



It's Mechanicville's Turn

Downtown Revitalization Grant Project



City of Mechanicville, Saratoga County  
Issued January, 2008

2007 Annual Report

**B**arton  
& **L**oguidice, P.C.

Engineers • Environmental Scientists • Planners • Landscape Architects





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**ATTENTION:  
MECHANICVILLE RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OWNERS**



**IT'S MECHANICVILLE'S RE-TURN ...**

**DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION GRANT PROJECT**

A PROJECT OF THE CITY, SARATOGA COUNTY & SEN. JOSEPH BRUNO.

**2007 SPRING AND SUMMER PUBLIC MEETINGS SCHEDULE:**

- **PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING: MAY 10, 2007**  
6:30 PM TO 8:00 PM - MECHANICVILLE SENIOR CENTER
- **COMMUNITY PLANNING CHARETTE: MAY 17, 2007**  
6:30 PM TO 9:30 PM - MECHANICVILLE SENIOR CENTER
- **COMMUNITY PLANNING CHARETTE: JUNE 7, 2007**  
6:30 PM TO 9:30 PM - MECHANICVILLE SENIOR CENTER

**PLEASE** join the Project Committee in identifying and prioritizing grant projects that will pave the way for Mechanicville's Downtown Revitalization.

**'IT'S MECHANICVILLE'S RE-TURN'** is a project to fund improvements to the City's downtown core; foster economic development and job growth; attract visitors from the surrounding communities; and to position the City to respond to opportunities presented by new growth in Saratoga County. For more information visit the City web site. <http://www.mechanicville.com/>



# Introduction

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The 2007 Annual Report summarizes the work of the City of Mechanicville, the Downtown Revitalization Project Committee, the Consultant Team of Barton and Loguidice, P.C., and Shingebiss Associates, and others who have assisted with the Downtown Revitalization Grant Project during its first year. This project was initiated in 2006 by the City of Mechanicville. Through the tireless efforts of Supervisor Tom Richardson and Mayor Anthony Sylvester, the City obtained funding from Saratoga County and Senator Joseph Bruno to help the City secure grant funds to revitalize downtown.

The Downtown Revitalization Project Committee (the Committee) was formed by the City to initiate a search for a consultant team to assist with the project. The Committee is composed of Mayor Sylvester, Supervisor Richardson, and several local residents and business owners. The selection process resulted in the hiring of the team of Barton and Loguidice, P.C. and Shingebiss Associates, Inc. (the Team). A project advisory committee consisting of private residents, business owners, and elected representatives of the City was assembled and the grants and planning project was kicked-off during a meeting held in late January 2007.



To date, five funding applications have been prepared and submitted, one application was funded, and two are still pending. Public outreach has created a sense of community participation and spans generations, including a group of local college students on summer break and a retired local architect who has voluntarily prepared renderings for the project. Local citizens have created a vision for the community that will help leverage the City's fortuitous geography, the ideal riverfront downtown setting, and attract a burgeoning population within easy walking distance to a unique historic downtown and city waterfront.

The project approach is to focus efforts on grant applications that meet the goals of previous city-wide planning efforts and on downtown revitalization. Through the first and second quarters of 2007, there was an aggressive public participation effort that included workshops and committee meetings. The third and fourth quarters of the project were focused on coordination with funding agencies, and project development as few major grant opportunities were offered during the period.

Public participation included three meetings during the first quarter and three meetings (charettes), and a public hearing during the second quarter. While the project committee continued to discuss opportunities, due to the lack of active funding rounds, public meetings were not needed. During the first charettes, a list of potential projects has been developed and many of the projects identified during the workshops as public priorities have formed the basis of grant applications. Conceptual designs developed during design and planning charettes to address issues and opportunities were refined and probable construction costs were prepared for each.

Charettes, while focused primarily on the waterfront and railroad station projects, included discussions of projects linked to future funding opportunities and potential economic development anchor projects in the City. By the summer of 2007 a clear vision was beginning to emerge for the revitalization of the City:

- revitalize the city with streetscape projects;

*Local citizens have created a vision for the community that will help leverage the City's fortuitous geography, the ideal riverfront downtown setting, and attract a burgeoning population within easy walking distance to a unique historic downtown and city waterfront.*

- restore the railroad station area;
- add amenities to the waterfront; and
- link these key areas through pedestrianization and rehabilitation of key connecting streets between these areas.

While key objectives were priorities, the City did not want any opportunity to pass and several other minor enhancements were discussed and conceptualized by the Team including enhancements to gateways into the City on Central Avenue, South Street, and Route 67. Additional planning money was obtained through the neighborhood linkage program for further planning and a soon to be initiated Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan will offset much of the planning costs of the project incurred during 2007.

The Team continued to meet with representatives of potential granting agencies to review the anticipated scope of applications to be submitted later in the year and in 2008. Funding agencies panel discussions and tours were held for potential public and private funding partners. These events served to introduce many public and private sector decision-makers to the great potential for revitalization of the City of Mechanicville.

This Annual Report presents a summary of the activities completed, anticipated and ongoing. It is intended to be a resource for the City of Mechanicville to continue outreach efforts and to ease the preparation of future funding requests. The report includes a detailed list of goals and objectives that have evolved through the public workshops and the related actions taken by the Team. There is a detailed summary of the grant applications submitted, disposition of the application, and follow up discussion with the granting agency. An included summary of the public outreach and ongoing committee efforts provides insight into the development of overall vision for revitalization. Following that summary, a list of proposed projects is presented including conceptual development plans and budgets for each. Finally an implementation strategy is presented which includes a suggested project schedule and activities for the 2008 calendar year.



*Spring 2007 Planning Charette at Penny's Cafe in Mechanicville*



# Goals and Objectives

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The City established a clear set of goals during the early stages of the project. The Team has worked to meet these goals, but success for the primary goal of making a visible change in 2007 proved elusive. The City was able to make some site improvements at Patnoudé on Central Avenue with the help of a private donation. While much was accomplished behind the scenes, and a great deal of stewardship from local residents and business owners has been gained, a major visible change was not made. The four primary goals of the project as listed in bold below have remained constant in 2007. Below is a list of the efforts the City and project team has made toward meeting the project goals.

## *Make Visible Changes in 2007*

- Applied for Main Street Funding for façade improvements on Park Avenue and Main Street.
- Developed a Preliminary Draft of Architectural Design Standards.
- Obtained cash donations for beautification and completed rehabilitation work at Patnoudé Park on Central Avenue.
- Applied for funds to develop links and signage to better connect the Dock and Downtown.
- Applied for NYS OPRHP Grant funds for the Waterfront and Railroad Station.
- Continued a public dialogue creating interest and participation



*Patnoudé Park*

including grass roots efforts to organize, and volunteer architectural design for the Downtown Core.

- Developed conceptual designs, simulations and a budget estimate for closure of a portion of Park Avenue resulting in a grant for the project, expected to be completed in early 2008.

### *Prepare the City to Respond to Advanced Microchip Devices/Luther Forest Technology Campus Spin-Off*

- Held discussions about potential outreach to surrounding suburban areas and interconnectivity with downtown.
- Issued project press releases to keep the revitalization efforts publicized.
- Developed gateway projects to make a positive first impression of the City on South Street, Central Avenue, and Route 67 including creation of concept plans and probable construction budgets.
- Discussed creating a City-wide WIFI access system to promote the City as a high-tech community.

### *Enhance Downtown Streets, Gateways and Links to the Waterfront*

- Applied for Main Street Funding for Façade and Streetscape Improvements.
- Developed a Preliminary Draft of Architectural Standards.
- Obtained cash donations for beautification and completed rehabilitation work at Patnoudé Park on Central Avenue.
- Created conceptual design for the waterfront, Central Avenue and Railroad Station areas.
- Applied for NYS OPRHP Grant funds for the Waterfront and Railroad Station.
- Applied for funds to develop links and signage to better connect the Dock and Downtown.
- Prepared application for TIP to fund improvements on Central Avenue.

- Obtained a Linkage Program grant to do in-depth study of opportunities in the Downtown Core, centered on Central Avenue and Main Street.
- Received a grant to construct a pedestrian plaza on Park Avenue.



*The Mechanicville "Dock"*

*Create Opportunities for Private Investment that Complement Mechanicville's Revitalization Objectives*

- Established relationships with Saratoga County Economic Development (SEDC) and TD Banknorth and other potential private funding partners.
- Held preliminary discussions with potential developers including developers interested in large vacant properties downtown.
- Teamed with SEDC to do grant applications, marketing and outreach.



*Large underutilized buildings dot downtown Mechanicville*



# Grant Project Summary and Results

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## *Applications Submitted*

The City and the Team have developed a Grants Strategy that is focused and is responding to identified needs in the community. There has been wide support from both the business community and our state representatives, in the form of support letters that were included in all grant applications.

We are in a very competitive environment as there are always more requests for funding than the total amount of available grants. As such, we will continue to be selective in our approach to grant sources, will always follow up with granting agencies to obtain application review materials, and will advise the City of the pros and cons of re-submitting non-selected grant applications.

## *New York Main Street 2007*

An application was developed requesting \$200,000 in grant funds, through the NYS Division of Housing & Community Renewal (DHCR). The City teamed up with the Saratoga Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) to serve as the Administrator of the funds.



*Photo simulation of Main Street after streetscape and facade improvements*

The “target area” for this program consisted of Central Avenue, Park Avenue and Main Street. This area represents the core downtown commercial district of the City. There were 46 buildings identified in the “target area”. The City proposed to use grant funds to upgrade the facades of 18 downtown storefronts and improve 6 second floor apartments.

- Unfortunately, the application was not selected for funding. Tom Richardson, SEDC and Shingebiss associates, Inc. met with John Serio, DHCR, to go over review comments. The Application missed being approved for funding by scoring just one point below the cut line. As such, the City has been urged by DHCR to re-apply in 2008.

