

January 2019

Pittsford

Active Transportation Plan

Executive Summary



The Town & Village Moving Together



“There’s no machine known that is more efficient than a human on a bicycle. Bowl of oatmeal, 30 miles — you can’t come close to that.”

Bill Nye

Science Educator & Mechanical Engineer

Plan Support by the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC)

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Acknowledgments

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Introduction

Pittsford values active transportation. From the bustling canal path at Schoen Place to the picturesque hills nestled along Clover Street, people choose to walk and bike throughout the community. Building on this strong legacy of the past and present, the Pittsford Active Transportation Plan aims to develop a thorough strategy to guide the future of active transportation in both the Town and Village.

Since 1975, the Town of Pittsford's growth has been guided by a Comprehensive Plan that focused on preservation of open space, farmland, and neighborhood character. The 1993 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed to guide the Town on sidewalk and trail priorities, which it has made an important component of capital improvements.



*Recreational cycling is a common activity in the community.
Photo by Town of Pittsford.*

The Village has also emphasized the importance of maintaining and improving walkability throughout the Village, which is evident not only in its planning efforts but in the development of its streets and crosswalks.

Although active transportation has always been important to Pittsford it lacked an overall vision and coordination. This Plan provides a broad-based vision for a cohesive bicycle and pedestrian network and provides recommendations that build on the extensive work the Town and the Village have completed.

Benefits of Active Transportation

“Active transportation” refers to human-powered mobility, primarily walking and biking. It can affect both a community and an individual in profound ways. The promotion of active transportation is important to the Pittsford community, as evidenced by its past work in providing places to bike and walk. There are significant benefits of active transportation in regard to the economy, health, the environment, and in consideration of social and human safety.

Economic

Although active transportation is often only associated with health benefits, it is important to recognize the economic benefits. The development of active transportation systems provides an opportunity for people to make affordable mobility choices. At the community level, active transportation networks offer high return on investment for a community. For example, the building of a multi-use trail could divert traffic from a road at a far lower cost than that of a road capacity increase. Other economic benefits include:

- Active transportation allows people to save money by decreasing or eliminating the cost of car ownership or use. Bicycling is very affordable and walking is free.
- By decreasing automobile trips, there is less damage to roads and traffic congestion. This decreases the need for expensive maintenance and capacity-building projects.
- All other things being equal, communities with active transportation networks are generally more desirable than those without. Furthermore, the 2015 National Community and Transportation Preference Survey

conducted by the National Association of Realtors found that millennials, those aged 18–34, prefer walking as a mode of transportation by 12 percentage points over driving.

- Trails and sidewalks in close proximity to residential areas have shown to increase property values.

Health

Active transportation offers many benefits to the health of individuals who choose to incorporate it into their lives. Although the infrastructure improvements or policy changes do not directly make people healthier, they facilitate healthy choices. An important strength of active transportation investments are their versatility. For example, the installation of a new sidewalk may allow one person to walk to work (transportation) and another to achieve needed exercise (recreation). Some of the health benefits linked to active transportation include:

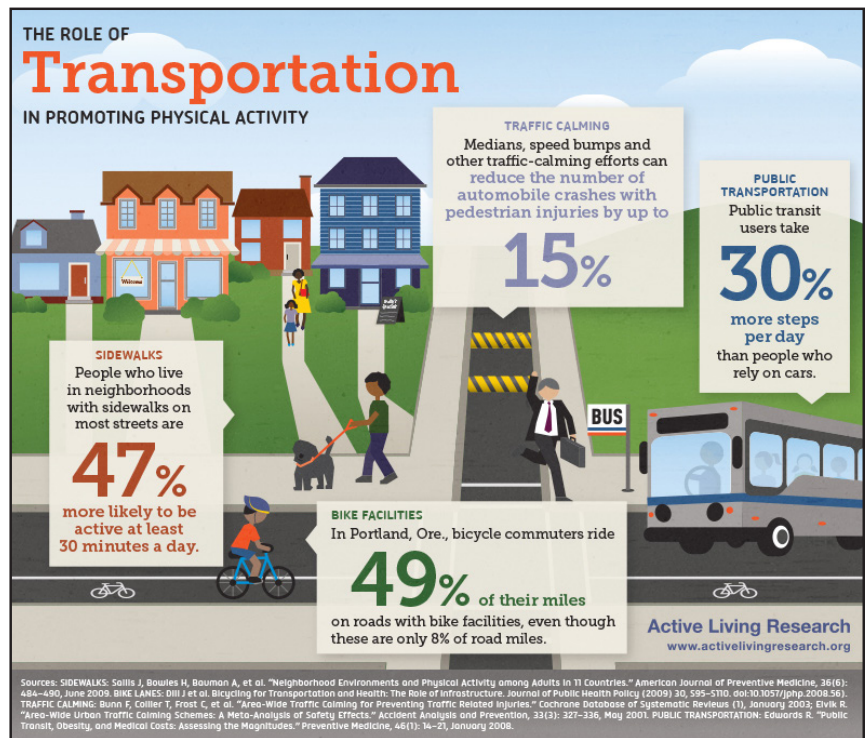
- Reduced risk of depression, heart disease and pollution-triggered respiratory health problems
- Increased energy levels
- Stress reduction

Environmental

Active transportation is a fundamental tool to mitigate threats to human life. The connections between automobile emissions, air pollution and climate change are clear. In 2013, greenhouse gas emissions from transportation accounted for about 27% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Communities without active transportation choices contribute to these issues at a high level.

