential impact to pedestrian and bicycle movements. This also frees up development parcels to create appropriate urban streetscapes without curb cuts and garage entrances.
4) Eliminates the need for zoning variances, fairly leveling the playing field for all developers and allowing planning boards to focus on design features as opposed to parking quantities.
5) Allows for historic preservation by enabling redevelopment of buildings without adding new parking.

In-lieu fees can be an effective method for cost-effectively providing parking in remote locations out of the control of individual land owners. By using fees to subsidize remote parking at locations with cheaper construction or leasing costs, communities can facilitate development financing while establishing a means to encourage appropriate development standards for participating developers. When fees are set appropriately, more efficient and better quality designs can be enabled while appropriate parking is provided off-site.

In more progressive communities, the success of in-lieu fees has evolved into the lowering of parking minimum requirements. Dozens of communities in the United States have completely removed minimum residential and commercial parking requirements in downtown districts, including Eugene, OR; Fort Myers, FL; Fort Pierce, FL; Los Angeles, CA; Milwaukee, WI; Olympia, WA; Portland, OR; San Diego, CA; Seattle, WA; Spokane, WA; and Stuart, FL.

Program Details

The majority of communities in America that employ in-lieu fees have a consistent standard for all new projects. However, the motivation for specifying a rate varies considerably. In many communities with excessive parking supplies, the fee is low to reduce the growth of parking.

[15] "In Lieu of Required Parking," Donald Shoup.

Other communities have a moderate rate that is designed specifically to contribute to a shared parking facility. Several communities have arbitrarily high fees to permit yet discourage the practice. In Collegetown, the primary goals of an in-lieu fee is to: 1) remove the cost and design complexity of building parking in Collegetown, while also 2) enabling the development of cheaper remote parking or alternative transportation systems through payments to the STS. Therefore, it is important to give a cost savings to developers while having a fee high enough to support a robust STS. Based on estimated garage construction prices of at least $30,000 per spaces, it is estimated that an average fee of $15,000 per space be implemented – annualized as a payment to the Parking Benefit District of approximately $1,400 per year for 35 years (the industry-standard lifespan of a parking structure) . This value is sufficient to cover the cost of building and maintaining a public surface or above-grade parking space in a remote location plus a contribution to STS elements.

The specific fee for a particular project may vary in direct proportion to the number of required spaces. Smaller projects that only require a few spaces may not see much incentive to reduce parking at $15,000 per space. A fee of only $7,500 may be appropriate. Larger projects with dozens of spaces are likely to have more substantial financing that is prepared to build expensive underground parking spaces that cost over $45,000. Such projects may see great benefit paying as much as $30,000 per space to avoid the complexity of structured parking. Therefore, the final in-lieu payment would be best expressed as a rate that increases with the number of total spaces required for a project (That is, $2,000 plus $500 for each additional space. A project requiring 5 spaces could build zero for a fee of $15,000 annualized, or $3,000 per space. A project requiring 50 spaces could build zero for a fee of $712,500 annualized, or $14,250 per space. One hundred spaces would be $2,675,000 annualized, or $26,750 per space removed.)

If the City prefers to retain some quantity of on-site parking, the amount that can be removed from a project through in-lieu payments may have a limit – typically expressed as a revised parking minimum. For instance, required parking of 4.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet of building can be reduced through in-lieu payments to a limit of 1.5 spaces per 1,000. While this approach may satisfy a public policy concern, it has notable drawbacks. It is likely that such a policy would not have the desired effect of reducing curb cut impacts on the Collegetown streetscape. It also may continue to discourage historic preservation or development of infill sites that simply don't have room for providing parking cost-effectively. Therefore, it is highly recommended that in-lieu payments are allowed to entirely remove the burden of providing on-site parking at most locations in Collegetown.

Remote parking

An important part of the success of the in-lieu fee program will be developing a remote parking program to replace supplies not constructed on-site. While it may be desirable in the long term to utilize fee revenue to construct a new Collegetown parking facility, the STS can take advantage of the significantly lower cost of remote parking and retain fee revenue for other infrastructure enhancements, such as those identified in Element 10 below. The City already possesses likely remote parking facilities in its downtown that are quickly accessible to Collegetown on frequent TCAT service. It has been estimated that at least 400 municipal garage spaces are vacant during peak demand downtown, allowing Collegetown to assign some student parking remotely. Cornell University also may be able to further leverage STS programs by allowing portions of the remote parking – especially for student housing – to occur on existing underutilized campus parking facilities that are served by direct TCAT connections.

element 7 establish a car sharing program

Goal

To (1) enable Collegetown commuters to carpool, take transit, bike, or walk to work by ensuring that a shared car will be available for work trips when needed, and (2) enable Collegetown residents to reduce the number of private vehicles they own by ensuring that a shared car will be available for household trips when needed.

Fundamentals

Car sharing operators, such as Ithaca Car Share, Flexcar and ZipCar, use telephone and Internet-based reservation systems, which allow their members a hassle-free way to rent cars by the hour with members receiving a single bill at the end of the month for all their usage. The shared cars are located at convenient neighborhood "pods". Flexcar and ZipCar is a national, for-profit company. Ithaca Car Share is an Ithaca-based nonprofit organization.

Car sharing has proven successful in reducing both household vehicle ownership and the percentage of employees who drive alone because of the need to have a car for errands during the workday. As a result, car sharing can be an important tool to reduce parking demand.

For residents, car sharing reduces the need to own a vehicle, particularly a second or third car. Recent surveys have shown that more than half of car-share users have sold at least one vehicle since joining the program in the San Francisco Bay Area.[16] For employees, car sharing allows them to take transit to work, since they will have a vehicle available for errands during the day.

With the vision of building improved mixed-use housing developments in Collegetown and the implementation of the other strategies recommended in this plan (such as requiring that parking costs be unbundled from housing costs and that employers offer the option to employees to cash-out parking at work), car sharing will become much more viable than in conventional suburban locations. If parking costs remain bundled into housing costs, or employee parking remains free with no cash-out program, then the prospects for a successful car sharing program will be considerably diminished.

Several cities, including the City of Berkeley and Philadelphia, PA have helped establish a car sharing program in their communities and reduced their own fleet costs by contracting out some portion of their vehicle fleet to a car sharing provider. In this arrangement, the City serves as an "anchor subscriber," which increases the financial feasibility of the location for the car sharing operator and allows more vehicles to be made available to the public, especially during evening and weekends when usage by city employees is low. The City should explore this model of contracting out part of its existing vehicle fleet.

Implementation of a universal transit pass (free transit pass for Collegetown residents and employees) will also increase demand for car sharing among residents and employees (who begin taking transit but occasionally need a car). This

[16] April 2002 survey by Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates for City CarShare.

plan therefore recommends that the City begin negotiations with an existing car sharing operator sooner rather than later, in order to be able to establish a car sharing program concurrent with the opening of any new buildings constructed in Collegetown after adoption of the plan and implementing ordinances.

Program Details

Collegetown should establish a car sharing service in Collegetown by working with Ithaca Car Share to locate at least one shared vehicle "pod" in the district. To establish a car sharing service in Collegetown, the City should negotiate a contract with Ithaca Car Share and consider the following strategies as part of the STS:

1) Offer convenient and visible parking spaces in Collegetown to the car sharing provider for the car sharing vehicles, at no charge. A pod can be based in the Dryden Road garage.
2) Partially or fully subsidize operation costs.
2) Partially or fully subsidize operation costs.
3) Replace some existing city-owned fleet vehicles with car sharing cars, and locate an additional car sharing pod at City Hall.
4) Require future developers throughout Ithaca who don't pay an in-lieu fee to pay into a car share start-up fund.
5) Coordinate with Cornell University to serve as an "anchor tenant" for an Ithaca Car Share pod. University utilization of shared cars is very high.
6) Provide other incentives as appropriate, such as:
   a. Offering convenient and visible spaces in other public facilities to car sharing providers for locating car sharing "pods", including downtown garages and the Collegetown fire station.
   b. Requiring developers of large projects to offer car sharing operators the right of first refusal for a limited number of parking spaces in their developments.

   c. Offering Collegetown residents and employees discounted annual car sharing memberships.

element 8 invest in transportation demand management programs

Goal

Invest in the most cost-effective mix of transportation modes for access to Collegetown, including both parking and transportation demand management strategies.

Fundamentals

The cost to construct underground parking garages in Collegetown can be expected to be approximately $45,000 per space gained, resulting in a total cost to build, operate and maintain new spaces of approximately $290 per month per space, every month for the expected 35 year lifetime of the typical garage. These dismal economics for parking garages lead to a simple principle: it can often be cheaper to reduce parking demand than to construct new parking. Therefore, Collegetown should invest in the most cost-effective mix of transportation modes for access, including both parking and transportation demand management strategies.

By investing in the following package of demand-reduction strategies, Collegetown can expect to cost-effectively reduce parking demand (and the resulting traffic loads). The Parking Benefit District should invest a portion of parking revenues (and other fees, grants, and/or transportation funds, when available) to establish a full menu of transportation programs for the benefit of all residents and employers. If necessary, a portion of the residential and commercial lease income and/or common area maintenance fees could also be used to provide funding. The transportation demand management programs should include:

- Carpool & Vanpool Incentives. Provide ride-sharing services, such as a carpool and vanpool incentives, customized ride-matching services, a transportation information package for new employees and residents, a Guaranteed Ride Home program (offering a limited number of emergency taxi rides home per employee), and an active marketing program to advertise the services to employees and residents. To achieve greatest cost efficiencies, this program should be coordinated with Cornell.
- Guaranteed Rides Home. A major reason why employees are reluctant to try new ways of commuting is the worry that they might be stranded at work. For instance, they might have to stay at work beyond transit service hours or their carpool partner must leave early for an emergency. GRH programs address these fears by offering emergency taxi rides home to employees when they are unable to return home using their standard arrangement. It provides a level of certainty that allows people to comfortably try alternative ways of getting to and from work.[17]
- Transportation Resource Center. A storefront office that provides personalized information on transit routes and schedules, carpool and vanpool programs, bicycle routes and facilities and other transportation options could be es-

[17] A study determined that 15 to 25% of program enrollees would otherwise drive to work if the GRH program did not exist (Emergency Ride Home: A Survey of Current Programs and Issues, Ian L. Todreas, ERG Inc, 2002.)

tablished either on city level or specifically for Collegetown and the surrounding neighborhoods. The Center would take responsibility for administering and actively marketing all demand management programs. Parking operations and administration could be housed here as well. Cornell may have a key roll in opening this center and should be encouraged to partner with the City to identify the best location and program for the Center.

As described in Chapter 2, Ithaca residents already have lower drive alone rates than the national average, with 48% commuting to work by transit, carpooling, bicycling, or walking. With a focused effort, and genuine financial incentives, the share can be increased further.

To some extent, parking demand at Collegetown will depend on how new development is marketed and presented to the public. A marketing message that stresses the availability of transit, the transportation demand management programs, the "unbundling" of parking costs from housing costs, the mix of uses within walking distance of each other, good bicycle amenities, and the availability of car-sharing is likely to attract households who want the choice to own just one vehicle – or in some cases none at all.

element 9 create a residential parking benefit district

Goal

Prevent "spillover" parking in downtown adjacent neighborhoods.

Fundamentals

In order to prevent spillover parking in residential neighborhoods, many cities implement *residential permit districts* (also known as preferential parking districts) by issuing a certain number of parking permits to residents, usually for free or a nominal fee. These permits allow the residents to park within the district while all others are prohibited from parking there for more than a few hours, if at all. At least 132 cities and counties in the US and Canada have residential parking permit districts.[18]

Residential parking permit districts are typically implemented in residential districts near large traffic generators such as central business districts, educational, medical, and recreational facilities but have several limitations.

Most notably, conventional residential permit districts often issue an unlimited number of permits to residents without regard to the actual number of curb parking spaces available in the district. This leads to a situation in which on-street parking is seriously congested, and the permit functions solely as a "hunting license" - simply giving residents the right to hunt for a parking space with no guarantee that they will actually find one. (An example of this is Boston's Beacon Hill neighborhood, where the City's Department of Transportation has issued residents 3,933 permits for the 983 available curb spaces in Beacon Hill's residential parking permit district, a 4-to-1 ratio.)[19] Ithaca's existing system limits permits per household, but does not constrain the total number of permits according to the available on-street capacity.

An opposite problem occurs with conventional residential permit districts in situations where there actually are surplus parking spaces (especially during the day, when many residents are away), but the permit district prevents any commuters from parking in these spaces even if demand is high and many motorists would be willing to pay to park in one of the surplus spaces. Ithaca has some designated zones where employees can park, but they are not allowed in resident zones.

In both cases, conventional residential parking permit districts prevent curb parking spaces from being efficiently used (promoting overuse in the former example and underuse in the latter).

To avoid these problems, Ithaca should implement a Residential Parking Benefit Districts in the residential areas adjacent to Collegetown at the same time that parking meters are implemented for curb parking. This will prevent excessive spillover parking from Collegetown

[18] "Residential Permit Parking: Informational Report." Institute of Transportation Engineers, 2000, p1.

[19] Shoup, Donald. The High Cost of Free Parking. APA Planners Press, 2005, p516.

residents, employees and visitors trying to avoid parking charges, and ensuring that the adjacent residents get the benefit of the Collegetown businesses next door, without the problem of excessive spillover parking.

Benefits of Residential Parking Benefit Districts

Residential Parking Benefit Districts have been described as "a compromise between free curb parking that leads to overcrowding and [conventional residential] permit districts that lead to underuse... [parking] benefit districts are better for both residents and non-residents: residents get public services paid for by non-residents, and non-residents get to park at a fair-market price rather than not at all."[20]

Benefits of implementing a Residential Parking Benefit District around Collegetown include the following:

- Excessive parking spillover into adjacent neighborhoods will be prevented.
- The most powerful measures to reduce traffic from new developments – such as unbundling parking costs and implementing parking cash-out programs – can be implemented.
- Scarce curb parking spaces will be used as efficiently as possible.
- Need for additional costly parking garage capacity at Collegetown (and other future developments) will be reduced.
- Residents will be guaranteed to find a parking space at the curb.

Examples of Residential Parking Benefit Districts

Ithaca's existing residential permit system allows a majority of residents on a given street to request the issuance of $45 annual permits (two per household) and supporting City enforcement. This program could be expanded into a Residential Parking Benefit District. Several are being implemented in various forms in the following jurisdictions:

- Aspen, CO (non-resident permits: $5/day)
- Boulder, CO (resident permits $17/year; non-resident permits $312/year)
- Santa Cruz, CA (resident permits $20/year; non-resident permits $240/year)
- Tucson, AZ (resident permits $2.50/year; non-resident permits $200-$400/year, declining with increased distance from University of Arizona campus)
- West Hollywood, CA (resident permits $9/year; non-resident permits $360/year)
- Isla Vista, CA (in progress)
- San Francisco, CA (in progress)

Program Details

At the same time that parking meters are implemented for curb parking in Collegetown, implement a Residential Parking Benefit District in the adjacent residential areas. The Residential Parking Benefit District would be similar to Ithaca's residential parking permit program, but it would allow a limited number of commuters to pay to use surplus on-street parking spaces in residential areas – provided that there is surplus space available for them during the day, when many residents are typically at work ^– and return the resulting revenues to the neighborhood to fund public improvements.

Implementation of a Residential Parking Benefit District in Collegetown will differ from the existing parking permit program in four key ways:

1) Participation should be mandatory within a 10-minute walk of the College & Dryden intersection to ensure the district works in harmony with the Commercial Parking Benefit District. All existing residents should be issued permits initially. Limit the number of permits issued to future residents to a number

[20] Ibid., p435.

that results in a peak hour occupancy of 85% or less, as determined by an initial city survey supplemented by periodic surveys thereafter (at least biannual).

2) Rather than entirely prohibit nonresident parking as with many conventional residential parking permit districts, the City should sell permits for any surplus parking capacity to non-resident parkers at fair market rates, up to 90% of available parking supply. Most likely, these permits will be good only during the daytime, when a surplus usually exists because many residents have driven to work.
3) Phase in the use of in-vehicle meters for non-resident parkers (who will primarily be Collegetown employees) rather than only offering adhesive permits or rearview hangtags. These in-vehicle meters (see image below), allow user and geographic transferability, multiple payment methods, variable pricing options, and networking capabilities.
4) Finally, the rates for non-residents' parking permits should be set at fair market rates as determined by periodic city surveys, and all net revenues above and beyond the cost of administering the program should be dedicated to pay for public improvements in the neighborhood where the revenue was generated. For example, revenues from the commuters' parking fees could be used to pay for landscaping, tree planting, or sidewalk improvements.

Community participation & local control

Residential parking benefit districts are likely to be needed for all curb parking spaces within a convenient walk of areas with parking charges. Typically, this distance is about a five minute walk, or a quarter-mile (about 1350 feet: see Fig. 4-3). However, residential parking benefit districts should only be implemented if a simple majority (50% +1) of property owners on a block supports formation of the district.

Once implemented, residents, property owners, and business owners in the district should continue to have a voice in advising City Council how they want new parking revenue spent in their neighborhood. This could occur via existing City advisory committees, mail-in surveys, or public workshops and hearings. Another option is to appoint advisory committees in the parking benefit district, tasked with advising the Council on how the surplus revenue should be spent in their neighborhood.

Fig. 4-3 Proposed Residential Parking Benefit District Boundary

element 10 investigate alternative infrastructure improvements

*The **ultimate goal** of the STS will be to improve the built environment in Collegetown by making streetscape and other infrastructure improvements that help make the district become more vibrant at street-level. Central to this change will be reducing dependence on the private automobile. While all of the elements described above work towards that goal by developing incentives to use alternative means of transportation, it will be essential for the district to implement many needed improvements to the walking, biking and transit systems in Collegetown.*

Goal

Build a better environment for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders in Collegetown.

Program Details

Pedestrians

Walking is the most critical mode of transportation in Collegetown. At some point, everyone traveling by any other mode becomes a pedestrian, whether they get out of a car, dismount a bike, or step off a bus. The current walking environment in Collegetown is compromised in a number of areas as identified in the existing conditions section. The City in coordination with Collegetown stakeholders and Cornell should develop a prioritized list of pedestrian improvements to be tackled immediately and in the near future. If managed correctly, Parking Benefit District revenues can be used to make payments on an infrastructure bond that covers the cost of a portion of this program.