### *Erie Canalway Heritage Corridor Program 2007*

The grant to the City was not funded under this program. The majority of awards were made to not-for-profit heritage and preservation organizations. No award was received in Saratoga County. A suggested strategy for this program in the future is to find not-for-profit groups to sponsor the grant application, rather than to have the City apply directly.

### *NYS EPF Heritage Area - Terminal Street and Mechanicville Dock*

In June, the City submitted a grant application under this program. Funding was sought to provide for improvements to the Dock and Terminal Street, including sidewalks, lighting and streetscape. Initial work to be done includes two kiosks; an entryway sign; a bathroom and shower facility; a sitting wall that will double as a retaining wall; benches; trash receptacles; deciduous and accent trees; ornamental bollards; sidewalks; curbing speed bumps; and crosswalks on Terminal Street.

Grant funding requested is \$234,364, or 50% of the total project cost of \$468,728.

- This application was not selected for funding by New York State. Barton & Loguidice and Tom Richardson met with NYS Parks to discuss the review process on December 17th. In a meeting with NYS Parks it was determined that the grant application submitted by the City scored very well and was almost selected for funding. The City was encouraged to re-submit in the spring 2008 funding round.

- In order to raise the point score on this application, the City will need to assure NYS Parks that it has the right to place improvements on the site, which is owned by the NYS Canal Corporation.
- B&L has set a meeting with the Canal Corporation to obtain the proper letter that will satisfy NYS Parks.



*Streetscape and pedestrian enhancements to Terminal Street will create a stronger link between downtown and the “Dock”*

### *Capital District Transportation Committee - Central Corridors Linkage Study*

The City applied for grant funds to use for a study that will reveal how to best integrate sound planning principles that consider both land use and transportation issues in the following areas: Mabbett Hill, Rte 67, and Northern Central Avenue.

- This \$36,037 grant request has been approved for funding.

### *NYS EPF Historic Preservation – RR Station and XO Tower*

The funding provides for stabilization and initial rehabilitation of the historic rail station. Pavement and storm water issues will be addressed, as well as exterior landscaping and utility upgrades. Funding requested is \$231,650 and will account for 50% of the total project cost of \$463,300. Significant in-kind and volunteer professional services were committed towards the match.

- This application was not selected for funding by New York State. A meeting to obtain the review comments was held on December 17th.
- This project is not eligible for funding through NYS Parks, because the site is not listed on either the New York State or Federal Historic Registers. As such, it was suggested that we develop a plan for private support to rehabilitate these facilities.



# Anticipated Applications, Future Cycles

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## *Small Cities 2008 Competitive*

Preparatory work will be critical to the success of the 2008 Small Cities Grant. Among the preparatory work needed may include an income survey which will be used to further demonstrate financial need in the community. Additionally, we will be looking into the potential of seeking Small Cities funding to assist with the current Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project that is required by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

- This funding deadline will be in April of 2008.

## *Small Cities 2008 Economic Development*

Linked to job creation and retention, this program offers up to \$750,000 to companies for equipment purchasing, training and education and infrastructure needs. We are analyzing potential projects as they become available.

- A meeting was held in December with Small Cities staff to discuss potential projects, and while there were no significant anchor projects proposed, a rolling round of funding will be available throughout 2008.

## *Restore NY 2008*

This program is linked to job creation. SEDC is working with the Team to analyze additional properties and projects. Some of the discussions of anchor projects might lead to strong Restore NY Grant project candidates.

- A summer 2008 application deadline is anticipated.

### *Transportation Enhancements Program 2008*

This program is an 80/20 State/Local matching reimbursement program. Eligible projects would include rehabilitation of the railroad station, rehabilitation of the XO tower, streetscape improvements on Central, Main and Park, the waterfront improvements and trails, as well as other transportation, trail and pedestrian oriented projects.

### *NYS DOS BOA EPF Grant 2008*

The Brownfield Opportunities Area program provides funding for a wide range of strategic planning activities that would provide valuable data and concept development in support of major transportation and revitalization projects. B&L and Shingebiss have successfully developed applications for Nomination Studies, thus bypassing the Pre-Nomination Study by supplementing the available Local Plans and Studies. The expected deadline of June 29, 2007 did not materialize and the DOS has not yet awarded funding under the 2005 and 2006 rounds leaving this potential project on the shelf. Potentially, once previous years awards are announced, an open round will also be announced with a rolling deadline, meaning funds can be applied for at any time.

- The Team is in contact with Dave McLoed from the DOS who will provide additional details about the program and answer any questions at the quarterly review meeting.

### *Various Member Items (MIP) and Discretionary Programs 2008*

Spring and summer will be the ideal time to plan for projects that might fall into these categories. A continuous stream of project updates and invitations to participate will keep local politicians that control these funds informed and able to advocate for Mechanicville. (An excellent MIP is the railroad overpass).

- An additional \$100,000 through Senator Bruno's office has recently been secured to assist the City in its efforts.

## *Transportation Improvements Plan (TIP) Program*

Projects that require a major financial commitment and can be done in the future should be proposed for inclusion in the TIP which is maintained by the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC). An example would be the Central Avenue South Street Pedestrian Improvement Project. This initiative would result in upgrades from South Street to the rail road bridge.

- A draft TIP proposal for South Central Avenue has been prepared and will be submitted to the CDTC in early 2008.



*New D&H Bridge Simulated Rehabilitation*

### *Hudson River Valley Greenway*

The newly expanded Greenway program now provides planning and grants assistance in parts of Saratoga County. As such, the City is eligible to participate. A resolution would have to be passed by the City Council, which would be provided by the greenway. Upon approval, the City would then be eligible for a small planning grant and a number of other competitive grants that would serve to expand community planning activities.

### *NYS DOS 2008 LWRP Implementation Grant (EPF)*

The City will be preparing a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) during early 2008. As a result of that plan, projects that can be implemented with EPF grant funds could be applied for in the next round of LWRP Implementation Grants in late fall 2008.

- The LWRP EPF program does not have a funding cap.

### *NY Main Street 2008*

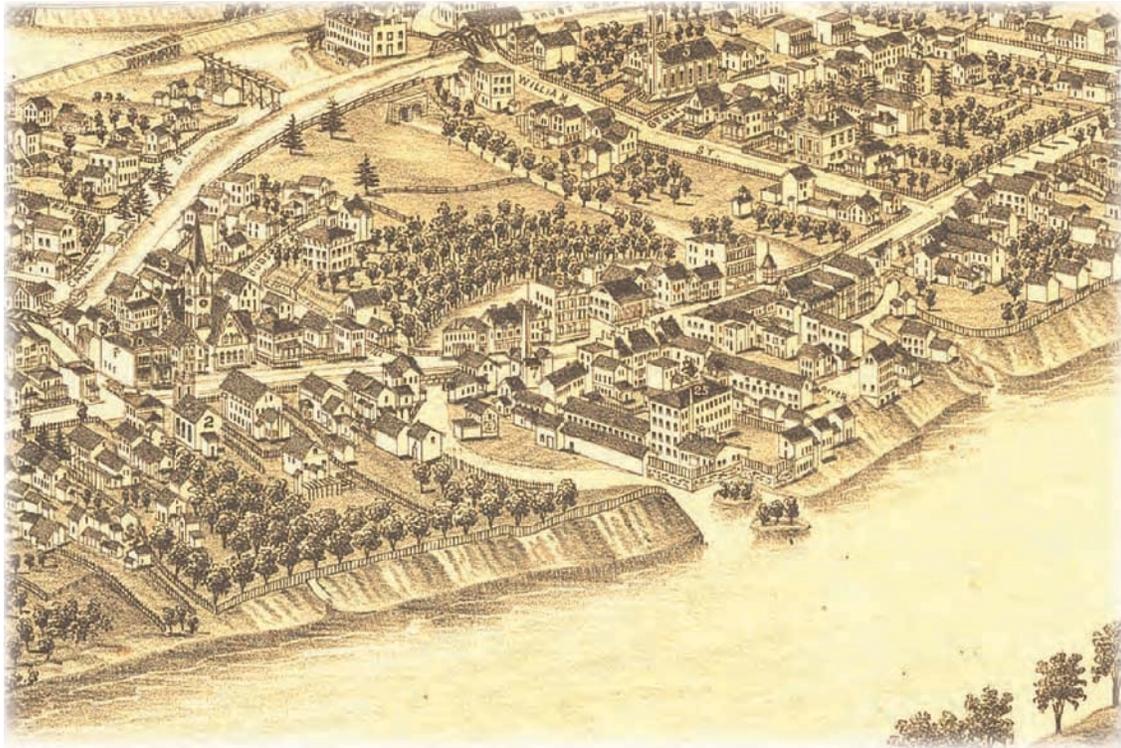
- Funding in the amount of \$200,000 will be requested from NYS DHCR for facade upgrades, building unit renovations and streetscape.
- Funding for a clock to support the streetscapes was requested of NYS Electric and Gas. Funding awards will be announced this summer.

### *NYS OPRHP 2008 Parks Development, Historic Preservation, and Heritage Areas Grants*

This is a 50/50 matching grant program utilizing EPF or Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF Awards are still Pending). Possible projects include resubmission of a grant application for improvements to the waterfront. Other potential applications for park development include rehabilitation projects for Patnoudé Park and Tallmadge Park. Funding priorities include many aspects of projects discussed in the Design and Planning Charettes.

*Centennial Initiative (NPS)*

A new grant program under development to benefit projects that will contribute to the 2009 celebration of the Henry Hudson's first journey up the Hudson River.



*Panoramic View of the Mechanicville Waterfront, 19th Century*





## Public Participation and Outreach Results

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The first City project task was to establish a steering committee (the Committee) for the project to work with the Team. The Committee met monthly with the Team to critique and direct work on the project.