Other environmental benefits to active transportation include:

- Reduces use of fossil fuels
- Promotes the conservation of sensitive natural features (e.g. trails and open space)



Social & Safety

Transportation networks have a large impact on human behavior. People both young and old, rich or poor depend on the same networks. Generally, communities with developed active transportation systems experience reductions in many of the negative aspects of auto-oriented communities. By providing alternatives to the use of an automobile, the following benefits may be achieved:

- Increased opportunity for social interaction
- Increased “eyes on the street” to deter crime and promote a quicker response to emergencies
- Increased social mobility through affordable mobility options

Although Pittsford is a relatively affluent community, the growing population of seniors and existing youth population represent a demand for active transportation. Further, the Town is an important employment and retail center for the Rochester area. These conditions represent a need for planning enhanced mobility approaches in the community.

Community's Vision & Goals

The following visions and goals are intended to guide the efforts of the Town and Village over the next decade. They are based upon the recommendations gleaned from previous plans and studies, the input provided by the Steering Committee, and the input received at the community workshops.

Village Vision

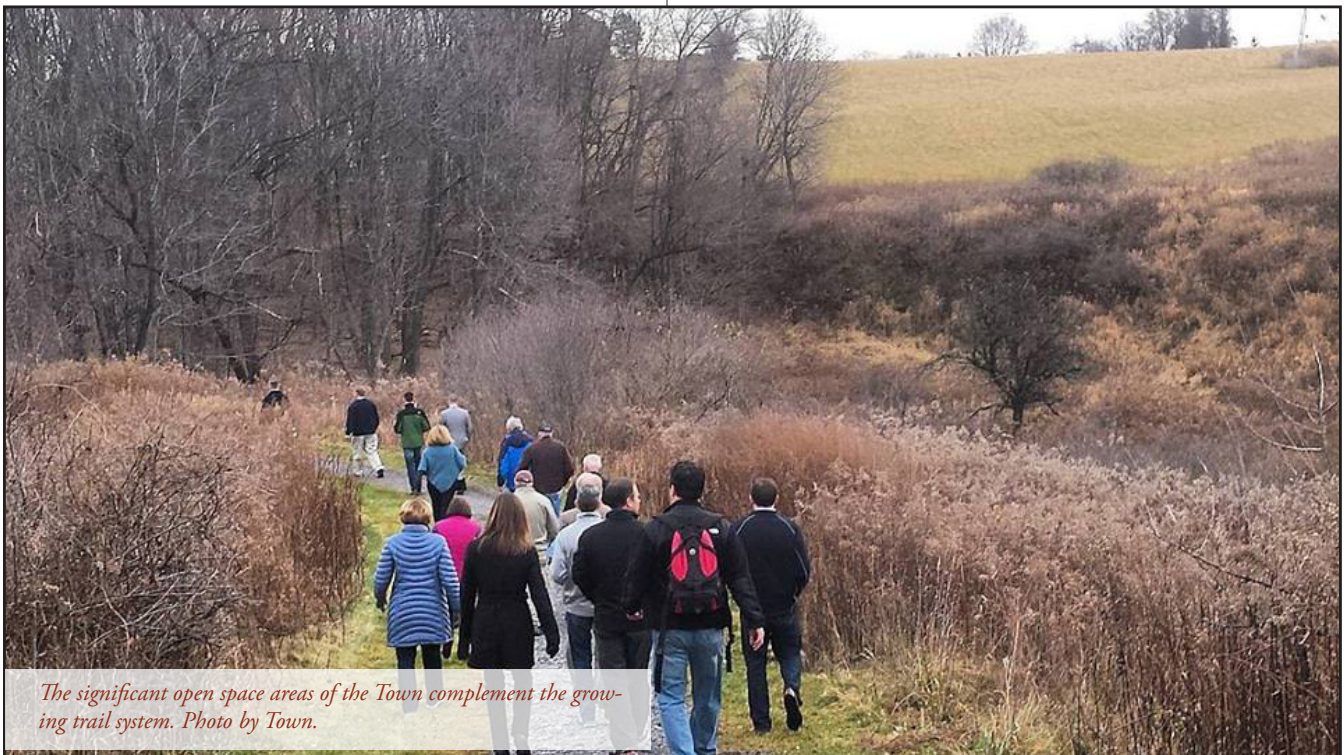
The Village's traditional development pattern, historic architecture, and tree-lined streetscapes, combined with the Canal Path and sidewalk network creates one of the most walkable environments in the region. However, we acknowledge that the accommodations and comfort experienced by bicyclists in the Village is not on the same level as the pedestrian experience our residents and visitors enjoy. It is our vision to aggressively pursue enhancements within and adjacent to the Village that create a sense-of-place and an unparalleled level of service for walkers and bicyclists.