The following improvements are recommended in order of importance:

1) **College & Dryden Crossing Improvements.** This intersection is the centerpiece of Collegetown's pedestrian circulation system and the location with the highest number of conflicts with vehicles.
   Short-term: International standard crosswalk markings (zebra bars) should be installed on all four crosswalks in reflective thermoplastic. Recommended signal improvements include installation of LED countdown pedestrian indications operating concurrently at all times, activation of a leading pedestrian interval (LPI) for each crossing phase, and reduction of total signal cycle length to under one minute.
   Long-term: Install curb extensions (aka "bulb-outs") on each corner. Curb extensions move the sidewalk further towards the vehicle travel lane, resulting in increased visibility of pedestrians by motorists, reduced crossing distances, and increased sidewalk waiting area.
2) **College Avenue Sidewalk Widening.** This street is the spine of pedestrian activity in the district.
   Short-term: Between Oak and Dryden, all meters, light posts, signposts and trees should be replaced or relocated to the existing curb extensions or other locations to increase the effective width of both sidewalks – replacing meters with pay stations as necessary.
   Long-term: Between Oak and Dryden, install a raised "woonerf" street section whereby all curbs are removed, the street elevation is brought up to the sidewalk elevation, all paving materials are the same, and on-street

parking is defined only by bollards. With daily volumes on College Avenue under 4,000 cars per day, this treatment would be highly effective.

3) **Oak & College Crossing Improvements.** This critical crossroads between Cornell, Collegetown, and the Schwartz Center for Performing Arts is severely compromised by an excessive dedication of space to underutilized street pavement. There is no need to retain the space-consuming circle, which only serves as a convenience for drivers to turn-around (Evening TCAT buses that utilize the turn-around have sufficient layover time to be easily re-routed at a number of locations along their runs or even extended into downtown, thereby eliminating the need to turn TCAT buses at this location.)
Short-term: Re-route TCAT buses and block-off the southeast portion of the circle to vehicle traffic with bollards and landscaping, installing new international standard crosswalks across Oak and College that reflect the direct desire-lines along College and Oak.
Long-term: Convert the blocked-off area to a raised plaza and convert the Oak crosswalk and the College crosswalk between Collegetown Bagels and Sheldon Court to raised crossings.

4) **Dryden Road Garage Entrance.** The primary public off-street parking facility in Collegetown presents a hazard to pedestrians crossing its entrance.
Short-term: Install clear signing and lighting to make the garage entrance clearly visible to pedestrians and motorists.
Long-term: Install sidewalk pavers across garage mouth and along sidewalk to emphasize pedestrian priority over vehicles.

5) **Eddy & Dryden Improvements.** At the base of Eddy Gate, this intersection represents a large amount of underutilized roadway and many potential conflicts from a variety of confusing desire-lines.
Short-term: Install bollards to channelize vehicular movements from Williams Street and into Eddy Gate, possibly removing on-street parking from Eddy between Dryden and Williams.
Long-term: Convert the end of Eddy Street north of Dryden into a "woonerf" plaza with bollards demarking on-street parking and the Williams Street moves. Include outdoor restaurant seating on west side of plaza.

6) **Buffalo & Eddy Safety Improvements.** As a key pedestrian and vehicular gateway to Collegetown, the current intersection operation is dangerous due to approach grades and sight-lines from eastbound Buffalo. Install 3-way stop control at this intersection and international standard crosswalks on each leg.

Bicycles

While Cornell sees heavy bicycle usage on campus, bicycling is poorly accommodated across the gorge in Collegetown. This mode of access and circulation is critical to removing vehicle trips, especially by students. However, no bicycle facilities exist. Only a few bicycle racks are present, and none were identified to meet current standards.

The following improvements are recommended in order of importance:

1) **Short-Term Bicycle Racks.** Inverted U or post and ring short-term bicycle racks should be installed throughout Collegetown, especially in close proximity to retail and other student destinations. Existing racks – such as those in front of the Schwartz Center – should be discarded. If racks are observed to be regularly occupied, additional rack should be installed.
2) **College Avenue Bike Facility.** Shared-lane chevron markings should be installed the entire length of College Avenue to warn drivers to leave room for bicycles.
3) **State Street Bike Facility.** A full class 1 bicycle facility should be installed on State Street between downtown Ithaca and Mitchell. An

international standard crosswalk should be installed on State to the east side of Eddy to facilitate bicyclists heading up State to Eddy who could not take the lane when turning left.

4) **Eddy Street Bike Facility.** Shared-lane chevrons should be installed the entire length of Eddy Street.
5) **Cascadilla Gorge.** A mixed-use path built to AASHTO standards should be installed to connection Eddy Gate with College at Oak, serving bicyclists and pedestrians.

Bicycle Rack Design Standards

The majority of bicycle rack styles available for purchase in the United States do not meet current standards for bicycles. Especially with increased bicycle costs, most traditional bike racks have a high potential to cause expensive repairs, especially to wheel spokes, gears and chains. Traditional racks either put damaging pressure on these critical bicycle components or do not adequately support bicycles, resulting in falls and damage upon impact or during retrieval when components are tangled with the components of an adjacent bicycle. The racks observed in Collegetown violate both of these criteria. The City should immediately implement a modern standard. Suggested design language follows:

The bicycle rack should:

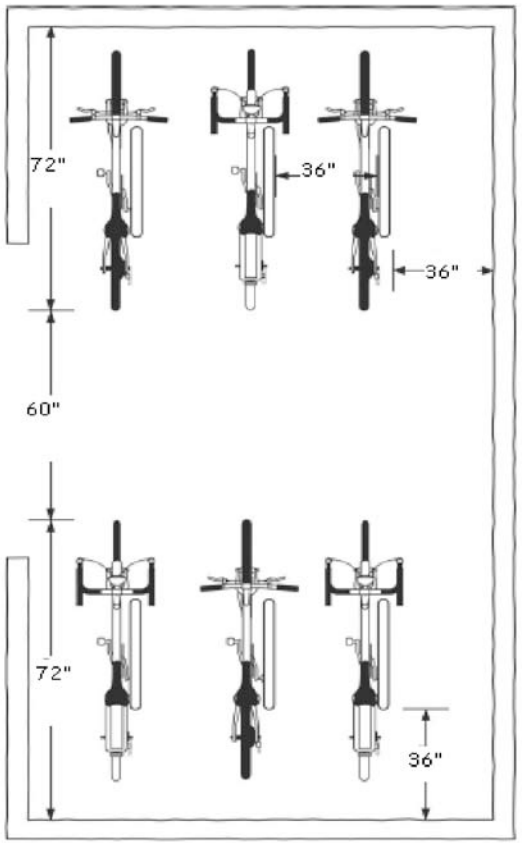
1. Have a stable structure and permanent foundation that is securely anchored in the ground.
2. Support an upright bicycle by its frame in two places on a horizontal plane.
3. Be designed to prevent the front wheel of the bicycle from tipping over.
4. Support a variety of bicycle sizes and frame shapes.
5. Allow the rider to secure the frame and one or both wheels to the rack.

The bicycle rack should NOT:

1. Only support the bicycle at one point.
2. Allow the bicycle to fall, which can damage the bike and block pedestrian right-of-way.
3. Have sharp edges that can be hazardous to the visually impaired.
4. Support the bicycle by one wheel.

Racks should be mounted in a row no closer than 36 inches apart from each other for easy accessibility. In the case of a rack area or bicycle parking lot, 60-inch aisles should separate the racks. To accommodate the average bicycle, at least 72 inches of depth should be allotted to each row of parked bicycles. No fewer than 36 inches should be allowed between each rack and any surrounding wall structure or vehicle parking space (see Fig. 4-4).

Fig. 4-4 Bike Rack Placement Guide



Shared Bicycle Pool

Upon installation of a significant number of bike racks as well as on- and off-street bicycle facilities, Collegetown should implement a bike share program where all participants have free access to a pool of bicycles. Stored at strategic secure locations throughout Collegetown and on Cornell's campus, the bicycles can be signed out with a member ID. This program has been in place for several years at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and Michigan Technological University among others. Washington DC is now launching a similar commercial program open to the general public.

To address theft concerns, RFID chips are imbedded in bicycles to aid with location and identification after a theft is reported. While financing the initial purchase costs and providing continued maintenance can exceed $1,000 per year per bicycle, this cost is significantly lower than the annual cost to finance and maintain new parking in Collegetown.

Phasing in this program should carefully consider the quality and quantity of key bicycle infrastructure and facilities before broadening bicycling to inexperienced riders. However, the program should be marketed early as a near-term goal in order to help motivate the necessary infrastructure improvements. Interim pilots can be initiated as bicycle infrastructure is improved, such as weekend-only bike loans.

Bicycle Purchase Loan Program

Several universities in North America are now offering a zero-percent interest loan program for the purchase of a bicycle in order to encourage bicycle commuting. Cornell could offer this program in order to help students get over the initial purchase hurdle of a bicycle, which can often exceed $1,000. Flexible pay-back terms are preferable. The University of California-Santa Cruz has implemented this program for several years.

Transit

While TCAT runs excellent frequent service through Collegetown, few area residents or employees understand and utilize the system. Several inexpensive improvements can be made to improve the accessibility of transit to new riders:

1) **Install Shelters.** Modern shelters protecting riders from the weather and providing a nighttime light source should be installed at each stop on College Avenue. All shelters post current schedule information and system routes on clear information panels.
2) **Create a Collegetown Transit Map.** A simple subset of the TCAT system map can be included on a Collegetown-specific map to be distributed throughout the neighborhood. By targeting the specific routes and destination served from Collegetown, much of the confusion with the current system-wide map can be avoided.
3) **Employ a Next Bus System.** Similar to the vehicle location systems utilized at several U.S. transit agencies, a pilot GPS-based automated vehicle location (AVL) system can be installed on every bus serving a key Collegetown routes (such as Route 10) that provides real-time bus arrival information.

The following implementation schedule suggests the preferred order for implementing most of the elements described above. Possible dates are included to suggest the fastest-possible timeframes given our team's understanding of each element and the implementation steps required for the City of Ithaca.

implementation schedule

Conclusions

The Sustainable Transportation System plan for Collegetown described herein includes a series of measures by which the City of Ithaca can reduce vehicle travel to and from the site, and promote transit, walking and cycling. The plan capitalizes on the mix of uses, walkability and future transit accessibility of the district, giving existing and future residents and employees more transportation choices.

These strategies will also ensure that the parking system is cost effective, works well, and makes spaces readily available for all users at all times in Collegetown. The recommendations are designed to meet several goals:

- Provide shoppers, employees and residents with sufficient parking, in a manner that is convenient and cost-effective.
- Provide additional transportation choices, including transit, carpool, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and services.
- Advance the broader vision of the Collegetown Vision Statement, by creating a development

Table 4-3 Implementation Schedule

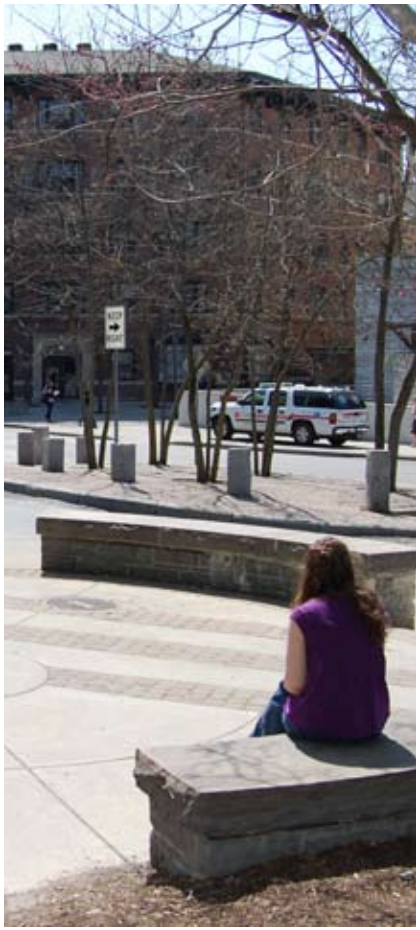
Conduct parking utilization study. In order to set up the appropriate pricing structure and enforcement mechanisms for a parking benefit district, a detailed parking utilization study should be conducted for Collegetown and surrounding neighborhoods – typically through the procurement of professional consulting services.	ASAP
Purchase and Install Phase 1 Parking Equipment. Authorize an initial capital project to pay for initial installation of trial pay stations. Install pay stations on selected block faces that were previously free to capture parking revenues (upper Oak, lower College, lower Linden, lower Eddy, etc…) effectively extending the for-charge on-street parking areas (some metered & some pay stations).	Fall '08
Activate Sustainable Transportation District. In parallel with the implementation of new proposed zoning changes – especially as they relate to parking – an on-street parking management program must be in place, TDM measures must be ready to be implemented, and key staff to manage program launch must be identified and trained. • Seek Board of Public Works approval to: 1) convert free on-street parking areas to metered parking to be regulated by pay stations, 2) establish revised hourly parking rates and times intended to leave 15% of spaces open, 3) authorize the Superintendent to revise parking rates as necessary to achieve 85% occupancy, and 4) establish monthly parking rate for remote parking at top levels of Cayuga Garage in downtown. • Request City management to decide how to staff, manage and fund the Mobility Coordinator position – in-house, fee consultant, authority, private incentives, etc. • Coordinate staffing/enforcement of expanded parking enforcement areas and hours with the community service officers who enforce parking regulations (Police Department), and build expenses and revenues into the 2009 City budget. • Based on utilization study results, seek Common Council/Board of Public Works approval to allow limited purchase of monthly daytime on-street parking in residential parking districts with surplus capacity for commuter/merchant permits.	Fall '08

that is genuinely oriented towards transit, walking and bicycling.

The Collegetown vision statement establishes a clear vision for the district. These recommendations have been designed to fulfill that vision, keeping in mind that parking and transportation policies have powerful effects not merely on parking demand, but on development feasibility, housing affordability, the amount of traffic produced, the quality of urban design, and many other areas. At the same time, these measures will provide a practical, implementable parking management plan, for a constrained neighborhood where active parking management is essential.

Take out General Obligation/Revenue Bond. Once a reliable revenue stream from parking and in-lieu fees is established, application for a bond mechanism may be initiated to finance streetscape improvements.	Spring '08
Initial streetscape project. Building upon the plan identified in this report, initial streetscape projects can begin.	Summer '09
Purchase and Install Phase 2 Parking Equipment. Depending on utilization results, all meters should be replaced with pay stations to improve revenues, customer options, and ease of enforcement. Authorize Phase 2 capital project – purchase and install pay stations for full extent of Commercial Parking Benefit District, including replacement of existing meters.	Fall '09
Supplement Collegetown PCO salary or directly hire an Ambassador. Based on revenues, the Parking Benefit District should be able to begin paying salaries or stipends to the Transportation Manager and any Mobility Ambassadors.	Winter '09
Offer off-street lease buy-backs. Based on program success, the Parking Benefit District may begin offering long-term leases, maintenance, and liability protection to private parking facilities.	Spring '10
Lease remote parking. If assistance from Cornell is no longer needed for providing cost-effective remote parking, the Parking Benefit District may begin leasing parking from Cornell or other operators at going rates.	Spring '10
Supplement TCAT budget. As TCAT ridership increases, the STS will have to evaluate purchases of Universal Transit Passes or direct service improvements.	Fall '10

5. The Urban Plan and Opportunity Scenarios



The urban plan that follows is intended to provide the underpinnings for the definition of the design guidelines for Collegetown. It provides the bridge between the vision established by the Task Force and the design guidelines and zoning that will guide development in to the future.

overview

This chapter will define a broad set of urban design principles and outline a series of hypothetical "development scenarios" which give physical form to the many aspirations and goals for Collegetown. These scenarios are meant to be hypothetical proposals for the purpose of specifically defining these goals and do not represent any specific proposal being proposed by any specific property owner.

Character Areas

1. Mixed-Use Core:

The area surrounding the intersection of College Avenue and Dryden Road is the heart of Collegetown. It has seen the most development and includes the largest buildings and concentration of businesses and services, which support the many students and residents in the immediate area. New development should continue to be concentrated in the heart of this area, but should be designed in ways that help improve the quality of the streetscape and overall image of the city. This area should be a destination for many people throughout the day and evening.

2. Village Residential:

To help enhance the vitality and activity along College Avenue and the upper portion of Linden Avenue, new housing types should be built which can increase the number of residents living directly on these streets. The architectural character of the buildings should be compatible with the surrounding residential vernacular while still allowing for densities that can accommodate a greater number of rental housing units than the existing zoning currently enables. Locating additional housing units along College Avenue could also help support retail and commercial activity in the mixed-use core.

3. Preservation A:

Locating additional housing units along the eastern section of Dryden Road between the mixed-use core and Cornell Street will provide additional growth capacity in Collegetown in a way that will also help protect the historic owner-occupied neighborhoods from further conversion to rental property. This growth can be accommodated in a way which does not alter the existing character of the streetscape. Methods include new infill development along the street which respects the rhythm of the existing buildings or infill at the rear of existing buildings through significant additions.

4. Preservation B:

Many existing streets and individual buildings throughout Collegetown have been identified by the community as significant and worthy of preservation into the future. These areas are distributed throughout Collegetown and typically provide a transition from mixed-use or higher density residential areas to the single family detached owner occupied neighborhoods. While distinct from each other with respect to specific architectural details, scale of buildings, streets, and landscape elements, the many sub-areas within this zone are similar in that they should each be carefully analyzed when existing buildings are renovated or if new construction needs to occur.