An ambitious schedule of public meetings and planning charettes was developed, intended to inform local residents and business owners about the project and to get their input on goals and objectives, potential projects, and priorities. The schedule had a dual role of meeting the public outreach requirements of various grant programs, while simultaneously engaging in a public dialogue to create a downtown revitalization plan. The public information meetings and planning charettes were heavily attended by a varied cross section of residents and business owners. These public meetings were successful due to the work of the Committee who distributed outreach flyers, made phone calls and arranged for use of meeting space downtown for the planning charettes.

*The public information meetings and planning charettes were heavily attended by a varied cross section of residents and business owners. These meetings were successful due to the work of the project committee who distributed outreach flyers, made phone calls and arranged for use of meeting space downtown for the planning charettes.*

Charettes were focused on identifying existing opportunities and constraints within Mechanicville, and developing concept plans in response. The objective of the meetings was to focus on projects that would fit the grant opportunities while expanding on ideas that were generated during earlier workshops in other areas of downtown.

In each charette, a presentation was made by the Team with information on the focus sites, opportunities, grants, and the tools available for the revitalization. Included were simulations for areas like the D&H Railroad Bridge, Central Avenue Corridor and the Mechanicville Dock/Terminal Street Area.

The planning charrettes consistently attracted large turnouts of 40 to 50 members of the community. As a result, each charette featured a minimum of four group discussions, allowing the full exploration of a variety of topics in each session. A number of new faces appeared in Charettes 2 and 3 to further diversify the participation, spark additional interest in the project, and foster more local stewardship of the project. Most significantly, several local college students took an interest in the project and contributed photography, conceptual design ideas, and design of a project web page. Regardless of the level of participation and variety of participants, common themes developed in all the workshops:

- Provide help for local business owners including marketing, financial assistance and technical expertise.
- Market downtown to the suburbs within a short drive of downtown.
- Improve the perception of downtown Mechanicville through promotion and special events that feature downtown as a destination.
- Improve visual and physical interconnection between the waterfront and downtown.
- Create a street character along downtown roads that is welcoming and comfortable for pedestrians and appealing for all.
- Provide greater opportunities for interpretation of local history and heritage.
- Update the digital infrastructure citywide.

## *Meeting Summaries*

### *January 21, 2007 - Project Kick-off Meeting - Mechanicville DPW*

The project approach was presented by the Team to the advisory committee at this initial meeting. Grant program information was presented for upcoming programs that would target the priority to make improvements on Central and Park Avenues. In response to the specific opportunities presented about the NY Main Street (NYMS) program, a special meeting with local business owners was scheduled. Potential participation in a façade and streetscape program would be solicited in support of the NYMS grant application.

The priority project discussed at this meeting was Central Avenue, viewed as the critical first impression of the City. A tentative schedule for public meetings was established including a public information meeting on February 8th and a Public Charette on March 1st.

### *January 30, 2007 - Business Owner's Breakfast - Mechanicville DPW*

The Team presented an introductory PowerPoint presentation to inform the attendees about the project scope, goals and schedule. In addition the Team presented specific information about the potential NY Main Street grant program and distributed program participation forms. Most of the representatives present responded positively and submitted forms expressing an interest in participating in a façade improvements program.

Participants expressed support for Central Avenue as the focal point of improvements. In addition, there was general support for a façade improvement program and for development of architectural guidelines in support of the program.



*February 8, 2007 - Public Information Meeting #1 - Mechanicville Senior Center*

The principle purpose of this meeting was to introduce the project to the public and to provide information about the anticipated grant programs, NY Main Street, Governor's Office of Small Cities, and Erie Canalway Heritage Corridor Pilot Program.

At this meeting it became apparent that a focus beyond Central Avenue might be necessary to meet grant program requirements. Participants were asked to consider a list of eligible activities for the programs and suggest projects in Mechanicville that would be eligible.

*March 1, 2007 - Planning and Design Charette #1 - Mechanicville Senior Center*

The first charette was focused on discussions that grew out of areas of interest identified by the Committee and grant opportunities. The purpose of the Charette was:

- to introduce the Downtown Revitalization Project to newcomers;
- to provide information about grant opportunities;
- to discuss projects that may be eligible for the presented grant programs;
- to refine ideas developed in earlier plans; and
- to develop new discussions based on new developments.

The session included an introduction by Supervisor Richardson and presentations by the Team to provide grant program information, project information and project examples for the participants. Information about three grant programs was presented including the New York Main Street Grants, Governor's Office of Small Cities Grants and Erie Canalway Heritage Grants.

Four discussion groups were facilitated by the Team based around: economic development; establishing a community foundation; architectural rehabilitation guidelines; and street, pedestrian and aesthetic improvements. Participants were instructed to develop project or task lists and consider projects that might be eligible for funding under the programs mentioned above.

Common themes in group discussions:

- Improve visual and physical interconnection between the waterfront and downtown.
- Improving the perception of downtown Mechanicville through promotion and special events that feature downtown as a destination.
- Create a street character along downtown roads that is comfortable for pedestrians and appealing for all.

The charette ended with a presentation from each group and an opportunity to comment and ask question of the presenters.

### *May 10, 2007 – Public Information Meeting #2*

This meeting provided an opportunity to review progress on the project, and to introduce the priorities of the anticipated grant programs. The meeting also provided an opportunity to develop a list of priority projects to consider based on the current funding rounds for the NYS OPRHP EPF Grants and programs such as TEP and Restore NY expected to be due in the fall.

As a result the following projects were discussed (listed in order of priority):

- Central Avenue Rehabilitation
- Mechanicville Dock and Terminal Street Streetscape



- The Railroad Station and XO Tower Improvements
- The D&H Railroad Bridge Rehabilitation on Central Avenue
- Pocket Parks Improvement/Creation (Patnoude Park)

### *May 24, 2007 - Planning and Design Charette #2*

Discussion groups were facilitated by the Team based around: Central Avenue South, Canal/Waterfront Area, and Economic Development. Participants were instructed to identify specific opportunities, related ideas, and any limitations. Wherever possible, groups were encouraged to develop concept plans to illustrate their ideas.



Common themes in group discussions:

- Major need for landscaping.
- Creating a more pedestrian friendly atmosphere.
- Creating awareness of waterfront and other events/attractions.
- Incorporate Mechanicville's history.

The charette ended with a presentation from each group and an opportunity to comment and ask question of the presenters.

### *June 5, 2007 - Advisory Committee Meeting*

During this meeting, the final details of the grant applications to the NYS OPRHP were discussed. The Committee indicated that verbal commitments for volunteer labor and materials were being made by local businesses towards the work that would be needed on the railroad station. The

meeting also presented an opportunity to discuss the results of the May 24 Charette and to review focal points for the June 7th Charette. In addition to the grant program related discussions, the potential to create a light rail connection through Mechanicville was discussed. This could have important implications for the City and the Railroad Station and XO Tower in particular.

### *June 7, 2007 - Planning and Design Charette #3 - Penny's Main Street Café*

The charette focused on expanding upon previous ideas, generating new ones, and preparing for the Grant applications due June 29th. The objective of the meeting was to continue progress with ideas throughout the City and to gather material for the upcoming grants.

A presentation was given on the upcoming needs for the Grant applications, ideas and sketches from Charette #2, and the expectations of the evening's Charette. After the Team finished their portion, a member of the community explained ideas and possible projects he and his peers had been working on since Charette #2. This was supplemented by pictures of the specific sites for projects.

Four discussion groups were facilitated by the Team based around:

- rehabilitation of the Railroad Station;
- Central Avenue South;
- improvements at the Dock; and
- economic development.

Participants were given specific topics to focus on within their groups. The charette ended with a presentation from each group and an opportunity to comment and ask question of the presenters. Letters of support were distributed to be signed by the community and will be used in the Grant applications.



**Barton**  
**Loguidice, P.C.**  
Engineers • Environmental Scientists • Planners • Landscape Architects

**CITY OF MECHANICVILLE**  
**Downtown Revitalization Project**  
*Potential Revitalization Projects*



## *Workshop Follow-up Projects*

The following projects grew out of discussions in the workshops:

### *Connectivity Project - Downtown and Waterfront*

The project grew out of discussions in the Design and Planning Charettes and the commonly identified need to make better interconnections between downtown and the waterfront. The Canalway Heritage Grant provided an ideal opportunity to expand this area of study and develop some plans without drawing funding away from the grant project. Similar opportunities will be leveraged for other projects including the anticipated Local Waterfront Revitalization Program funding.

### *Architectural Guidelines*

A set of draft guidelines was developed specifically for Mechanicville in response to discussions that began at the Business Owner's Breakfast. A set of guidelines developed for another similar community was discussed in detail in one of the Design and Planning Charette groups. Follow-up review of the Mechanicville Guidelines was done with Garrett Guertz, Architect (retired) and Mary Grace Izzo, both of whom serve on the City Planning Board. The draft document was attached to the NY Main Street Grant Application and additional funding will be needed to complete the development of the guidelines and to assist the City with their official adoption.

### *Downtown Core Revitalization Plan by Garrett Guertz/Park Street Closure Project*

Retired architect Garrett Guertz participated in the planning charettes and took a keen interest in the potential to make a major impact on the City of Mechanicville's Downtown Core by putting a new face on the street surrounding the strip mall at the city center. Garrett's sketch was an invaluable visual aid and was the basis for discussions with local business owners. One of the significant proposals illustrated in the sketch was Mr. Guertz' suggestion to close a portion of Park Avenue, thereby creating a pedestrian street. This project is presented in detail in the Detailed Project Pages section of this report, and will be developed as a result of a grant received in early 2008.



Guertz Sketch

The Troy Record has maintained an interest in the project and has published several stories about the project. That paper has expressed an interest in continuing to follow the project. For some press examples, refer to the newspaper clippings at the end of this section.

# Slow down and enjoy Mechanicville



A PEDESTRIAN walks on Main Street in Mechanicville, which is seeking state grants to upgrade facades and highlight attractions.

That's the message officials hope to send with grant money for downtown facade improvements, canal project

By **TIM BLYDENBURGH**  
Staff writer

**MECHANICVILLE** — City officials and their hired hands hosted state representatives for a tour of downtown Monday, talking up targets for potential grant money.