Town Vision

Over the past three decades, the Town has been actively developing a system of trail segments and open spaces throughout the southern portion of Pittsford. The cumulative result is a series of transportation segments and public amenities in close proximity to neighborhoods, parks, and schools. Over the next decade, we will work to connect these resources to form a more interconnected multi-modal network that can be used for recreation and transportation purposes, while also partnering with the Village to improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists between the Town and the Villages.



Despite challenges to bicycling in the Village, it is already a common activity. This Plan will consider improvements to Village bicycling.



The significant open space areas of the Town complement the growing trail system. Photo by Town.

Community Transportation Goals

1. Create a bicycle and pedestrian transportation network that connects neighborhoods, commercial areas, and community uses located in the Town and Villages of Pittsford and East Rochester.
2. Provide an area around the Villages that slows incoming traffic and notifies motorists that they are entering an area with a large number of pedestrians and bicyclists.
3. Create a multi-modal transportation network that connects the southern portion of the Town to the Village of Pittsford and the commercial destinations along Monroe Avenue.
4. Foster a network and culture that makes commuting on foot or by bicycle a viable travel option.
5. Increase driver and community awareness of pedestrians and bicyclists in a manner that positively impacts the behavior of motorists.



Planning Process

The planning process included committee guidance, community input exercises, and broad areas of research by the consultant team. The overall intent of the planning process was to promote a dialogue between the different groups and allow the wants and needs of the community to be addressed. To guide the development of the Plan, a Steering Committee formed and was responsible for providing preliminary Plan direction and on-going review. The Committee included Town and Village officials and residents and representatives from other agencies including NYSDOT, RGRTA, GTC, and Monroe County.

Recommendations

Overview

A variety of strategies could be used to enhance the bicycle and pedestrian environment in Pittsford. When applied strategically throughout the community, the result is a cohesive network where pedestrians and bicyclists can feel safe and can reliably use walking and bicycling as a mode of transportation. While infrastructure is important in efforts to increase active transportation, these projects alone only have a limited impact. However, when infrastructure improvements are combined with programs to educate and encourage, and policies to enforce and support, a community can truly become walkable and bikable.

The following chapter will describe different types of pedestrian and bicycle treatments and the locations where they are recommended within the Town and Village of Pittsford, as well as program and policy recommendations to support those improvements.

1. Catalog of Active Transportation Strategies
2. Town of Pittsford Recommendations
3. Village of Pittsford Recommendations
4. Town & Village Recommendations
5. Program and Policy Recommendations
6. Creating a Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Culture



Pedestrian on the Erie Canal Heritage Trail.

Catalog of Active Transportation Strategies

The following pages identify strategies that can be used to improve the pedestrian network, provide traffic calming, modify the bicycle network, and expand the trail system. In each category you will find generalized descriptions of recommended improvements, as well as a list of additional strategies that might be appropriate in the future.

Pedestrian Network

Sidewalks & Connectivity

Sidewalks are the backbone of the pedestrian network. These pedestrian lanes provide users with space to travel within the public right-of-way while remaining separated from vehicles in the roadway. Sidewalks are a vital facility when striving to maximize pedestrian safety. Sidewalks provide access to the community to users of all ages. Children, in particular, use sidewalks to walk, ride bikes, and play. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends a five foot minimum width for sidewalks in order to allow two people to pass comfortably or walk side-by-side.

Sidewalks are most useful when they connect to other sidewalks and useful destinations. To make safe and efficient connections, a sidewalk network requires intersection crossing treatments and mid-block crossing treatments.

Pedestrian Intersection Crossing Treatments

Street crossings are points of conflict between vehicle and pedestrian traffic. To ensure that pedestrians are visible and safe at intersections, the following treatments are recommended:

ADA Compliant Curb Ramps

The ADA requires curb ramps to provide an accessible and safe transition, from a roadway to a sidewalk, for every person. Proper curb ramps are the safest way for a person using a wheelchair to transition from a crosswalk to a sidewalk. Curb ramps must be designed to meet ADA design standards for width, slope, cross slope, placement, and other features.