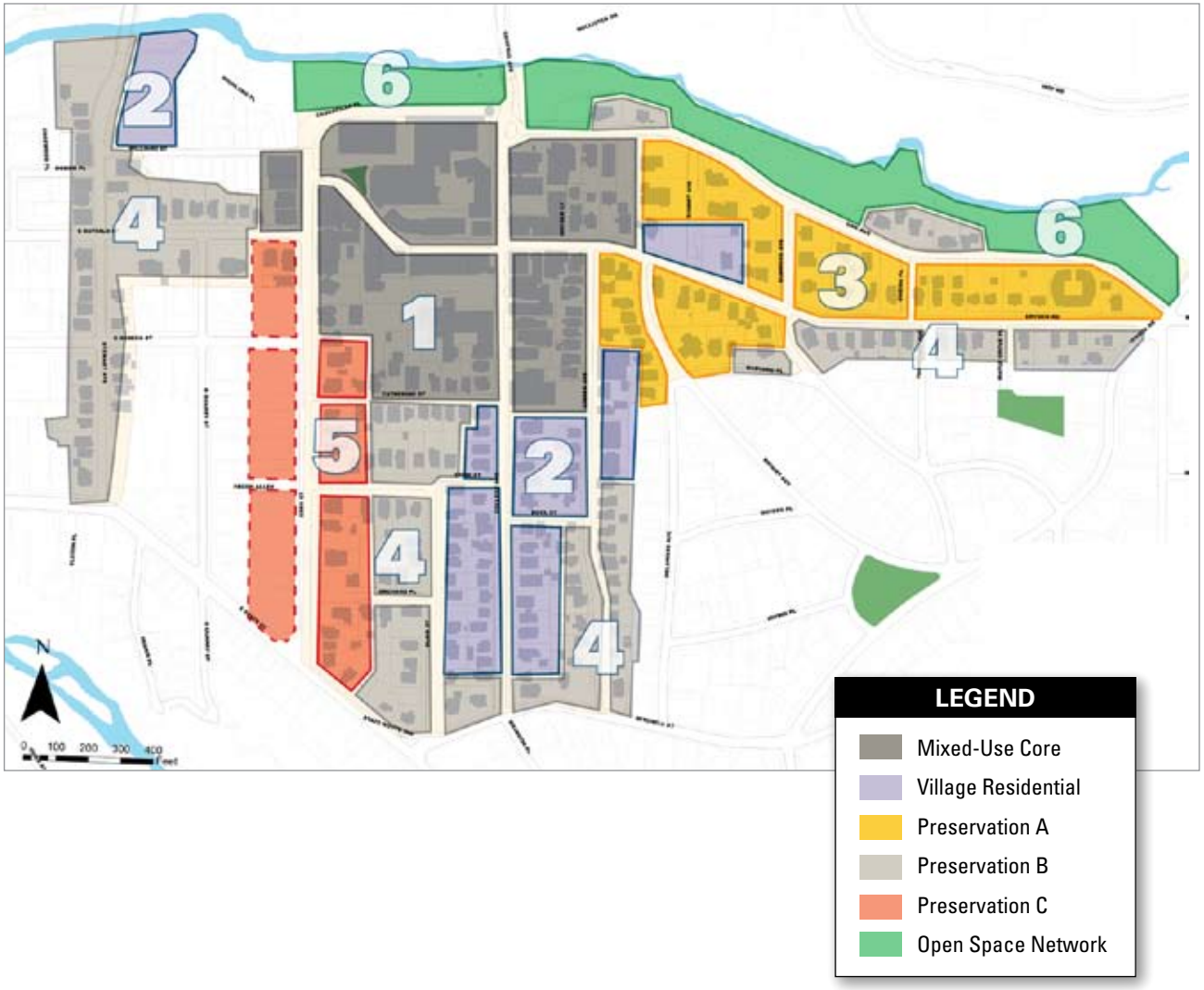
5. Preservation C:

The areas along Eddy Street from E. Buffalo Street to E. State Street are seen as historically and architecturally significant and have been included in the East Hill Historic District. The goals for this area are similar to Preservation B, but demand special categorization due to the historic designation and unique character of the street. Additionally, the larger homes and lots along Eddy Street provides an opportunity to enhance the amenities geared toward families, young professionals, and university faculty and staff, helping to diversify the mixture of resident types living in Collegetown.

6. Open Space Network:

Today, there is very little open space in Collegetown. Additional open spaces should be developed that could be used for passive recreation and enable residents and visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of the area. This can be achieved by capitalizing on the tremendous resource of Cascadilla Gorge though the enhancement of existing spaces with more pedestrian-friendly designs, particularly the area north of the Eddy Gate, behind Cascadilla Hall and the area at the southern side of the bridge from the Engineering Quad on Cornell's campus.

Character Area Plan

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Existing Conditions

1. Massing and materials of many newer buildings do not relate well to Collegetown's historic rhythm and character.

2. Buildings meet the sidewalk in ways which detract significantly from the pedestrian experience, including massive blank walls, recessed ground floors, and large garage entrances.

3. Sudden transitions in building use, scale, and character create a disjointed urban form, particularly between mixed-use and residential areas.

4. Sidewalks are narrow and lack human-scale elements such as trees and lighting which can create a more pleasant experience.

5. Retail and commercial activity is located primarily in the area surrounding College Avenue and Dryden Road.

6. Collegetown is surrounded by established owner-occupied historic neighborhoods, including the East Hill Historic District, Bryant Park, and Belle Sherman.

7. Cascadilla Gorge is underutilized as an integral part of an open space network.


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Illustrative Plan

1. High-density mixed-use projects should be focused at the intersection of College and Dryden Road. Additional heights up to 90´ should be permitted at this location, provided that it follow dimensional regulations and massing as described in the design guidelines.

2. Opportunities should be explored to enable redevelopment to provide landscaped connections between College Avenue and Linden Avenue and larger, denser housing models to be accommodated, and lot interiors to be used for open spaces instead of surface parking.

3. Use of new multi-unit housing types should be investigated to allow a significant increase in available housing options. Their designs should respect the area's existing architectural vocabulary, as defined in the design guidelines.

4. Curb extensions should be regularized to allow for street tree planting and coordinated with enhanced sidewalk crossings

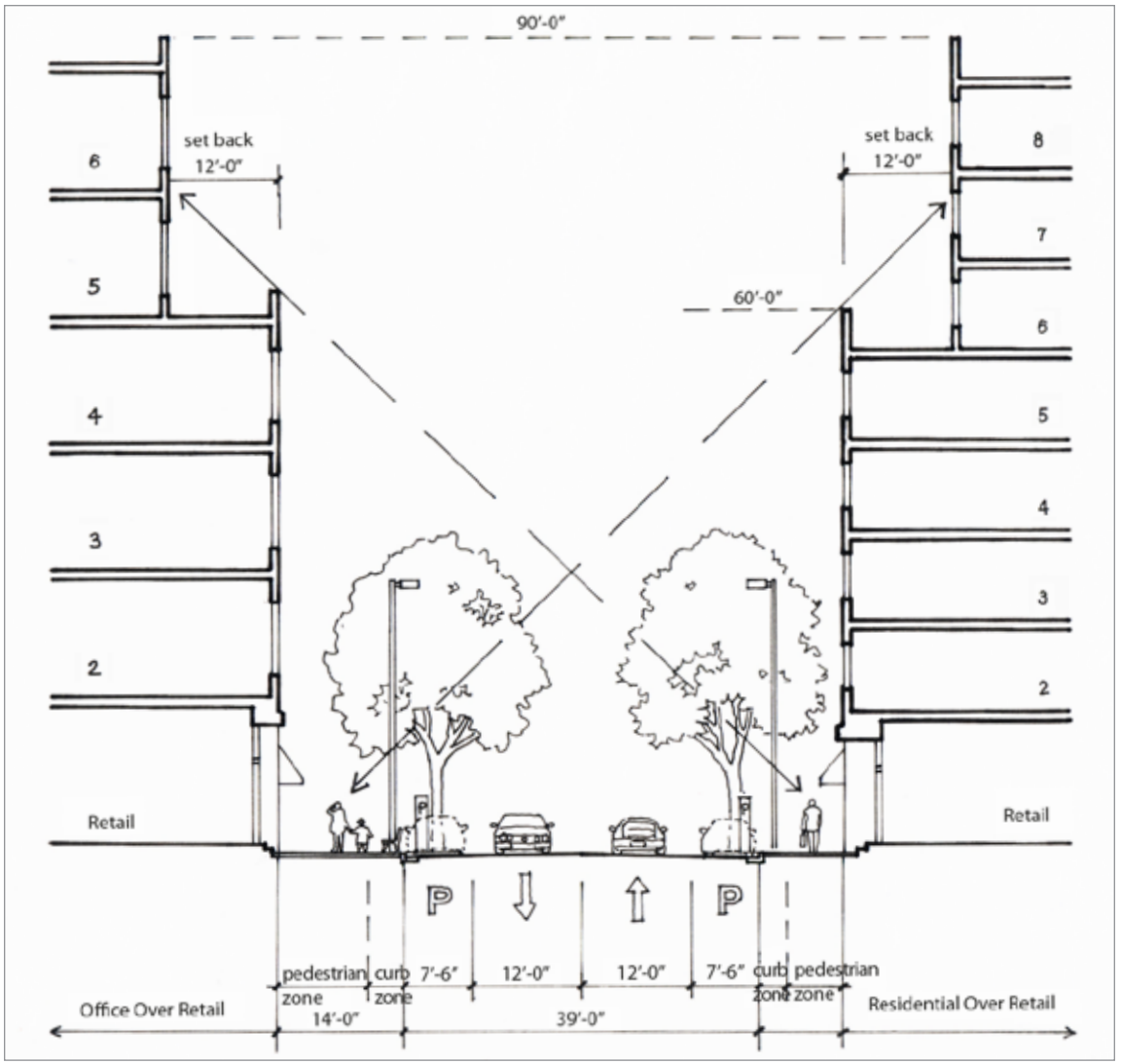
5. Plazas, parks, and attractive pathways should be developed along Cascadilla Gorge

6. Infill development should allow Dryden Road to accommodate more residents while still allowing the existing character along the street to remain fundamentally unchanged

Mixed-Use Core: 400-block

As the heart of Collegetown, the area from the intersection of College Avenue and Dryden Road to Cascadilla Gorge represents a tremendous opportunity to make streetscape improvements that can be used as a model for all of the study area. The plan and section that follow highlight the major elements that can be used to enhance the pedestrian experience and make the area a safer and more attractive part of Ithaca.

Existing view of 400-block.

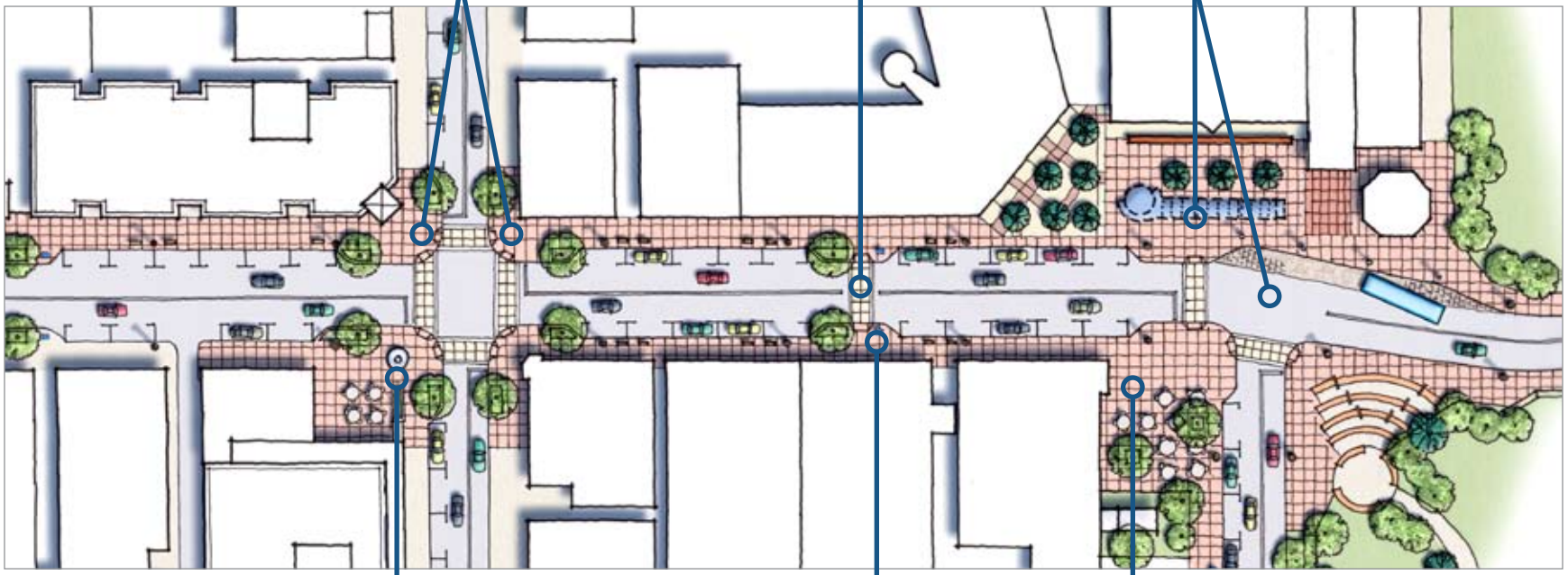


Diagramatic section in mixed-use core area.

Curb extensions can provide greatly needed area at intersections for pedestrians to gather while waiting to cross the street. A paving material that runs continuously from the face of building to the curb will help the sidewalk be more usable and increase its perceived size.

Crosswalks should be constructed in a way that differentiates them from the sidewalk paving system. Additional signage should also be provided at mid-block crossings.

The College Avenue and Oak Street roundabout should be reconfigured to simplify traffic flow and allow for additional public open space on surrounding properties. Together with revising the Schwartz Center plaza, this change can create a new dynamic civic space near the Gorge.



A small setback at the ground level located on the southeas corner of College Avenue and Dryden Road could become a plaza that could accommodate outdoor seating and allow relief from the street wall.

In addition curb extensions at the corners, if located intermittently along the street, they provide areas to accommodate trees, parking pay-stations, and other street furnishings.

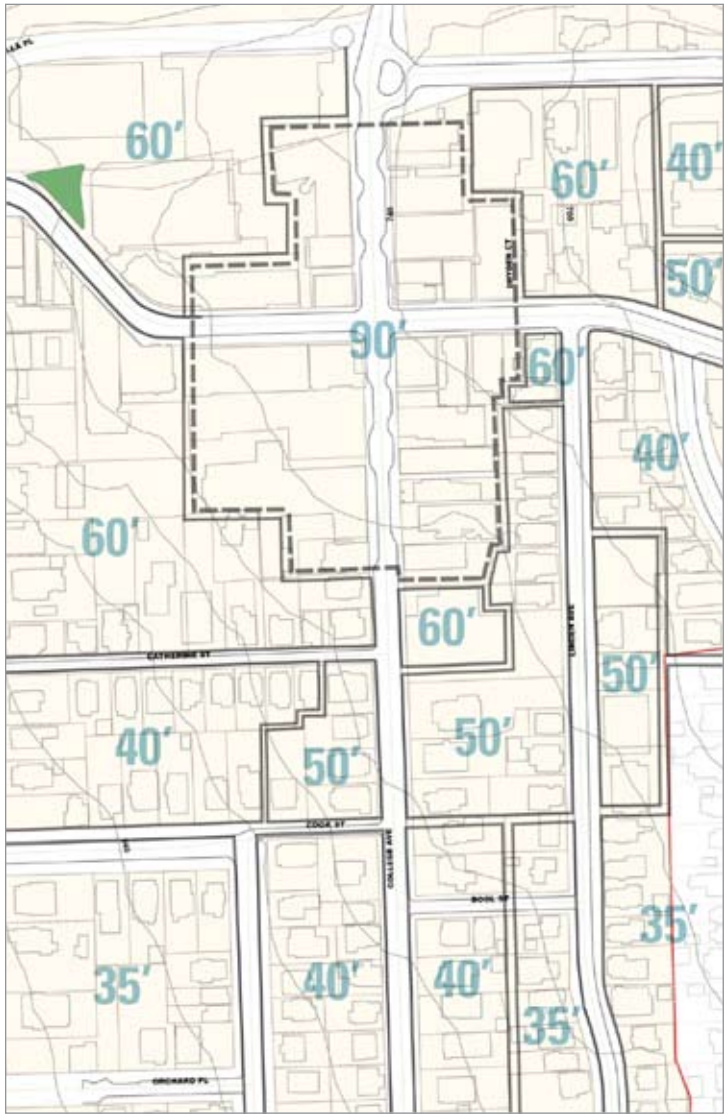
Reconfiguration of the College Avenue and Oak Street intersection allows the existing outdoor space at the end of the block to be expanded.

Allowable Heights

From the very beginning, this urban plan has used the work of the CVIC as the basis for understanding and evaluating an approach to physical improvements to the urban form of Collegetown. The primary weakness of Collegetown, as identified in the CVIC's vision statement, is the inattention to the design and quality of the built environment in the 1980's and 1990's. Excessive heights and their canyon effects, severe and rapid transitions from high-density areas to established owner-occupied neighborhoods, and lack of pedestrian-oriented design elements have been consistent themes throughout the public process.

The proposed height diagram addresses these concerns through a strategy which will allow more density (and all the economic benefits derived from it) while still providing graceful transitions from high to low density built form. This is achieved by adding 2 additional height limits to the existing 2 which are currently defined I the underlying zoning districts B2B and R3. An increase to 90' in select areas at the core and a transitional 50' zone each help to provide a gradually stepped profile along College Avenue and to points east and west.

In order for this gradual 90-60-50-40 stepping to have the necessary visual impact, sufficient linear dimensions, measured along the street frontage, must be maintained. These transitional dimensions are detailed in the design guidelines on pages 6.9 and 6.10.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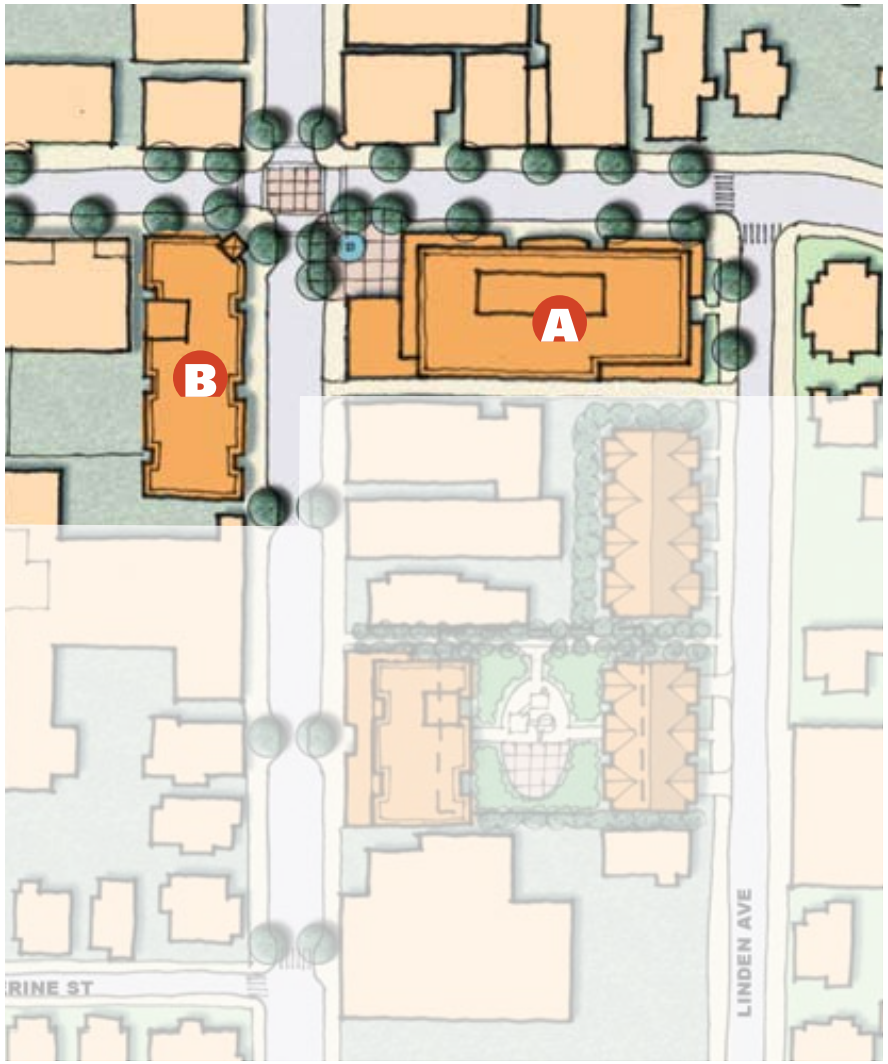
Mixed-Use Core: College and Dryden



A

- **Site:** 23,000 sf
- **Existing:** 6 residential & commercial bldgs.
- **Potential:**
  - 5 to 6 story (90' max.)
  - 7,000 gsf retail
  - 60,000 gsf office
  - 80 parking spaces (1.5 spaces/1000 gsf)
  - 2000 sf plaza space

B

- **Site:** 12,750 sf
- **Existing:** parking & 1 commercial building
- **Potential:**
  - 6 story (55'-65')
  - 3,500 gsf retail
  - 38 one- and two-bedroom apts/condos
  - 57 beds
  - No parking provided

College Avenue looking east.