The trip was part of a campaign to boost the fortunes of one of the state's smallest cities by enticing some of the thousands daily who drive through downtown stop and spend time and money here. The city has applied for two grants. Getting more state officials to see the need for betterment is another part of the push, consultant Glenn Gidaly said.

"This is to let them know Mechanicville is here," said Gidaly of Barton & Loguidice. "We're shooting for a bull's-eye."

In the 1950s and 1960s, the mill city and major railroad hub was the engine that fueled Saratoga County, said Tom Richardson, a county supervisor and co-chairman of the Revitalization Committee. As those industries faded, so did the city's fortunes and population, from 10,000 to barely 5,000 today, Richardson said.

But the one-square mile city retains its appeal, he said. As well as being a safe place, Mechanicville has its own Public Works Department and police force, four banks in and around the city and a dock on the Hudson that attracts boaters. More Victorian lights and sidewalk expansions and dressing up Patenaude Park will give people more of a reason to linger, Richardson said.

"We want to be the downtown not only for Mechanicville, but for Stillwater and Halfmoon as well," he said.

The city has applied for a \$200,000 state Main Street New York grant for facade improvements. Another \$8,500 application from the state Canal

Please see **CITY B4** ▶

*Times Union article*



PHILIP KAMRASS/TIMES UNION

**MECHANICVILLE'S** population has fallen from about 10,000 to about 5,000 over the decades.

## **CITY:** Hoping to put on a fresh face

▼ CONTINUED FROM B3

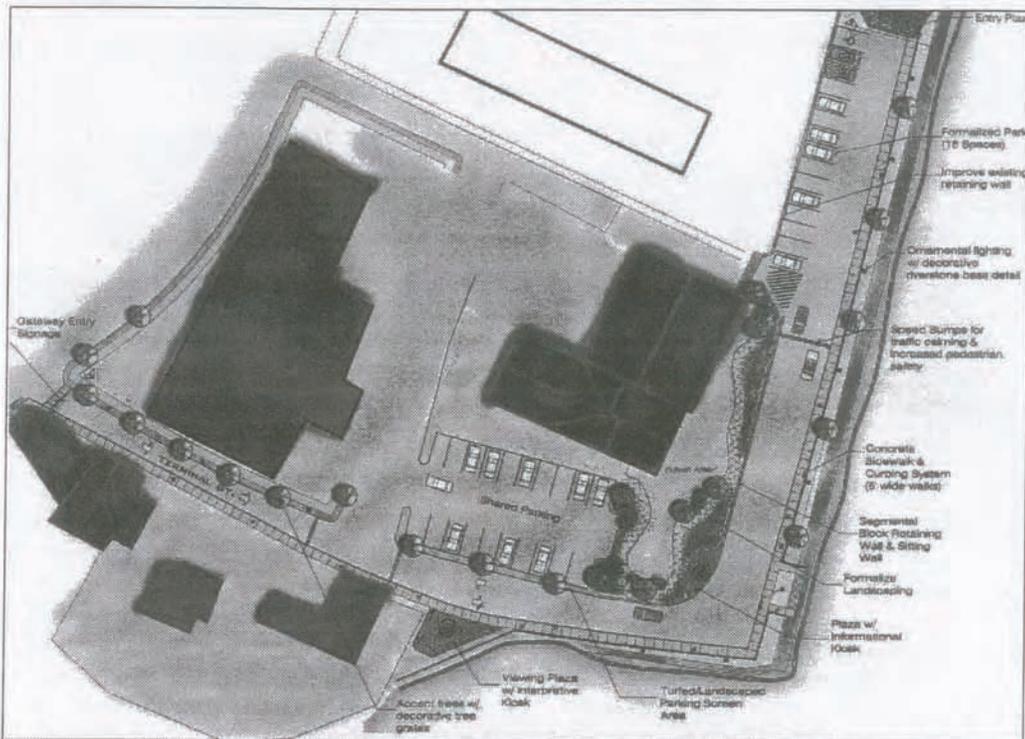
Corp. would go for signs showcasing waterfront and downtown, Gidaly said. Word on a decision will take months.

Monday's meeting and tour

laid out the possibilities of revitalization to funding agencies. More grants may be sought for other projects, one of which may be remodeling the vacant elementary school for a business center, he said.

"It's 20 minutes from everywhere," Gidaly said, offering another advantage of the city. "About 18,000 cars daily pass through Main Street, and most of them don't stop; ... it needs a heightened sense of place."

## Officials Devise Plans For The Revitalization Of Mechanicville's Downtown Business Area



*This architect's rendering shows some of what planners have in mind for Mechanicville's business section, including acknowledging and promoting its railroad heritage.*

BY FRANCINE GRINNELL

Changes are under way for the city of Mechanicville's downtown district.

A revitalization project that started two years ago is continuing under the watchful eyes of Mayor Anthony J. Sylvester and Mechanicville Supervisor Tom Richardson.

With their time and commitment, as well as that of dedicated people from both the public and private sectors, the plan is gathering visible momentum.

Grant monies, including \$100,000 from state Sen. Joseph Bruno's office and the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors, and \$400,000 from McDonald's Corp., have been instrumental in making resident dreams a reality.

The goal is to have much of the plan completed by July 2008, according to officials.

Courtesy of Barton and Loguidice PC

Sylvester said \$30,000, or 2 percent of tax revenue in the city, has been targeted for revitalization. He and Richardson are working with Thaddeus M. Kolankowski, senior land use planner for Barton and Loguidice PC of Albany, and Garrett J. Geurtze, architect emeritus, and Mechanicville Planning Committee member, to bring the project to fruition.

A series of public workshops and meetings, guided by Camoin Associates, were held to get resident input and develop a strategic economic development plan. The workshops yielded creative ideas for streetscaping and design concepts to improve the perception of the core downtown areas, specifically Central Avenue, Park Street and Main Street.

Some \$200,000 was budgeted for the upgrad-

*Continued On Page 11*

# Mechanicville Revitalization

*Continued From Page 9*

ing of business facades, with participating merchants equally matching the grant funding they were each allotted.

Many of the concepts expressed were incorporated into a rendering executed by Geurtze. Copies of the proposed preliminary project layout are being placed throughout the city in local businesses to help residents envision what Mechanicville could become and to generate further interest and exposure.

"People long for life as it was and can be again," said Geurtze. "If even half of (the plan) comes to pass, it will be a return to the kind of thriving place that many remember."

He said during World War II, three quarters of the nation's train travel was routed through Mechanicville. Resident feedback indicates that many want to acknowledge that heritage with a museum, as well as bring rail travel through the city once again, with service running from Mechanicville to Albany and Saratoga and back.

The city of 5,000 residents, many of whom are senior citizens, has 17,000 vehicles go through daily. The plan would divert automobile commuter traffic to downtown, encouraging visitors to stop, spend the day, and get acquainted with downtown Mechanicville.

"We want to make a clear shot from the waterfront to downtown by making it pedestrian friendly, as well more visually attractive," said Geurtze.

Having traveled extensively throughout his career working for four New York state agencies, Geurtze has seen what other locales have done to create and maintain a vibrant city center. He said he would like to see some of the things he observed in other municipalities.

Plans are being discussed to extend the present Mechanicville boat dock on

the Hudson River by 80 feet to encourage larger pleasure craft to dock for the day, free of charge, so passengers can disembark to visit the downtown shopping district.

The dock can accommodate seven cabin cruisers comfortably, with electricity and septic services provided.

An informational kiosk, offering a walking tour brochure, would be placed by the dock to help direct visitors.

Murals depicting scenes of Mechanicville freight and passenger rail history, its clothing factories, Victorian homes and downtown life during various periods of the city's history are proposed for the outside rear walls of Park Plaza.

Landscaping, bicycle racks, picnic tables and storefront awnings and café tables for dining outdoors have been suggested to add to the attractiveness of the area. Other possibilities include a monument park and a replica of the Champlain Canal, complete with a mule statue and informational signs

Kolankowski said Richardson "is the genius behind the project. He realized that the city had not moved forward in years. He has worked with the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors, planners and under the direction of grant writing firm Shingebiss Associates Inc. of New Paltz to generate and distribute the pool of money assembled to optimum advantage and with accountability."

Kolankowski said Richardson personally conducts guided bus tours of the city for prospective investors and corporate representatives and points out to them the advantages of investing in or bringing their businesses to Mechanicville.

"I was born here. We want to bring Mechanicville back to what it was," said Sylvester. "We have a lot of 'doers' working on this. It's the greatest thing." □





## Funding Panel Meetings

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The Team hosted informational meetings and bus tours on two occasions: the first for public funding agency representatives, and the second for local developers and potential investors. The purpose of these events was to introduce the Downtown Revitalization Grant Project to potential funders, solicit participants for eligible project ideas, and to familiarize them with issues and opportunities in Mechanicville.

For each session, the Team presented an introductory presentation at the Mechanicville Fire Hall and then took participants on a City bus tour to several pre-determined key sites in the city. Tom Richardson delivered a description of the issues and opportunities at each stop and talked about how each site was linked to the City's overall revitalization strategy. Many of the participants in these tours were not familiar with Mechanicville and most were surprised to see the great potential for successful revitalization that exists in the City. Significant interest and positive feedback including excellent press coverage was gained through the meeting, tour and lunch discussions. Follow-up meetings were scheduled with many of the agency tour participants.

Major stops included:



### *The Dock (Canal Harbor)*

At the first stop on the bus tours, the Hudson River canal harbor, the Team pointed out the critical need for a better pedestrian connection to downtown businesses. An improved public architectural face and additional public amenities are needed to serve land and water based users.

### *Mechanicville Middle School*

This presently underutilized building represents a significant opportunity to develop a major downtown 'anchoring' project.