High-Visibility Crosswalks

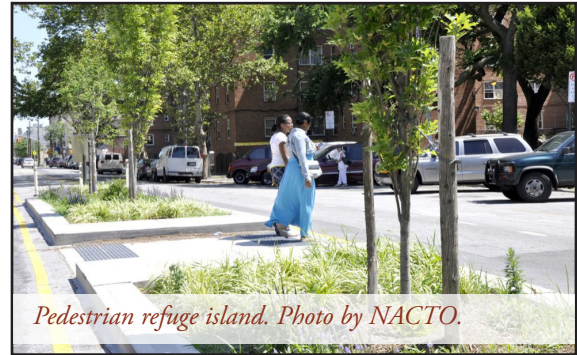
Crosswalks that have a high level of visibility help pedestrians feel more comfortable and improve safety for both pedestrians. The installation of highly visible crosswalks increases the likelihood that drivers will see pedestrians crossing. Examples of high-visibility crosswalks include those with a ladder design, continental design, or diagonal markings. Additionally, crosswalks become more visible as their width increases.



High-visibility crosswalk. Photo by NACTO.

Pedestrian Refuge Islands

A pedestrian refuge island is one that creates a protected space in the median or center of a street to assist bicycle and pedestrian crossings. Two-way streets with more than two lanes can be difficult for both bicyclists and pedestrians to cross. The construction of a pedestrian refuge island allows people to wait for vehicle traffic to dissipate from a protected gap in the median.



Pedestrian refuge island. Photo by NACTO.

Curb Extensions

Curb extensions are traffic calming devices that physically narrow the roadway, while also giving the appearance of a much narrower roadway. They can create shorter crossings for pedestrians and also reduce vehicle speeds leading to a safer environment for both drivers and pedestrians.

Curb Radii

Reducing corner radii of intersection curbs forces vehicles to slow down. As a corner curb's radius increases, the ease and speed that vehicles turn also increases. Additionally, a longer curb radius creates longer crossing distances for pedestrians. The combination of higher vehicle speeds, easier turns for drivers, and longer crossing distances for pedestrians make for an unsafe and uncomfortable pedestrian environment.

Traffic Signals

Signalizing busy intersections can help to control the flow of traffic and provide sufficient time for safe and efficient pedestrian crossings. Signals are the highest form of traffic control and must be installed at appropriate locations in order to improve pedestrian safety. Signals are most effective for pedestrians when used in combination with marked crosswalks, pedestrian signal heads, curb ramps, and stop bars for vehicles.

Other Treatments

In addition to the recommended strategies described in this section, other pedestrian intersection crossing treatments exist that may be appropriate for Pittsford in the future. These include:

- Traffic signal timing;
- Audible pedestrian signals;
- Pedestrian countdown heads;
- Leading pedestrian intervals; and
- Advance stop lines.

Pedestrian Mid-Block Crossing Treatments

In some areas of Pittsford, intersection crossings are a great distance apart. Mid-block crossing treatments can be used in select locations to help pedestrians safely cross the roadway.

In-Street Yield to Pedestrian Sign

An in-street sign can be placed in a roadway to alert drivers to stop or yield for pedestrians thereby improving safety for crossing pedestrians. These signs can either be permanently mounted on the roadway or can be mounted on a portable base and used as needed. They can also include flashing lights.

Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon



A rectangular rapid flash beacon (RRFB) is used primarily to reduce incidents between vehicles and pedestrians. RRFBs have user-activated lights to warn drivers of crossing pedestrians at non-signalized intersections and mid-block crosswalks. They can also be activated by pedestrian movement through video or infrared detection.

Other Treatments

In addition to the recommended strategies described in this section, other pedestrian mid-block crossing treatments exist that may be appropriate for Pittsford in the future. These include:

- Advance yield lines;
- Hawk signals; and
- Tactile yield cues.

Traffic Calming

Traffic Calming Strategies

Traffic speed is an issue that many communities must address to keep residents safe. High vehicle speeds impact bicyclists who try to share the roadway, as well as pedestrian safety, vehicle safety and neighborhood quality of life. A number of strategies can be used to calm traffic. The most success will result from using a combination of traffic calming strategies.

Speed Bumps

A speed bump is a raised surface in the roadway that forces drivers to slow down. They generally have a height between 3-6 inches and are between 1-3 feet in length along the road. Speed bumps are not typically used in well-traveled roadways and are often limited to parking lots, apartment



complexes, low-volume private and residential streets, and driveways.

Speed Humps

Unlike speed bumps, speed humps are longer and tend to be lower to the roadway. Humps can have a rounded or flat top, and the shape may depend on the length of the speed hump. Flat-topped humps are also referred to as “speed tables.” While both speed bumps and speed humps can be difficult for bicyclists to overcome, both can be designed with cuts at the side to allow for easy passage for riders. Multiple bumps or humps are needed at intervals of 300 to 600 feet apart to achieve lower vehicle speeds for an entire roadway.