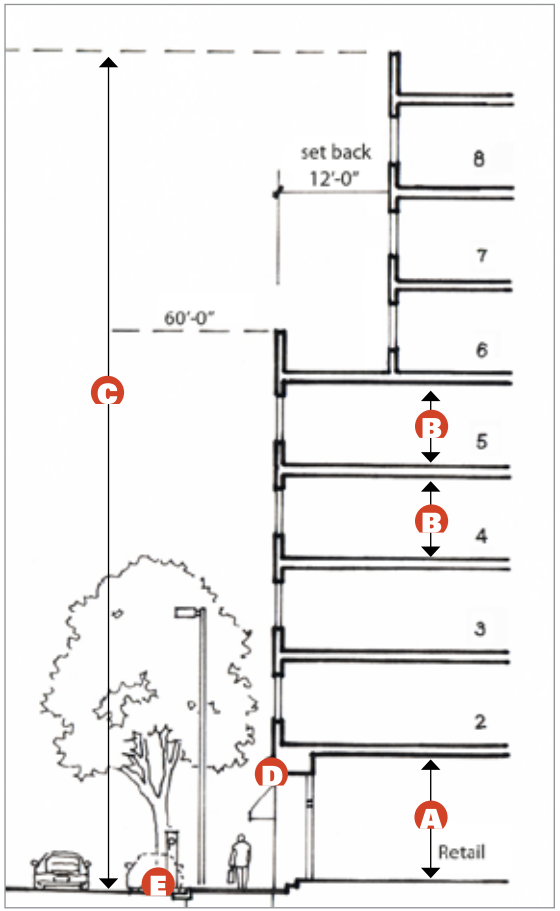
View 1

View 2

Mixed-Use Core: College to Linden

- **Site:** 38,700 sf
- **Existing:** 5 residential 1 office building and a fire station
- **Potential:**
  - 4 to 6 story (40' - 60')
  - 5,000 gsf retail
  - 64 one-, two- and three-bedroom apts/condos
  - 128 beds
  - 32 parking spaces (0.5 space/unit)

Typical Section at College Avenue



A **Ground floor height** 15’ min.; 20’ max. floor-to-floor
12’. Min. clear

B **Typical upper floor** 10’ min. floor-to-floor
8’ min. clear

C **Building height** 60’
90’ (within 200’ of College Ave. and Dryden Rd.); or 6 stories

D **Awnings and signage scaled toward pedestrian**

E **Sidewalk extension beyond**

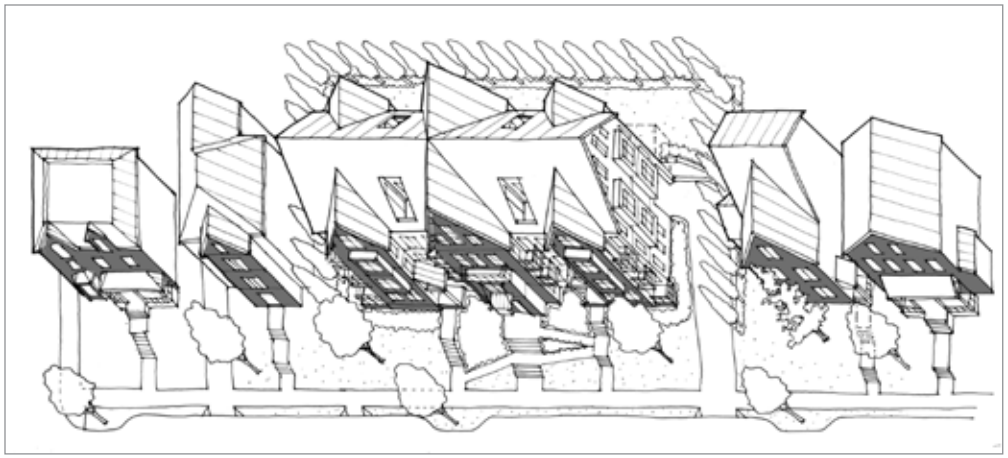
Village Residential: Transition Block

- **Site:** 37,000 sf
- **Existing:** 6 residential buildings
- **Potential:**
  - 4 to 5 story (40'-50')
  - 3,500 gsf retail
  - 44 two- and three-bedroom apts/condos
  - 110 beds
  - 44 parking spaces (1 space/unit)

College Avenue looking east

College Avenue

Village Residential: Townhouses



- **Site:** 24,000 sf
- **Existing:** 6 residential buildings
- **Potential:**
  - 4 story (40')
  - 36 three-bedroom apts/condos
  - 108 beds
  - 36 parking spaces (1 space/unit)

This illustration depicts a potential scenario which would aggregate several individual lots together and develop a new multi-unit townhouse structure. The size of the building would be mitigated by breaking down the street façade into several volumes which pick up on the rhythm of the gable ends facing College Avenue. Several entrances accessed via pathways from the street to one-story entry elements will also help a project of this type within the existing residential fabric.

- **Site:** 20,600 sf
- **Existing:** 3 residential buildings
- **Potential:**
  - 4 story (40')
  - 24 two- and three-bedroom apts/condos
  - 60 beds
  - 24 parking spaces (1 space/unit)

For projects which would cover an area which was subject to significant changes in grade, the architecture should step with the slope of the land. This section view describes the opportunity to develop a series of townhouse apartments clustered around an internal courtyard which would split the difference in grade between the Blair Street and College Avenue apartments.

Preservation A

- **Site:** 30,000 sf
- **Existing:** 3 residential buildings
- **Potential:**
  - 3 to 4 story (30'-40')
  - 24 two-bedroom apts or condos
  - 6 three-bedroom townhomes
  - 66 beds (total)
  - 30 parking spaces (1 space/unit)

A While limited in number, there are opportunities to infill with entirely new construction through the subdivision of existing lots. The standards outlined in the design guidelines would control elements of the housing such as roof form, porches, pathways, and materials. They would also be applied if a home on an existing lot were destroyed and needed to be replaced

B The deep lots along the north side of Dryden Road could allow for significant additions to be placed at the rear of the property. This strategy would allow an increase in the number of units without impacting the massing and rhythm of facades along the street.

C If opportunities arise, a larger building to be constructed by aggregating several lots together; the design guidelines will control the massing, materials, and architectural details so that the project would be compatible with the streetscape. Highlights would include constructing one-story elements to help transition to the sidewalk, designing gable-end which face the street and repeat the pitch and materials of surrounding roofs, and connecting the street-facing entrances to the sidewalk via a simple pathway.

Dryden Road looking north

Caption

Open Space

A new Eddy Gate

A Eddy Street Gate area improvements

B Walk/bikeway along gorge

C Access from pedestrian bridge

D Plaza adjacent to CTB

E Bus stop kiosk in front of PAC

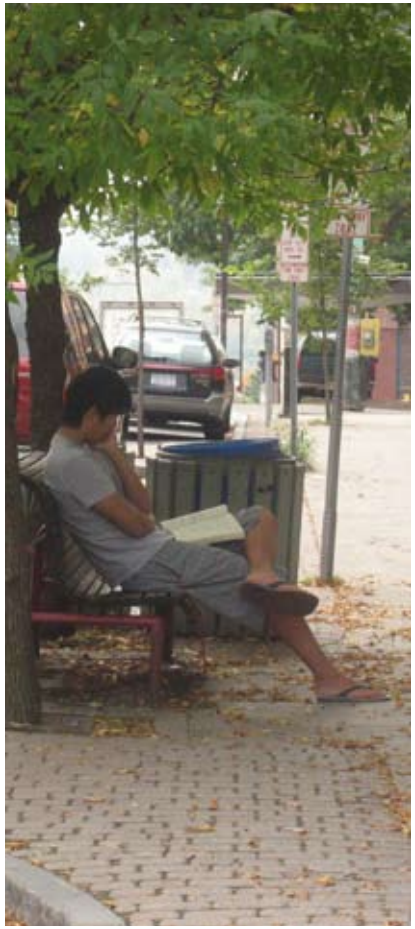
F Plaza at Eddy/Dryden corner

New plaza and bus shelter at College and Oak

Eddy Street Pocket Park

(text to come)

6. Collegetown Design Guidelines



These Design Guidelines are the product of the long and intensive public process with the Ithaca community and are a reflection their vision and goals for the future of the corridor. Discussions about the quality and vitality of the area were initiated through the work of the Collegetown Vision Task Force and supplemented at various meetings, workshops, and a community charrette hosted by the consultant team.

The guidelines are intended to provide residents, property owners, business owners, developers, and City agencies with the tools to understand the desired physical form and character of the Collegetown Study Area.

Collegetown is the heart of a diverse and dynamic community and should reflect these qualities in the physical environment they share. These guidelines celebrate the existing strengths of the area and build upon those in shaping the future. The guidelines are structured in two ways, considering the study area both as a whole and as a collection of a several unique "character areas" with special characteristics. The rationale and definition of each character area has been established as discussed in the Urban Plan, and the details that follow in this section are intended to clarify and further describe the principles and desired outcomes within each area.

All the design guidelines are based on the following core principles:

- Celebrate and strengthen the existing patterns of place, allowing potential changes to emerge out of the existing context
- Encourage programs and strategies that assist in the strengthening of the area as a diverse place which is home to new and long term residents, as well as university students, faculty, and staff
- Enhance the quality of life through the creation of a clean, safe, and pedestrian-friendly streetscape environment.

Who Is Expected to Use These Guidelines?

Because these guidelines will be used in evaluating new development projects in the study area, the most frequent users of this document will be the people concerned with the development of new buildings and public spaces.

Property Owners/Developers

The guidelines can acquaint property owners and developers with the issues identified in the Vision Statement and Urban Plan regarding community character and give direction to how new development can contribute in addressing relevant issues and meeting stated goals.

Designers

The guidelines will help architects and others who design buildings and public spaces to know what is expected of their products and what could make their designs more compatible with their surroundings, and/or more consistent with the goals of the Urban Plan.

Project Neighbors

People who live near new development proposals will benefit greatly from these guidelines, as they may give neighbors a better vision of projects proposed nearby and how those projects can enhance the neighborhood's character. Ultimately, the guidelines will be a tool that neighbors can use when they want to describe to developers or City representatives what they consider appropriate design for their part of Collegetown.

City Representatives

Staff from the City of Ithaca Planning and Development office will use these guidelines in both short and long-term ways. In the short term, they will provide a clear and comprehensive way for them to discuss the goals, aspirations, and physical form Collegetown with property and business owners who are considering improvements to their sites, as well as help identify long-term strategies for addressing key sites along the corridor.

How to Use These Guidelines

As reviewers apply the design guidelines to particular development projects, some important things to remember are:

- Each project is unique and will pose unique design issues. With some projects, trying

to follow all of the guidelines could produce conflicts in the design. With most projects, staff will find some guidelines more important than others, and the guidelines that are most important on one project might not be at all on the next one.

- Many of the guidelines suggest using the existing context to determine appropriate solutions for the project under consideration. In some areas, the existing context is not well defined, or may be undesirable. In such cases, the new project should be recognized as a precedent with the opportunity to establish a pattern or identity from which subsequent development can take its cues.
- Each guideline includes examples and illustrations of ways in which that guideline can be achieved. The examples are just that – examples. They are not the only acceptable solutions. Designers and reviewers should consider designs, styles and techniques not described in the examples but that meet the intent of the guideline.

What Is Design Review?

Design review is intended to be a forum for city staff, a project proponent, and the community to work toward achieving a better community through attention to simple design principles. Those principles are presented in the design guidelines which follow.

Where Do the Guidelines Apply?

In general, these guidelines have been developed to address those areas located within the boundaries established by the overlay zone. They could, however, be appropriate when considering changes to those properties or streets which are part of the impact area surrounding the study area.

Design Guidelines

Within the framework outlined in the previous chapter, and following the guidance provided by the Vision statement and results of the community charrette, the design guidelines describe a series of issues that collectively will provide a way to achieve the physical results desired by the community. Building on the previous discussion and definition of the "character areas", the following guidelines are outlined as follows:

- Mixed-use core
- Village residential
- Preservation A
- Preservation B
- Preservation C
- Open space

The guidelines locate each of these sections within the greater study area, provide brief summaries of the goals for each area, present images which are meant to be visual examples of relevant issues, and discuss specific architectural or landscape approaches to achieving the desired goals.

character area 1 mixed use core

Preferred Use

Existing zoning for the mixed-use core area currently allows for many uses, including retail, office, and housing. The primary residents are undergraduate students from Cornell University. Keeping the area active and vibrant throughout the day and evening can be supported by maintaining and expanding a wide range of uses that will appeal to university students, faculty, and staff, as well as non-university affiliated residents and toursits.

- Wherever possible, incorporate retail, cultural facilities, entertainment or other uses on the ground floor in order to enliven the pedestrian experience.
- In areas where these uses are not possible, attempt to locate office uses that do not require screening from public view (architects, graphic designers, caterers, and other small businesses often welcome storefront locations).
- Upper levels of buildings should include housing geared toward the undergraduate student population or commercial office space.
- Restaurants, drug stores, grocery and convenience store, clothiers, and other services that will serve both the student and non-student population should be encouraged.

Site Design

Active street activity will be encouraged if the buildings remain the primary elements along the sidewalk, locating parking, service, and access to the rear of the site .

- Buildings should be placed near the front lot line so that it meets the sidewalk and helps support a continuous active edge.
- In select areas, a 5' – 8' setback should be allowed in order to provide visual interest to the streetscape and accommodate outdoor dining uses or limited outdoor merchandise display.
- Entries to ground floor uses should step with the changes in elevation along a façade's length to allow continuous access from the sidewalk.
- Large openings in the ground floor of buildings along major streets for garage access or service are strongly discouraged.
- Ground floor levels of new buildings should be elevated at least one foot above the sidewalk level where accessibility requirements allow

Parking

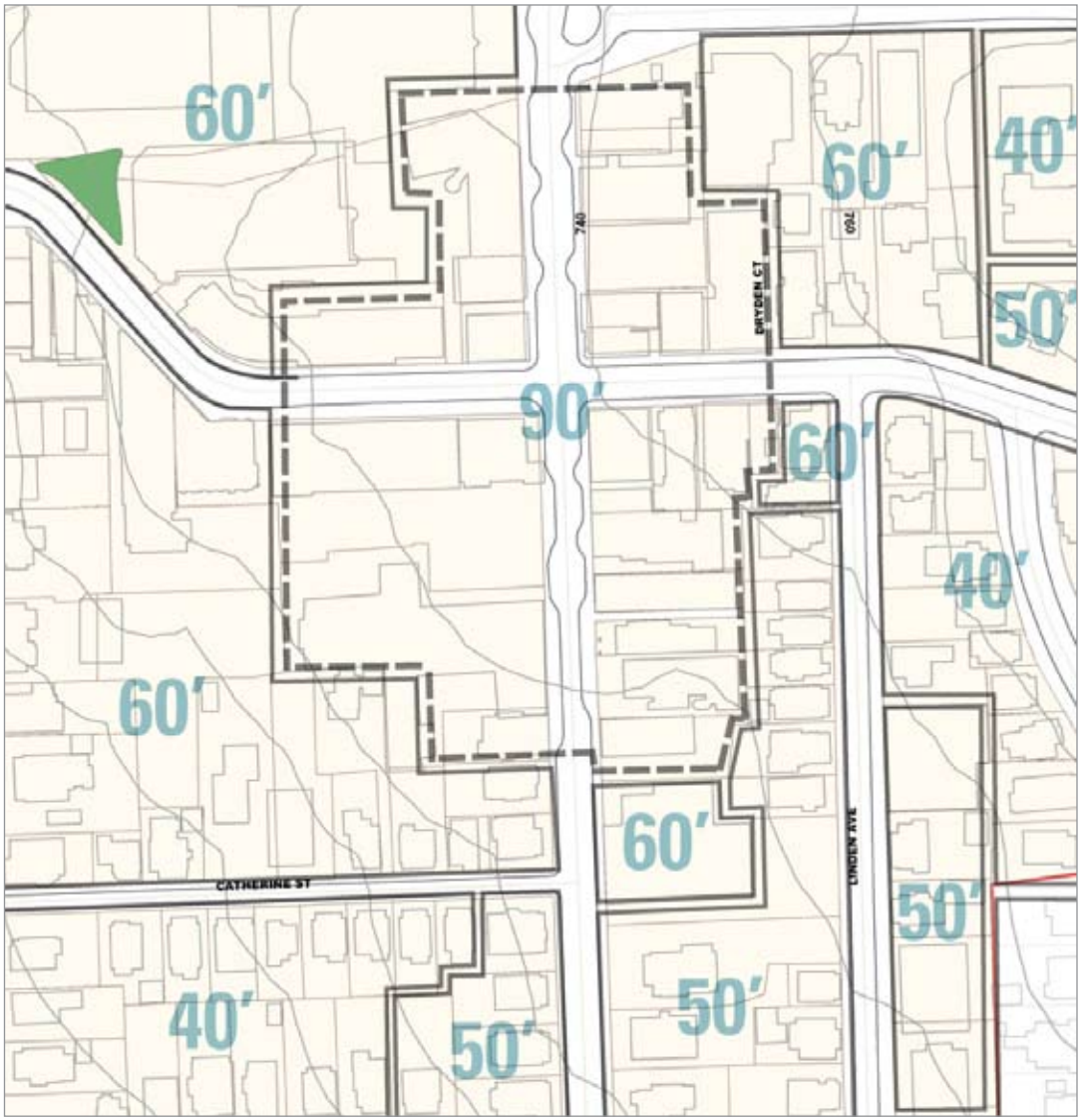
The ability to accommodate cars within the core of Collegetown without creating conditions which detract from the enhancement of a pedestrian-friendly public realm is of paramount importance to the plan.