### *Downtown Business District*

Streetscape improvements are needed downtown on Central Avenue which at present does not project a positive image for the city. Facade and pedestrian improvements are needed on Central Avenue, Park Avenue and Main Street.

### *Fairways of Halfmoon*

A subdivision in Halfmoon provided an example of the rapidly expanding residential housing and suburban population locating near the City of Mechanicville. The City perceives a great opportunity to capture a greater share of the expendable income available from these suburban areas. Creating an attractive and pedestrian downtown is viewed as the best way to attract suburbanites to shop in Mechanicville.

### *DC Sports*

The business provides an example of a success story resulting from the efforts of the city and the assistance of SEDC. DC Sports opened and recently expanded in the City.

### *Railroad Station Area*

The Mechanicville Rail Station and XO tower are now owned by a not-for-profit group with a goal of restoration as a railroad history museum. The XO tower is a unique and rare architectural element and the rail station provides an excellent example of period architecture.



*The unique "XO" Tower Building*

### *Potential Funding Opportunities Discussed*

Several of the funding administrators requested follow-up meetings to further discuss potential projects and how their agency programs might be of assistance.

- Restore NY Program – Railroad Station development, Middle School redevelopment.
- Brownfield Opportunity Areas – Downtown Revitalization inventory and analysis, GIS mapping, historical research, planning, comprehensive plan updates.
- Highway Pass-Through Funds – Major transportation-based projects throughout downtown, Neighborhood Linkage Studies to develop stronger pedestrian and bicycle connections between downtown and suburban residential areas, small sidewalk and streetscape improvement grants.

- State Transportation Enhancements, Multi-Modal Programs – Major transportation enhancements and streetscape improvements.
- New York State Thruway Authority, Canal Corporation – Canal Harbor and Canalway Trail projects.
- LWRP Implementation Grants for Downtown Revitalization, Parks and Historic Preservation Projects.
- Coordinated approaches utilizing funds from multiple programs for large projects.

### *Follow-up Meetings*

Wilson Moore of NYSDOT provided additional information about transportation funding programs including:

- Multi-Modal 4 Funds – Accessed through elected representatives at the state level.
- Transportation Enhancements Program – Competitive program will be announced over the summer, applications likely due in September.
- SPOT Improvements – Sidewalk and other pedestrian/trail projects with small budgets, accessed through CDTC.
- Member Item Programs – Accessed through elected representatives.
- Other Multi-Modal Programs – Accessed through elected representatives, may be un-expended or forfeited funds that become available.
- Industrial Access Program – Will fund industrial park access roads through low interest loans.

Kyle Wilbur of NYS Department of State Shared Municipal Services Grant Program (SMSIP) discussed potential eligible projects for the next round of SMSIP Grants to be announced mid-summer with a deadline in late fall. Specific eligible activities discussed for Mechanicville included:

- DPW – shared equipment resulting in cost savings.
- School District – need to create efficiencies.
- Police Department – Consolidate services of multiple jurisdictions.
- Assessor – previously explored by Mechanicville and Stillwater.

Dave MacLeod, Department of State administrator for the Brownfield Opportunities Areas program provided information about the program during a Committee meeting. Several sites have the potential to be studied under a BOA grant including the rail station area, several potential brownfields along Central Avenue, and the Industrial Park. Unfortunately, the state has neither awarded nor solicited proposals for new BOA projects since 2005. The program would fund work that would be a great benefit to the city including:

- Planning based study of a large section of the City.
- Preparation of Economic Impact Studies.
- Preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the study area.
- Preparation and Implementation of Testing and Mitigation Plans for contaminated sites.

Dave Jukins and Sandy Mesiewicz from the Capital District Transportation Committee reviewed the Second Quarter report document and suggested several of the projects presented in the report were ready for potential inclusion in the Transportation Improvements Plan.







# Suggested Implementation Projects

The Team has assembled an extensive list of implementation projects that has grown from the list that was begun with reviews of the Downtown Revitalization Strategy of 2006 by Camoin Associates, the 2000 Comprehensive Plan, and Reclaiming the Hudson: the Saratoga County Riverscape Project. The expanded list is a product of the actions that will attain the vision for revitalization expressed in planning workshops and ideas generated by the Committee. In addition, several potential funders provided advice for packaging projects to fit better with in the framework of various funding opportunities.

Since the inception of the project in January 2007, a great deal of effort and synergy has been attained. Many planning workshop participants have taken an ownership interest in the revitalization project and voluntarily contributed including a group of college students, local business owners, and a retired architect who lives in Mechanicville. The resulting discussions have been loosely assembled into a makeshift revitalization strategy (as the overall management goal of this project is to formulate



planning only in support of grant applications). Two planning grants will fund significant planning efforts in 2008 including a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan and a Neighborhood Linkage Study funded by the Capital District Transportation Committee.

Planning efforts in 2008 will provide an opportunity to further discuss and link the projects presented, but more importantly will provide an opportunity to suggest the legislative framework to assist in these efforts. Architectural standards were prepared in draft form and will need to be updated and finalized. Signage and other standards are needed to guide the form of the revitalization and to ensure the community vision is truly represented in new development. In addition, other changes in local laws may be needed including land use, parking, and historic preservation to further assist the revitalization efforts.

As part of this Annual Report, the loose assembly of project ideas is presented in a slightly more organized strategy which can guide the LWRP and Linkage Study efforts in 2008. The next chapter, Detailed Project Pages, details project information for significant projects and can form the basis of grant applications as recommended. The projects were selected based on three assessment principles, in order of priority:

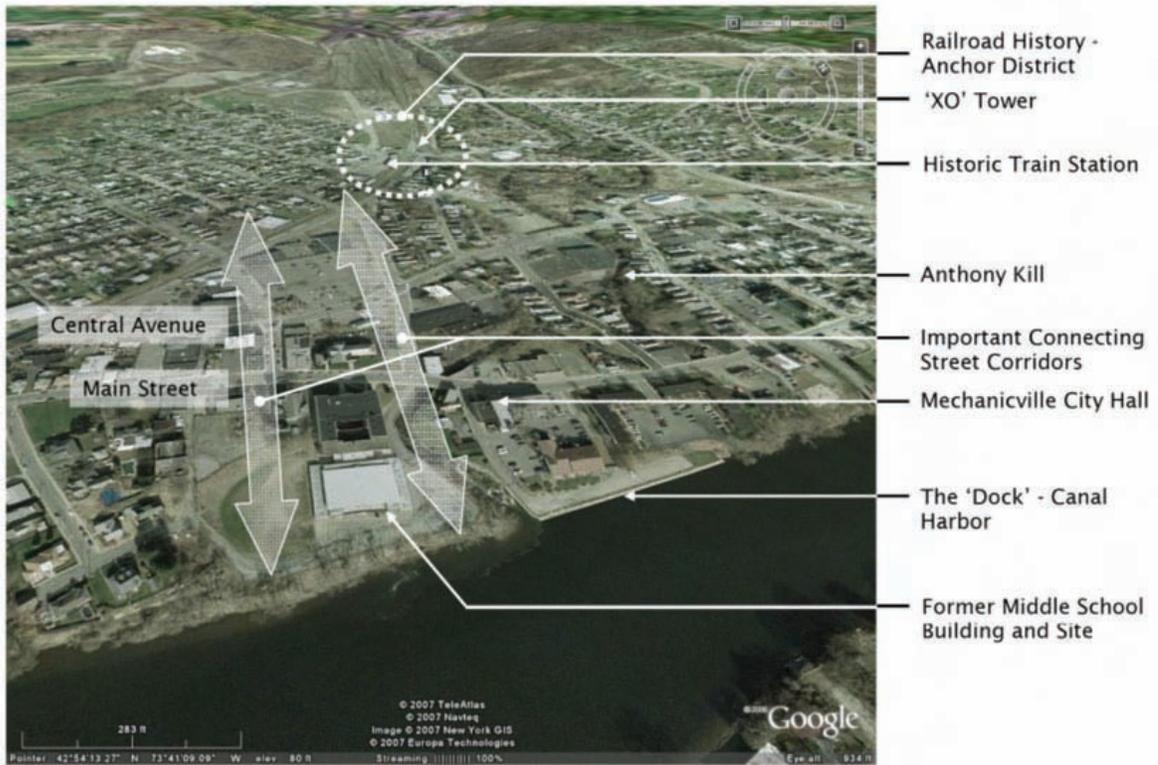
- Low Cost, Constructible in 2008, and High Local Impact
- Highly Fundable with minimal local Match and High Local Impact
- Fits into the Overall Strategy to Link the Railroad Station Area, Downtown and the Waterfront

### *Linking Downtown, the Railroad Area and the Waterfront*

The revitalization strategy that has evolved is to interconnect three key areas of the city: downtown, the railroad station and the canal harbor/Hudson Riverfront. Strengthening the visual and pedestrian linkages between those key areas offers the best opportunity to develop a mutually beneficial movement of people between these places that can generate revenue for local businesses and present an attractive vibrant image of the city. This important connecting corridor is on an East to West axis, which is perpendicular to the most important vehicular routes, Central Avenue and Main Street, which run North and South. Rehabilitation of those routes will be most beneficial if it creates a new, visually appealing, pedestrian appearance from the perspective of motorists. Work on these routes should also clearly improve pedestrian safety and comfort.

A third focus area is along Park Avenue which is an east to west route that crosses Central Avenue and Main Street. Park Avenue has the most intact 'downtown' historic commercial architectural façade in the city. Rehabilitation of the street including pedestrian and streetscape improvements and façade improvements that will rehabilitate and in some areas restore the historic appearance will be needed along two blocks of Park. A similar improvement can be made along the two blocks of Main Street from Park Avenue north.

### City of Mechanicville - Downtown Revitalization Project Canalway Interpretation and Connections Study



Not to Scale

### *Projects*

The project discussion in this section is intended to briefly discuss conditions, opportunities and suggest development projects. Detailed project descriptions for projects identified as key to the

Revitalization of the City of Mechanicville are in the next chapter, Detailed Project Descriptions.  
*Central Avenue (NYS Route 4 and 32)*

Central Avenue is one of Mechanicville's primary transportation routes and presents an important first impression of the City. The corridor has three distinct settings, all of which are heavily oriented towards vehicular transportation.