Textured/Color Contrasted Paving

Textured or color contrasted pavement gives drivers tactile and audible cues within a traffic-calmed area. If the colors and textures of shoulders, crosswalks, or bicycle facilities contrast with those along the roadway, it will keep drivers alert and in vehicle traffic lanes. Using different textures and colors in paving will also remind drivers that they are in a traffic-restricted or traffic-calmed zone. Textured and color contrasting surfaces are often used in conjunction with one or more other traffic-calming devices.



Restriping

Restriping the roadway in order to narrow lanes is a less disruptive method of traffic calming. It requires far less construction or work on the actual roadway and also is more accommodating of emergency vehicles because they do not have to adjust to physical changes to a roadway. Roadway restriping allows for a narrower roadway with more shoulder room for bicycle or multi-use facilities. Additionally, roadway restriping can be implemented quickly and at low cost.

On-Street Parking

Creating a wider shoulder to allow for parallel on-street parking can greatly reduce vehicle speeds on a roadway. On-street parking lanes represent a physical barrier that clearly delineates the width of the street for drivers.

Speed Limit

The most effective way to reduce speeds is through traffic calming measures aimed at reducing operating speeds. Associate speed limit reductions are likely to follow.

Other Treatments

In addition to the recommended strategies described in this section, other traffic calming strategies exist that may be appropriate for Pittsford in the future. These include:

- Traffic Circles;
- Chicanes;
- Chokers; and
- Transverse Pavement Markings.

Other Key Town & Village Recommendations

The figures below do not represent an exhaustive list of the recommendations in the Active Transportation Plan. They are intended to provide a general understanding of significant Town and Village sidewalk, trail, and other pedestrian improvements.