- Ensure that surface parking lots are shielded from view from the sidewalk.
- Access to parking lots and parking structures should not create large openings in the ground floor of buildings.

Height

Due to the strong topographical variations in Ithaca, careful consideration needs to be given to regarding the height of structures when viewed from a variety of vantage points. The heights of buildings must balance the need to create a streetscape environment which is not overwhelming to the pedestrian while still allowing a critical mass of people and diversity of uses that will enable Collegetown to maintain and expand its vibrancy and commercial success. Careful consideration has been given to creating a system which will allow graceful transitions from high-height areas to low-height areas and also how buildings meet the ground plane.

- The ground floors of all new buildings with street frontage should have a floor-to-floor height of at least 15' and no more than 20' to ensure the potential for quality retail space.
- A select area of the mixed-use zone can support additional heights up to a maximum of 90'. The area for this increase in height was determined after a careful survey of the existing properties from all directions, including areas east of Linden Ave. The 90' limit would allow for ground level retail with either 7 stories of residential (based on 10' floor-to-floor heights) or 5 stories of commercial space (based on 13' floor-to-floor heights) to be located above.

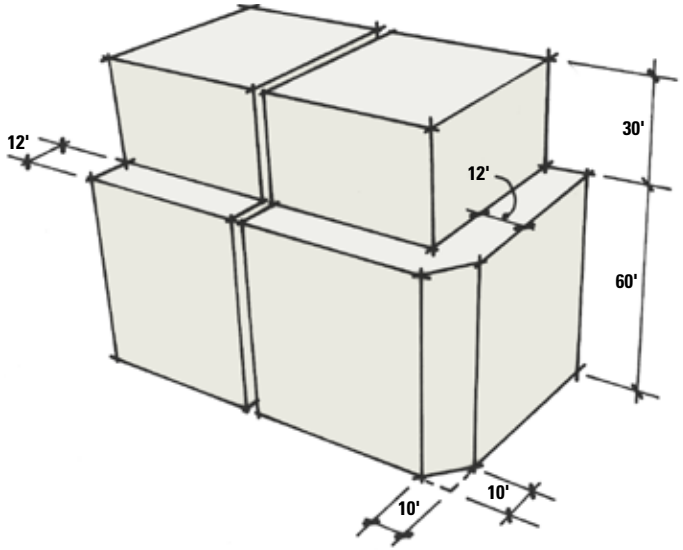


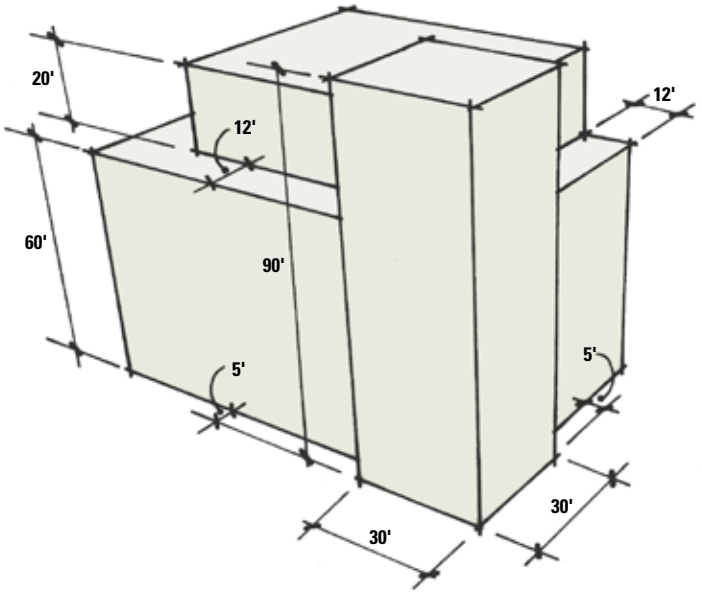
Typical Setbacks

- Any portion of a building, along any elevation, which exceeds a height of 60', shall be set back from the edge of the building by no less than 12' in order to diminish the impact of the height from street level or areas located on the downhill side of the slope.
- Corners shall be beveled, based on connecting two points which are set back 10' from the intersection of the two wall planes. Treatment of corners in this way is intended to provide additional space for pedestrian circulation or entries to ground floor spaces located at corners.

College Avenue and Oak Street

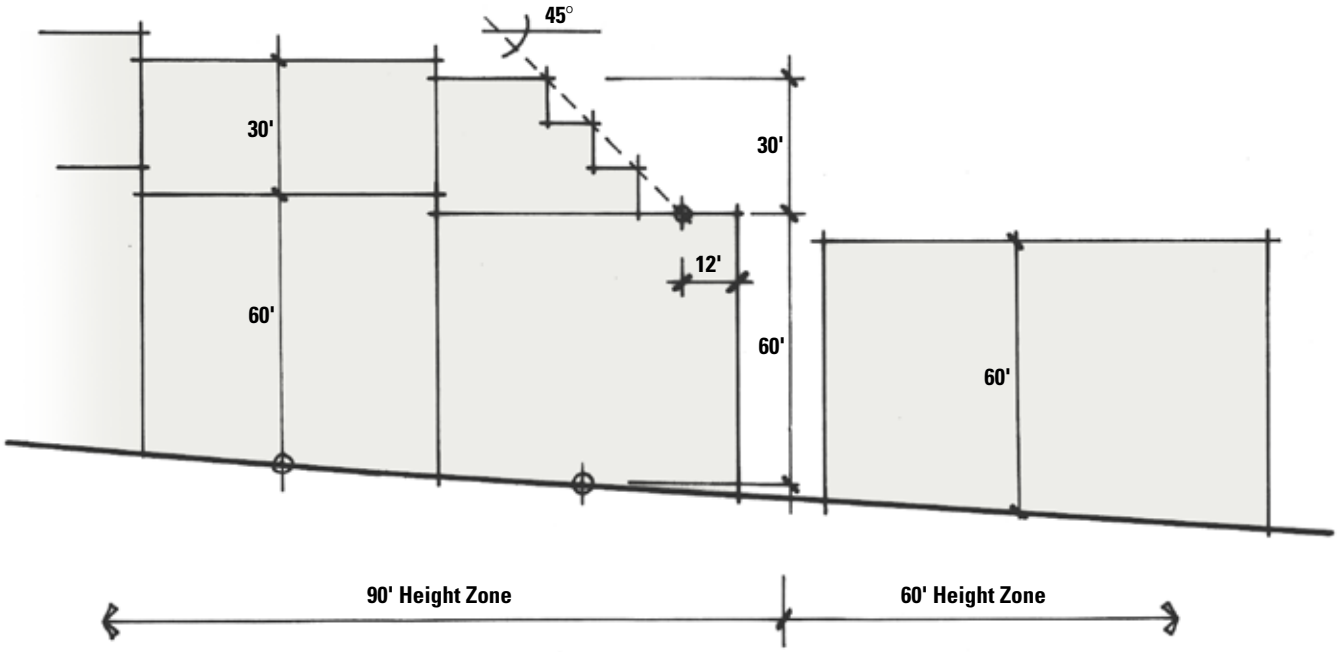
- Given its special prominence as the terminus to College Avenue, location along Cascadilla Gorge, and symbolic role at the bridge to Cornell University, the site currently occupied by Collegetown Bagels and the Student Services agency should be able to accommodate additional height in a way which reflects its many unique aspects.
- The corner shall be permitted to allow heights of 90' without the typical setback at 60' as defined in all other locations within the mixed-use zone, provided that this height does not extend more than 30' along either wall plane projected back from the corner. The intention is create a slender form whose proportions and scale does not overwhelm the pedestrian and act as a beacon for Collegetown throughout the city and region. In order to emphasize this form, the maximum height limit for the remainder of the building shall be 80'. In addition, the two wall planes along College Avenue and Oak Street shall be set back 5' in order to emphasize this form at the ground level.





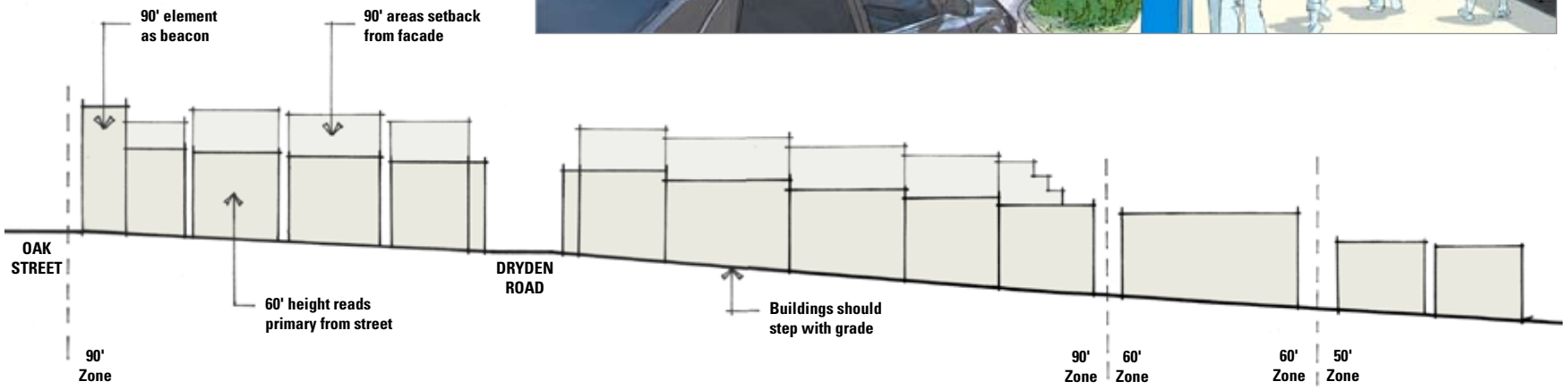
Transitions to adjacent areas

- In order to provide graceful transitions between the mixed-use areas with 90' and 60' maximum heights, additional setback requirements shall be placed upon those areas of a building which are in excess of 60'. From a point setback 12' from the edge of the 60' portion of the building, additional stories must fall within an envelope defined by a line leading upwards at a 45 degree angle. This transition would occur wherever the 90' area met the 60' area



Overall urban form

The elevation below shows the way in which the setback and height strategies for the mixed-use core will allow a graceful transition to the surrounding village residential character area. As a view of the east side of College Avenue from Oak Street to just south of Catherine Street, the elevation shows how the street wall will be perceived as 60´ tall, with a special element marking the northern-most edge at the Gorge, and stepped massing as the boundary line for the 60´ zone is approached.



Materials

In general, dense mixed-use areas benefit greatly by a range of exterior materials and styles that help reflect the diversity of activities and uses within the buildings. This diversity exists currently in Collegetown and should be strengthened through the use of a range of materials.

- Special emphasis should be placed on those materials which convey a sense of quality, beauty, and permanence, such as brick, limestone, granite, and cast stone.
- Additional use of concrete block or precast concrete should be discouraged, except as minor façade elements or in those areas not readily visible from the public realm.
- Materials on the lowest levels of buildings and near sidewalks and entries should be of the finest quality and highest level of durability.
- Avoid the use of opaque panels, such as mirrored glass, spandrel panels, or painted metal

Architectural and Façade Design

Innovation and contemporary design should be encouraged in Collegetown, provided that the result is not discordant with the overall character and image of the area. Several valuable lessons can be learned from the east side of the 400-block of College Avenue and should be included in the design or the renovation of buildings in the mixed use core.

- Through the use of materials, window sizes and configuration, and other architectural details, buildings should have a clearly expressed base, middle, and top.
- If the area of a façade plane facing a public street exceeds 6000 square feet, 50 percent of the area that exceeds the limit must be set back from the facade by no less than 10'
- Provide details that provide a sense of scale, visual richness, and safety to a person along the street; this includes a varied rhythm of window and door openings, awnings.
- Facades should include horizontal lines of expression, such as stringcourses and cornices, which correspond to the height of adjacent context buildings
- Large windows at the ground floor which allow a high degree of visual connection between the sidewalk and the interior should be encouraged. A minimum of 75 percent of the ground floor façade should be transparent vision glass to enliven the pedestrian experience.
- Ground level retail storefronts are encouraged to have exterior awnings that are coordinated with the design of the storefront and overall building.
- Provide entrances to retail, office, and other active ground floor uses at least every 100 feet along the sidewalk where possible. If located along a significant slope, entries to retail should step with the grade.

A well designed retail facade should be at least 75% transparent and should incorporate awnings wherever possible.

Streetscape

Improvements in the mixed-use core area should help create an attractive and comfortable public realm around which redevelopment can occur. Improvements such as wider sidewalks, regular street trees, ornamental vegetation, street furniture, human-scaled lighting, and safe crosswalks create a pleasant and safe environment for people who shop, eat, socialize, or simply sit and observe street activity.

- Along College Avenue, in the 300- and 400-blocks, reconfigure the sidewalks by centralizing parking meters to a single location, widening the sidewalks at the College and Dryden intersection, and reconstructing the sidewalk with a single material (ideally brick) from the face of buildings to the back of the granite curb.
- Explore opportunities to widen sidewalks in places logically aligned with major building entries or uses which can spill out from the interior to enliven the street
- Plant continuous rows of street trees on both sides of Dryden Road, paying particular attention to the section between College Ave. and Eddy St.
- Create a plaza at the corner of College and Dryden.

character area 2 village residential

Preferred Use

The current uses along lower College Avenue and Linden Street are residential and this use should be continued as the primary one in these areas. Future additional housing types should be able to accommodate multiple unrelated occupants, but should not allow retail, services, or other non-residential uses.

- The primary use should be multi-unit structures which can serve as housing primarily for undergraduate students.
- Identify architecturally significant detached homes which should be considered for preservation in this area

Height

The Village Residential zone serves as the transitional area between the dense mixed-use core and the traditional neighborhood areas.

- The current residential zoning height maximum of 40' should be maintained, except within 100' feet of the Mixed-use character area.
- Within 100' of the mixed-use character area, new buildings should be encouraged to develop heights of up to 50'. This will allow a more graceful transition to the dense core of Collegetown.

College Avenue looking east

Site design

Site elements, orientation, and setbacks should enable new, higher density housing types to relate to the existing vernacular architecture and become an active part of the streetscape.

- Primary access to the residential buildings shall be from the street
- To provide a proper transition from the public to private realm, buildings shall have a compact "green edge" zone between residential buildings and the public sidewalk. Raised entrances and single story porches or entry elements are also encouraged to enable proper transitions.
- Setbacks should be a minimum of 6' and increase in width as lots approach the outer boundaries of the planning area.
- In order to accommodate an increase in housing density, more land area will need to be used on parts of sites currently occupied by cars or driveways. These areas could become either developed as part of a new building or become green open space as an amenity for the residents.

Materials

While the ideal housing type for the village residential area is larger in scale than the single family homes or rooming houses that currently sit on the street, every effort should be made to enable new construction of housing to relate directly to the vernacular housing which gives such a wonderful character to the neighborhoods surrounding the area.

- Primary exterior materials should be wood, either painted or stained; cementitious siding products (such as Hardi-plank), brick, and stucco are also acceptable
- Clapboards, shingles, shakes, and trim should be used in creative ways to help create a pleasing and varied composition
- Use of multiple cladding materials is encouraged, particularly if they help emphasize changes in the building massing

Architectural design

New housing in this area should try to mitigate the impact of its larger size by providing a series of design elements which will help it relate better to pedestrians and the surrounding historic neighborhoods.

- Facades should be organized in such a way as to create the impression of a number of individual units and not one monolithic structure
- There should be many entries into units or groups of units placed along major streets; entries could be emphasized by small overhangs or other massing elements.
- Porches should be encouraged along the public way; property owners are encouraged to keep the porches clear of excessive clutter and large pieces of furniture
- Highly articulated facades with projecting bays, dormers, overhangs, and other architectural treatments will help break down the massing of the building.
- A variety of window sizes and shapes will help provide visual interest to the exterior; as many windows should be placed along the street to provide a welcoming presence and enable a safer sidewalk experience

- Massing and composition should allow new buildings to provide transitional heights between them mixed-use core and the traditional neighborhood

Streetscape

With an increased number of residents living along College Avenue and Linden Street, the presence of an attractive, well-maintained sidewalk and public realm will help encourage pedestrians to use these streets as major thoroughfares as they make their way to the retail, restaurants, and other services located in the mixed-use core or on their way to the Cornell campus.