- Central Avenue from South Street to Park Avenue including the CSX Bridge – (Central Avenue South Project Pages.) Sidewalks are narrow and lacking pedestrian amenities. The railroad bridge that crosses is in need of surface repairs and vacant areas are not maintained and becoming overgrown.
- Central Avenue from Park Street to Hill Street – (Downtown Core Revitalization Concept by Garrett Guertz.) This section is lacking a consistent street wall and suffers from a lack of clear delineation of the street pavement from pedestrian and parking areas. There is also a lack of pedestrian amenities including lighting, crosswalks, benches and street trees.
- Central Avenue from Hill Street to Route 67 – This segment has the greatest potential for becoming a major redevelopment area in the City. The majority of parcels ARE adjacent this portion of Central Avenue.

Once pedestrian and streetscape improvements there are completed, a new perception of the City will begin to take shape. The nearly 20,000 suburban



*Aerial photo of Central Avenue North*

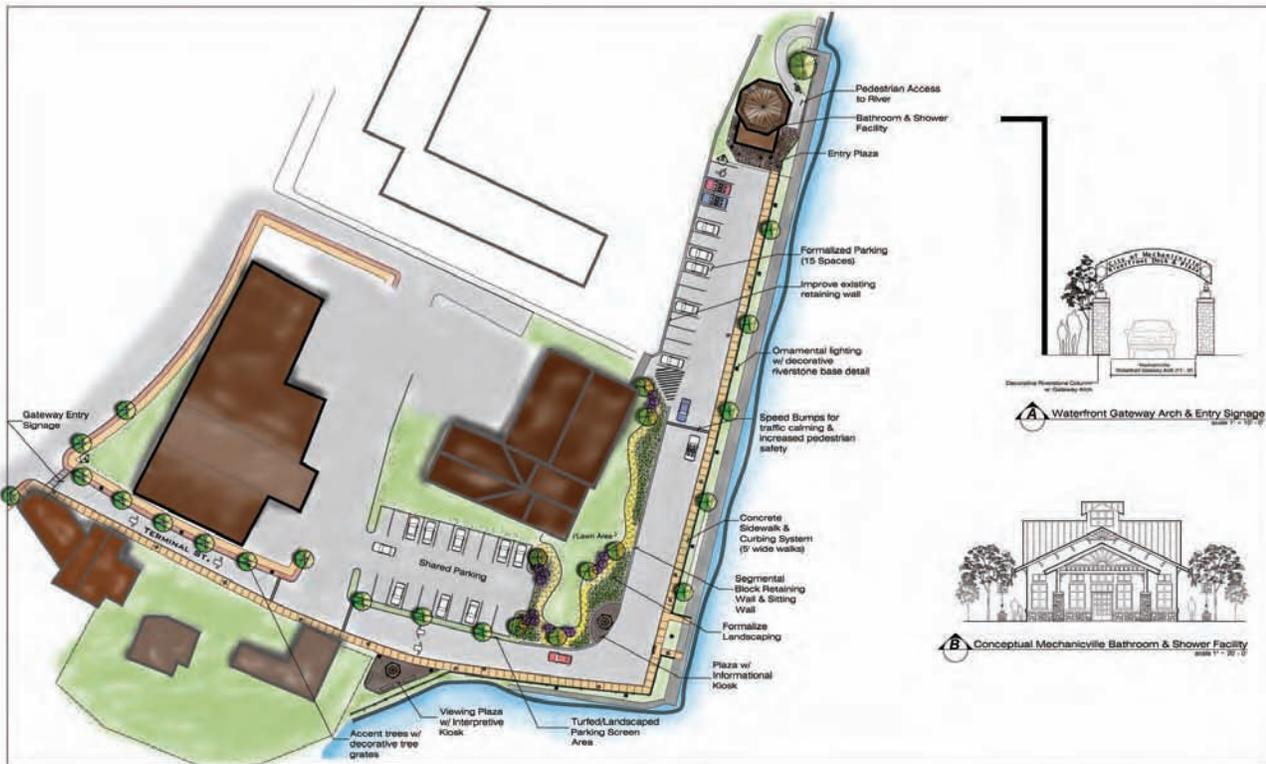
dwellers will become aware of the attractive urban downtown within an easy walk or bike ride.

### *The City Dock (Mechanicville Erie Canal Landing on the Hudson River)*

Mechanicville is fortunate to have almost two miles of very accessible waterfront. In contrast to the majority of cities in the region, there is no rail, highway or industrial barrier to public river shoreline access. This adds a significant element of likely success to any trail, park or other river shore projects in the City. The most significant waterfront site is the canal harbor known as the City Dock at the foot of Terminal Street, a block from Main Street and City Hall.

There is potential for a powerful dynamic to develop between the work on Central Avenue and the Mechanicville Dock. The Dock can make an important intermodal transportation terminal providing trolley and bicycle connections to the existing boat, automobile, bus, and pedestrian connections. The current road connecting the City Dock to Main Street is not marked and difficult to find. It is lacking pedestrian amenities and there is little information beyond the interpretive signage to indicate that the site is close to downtown. (See detailed project information page for more information on Terminal Street and The Mechanicville Dock Project.) Other potential waterfront projects discussed during planning charettes included:

- A Hudson Riverfront trail from the Mechanicville Dock north to the Shopping Plaza on Route 67. This trail would require either acquisition of land or filling along the shoreline just north of the Dock. Visiting boaters would have a direct connection to the retail area on Route 67, including the Price Chopper. This would represent a rare canal harbor opportunity with a major grocery store within walking distance.
- A public boat launching site just north of the Mechanicville Dock at the foot of Saratoga Avenue. A land or right-of-way acquisition might be needed to create access and parking adjacent to the launch.
- A major public destination and bridge over the Anthony Kill to the Dock, built on the former Middle School site. The site is currently an underused parking lot. An extensive vacant open space on the river shoreline exists at the middle school potentially opening the door to several exciting new public spaces that would enhance the sense of arrival for boaters, and begin to establish a fantastic pedestrian system along the river.



### *The Downtown Core Project*

Several projects were identified for the downtown core area of the City. The most significant element in the downtown core is the strip-mall-style plaza bounded by Railroad Street, Central Avenue, Park Avenue and Mabbett Street. The opportunities for the site could not be explored beyond discussion, as the property is privately owned; however, Garrett Guertz (a local retired architect) took on the task of organizing many of the ideas from the planning charettes and added some of his own to create a plan for the downtown core that added significant interest, created a more attractive face for the plaza along the surrounding streets and providing new and exciting public spaces that would complement many of the other projects. Among some of the key elements of this plan is the closing of a portion of Park Avenue, discussed in the Park Street Plaza Project Section. Other project ideas illustrated on Guertz’s concept plan include:

- A pocket park on the plaza space at Mabbett and Railroad Street which would include new trees, picnic tables, and other amenities.

- A recreation of the Champlain Canal including a representation of a Packet Boat in a new park at the intersection of Mabbett Street and Central Avenue. A significant improvement to the appearance of the intersection that would complement the Central Avenue Improvements discussed above and the Hudson River Vista mentioned below.
- New textured pavements introduced into the sidewalks in and around the plaza and ornamental street lights and street trees to soften the appearance of the plaza edges.
- Parking improvements to expand the on-street parking capacity throughout the plaza area of downtown.

### *The Railroad Station Area*

From the Dock, several systems will serve to offer better connections to shopping, downtown eateries and historic sites. Among the most significant of the historic sites is the Railroad Station area. An important change in the status of this project occurred in 2007 as the station is now owned by the Mechanicville Heritage Society, Inc., a local not-for-profit preservation organization. This project is discussed in detail on the Railroad Station and XO Tower Rehabilitation and Area Improvements project page. A nearly direct visual link exists between the station and the riverfront, offering an important dynamic between history and the waterfront via downtown. Other spin off projects could potentially be developed adjacent to the Rail Station including:



*Mechanicville's Delaware and Hudson Railroad Station*

- A linear park beginning at the station and traveling south along the Railroad Street. This strip of land is currently lawn and parking pavement. The trail could include pedestrian amenities and would make an attractive connective pedestrian corridor linking the station area to downtown.

- XO Tower and the adjacent land have been discussed as the site for an outdoor rail history exhibit including several rehabilitated examples of passenger cars. A rail siding could be easily added to the existing CSX freight line.

### *A Hudson River Vista*

The functional links to the river will be improved with the project at the Dock and along Terminal Street, but perhaps more important are the visual links between downtown Mechanicville and the River. Views of the river from any of the perpendicular streets in downtown are presently obscured. The greatest opportunity to establish a visual link, without removing buildings, exists along Mabbet and Hill Streets.

Along this vista, a series of trails, pocket parks, and pedestrian improvements are envisioned on Railroad, Mabbett and Hill Streets leading directly to the river at the former Middle School. An extensive vacant open space on the river shoreline exists at the Middle School potentially opening the door to several exciting new public spaces that would enhance the sense of arrival for boaters, and begin to establish a fantastic pedestrian system along the river.



*Aerial view of the connecting corridor between the Railroad Station and the Hudson River*

A portion of this Vista project is shown on the Downtown Improvements Plan developed by Garrett Guertz.

### *Trail and Open Space Projects*

The potential to create a network of trails and open spaces exists throughout downtown Mechanicville. This network could potentially be developed using currently vacant space including the Anthony Kill corridor, the river shoreline, paper streets, and lands adjacent the railroad.

- Riverfront Trail – a potentially 1.5+ mile trail along the Hudson River which could form a missing link in the Canalway Trail System.
- Anthony Kill Corridor Greenway Trail – a short trail connection utilizing the Anthony Kill shoreline that would create a non-vehicular connection between the river and Railroad Station area.