TOWN SIDEWALK CONNECTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS

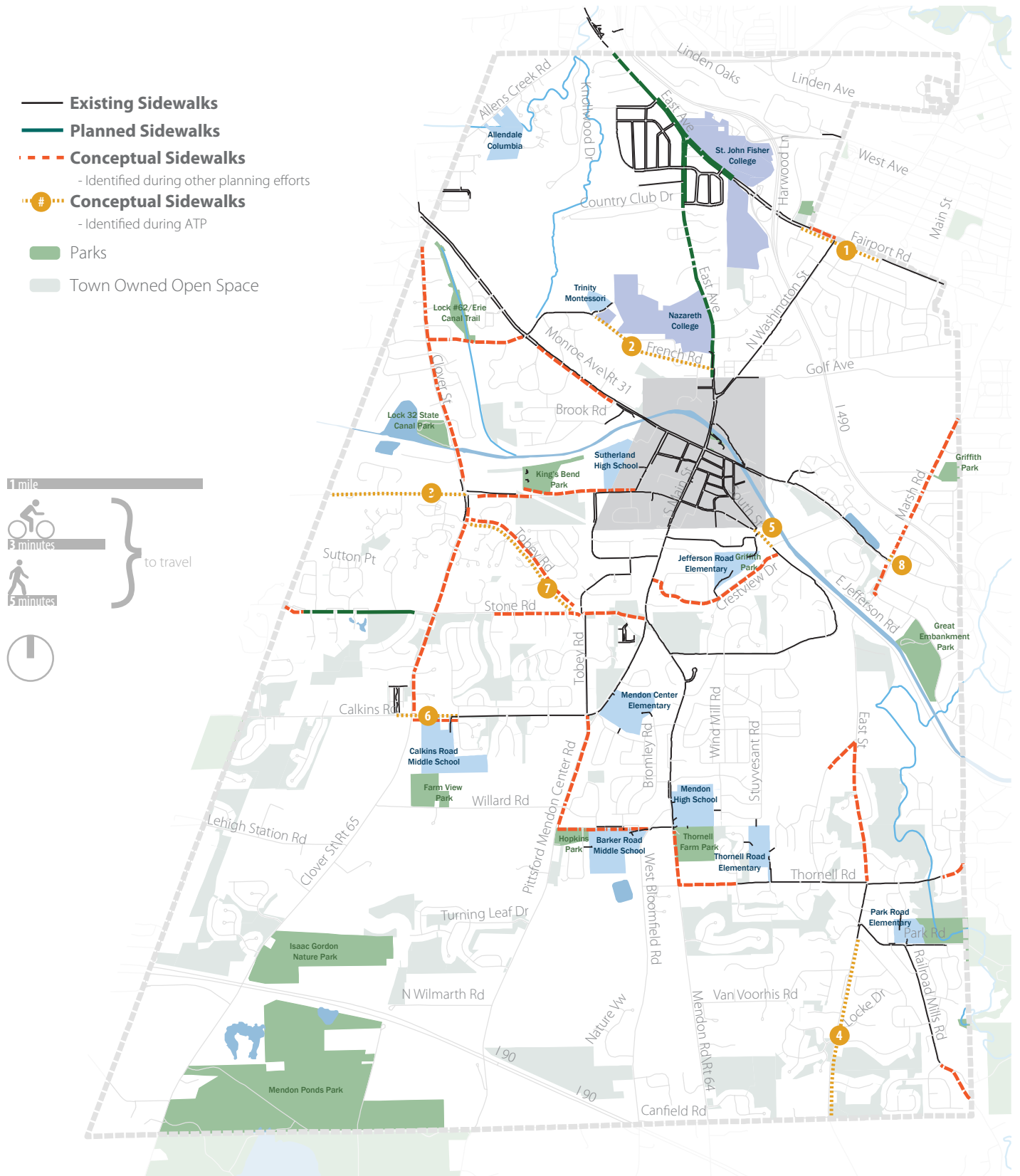


Figure 32: Town Sidewalk Connectivity Recommendations

TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Existing Trails
- Planned Trails
- - - Conceptual Trails
- # Conceptual Multi-use Trails
- Parks
- Town Owned Open Space

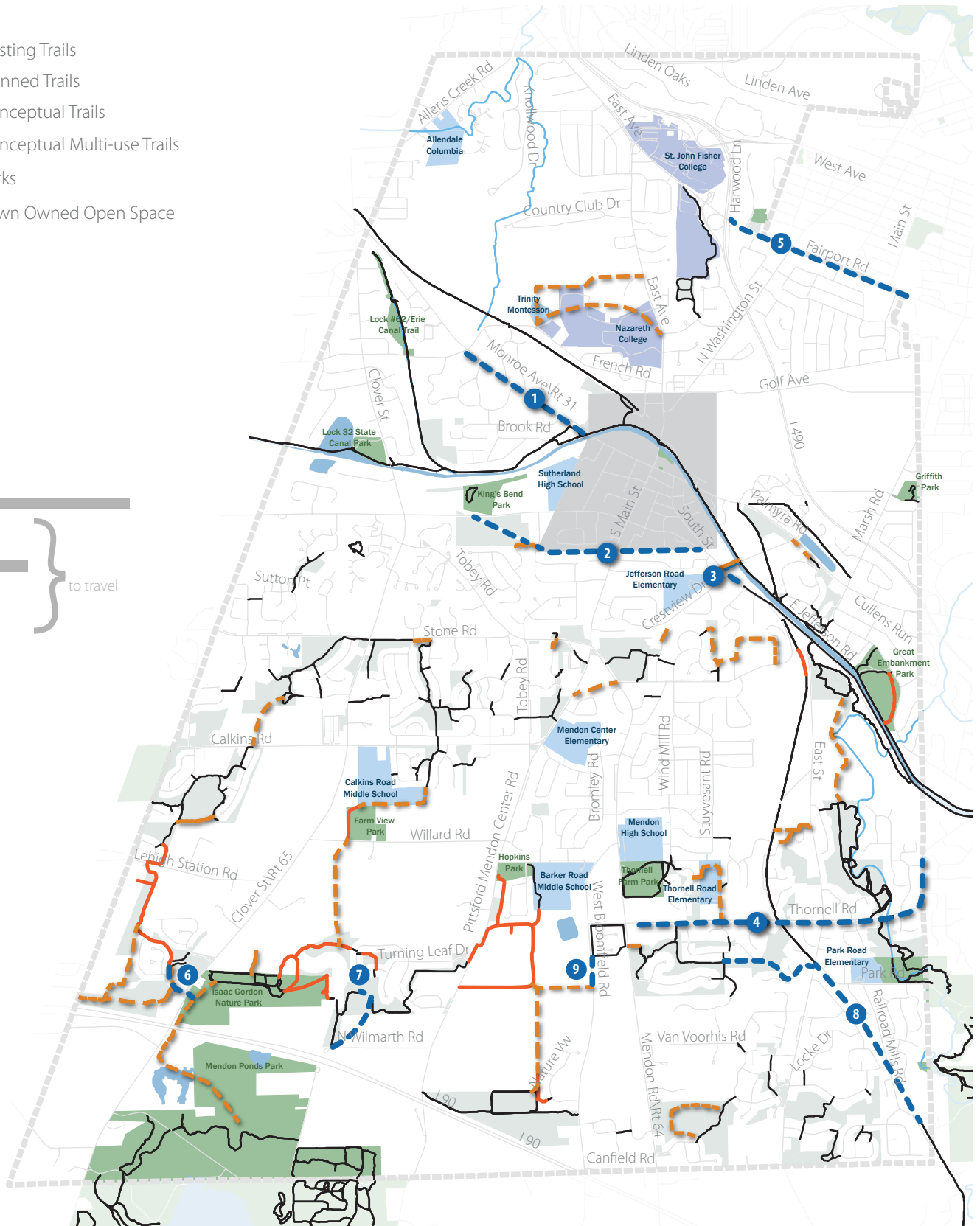
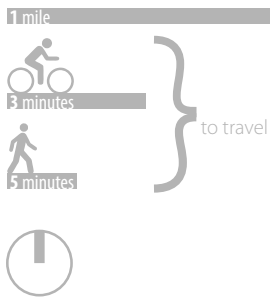