- Sidewalks should be made as welcoming as possible by removing parking meters from the length of the blocks and consolidating them into parking stations
- Improve the overall quality of the walking surface by installing special pavers and curbs; a variety of patterns and textures will also help to highlight the special nature of these streets; paving should maintain smooth surfaces, with level changes not to exceed ¼-inch
- New street trees can be accommodated by locating them in curb extensions located intermittently along the street.
- Crosswalks shall be a minimum of 6' wide and constructed of brick and edged with a stone band. The distinct color and material will help give special prominence to these crossings and encourage vehicles to stop when pedestrians enter these highly visible and well-defined zones.
- Provide accessible curb cuts linking crosswalks to sidewalks

character area 3 preservation A

Massing

- The pitch of principal gables shall be between 4:12 and 6:12, ideally facing the street
- 3rd story spaces should always be concealed within dormers; the pitch should be greater than or equal to that of the principal roof pitch
- Buildings should be a collection of volumes, with one-story elements serving as transitions from the street






Materials

- Wall materials shall be composed of clapboards, shingles, and trim; wood is preferred, but cementitious material is acceptable
- Metal and vinyl are strongly discouraged as siding materials

Site and Landscape

- Buildings should face a front yard which provides for trees, shrubs and lawn areas to help partially screen the houses from the sidewalk
- A paved pathway should lead directly from the sidewalk to the entry porch or overhang

Architectural Details

- A mixture of clapboards and shingles is encouraged in many areas; first floor volumes are defined by horizontal clapboards, while second story and third story gable end are shingles
- A variety of window opening sizes within a building is encouraged to provide visual interest

character area 4 preservation B

Massing

- Rooflines, overall height, and composition of volumes should relate to existing houses along the same street within 250' of the property
- 3rd story spaces should always be concealed within dormers; the pitch should be greater than or equal to that of the principal roof pitch






Materials

- Wall materials shall be composed of clapboards, shingles, and trim; wood is preferred, but cementitious material is acceptable
- Metal and vinyl are strongly discouraged as siding materials

Site and Landscape

- Building entries should be oriented toward the sidewalk
- A paved pathway should lead directly from the sidewalk to a one-story entry porch or overhang

Architectural Details

- A simple pattern of regular window opening sizes should be encouraged on the smaller houses in order to relate to less complex massing
- Many smaller homes can be given more prominence through the use of carefully selected details along rooflines, doorways, and porches
- Specialty windows should be placed on the gable ends facing the street

character area 5 preservation C

Massing

- A great variety of roof shapes and configurations is encouraged and desirable due to the eclectic nature of the existing homes
- Houses should be at least 2 full stories in height; third floor occupied space within dormered areas is preferred
- Dormers should have a pitch greater than or equal to that of the principal roof form






Materials

- Wall materials shall be composed of clapboards, shingles, and trim; wood is preferred, but cementitious material is acceptable
- Metal and vinyl are strongly discouraged as siding materials

Site and Landscape

- Mature trees and other plantings should be preserved wherever possible.
- Side yard entries are permitted due to the greater setbacks and variety of housing configurations

Architectural Details

- The primary façade facing the street should receive special architectural treatment, particularly if the main entry door is not oriented toward the street
- Decorative wood ornamentation at windows and porches is encouraged
- A variety of window opening sizes within a building is encouraged to provide visual interest

character area 6 open space network

Preferred Use

Collegetown should become an integral point along an interconnected public open space system which includes the Goldwin-Smith Walk and Cascadilla Park. This could enhance the pedestrian experience for those travelling from points both east and west along Cascadilla Gorge and across the bridge to the Cornell University campus.

Materials

For both hardscape and plant materials, every effort should be made to specify durable items which will need a minimum of maintenance and replacement over time.

- For park areas, hardscape surfaces should be made of unit masonry or stone materials. Due to the fact that occasional service or emergency vehicles will need access to the rear of Cascadilla Hall and the Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts, the selected material and construction must be either durable enough to withstand these uses or easily repaired as necessary.
- Native tree, shrub, and plant species should be selected based on their ability to withstand the harsh Ithaca environment and require minimal watering and treatment.

Site design

In addition to establishing links to the existing trail system at the base of the gorge, the new open space system should include two pocket parks at the top of the gorge; one park in the area immediately behind the Eddy Gate and one park along Oak Street near the pedestrian bridge that crosses over to Cornell.

- Eddy Park
  - Vehicular access through Eddy Gate should be minimized so that the area along the gorge was primarily a pedestrian way
  - Hardscape areas would enable the occasional small delivery vehicle to access Cascadilla Hall, but every effort should be made to relocate service to the Dryden Road side of the building.
  - Areas should be provided for seating; in addition to benches, site walls and other landscape features should enable informal seating to happen around the site
- Oak Park
  - After passing over the pedestrian bridge from the Cornell campus, a small area should be designed with pavers, benches, and informal sitting areas to allow for people to sit under the trees, listen to the rushing water, and watch as others go by.
  - Minimal disturbance should be made to the existing topography and mature trees
- Cascadilla Way
  - Connect these two parks with a pedestrian walkway enhanced by new walking surfaces, signage, and lighting
  - Provide additional benches and seating options along the path to encourage people to pause along the way and enjoy the beauty of the gorge

Site Furnishings, Lighting, and Furniture

- Site lighting should be provided which is scaled the pedestrian and is able to accommodate specialty signage and seasonal banners and flags.
- Iron and wood benches should be provided along paths and in small plazas; bench seats shall be yellow cedar and metal frames shall have a standard black, powdercoat finish.
- Bike racks should be placed at convenient, well-lit paved areas in each of the park areas
- Trash receptacles should be used throughout the park areas

7. Implementing the Plan, Managing Opportunities, and Managing Enforcement

Introduction

There are two essential drivers for implementation of the Collegetown Plan and Design Guidelines: (1) the Sustainable Transportation System (STS) and (2) the new Collegetown zoning ordinance derived from the plan and the guidelines. Together, they comprise the operational and regulatory underpinnings for aligning Collegetown with the goals and ambitions of the original Vision Statement.

As the City undertakes the approval process for both the STS and the new ordinance, it needs concurrently to identify and apply the resources to ensure successful roll-out and management of the former and enforcement of the latter.

With the STS and the design guidelines presented in detail in earlier parts of the report, this chapter briefly reviews these tools and their components. It then identifies several potential development and partnership opportunities that emerged during the planning process and that offer promise for helping to implement the plan and the Vision Statement. It recommends a number of initiatives in the public realm that can be undertaken by the City, both independently and in collaboration with Cornell.

The chapter also highlights Cornell's potential role as a lever both for new retail and for new commercial development in Collegetown, as well as for housing. It concludes by re-emphasizing the degree to which code enforcement must play a central role in sustaining the health and vibrancy of the Collegetown neighborhood.

Key implementation tools

Sustainable Transportation System

As detailed in Chapter 4, the initiatives that comprise the STS include a parking utilization study; changes to the pricing of on-street parking; creation of commercial and residential parking revenue districts; and further collaboration with Cornell and with TCAT on issues relating to parking and transit. Successful implementation of the system's components will require that they (1) are coordinated with implementation of the zoning ordinance; (2) are in conformance with applicable local, state, and federal laws; (3) are adjusted when necessary to changing conditions. Finally, (4) the City, working with Collegetown stakeholders, must ensure the equitable disposition of the incremental revenues from new pricing of parking and other sources.

While recognizing existing constraints on City resources, it is nevertheless essential that a full-time City or agency staffer be given the responsibility of managing implementation of the STS. Integrating the system's multiple components by itself would virtually preclude having an individual devoting only part of his or her time to this project. The costs for funding such a position will eventually be covered by some part of Collegetown's additional parking revenues.

Zoning

Following approval of the Collegetown plan and design guidelines, an amendment will be drafted for the City's Zoning Ordinance. The amendment will serve as the plan's major implementation tool and, ultimately, the major vehicle by which the City can achieve the goals set forth in the May 2007 Collegetown Vision Statement. The amended Ordinance will list permitted land uses and densities (as does the existing zoning for the area). In addition, it will detail the allowable form and appearance of buildings, prescriptions that are not currently part of the Ordinance. Where similar form-based ordinances have been adopted in cities across the nation, they have proved to be an effective way to regulate appearance. These regulations will apply equally to private, public, and not-for-profit developers. The package of amendments is scheduled to be adopted prior to expiration of Collegetown's development moratorium.

Public realm

While the new zoning language will regulate future development in Collegetown, the plan and design guidelines also make recommendations for improving Collegetown's public realm. Most of this will require implementation by the City. The improvements include streetscape enhance-

ments, new tree plantings, sidewalk repairs, and the possible creation of a new pocket park midway along Eddy Street. Initially, these recommendations will need to be funded through the City's capital budget as approved by the Mayor and Common Council. With this in mind, the City should consider identifying and funding, in the short term, an initiative such as sidewalk repairs that would show evidence of positive change and begin to contribute to Collegetown's overall renewal. Similarly, projected incremental revenues generated by the STS can be applied to the replacement of parking meters by parking pay stations, particularly along the 400 block of College Avenue, creating an immediate widening of the sidewalk, especially along the eastern side. (As noted in Chapter 4, STS-generated revenues can be a major source of funding for all manner of streetscape improvements in Collegetown.)

Cornell's role

The plan also identifies improvements to the public realm that are proposed for sites owned by the University. Examples include the area around Eddy Gate; the proposed expanded plaza in front of the Schwartz Center and Sheldon Court; and improvements to the Cascadilla Walk and to the pedestrian bridge across the Gorge between Oak Avenue and the Engineering Quad. These sites serve the Collegetown community and the University as "common ground" and are among the most important links between the neighborhood and the campus. Their improvement will strengthen the vibrancy of the former and give further honor to the significance of the latter, and should be among the first initiatives undertaken as a joint effort between the City and the University.

Sheldon Court itself offers a significant opportunity to enhance the all-important 400 block of College Avenue: the plan for that block includes an expansion of the plaza in front of the Schwartz Center, the removal of the wall parallel to College Avenue, and the design of a pedestrian space similar in activity and interest similar in activity and interest to the dining and gathering area adjacent to Collegetown Bagels. Even before determining the final uses for Sheldon Court, Cornell can strengthen the building's presence on the street as a major amenity through new exterior lighting, the addition of multi-colored banners that bring attention to the building's handsome and historic character, clean-up of the bottom-floor bay windows, and the addition of plantings or public art along the façade.

Finally, Cornell should be urged to participate significantly in the revitalization of Collegetown through investment in the development of new mixed-use office/retail space, with the University itself providing commercial tenants. In Chapter 2, the report underscores the central importance of Cornell's ability to undertake this kind of investment. As a catalyst project, such a development would significantly alter not only perceptions of Collegetown, but contribute to the much-desired presence of a year-round workforce and to the retail health of the area.

Managing opportunities

In addition to coordinating and applying the major implementation tools mentioned above, the City should actively pursue a series of potential new development initiatives that began to emerge during the planning process, and that involve entities that range from federal, county, and City agencies to local non-profits to Cornell University itself.

Though the following examples are by no means exhaustive – and their positive outcomes by no means guaranteed – they illustrate ways in which the City can potentially harness additional financial and other resources in support of the plan's goals and objectives. By leading off with potential housing initiatives, this list reflects the expressed

need for better and more diverse housing opportunities as a key attractor for new long-term residents.

Housing

- Working with Cornell and a local housing non-profit such as the Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services (INHS), the City should explore the extent to which employer-assisted housing (EAH), could strengthen Collegetown's residential, non-undergraduate market sector. As the area's largest employer, the University could provide grants and forgivable and/or low-interest loans to employees relocating to Ithaca and wishing to live in proximity to the University. At the same time, INHS could provide homebuyer education and additional subsidies to low-income households.
- Similarly, the Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency (IDA), through its Density Incentive tax abatement program, offers another potential vehicle for improving Collegetown's residential mix. While this IDA program has previously been limited to the city's central business district and undeveloped land west of the CBD, early conversations with senior staff have indicated a willingness to consider expansion of the density zone to include Collegetown, assuming formal approval by the City of the plan and new zoning. This would represent a shift for the IDA in both expanding its geographical boundaries and including affordable housing as an area of interest.

Mixed-use residential-commercial

- Income data from the 2000 census indicate that Collegetown could be eligible for New Market Tax Credits (NMTC), a federal investment incentive aimed at bringing new development to income-qualified communities. The uses to which these credits can be applied include commercial, office, hotel, entertainment, and mixed-use residential/commercial development. For a rental housing project to be eligible it must derive at least 20% of anticipated gross revenues from a non-residential use: e.g., ground floor retail with four floors of housing above.

Retail

- Several of Cornell's academic units can potentially serve as generators of or partners in new Collegetown retail. Part of the City's agenda in moving the Collegetown plan forward should include an examination of the feasibility of these new opportunities. Each would be unique to Collegetown and would serve the local community while in addition providing destinations for the wider market.

> **The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS): Applied Economics and Management** program. With Collegetown in need of a fresh produce market, the CALS program, perhaps in partnership with a local chain such as Wegman's (and possibly one of the local organic farms) could take part in establishing a combined market/prepared foods business. Such an establishment would serve the needs of Collegetown and other East Hill residents while providing training for students within the Economics and Management program.

> **Johnson School of Management: Entrepreneurship@Johnson** program. Working in conjunction with Student Agencies and other private sector providers, the entrepreneurship program should investigate the feasibility of new kinds of retail in Collegetown, including a gym open to the community at large.

> **Johnson Museum of Art/Schwartz Performing Arts Center.** Given Cornell's strengths in the performing and visual arts, and the Schwartz Center's key location in Collegetown, the University should explore ways in which the arts – via a combined gallery/cafe/small performance venue – can play a more prominent role in the life of the neighborhood.

Managing enforcement

Critical to the successful implementation of Collegetown's new plan, design guidelines, and zoning will be the degree to which new and existing regulations are enforced. Throughout the planning process, Collegetown residents identified the lack of strict code enforcement as a major hindrance to maintaining a desirable quality of life within the community. The issues include: ensuring that parked cars do not block access for emergency vehicles; lack of resources to pay for needed parking enforcement; over-flowing trash bins in front of both multi-unit houses and commercial businesses; apartment occupancies that are above the maximum permitted by zoning. City elected officials and operating departments should work with other branches of government – most prominently, the judicial system – to determine jointly the reasons for current gaps in enforcement and to create strategies for filling those gaps. The City should review the Collegetown Plan with the City Court and incorporate the Court's recommendations into an overall enforcement implementation strategy. In addition, the Court could help to ensure enforcement of regulations regarding issues of trash, particularly in front of commercial businesses where the responsibility for monitoring the trash rests with the proprietors.

The City could also work with Cornell to identify ways in which the University might play a more active role in reinforcing compliance in the residential properties in which those students reside. For example, the City could inform Cornell when a residential property fails to receive a certificate of compliance.

Finally, revenues derived from implementation of the Sustainable Transportation System will be able to provide resources for stricter code enforcement of parking regulations, as detailed in Chapter 4. Revenues from the STS could also be allocated to help manage enforcement of other regulations such as the use of trash bins in front of commercial businesses.

Managing Collegetown's future

With the new plan, guidelines, and zoning as the foundation, there is now the opportunity to convene a cross-section of representatives from Collegetown's varied populations – students, non-students, families, businesspeople, property owners, City agencies, safety and enforcement officers, and Cornell – to identify the collective steps that all members of the community could take to assist in ensure code enforcement and, in general, to provide a community voice as the plan takes root. Working in conjunction with the Collegetown Neighborhood Council, the agenda of this next generation of the Collegetown Vision Implementation Committee would continue to monitor all aspects of the plan's implementation while institutionalizing the coalition that was formed initially to create the vision itself.

For the City, a possible model for revisiting the enforcement issue , though scaled down for Ithaca, would be Baltimore's CityStat program. This initiative operates within the Mayor's office and is aimed at "improving service delivery in Baltimore City." In the case of Baltimore, participating agencies range from Public Works to Health to Housing to Policy to Recreation and Parks to Transportation.[1]

As described in a report issued by the IBM Center for the Business of Government,

> *A city is employing a CityStat performance strategy if it holds an ongoing series of regular, periodic meetings during which the mayor and/or the principal members of the mayor's leadership team plus the individual director (and the top managers) of different city agencies use data to analyze the agencies' past performance, to establish its next performance objectives, and to examine its overall performance strategies....This ongoing*

1 http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/citistat/

discussion of performance involves much persistent follow-up on past performance deficits and previous commitments to fix specific problems, as well as follow-up on decisions, commitments, and established expectations for future performance improvements.[2]

Whether a CityStat-like model or a venture emerging from the specific Ithaca environment, the point would be to use the Collegetown Plan to improve cooperation and collaboration among the City, its residents, businesses, and major employer, recognizing that the spirit that produced the Collegetown Vision Statement can be brought forward to ensure the full realization of that vision.

2 http://www.businessofgovernment.org/pdfs/BehnReportCiti.pdf

Appendix: The Collegetown Vision Statement

May 31, 2007
As endorsed by the City of Ithaca Common Council on June 6, 2007

Prepared by the
Collegetown Vision Task Force & The City of Ithaca Department of Planning & Development

Members of the Collegetown Vision Task Force

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David Gelinas, Common Council representative, Fourth Ward; Cornell student

Nancy Schuler, East Hill resident

Jennifer Wilkins, East Hill resident

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Other Collegetown community members and city staff contributed comments at meetings or submitted written comments. Some of this group included:

Susan Blumenthal, Bryant Park resident

Leslie Chatterton, City Planner and staff to the Committee

Kyle Couchman, Po Family Realty

Milton Curry, Director, Cornell Council for the Arts

Phyllisa DeSarno, Director for Economic Development, City of Ithaca

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With review and comment from the City of Ithaca Planning & Development Board and the Planning & Economic Development Committee of the Common Council

Collegetown Vision Task Force Background

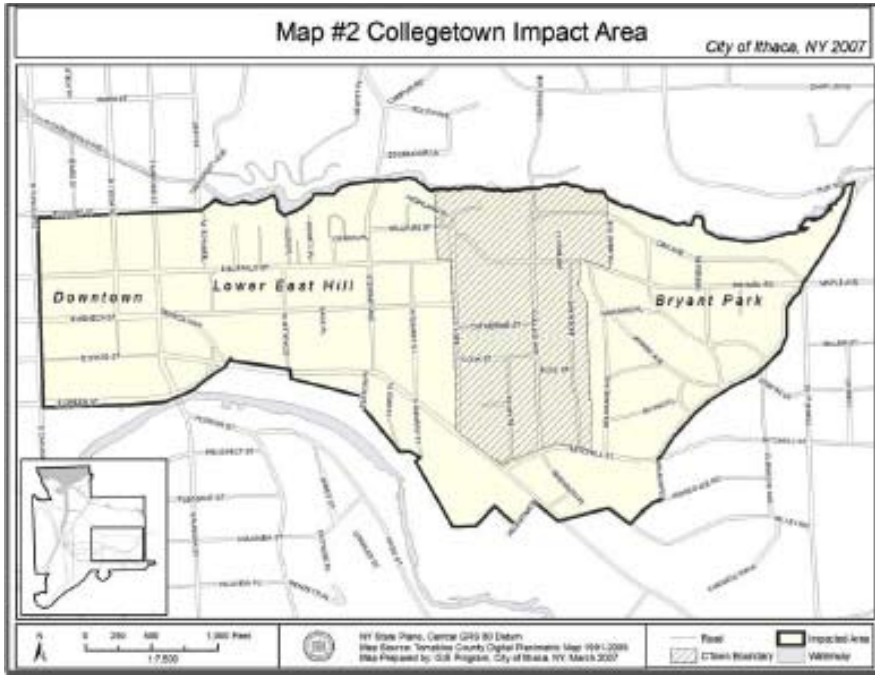
Rapid growth spurred by zoning changes and other city-initiated incentives that were put in place in the mid-1980s has had a generally positive impact on the character of Collegetown, but also has created some less desirable consequences. By the mid-1990s, parties both inside and outside of City Hall, including Common Council representatives, concluded that there was a need to take a new look at Collegetown and its future growth and improvement.