*The Anthony Kill Corridor Greenway Trail: A potential trail corridor through downtown*

- Rail-side Trail – a trail paralleling the railroad that could connect the shoreline trail and Anthony Kill Greenway to larger regional trail systems.

### *Pocket Parks*

Small city-owned lands are scattered throughout downtown Mechanicville. Some of these lands are formal city parks, most are maintained and unimproved or vacant. Some key opportunities exist to create new parks that can become resting points along trail and pedestrian systems, or significantly improve the appearance of vacant land complementing other project. These potential pocket parks opportunities exist in several downtown locations including:

- A large lawn area between the plaza and Mabbett Street (as discussed above)
- In the Mabbett Street Right-of-Way at the Railroad Street intersection.
- On either side of the CSX bridge over South Central Avenue.
- Along North Central Avenue in front of the former Niagara Mohawk facility.
- At several undeveloped paper streets and vacant Road Right-of-Ways, especially adjacent the Hudson River and Anthony Kill.

### *City Gateways*

The South Central Avenue gateway is one of the important gateways to the city that include North Central Avenue, Saratoga Avenue (NYS Route 67), South Street and Main Street at Route 67.



*Saratoga Avenue Gateway Improvements Photo Simulation*

## *Economic Development Projects*

Most of the projects above were also identified by groups discussing economic development projects during the planning charettes. A number of currently vacant or underutilized privately owned properties were viewed as key opportunities for economic development projects. These properties ranged from vacant parcels to large underutilized structure which can be marketed by the city with the cooperation of the landowners to proactively seek out developers whose interests in the site will contribute to the public vision for downtown.

Another notion that was discussed in detail is the potential to provide a city-wide Wireless Internet service (Wi-Fi). This would likely generate positive press for the city and attract business in downtown eateries and lounges. Wi-Fi would not only be attractive for the residents of Mechanicville, but boaters and other visitors.

Rapid transit and light rail was discussed, utilizing the CSX right-of-way, as part of a regional system. Though the actual creation of such a system might be in the distant future, the city would not only benefit greatly, but has the built in infrastructure, including an existing station to accommodate service.



**Barton**  
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Engineers • Environmental Scientists • Planners • Landscape Architects

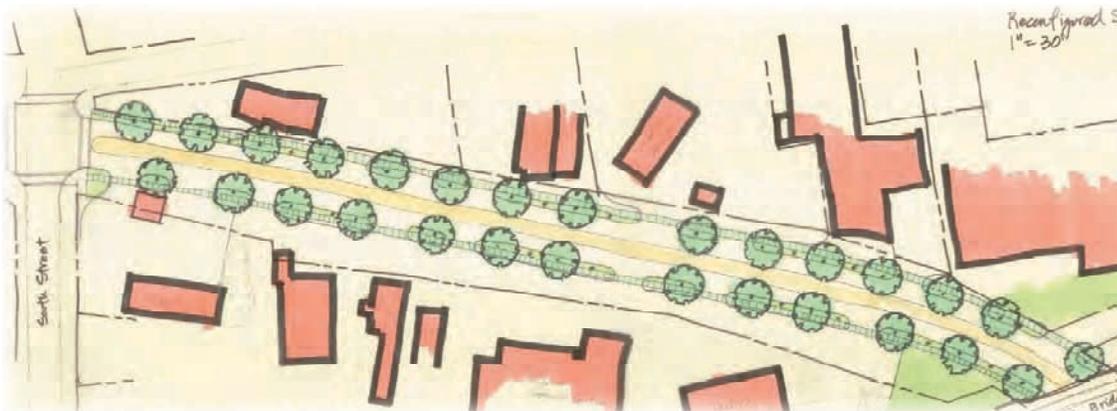
**CITY OF MECHANICVILLE**  
 Downtown Revitalization Project  
 Planning & Project Programming

  
 1 inch equals 150 feet





## Detailed Project Pages



### *Central Avenue South Pedestrian Improvements – Streetscape Phase 1*

The Central Avenue South project has been considered to be the highest priority for the revitalization of Mechanicville. The project site extends from the South Street to the CSX Bridge and is one of the gateways to Downtown Mechanicville that forms a critical first impression of the City when approaching from the heavily populated south.

The project includes improvements to pedestrian safety and comfort by adding a textured pavement buffer strip between the sidewalk and curb with new ornamental lighting and street trees. The existing four lanes would be narrowed to two with a center turn lane. Existing curbside parking is retained but curbed islands are created to better manage access to Central Avenue for local businesses. The road narrowing creates a wider parking frontage for the businesses potentially allowing double-loading in front of several stores.

The CSX Railroad bridge currently creates a rusting and exfoliating gateway to downtown. The bridge surfaces will be refinished with an encapsulating paint treatment which will include

recreation of the historic Delaware and Hudson (D & H) logo and a welcome message. (Presented in a separate project page) Vacant lands adjacent the bridge will be landscape including interpretive and informational signage, benches and trash receptacles.

The photo-simulations below illustrate the impact of these improvements.



## Project Budget

Pre - Construction			
Component	Completion	Cost	
Survey and Stakeout	2 months	\$	20,000.00
Design	12 months	\$	75,000.00
Archeology, Geotech, etc.	6 weeks	\$	4,000.00
Subtotal:		\$	99,000.00
Demolition / Site Development			
Pavement removals	1.5 months	\$	3,000.00
Additional Excavation	.5 month	\$	1,000.00
Asphalt Excavation (Street Side Parking Area)	1 month	\$	8,500.00
Subtotal:		\$	12,500.00
Construction			
Side Walk			
8" Sub base	1.5 months	\$	9,000.00
Side Walk 6' Wide	2 month	\$	46,000.00
Curbing	1 month	\$	106,500.00
Bricking or Stone (between curb at road and sidewalk)	1 month	\$	115,000.00
Trees	1 month	\$	16,000.00
Light Posts	1 month	\$	100,000.00
Street Side Parking Area			
Misc. Pavement Repairs	1 month	\$	10,000.00
Resurface Asphalt – Central Ave.	1 month	\$	82,000.00
Site Amenities			
Benches (4 at \$1750)	.5 Month	\$	7,000.00
Trash Receptacles (2 at \$2000)	.5 Month	\$	4,000.00
Signage	.5 Month	\$	5,000.00
Subtotal:		\$	500,500.00
Construction Contingency at 20%		\$	102,500.00
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>703,000.00</b>

## Terminal Street and the Mechanicville Dock



### Project Description

Mechanicville identified the improvement of their Champlain Canal harbor on the Hudson River as a project critical to the revitalization of their downtown in two recent comprehensive planning efforts, the 2006 Downtown Revitalization Plan and the 2006 Reclaiming the Hudson.

During public planning charettes hosted by the city in the spring of 2007, public interest continued and conceptual plans for the project took shape. Pictured above is the plan for the project which is intended to create a better sense of arrival to the city while providing currently lacking amenities for boaters and other visitors to the 'Mechanicville Dock'. The plan includes pedestrian improvements on Terminal Street and redevelopment of a plaza in front of City Hall at the intersection of Terminal and Main, both intended to meet city objectives to forge better links between downtown and the riverfront. Boater and visitor comfort will be greatly improved by the addition of amenities including shade trees, benches and a new shelter which will house restroom and shower facilities.



### *Project Budget*

Pre - Construction			
Component	Completion	Cost	
CPA Audit Report (Admin.)	3 months	\$	2,000.00
Project Sign	1 week	\$	300.00
Survey and Stakeout	2 months	\$	3,587.00
Design	2 months	\$	20,000.00
Archeology	6 weeks	\$	1,500.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		\$	<b>27,387.00</b>
Demolition / Site Development			
Pavement removals	1.5 months	\$	12,500.00
Utility Relocation	1.5 months	\$	12,500.00
Grading Drainage	2 months	\$	15,000.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		\$	<b>40,000.00</b>
Construction			
Exterior			
Kiosk (2-sided)	1 month	\$	3,000.00
Kiosk (3-sided)	1 month	\$	7,000.00
Segmental Block Retaining / Sitting Wall	2 months	\$	78,750.00
Asphalt Paving & Subbase	2 months	\$	25,000.00
Concrete sidewalks Cast-in-place concrete	1 month	\$	11,750.00
Curbing	1 month	\$	26,640.00
Pre-Cast Concrete Pavers Parking & Crosswalk	1 month	\$	12,675.00
Stripping	2 months	\$	666.00
Benches	1 month	\$	7,000.00

Planting			
Deciduous Trees	1 month	\$	2,800.00
Evergreen Shrubs	1 month	\$	1,575.00
Accent Trees	1 month	\$	2,400.00
Deciduous Shrubs	1 month	\$	2,475.00
Perennial Ornamental Grasses	1 month	\$	1,250.00
Other Amenities			
Entry Sign	2 months	\$	3,500.00
Ornamental Light poles & Luminaires	2 months	\$	37,500.00
Ornamental Bollards	2 months	\$	5,000.00
Mobilization Cost		\$	28,700.00
Contingency Cost		\$	58,660.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>316,341.00</b>
Interior			
500 Sq. ft. Bathroom and Shower Facility	4 months	\$	85,000.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>85,000.00</b>
<b>Total Project Cost</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>468,728.00</b>

## *Central Avenue Railroad Bridge Rehabilitation*

### *Project Description*

The Rail Road viaduct that crosses South Central Avenue creates a gateway into the City's Downtown Core. As a result it is a main focal point entering the City for nearly 17,000 motorists per day.

The bridge is currently rusting and in need of repair and painting and its appearance reflects negatively on the community and draws attention away from the prospects and heritage of Mechanicville. The community sees an opportunity to make the bridge a more welcoming entry feature by re-painting the structure and creating a pocket park on both sides of the bridge. Improvements to the sidewalks under the viaduct and the stone bridge abutments will be accented by new lighting.