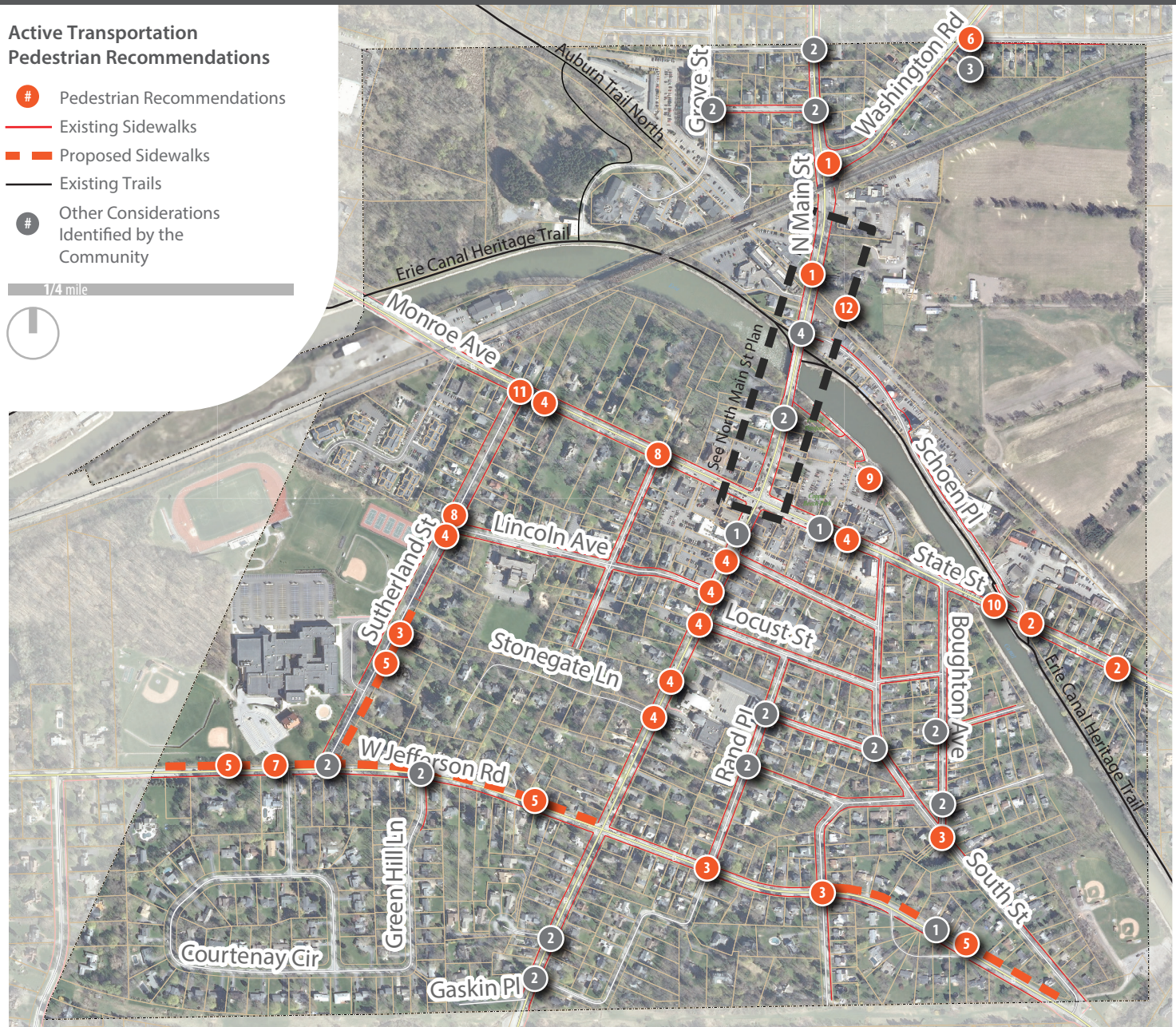
Figure 33: Trail Recommendations

PEDESTRIAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Active Transportation Pedestrian Recommendations

- # Pedestrian Recommendations
- Existing Sidewalks
- - - Proposed Sidewalks
- Existing Trails
- # Other Considerations Identified by the Community