The Cornell University Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) process currently underway acknowledges "Collegetown is where the city meets the campus in highly visible ways and is vital to the Cornell experience." The CMP process identifies both downtown and Collegetown as "opportunity areas" for greater Cornell presence. The university already has taken the first step to establishing a greater presence in downtown with the relocation of its development office from the Cornell Business & Technology Park to the newly completed Seneca Place on the Commons. City officials and the Ithaca Downtown Partnership welcomed the move, recognizing that the addition of a sizeable workforce to the mix of people downtown would be a great benefit to local business. Because of Collegetown's proximity and status as the urban edge of campus, the city and Cornell have a mutual interest in improving Collegetown's image.

In February 2006, with Mayor Carolyn Peterson's support, the Common Council adopted a resolution authorizing the preparation of a vision statement for Collegetown and the establishment of a task force. In April, the Mayor appointed 12 task force members representing city, business, landlord, student, neighborhood, and Cornell University interest groups. The task force selected Fourth-Ward Common Council representative David Gelinas to chair the newly formed Collegetown Vision Task Force.

For purposes of the vision statement, the area considered as Collegetown is roughly bounded on the south by Mitchell Street and East State Street (Rte. 79), on the north by Cascadilla Creek, on the west by Eddy Street but including both east and west sides of the 400 block, and on the east by the rear property lines of the east side of Linden Avenue and by Summit Avenue. (See Map #1: Collegetown Study Area, p. 2.) This boundary encompasses the commercial core of Collegetown and the full lengths of College Avenue and Eddy Street, which have historically been two main thoroughfares leading through Collegetown to the university. The area west of this boundary (along with a number of Eddy Street properties within the study area) is within the East Hill Historic District, while the area to the south and east is within the boundaries of the Bryant Park Civic Association neighborhood. Because land use and its physical manifestation in the Collegetown Study Area affect these neighborhoods and also the downtown commercial district, a broader Collegetown Impact Area has been drawn. (See Map #2: Collegetown Impact Area, p. 3.) Finally, while a more concentrated area has been defined in conjunction with the recommendations for an Urban Plan and Design Guidelines (see Map #3: Collegetown Urban Plan Focus Area, p. 17), it is likely that its boundaries will be reevaluated as work on those recommendations proceeds.

The work of the task force took place over a ten-month period between May 2006 and March 2007. Meetings were held every three weeks at the St. Luke Lutheran Church meeting room in Collegetown. Meeting notices and materials were sent to task force members and to Collegetown merchants, landlords, residents, and other community members who had expressed interest in the project. This list of invitees continued to grow as the work proceeded. The Collegetown Neighborhood Council (CNC) received regular updates throughout the process and sponsored a public forum in September. The CNC's February



2007 meeting consisted of a public presentation of the vision statement. During the course of the task force's work, the Bryant Park Civic Association was reconstituted. In November, that group hosted task force members for a presentation and feedback session in the Belle Sherman School. The task force has benefited from comments expressed by individuals and members of civic groups.

The basis for the Collegetown Vision Statement is an early assessment by task force members of Collegetown's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), a SWOT exercise. In the course of two meetings, the group achieved agreement on a consolidated SWOT document and in the process identified five categories that

shape the current draft statement, Business, Housing & Residential Neighborhoods, Circulation & Parking, Cultural Experience, and Urban Design, which has since been broadened as Urban Plan & Design Guidelines. In addition to the overall vision presented in the following section of the report, a vision is articulated for each of the five categories, along with recommendations for achieving the vision. It is acknowledged that many of the recommendations will require further study and that one of the first steps in implementation should be the establishment of priorities and timelines.

The Collegetown Vision Statement

Goals & Objectives

The primary goal of the Collegetown Vision Statement is to set the course for the creation of an outstanding urban environment that builds on its proximity to the adjacent campus of Cornell University, an institution of importance to the city for its educational and cultural contributions and for its positive impact on the local economy. As such, there is a unique opportunity to create a diverse, commercially viable, dense, mixed-use community characterized by notable urban design, a predominantly student population, high quality architecture, vibrant public spaces, and pedestrian amenities. The vision for residential neighborhoods east of Collegetown includes a population mix of students, longterm residents, families, and owner-occupants that enables all to enjoy a high quality of life. The neighborhood between Collegetown and downtown is a primarily residential historic district that enjoys a unique status as a result of its location between two active commercial areas. This area merits attention in the form of programs or incentives to strengthen both its visual appearance and the resident mix of owner-occupants and student renters. A convenient public transportation system connecting Collegetown and the surrounding neighborhoods to the larger Ithaca community is one of several strategies aimed at reducing car traffic in Collegetown and enhancing the environment for pedestrians.

Collegetown Strenghts & Weaknesses

Strengths:

(1) The youth and diversity of student residents imparts an exciting, vibrant, urban quality that uniquely characterizes Collegetown. Collegetown's high-density population includes a racial, ethnic, and cultural mix that is unique in Tompkins County.

(2) Collegetown supports a number of successful long-standing businesses and continues to stimulate new business development. The high demand for commercial space in Collegetown results in rents that are twice as high as those for comparable downtown space. Strong demand also drives up the price of real estate, which is by far the highest in the area. As is typical of such real estate markets, the anticipation of high demand and the perceived prospects for such is another factor inflating the price of rent and real estate.

(3) Collegetown supports a strong food and beverage sector that provides customers wide choices in terms of ethnic cuisines and dining styles. Collegetown restaurants draw customers not only from the student population but also from the surrounding neighborhoods, the citywide population, Cornell faculty and employees, parents, and other visitors to Ithaca.

(4) Demand for student housing in Collegetown has been consistently strong. The student housing that was developed beginning in the mid-1980s has created a dense, urban character on the lower blocks of Dryden Road and the northern section of College Avenue. Most of the market-driven housing developed in Collegetown over the past 15 years has been targeted to undergraduate students. Overall, this concentration of student housing in the Collegetown core has been good

for student renters who have demonstrated a preference for living in the midst of a student community in close proximity to the university campus.

(5) The surrounding residential neighborhoods of Bryant Park, Belle Sherman, and East Hill include a mix of student renters and owner-occupants. While existing zoning accommodates student renters, the neighborhoods are valued for the opportunity provided to homeowners and families:
- to make a relatively secure investment in property
- to enable Cornell faculty and employees to walk from home to work
- to live in long-established and safe neighborhoods with a high quality of life.

The stability of these neighborhoods and their ability to attract long-term residents is important to Collegetown, the city, and the university.

(6) Recent new development on the east side of College Avenue's 400 block is a striking example of excellence in architectural design within an existing urban context.

(7) The Collegetown Vision Task Force recognizes that Collegetown's greatest strength is its proximity to and interrelationship with the university. Engaging the university in a shared revitalization effort brings opportunities and resources to improve Collegetown's physical context; to promote greater cultural, artistic, academic, and social connections between the campus and Collegetown; to strengthen the business district; to accommodate the pedestrian experience; and to protect and enhance the quality of life in the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Weaknesses:

(1) Insufficient attention has been given to the design and quality of the Collegetown environment during the redevelopment of the later 1980s and 1990s. Tall buildings and steep slopes have created a canyon-like quality along Dryden Road and impinge on historic views of downtown, the valley to the south and over Cayuga Lake. In other cases, architectural design is lackluster, and buildings that do not relate well to the sidewalk or street hamper pedestrian mobility.

(2) Collegetown is not especially pedestrian or bicycle friendly. In spite of the enormous amount of foot traffic, sidewalks are narrow, uneven, and often in deteriorated condition. Cyclists are discouraged by poor road conditions and lack of amenities such as bicycle racks. Limited capacity for motor vehicle traffic and transit also compromises the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

(3) Spaces for public gathering are limited. Existing space, such as the area in front of the Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts (aka PAC) and the area between the PAC and Sheldon Court could be improved to encourage greater public use. As is, the PAC presents an unwelcoming façade that drains energy and interest from the street. In contrast, the plaza adjacent to Collegetown Bagels is a popular meeting spot and an asset to the neighborhood. In addition, there is very little green space in Collegetown. Dryden Road Park is the only designated city park in the Collegetown area, and its topography limits many active public uses.

(4) The Collegetown business district does not fulfill its potential. Task force members identified the following deficiencies:
- the retail mix is limited
- a major segment of the potential customer base is tied to the university's academic
- schedule
- cohesive marketing and retail strategies are lacking
- attention to the physical environment is inadequate
- there is little to attract non-student neighborhood residents.

(5) The Collegetown parking shortage, both the perception and the reality has been a long-

standing problem for residents, businesses, employees, and visitors alike. As stated in the Collegetown Parking Study, prepared in 2000 by the City of Ithaca Department of Planning and Development, car-ownership rates in Collegetown are high when compared with other areas of the city and produce a correspondingly high demand for parking spaces. On the other hand, metered parking just outside the commercial core is underutilized. Still, the general impression that it's very difficult to park in Collegetown is a deterrent to businesses and visitors. Other negative effects of the parking shortage include blocked access due to illegal parking and the excessive paving of available green space and rear yards in the residential neighborhoods.

(6) Property stewardship and maintenance have a great effect on the visual character of Collegetown. Prime sites at the southeast and southwest corners of Dryden Road and College Avenue are underutilized and "deaden" the streetscape. High pedestrian traffic in Collegetown demands greater attention to design and maintenance of the public infrastructure - streets, sidewalks, street furniture, lighting, etc. Residents in adjacent neighborhoods are deterred from frequenting Collegetown by the trash, broken glass, and the poor condition of streets and sidewalks.

Business

The Vision

Integral to the Collegetown vision is a thriving business district, supported by and benefiting students, neighborhoods, Cornell employees, the City of Ithaca, area tourism, and Cornell University. Collegetown has the greatest undergraduate population density and racial, cultural, and ethnic mix of any area in Tompkins County. An objective of the vision is to diversify further the population to include a greater number of employees and residents whose presence is not dependent on the university's academic schedule and who could support Collegetown business when students are gone. A population that mixes other age groups or family households also could create demand and support for a greater variety of retail offerings.

Challenges:

(1) Collegetown businesses are largely dependent on the patronage of the Cornell community and principally the student population. Many businesses struggle during sustained breaks in the academic year, especially over the winter and summer. The challenge for Collegetown is to diversify its customer base to promote year-round business activity.

(2) The variety of retail offerings is limited. Long-term residents in neighborhoods adjacent to Collegetown want to see retail businesses that serve neighborhood needs, for example a grocery store or drug store.

(3) Although high rents for many Collegetown retail locations can be viewed as an indicator of strong demand, there are currently a number of empty street level retail spaces. Perhaps more significantly, the vacancies are in key locations such as the intersection of College Avenue and Dryden Road. There could be a variety of reasons for the vacancies, such as inflated rents, square footage, location, or other inadequacies of the vacant space or potential development projects "in play". Successful business recruitment will require a better understanding of the reasons for vacancies in Collegetown.

(4) There is currently little coordination or consistency among Collegetown business owners regarding business planning, recruitment, marketing, or the maintenance of public infrastructure in the business district.

Without focused and sustained attention it is unlikely that business owners, already fully occupied with management of their own enterprises, could provide all the energy needed to renew the greater Collegetown business district.

Recommendations:

(1) Support the organization of a merchant group. Working under the direction of Collegetown business owners, the City of Ithaca's Department of Planning and Development should seek funding to engage a professional consultant familiar with offcampus college retail to conduct a market study. The study would assess what type of retail or commercial activity makes sense for Collegetown and related issues such as the reasons for vacant retail space.

The market study could inform merchants and property owners about the benefits and drawbacks of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID), similar to and possibly connected with the city's existing BID, the Ithaca Downtown Partnership. A merchant organization could provide vision, coordination, and oversight of a cohesive strategy for strengthening the Collegetown business sector. Supported by the city and business owners, and working solely for them, the BID could be an effective mechanism for taking on the challenges confronting Collegetown businesses.

The following information would be useful to the efforts of merchants formulating a business development policy for this area of the city:

- A list of businesses and business owners currently operating in Collegetown. How many own the building housing their business? What, if any, is the correlation between property ownership and business success?
- Precise information on retail vacancy rates. What are the factors affecting vacancy: high taxes? high rents? seasonal population? insufficient parking? difficulty of deliveries? challenges of small businesses to gain purchasing power?
- A survey and/or focus group with students to learn about what does or does not draw them to Collegetown. Identify student impact on retail and restaurant business. What, for example, are the impacts of internet shopping, on campus businesses, etc?

(2) Recruit additional office uses. Additional office and administrative uses would broaden the retail customer base with people who work in Collegetown whether or not Cornell is in session. The non-student population has the potential to sustain Collegetown during breaks in the academic calendar. Increasing office uses in Collegetown would not only add to the number of people but also generate a greater mix of ages and lifestyles – in other words, a diverse population to support greater variety of retail business. In 1982, The Collegetown Development Program, prepared by The American City Corporation, showed that Collegetown could support an increase from 60,000 to 80,000 square feet of new office space. This amount of new office space was never realized and the earlier estimate has almost certainly increased in 24 years. The most desirable service businesses or office uses would be those that in some way relate to the university, such as academic support uses, administrative offices and student or faculty-developed "spin-off" businesses. The Collegetown location is naturally advantageous for these types of businesses and focused recruitment of uses associated with the university would reduce competition with The Commons.

(3) Future business expansion, including office uses, should be contained in the area of the Collegetown business district, the B-2b zone,

until the city has adopted an urban plan for the area and established urban design guidelines. Residents of neighborhoods east of the Collegetown business district view expansion along Dryden Road as a neighborhood intrusion. Analyzing the appropriate density of commercial redevelopment south of the commercial core with reference to possible expansion of the B-2b zone could be included within the scope to be considered by an urban plan team but only with consideration of impacts on livability in adjacent residential neighborhoods.

(4) Recruitment of a strong retail anchor. Like other commercial centers, the Collegetown business district would benefit from the addition of a strong retail anchor, one that caters to students but also markets to a broader segment of the population. In many college towns, the "college" bookstore is located in a commercial area adjacent to the campus and serves the broader community.

(5) Address the Collegetown parking situation. There are multiple issues to be considered in addressing both real and perceived problems with Collegetown parking. Within this mix are the different types of parking, such as on-street, off-street, storage, long term, and short term; the variety of users including students, residents, employees, visitors, and customers; and distances from the user's destination. Efforts to solve parking problems will require an understanding of the complexities and ideally the involvement of the university administration (more about which is discussed in the Circulation & Parking section of this report), but these issues must be addressed if efforts to strengthen the Collegetown business district are to be successful. Office uses, targeted for recruitment in the vision statement, for example, may be especially parking intensive.

(6) Promote Collegetown businesses by taking advantage of existing annual events that occur during the Cornell academic calendar and the Ithaca Downtown Partnership's calendar. Although year-round business would be an extraordinary benefit to Collegetown, the business community could take steps now to increase the current seasonal business and to cushion the financial burden of the off-season months. There is opportunity for the business community to promote special weekends and events related to the academic calendar as well as to link up with planned community events such as:

Fall

New student orientation/welcome weekend
Homecoming/home football games
First-year family weekend
Hockey opening weekend/home games
Apple Harvest Weekend
December holiday season

Summer

Ithaca Festival
Alumni Weekend
Cornell Summer Camps

Spring

Student arrival in January
Greek Rush Week
Senior Week
Graduation weekend

Other

Outdoor musical/dramatic performances
Art shows and installations
Placement of kiosks in Collegetown dedicated to announcements of Collegetown events and the erection of banners would provide notice, heighten anticipation, and promote a festive environment. Kiosks located in proximity to bus shelters could also include information about the public transit and the shuttle bus routes.

(7) Collegetown Pamphlet/Map. Collegetown businesses would benefit from a pamphlet or brochure that includes a map and list of

Collegetown businesses, possible advertisements, and other information. The map could be made available at all Collegetown businesses, to assist the many customers who enter businesses looking for something or someplace.

(8) Strengthen the relationship between Collegetown and the downtown business districts. Task force discussion has addressed this recommendation by reference to rehabilitation of the East Hill residential area between downtown and Collegetown to increase its attraction to families and owner-occupants. If established, a BID or other merchant organization could initiate a formal or informal relationship with Ithaca's downtown BID, the Ithaca Downtown Partnership. A third suggestion is to create a physical link with something as simple as pedestrian scale lighting on East Buffalo, East Seneca, or East State Streets.

(9) Property stewardship and maintenance. The city in partnership with the university, major landlords, and business owners could develop a campaign for involvement of the Collegetown population in controlling trash in Collegetown. The city should reconsider the effectiveness of current property maintenance regulations and their enforcement.

Further Considerations:

(1) New development must generate revenue for the city. The city cannot afford to allow additional property to be removed from the property tax rolls without compensating revenue, especially given the high value of property in Collegetown.

(2) Zoning regulations, specifically the Collegetown Parking Overlay Zone (CPOZ) and building height restrictions set at 60 feet, have been cited as factors limiting quality mixed-use development attractive to most office tenants.

  (a) Providing on-site parking in the densely developed areas of Collegetown is not often physically possible and in most cases is cost prohibitive for developers. As a result, much recent new development has been permitted only with a variance from the CPOZ regulation.

  (b) The present day standard for height per floor is approximately 15 feet, the optimum for accommodating an open floor plan that maximizes penetration of natural light into the central part of the building, necessary for the direct/indirect pendant lighting systems favored by most office tenants and required to support the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems in the ceiling cavity. The current 60 foot height restriction results in a four-story building that cannot provide the rate of return necessary to encourage new development. Any increase in the allowable height of buildings, even in the B-2b zone, will require careful consideration with regard to views from within Collegetown, from the neighborhoods above, and from the city below. Given that, it may be worth consideration of concessions on a case-by-case basis that would allow greater height to developers who provide alternate benefits such as underground on-site parking, public space set-aside, or workforce housing.

(3) Office space is not an appropriate first floor use in the commercial core. Uses that draw people and generate activity on the street, such as retail or food and beverage establishments should be encouraged or even required by regulation.

Housing & Residential Neighborhoods

The Vision

Collegetown should include a variety of housing choices targeted for household types in addi-

tion to single, undergraduate students, such as graduate student families, Cornell workforce, young professionals, and senior residents. Housing options could include townhouses, co-ops, and condominiums. These additional populations could help sustain the business district at times when the student population decreases thereby encouraging a greater variety of retail options. Redevelopment of some of Collegetown's marginal rental properties to diversify housing choices could have the added benefit of strengthening the visual character of Collegetown.

Challenges:

(1) Since the mid-1980s, most development in Collegetown has been targeted for the undergraduate student market. While this environment is very attractive to most undergrads, the high-density undergraduate student "monoculture" creates a strain on Collegetown businesses when students are gone. In addition, this narrow demographic is unable to support diversification of retail offerings.