### *Project Budget*

Additional coordination with the owner of the bridge will be necessary to determine the feasibility of re-painting. There will be a wide variation in the budget for rehabilitation of this railroad bridge depending on whether encapsulation of the bridge for lead-based paint removal is necessary or not. In general, encapsulation for removal of lead-based paint, and the resulting traffic re-routing and construction mobilization/de-mobilization can push the budget beyond the cost of full bridge replacement.

Many bridges can be repainted with only minor surface treatments, thus reducing the high cost and additional concerns of lead-based paint removal. Based on the size and style of the Central

Avenue Bridge, the costs for this minor surface painting and other rehabilitation work would range from \$95,000.00 up, depending on various factors.



## Railroad Station and XO Tower Rehabilitation and Area Improvements

### Project Description

The rehabilitation of two of the City's most historic buildings will preserve them as a tourist / visitors site. The Railroad Station area, including the XO Tower site, is rich in local railroad history. The railroad's hay-day was about 100 years ago when the nearby rail yard (now an industrial park) was a center for freight transport of lumber, paper, and textiles connecting the most renowned railroad of the era in New York State.



Future revitalization goals include restoring the sites so that visitors can experience the railroad environment in Mechanicville during the turn of the century. In addition, the city hopes to develop the site by adding a feature at the entrances to the railroad area. The ultimate goal of the project is to brighten and revitalize the City of Mechanicville while creating a major tourist destination. Additional off site improvements will be made to the street and sidewalks with the implementation of a traffic circle for the purposes of improving traffic flow and aesthetics.





## Project Budget

### Pre - Construction

Component	Completion	Cost
CPA Audit Report (Admin.)	3 months	\$ 2,000.00
Project Sign	1 week	\$ 300.00
Survey and Stakeout	1 Month	\$ 10,000.00
Design	2 Months	\$ 60,000.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$ 72,300.00</b>

### Demolition / Site Development

Pavement removals	1 Month	\$ 20,000.00
Utility Relocation	3 Months	\$ 10,000.00
Storm Water Pollution Prevention	6 Months	\$ 5,000.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$ 35,000.00</b>

### Construction

#### Exterior

Asphalt Road and Parking	2 Months	\$ 70,000.00
Pavement		
Concrete Walks	1 Month	\$ 12,000.00
Brick Pavers	2 Months	\$ 50,000.00
Concrete Curbing	1 Month	\$ 45,000.00
Mulch Beds	1 Month	\$ 2,000.00
Lawn	3 Months	\$ 8,000.00
Flower Beds	1 Month	\$ 4,000.00
Shrubs and Flowering Trees	1 Month	\$ 10,000.00
Street Trees	1 Month	\$ 25,000.00
Benches	1 Month	\$ 25,000.00
Bollards	2 Months	\$ 10,000.00
Trash Receptacles	1 Month	\$ 5,000.00
Fencing	1 Month	\$ 5,000.00
Street Lights	2 Months	\$ 60,000.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$ 331,000.00</b>
Utilities		
Storm Water	3 Months	\$ 10,000.00
Sanitary Connections	1 Month	\$ 5,000.00
Water Service Upgrades	4 Months	\$ 5,000.00
Electrical Upgrades	5 Months	\$ 5,000.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$ 25,000.00</b>

<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>463,300.00</b>
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## Park Avenue Plaza Project

### Project Description

The Park Avenue Plaza project represents a grass-roots effort to revitalize Mechanicville's downtown beginning at the city's core. By closing off a section of the street to automobiles and providing a purely pedestrian environment, it is hoped that the project will form a catalyst for business growth that will ripple through the city.



The project extends from the intersection of Park Avenue and Railroad Street to the entrance to the existing shopping plaza along Park Avenue. Objectives of the project include creating a pedestrian friendly shopping experience with many aesthetic improvements to the existing businesses. The entire area will be improved with new walkways, areas to sit and relax, new landscaping, and many other features. A rough representation of these improvements is presented above. Possible future improvements include extending the closed portion of the street the entire length of Park Avenue.



## Project Budget

Item No.	Description of Work	QTY	Units	Unit Cost	Cost
A	Demolition	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
B	Excavation & Disposal for curb cuts (6 locations)	10	CY	\$15.00	\$150.00
C	Excavation (electric and water lines at 3 locations)	150	LF	\$15.00	\$2,250.00
D	Tack Coat	40	GAL	\$5.00	\$200.00
E	Sawcut Pavement	90	LF	\$3.00	\$270.00
F	StreetPrint (30% coverage)	250	SY	\$75.00	\$18,750.00
H	Subbase (for concrete sidewalks)	6	CY	\$30.00	\$180.00
I	Concrete Sidewalks	2	CY	\$375.00	\$750.00
J	Electrical conduit crossings (3 at 50')	150	LF	\$3.00	\$450.00
K	Frame and Grate adjustments (Assume 6)	6	EA	\$300.00	\$1,800.00
L	Bollards	6	EA	\$570.00	\$3,420.00
M	Bollards Base D	6	EA	\$45.00	\$270.00
N	Matching fixtures	4	EA	\$5,000.00	\$20,000.00
O	Planting Areas (assume 12' dia center planter, 18" free standing walls)	1	LS	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
P	Planting Areas (8'x8' square planter, 18" free standing walls)	4	LS	\$1,500.00	\$6,000.00
Q	Kiosk	1	EA	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
R	Planting	1	LS	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
S	Benches	8	EA	\$875.00	\$7,000.00
T	Planters - 22" diameter	6	EA	\$795.00	\$4,770.00
U	Trash cans	4	EA	\$795.00	\$3,180.00
V	Ash trays	2	EA	\$650.00	\$1,300.00
<b>SUBTOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS:</b>					<b>\$93,740.00</b>
Contingency (15%)					\$14,061.00
Legal, Survey, Engineering, Permits & Construction Inspection (15%)					\$14,061.00
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS:</b>					<b>\$121,862.00</b>
<b>ADD ALTERNATE #1</b>					
1A	Mill existing asphalt	1100	SY	\$2.00	\$2,200.00
2B	Re-top road with new type 7F top	97	TONS	\$90.00	\$8,730.00
3C	True and Leveling Course	93	TONS	\$70.00	\$6,510.00
<b>TOTAL WITH ADD ALTERNATE #1</b>					<b>\$144,534.00</b>

## *Route 67 Wall Proposed Improvements*



*Before: Current conditions along Route 67.*

### *Project Description*

The wall along Route 67 marks one of the entrances into the City of Mechanicville and is known for being a narrow, unsafe road to pedestrians. Improvements to the Route 67 wall and shoulder will help increase safety for pedestrian as people enter the City. Proposed enhancements include a refinished wall that is more aesthetically pleasing, pedestrian lights and a new sidewalk along the wall. The sidewalk will offer a safe route for pedestrians to cross into the City. A photo illustration is provided below to give a representation of completed improvements along Route 67.



*After: Proposed road improvements including pedestrian lights, sidewalk and refinished wall.*

*Project Budget*

Item No.	Description of Work	Quantity	Units	Unit Cost	Cost
1	Wall Repairs	1	LS	\$100,000	\$100,000
2	Electric lights	1	LS	\$25,000	\$25,000
3	Sidewalk	1	LS	\$20,000	\$20,000
4	Maintenance of Traffic (By City DPW)	1	LS	\$35,000	\$35,000
Subtotal					\$180,000
Contingency (15% +/-)					\$27,000
Legal, Survey, Engineering, Permits & Construction Inspection:					\$27,000
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS:</b>					<b>\$234,000</b>
					<b>SAY: \$235,000</b>





# Implementation Strategy

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A number of programs expected to be announced in 2007 did not materialize. Among the expected programs were the NYS DOS Brownfields Opportunities Area Grants, NYS DOT Transportation Enhancements Program Grants, National Recreational Trails Act and the NYSDEC Urban Street Tree Program Grants. Despite the shortage of programs several applications were submitted and reviewed. The list below represents the grant work that is expected for the 2008 calendar year. The original term of the agreement for the project is set to expire in July 2008. That contract should be reviewed in May 2008 to determine if it is feasible to extend the contract to a later date.

## Anticipated Grant Applications and Deadlines

- Submit TIP Application for South Central Avenue Upgrades
- New York State Council on the Arts – Planning Grant      Feb. 2008
- Small Cities – 2008 Community Development Grant      April 2008
- Small Cities – 2008 Economic Development Grant      April 2008
- New York Main Street – 2008      April 2008
- NY OPRHP Historic Preservation Grant 2008      June 2008
- NY OPRHP Heritage Areas or Parks Grant 2008      June 2008

## *Other Grant Programs/Potential Opportunities*

- Restore NY 2008
- Transportation Enhancements Program 2008
- Transportation Improvements Plan 2007-2012
- Hudson River Valley Greenway 2008
- NYS DOS LWRP Implementation Grant 2008
- NYS DOS Brownfield Opportunities Area Grant 2008
- NPS Centennial Initiative Program 2008
- National Recreational Trails Act 2008

## *Action Items*

### *Proposed 2008 Project Schedule:*

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| • Project Team Annual Strategic Planning Meeting        | January 2008        |
| • Advisory Committee Meeting                            | February 2008       |
| • Small Cities Public Information Meeting               | February/March 2008 |
| • Advisory Committee Meeting                            | March 2008          |
| • Project Concept Planning Charette (Sm. Cities Mtg. 2) | March 2008          |
| • Advisory Committee Meeting                            | April 2008          |
| • Public Information Meeting                            | April 2008          |
| • Project Extension Evaluation and Team Meeting         | May 2008            |

- Funders Panel Meeting and Tour May 2008
- Project Planning Charette May 2008
- Advisory Committee Meeting June 2008

*Other Work:*

- Discuss/pass Resolution to join Greenway
- Seek National/State Historic Register Status for RR Station
- Review Draft Architectural Guidelines
- Assist the City in Obtaining Funding for Final Architectural Guidelines
- Development of RFP's for Projects to be determined
- Windshield Downtown Infrastructure







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