1/4 mile



- 1 Develop pedestrian refuge on traffic island. (3)
- 2 Consider mid-block crossing and 'yield to pedestrians' signs. (2)
- 3 Consider installing and/or maintain 'yield to pedestrians' signs at crosswalk. (3)
- 4 Consider installing and/or maintain 'yield to pedestrians' signs and ADA-compliant curb ramps. (7)
- 5 Install sidewalks. (3)
- 6 Evaluate and consider reducing curb radii.
- 7 Consider installing curbs.
- 8 Install curb extensions.
- 9 Remove parking spaces that front on the Erie Canal and redevelop as usable green space.
- 10 Improve bridge lighting.
- 11 Discuss with NYSDOT the potential installation of a traffic signal.
- 12 Implement Conceptual North Main Street Streetscape Plan.
- 1 Consider a pedestrian refuge on a traffic island
- 2 Consider a crosswalk or a mid-block crossing and/or install 'yield to pedestrians' signs.
- 3 Consider installation of a 'yield to pedestrians' sign at the existing crosswalk.
- 4 Consider a flashing beacon for an existing pedestrian crossing.

Figure 35: Village Pedestrian Recommendations

CONCEPTUAL NORTH MAIN STREET STREETScape PLAN

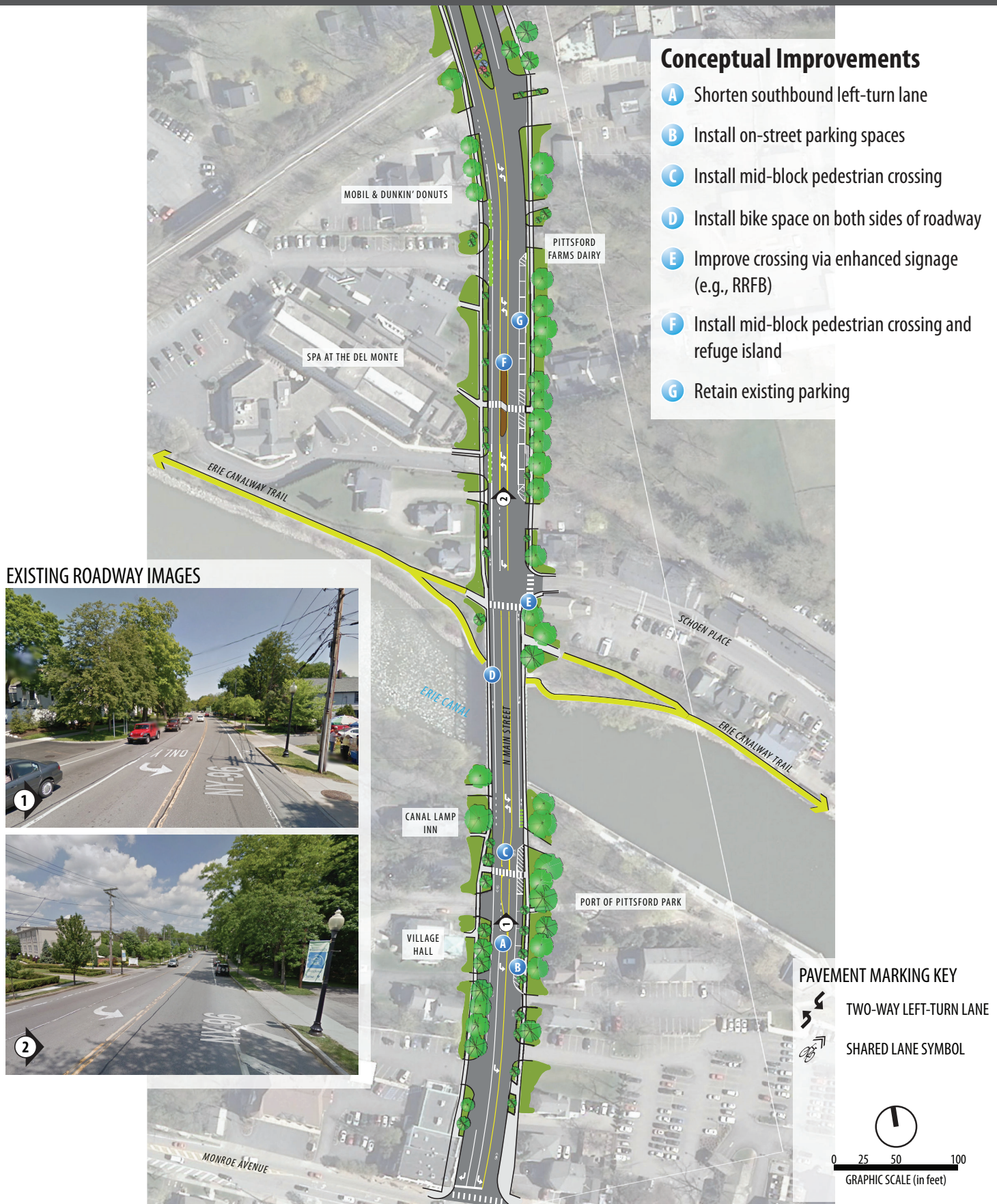


Figure 36: Conceptual North Main Street Transformational Streetscape Plan