(2) There is ongoing tension between the lifestyles of the student population and the quality of life that many long-term residents expect to enjoy in neighborhoods surrounding the Collegetown business district. In recent years Cornell and the city have worked together to reduce heightened conflict at key times, such as the arrival of students in the fall and 'Senior Week' just before graduation. Cornell also supports the Collegetown Neighborhood Council, which helps build student awareness of the existing residential neighborhoods and municipal regulations.

(3) Collegetown supports an extremely dense population that is 95% student in the core area. The density of this small area presents a challenge to the city's ability to provide services such as street cleaning and enforcement of property maintenance regulations to create a clean and attractive environment, much to the frustration of long-term residents.

Recommendations:

(1) Identify sites for development of housing for a population other than undergraduate students. Identify pockets of deteriorated housing in Collegetown for possible redevelopment of housing for the Cornell or Collegetown workforce, graduate student families, faculty, and young professionals.

(2) Research mixed-housing trends in other college towns. In the course of its work, individual task force members have obtained articles on efforts of other college towns to develop housing that would appeal to non-student residents. Research on comparable efforts to diversify college town populations in other areas would be useful in planning strategies to diversify Collegetown.

(3) Work with Cornell University to evaluate the viability of instituting an employer-assisted housing program in Collegetown and in the nearby East Hill Historic District. Many universities offer mortgage assistance programs as a means of competing in the recruitment of highly qualified faculty. Mortgage assistance for another spectrum of the Cornell workforce could help those who cannot afford to live near the university. The high price of Collegetown real estate and existing regulations governing building height and parking make it difficult to provide affordable workforce housing without some form of subsidy. Assistance programs would benefit the university and the city by increasing the numbers of long-term residents, thereby stabilizing neighborhoods surrounding Collegetown. A mortgage-assistance program could be an incentive for reinvestment in housing stock and would build a workforce that is within walking distance of the university.

(4) Protect and enhance the East Hill neighborhoods located south, east, and west of Collegetown. There is a shared interest on the

part of residents, the city and the university to protect and preserve the residential fabric and quality of life that attracts long-term, owner-occupant residents, many of them university faculty and staff, to neighborhoods near the campus. The task force supports work recently initiated by the Planning & Development Board to establish zones that transition from higher to lower, both in scale and density, thereby mitigating some of the adverse impacts of concentrated commercial uses and high-density student residential development nearby. Residents in the Bryant Park and Belle Sherman neighborhoods have cited "walkability" as a key quality-of-life indicator and have called for neighborhood infrastructure improvements that would facilitate connections to and through Collegetown. Lack of attention to maintenance of sidewalks, insufficient number of and poor condition of curb ramps and poor road surface conditions hinders non-motorized transportation modes like walking and biking, and thus makes the neighborhoods less attractive to owner-occupant families. Some of these residents, concerned about cut-through traffic and traffic speeds, want the city to consider a traffic calming program in their neighborhoods.

Circulation & Parking

The Vision

Collegetown traffic should be pedestrian, bicycle, and transit focused. Both physical and programmatic changes should be undertaken to enhance the pedestrian and cyclist's experience and increase the use of public transit. Improvements that encourage use of these transportation modes is a strategy central to reducing the high rates of car-ownership in Collegetown and the ever increasing demand for parking. College Avenue could be remade as 'the great street,' with a more significant portion of its width devoted to pedestrians and cyclists. The demand for cars in Collegetown could be reduced by high-functioning public transit that is convenient, fun, and linked to places students want to go. A car-sharing program also could reduce student demand for cars. Establishment of storage parking located outside the core and serviced by shuttle and late night service "on demand" could meet the short-term parking needs of Collegetown employees as well as the long-term needs of students who don't use their cars on a daily basis.

Challenges:

(1) A multi-pronged strategy is needed to assess the real and perceived parking problems, manage the current demand, and achieve reduction of future demand.

(2) The Dryden Road - College Avenue intersection is one of the busiest in the city. The confluence of the high volume of pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic, coupled with a heavily used transit stop, produces congestion and sometimes dangerous conditions. There are similar problems with the intersections of College and Oak Avenues and of Dryden Road and Eddy Street.

(3) Due to the combination of narrow streets, challenging topography, volume of pedestrians, and a variety of transportation modes, emergency vehicle access is already a problem in Collegetown. Redesign of the street and sidewalk to accommodate pedestrians could also adversely impact access for emergency service vehicles.

(4) There are concerns for the safety of students who return to Collegetown from the campus or who walk to storage parking at late night hours. Programs in place such as Cornell's "blue-light" program do not meet the needs of all students and anecdotal evidence indicates that students are not inclined to pre-schedule their transportation needs, so late night transit or escort service must be flexible.

Recommendations:

(1) Conduct a transportation study with a focus on accommodating pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit and reducing the demand for cars. The existing high-volume pedestrian traffic justifies an effort by the city to explore design and infrastructure improvements that would provide an optimum pedestrian experience, encourage bicycle use and enhance public transit service. Consistent with the vision statement the study would look at the general service levels of existing transportation systems and mitigation of negative impacts of all transportation modes. Examples of specific areas of interest are the establishment of an Ithaca Carshare pod in Collegetown, safety at the intersection of Dryden Road and College Avenue, and traffic calming treatments in nearby neighborhoods.

(2) Update the Collegetown Parking Study (July 2000), prepared by Jessica Greig for the City's Department of Planning and Development, either as a component of the transportation study or as a companion document. It has been noted elsewhere in this vision statement that there is general perception of a serious shortage of parking in Collegetown that is a deterrent to visitors, customers and business owners and developers. However, this is a blanket impression that doesn't differentiate among onstreet, off-street, long term, short term or storage parking or the variety of users and user needs. One can typically find daytime metered parking in increasing amounts as one travels south along College Avenue, yet these metered spaces don't meet the needs of employees who park for 4-8 hours a day, don't meet the needs of students for long-term storage and are not conveniently located for customers who want to complete their retail business quickly. In addition, Greig's report presents a number of ideas for reducing high rates of car ownership in Collegetown, some of which have been implemented and others that merit fresh consideration.

The updated report should include an assessment of the quality and quantity of all types of parking, different user needs, location of parking and impacts of parking on the movement of pedestrians and cyclists, as well as reducing the high rates of car ownership in Collegetown. A basic concept of the vision statement is that the university and the city will share the benefit of a healthy Collegetown environment, one that is currently constrained by real and perceived parking deficiencies. Task force members recognized that resolving/reducing the parking problems will require an integrated strategy achieved with collaboration between the city and the university.

(3) Redesign College Avenue as the "great street." College Avenue is an historic gateway to the university campus and remains an important access route today. Collegetown is unique in that it's the only urban interface with the campus. The significance of these attributes in combination with the pedestrian focus of the vision provides a rationale for the concept of redesigning College Avenue as the "great street." Ideas for the "great street" include:

- removal of on-street parking on the 400 block allowing greater sidewalk width, greater opportunities for outdoor seating,
- closure of the 400 block to traffic for special events and celebrations
- signing the street as a neighborhood destination and Cornell gateway, placement of street banners in the commercial area
- streetscape improvements and enhanced public transit facilities
- kiosks for posting public notices.

4) Evaluate feasibility of creating additional parking in Collegetown and storage parking outside the Collegetown core area. Possibilities for additional parking could include

adding to the existing Dryden Road garage or constructing a new garage. A benefit improvement district could help support development of additional public parking.

Provision of storage parking allows existing on-street parking to be limited to short-term use for deliveries and public transit. Storage parking would have to be conveniently located and with regular transit service.

(5) Re-evaluate the residential parking permit system. Assess the viability of program expansion to take stress off the surrounding neighborhoods.

Further Considerations:

Proposals for physical changes to streets or sidewalks would require the following considerations:

- How would this affect the needs of emergency service providers such as the Ithaca Fire Department and Bangs Ambulance?
- What would be the visual impacts of such change?
- What are the cost/funding implications and opportunities?
- What would be the effect on the business community?

Cultural Experience

The Vision

There is opportunity in Collegetown to enhance the urban environment by merging the abundant art and cultural programs on the campus and in the community with the street life in Collegetown's business district. An example is the recent sculpture installation, sponsored by the Cornell Council for the Arts and located between the Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts (PAC) and Sheldon Court, which has received much attention. In an area with so much foot traffic, public spaces, new or reclaimed, are of special value in providing venues for public art, performance and public gathering.

There is opportunity to raise awareness and appreciation of Collegetown's history by highlighting older buildings, structures, and other remnants that recall its development. The Cascadilla Creek Gorge is a dramatic natural feature that with better integration can impart a unique and picturesque quality to the overall Collegetown landscape. Similarly, sweeping views and vistas to the south, west, and north merit attention when considering siting of proposed development projects.

Performance, art, interpretation of natural and cultural resources, and the opportunity for public gathering would enhance the Collegetown community. It would draw people to the street, benefit local retail business, strengthen the character of Collegetown, and by extension, the city and the university.

Recommendations:

(1) The Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts (PAC) should be leveraged as a major cultural institution that, with proper planning and promotion, can attract a great number of students and non-students to Collegetown and its businesses. As a premier venue for Cornell performing arts, it should be showcased within the context of a revitalized Collegetown. Despite the attention to its architectural design, its unwelcoming and uninviting expression at the street level limits its contribution to the vitality of the Collegetown streetscape. Any future establishment of a merchant group should include representation from the PAC.

(2) Identification, rehabilitation, and interpretation of historic, architectural, and natural resources should be included in the scope of the urban plan. The East Hill Historic District, including the Eddy Gate, is a designated historic resource. Deferred maintenance of the Eddy Gate and immediate surroundings diminishes its considerable symbolic

value as a historic and urban entrance to Cornell. Similarly, the Cascadilla "walk," extending from Eddy Gate east along the edge of the Cascadilla Gorge to the College Avenue bridge, and giving access to the Cascadilla Glen Trail, is an outstanding feature that highlights the dramatic, picturesque quality of the Collegetown landscape. In its current neglected condition its contribution to the visual character of Collegetown and its desirability as a route of pedestrian travel is limited.

In addition to the designated historic resources, there are other properties and areas that punctuate the story of Collegetown's historical development. Interpretation of this story, possibly with markers, signs, literature, or other means, will add interest and depth to the Collegetown experience for students, other residents, and visitors.

(3) A Cornell campus information center located in Collegetown would accommodate a great need not only for visitors but also for local residents unfamiliar with the campus and what it offers to the Ithaca community. Whether the center takes the form of a kiosk with maps and information or is a branch of a central visitor's center located elsewhere, such a facility would be an attraction in line with other recommendations of the vision statement.

Urban Plan & Design Guidelines

The Vision

The urban plan knits together the various roles attached to Collegetown, such as a densely populated, multicultural, high-energy student environment; a destination for prospective students, their families, prospective faculty and visiting scholars from around the world; an historic gateway to Cornell, symbolized by the historic Eddy Gate; and a vibrant, 24/7, year-round, and mixed-use district.

Some of the more prominent components of the vision statement that should serve as points of reference for Collegetown's urban plan include:

Business

- architectural form that accommodates desirable mixed-uses, including upper story office use
- first floor retail uses to promote street activity
- strengthening the relationship and linkage between Collegetown, Cornell University and the downtown business community

Housing & Residential Neighborhoods

- protection of East Hill neighborhoods located south, east, and west of Collegetown from the adverse impacts of the commercial and high-density student residential development with areas that transition in both scale and density.
- provision of new housing for a greater mix of household types

Circulation & Parking

- recognition that the pedestrian is the primary user of Collegetown so that private and public redevelopment routinely includes pedestrian accommodations in street design, sidewalk design, and paths of travel
- recognition of the important role played by public transit

Cultural Experience

- well-designed public spaces that provide needed venues for social and cultural experience
- highlighting the area's dramatic geographical and topographical environment and Collegetown's rich and distinct development history

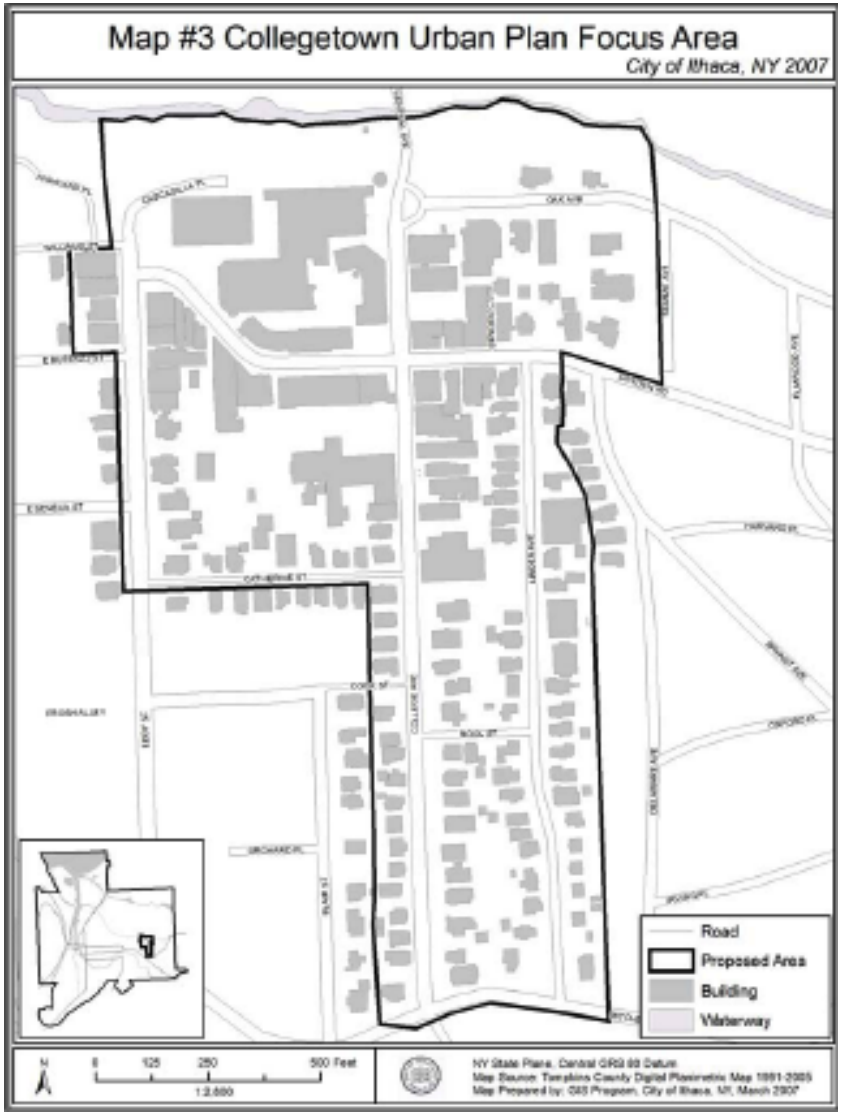
Recommendations:

The City of Ithaca Department of Planning and Development shall oversee a two-step approach to realizing the physical embodiment of the

vision statement: implementing an ideas competition and preparing an urban plan with corresponding urban design guidelines. As an active participant in the visioning process, the planning department and members of the Collegetown Vision Task Force have a full understanding of the vision statement recommendations. The task force recommends that its charge be extended, or a new group with crossover membership be appointed to guide the processes of the ideas competition and the preparation of the urban plan and design guidelines. In order to ensure that the methods to be employed in achieving the vision accurately reflect the task force's work, the city must remain in control of the process. However, because Collegetown is the most prominent entrance to Cornell University and a substantial portion of the Cornell undergraduate population resides in Collegetown, the university and the city have a mutual interest in its urban plan. Thus, the city should actively seek to engage the university during the entire urban planning process and both entities should participate in exploring funding and cost-sharing measures.

1. **Implement an ideas competition for Collegetown**
   As presented to the task force by the Cornell Council for the Arts (CCA), an ideas competition would engage artists and designers across the country in a much-needed dialogue about how to revitalize the Collegetown sector of Ithaca. The concepts outlined in the vision statement will serve as the guiding principles for the competition and for the criteria upon which the competition entries will be judged.

   As demonstrated by other competitions, an ideas competition for Collegetown would have the potential to generate innovative concepts for the improvement to and the treatment of Collegetown that may be outside the scope of a typical urban plan. By leveraging the international name recognition



of Cornell University, a well-publicized and efficiently executed ideas competition has the potential to bring greater attention to Collegetown as an attractive destination and investment opportunity for developers and future business owners. By choosing to conduct an ideas competition prior to embarking on an urban plan and design guidelines, the task force recognizes the advantages gained by addressing the vision statement from a contemporary and artistic vantage point that could then contribute to the outcome of an urban plan. In furthering the level of collaboration between the city and the university, the CCA should be an active participant because of the expertise, leadership, and experience it could bring to the task of organizing and conducting the ideas competition.

The boundaries of the focus area are not intended to limit the area for study nor to dictate or imply future zoning district boundaries.

2. **Creation of an urban plan and design guidelines**

Following on the ideas competition, the development of an urban plan and guidelines employs a more traditional approach to the development of built form, both public and private, with a well-defined scope and a more or less standard set of tools. The urban plan, directed by the vision statement and taking into account the competition's final ideas, could result in an innovative and comprehensive approach to shaping the future of Collegetown.

The area that has been outlined as the focus of the urban plan and design guidelines is bounded on the east by rear lot lines of properties on the east side of Linden Avenue and by Summit Avenue, on the north by Cascadilla Creek, on the west in a southerly direction from Cascadilla Creek along the rear lot lines of properties on the west side of Eddy Street between Williams and Buffalo Street, then southerly along Eddy Street to Catherine Street, then easterly on Catherine Street to the rear lot lines of properties on the west side of College Avenue south to Mitchell Street, and on the south by Mitchell Street. In developing the plan and guidelines, however, it is anticipated that these boundaries will be reevaluated, and that consideration will also be given to surrounding neighborhoods and downtown. A review of existing zoning should be included within the scope of the urban plan to insure that zoning is consistent with the plan and, if not, to recommend changes prior to the preparation of design guidelines.

The design guidelines would be binding, incorporated into the municipal code and coordinated with anticipated design guidelines for other areas of the city. The guidelines would include but not be limited to items such as:

- gateway treatments
- building height, massing, form, fenestration, exterior materials, color, and orientation
- design and layout of College Avenue as the "great street"
- pedestrian amenities
- traffic calming devices
- protection of long-term residential neighborhoods with transition areas to mitigate effects of high density development in the Collegetown core
- strengthen the visual and thematic links between Collegetown and downtown.